

Ageing, Garden Practice and Spiritual Expression: a Phenomenological Study

Submitted by

Joanne Adams

Bachelor of Public Health – La Trobe University, Bendigo

Master of Health Sciences – La Trobe University, Bendigo

A thesis submitted in total fulfilment

of the requirements of the degree

Doctor of Philosophy

Rural Department of Community Health

La Trobe Rural Health School

College of Science, Health and Engineering

La Trobe University

Victoria, Australia

October 2019

STATEMENT OF AUTHORSHIP

Except where reference is made in the text of the thesis, this thesis contains no material published elsewhere or extracted in whole or in part from a thesis submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma.

No other person's work has been used without due acknowledgement in the main text of the thesis.

The thesis has not been submitted for the award of any degree or diploma in any other tertiary institution.

All research procedures reported in the thesis were approved by the relevant Ethics Committee.



31 October 2019

Signed

Date

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis brings together three topics for which I maintain ongoing passion and concern. The completion of my doctorate is very much the beginning rather than the end of my journey in discovery. I cannot imagine life without a garden and the many wonders and insights it provides.

With this in mind I wish, firstly to thank my participants. They shared many stories and insights provided by a lifetime in the garden. My admiration and respect for their wisdom, resilience and patience will always remain with me.

The patience of my supervisory team has also been greatly appreciated, as this thesis has taken much longer to complete than anticipated. Beginning firstly with Dr Jan Pascal and Dr Virginia Dickson-Swift and finishing with the support of Dr Fiona Gardner. I thank you all for your ongoing support and encouragement to continue despite several obstacles and setbacks. You have each given me different perspectives to consider and helped me to believe in my abilities. For this I am very grateful.

To my family I wish also to extend my thanks. My parents have been unwavering in their support and encouragement at all points throughout my life. It is their love and support that on many occasions has kept me going. To my beautiful husband and children, I also wish to give thanks. They have provided inspiration, despite the many challenges we have faced together. It is from the home and garden that we have established that much of my own insight is created and drawn. Thank you.

This work was supported by an Australian Government Research Training Program Scholarship and a La Trobe University Postgraduate Scholarship.

SUMMARY

Ageing is something we all aspire to, but may approach with trepidation. Despite many negative connotations associated with decline, later stages of our lives can signify growth and development. As a time that beckons reflection, it touches on dimensions of life that have been considered spiritual. Within current times our spiritual resources are consistently being challenged not only because of an increasing emphasis on logic, science and reason, but also because a capacity to reflect has largely been usurped by the fast pace of life and a lack of everyday opportunity.

Gardening and spending time in the garden is an activity often related to older people. An understanding of contact with nature has been enhanced by a knowledge that the benefits of contact relate to physical, mental and emotional dimensions. A capacity to express such benefits is, however, limited not only by language, but also by lack of understanding of the experience of gardening and spending time in the garden. Poetry has been used to facilitate expression metaphorically, historically and within the research process itself.

Through a phenomenological methodology this study aimed to better understand the relationship between spiritual awareness and expression, garden practices and the process of ageing. Semi-structured, in-depth interviews were conducted with twelve older gardeners for whom the garden has been an important part of their lives. Findings from the study support the conception that contact with nature in the garden can be recognised as an activity with inherently spiritual qualities and that the process of ageing may be richly resourced and enhanced through garden practice. A model for embodying spirituality through gardening is proposed for health care workers to more consciously use gardening in their practice with older people, but with potential for use with all age groups. This includes both the internal factors of wellbeing, noticing, creativity and faith and the external factors of activity, nurturing, mystery and fascination in the context of connection, hope and memory.

CONTENTS

Chapter 1 – Introduction

1.1	Background	10
1.2	Preliminary Poetic Expression	14
1.3	Key Concepts and Terms.....	17
1.4	Research Aims and Objectives.....	18
1.5	Organisation of Thesis	19

Chapter 2 – Literature Review

2.1	Preamble	22
2.2	Ageing	24
2.3	Spirituality within Healthcare	35
2.4	Concepts of Wellbeing.....	46
2.5	Contact with Nature	59
2.6	History of Gardening.....	71
2.7	Summary of Literature Review	85

Chapter 3 – Theoretical Frameworks

3.1	Methodology.....	88
3.1.1	Theoretical Positioning	88
3.1.2	Embodied Enquiry and Practice.....	94
3.1.3	Holistic Observation and Meaning Making.....	98
3.1.4	Phenomenology and Poetry	100
3.2	Method	113
3.2.1	Fusion of Horizons	113
3.2.2	Sampling and Data Saturation	116
3.2.3	Participants	117
3.2.4	Data Collection.....	118
3.2.5	Data Analysis and development of poetry	122
3.2.6	Trustworthiness and Authenticity	125

3.2.7	Ethical Considerations.....	127
Chapter 4 - Findings		
4.1	Findings Preamble	130
4.2	Researcher Reflection and poetry	135
4.3	Findings	147
4.3.1	Embodied Practice	147
4.3.2	Holistic Observation.....	148
4.3.3	Spiritual Expression.....	180
Chapter 5 – Discussion		
5.1	Discussion Preamble	182
5.2	Thematic Presentation.....	185
5.2.1	Graphic Representation	186
5.2.2	Embodied Practice	187
5.2.3	Holistic Observation.....	190
5.2.3	Spiritual Expression.....	204
5.3	Poetic Reflection on Ageing.....	206
5.3.1	Foundation Poem.....	206
5.4	History and Inter-Generational Paradigms.....	214
5.5	Contact with Nature in the Garden	222
5.6	Embodied Practices, Wellbeing and Spirituality.....	227
5.7	Healthcare Settings, Ageing and Spiritual Expression	234
5.8	Study Recommendations.....	242
5.8.1	Reinstating the Value of the Garden	245
5.8.2	Creativity in the Garden.....	245
5.8.3	Cognitive Stimulation.....	246
5.8.4	Physical Activity	246
5.8.5	Intergenerational Activity	247
5.8.6	Further Research.....	248

Chapter 6 – Conclusion	249
------------------------------	-----

Appendices

A.1 Participant Interview Guide	255
A.2 Participant Information and Consent Forms	256
A.3 Poetry Journal	261
A.4 Influential Poetry	290

References	292
------------------	-----

List of Figures

1 Wellbeing	50
2 Model of Domestic Gardening.....	114
3 Methodological Progression.....	116
4 Example of poetry development	123
5 Thematic Guide.....	147
6 Garden Practice for Gardeners.....	186
7 Wellbeing Revised.....	196
8 Poetic Development	207
9 Garden Practice for Beginning Gardeners	242

CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

Gardening has been recognised as a popular leisure activity historically and culturally (Maller, Townsend, Pryor, Brown & St Leger, 2005; St Leger, 2003; Catanazaro & Ekanem, 2002; Unruh, 2002; Dunnett & Qasim, 2000; Kaplan & Kaplan, 1989; Thacker, 1979; Hyams, 1971). Within Western/European cultures gardening has been associated with home making and more recently, interest in gardening has been attributed more specifically to older people (Wang & MacMillan, 2013; Ottoson & Grahn, 2006, 2005; Rappe, 2005; Milligan, Gatrell & Bingley, 2004; Barnicle & Midden, 2003; Heliker, Chadwick & O'Connell, 2001). From an academic perspective, interest in gardening has gained increasing attention from a range of disciplines including psychology, horticulture therapy, human geography, sociology and public health. Increasingly research surrounding gardening has demonstrated links to improved health outcomes and wellbeing (inclusive of spiritual and emotional dimensions), particularly for older people (Adams, Pascal & Dickson-Swift, 2014; Wang & MacMillan, 2013; Unruh & Hutchinson, 2011; Bhatti, 2006).

The complexity of emotional and spiritual needs in the final stages of life is generally understood (MacKinlay, 2017; Puchalski, Blatt, Kogan & Butler, 2014; Erichsen & Bussing, 2013; Koenig, 2007; Dalby, 2006; Rumbold, 2006; Fleming, 2003). There are arguably fewer opportunities for expression of emotional and spiritual needs related to gardening within current (western/European) lifestyles. The potential of the domestic garden to meet such needs is less well understood. This study therefore aimed to explore the role of the garden and gardening for older people in gaining and maintaining health and wellbeing and, in particular, providing a valuable means of spiritual expression.

In introducing my study I wish to provide a roadmap to guide the reader. Each chapter will begin with such a roadmap providing a description of the contents of the chapter.

Chapter 1 is divided into sections. In the first section, I will provide some background to my study. Specifically this will describe my interest in the topic and what prompted me

to begin a study of this kind. Reflection on my interest in this topic is also provided in the form of poems which formed part of a reflective journal written progressively throughout the study. Next I will introduce a poem that I wrote at the beginning of the study. In essence this provides insight into my thinking around spirituality and the garden. It also introduces the importance of poetry as a form of expression. The relationship between poetry and a phenomenological approach to research is a thread that runs consistently through this study.

1.1 Background

When beginning this study, I had just completed research toward a Master of Health Sciences exploring the health and wellbeing of older people in relation to the domestic garden. I realised there was much more I wanted to discover. In particular, I wanted to understand how meaning related to garden practices and whether or not such meaning found its basis in spiritual expression. I also became increasingly aware that this research had evolved from a very personal search for meaning. Dispersed throughout the thesis I have included poetry that I have written during the progress of this study. This highlights not only the personal meaning attributed to this study, but also introduces the notion that poetry provides a powerful form of reflection and an alternative means of expression. Before describing the aims of my current study, I would like to share three key experiences that have inspired and challenged my developmental journey, both generally and in relation to my doctoral studies.

The first occurred when I was introduced to the concept of faith and teachings of Christianity as a child with a brief yet significant experience of the Catholic Church and progression through the sacraments (which shape your maturation as a member of the Church). I developed a sense of the importance of faith, but really had no understanding of what that meant. The notion of a loving God in 3 parts (father, son and holy spirit), to me was very comforting yet puzzling. With a child's perspective my faith was shaped by primarily visual and sensory experiences that were, to me, utterly mysterious and beautiful. Many of the religious images held a reverence which captivated my imagination. The tortuous figure of Jesus carrying a large cross to his eventual death depicted within series of pictures made me feel sad, but I also remember images of clouds, angelic figures and rays of sunshine. I remember being in awe of the Church building itself. I later discovered the significance of the notion of 'awe' to authors such as Rudolf Otto (1952) in describing the mystery of religious emotion and what he identified as the numinous. I remember the beauty of light reflected through stained glass windows and high ceilings with wooden beams. These images were supplemented by the smell of incense and wood, the echo of footsteps on the floor and an apparent air

of majesty. My experience of religion remained minimal and yet within its mystery was a depth that allowed a seed of faith and insight to be planted.

The second was an experience as a young adult travelling overseas for the first time. I chose to work within a residential care home for the elderly in a small town within the county of Essex, England. It was my first experience of caring for others and was to have a profound impact on me. The diverse range of characters and needs was challenging. I witnessed a range of care offered to the residents. Some were treated like children, others shown deep respect for their wisdom and experience. I had little involvement with my own grandparents or extended family, but I could clearly see a need for empathy and respect. In many ways this was very confronting for a young person who could not possibly know how it felt to live in an ageing body. I resolved to listen and learn. I worked in the residential care home for 14 months and yet a quarter of a century later; I still remember the names and stories of many of those I cared for. In hindsight, I learnt much about the human spirit – its strengths and frailties in the face of ageing and living in the final stages of life. This experience is expressed in the following poem written during the early part of this study to reflect on this time.

I Remember

I remember
Their faces, stories, places
They lived, but barely lived.
Personalities were strong
No need for pretention
Small pleasures, blocks of time
Spent in contemplation

I remember
The carers, did they know how to care
Their minds often absent
Fed from beyond where
The faces, stories and places
Could reach

In time they may know
What pretention might mean

But caring is thankless to those who don't see
Small pleasures, blocks of time
Memory

J Adams

The third experience of learning came with the purchase of our current family home situated on an acre block in regional Victoria. The garden was fully established and had been well cared for. It had many large trees, a great range of plants and a calm and peaceful feel. I had not been responsible for a garden previously but felt drawn to this garden. Its character, plantings and setting held a certain mystery to me. With three very young children at this time, I also wanted them to have an experience of space, beauty and contact with nature. It was my feeling that this would provide a good foundation for them to appreciate nature and gain a clear sense of its importance.

Within the years that followed, conditions of extreme drought were experienced, and severe water restrictions were imposed. We lost many plants but set about securing a tank based watering system and replacing our losses. A phase of learning began as we negotiated conditions for our future garden. The nature reserve (set aside by local government) opposite the garden provided inspiration for my search to understand plants that would be suitable in our garden. A gradual transformation of the garden had to occur and with the losses and replanting, my connection with the garden became increasingly important. A sense that time could stand still while I was working in the garden fascinated me. It felt similar to previous experiences of music and art, but a connection to another life-force added a dimension I had not experienced before.

The impact of drought and a changing perception and appreciation for plants is reflected in the following poem

The Sun

The ground is melting, saturating
Any nutrient that would give life
Every blade of green that can be seen
Will struggle to survive.

The sun whose might we contemplate
Is unrelenting full of spite
Summoning every drop of moisture
Each gardener would invite.

Not all plants resent the sun
Some understand its glare
In three short months it will be done
Resilience gifted to native fair.

My Master of Health Sciences participants (Adams, 2011; Adams, Pascal, & Dickson-Swift, 2014), were predominately in their 70s. From their experience, I discovered a depth of connection and respect for the garden that formed a considerable foundation to wellbeing, enchantment and, I began to wonder, an everyday form of spiritual expression.

This brought together three elements of great significance to me - faith/spirituality, the wisdom and needs of older people, and contact with nature in the garden. The notion that contact with nature in the garden could be recognised as a valued form of spiritual expression to enhance the wellbeing of older people therefore became the topic of my PhD. From my reading and previous research there appeared to be a very real need to establish and promote alternative forms of spiritual expression that had their basis in everyday activity. This would address the complex array of tasks associated with ageing in a manner that recognises the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual dimensions of such a process. I also wish to acknowledge that having grown up in a country that has yet to fully acknowledge the wisdom and knowledge held by its indigenous peoples, that my perspective is shaped by my white, European influenced background.

The following poem expresses the beginning of a journey – a foundation from which I have drawn throughout this study. It is a personal expression, but as the journey progressed it has found resonance with the journey of others.

1.2 Preliminary Poetic Expression

“All my life, the garden has been a great teacher in everything I cherish. As a child, I dreamed of a world that was loving, that was open to all kinds of experience, where there was no prejudice, no hatred, no fear. The garden was a world that depended on care and nourishment” Stanley Kunitz (Kunitz & Lentine, 2007, p.13)

DOES FAITH BEGIN AND END IN MY GARDEN

A quest for faith appears unfathomable,
A disquiet longing to materialise in my senses
To touch, to smell, to hear, to see

Amid the blur that is the rest of my life
My garden draws me close
Mesmerising, calming, enabling

Physical, mental, emotional, spiritual
My garden absorbs and re-shapes my energy,
Its strength and virtue, felt deeply.

Enduring and responding to an-other
My garden is a sentinel of change
I am called to collaborate, nurture, engage.

If I did not convey body, mind and spirit,
Would it cease to be so?
A quest for faith begins and ends in my garden

The poem describes the tension of (attaining and) maintaining a faith without tangible experience of how that faith manifests in everyday life. For me the garden has become that tangible expression of faith because it allows me to participate in a flow of energy that is infinite and yet private within my own domestic space. This represents an

expression of my spirituality in an everyday setting. A calling to engage with the garden takes many forms having components that are physical, mental, emotional and spiritual. These components change through time and space, but their presence in equal measure appears to be an important aspect of the experience.

How our garden has inspired my children and partner has provided direction to my study. Their responses trigger often unexpected conversations and insights that have led me to seek an understanding of a possible spiritual nature within garden practice with greater depth and breadth. The awe expressed by my own children toward nature and elements of nature provided added insight into the possibility of a shift in consciousness and an acknowledgement of a life-force much bigger than ourselves that continues to exist whether we choose to believe in it or not. Many participants to this study subsequently described the importance of childhood experience in the garden. Of a childhood sense of mystery, fascination and awe that remained with them into older age.

At various points in history the role of the garden and garden practice has shown how nature represents a belief in an energy that may cross into other realms or dimensions of consciousness. The life-force or energy of nature has been given many names, both spiritual and otherwise. Whichever way we consider it, however, it appears that current generations have stepped well away from nature and the consequences of this step are becoming increasingly apparent as I will demonstrate in the literature review (Grinde & Patil, 2009; Keniger, Gaston, Irvine, & Fuller, 2013; Maller, Townsend, Pryor, Brown, & St Leger, 2005; Mayer & Frantz, 2004). At the same time our ability to look inward, reconcile our place in the world and find meaning has also diminished, or at the very least become increasingly de-valued (Biggs, 2014; Naydler, 2011a; Peach, 2003).

In considering each of the influences that brings me to this point in my research, my mind often returned to the individuals I cared for in the aged care facility in England. The range of experience amongst the residents was incredibly rich and their opportunity to express and explore the meaning of that experience often sadly lacking. From a research

perspective, this age group offers important information regarding wellbeing and spiritual expression for two reasons. Firstly, they have had more time in which to develop a knowledge of this world through experience. For many this is manifest in wisdom shared with others. This means that any distinction between modes of knowing the world will be based on a range of experiences, actions, and interactions (Biggs, 2014; Gullette, 2015; van Manen, 2016). Secondly, from a developmental perspective, older age is a time when we are beckoned to consider the purpose and meaning of our lives in order to maintain and/or achieve a sense of wellbeing (Brown & Lowis, 2003; Erikson & Erikson, 1998; Tornstam, 2005; Yount, 2009). It is clear that there is much that we don't know about the human brain and its potential in later life deserves to be more readily explored and valued (Cohen, 2001; Vaillant, 2002).

1.3 Key Concepts and Terms

“Sometimes, especially when one gets older, one gets very clumsy in the handling of delicate objects. The hands, the fingers, are less nimble than they were. But then, there’s the compensation that one knows a bit more. There’s a quid pro quo” Stanley Kunitz (Kunitz & Lentine, 2007, p.18)

This thesis brings together many concepts from a diverse range of academic disciplines, including ageing, spirituality, psychology, philosophy, sociology, human geography, horticulture therapy and public health have. In many respects this is representative of my public health background that recognises the inter-relationship of multi-disciplinary variables. It is also an attempt to reconfigure the way that such concepts are considered and related.

Definitions for many key terms have been various and in some cases their rendering in literature has made them appear ambiguous. They are subject to change, context specific and often guided by their respective discipline. Definitions for key terms will be developed within the context of discussion within the following chapters.

The following general key concerns are provided in order to emphasise the primary focus of this thesis. Such concerns focus on a predominately western/European context.

1. There are increasingly limited opportunities for spiritual expression, support and guidance. This has particular impact on older people who are faced with end of life challenges.
2. The opportunity and value attributed to contact with nature in everyday settings has generally diminished.
3. There is a need to increase understanding of the importance of spiritual expression and recognise everyday opportunities for such expression – in particular the role of the garden in providing such opportunities.

1.4 Research Aims and Objectives

“Once you have perceived the garden as a whole, the individual tiers of the garden take on a different form because you have seen them both as a part and as a whole” (Kunitz & Lentine, 2007, p.72)

From key concerns (expressed in 1.3) it follows that there is a great need to gain a better understanding of wellbeing for those in the final stages of life. For the purposes of this study I have chosen to focus on those aged 70 years and over. This is not only because of predicted increases in this age group in the coming decades, but also because of an evident wide range in both physical and mental capacity. Within this study I have proposed that contact with nature through garden practice may offer opportunities for personal development and spiritual connection and expression that will significantly enhance health and wellbeing.

This study therefore aimed to explore the meaning and experience of gardening for older people. Using a phenomenological approach to research, semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with 12 participants (as per Participant Interview Guide, Appendix A.1). The interviews focused on the experience of participants in the garden and the meaning attributed to garden practices. Interviews were conducted in or adjacent to the garden and also considered the benefits and challenges of gardening, together with perceptions of spiritual experience and expression. The perspectives of participants were shared in both prose and poetry in order to more fully capture the imagery, tone and feelings shared at interview.

1.5 Organisation of Thesis

“The garden hasn’t yet happened. In all the existence of great nations that we know of, that is, in our little bit of history, the garden has of course not yet happened”
(Chadwick, 2008, p.30)

The thesis has been divided into six chapters: Introduction, Literature Review, Theoretical Frameworks, Findings, Discussion and Conclusion.

This introduction provides background to the study and introduces my own perspectives and motivations toward the topic. I have introduced the use of poetry throughout the thesis and describe its use. The introduction also contains the research aims and objectives, and describes the organisation of the thesis.

The Literature Review has been divided into five separate sections. The first (2.1) provides an overview of population ageing, health status and provision of care for older people. The second (2.2) focuses specifically on spirituality and healthcare. This begins with a review of models of health care and how health care systems generally have viewed spiritual needs and care. The focus then shifts to the experience of older people within residential and nursing care facilities and finally considers the broader cultural context within which health care systems operate. The third section (2.3) considers various concepts of wellbeing and relevant time frames. Within this I have drawn links between wellbeing and spiritual awareness and expression and offer alternative ways in which this may be achieved. This has been followed by an exploration of literature describing contact with nature (2.4). I demonstrate the breadth and extent of this work through empirical studies describing benefits to health, wellbeing and spiritual expression. This is followed by a section (2.5) describing the history of garden practice, beginning in ancient Egypt and following through to current times. Having an understanding of garden practices through time allows us to see how the value attributed to contact with nature is closely related to the priorities of the dominant culture and measures of prosperity. This focuses particularly on aspects of wellbeing,

spiritual expression and consciousness, but also considers how our perspective of nature has changed with the advent of scientific understanding.

In Chapter 3 I have introduced the methodology and method followed throughout this study. Discussion explores the phenomenological perspectives that have shaped both the philosophical stance and analytical approach to findings. I introduce the use of poetry as a means to reflect on the words of participants and to more fully express the meaning associated with garden practices and spiritual expression. I also provide examples of how poetry has influenced by own processes of reflection. This is concluded by a detailed description of the study design used to conduct the research.

The Findings of the study are contained within Chapter 4. This begins with a preamble describing general characteristics of the participants and their generation. I then provide the words of participants in both prose and poetic format. The findings are further divided thematically.

Within Chapter 5, the Discussion has been presented in five sections, echoing those of the Literature Review. This allows the perceptions and experiences of participants to relate more directly to the given literature and demonstrates how my own perspective of the potential to actively encourage alternative means of spiritual expression for older people has emerged. This section will conclude with recommendations following from this study.

The Conclusion Chapter (6) summarises the findings of the study and provide recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER 2 – LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review begins with a preamble and is followed by five sections. In section one, I provide a broad perspective on the health status of older people and the challenges faced within the health care system and society more generally in embracing and responding to those challenges. In section 2, a summary of spirituality within the setting of health care and institutions developed to care for the elderly provides some indication of how spirituality has been viewed and how it often contrasts with a medical (scientific) view of care and illness. Next, I consider the concept of wellbeing and its links with spirituality. Importantly within this section I also introduce the concept of embodied practice and how this sheds light on alternative views of how wellbeing and spirituality may be considered.

The third section of the literature review focuses on contact with nature, particularly in relation to concepts of health and wellbeing. Literature in this section is drawn from a diverse range of disciplines. This includes Human Geography, Horticulture Therapy, Sociology, Public Health and Psychology. Each discipline emphasises different priorities but information gleaned helps to build an accurate picture of what is known and how it might contribute to new ways of understanding. This is followed by a section on the history of gardens and gardening. This provides a historic perspective particularly on the changing relationship of people and plants, but also how historical events shape our view of plants and the value we choose to place on them.

2.1 Preamble

“We moderns are faced with the necessity of rediscovering the life of the spirit; we must experience it anew for ourselves” (Jung, 1929, p.780)

As a beginning researcher it can be difficult to navigate the vast array of literature. It is clear that there is great variation in the way reviews of literature are undertaken (Grant & Booth, 2009). I have narrowed relevant information down to 5 sections (2.2-2.6) drawn from a range of disciplines. Each discipline often describes different priorities such as individual therapy, population health or sustainability. Chosen literature highlights areas of study that I have considered important in being able to understand the experience of gardening in relation to the process of ageing and spiritual expression.

In accordance with Grant & Booth (2009), this review is characterised as a literature review because it contains published materials that provide examination of recent or current literature arranged thematically. The synthesis of information has been typically narrative in order to account for various levels of both completeness and comprehensiveness (Grant & Booth, 2009; Hedges & Cooper, 2009). Aveyard and Bradbury-Jones (2019) point to some confusion regarding the term narrative review. This is because what is done in gathering relevant literature can vary greatly.

Within this study a search for literature was an ongoing process, building on knowledge obtained during completion in 2011 of previous research as part of the Master of Health Sciences titled ‘Health, Wellbeing and the Domestic Garden: a phenomenological perspective’. Many key authors, texts and journals in the field were known. It was acknowledged, however that due to the breadth and nature of the topics covered in this study, that relevant literature frequently fell outside the scope of typical search processes involving databases. Searching therefore focused on gathering more recent work, using predominantly handsearching. This was supplemented by searches of databases such as Cinahl (EBSCO) and Medline 1946 – (Ovid). Handsearching was identified by Armstrong, Jackson, Doyle, Waters & Howe (2005) as an important strategy because it enables location of articles that may fall outside typical database criteria.

Within identified literature there were a range of research methods used to explore the topic including qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods studies. In some instances, literature cited is older than might be considered current (in the last 10 years). This is because, it is either foundational or there have been limited studies from which to draw. Handsearching therefore also included extensive bibliographical checking of acknowledged authors in order to gain a full appreciation of the breadth and interrelationship of previous studies.

2.2 Ageing

The cure of this ill, is not to sit still,
Or frowst with a book by the fire;
But to take a large hoe and shovel also,
And dig till you gently perspire.

From How the Camel Got his Hump (Kipling, 1902)

The growing nature of our ageing population in terms of demographics, epidemiology and aetiology is well documented (Beard et al., 2016; Kowal et al., 2012; WHO, 2015). Within the chosen age group for this study (70 years plus) there is a cross-over of generations occurring. The maturation of the 'baby boomers' and the impact this will have on health care systems has been anticipated for some time (Knickman & Snell, 2002; Quine & Carter, 2006). From a cultural perspective, ageing is still considered as a period of inevitable decline often approached with some trepidation (Bernard & Davies, 2005; Grant, 2006). For others, it is being recognised as a period with much more potential because many are living longer with prolonged periods of good health (Bateson, 2011; MacKinlay, 2017).

The most prominent aspects of ageing are perhaps physical and mental because they show the most obvious signs of decline, but it is arguably the emotional and spiritual dimensions of ageing for which we are least prepared and which are undergoing the most change (MacKinlay, 2017). Our understanding of health and healthcare throughout the lifespan has been enhanced by medical and scientific advances. It is unclear, however, whether this allows the current generation of older people (within predominantly 'western' or first world countries) to experience better health than their parents (Beard et al., 2016; WHO-GSAP, 2017). Such advances have allowed longer life spans, but these are often accompanied by a range of chronic conditions, many of which are preventable and lifestyle related.

Within the Australian context, the proportion of older people, those aged 65 years (age range used by Australian Bureau of Statistics) and over, has been steadily increasing and

this trend is expected to continue. Together with improved health care, decreasing death rates and improved life expectancy, the falling birth rate is also contributing to this trend. Those aged between 65 to 74 years (the baby boomer generation) have generally accounted for the majority of older people (56% of people aged 65 years and over), but they have been joined by increasing numbers of people in the 75 to 84 years (the builders generation) (30%), and 85 years and over age groups (13%) (the federation generation). Those in the higher age groups now make up a substantial group in the overall population (Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), 2017; McDonald, 2017).

On an international scale the proportions of older people within the general population varies. Amongst those nations counted within the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Australia had one of the lowest proportions of older people (14%). It ranked as the 21st oldest country out of 31 countries (ABS, 2017). However, the proportion of older people in OECD countries varies greatly from one in four people in Japan (25%), which has the world's largest proportion of older people, to only 6.5% of people in Mexico (ABS, 2017).

The health status of the Australian population is perhaps best understood through data available from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) National Health Survey (NHS). In particular, information regarding health and functioning, behavioural risk factors and access to care, is useful in understanding not only those chronic conditions that are most prevalent (and also preventable), but also how older people perceive their health and access to available services. To provide some indication of what is currently known about the health of our older generation, life expectancy in 2014-16 increased by more than 8 years for men and 10 years for women since the turn of the century. This brings the expected lifetime of men to 84.6 and of women to 87.3 years. Within the age group 65 years and over, 7 in 10 people considered their health to be good, very good or excellent. The experience of disability having significant impact on quality of life equated to 1 in 5 people (ABS, 2017).

With longer life expectancy comes the opportunity to plan our lives differently. Additional years of life represent a considerable resource and opportunity to reconsider what older age might consist of (MacKinlay, 2017). The extent of opportunities is very much dependent on our health during this time (Beard et al., 2016). Increased longevity is not necessarily accompanied by extended periods of good health (WHO, 2015). While The WHO (2015) define healthy ageing in terms of maintaining functional ability, such ability in turn, is determined by the intrinsic capacity of the individual. This is made up of an individual's physical, mental and psychosocial capacity together with the environments he or she inhabits. In a manner consistent with a public health perspective, the term environment is inclusive of the physical, social and policy/political contexts of living and the interaction between these (WHO, 2015).

While there has been a decline in severe disability impacting on basic activities of daily living, there has been little change in the experience of less severe disability for older people in the past 30 years with the greatest causes of years of living with disability in people 60 years and over as relating to sensory impairments (WHO, 2015). This includes: back and nerve pain, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, depressive disorders, falls, diabetes, dementia and osteoarthritis. The presence of a disorder is only part of what makes up health in older people. It is clear that the impact of such a disorder is characterised by individual perceptions of health and ageing as well as the environments of living and access to care (AIHW., 2018).

Ageing is also associated with an increased risk of experiencing more than one disorder at a time, or multi-morbidity (Britt, Harrison, Miller, & Knox, 2008). This impacts more than half of those aged 60 years and over. Multi-morbidity may have a compounding impact on older people due to the interaction of symptoms, medications and treatments. Multi-morbidity is associated with higher costs and utilisation of health care services. The impact on functioning, quality of life and mortality risk is greater than what might be expected from the individual impacts of experienced disorders. Gunn et al. (2012), identify a relationship between the number of chronic physical problems and depressive symptoms. Depression in this instance appears to be exacerbated by

self-perceived health related quality of life (Gunn et al., 2012). Multi-morbidity is complicated by the high incidence of frailty which increases with age. The WHO (2015) points to the complexity of health status in older people as a reason to avoid disease-based conceptualisations of health and instead focus on functioning. Assessment of functioning in older age therefore is also a much better predictor of survival and other outcomes than the presence of disease or even the extent of co-morbidities.

Within a public health response to population ageing, The WHO (2015) considers the health characteristics mentioned above together with underlying physiological and psychosocial changes associated with ageing to determine an older person's intrinsic capacity. Capacity is therefore a composite of all the physical, mental (psycho-social) capacities that an individual can draw on at any point in time.

Of particular note for the purposes of this study are the ABS National Health Survey data relating to physical activity and remaining mentally active. In response to questions regarding physical activity, 35% of those aged 65 and over reported being sufficiently active (doing more than 150 minutes of exercise over 5 or more sessions during the preceding week). This compared to 48% within the 10-64-year age group. A similar proportion of 37% reported being insufficiently active and 28% reported doing no exercise at all (AIHW, 2018). Remaining mentally active throughout the lifespan is recognised as helping to maintain cognitive functioning, mental wellbeing and promoting independence into older age. In 2016, more than 21,000 people aged 65 and over were enrolled in a full or part time educational course. In the same year, 13% of people aged 65 years and over were engaged in employment, education or training. In other measures of mental activity, in 2012, 43% of men and 65% of women reported reading books three or more times a week (AIHW, 2018).

Of further consideration for those aged 70 years plus in this study relates to usage of the health and aged care systems. This was higher for those aged 65 years and over, with more than twice as many claims made to the Medicare system than for the broader population. Overall usage grew only slightly from 2005-6 to 2016-17 for those aged 65-

84, but rose significantly for those aged 85 years and over. Aged care services have expanded during the reporting period stated above. Government programmes provide a basic level of aged care services to support continued independence for people aged 65 years and over living at home and their carers. The number of providers of services has increased by 41.5%. Of the recipients of home care services, 97% are aged 65 and over and the average age is 80.2 years. The number of home care recipients has increased by 84% over the past 10 years. This reflects an increasing preference for older Australians to age in place (at home) and an increased capacity within the system to deliver community-based care (AIHW, 2018).

Along with increases to home care services, there have been corresponding increases in Residential Aged Care. Residential Aged Care may be permanent or short term (respite care). Of those in aged care, 97% are aged 65 and over. The number of available places rose by 17% in the period 2007-17, but the corresponding number of people in care also rose by 17%. The World Report on Health and Ageing (WHO, 2015) points to the ineffectiveness of current public-health approaches to population ageing. From a broad-based perspective The WHO (2015) identify health systems that are poorly aligned to required levels of care for older populations even in high-income countries such as Australia. Long term care models are noted as inadequate and unsustainable and the physical and social environment presents multiple barriers and disincentives to both health and participation (WHO, 2015).

The World Report on Ageing and Health (WHO, 2015), notes that increased risk of disease, major social changes and personal loss are a common experience in the second half of life. It might be expected that this time is characterised by decline and misery, but this is not necessarily the case (Blanchflower & Oswald, 2008; Steptoe, Deaton, & Stone, 2015). General trends across a range of countries suggest that life satisfaction actually increases in older age. This may be reflective of the potential in older age for recovery, adaptation and psychosocial growth (WHO, 2015).

From a broader public health perspective, healthy ageing needs therefore to be framed through the concepts of intrinsic capacity and functional ability. Information in this regard is limited, however, as data and the methods used to collect it focus on disease-based surveillance. There are very few accepted measures of capacity except for cognitive function and the more severe limitations in capacity impacting on activities of daily living. For countries such as Australia, barriers for older people accessing health care appear to focus on past experience of being badly treated by health care professionals or that the older people themselves do not perceive themselves as being sick enough to seek health care.

There is some indication that while severe disability-free life expectancies may have decreased in some high-income countries, total disability-free life expectancy has remained the same. This means that for the majority of older people living with conditions that affect their functional ability, there has been little change within recent years (Chatterji, Byles, Cutler, Seeman, & Verdes, 2015). Moreover, patterns of morbidity-free life expectancies have varied according to the definition of morbidity used within respective studies. It appears that for those studies that use disability-related or impairment-related measures of morbidity, there is more likely to be a compression of morbidity, or reduction in years lived with disability (Chatterji et al., 2015). Studies that utilise chronic disease related measures of morbidity are more likely to describe an expansion of morbidity, or increased years lived with a chronic condition.

Where findings suggest that loss of functioning and disability throughout the life course may be improving, this is likely due to advances in rehabilitative medicine, modifications to physical living environments, or education. Morbidity due to chronic disease in later life is perhaps more problematic because many of the conditions are the result of accumulated lifestyle and other risks much earlier in life (Chatterji et al., 2015). This may include the incidence of smoking, obesity, physical activity, mental stimulation and participation in leisure activities. Training strategies that could alter cognitive-behavioural styles of older adults to adapt to changing life circumstances might also help

them to keep good health in later life, by preserving their cognitive function as they age (Beard & Bloom, 2015).

Meeting the health care needs of older people requires a holistic perspective that manages the consequences of chronic conditions in ways that fit with an older person's priorities (Ham, 2010). Within the health care setting, the focus is generally placed on immediate concerns, rather than health promotion strategies that would proactively anticipate and counter changes in function. This does not often extend to working with older people to enable increased control over their own health (Frenk et al., 2010). It appears that ageist attitudes are widespread within health care settings. This reinforces an apparent reluctance to include more comprehensive gerontological and geriatric knowledge and training for health care professionals, which limits the opportunity to provide appropriate guidance in managing the common problems of multimorbidity and frailty (Ham, 2010). Frailty has been described by Gwyther et al. (2018) as a multi-dimensional condition related to age whereby the reserves in multiple physiological and psychological systems are depleted. Frail individuals are less able to cope with a range of daily stressors and are more vulnerable to acute illness and adverse health outcomes (Gwyther et al., 2018).

Evidence suggests that focusing primarily on older people's intrinsic capacity is more effective than prioritizing the management of specific chronic diseases (WHO, 2015). Adoption and maintenance of a lifestyle that reduces frailty and disability also promotes intrinsic capacity. Frailty and the increasingly recognised frailty syndrome have become increasingly significant as age progresses (Ahmed, Mandel, & Fain, 2007; Woo, 2017; Xue, 2011). The occurrence of frailty has physical, cognitive, social and psychological dimensions (Woo, 2017). For those older people living with frailty, there is a higher risk of changes in mental and physical health following minor events which challenge their health. Commonly this leads to falls, disability, hospitalization, institutionalization, and mortality (Woo, 2017). This in turn leads to increased caregiving needs and requirement to access health care.

Many of the conditions associated with frailty are preventable. It is possible that a shift to integrated care in the community instead of specialty dominated hospital care, would enable establishment of regular activities that emphasise an older person's physical and mental capacities. This is not to reject the worth of clinical care, but rather to emphasise more appropriate targets of, and entry points for, health interventions. Approaching older people through the lens of intrinsic capacity and the environments in which they live helps ensure that health services are oriented towards the outcomes that are most relevant to their daily lives (WHO, 2015, Woo, 2017).

With advancing age intrinsic capacity starts to decline. This may include an increase in the experience of chronic disease. For older people with high and stable levels of capacity, a need to build and maintain these levels for as long as possible places emphasis on preventing disease and reducing risk, promoting capacity-enhancing behaviours, ensuring that acute problems are adequately addressed, and detecting and managing chronic noncommunicable diseases at an early stage. This includes focus on behaviours relating to diet, physical activity, tobacco and alcohol use which impact the risk of a range of noncommunicable diseases (Michel, Newton, & Kirkwood, 2008).

Intervention at a stage when capacity is just beginning to decline is particularly important because it may be possible to delay, slow or even partly reverse functional decline (Daniels, van Rossum, de Witte, Kempen, & van den Heuvel, 2008; Daniels et al., 2011). Decline is a complex and dynamic process, as it may be slow or rapid or occur as a particular consequence of a specific health condition or trauma. Functional decline leads to frailty and increased risk of care-dependency. In this instance the focus broadens from reducing risk factors to encompassing actions that can directly help maintain and reverse losses in intrinsic capacity (Daniels et al., 2008).

Physical exercise is of particular importance in efforts to maintain intrinsic capacity. Both are implicated in the experience of frailty and conditions such as sarcopenia (loss of muscle mass and strength), osteoporosis (loss of bone density and strength) and cardiovascular disease. For prevention of cardiovascular disease and several other

chronic conditions, aerobic exercise is important (Paterson, Warburton, & Activity, 2010). Whereas for muscle mass and bone density, exercise that increases strength and improves balance are required (Liu & Latham, 2011). Exercise has been shown to prevent and possibly reverse the impact of frailty and sarcopenia (Cesari et al., 2014; Pahor et al., 2014; Paterson et al., 2010). It also provides some protection against depression and cognitive decline (Jak, 2011).

Adequate nutrition into older age is also highly important. Not only because of the link between dietary deficiency and the above conditions, but also because older age (age 65 and over) is typically a time when weight declines. Increased focus on nutrient density, vitamins and micronutrients may be beneficial. So too, an increased need to increase protein intake to counter this decline (Levine et al., 2014). Contributing to a decrease in weight in older age, are sensory impairments, such as a decreased sense of taste and/or smell resulting in reduced appetite. Poor oral health and dental problems can further complicate nutrition status.

Studies reporting prevention and/or reversal of frailty and sarcopenia have focused on nutrition and physical exercise (Dorner et al., 2013). Such studies are, by necessity, multicomponent programmes. In particular, highly intensive strength training is the key intervention necessary to prevent and reverse frailty and sarcopenia; it also indirectly protects the brain against depression and cognitive decline (Chodzko-Zajko et al., 2009; Dorner et al., 2007; Lautenschlager, Almeida, Flicker, & Janca, 2004). One systematic review reported considerable reduction in the relative risk of developing functional limitations among people aged 65–85 years who engaged in regular physical activity of at least moderate intensity (Paterson et al., 2010). Strength training can empower older people to maintain or regain autonomy and independence (Fukagawa, Wolfson, Judge, Whipple, & King, 1995). A lack of strength is a major cause of falls in people who are frail (Gomes et al., 2013; Landi et al., 2012).

There is evidence to suggest that it is home-based physical-activity interventions for older people that have better long-term results (Ashworth, Chad, Harrison, Reeder, &

Marshall, 2005; Dorner et al., 2013; Opdenacker, Boen, Coorevits, & Delecluse, 2008). This is not only because home-based interventions remove barriers to exercise such as transport, but also open the opportunity for more community focused and leisure based activity (Wendel-Vos, Schuit, Tijhuis, & Kromhout, 2004). With increased access to technology amongst older people, the means to incorporate interaction and feedback from home-based activities is also becoming more viable (Geraedts, Zijlstra, Bulstra, Stevens, & Zijlstra, 2013). The notion that technology can play an important role in enhancing quality of life and independence of older adults is supported by studies suggesting that computer skills and cell phone use within this age group is increasing (Schulz et al., 2014).

The WHO (2015) suggests that a focus on intrinsic capacity should be a central feature of transforming health systems for an increasingly aged population. The second half of life is characterized by heterogeneity in courses of intrinsic capacity. Within any population of older people, many individuals will experience periods of high and stable capacity, declining capacity, and a significant loss of capacity. Each of these three periods requires different responses to be emphasized. Transforming health systems in line with WHO recommendations firstly involves a shift from a clinical focus on disease to intrinsic capacity, secondly rebuilding health systems to provide a more person-centred and integrated care of older people, and lastly transforming the health workforce so that it can better provide the care that is required.

Within conventional care of older people, health care often sees focus placed on health conditions and/or disease with a goal to manage or cure the condition. This does not account for the autonomy of older people which remains poorly recognised and largely undefined (Lindberg, Fagerström, Sivberg, & Willman, 2014; Welford, Murphy, Rodgers, & Frauenlob, 2012; Wiles, Leibing, Guberman, Reeve, & Allen, 2012). Organisations who care for older people are constrained to place physical needs over those relating to autonomy and quality of life (Bonifas, Simons, Biel, & Kramer, 2014; Rodgers, Welford, Murphy, & Frauenlob, 2012). This often sees the older person as a passive recipient of care fragmented across different settings. A more integrated approach to care would

focus on people and their individual goals. It would emphasise maximizing intrinsic capacity with the older person at the centre of care planning and self-management (Murphy & Welford, 2012). Care would be integrated across settings and between health workers and ageing would be considered a normal and valued part of the life course.

An integrated approach to care that focuses on the individual would also be cognisant of emotional and spiritual needs, which theorists tell us is frequently characterised by a period of looking at the purpose and meaning of a life lived (Brown & Lowis, 2003; Clayton, 1975; Erikson & Erikson, 1998; Tornstam, 2005). A further measure of potential significance to health and wellbeing relates to the spiritual status of older people. Christianity was the most commonly reported religion in the 2016 Australian census. Older people were more likely to report an affiliation with a Christian religion than those aged under 65 years (70% and 49% respectively). Older people were also less likely to report a non-Christian religion (3.3% compared to 9.1%) or to have no religion (16% compared to 33%) (AIHW, 2018).

The process of ageing is undoubtedly one of the most difficult periods of life, with many complex challenges on multiple levels (physical, mental, emotional and spiritual). The following poem provides some additional insight to this process and has provided inspiration to this study (Kunitz, 2002). The poem will be discussed in more detail in section 5.2.

The poem *The Layers* by Stanley Kunitz, has been redacted from this thesis due to copyright restrictions. The following link may be used to access this poem.

www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/54897/the-layers

The following section will provide a description of how spiritual awareness and practice has been integrated into health care. This will place particular focus on the Australian context.

2.3 Spirituality within Health Care

“The human being needs a framework of values, a philosophy of life, a religion or religion-surrogate to live by and understand by in about the same sense he needs sunlight, calcium or love”. (Maslow, 1962, p.42)

Throughout this study, the partnering of spirituality and wellbeing has largely been based upon a growing understanding of the importance of recognising spiritual and/or religious belief and needs within healthcare settings. I take this opportunity here to explore available research and literature that describes developments within health care.

Historically, health care and medical treatment largely fell within the domain of religious organisations who provided both the institution and staffing for treatment of illness (Ferngren, 2014, 2017; Koenig, 2012a). It is only in recent times and in developed western nations that a separation of religion and health care has occurred (Koenig, 2012b).

This separation was driven by a more scientific approach to medical treatment and a focus on the biological components of the human body (Sulmasy, 2002). Engel (1977) described the biomedical model as one that is based on molecular biology and sees illness as a deviation from measurable biological (somatic) variables. This model follows a reductionist philosophy that all complex phenomena can be reduced to a single primary principle and a body-mind dualism that sees the function of the body as quite separate to that of the mind. The (bio)medical model of health care has led to many significant advances in treatment therapy, but also has significant limitations (Engel, 1977).

While acknowledging the strength and value of the medical model of health, Engel (1977) proposed the biopsychosocial model of health. This would enable recognition of the psychological and social determinants of health which he saw as of equal importance in the care of patients. This model together with the public health or ecological model of health were proposed as alternatives to the medical model (Green, Richard, & Potvin,

1996). Yet the biopsychosocial and public health models of health have both had limited acceptance within mainstream medicine (Sulmasy, 2002). Our health care systems are inadequate in addressing a significant array of needs resulting from the condition of being a person. The biopsychosocial-spiritual model of health was proposed to provide a foundation for treating a person holistically, seeing a person as a being in relationship (Sulmasy, 2002). A human person bears relationships with biological, psychological, social and transcendent dimensions. The experience of illness disrupts each of these dimensions simultaneously.

Studies exploring how spirituality and/or religion relates to health and wellbeing are complex. It is often not possible to predict how specific events will impact religious and non-religious people. Little is known about the antecedents of spiritual crisis (Neimeyer & Burke, 2011). Yet a poor sense of a kind and just world has been coupled with poor psychological and physical outcomes (Currier, Holland, & Neimeyer, 2006; Janoff-Bulman & Berger, 2000). So too, inability to find meaning or cope with a sense of loss is clearly linked to prolonged distress (Coleman & Neimeyer, 2010). Similarly, the impact of a person's religious and/or spiritual beliefs on health is multifaceted and difficult to clearly delineate. According to Bussing, Baumann, Hvidt, Koenig, Puchalski and Swinton (2014), this is because it includes cognitive approaches, emotions, practices, specific behaviours, reactive strategies to deal with illness and spiritual/religion-based interventions. Within aged care settings, there is limited knowledge about psychosocial and spiritual needs of elderly people living in residential/nursing homes (Erichsen & Büssing, 2013).

Religious and/or spiritual beliefs and practices are commonly used by both medical and psychiatric patients to cope with illness and other stressful life changes (Koenig, 2012a). There is a growing body of research indicating that those with religious and/or spiritual belief experience better mental health and can adapt more quickly to health problems compared to those who don't (Frankl, 1963, 1985; Koenig, 2012a; Lichtenthal, Burke, & Neimeyer, 2011; O'Neill & Kenny, 1998; Rumbold, 2012). Furthermore, Koenig (2012a) points out, the benefits of such beliefs to both mental health and wellbeing, have

physiological consequences. These, in turn, impact physical health, affect the risk of disease and influence responsiveness to treatment.

The effect of spirituality on health was described by Puchalski (2001) in three key ways: mortality, coping and recovery. Those with spiritual beliefs, commitments and practices, generally benefited with living longer lives, coping better with illness, pain and life stresses and recovering better from illness and surgery (Puchalski, 2001, 2012). Monod, Rochat, Bula and Spencer (2010) point out that while spirituality has been associated with better health outcomes, it has also been linked to deleterious effects on health (Astrow, Wexler, Texeira, He, & Sulmasy, 2007; Pargament, Koenig, Tarakeshwar, & Hahn, 2001). This can be recognised as religious struggle and the experience of negative feelings towards God due to, for example, a belief that God is punishing and/or that the devil influences the experience of ill health. Yet they also acknowledge that every person has a spirituality, regardless of cultural or religious background and whether or not they consider themselves religious/spiritual (Monod, Rochat, Bula, & Spencer, 2010).

The integration of spirituality with medicine continues to be vigorously debated. The involvement of health professionals in spiritual care has been identified as challenging for three main reasons. Firstly, having time for deep discussions of such a personal nature. Secondly, being able to manage spiritual distress particularly if those with expertise in this area are unavailable. Thirdly, ethical concerns for potential harm where clinicians may be inclined to proselytize (or preach) (Balboni, Puchalski, & Peteet, 2014; Monod et al., 2010).

Models proposed to enable the integration of spirituality into health care are varied and the best approach is largely dependent on individuals, circumstance and time frame. In particular this may relate to time and setting constraints within a busy clinical setting, training of individual clinicians, ethical concerns and concerns for patient harm.

Balbone, Puchalski and Peteet (2014) describe three different models: Whole Person Generalist Model that emphasises team work amongst medical and spiritual professionals; Existential Function Model that identifies a clear role for the clinician in

promoting spiritual wellbeing; Open Pluralism Model that highlights how differing spiritual and cultural traditions can shape the relationship between patient and clinician. While each model varies in emphasis they do share common ground: namely, an understanding of the need to define spirituality broadly so that it is inclusive of all perspectives including religious, non-religious, secular, spiritual and cultural. They each recognise the importance of ethical professional boundaries to protect potentially vulnerable patients from undue influence by religious or non-religious clinicians. Similarly, they recognise the need to ensure that clinicians receive training in spiritual care and can work with spiritual care professionals in the care of the whole person (Balbone, Puchalski & Peteet, 2014). The danger of creating a medical model of spirituality, of course, is the possibility that it may lead to a perceived medicalisation of spirituality. Medicalisation according to Illich (1975) reinforces dependence on professional (medical) intervention and tends to impoverish other non-medical support structures as well as the psychological coping ability of ordinary people.

For older people experiencing the health care system within a residential/nursing environment the need for addressing spiritual needs is arguably more pronounced. In the face of possible frailty, disability and dementia, a search for meaning, connectedness and hope is increasingly important (MacKinlay & Trevitt, 2007). Erichson and Bussing (2013) raise the possibility that specific psychosocial and spiritual needs of elderly living in residential and nursing homes were largely unrecognised and therefore unmet. Like Rumbold (2007), Erichson & Bussing (2013) further suggest that this is because health care focuses on decreasing functional capacity rather than an individual's perception of health and self-esteem. A focus on personal factors appears to be of greatest importance, but just how this might best occur is unclear. The study reiterated that residents were largely uninterested in consulting priests and chaplains. A strong interest and perceived benefit of sharing stories was identified. This was further supported in studies conducted by Mastel-Smith, McFarlane, Sierpina, Malecha & Haile (2007) and Chippendale & Bear-Lehman (2012) which both found a reduction in levels of depression following life review practices, such as those inherent in life story writing.

A further study conducted by Erichsen & Bussing (2013), determined spiritual need was best predicted by individual levels of religious trust and mood states, particularly tiredness. Higher needs were expressed for giving, generativity and connection with those that would remember them. Conversely, needs for religious and existential attention were low. Other studies reveal conflicting results. Shea (1986) found a need to address feelings of uselessness, loss of dignity and thoughts of dying before what were identified as higher order spiritual needs. Ross (1997) found elderly patients stated needs clearly related to religion, meaning, love and belonging, morality, death and dying. For many, these issues of spirituality seem more urgent when faced by a situational or developmental crisis. For older people this may include coming to terms with a terminal illness or increasing awareness of their own mortality (MacKinlay & Trevitt, 2007).

Within aged care, Rumbold (2006) describes an environment that is frequently unsympathetic to spiritual belief and practice. This is because such a setting predominantly focuses on professionally assessed physical needs and associated costs of required services (Rumbold, 2006). Assessment of spiritual needs within health care settings further involves making assumptions about the relationship between health and spirituality. Those assumptions are often not made explicit but suggest the incompatibility of existing health and spirituality frameworks. Merging one with the other must also be interpreted through the model of health being applied; either biomedical, psychosocial or social (Rumbold, 2007). Related to this Cohen (2000) emphasizes the positive aspects of ageing including that intellectual capacity does not diminish with age in the same way that the physical capacity of the body does. This, together with reduced lateralisation of brain activity is what underlines Cohen's (2009) belief in new and unique opportunities for intellectual growth and creativity in the later period of life.

On the other hand, an increasing incidence of depression has been linked to a transition to institutionalised aged care. Within many aged care settings, depression is often seen

(by aged care staff) as a normal response to the circumstances in which older people find themselves and in some instances, depression goes untreated (and in others older people themselves are unaware that they are being treated for depression) (Davison, McCabe, Mellor, Karantzas, & George, 2009). When numbers of residents recognised to suffer major depression are coupled with those suffering less severe, yet significant depressive symptomatology, it can be seen that almost half (44%) suffer with depression (Teresi, Abrams, Holmes, Ramirez & Eimicke, 2001).

A propensity toward depression was identified by Erikson, Erikson & Kivnick (1989) in the eighth stage of psychological development titled 'integrity versus despair' where despair may result if meaning is not found in a reconciliation of previous stages. Similarly, Blazer (2006) identified depression as being closely correlated with the core spiritual task of finding meaning in life (Blazer, 2006). Furthermore depressive symptoms (of those moving into later life) may limit activities of daily living and create greater risk of losing functional ability (Covinsky et al., 2010). Blazer (2010b) did, however outline several strengths that older people may bring to the challenge of ageing and likelihood of depression, such as wisdom. Achievement of wisdom may allow transcendence of personal interest and a mastering of one's own finitude (Blazer, 2010a).

Identifying depression in older people is frequently complicated by high co-morbid rates of dementia, medical illness and declines in physical, social and cognitive functioning (Davison et al., 2009). Visiting medical professionals, with limited time for consultation, may rely on aged care staff to assist in detecting depression, who may or may not have the required skill to do so (Koenig, 2007). It is often also the case that aged care staff have limited time to spend with residents (Tuckett, 2007). Yet spiritual care initiated to assist with depression must include an understanding of an individual's spiritual history and personal story (MacKinlay, 2012). In studies conducted by Blazer (2010a), the most consistent positive association between religion/spirituality and depression related to religious activity, specifically, attendance at religious services.

A guiding concept in the assessment of spiritual needs of older people is evident in identifying those practices that connect belief and action. These are inferred by key events in a person's life. Rumbold (2007) describes a process of collating observations and producing a map of significant connections that hold a person's sense of self, community and purpose. This may be obtained by asking questions such as: "Who am I?", "Who are We?" and "Why are We?". This map may show connection and/or fracture related to life events. Identification of spiritual distress is perhaps a more direct means of addressing the spiritual needs of the elderly in clinical settings. The notion that spiritual distress results from unmet spiritual needs is consistent with a bio-psycho-social needs assessment and appears the most promising way to integrate spirituality into health care established by an interdisciplinary team and institutional policy (Monod et al., 2010). Identification of spiritual distress, does however, depend upon an individual capacity to assess the spiritual state of an individual and this has been noted by Monod et al. (2010) as dynamic: fluctuating according to a hypothesised spectrum of spiritual wellness.

It is here that the concept of faith may best be mentioned. It may be the capacity of each of us to believe without definitive proof of the existence of a higher authority. For many older people now, just as in Graeco-Roman times, faith is seen as the glue that cements a wide variety of personal human relationships together (McKaughan, 2017). There are many different kinds of faith. Faith may be described as religious, non-religious, interpersonal and propositional (Rettler, 2018). Faith is a central component of many religious traditions and is a term widely used outside of religious context.

Faith forms an important part of the stories which distinguish us as individuals. Klink (1965) described the achievement of faith as a process, embedded in a specific personal history, but subject to the stress of anxiety, should it be threatened. It does not unfold with inexorable logic from a pre-determined model or programme because of its innate qualities of autonomy and creativity (Klink, 1965). The concept of faith has been interpreted in many starkly different ways throughout history. Rice, McKaughan and Howard-Snyder (2017) identify great variation in general understandings of faith.

Ranging from being the “root of all evil” to the more recent work of McKaughan (2017) describing faith as something without which no society could flourish (Rice et al., 2017). From this perspective, faith can be considered a combination of trust and commitment. Its value may be recognised in the stability, security and resilience that individuals draw from their relationship with broader society (Rice, et al., 2017).

Faith is frequently related to individual beliefs. Cobb (2012) points out that beliefs (general, religious or spiritual) are part of everyday life and as such may easily go unnoticed such as beliefs about what keeps us healthy, causes illness and brings about healing. Increased academic interest in the nature of belief comes from their likely influence on cognitive processes and states which, in turn, influence emotional and inferential roles that help guide and explain behaviours (Cobb, 2012). The Health Belief Model first proposed by Rosenstock (1974) and colleagues has been highly influential within the discipline of public health. It conceived a basic equation based on individual belief to determine the likelihood of taking action. This comprised perceived susceptibility plus perceived seriousness and benefits, minus perceived barriers to taking action. Other influencing factors were considered to be cues to action which included mass media campaigns, advice from others, reminders from health professionals, illness of family members and content within newspaper/magazines (Janz & Becker, 1984). Nevertheless, Cobb (2012) points out that regardless of pharmacological agents or clinical interventions, convictions established due to personal experiences and individual faith in that which gives meaning and purpose to individual lives are ultimately what determines a responsiveness to health care.

Personal stories are often filled with rituals and symbols that are meaningful (MacKinlay, 2012). Often that meaning is hard to put into words and yet through ritual and symbol a connection between an older person and their loved ones is possible. MacKinlay (2012) points to the powerful nature of symbols in nature because of their capacity to convey cycles of life and death, peace and hope. Increasing separation between spirituality and formalised religion has lessened opportunities for spiritual expression and practice. This is particularly the case for older members of our community for whom the later stages

of life are typically those where reflection on the meaning and purpose of life require great spiritual attention (Dalby, 2006; MacKinlay, 2006).

A spiritual deficit has been identified within Australian culture (Frame, 2009; Lindsay, 2000). Within a society where expression of needs and values is characteristically understated, this perception may tell us more about accepted opportunities for expression than intent (Bouma, 2006). Nonetheless, the impact on health and wellbeing of limited means of spiritual expression is not well understood, particularly for older people (Koenig, 2007).

Cultural heritage informs common understanding of those elements of the physical, social and emotional environments that are sacred. Euro-Australian heritage is relatively short. Within the Australian context, colonial/convict beginnings have engendered a cultural heritage that is frequently characterised by stoicism, self-chastisement and the merit of the 'underdog' (or less advantaged) (Tacey, 2009). Tacey (2009) identifies a fracturing in the psyche of our colonial forebears which can be viewed from two distinct perspectives. From a positive perspective this has engendered a down-to-earth, robust and enterprising nature, but from a negative perspective it has led to a society subjugated by instinct, materialism and a crudeness that is insensitive to spiritual values. A colonial beginning also appears to be generative of a type of mass-mindedness that admonishes self promotion and values 'mateship' or team orientation (Tacey, 2009).

Within this context, discussion and expression of spirituality has not been commonly favoured. Recognition of the sacred has largely been limited to those elements of formalised religion and practice sanctified by the church environment (Tacey, 2009). From a scientific (or medical) perspective a causal link between limited spiritual expression and health and wellbeing is difficult to establish, but from a philosophical point of view, a paucity of spiritual and religious awareness limits our understanding of the cultural heritage which has shaped the Australian identity (Holloway & Valins, 2002). The foundations of contemporary culture appear to be inherently connected to religious belief and practice.

French philosopher, Michel Foucault (1976), believed that a culture could not hope to understand itself without acknowledging this link (Carrette, 2000). Foucault recognised the impact of secularisation on both culture and religion. Where a culture does not allow the assimilation of religious (or mystical) beliefs in the present context of experience, there is an inherent risk that religion may be the object of delusional belief (Foucault, 1976). It is possible that a diminished trust in the authority of religious institutions has contributed to reduced cultural value being attributed to the traditionally recognised sacred, but so too does a limited understanding of the heritage of which we are part (Carrette, 2000). A rising interest in spirituality (within the Australian context) may lead to a need to re-configure the way spiritual and religious practices are perceived and enacted (Tacey, 2006). Through a (culturally) youthful Australian filter, acceptance of a western society increasingly dominated by reason, logic and science appears absolute, and a clear sense that spiritual connection is not necessary to establish a successful and productive life appears to have emerged (Tacey, 2004). By standard forms of measure, formalised religion is experiencing significant decline in Australia, and yet there is an evident rise in interest in spirituality amongst a range of age groups (ABS, 2013; Peach, 2003; Tacey, 2004; Williams & Sternthal, 2007). Growing secularisation (or rejection of religion) has been coupled with rapid change in commonly accepted values and definitions attributed to both religion and spirituality (Ammerman, 2007).

From a public health perspective many of the attributes that contribute to a spiritual deficit, have clear resonance with the social determinants of health. An understanding of this relationship is hampered by the difficulty of defining and understanding spirituality (Walent, 2008). Many older people (particularly those born before 1935) do not readily identify with the term spirituality and clarification of the difference between spirituality and religion is particularly important (Nolan & Mills, 2011; Simmons, 2005). The manner in which it is defined and discussed is variable and, in many respects influenced by contemporary culture (Chen & Koenig, 2006).

Addressing the spiritual needs of those experiencing ill-health within the health care system, generally, and the elderly, specifically, is complex. Within the next section I will provide a more broadly-based discussion of wellbeing and the various concepts that have been developed. Definitions of wellbeing are subject to variation and have been variously described as quality of life, flourishing, optimal development and achievement of flow. Discussion will then move to consideration of spiritual/religious needs in the places where older people live and conduct daily activities. Merging belief with action and the importance of identifying activities compatible with expression of belief will then be discussed along with recognising the importance of a life story and identifying alternate rituals and symbols as part of spiritual expression.

2.4 Concepts of Wellbeing

“All human actions have one or more of these seven causes: chance, nature, compulsion, habit, reason, passion, and desire”. *Aristotle (384 BC–322 BC) cited in (MacDermid & Graham, 2009, p.127)*

The concepts of wellbeing and spirituality are multifaceted. They draw many parallels both in the difficulty of concisely defining them and the degree to which they have been subject to change (Dodge, Daly, Huyton, & Sanders, 2012; Forgeard, Jayawickreme, Kern, & Seligman, 2011). Both concepts are somewhat intangible and dependent upon the perception and consciousness to which they are applied. This section will explore the literature of wellbeing and how this has been conceptualised in a variety of academic disciplines. With each perspective it is clear that our perception and (un)conscious thoughts and actions impact the experience of wellbeing and ill-health. Given the focus of this study on older people, I am also particularly interested in referring to generational and historical experience of such concepts. I refer to Naydler (2009, p184) in the belief that ‘the way we perceive, and grasp hold of meaning in history bears directly on the way in which we poise ourselves for the future’.

Traditionally the construct of wellbeing has been drawn from two general perspectives: the eudaimonic approach which focuses on meaning and self-realisation and defines wellbeing in terms of the degree to which a person is fully functioning (Ryff, 1989; Waterman, 1993) and the hedonic approach, which focuses on happiness and defines well-being in terms of pleasure attainment, pain avoidance and happiness (Bradburn, 1969; Kahneman, Diener, & Schwarz, 1999; Lyubomirsky & Lepper, 1999). Both perspectives have given rise to research focusing on different aspects of wellbeing which in some instances are divergent and in others, complementary (Ryan & Deci, 2001). In more recent research, three aspects of subjective wellbeing have been distinguished. This includes: hedonic wellbeing (feelings of happiness, sadness, anger, stress, and pain); eudemonic wellbeing (sense of purpose and meaning in life); and evaluative wellbeing (or life satisfaction) (Steptoe et al., 2015).

Another important aspect of this understanding that has perhaps not remained in focus is that of the term daimon, or guardian spirit. Eudaimonia was the ancient Greek word for happiness, where the *eu* represented good and together therefore represented 'good spirit'. To be happy in life, meant keeping favour with the gods, or spirits (Naydler, 2009). At this time, happiness was dependent on the good will of the gods and was something that people had limited control over.

This time coincided with a diminishing impact of the gods on the lives of ancient Greeks. For Plato, the daimon remained the key to human happiness, but instead came to consider that the wise person is one who cherishes that which is divine in him or herself. In doing so they may attain happiness but employ some measure of control. Aristotle similarly believed that living in accordance with the inner daimon was the key to happiness. For Aristotle eudaimonia (or happiness) was the activity of contemplative thinking. This was activity that involved the divine element within ourselves (Naydler, 2009).

Aristotle further developed this understanding by focusing on the impact of 'right judgement'. Referring to the inner daimon for guidance could be conceived as what we have come to consider conscience. The unpredictability of conscience has, through following generations, made this reliance questionable. With the guise of wise judgement being transferred from the gods to our inner conscience, the question of moral autonomy comes to the fore. Moral autonomy is complex and open to a great deal of interpretation (Naydler, 2009). Morality, itself is perhaps best considered as a social construct. As such, it is also guided by what society configures as happiness and is far removed from an individual search for happiness. Naydler (2009) reminds us, however, that the divinatory consciousness of the past arose out of a religious attitude toward both nature and the inner life of the soul. Our capacity to access the divine element within ourselves has, in turn, become all the poorer because it no longer draws close association with nature.

Religious institutions have attained and maintained great control over moral reasoning and sensibility (Koenig, King, & Carson, 2012). In most instances their focus was not aligned with wellbeing, but rather guiding what was considered as 'right judgement' (Koenig et al., 2012). The wellbeing of the individual was seen to be taken care of by the act of religiously guided right judgement. Within the last 50 years, institutionalised religion, with its focus on societal expectations, has given rise to a growing need for alternative spiritual outlets and growth in the use of the term spirituality. Yet it can be seen that the way we understand, define and discuss spirituality is complex and closely linked to the culture of which we are part (Eisenhandler, 2005; Rumbold, 2006).

The concept of wellbeing was moved forward by the work of Bradburn (1969) with clearer attention focused on the psychological reactions of ordinary people during the course of their everyday lives (Dodge et al., 2012). With reference to Aristotle's notion of eudaimonia, Blackburn (1969) identified psychological wellbeing as a balance of positive and negative affect.

In early research, wellbeing was described by Ryff (1989) to be constituted of: autonomy, environmental mastery, positive relationships with others, purpose in life, realisation of potential and self-acceptance. Other terminology has focused on 'quality of life'. This was adopted by the World Health Organisation in 1997 when quality of life (QoL) was defined as:

"An individual's perception of their position in life in the context of the culture and value systems in which they live and in relation to their goals, expectations, standards and concerns". This they believe was affected by the persons physical health, psychological state, personal beliefs, social relationships and their relationship to salient features of their environment (WHOQOL, 1995, p.1405).

Generic assessments of QoL have not traditionally addressed aspects related to religion, spirituality or existential well-being (WHOQOL, 2002; WHOQOL SRPB Group, 2006). The QoL assessment tool includes both a long and short version consisting of four domains: physical, psychological, social and environment (Skevington, Lofty, O'Connell &

WHOQOL Group, 2004). The WHOQOL SRPB Group was established to consider a new domain focusing specifically on spirituality, religion and personal beliefs (WHOQoL SRPB Group, 2006). Specifically, the new domain was intended to establish an accurate and comprehensive cross-cultural assessment of spiritual QoL. This could be used to assess a range of different religions and diverse spiritual beliefs and is also provided in both long and short form (Skevington, Gunson & O'Connell, 2013). In the development of such tools, however, Moreira-Almeida and Koenig (2006) point to a risk of being too broad when defining terms such as spirituality and religiousness. Several instruments including the WHOQOL SRPB consider concepts such as psychological well-being, mental health, meaning and purpose in life. While such concepts are clearly related to the experience of spirituality and religiousness, they also have very precise definitions within the disciplines from which they have evolved and may therefore confuse any findings where mental health is the outcome (Moreira-Almeida and Koenig, 2006).

Dodge et al. (2012), however see quality of life as a dimension of wellbeing, rather than a comprehensive definition. The term 'quality of life' has become interchangeable with the term wellbeing. This is problematic according to Dodge et al. (2012) because it relies on subjective measures of wellbeing and is not necessarily reflective of the wider population. Other words that have been introduced in consideration of wellbeing include 'flourishing' and 'languishing' (Forgeard et al., 2011; Seligman, 2010). The elements of flourishing were described within the acronym PERMA: positive emotion, engagement, relationships, meanings and accomplishments. Like the term flourishing, quality of life appears to be just one dimension of wellbeing rather than being comprehensive (Dodge et al., 2012). It is perhaps those instruments that focus on spiritual distress (or disenchantment with God and/or religion) that reduce the problem of scope (Monod et al., 2010).

Within the field of positive psychology, optimal experience and optimal development have been described within the concept of 'flow' (Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi, 2002). The concept focuses on activity and the premise that "a good life is one that is characterized by complete absorption in what one does" (Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi,

2002, p89). Flow describes the phenomenon of intrinsic motivation and how those with an autotelic (auto meaning self and telic meaning goal) personality find reward in the activity itself rather than the end result. In a study conducted by McHugh (2016), the concept of flow was linked to subjective wellbeing and to better physical and psychological health for older people. This was achieved through engagement in creative and meaningful activity. The study found that autonomy in choice of activity and allowance for mastery through matching skills to task, were particularly important in gaining intrinsic motivation. Absorption in creative activity in this way enhanced self-reflection and resulted in an integration of mind body spirit connections (McHugh, 2016).

Subjective wellbeing and health are closely linked to age. Three aspects of subjective wellbeing can be distinguished— evaluative wellbeing (or life satisfaction), hedonic wellbeing (feelings of happiness, sadness, anger, stress, and pain), and eudemonic wellbeing (sense of purpose and meaning in life).

A definition of wellbeing proposed by Dodge et al. (2012) has provided guidance to this work. It brings together three theoretical perspectives of wellbeing that reflect their complexity yet allow simple representation that has wide ranging application. This includes; dynamic equilibrium theory described by Headey and Wearing (1989); the effect of life challenges on homeostasis (Cummins, 2010); and lifespan model of development (Hendry & Kloep, 2002). This has been pictorially represented in Figure 1 (Dodge et al., 2012, p.230).

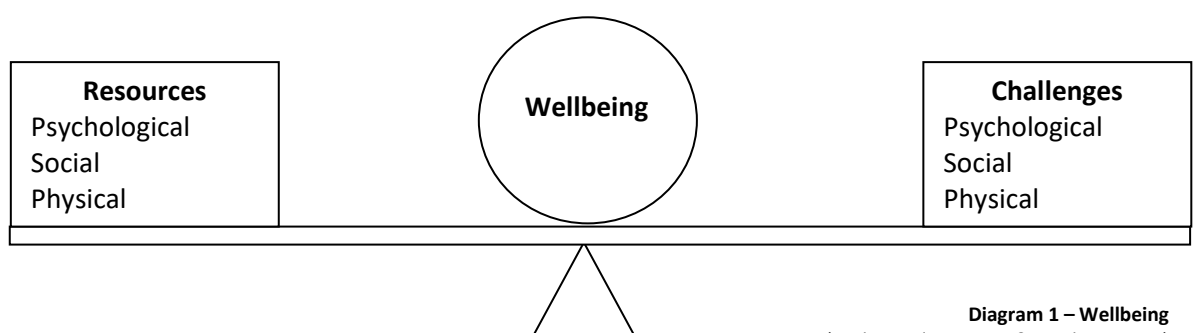


Diagram 1 – Wellbeing
(Dodge, Daly, Huyton & Sanders, p.230)

The see-saw represents the fluctuating state between challenges and resources and the drive of the individual to return to a state of balance such that the resources available match the challenges to be met. This perspective was similarly described by Kubzansky and Kawachi (2000) in stating that stress or negative emotion is experienced when external demands are perceived to exceed an individual's ability to cope. Wellbeing is therefore a dynamic process which can be applied at any point throughout the lifespan.

Recognising wellbeing as a dynamic state of balance is consistent with a phenomenological perspective that acknowledges a distinction between a conscious (or cognitive) knowledge of the world and a knowledge of the world gained through the actions of the body or embodied knowing of the world. To this I would seek to include a third dimension; that of spiritual knowing or awareness of the world around us and our place within it. It is the premise of this study that a true sense of wellbeing rests in a need to balance the actions of mind, body and spirit. The concept of balance is no longer embedded in existing cultural constructs, if indeed it ever was, and there is an abiding preference given to the cognitive processes of the mind. The impact of this preference is beginning to be recognised for its detrimental effect on wellbeing, particularly in relation to mental health. There is an increasing need to acknowledge the presence of spirit and spiritual needs.

Within a developing cultural identity, Holloway (2003) suggests spiritual awareness and expression might best be met with an emphasis on spiritual practice that is non-denominational and accepting of both Christian and non-Christian traditions leading to a possible re-enchantment of the everyday and the ordinary. Niven (2008) suggests that there is a greater willingness of pastoral carers to move beyond the traditional, pre-constructed religious rituals (while still valueing them) and adjust the style, content, form and metaphors of any particular ritual to meet the needs, culture, context and wishes of an individual or family. Holloway (2003) points to a duality between the sacred and profane and describes how the considered (corporeal) actions of the body allow for a sensing of the sacred, hence enabling spiritual practice to be located both in and of the everyday.

Re-enchantment of the everyday and the ordinary was similarly considered in relation to garden practices and the everyday act of 'doing' (Bhatti, Church, Claremont, & Stenner, 2009). The ordinary domestic garden provides a creative place inhabited by people and nature. Such a setting can be a place full of mystery. Simple pleasures can have profound meanings where ecology, emotion, body and memory combine (Bhatti et al., 2009). Drawing on the phenomenological perspective of Bachelard (1971, 1994), Bhatti et al. (2009, p.73) further relay 'a poetics of the garden in which enchanting encounters reverberate in time, place and memory'. Enchantment in this context would appear to be an apt precursor to spiritual awareness and expression.

Spiritual awareness and spiritual expression might best be understood by considering the nature of spiritual experience. Atchley (2009, p.6) saw spirituality as rooted in the purest experience of existence, "the 'I am' without words, just awareness". Spirituality in its purest form is an inner subjective experience. It is a non-verbal experience akin to mindfulness and present-moment awareness described within some recognised religions and cultural practices. But spiritual experience need not be related to religious practice or notions of a higher power, it may be a solitary practice. Invariably it is a balance of 'being' and 'doing'. Atchley (2009) describes the importance of bringing 'being' back into consciousness because it provides a healthy distance from social roles and introduces an element of creativity and spontaneity to one's lived experience.

Similarly, Underwood (2006) distinguished between everyday spiritual experiences and those inclusive of recognised beliefs and practices. In a measure designed to capture everyday spiritual experiences, she focused on feelings and sensations evoked, rather than cognitive awareness of specific beliefs. This included feelings such as a sense of awe, a sense of thankfulness, feelings of compassionate love, mercy, and desire for divine closeness (Underwood, 2006). Atchley (2009) names related qualities such as deep inner silence, mental clarity, insight, compassion, connection, transcendence, wonder, inexpressibility, mystery, paradox, immateriality, motivation and transformation explored through avenues that might be physical, sensory,

consciousness/awareness, thought, relational, intuitive/mystical and/or unitive. A common element of spirituality is seeing the spiritual in experience, a sense of connectedness, that is either transcendent, or immanent. It is a quality that can infuse experience in a wide variety of settings.

Tacey (2011) suggests that limited opportunity for spiritual awareness and expression leads to the experience of ill-health. Within the Australian context, studies exploring the impact of spirituality on health have tended to focus on religious participation/attendance, for which positive association has been consistently found (Blazer, 2006; Peach, 2003; Williams & Sternthal, 2007). This is particularly relevant in consideration of mental health where evidence exists to suggest a potential benefit to a range of conditions, most notably depression (Fleming, 2003; Koenig, 2009; Ottosson & Grahn, 2005, 2006; Puchalski, Blatt, Kogan, & Butler, 2014; Swinton, 2001).

In acknowledging the unique character of the Australian context, it is possible to more faithfully account for how our heritage may shape our future. Research seeking to deepen understanding of spiritual practice must be cognisant of the Australian context and furthermore, the setting in which interaction occurs. For older people this may be a long term domestic setting (home), community setting (such as a retirement village) or institutional (aged) care.

For those older people who can live independently, it is arguably the capacity to remain self-reliant and select appropriate activities regardless of perceived risk that provide reason to avoid institutionalised care. For many, the manner in which aged care services are provided, has been linked to reduced self-esteem and loss of purpose in life (Rumbold, 2006). Where older people have been involved in planning care that maintains self-determination and allows continuity in life, however, it has been demonstrated that high levels of dependence can be combined with high levels of experienced independence (Secker, Hill, Villeneuve, & Parkman, 2003).

A term synonymous with ageing and levels of activity is that of successful ageing. Successful Ageing was first identified by Rowe and Kahn in 1997 and was typified by an individual's ability to remain active, engaged and appropriately networked from a social perspective (Rowe & Kahn, 1997). Bowling and Dieppe (2005) describe Rowe and Kahn's model as the most widely used approach, but point to a failure to acknowledge that many older people will inevitably experience disease. Katz and Calasanti (2014) discuss the problem of viewing levels of activity as universally beneficial. This is problematic for two reasons. Firstly because of culturally configured identifications of the ageing body and its inevitable decline which characterises older people from a negative perspective despite attempting vigorously to defend the need to remain active (Katz & Calasanti, 2014). Secondly, the risk of activity and falls means that older people may not see being active as their highest priority as they carefully consider how the physical changes in their ageing bodies also changes their experience of the world (Katz, 2011). This Katz describes as biographical work the results of which are to be found in the everyday narratives of older people. We cannot escape, however, the strength of culturally defined images associated with the body and its relationship to ageing.

The concept of Healthy Ageing extended the notion of Successful Ageing. While the two terms are often used interchangeably, Hansen-Kyle (2005, p.52) propose a definition of Healthy Ageing as "the process of slowing down, physically and cognitively, while resiliently adapting and compensating in order to optimally function and participate in all areas of one's life (physical, cognitive, social and spiritual)". Healthy Ageing is identified as an antecedent for Successful Ageing, which is characterised by a more goal driven process. That goal has been variously described as that of sustained personal autonomy (Ford et al., 2000). Maintaining autonomy was identified as the most important success of ageing (Hansen-Kyle, 2005). Rowe and Kahn's (1997) concept of Successful Ageing was also later extended to include Positive Spirituality (Crowther, Parker, Achenbaum, Larimore, & Koenig, 2002).

The complexities of ageing are particularly apparent when the relationship between the ageing body and the home and garden become disturbed (Hockey & James, 2003). As

we move from the so called Third Age (characterised by independence and a full and active life) to the Fourth Age (where relative dependency and the onset of chronic conditions are apparent), it is the garden which so often provides a powerful indicator of such a change (Bhatti, 2006). When an older person makes a transition to institutionalised care, the loss of the garden (or an inability to garden), can be a form of bereavement leading to low morale and depression (Bhatti, 2006).

Consideration for the everyday use of domestic and community spaces inhabited by older people provides a link to understanding how daily routines in later life are managed and prioritised (Percival, 2002). The garden carries great significance in the ongoing process of home-making, but how this impacts on those transitioning to institutional care is not well understood (Bhatti, 2006).

It follows, therefore, that for older people transitioning into aged care institutions, continued activity, or embodied practice, in a garden (either in a solitary or social manner) would represent a fundamental component of re-making home and renewing spiritual connection in a new location. In this sense, embodied practice or embodiment is not limited to physical activity but is broadened to consider the experiencing body and how this might contrast with the perceptions of the mind. Embodied practice opens the opportunity to experience the world in a different way. With the exception of some more recent religious groups and Churches (Connell, 2005; Goh, 2008), embodied practices within prominent forms of religious expression have diminished in prominence during the last century. This has resulted in spiritual expression that is often purely cognitive and unemotional (McGuire, 2007). Different types of embodied practice reflect and reproduce different kinds of spiritual experiences and yet in each practice, participation of the body is integral to the practice. This may include interior practices such as contemplation, or exterior practices involving the bodily senses, postures, gestures and movements (McGuire, 2007).

The terms Embodiment and Embodied practice have been variously used by academic scholars. Within this study the meaning of embodied practices draws on that identified

by McGuire (2007) to include activities accomplished by the body that draw spiritual meaning and understanding. Marshall and Katz (2012) consider the concept of the embodied life course and the temporal aspects of bodily life as a means to explore the ways in which biological, biographical and socio-historical time intersects. From this perspective the ageing body is situated within a debate surrounding feminism, post-feminism, the sociology of the body, positive and negative images of ageing, and anti-ageing and anti-ageist cultures and industries (Marshall & Katz, 2012). While this has considered interest to this study, discussion surrounding embodied practices for the purposes of this work focuses on the way we live and experience the world through our bodies. This relates specifically to our perception, emotion and movement in space and time and draws on a phenomenological perspective. The concept of Embodiment is similarly complex and its meaning changes depending on the particular discipline within which it is used. Within the fields of psychology and philosophy the term continues to be debated, particularly in consideration of the mind/body split (Finnegan, 2005).

McGuire (2007, p.197) acknowledged that when gardening is carried out as an embodied religious or spiritual practice it may 'engage the senses, evoke memories and imagination, and reflect a deep connection with the natural environment'. The integration of mind, body and spirit can produce an experiential awareness of religious presence or spiritual truth. Ferrer (2008) explored how a more embodied spiritual life can emerge through participatory engagement acknowledging both the energy of consciousness and the actions of the body. Embodied practice provides a means to link materiality with spirituality in the creation of a 'lived' religion. This possibility is particularly important for older people because it also allows practice to share and enact the stories out of which we live (McGuire, 2007). Ferrer (2008) further describes how an emerging embodied spirituality in Western or 'first world' countries can be seen as an attempt to seek creative transformation of the embodied person and the world - embracing both transcendent and immanent spiritual energies.

Embodied practice applied in a research context must acknowledge the relationship between practice and language (embodying and languaging), particularly those practices

for which bodily depth is more than words can say. For meaningful knowing to occur, Todres (2007) refers to the work of Gendlin (1997) in describing the close relationship between bodily knowing and language: 'these components of knowing cannot be reduced to one another and are both required in the rhythm of closeness and distance'. In this context, closeness refers to 'bodily-participative-knowing', while distance refers to the 'language-formulating process'. Todres (2007) points out that knowledge cannot be reasoned and given language, without first being felt and responded to, by the body.

Philosopher and leading phenomenologist, Merleau-Ponty similarly confers the idea that human understanding comes from our bodily experience of the world that we perceive (Merleau-Ponty, Davis, & Baldwin, 2004). Merleau-Ponty believed there was a need to rediscover the perceived world with the help of modern art and philosophy in order to overcome a modern tendency to discount the value of the senses and bodily experience (Merleau-Ponty, 1962). This concurs with the thoughts of Naydler (2012) who saw a need to place greater importance on the sensory world. Because it is through re-sensitising ourselves to our surroundings that we may creatively engage with the more hidden and inward dimensions of nature. Allowing the divine back into our daily lives therefore appears to call us to balance the actions of body, mind and spirit such that we may open a window to spirit. It is perhaps, as Tornstam (2005) suggested, that activities of a solitary and informal nature carried out on an everyday basis within a domestic or home environment, that best allow this to occur.

An understanding that the world appears to us in three different ways was also considered by Goethe. These were identified by the terms body, soul and spirit. Goethe saw these three domains as distinctly separate in human life and that we are constantly linking ourselves to the world in this threefold way (Naydler, 1996). For Goethe, the body indicated the way by which things in our environment reveal themselves to us, through our senses. The soul referred to how we link these things to our personal experience, through feelings such as joy and sorrow (Goethe, 2009). The spirit refers to the notion that each of us contain spirit of which we become aware when the spirit within is linked with the spirit beyond ourselves. Faculties such as feeling, imagination

and intuition relate to the spiritual dimension that underlies the physical. At the heart of Goethe's practice of science, which must be practiced meticulously, is arousal of the feeling of wonder through contemplative looking (Naydler, 1996). To this end, Goethe believed that to understand the three ways of being in the world we must employ three different modes of observation. The experience of contemplative looking does not depend on vast amounts of knowledge or scientific rigour, but rather a consciousness that is attuned to the creative and formative forces of nature (Naydler, 1996).

The notion that spiritual experience had an inexplicable or non-rational component was expressed by Otto (1952) in his work 'The Idea of the Holy'. To discuss the non-rational component of religious experience Otto introduced the term the 'numinous'. While the concept of the numinous is notoriously difficult to define and, in many respects, defies intellectualisation (Huskinson, 2006), it includes the notion of 'awe'. The notion of 'awe' is multi-dimensional, containing elements of fascination, bliss, fear and a sense of feeling completely overwhelmed in the presence of the power of something much larger than oneself. Otto's (1952) approach to discussing the non-rational aspects of religion, or the 'numinous' took a phenomenological perspective (Bastow, 1976). Discussion of 'awe', therefore has many parallels to the focus of this study and to the perspective of both Goethe and Naydler that experiencing the presence of nature has a spiritual element which may or may not be associated with religion.

Opportunities to connect with soul and spirit have often been related to contact with nature in various forms. It too, represents a life form of which we are part, but from which we often stand separately. Within the next section I will explore the literature relating to contact with nature and how this might provide some insight into alternate forms of spiritual expression.

2.5 Contact with Nature

“As birds’ wings beat the solid air without which none could fly so words freed by the imagination affirm reality by their flight”. (Williams, 1971, p.150)

Within the last century in western (European, or first world) nations, current generations have become increasingly removed from natural processes and lifecycles. The fast pace of life and competing demands limit available time to slow down long enough to notice the subtle changes in the living processes of plants around us (Hitchings, 2006). Within a study conducted by Dunnett & Quasim (2000) in Sheffield England, it was found that contact with nature available on a regular basis occurred only within respective back yards or gardens. Similarly, a study conducted in the United States by Catanazaro & Ekanem (2002) demonstrated opportunities to interact with nature in the domestic setting were very important. Whether or not we are attentive gardeners, our everyday environments offer rich opportunities for (re)-connection with nature.

The benefits of contact with nature for human health has been a topic of increasing interest (Bowler, Buyung-Ali, Knight, & Pullin, 2010; Bratman, Hamilton, & Daily, 2012; Howard Frumkin et al., 2017; Hartig, Mitchell, De Vries, & Frumkin, 2014). Primarily within the field of public health, such studies have taken a much broader environmental focus, choosing to describe areas containing living systems across wide ranging scales and degrees of human involvement. This includes human engagement that is either active or passive, ranging from environments such as a small urban parks to designated wilderness areas. Interaction with plants similarly ranges from contact within a room to views through windows, camping trips through to virtual reality imagery. With such wide-ranging interest, I take the opportunity here to describe my focus primarily on domestic gardens. This is not only due to limitations in the scope of the current work, but also because I am particularly interested in the setting of the home where everyday contact with nature occurs. Studies included in the literature review are therefore those that have direct and (in some cases) indirect association with the domestic garden. Chosen studies relate to a range of age groups. This provides a background to available

information and how it might more directly apply to older people within the following sections.

From an academic perspective, contact with nature in the domestic garden has received limited attention, particularly in relation to spirituality and wellbeing. A range of disciplines, including psychology, sociology, human geography, horticulture therapy and public health have considered such a relationship, but each has remained largely within their own paradigms (Adevi & Mårtensson, 2013; Freeman, Dickinson, Porter, & van Heezik, 2012; Grahn, Tenngart Ivarsson, Stigsdotter, & Bengtsson, 2010). Collectively, however, evidence for the benefits to health, wellbeing and spiritual expression from contact with nature in the garden is growing.

An inherent need to connect with nature was identified by Wilson (1984) in a concept he named 'Biophilia'. The term had previously been used by psychologist, Erich Fromm to argue that a love of life is essential for human mental health (Kellert, 2012). Wilson (1984) saw the establishment of this bond as a developmental process with cognitive, emotional and spiritual dimensions (Wilson, 1984). He believed that greater understanding of other organisms could lead to greater value being attributed to them. Kellert (1993) identified an intrinsic connection between humans and all other life forms. This, he believed, was forged during evolution and hence played a fundamental role in a human capacity to think, feel, communicate, create and find meaning in life. In further studies by Kellert (2002), focusing on children's needs for contact with nature and the outdoors, it was found that such a connection was a necessary foundation for ongoing fitness and productivity. Kellert (2012) also noted, however, that even though we are born with this capacity, its adaptive occurrence depends on experience and the ongoing support of others. Exploitation of this relationship has allowed humans to thrive as a species, yet Kellert (1993) later observed that a degradation of the relationship may lead not only to material demise, but also to diminished affective, cognitive and evaluative capacity.

The Biophilia hypothesis formed the basis of further studies by Barbiero (2011). In accepting the premise of the hypothesis, Barbiero (2011) posited that a biophilic instinct would find expression in: attention, a capacity to allow oneself to be fascinated by natural stimuli; and empathy, a capacity to affiliate with different forms of life. Barbiero subsequently paired this with the (somewhat controversial) Gaia hypothesis proposed by James Lovelock (1979) which describes the earth as a synergistic, self-regulating and complex system that sustains us physically and psychologically. To this, Barbiero (2011) posits an instinct of involuntary attention and fascination. Through pairing the Biophilia and Gaia Hypotheses, Barbiero (2011) attempted to offer a new way of contemplating the living world utilising experimental observation as a tool for dialogue between different perspectives.

Analysis of attention and fascination was central to the work of Stephen and Rachel Kaplan (1989). They distinguished two forms of attention: directed attention and involuntary attention. Involuntary attention was most closely associated with experience in nature, required no effort on the part of the observer and was identified as self sustaining (because it did not lead to mental fatigue). Conversely, directed attention required effort and inhibition of competing interests. Within current (western European) lifestyles (Kaplan & Kaplan, 1989) identify a cumulative demand on directed attention in order to complete increasingly specialised tasks, often leading to mental fatigue. Recognising the need to balance demands on directed attention led the Kaplans toward development of Attention Restoration Theory (ART). Restoration of mental fatigue rested on the combination of three concepts: 'being away' (or escape) within a whole other world (either physically or perceptually) with the theory of extent; engaging involuntary attention through the concept of fascination; and optimising balanced attention through the concept of compatibility (where tasks and settings are compatible with the identified interests of the individual) (Kaplan & Kaplan, 1989). The Kaplans identify that a range of places, activities and circumstances may satisfy the identified concepts leading to restoration, but point to the natural environment as having a special relationship with each concept.

A study conducted by Rachel Kaplan (1973) entitled 'Some Psychological Benefits of Gardening' focused on one activity where nature was a central component, namely gardening. This was the first of two studies, both of which supported many of the concepts later identified within ART. The first was a small study (conducted in the early 1970s) with a mixture of community and back yard gardeners. The study suggested the possibility of a developmental variable in relation to fascination. This is because more experienced gardeners tended to score higher on measures of satisfaction relating to fascination. This implies that fascination may grow with experience requiring self-knowledge and time to acquire. The study also suggested a degree of universality in the gardening experience, as despite varying backgrounds and gardening patterns, study participants identified a similar range of benefits (Kaplan, 1973). The second was a larger study conducted in collaboration with the American Horticultural Society (in the late 1970s). Both studies revealed the importance of tangible benefits of gardening, such as growing ones own vegetables and food, cutting expenses and the satisfaction of harvest. With gardening experience, however, the tangible benefits appeared to become less important and benefits relating to the sense tranquillity were identified. Interestingly, the second study also identified links between the need for control over the natural processes in the garden and reported measures of satisfaction. This was (somewhat contraversily) linked to the use of chemical/organic fertilisers and pesticides, whereby those who preferred the organic approach were seen to draw greater satisfaction than those who used a chemical approach (Kaplan & Kaplan, 1989). Results of the second study were not published.

Fascination was foundational to achieving identified sources of satisfaction with gardening. This occurred in an environment that allowed direct and continuing contact in diverse ways including: physically active involvement, such as working the soil; observation, including checking on the plants; and cognitive involvement, in considering care needs and control of garden pests (Kaplan & Kaplan, 1989). Gardening facilitated each of the concepts outlined within ART, but did however demonstrate that a breadth of extent or 'being away' was perhaps not as important as fascination and compatability (Kaplan & Kaplan, 1989).

Kaplan & Kaplan (1989) recognised the value of involuntary attention which came about in the garden when an individual's attention was completely captured without conscious effort. The process of gardening was seen to challenge an individual's ability to process information because it both provided and required knowledge in an environment that is subject to continual change (Kaplan, 1973). It was also seen as restorative in relation to ART, because involuntary attention required no effort and allowed some reprieve from the competing thoughts of the mind (Kaplan, 1995). This is similar to the concept of 'flow' described by (Csikszentmihalyi & Csikszentmihalyi, 1975) and Nakamura and Csikszentmihalyi (2002) in which complete absorption in an activity leads to a subjective state of wellbeing. Neither Attention Restoration Theory nor the concept of 'flow' touch on a spiritual dimension to gardening or the possible meaning associated with the satisfactions of garden activity.

Unruh (2002) studied the meaning of gardens and gardening in daily life including the relationships between gardening, health and well-being and frustrations with gardening and revealed important benefits to physical, emotional, social and spiritual well-being as well as a coping strategy for living with stressful life experience. A later study found that spiritual experience was embedded in gardening practice but that how this was expressed depended on the individual attributes of participants to the study (Unruh & Hutchinson, 2011).

Within the domestic setting, sociology and human geography have considered contact with nature in the garden as a reflection of culturally constructed changes to our collective view of the world. Bhatti and Church (2004) found the garden was seen as a distinctive space in which individuals can engage with nature in privacy but with an apparent ambiguous tension between a sense of privacy, sociability and connection with nature (Bhatti & Church, 2004). Also, from a human geographical perspective, Hitchings (2006) found that satisfaction with garden practice is more likely by not attempting to exact control, but rather allowing the gardening experience to be open and progressive. He acknowledged the sociological complexity of the garden setting but focused on the

possibility that a connection between people and plants can provide satisfaction and potentially positive impacts upon health and wellbeing. Further studies from this perspective revealed how gardening can be seen as a dynamic engagement between people and plants, and involves a process of collaboration, negotiation, competition and challenge, rather than human manipulation and control (Power, 2005).

Similarly, in my Masters research, (Adams et al., 2014) the garden contributed significantly to the health and wellbeing of participants who had tended their gardens over considerable time periods through often extreme conditions. The combined act of mental and physical energy applied in the garden led to a process of engagement and so deeper level of connection to the garden and a considered sense of wholeness. For many participants the garden represented a means of coping with all manner of life events, enabling acceptance of change, resilience and fulfilment. The study also supported the findings of Kaplan (1973), in that the close and continuing nature of the domestic setting enhanced the capacity for connection to occur.

The setting of the community garden has received relatively more attention particularly from public health and community development perspectives (Maller et al., 2005; St Leger, 2003). Within the Australian context, community gardening is a relatively new phenomenon. Unlike European countries, where the concept originated, Australians have not typically encountered a lack of space in their own back yards. Historically, within Australian domestic gardens, cultivation of a 'veggie' patch and fruiting trees were common place. Of more recent times, the Australian backyard is shrinking and the value attributed to garden cultivation has changed (Hall, 2010). Within city centres, space has become more confined, and coupled with an increase in migrant populations (familiar with the community garden concept), community gardens have been established.

Community gardens have been recognised for their potential to promote sustainable urban living, greater engagement with food production systems, and community participation and development (Firth, Maye, & Pearson, 2011; Glover, 2004; Liu,

Gilchrist, Taylor, & Ravenscroft, 2017; Pudup, 2008; Sempik, Aldridge, & Becker, 2005; Turner, 2011). Similarly in a meta-ethnographic study the occupation of gardening was found to increase wellbeing amongst individuals because it provided a neutral, calming and de-stigmatising environment where people felt connected to something real and meaningful (York & Wiseman, 2012). There is, however, a high degree of variance in the purpose, placement and governance of community gardens which makes generalisations problematic. So too, the extent to which the community garden concept has become a 'panacea' for many health promotion and community development initiatives is unclear.

In an ethnographic study of community gardeners in the Australian Capital Territory, Turner (2011) argues that embodied forms of sustainability such as community gardening, that allow individuals to become engaged in collective spaces may promote new forms of ecological citizenship and longer-term sustainability outcomes. On the other hand, a study conducted in Melbourne by Kingsley and colleagues (2006) recognised the potential of community gardens to enhance health, wellbeing and contact with nature for urban dwellers. Their participants felt the garden was a sanctuary where people could come together and escape daily pressures, share advice and social support and promote a sense of worth and involvement with spiritual, fitness and nutritional benefits (Kingsley & Townsend, 2006; Kingsley, Townsend, & Henderson-Wilson, 2009).

Within regional centres, incentives to establish community gardens have been less pressing. Very few studies have been conducted within the regional Australian context to determine whether community gardens are needed or successful. However, in a recent study conducted by the candidate (as yet unpublished), four community gardens within a regional centre were considered. Findings from the study demonstrated great variation in the structure, number of members and purpose of the gardens. A shared and valued purpose in maintaining and caring for the garden was a significant factor in the success of the garden. Depending on the structure of the community garden, it brought people together in the shared act of doing, creating and nurturing. Produce from the garden enhanced the act of sharing through its use in joint celebration. For

many participants, the combination of these acts led to a sense of the spiritual that was implicit and multi-layered. The garden created a focal point from which other activities developed such as learning, cooking and celebrating the achievement of produce. In many respects, however, the ability of the garden to create such outcomes required a champion to guide and nurture its expression and a homogenous capacity within participants to embrace a shared purpose.

Our understanding of the spiritual nature of garden practice within the community garden setting is limited due to a paucity of research in this area and variance attributed to definitions of spirituality and spiritual practice. In such a setting it is unclear whether a sense of spirituality arises from garden practice itself, the shared nature of the experience or a combination of the two. Insight into a possible distinction between domestic and community garden settings will enable a clearer sense of how garden practice may assist in enhancing spiritual practice for older people, particularly for those transitioning from domestic and community settings to aged care facilities where the garden is an intrinsic part of home-making and/or social interaction.

Consideration for the everyday use of domestic and community spaces inhabited by older people provides a link to understanding how daily routines in later life are managed and prioritised (Percival, 2002). The garden carries great significance in the ongoing process of home-making, but how this impacts on those transitioning to institutional care is not well understood (Bhatti, 2006). For those who are no longer able to maintain their garden, due to physical demands, it can come to represent a loss and great sadness associated with ageing (Percival, 2002). Yet it is also clear that older people will adjust their gardening practice in order to continue gardening for as long as possible (Milligan & Bingley, 2015). There is also some evidence that gardening activities may help to reduce the risk of falls in older adults (Chen & Janke, 2012) and that garden activities can be adapted in order to overcome difficulties with physical limitation and dementia (Kwack, Relf, & Rudolph, 2005).

There is increasing interest in the provision of gardens in health care settings.

Horticulture therapy has developed as a discipline to meet this need. Evidence suggests that both direct and indirect contact with nature in a garden setting is beneficial to health and wellbeing (Dunnett & Qasim, 2000; Kellert, 2002; Maller et al., 2005; Pretty, 2004; Stigsdotter & Grahn, 2004; Stigsdotter et al., 2011). Within aged care there has been growing interest in the therapeutic value of maintaining a garden, particularly from a sensorial perspective for those experiencing dementia (Chapman, Hazen, & Noell-Waggoner, 2007; Gigliotti & Jarrott, 2005; Hernandez, 2007; Kwack et al., 2005; Marcus, 2007; Moore, 2007; Rappe & Topo, 2007).

Horticulture Therapy has been distinguished from Social and Therapeutic (Sempik, Aldridge, & Becker, 2003). Horticulture Therapy is the use of plants by a trained therapist as a medium to reach certain goals, whereas Social and Therapeutic Horticulture is directed towards improving the health and wellbeing of individuals more generally. With Wilson's (1984) theory of *Biophilia* as its basis, a model developed by Sempik, Aldridge and Becker (2005) loosely breaks the Therapeutic Horticulture approach down into 2 streams: one active and the other passive. The two streams may cross over at certain points, but one stream moves more directly toward rehabilitation, acceptance and social inclusion, while the other stream is directed toward tranquillity, peace and spirituality. The model was developed following extensive review of literature and aimed at providing evidence for the effectiveness of horticulture and gardening in a number of different therapeutic settings (Sempik et al., 2005).

Horticulture therapy has been applied in many settings: long-term facilities, retirement communities, rehabilitation centres, and prisons. Interaction at even minimal levels can inspire in older people a sense of connection to a world outside their own. In a 7-week program, indoor horticulture activities were found to provide a significant improvement in psychological wellbeing compared to a control group (Barnicle & Midden, 2003).

Gardening was also identified as a very strong protective factor for dementia prevention and consideration of daily gardening for senior citizens was recommended as a leisure or mental activity (Simons, Simons, McCallum, & Friedlander, 2006).

Within aged care facilities, activities which have been included in therapy can occur indoor and/or outdoor. Activities may include cultivation of seeds, cuttings and edible produce, as well as cooking, preserving, flower arranging and other craft based activities (McGuire, 1997). Burgess (1989) identified psychosocial benefits for elderly living in institutional care including: self-expression, variety and change, control and independence, social interaction, mental stimulation, physical activity, and the opportunity to be of service to others. Similarly, Rappe (2005) described health-related benefits for participants as promotion of independence, autonomy, competence and self-esteem. Involvement in the study provided social interaction, sensory stimulation and opportunities for exercise. In this context it can be seen that satisfaction of higher order needs is implicitly linked to spiritual need and expression.

Menec (2003) analysed the relationship between overall activity levels and successful ageing (namely, well-being, function and mortality) and identified everyday activities, such as gardening and housework as opportunities for meaningful and productive activity providing both psychological and physical benefits. Findings were clear that different types of activity may have different benefits, but not whether these activities should be social or solitary; formal or informal. In accordance with principles of positive ageing it is often assumed that activities should be social in nature and formally organised, but Tornstam's (2005) suggests activities that are solitary and informal frequently evoke meaning and spiritual insight. Very few studies have identified the need for spiritual awareness and expression, but Bhatti (2006) concurs with the phenomenological perspective of Dovey (1985) that the 'garden provides us with a lens for understanding the creation of psycho-social worlds in and around the home that are an important part of the practice of everyday life in old age' (Bhatti, 2006 p.321) closely related to the stages or movements in the life course. When this process is disrupted, however, as in the case of the death of a spouse, illness, or relocation to a dwelling without a garden, Bhatti (2006), contends that a feeling of 'ontological insecurity' develops. Home-making relates to embodied practices, whereby domestic routines in

and around the home are carried out by the body, and the home can be seen as a series of bodily activities inter-acting within the physical dwelling.

Wright and Wadsworth (2014) trace a considered nexus between gardening and the ageing experience, with psychological benefits resulting from the cultivation of caring including personal contentment and artistic expression. In particular the role of stewardship played by older gardeners provided increased health, community awareness and a connection to future generations (Collins, 2007; Wright & Wadsworth, 2014). The practice of gardening was seen as reverential and joyful. It was utilitarian because of the benefit created for others and also sacred because it created opportunities for introspection and reflection (Vaillant, 2002). Soga, Gaston and Yamaura's (2017) meta-analysis of available data reinforces physical, psychological and social health benefits from the practice of gardening and suggest this as a beneficial health intervention for adoption by government and health organisations. To become a reality, however, policy would need to increase opportunity and motivation to engage in gardening. This would require not only adequate spaces for gardening to occur, but also making the various advantages of gardening more apparent to a broader audience.

It follows, therefore, that for older people transitioning into aged care institutions, continued activity, or embodied practice, in a garden (either in a solitary or social manner) could represent a fundamental component of re-making home and renewing spiritual connection in a new location. It is acknowledged, however, that not everyone is interested exclusively in gardening and that for some it is the social aspect of coming together with others with a shared purpose that provides greater interest and enjoyment (Milligan et al., 2004). This would allow them to experience the benefits of contact with nature in either a passive or active manner. Further, it would provide opportunity for older people to tell their individual stories through selection of plants that have held particular significance throughout their lives.

With great variance in size and type of available gardens, it is clear that the notion of a garden has changed significantly over time. Its importance to people throughout history

provides insight to the above discussion and will be extended in the following section exploring the history of gardening.

2.6 History of Gardening

“One must emphasize ... that there is an integrity and a perfection in the twig, the bud, and the blossom – a perfection appropriate to the stage of its development”.
(Erikson, 1991, p.13)

Exploring a history of gardening provides great insight to the meaning of plants in our lives and our changing relationship with nature. As with most aspects of history it also reflects a changing level of consciousness in relation to a largely western/European placement within the world. I acknowledge that this section focuses mainly on a western/European perspective, partly because it reflects my own heritage and that of my participants, but also because the scope of this project would not allow further exploration. This section will provide an overview of a history of garden practice and our relationship with plants over time. It will place emphasis on the meaning that such a relationship has had historically. It can be seen that within certain periods of history a very strong connection with the natural world is apparent, but within other times this connection dissolves into a display of power, dominance and status. A view of human life in relation to other living species bears close association to cultural understandings, societal expectations and the advance of scientific thought and reasoning.

An historical view of the garden reveals a preoccupation with the natural environment that has been identified as a vital means of expression and valued art form (Hyams, 1971). Swinscow (1992) points to enduring descriptions of a perfect equilibrium in the relationship between humans and the natural world as one of the most lasting myths of mankind present in one form or another amongst people's all around the world. In particular such myths extend to the Garden of Eden and the Gardens of Hesperides. An admiration for nature has been variously depicted within styles of gardening from rolling fields and woodlands in natural 'looking' settings to gardens that are finely controlled, clipped and manicured (Swinscow, 1992). Swinscow (1992), sadly acknowledges that nature in a pristine state is hard to find and that for those of us living in first world, western/European settings, a prevailing perspective rests in standing outside from nature. Human self-consciousness appears to set us apart from other living species, yet Swinscow (1992) points to an innate desire to find kinship with nature.

A precedence for connection with nature and the importance of garden practice may be found in the mythic condition in which humans and gods are thought to have been imagined living together in the natural world of ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia (Naydler, 2011). Like all aspects of Egyptian society, the gardens were full of religious symbolism (Daines, 2008). The orientation of the garden and the plants in it denoted particular deities and sacred ideas. This world was instilled with spiritual power and meaning. To the ancient Egyptians, the outwardly observable forms of nature were all endowed with inner qualities that related to divine energies (Naydler, 2011).

Egyptian gardens were usually created around a pool of water, often enclosed within a dwelling (Wilkinson, 1990). Yet with little rainfall, in most of Egypt, gardens were supplied by artificial means. Water was either diverted from the Nile River via canals or carried by hand. Similarly, suitable soil had to be transported to support the nutritional requirements of plants (Wilkinson, 1990). Water was symbolic of the primordial waters of creation (Daines, 2008). It provided valued produce and allowed animals to be kept that supplemented life, both human and divine (Wilkinson, 1990).

A connection with the divine was what Egyptian culture attempted to maintain and the garden was part of this effort. Within this ancient consciousness each plant was seen to be the vegetative manifestation of a god or goddess (Naydler, 2011). Such plants included: the date palm, the lettuce plant, the doum palm, willow tree, water lily, papyrus and sycamore tree (Daines, 2008). Detailed information regarding gardens at this time has come from analysis of roots, seeds, pollen and carbonised and decayed remains found at excavations. This has been supplemented by ancient texts such as 'The Book of the Dead' and the 'Pyramid Texts'.

In the ancient gardens of Egypt and Mesopotamia, plants and fixtures were arranged with an awareness that certain gods and spiritual energies would be attracted. The garden was a place of communion between the visible and invisible worlds; the human and the divine. At this time a capacity to distinguish the atmosphere surrounding one

place from another was evident. Daines (2008), points to a distinction, however, between symbolism becoming tradition and holiness acknowledged through the recognition of symbols. This was evidenced by a continuation of garden symbolism despite theosophical change over time. This, she points out, occurred between recognised periods/dynasties within Egyptian civilisation, and for the later pharaohs, the garden appeared to become symbolic of power and status (Daines, 2008).

Nature also represented a connection between human life and the divine within ancient Greece and Rome where all life – whether plant, animal or human, was believed to be intimately connected with the divine (Giesecke, 2014). The plant lore of ancient Greece and Rome described the intimacy of the human-plant relationship found in classical culture. There were everyday uses and broader cultural meanings associated with plants. Those with particularly strong mythological associations included common garden plants such as narcissus and hyacinth, as well as pomegranate and apple, each of which were powerful symbols of fertility (Giesecke, 2014). A belief in the role of the spirits and gods in each of these civilisations was intrinsic to the culture of the time and widely accessible to those who were part of it (Naydler, 2011). Thacker (1979) notes that for the ancient Greeks, the garden or ‘sacred grove’ maintained a natural and secluded air – tended and visited as a place of worship.

The existence of sacred groves relies on descriptions available in literary works of the time, yet Bowe (2009) believed this was sufficient to acknowledge their importance in the life of ancient Greeks over ten centuries. It is likely they formed significant landmarks in the landscape in both urban and rural areas and contained both architectural and sculptural elements. Within sacred groves natural woodland was conserved and new trees were planted, with some individual trees being considered sacred. Sacred groves were used primarily for religious purposes, but also recreationally. According to Bowe (2009), sacred groves could be considered the beginnings of the western tradition of designed landscapes.

Definitive descriptions of gardens within ancient Greece are difficult to verify (Bowe, 2010). Much of our knowledge is supplemented by poetic evidence of gardening activity in Greece. This comes from the eighth century BC through the poetry of Homer, together with the writing of various playwrights, philosophers, historians and orators including Aristotle and Plato. Bowe (2010) relates that the relative accuracy must be weighed.

With a rise in foreign conquests wealthy Romans began to establish lavish villa style housing. Gardens became a central feature of the villa and chosen plants together with murals depicting ancient mythology reflected the cultural significance of plants and corresponding gods (Giesecke, 2014). The lavishness of the garden became a reflection of status and by the time of the Romans (c150 BC – 27 BC) the gods and nature spirits had to a large extent withdrawn from human awareness (Naydler, 2011). Yet common reference to the nature spirits was made more to frighten away uninvited guests, rather than bestow virtue (Thacker, 1979). From the 3rd century BC rational explanations were offered to natural phenomena and the world of nature and the world of the divine was increasingly seen as belonging to separate spheres. For the educated Roman a relationship with nature was irreparably altered and replaced by a sense of detachment (Naydler, 2011). Increasingly, gardens at this time were largely utilitarian with kitchen gardens, orchards or vineyards, often established in open country or temple precincts (Hyams, 1971). Hyams (1971) points to the knowledge that there was no Roman word for gardener, to confirm that aesthetic gardening was not practiced.

Detachment from nature led to a concept of beauty related to nature only in the presence of human aesthetic control. Wild nature was not considered beautiful unless it had been tamed by human involvement. This was particularly evidenced by the advent of garden practices such as topiary (Naydler, 2011). The Roman word *Topiarius* first used to describe the practice of topiary soon became the word for a Gardener in general (Hyams, 1971). During the middle of the 1st century AD topiary had become a fine art and allowed the concept of ownership of plants to be displayed. In some instances, topiary depicted the names of the owner, hunting scenes, or fleets of ships (Thacker,

1979). In a reconstruction of a garden attributed to Pliny the Younger in 100AD, a portion of rural (untended) land is seen surrounded by highly sculpted box hedges. This perhaps bears reference to the natural sacred grove (Thacker, 1979), or the degree to which land owners could demonstrate their level of control. Nevertheless, any acknowledgement of a spiritual essence present in nature had been extinguished (Naydler, 2011). Changes to the balance of power between humans and nature was also demonstrated in much broader notions of power within other human dealings at this time.

The garden in the early Roman Empire was essentially a creation by humans for humans. Cultivation provided a means of renewal offering benefit to both the individual, and to the state (Ray, 2010). The primary purpose of a garden was to promote wellbeing and pleasure and to reinforce a sense of human power with regard to the natural world (Ray, 2010). Acknowledgement of spiritual need and virtue was no longer a priority. The concept of wellbeing became the topic of philosophers such as Aristotle who differentiated aspects of wellbeing as being either eudaimonic or hedonic (Samman, 2007). Texts from this time vary greatly in their description of farming and gardening practice, but all share a continued belief in the benefits of cultivation. It not only represented renewal and growth but was also fundamental to their understanding of achieving a moral, religious and civic life (Ray, 2010).

From a Christian perspective, the Bible presents a view of garden practice and of plants themselves that is supportive of their existence solely for human use. This is recognised in a story of the Garden of Eden in Genesis 2-3 depicting two categories of use: to please (aesthetically), and to sustain human life. Within such a depiction, plants were wholly instrumental and existed for human benefit (Hall, 2010). Within the Garden of Eden, all the plants that existed inside the garden were of some benefit to humans, while the wild plants outside the garden, the weeds, thorns and thistles were to be met by humans after their fall from grace (Hall, 2010). This view created a sharp dualism between cultivated and wild plants which still appears to exist today. While the literal truth of the bible is no longer widely accepted, the concept of the garden existing so that humans

may do with plants as they wish, remains (Hall, 2010). It must be acknowledged that this represents a purely European or Western mindset and would not be consistent with Indigenous cultures.

With the passing of the Roman Empire, gardens within Europe became primarily utilitarian (Naydler, 2011). According to Thacker (1979), gardens and garden art virtually disappeared with no mention in literature of great gardens for seven or eight hundred years. Gardens existed only in fantasy with writers and artists providing only imaginative presentation of either spiritual or worldly delights (Thacker, 1979). It is not until the later middle ages that mention of gardens re-emerged.

By the 12th Century, however, following inspiration from the Islamic gardens of the East, came the popular emergence of the enclosed garden or 'hortus conclusus' in Europe (Naydler, 2011a). The Islamic garden provided a symbol of paradise and abundance as depicted in the Koran. Islamic gardens were collectively influenced by Roman North Africa and Zoroastrian Persia to the East (Hyams, 1971). The style of Islamic garden quickly developed, possibly due to the rivalry between provinces (Hyams, 1971). A feature of these gardens was the range of exotic plants. Fruit trees were of great importance and flowers of varying kinds were highly valued. Due to the harshness of the climate, irrigation and water features were also central to the rectangular design. The influence of Islamic garden style spread from India in the east to Spain in the west (Hyams, 1971).

The Garden of Eden provided an archetype for a renewed attempt to purify the human soul. Within highly symbolic depictions of the garden, the image of the Virgin Mary became increasingly prominent. The connection between the Virgin Mary and the 'hortus conclusus' allowed the garden to be similarly configured as the interior of the soul (Naydler, 2011). It is likely, however, that gardens depicted in the earliest available illustrations and writings from this time were not the same as actual gardens. In some instances, illustrations depicted scenes that were not possible at this time (Thacker,

1979). Nonetheless, the imagery is still representative of the relationship between people and plants as it then was.

Within the culture of Medieval Europe, religious concepts and feelings were all pervasive. The hortus conclusus was not created or used exclusively for religious purposes, but rather provided a path to a moral life. Few activities took place that did not have moral and religious thoughts and feelings as their background and matrix (Naydler, 2011). Yet, to a fourteenth century European, nature was filled with religious conception both positive and negative, including symbols of both sanctity and wickedness (Swinscow, 1992). Frequently, however, it was Monasteries that provided the clearest examples of the hortus conclusus. Monasteries within the Medieval period became known not only as seats of learning and scholarly activity, but also the development of bountiful gardens (Anderson, 2001). Monastic gardens were intended to make the monastery self-sufficient, but they also allowed the monastery to offer hospitality and herbal healing remedies to the neighbouring community (Anderson, 2001).

Monastic gardens also provided pleasure as Albertus Magnus (ca1200-1280) stated: 'Nothing refreshes the sight so much as a fine short grass' (Anderson, 2001). The joys of gardening within a medieval monastic garden are recounted in the work of Walahfrid Strabo (Walahfrid the squint-eyed) in his work Hortulus (Payne & Blunt, 1966). This included not only the aspects of manual labour, but also the beauty of plants and benefits they provided for the monks. Yet for the monks, who had chosen a path of poverty and abstinence from material pleasures, the beauty and abundance of the garden presented a paradox. Poetry such as that offered by Louis of Blois (1506-1566) helped to reconcile these differences by encouraging the monks to enjoy the pleasures of the gardens while retaining proper Benedictine detachment from material possessions. The manual labour of maintaining a garden was balanced by the more contemplative action of prayer and meditation (Anderson, 2001).

Symbolic depiction of the garden and its virtues came to an end with the advent of the Renaissance. Renaissance scholars viewed the Middle Ages as a time of ignorance and superstition that placed the word of religious authorities over personal experience and rational activity. To the renaissance mind, this represented a decline from the high culture and civilisation of the classical period that preceded it (Lindberg, 2003).

Symbolic consciousness was increasingly replaced with a more objective view of the world. While symbolism continued in some forms, it became more of a learned art and the symbolic imagination was far less accessible to most.

It is argued that the historical garden is an aesthetic and cultural work of art reflecting the artistic and intellectual environment in which it was created (Szafrńska, 2006). This was, however, subject to change. Within the Renaissance period priority was given to perspective and accurate three-dimensional representation. This allowed the observer to step back and remain detached from the presented imagery. This manner of thinking had considerable impact on how people of this time interacted with nature. Within the Renaissance mindset, both observer and participant were encouraged to take an objective and detached stance and any symbolic interaction was limited to those who were educated (Naydler, 2011).

With priority given to perspective, gardens from the Renaissance gradually returned to the formal style previously seen within Roman gardens. Human control over the natural elements of plants was taken to new extremes as expansive gardens were given to geometric and mathematical precision (Naydler, 2011). The garden was purely an architectural adornment. Within Renaissance times, however, the garden also strongly related to the place in which it was created, how time passed through it (including time of day and season throughout the year), and what happens when someone enters into it (Szafrńska, 2006). In focusing particularly on time and place, the Renaissance garden provided a sense of security and permanence for those who shared its parameters.

With the advent of the Industrial Revolution (occurring during the period 1760-1820 in England, Europe and the United States with large scale transition to new manufacturing

processes) another shift in the human relationship with nature and plants occurred (Lowy & Sayre, 2018). A shift in perspective and a task of transformation was one that Goethe and later the Romantics drew from the many different ways of seeing the world. They sought to marry science and art such that the merits of both would be combined. In making clear the different ways of observing phenomena, Seamon and Zajonc (1998, p.18) draw on the words of Henry David Thoreau written in 1851 in response to watching a sunset:

“I, standing twenty miles off, see a crimson cloud in the horizon. You tell me it is a mass of vapour which absorbs all other rays and reflects the red, but that is nothing to the purpose, for this red vision excites me, stirs my blood, makes my thoughts flow, and I have new and indescribable fancies, and you have not touched the secret of that influence. If there is not something mystical in your explanation, something inexplicable to the understanding, some elements of mystery, it is not quite sufficient. If there is nothing in it which speaks to my imagination, what boots it? What sort of science is that which enriches the understanding, but robs the imagination? If we knew all things thus mechanically merely, should we know anything really?”.

That shift was driven by a group of scholars/artists who emerged, in part, to a protest against the exploits of the Industrial Revolution. This group were identified with what became known as the Romantic Period (1800-1890) which began to lament the loss of natural beauty and to consider the garden as a form of art (Naydler, 2011). For the Romantics, nature became a source of aesthetic enjoyment. This was reflected in paintings by prominent artists of the time. It was also evidenced by wealthy landowners who saw nature as a domain to be improved by the latest agricultural techniques then being actively developed (Swinscow, 1992). This shift in perspective filtered into the dominant culture of the time through literary, arts and political advocates. Notable people of the time (including prominent literary figures, politicians and landholders) began to admonish the mathematical precision with which gardens were tended and advocate for a more natural beauty. Gardening was seen as an art form in its own right based on enhancing the natural beauty of both plants and the landscapes of which they

were part (Naydler, 2011). Poets such as Wordsworth and Coleridge became part of the Romantic movement. Wordsworth described the intensity of his spiritual experience of nature as a child in several of his well known works (Kerrigan, 2009). Like Goethe, Coleridge believed that the poetic imagination and the scientific imagination shared a common root because humans have the unique ability to make mental representations of things that are not of the here and now (Ward, 2013). The Romantics also shared a sensibility with Medieval views of nature and natural beauty (Lowy & Sayre, 2018) .

To return the countryside to a more natural state vast expanses of largely aristocratic land holdings were transformed into landscaped parkland to enhance nature's intrinsic beauty. The value and meaning present in nature was recognised as a quality that should be more broadly appreciated (Richardson, 2008). Landscape gardening, which occurred almost exclusively within England, took on an added dimension when those with landholdings and therefore money and power utilised their landscape as a means to support either the Whig or the Tory political parties; one supported a more natural and seemingly unpretentious style and the other a more formal manicured style of garden (Richardson, 2008). At this time there was no other artform through which an owner of an estate could have such an influence. Richardson (2008) points to one example at Stowe in Buckinghamshire where the political ideals of the Whig party were displayed distinctly throughout the garden so as to embarrass the (Tory) government administration.

In complete contrast to the British perspective, it can be noted that Romantic notions of nature and landscape did not apply to the Australian context. To our British colonists the Australian landscape had a much-noted resemblance to the English 'gentleman's park' of the Landscapist/Romantic era. Proponents of this era (and beyond) lacked the capacity to understand that Australian landscapes were as much a product of culture and human intervention as those with which they were familiar (Holmes, Martin, & Mirmohamadi, 2008). Stewardship of the landscape took place from an Indigenous perspective formed from within a culture of entirely different origins and understanding (Gammage, 2012). An innate understanding of the connection between Aboriginal

people and their country is arguably not possible for someone of my heritage. My admiration for the knowledge of Aboriginal people who have cared for the Australian landscape is immense, but unfortunately beyond the scope of this study.

Rendering an entire landscape was inevitably restricted to those with large landholdings and the means to convert it and the reach of the landscapists was somewhat limited. The manner of conversion was open to some criticism, as in doing so, the land was stripped bare and artificial lakes and rolling countryside were installed in order to create a somewhat artificial atmosphere of peace, harmony and beauty. This criticism has perhaps particularly focused on the work of Lancelot (Capability) Brown, who transformed large expanses of land for questionable gain (Richardson, 2008). It did, however, mark an important turning point in the human relationship with nature because it represented an attempt to work with nature towards her improvement (Naydler, 2011). Romantics/Landscapists of the time believed it was possible to sustain a reciprocal relationship between nature and humans, but this was significantly dulled by the rise of industrial England. Both Science and Industry shared a view of nature as a raw material to be shaped and utilised as humans saw fit. Those with power and influence wanted to demonstrate a capacity to take control and gardens largely returned to an architectural 'Italianate' style (Naydler, 2011).

This style was adopted in both private and public gardens and was seen to complement the British Empire in a similar manner to that of the Roman Empire before it. Many of the formal features of the Roman garden returned. The technology now existed to produce mass plantings of selected colours and features such as the floral clock became commonplace in public spaces. The relationship with plants in this context had been reduced to seeing them simply as blocks of colour, literally arranged to represent human objects. Naydler (2011) described this general passive acceptance of control over plants as further alienating us from the natural world, in a manner quite opposite to that of the medieval consciousness.

Swinscow (1992) points out that nature is not in harmony, otherwise evolution would have ceased long ago. The only certainty that the past provides is unceasing change – including change of form, life strategy and prevalence (Swinscow, 1992). Nature represents an intricate balance, but within this balance is an innate competition for resources. The reality of competing species of plants (and animals) is hard to ignore. It does not match an apparent human desire to acquire tranquillity from the experience of nature, and so Swinscow (1992) describes a human need to create gardens. Gardens, by necessity are selective and controlled to varying degrees. The extent of this control represents a paradox for gardeners and those who seek to enjoy gardens.

Garden historians (Hyams, 1971; Thacker, 1979) describe processes of gardening such as a desire to control blocks of colour in order to create an effect, but moving forward from the historical perspective outlined above, gardens that demonstrate an awareness of atmospheric quality can be distinguished from those that do not. Naydler (2011a) points to the work of Gertrude Jekyll, William Robinson and Claude Monet as gardeners who demonstrate high sensitivity to nature and a need to work with it in order to honour the atmosphere and spiritual presence that can be found in the garden. Jekyll had strong affiliation with the Romantics of the 1800s and with the somewhat pantheistic ideas expressed by Wordsworth of nature and gardens (Kerrigan, 2009). Robinson (2009) was perhaps the first modern gardener to explicitly express the idea that the art of gardening has a 'sacred' not just an aesthetic dimension to it. This view accepts that in every garden the whole of nature is present and involved and must be considered.

When a gardener is sensitively attuned with the atmosphere of a garden, the garden itself can become a living being in and of itself. Swinscow (1992) similarly concurs and describes a hidden order of nature that can be found in a garden. This he believes should be studied in three different ways – scientific, aesthetic and spiritual (Swinscow, 1992). Naydler (2011) describes Monet's garden as one that points toward another level of life where the mysterious and invisible inner life of nature is clearly present. Just as in his painting, Monet strove to honour the atmosphere, or light, that is present in a garden. A contemporary of Monet identified an objectivising consciousness which he

believed Monet was able to transcend in the creation of his garden. The creative energy applied in both the garden and on canvas, it is believed, could penetrate nature's creative energy and the phenomenal world (Naydler, 2011).

According to Swinscow (1992), it is possible to reveal a spiritual order in a garden, particularly if it can, through interaction and care, reflect the soul of its creator. The garden is experienced as a living presence that has the capacity to be considered synonymously with an icon because it can make manifest that which is essentially invisible and non-manifest.

The numinous quality attributed to the garden has some parallels with the concept of 'awe' described by Otto (1952). Otto (1952) similarly describes the holy as containing (rational and) non-rational elements that can only be apprehended through feeling and intuition. Communication of the numinous is enabled only through symbolic language such as that found in poetry, art and music and the numinous object cannot be forced or summoned into consciousness (Huskinson, 2006). Bishop (2006) points to similarities between Otto's concept of the numinous and Goethe's way of seeing or 'eyes of the spirit'. The sets of 'feelings', 'ideas' or 'events' that Otto describes as numinous, Goethe might describe as aesthetic experiences that can profoundly impact the viewer.

Where the essence of garden experience may touch on the concept of the numinous, it remains that such an experience is difficult to put into words. A light hearted attempt at describing a spiritual presence in the garden was given by Naydler (2005) in a series of poems. These have not been included here due to copyright restrictions, but have given insight to this study.

Swinscow (1992) relates that the perfect garden does not exist, but the imagination (or consciousness) makes this possibility a little closer. Within our imagination, a garden is forever moving towards an ideal and in reality it can never reach completion (Swinscow, 1992). Yet the garden provides the possibility of standing between two worlds or two different forms of consciousness. From the above discussion it can be seen that our

predecessors held different forms of consciousness influenced by the culture and circumstances of the time. Fundamentally, a difference in consciousness lies in our ability to believe only in what can be seen (Naydler, 2009), particularly with regard to nature and our relationship with it. Even though the ideal garden may not exist, it does have meaning for our imagination (Swinscow, 1992).

At different times throughout history our culture, religion, political/industrial ambitions and prevailing knowledge and interests have influenced how nature is perceived (Naydler, 2011). It is apparent that during those periods of history where complete control was exercised over gardens (and nature more generally), the possibility of connecting with nature in meaningful ways was greatly reduced. It is not too far removed to consider that changing our perception of plants within our own gardens may allow us to access a different form of consciousness today, even if just temporarily. This may be witnessed as a form of spiritual expression, a heightened sense of imagination and intuition, or an increase in the experience of peace and tranquillity. In turn it may also bring about greater empathy for the natural world beyond our gardens. Since the garden and gardening practices define humanity's relation to the natural environment, it is of utmost importance to retrace and re-examine the garden's symbolism, history, and life-sustaining potency (Giesecke & Jacobs, 2012).

2.7 Summary of Literature Review

“When I look at a garden, I see it as in transition. It is forever moving towards an ideal. In reality it can never reach completion” (Swinscow, 1992, p.23)

The following provides a summary and focus of the search for literature in the identified topics. The summary outlines key points identified from the review of Literature. This supports and expands the rationale for the research aims and objectives of the study (outlined in section 1.4) which were to explore the meaning and experience of gardening for older people with particular emphasis on the possibility of spiritual experience and expression.

Within literature identified in Ageing (section 2.2) health status within the Australian context is provided. Literature indicates that there is considerable variation in health status of older people aged 70 years plus. Importantly, recognition of capacity provides positive impetus for this study. Acknowledging the significance of maintaining and building capacity allows focus to be placed on potential. Potential for increased wellbeing is not dependent on physical health alone despite what is known about health status in later life.

Literature discussed in Spirituality within Healthcare (section 2.3), focuses specifically on the healthcare sector and outlines its complexity. In particular focus has been placed on aged care provision and facilities. Much has been achieved in being able to assess and consider the spiritual needs of older people. However, this is often based on religious affiliation rather than broader principles of spiritual need such as the benefits of gardening. The literature implies therefore that there is much still to be done, particularly in recognising alternate forms of spiritual expression and how this might contribute to overall wellbeing.

Literature considering Concepts of Wellbeing (section 2.4) has taken a broad perspective and focused on foundational theory related to ageing. Consideration for developmental stages of ageing have given insight to this study. Focus has also been placed on

wellbeing and links to contact with nature. Importantly for older people acknowledging physical activity and embodied practices in relation to homemaking opens up possibility for new perspectives on wellbeing in the final stages of life. This is particularly important when large scale changes are encountered.

In literature describing Contact with Nature (section 2.5) many potential benefits are identified. The growing field of horticulture therapy has particular application to aged care. This, together with theory surrounding the concept of fascination have provided great insight to this study. The possibility of a spiritual dimension relating to contact with nature is considered by some authors, although not explicit demonstrating the need for further research.

Within literature considered in History of Gardening (section 2.6), it can be seen that historical precedent does exist for spiritual connection with nature in western/European traditions. This connection is seen to fluctuate with cultural/social/political context of the time. It demonstrates that a shift in perspective may provide the necessary impetus to acknowledge this precedent and to affirm the relevance of research in this field.

CHAPTER 3 – THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

This chapter has been written in two parts. Firstly, within 3.1, I will outline the methodology of this study. This will include a description of the theoretical positioning of myself as the researcher and place the current study within a qualitative research domain. I will introduce the phenomenological perspective and theoretical underpinning of the study. This includes an understanding of embodied practices and embodied enquiry. I introduce the use of poetry, not only as an aid to reflection, but also as a means to support a phenomenological perspective. This is supplemented by examples of my own poetry written during the course of this study.

Secondly, within 3.2, I outline the methods used to conduct this study. This includes discussion of the fusion of horizons and hermeneutic circle, and the contribution of my own previous study toward the shaping of techniques used within this study. In discussion of the method I will include a general description of participants, data collection and analysis as well as methods used to increase trustworthiness and authenticity of the study and touch on strengths, weaknesses and ethical considerations of the study.

3.1 Methodology

“What (the creator) feels ... is joy, joy defined as the emotion that goes with heightened consciousness, the mood that accompanies the experience of actualising one’s own potentialities”. (May, 1959, p.268)

3.1.1 Theoretical Positioning

I have chosen a qualitative approach as this allows the topic to be explored in detail, within a complex and holistic picture, incorporating multiple dimensions (Creswell, 1998). In a qualitative approach, the experiences of individuals can be studied in their natural state, with the researcher as an active learner (Creswell, 1998). As an interpretive process, qualitative research involves trying to understand the practices and meanings of research participants from their perspective (Ezzy, 2002b). In particular, this approach recognises that meanings are constantly changing.

A qualitative research domain is particularly suited to research grounded within a public health tradition because of its capacity to embrace a sociological perspective. It offers a particular way of seeing and discovering (Swinton & Mowat, 2006). A definition of qualitative research offered by McLeod (2001, p 3.) provides a way of recognising not only how human beings encounter the world, but also the care and rigour intrinsic to this mode of research:

“Qualitative research is a process of careful, rigorous inquiry into aspects of the social world. It produces formal statements or conceptual frameworks that provide new ways of understanding the world, and therefore comprises knowledge that is practically useful for those who work with issues around learning and adjustment to the pressures and demands of the social world”.

This definition places emphasis on the narrative base of qualitative research and recognises its significant contribution to human knowledge (Swinton & Mowat, 2006). The depth and rigour associated with this approach also allows qualitative research to offer distinctive support to a humanizing emphasis for care within healthcare settings (Todres, Galvin, & Holloway, 2009). Rigour in qualitative research is afforded by the

depth of analysis that remains focused on data gathered, but is supported by available literature, researcher insight and peer review processes. A researcher must be prepared to immerse themselves within the data, fully cognisant of the total experiences described. The potential for qualitative research to enlighten the healthcare setting is therefore apparent.

Qualitative research is derived from an interpretative paradigm (or set of beliefs) and can draw specifically on a constructivist philosophy (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Lincoln, Lynham, & Guba, 2011). Constructivism is a world view that suggests that humans construct their reality from their subjective interaction with objects in the world (Caelli, Ray & Mill, 2003). This contrasts from the positivist stance of quantitative research that is deductive in nature and attempts to be as objective as possible (Swinton & Mowat, 2006). According to Guba & Lincoln (1994), our construction of reality is dependent upon the individual persons (or groups) holding the construction(s) and is made up of multiple, intangible mental constructions which are themselves subject to change. A constructivist perspective, therefore, proposes that meaning emerges from the shared interaction of individuals within society (Swinton & Mowat, 2006). Conversely, the epistemology of the natural sciences assumes a more fixed, stable and external reality (Swinton & Mowat, 2006). A qualitative research perspective is particularly useful when exploring the spiritual nature of garden practice, because it acknowledges the variance, complexity and often intangible nature of experience in the garden.

Within the qualitative research tradition, an understanding of the term hermeneutic is particularly important. Hermeneutics is an ancient discipline originally applied to the interpretation of biblical texts (Packer, 1985). It has been variously modified since this time with perhaps the work of Heidegger (1962) and Gadamer (1975) being most significant; both of whom focus on the importance of human action and the value of interpretation. Gadamer (1975), however, distinguishes the importance of taking an historical approach to awareness and that a more complete understanding of human action comes from fusing what might be foreign to us and what is familiar to us (Seyhan, 2001). Utilising what Gadamer (1975) called the 'fusion of horizons' has been central to

methodology applied within this study. Within such an approach meaningful dialogue is made possible because foreignness and familiarity are recognised and distinct (Neikerk, 2004). For Gadamer (1975) acknowledging pre-understanding was particularly important. Gadamer (1975) believed that historical awareness should be valued and that understanding of phenomenon was only possible if the historical, cultural and social dimensions of human action were fully considered (Fleming, Gaidys & Robb, 2002).

A hermeneutic approach supports interpretation of meaning, but recognises that interpretation is complex, subjective and changeable (Ezzy, 2002). In hermeneutics, understanding is always from a particular perspective. This means that a particular perspective comes always from the pre-understandings and 'prejudices' that arise from an individual being part of a particular culture and user of a particular language (Swinton & Mowat, 2006). For the researcher, hermeneutics emphasises the tension which may exist between a personal perspective and the perspective of others (Koch, 1995).

A belief that humans are by nature interpretive creatures has been related by Swinton & Mowat (2006) to the work of Gadamer (1975). Hermeneutics provides an ontological perspective because it represents a philosophical study of 'being' or 'existing' in the world; rather than merely an epistemological perspective focusing on a philosophical study of knowledge or 'knowing'. Swinton & Mowat (2006) argue, this is because humans tend to be interpretive beings. Gadamer's belief that things that change force themselves on our attention far more than things that stay the same was conceived as a general law of our intellectual life (Gadamer, 1975). Yet, the range of interpretation of one individual is somewhat restricted. It is therefore incumbent upon the researcher to be fully aware of the context within which their interpretation occurs and how this might relate to that of the participants to the research. Gadamer saw this process as a fusion of horizons (Swinton & Mowat, 2006). My own experience of spiritual expression and garden experience has shaped my capacity to provide insight and pursue greater understanding and has been openly acknowledged within the introduction to this study, journaling and reflexivity. This supports a(n) (ontological) belief in the existence of not

just one reality, but multiple realities constructed and altered by the researcher together with participants to this study (Laverty, 2003).

Within the qualitative research domain, I have used a phenomenological approach that is I seek to understand what an experience means to a person. This approach does not attempt to explain behaviour and/or experience, but rather provide rich descriptions of experience in order to generate plausible insight (Moustakas, 1994). Its founder, Edmund Husserl, feared that the mind as it was recognised in the early 1900s was being solidified into just another object in an increasingly mathematized and mechanical world (Husserl, 1989). He sought to describe the world as it is actually experienced. Paying attention to the rhythms and textures of subjective experience therefore gives voice to the ever-changing and enigmatic patterns of experience (Abram, 1996). Similarly, Merleau-Ponty (1962, p. ix) affirms a need to 'return to things themselves' because this is the world that precedes knowledge and is the foundation upon which all understanding including scientific schematization is derived. Phenomenology is, therefore, a philosophy of experience and enables understanding of the ways in which meaning is constructed in and through human experience (Swinton & Mowat, 2006). Where it is possible to see the world differently, it may also be possible to act differently towards it (Swinton & Mowat, 2006). This stance is particularly important for this study because through viewing garden practice differently a greater understanding of the depth of meaning associated may be gained.

Within a phenomenological approach, van Manen (1997) describes the importance of exploring the 'lifeworld' of participants; the place where everyday experience occurs: lived experience is the starting point and the end point of phenomenological research and provides the basis for meaning-making. Lived experience is therefore the foundation of meaning (Swinton & Mowat, 2006), but placing it within the realm of the everyday also connects this to the notion of home-making to which the garden has been closely related (Bhatti and Church, 2009). The phenomenological tradition is compatible philosophically with a range of ways of seeing the world because it accepts that there are many ways of 'being' in the world. Our individual perception enacts a range of

meaning-making. Gaining an understanding and appreciation for this range in turn deepens our understanding and allows the possibility of applying this knowledge to settings where maintaining health and wellbeing is challenging. Compatibility of philosophical and methodological approach provides this study with increased strength (Ezzy, 2002a).

In contrast with phenomenology, hermeneutics recognises the potential for bias within interpretation and phenomenology seeking to accurately describe experience in an unbiased (bracketed) way (Swinton & Mowat, 2006). Tufford & Newman (2012) describe bracketing as a method used to lessen the potentially damaging effects that a researchers pre-conceptions might have on the research process. This fundamental difference led to a philosophical separation within phenomenology; one directed by Husserl and the other by Heidegger and Gadamer. There are important similarities, however, which make their combination both possible and desirable. Both stress active, intentional, construction of a social world and its meanings; a focus on language-based accounts of experience; and a concern with the development of understanding (Swinton & Mowat, 2006). The development of hermeneutic phenomenology differentiates it from traditional forms introduced by Husserl, but also represents a growing dissatisfaction with a realist philosophy of science that conducts research with no reference to cultural or social context (Caelli, 2000, Swinton & Mowat, 2006).

Hermeneutic phenomenology has been specifically chosen for this study because it brings together both of these perspectives to provide a rich description of the individual experience and a necessary interpretative perspective of lived experience. This allows the lifeworld of participants to be attentively described and recognises the role of interpretation at all points within the research spectrum. The knowledge, experience and understanding of the researcher is openly acknowledged in the process of interpretation.

It is important to understand the differences and similarities between Heidegger and Gadamer. For Gadamer, language was the means by which we reach understanding.

Through language, understanding appears like a form of agreement between two parties to a conversation. In acknowledging a merging of what might be considered foreign with what is familiar, Gadamer (1975) identified a fusion of horizons. Such a fusion provided the possibility for agreement to be reached and therefore understanding gained. Seyhan (2001) describes Gadamer's belief that understanding comes in the common ground of language and the notion that language embodies and enacts the totality of our experience in the world. As Niekerk (2004) points out, however, this depends on a capacity to share a universal language. If we are also to consider Gadamer's (1975) emphasis on the importance of being fully cognisant of the respective influence historical backgrounds on a capacity to fully understand, this may be problematic.

The fusion of horizons proposed by Gadamer (1975) contrasts with the hermeneutic circle proposed by Heidegger (1962). Within the hermeneutic circle emphasis is placed on the subjective view of the researcher, who subsequently de-constructs and re-constructs a version of reality in order to reach understanding. This was based far more on the reflective capacity of the researcher to derive meaning from the experience of others. The hermeneutical circle acknowledges that in order to make sense of the whole situation it is necessary to move backwards and forwards from whole to part, however these may be described. The fusion of horizons and hermeneutic circle both provide a process of comparison, development and re-interpretation between data gathered and pre-existing interpretations (Ezzy, 2002).

Gadamer has been criticised by philosophers for his account of the fusion of horizons because of the implication that a fusion can only occur if agreement between parties is reached. According to Vessey (2009) this is because of a misunderstanding not only of what Gadamer meant by the term horizon(s) and just how they may be fused; but also because of his emphasis on what has been called 'radical historicity' (the notion that we can never understand something except from our historical point of view). For Gadamer (1975), the term horizon was used as a technical term and did not relate to the everyday use of the word. Horizons were rather seen as gateways to something beyond including

all that we observe through out senses, as well as those that are inherently known to us about an object and its surroundings from our cultural and historical understanding (Vessey, 2009). Horizons open up possibilities of future perceptions and relate to a set of conditions that provide meaning to an object or circumstance (Vessey, 2009). A fusion of horizons might therefore occur when an individual realises how the context of a given situation or circumstance may be weighted differently to lead to a different interpretation from what might have initially been gained (Vessey, 2009).

Gadamer was reticent to apply method to the process of analysis because of the inherent restriction of applying method to interpretation. He recognised the importance of language in reaching understanding, but also pointed to the limitations of working solely with the written and spoken word. Much of the experience of being is beyond words and remains unsaid (Todres, 2007). That language cannot comprehensively describe the 'lifeworld' of lived experience implies that the body and perhaps spirit of a human being must be more fully considered. This transcends the difficulties of language itself, but acknowledges the importance of historical, cultural and social influences on lived experience.

Within this study I have chosen to focus on the fusion of horizons. This is because, as a gardener myself, I have direct experience of the phenomena being studied, but as a younger person than all of my participants have had less time to reflect on this experience. An important part of understanding the experience of participants involved recognising agreement and possible disagreement in the range of experience.

3.1.2 Embodied Enquiry and Practice

Phenomenological insight is highly compatible with embracing the concept of embodiment and for this study this provides an important step towards acknowledging the role of the body in garden practice. Importantly this includes the abundance of sensory input that is possible in the garden setting. It also recognises the limitation of drawing on written and spoken language in order to describe experience in the garden.

As an experiencing body, our physical form allows us to engage with nature, but it is our capacity to receptively and creatively 'orient' ourselves within changing circumstances that also underlies our ability to be perceptive (Abram, 1996).

The concept of embodiment was central to phenomenologist, Merleau-Ponty. He believed there was no distinguishable separation between our emotional (or spiritual) experience and its physical manifestation within our bodies (Abram, 1996). The concept of embodiment further differentiates from the phenomenology of Husserl, who described a transcendental ego, ultimately separate from the experiencing body. Conversely, Merleau-Ponty (1962) saw the body as the true subject of experience (Abram, 1996). Without the body there would be no possibility of experience. A truly authentic phenomenology could, therefore, only be articulated from within our experienced situation (Abram, 1996).

This does not reduce our awareness to a bounded object, but rather acknowledges a living body that is open, indeterminate and draws sustenance from the natural elements that surround it (Abram, 1996). Recognising the primacy of the body begins in a philosophical tradition which understands intimate participation in life is the grounds that makes knowing possible (Todres, 2006). From a philosophical perspective Merleau-Ponty further believed it was not possible to gain a complete picture of reality, because this would require a mind or consciousness that resided outside of our existence (Abram, 1996).

The inherent knowledge of the body is considered pre-reflective because it occurs before the human brain can reflect on its occurrence. In considering the body as the primary source of knowing, it can be seen that such knowing is pre-reflective because it occurs before we apply logic (Todres, 2006). Gendlin (1997a) describes a process of separating out bodily knowing from (reflective) or logical knowing prior to applying language to its occurrence. It is only then that the knowledge of the body can serve as a meaningful reference for words. It is clear, however, that sometimes the bodily depth of what has been lived through is 'more than words can say'. Yet, Gendlin (1997a),

acknowledges that such experience 'looks for' words and the tension between languaging the body and embodying language occurs in a rhythm of closeness and distance. Closeness refers to the bodily-participative-knowing, and distance refers to the language-formulating process (Todres, 2006). For Gendlin (1997a), it was analysis of the lived body that provided the familiarity required for knowledge to be a meaningful practice (Todres, 2006).

Within contemporary society our reliance on cognitive processes has led to an emphasis on written and spoken language to communicate and form the basis of education. Embodied enquiry acknowledges the primacy of the human body in 'sense-making' and that the felt sense of the body comes before the structure imposed on experience via cognitive processing and analysis (Todres, 2007). Gendlin (1997), believed that intimate participation in life is the ground that makes knowing and languaging experiences possible and that the body and the situation are one system or event.

Importantly, for this study, the experience of both garden practice and spiritual expression are frequently 'more than words can say'. The medium of poetry has provided an alternative means of languaging the felt experience of participants. Poetic expression does not produce boundaries in how words are sequenced and expressed (Kunitz & Lentine, 2007). A phenomenological approach to understanding is inherently expressive and draws strong parallels with poetic literary perspectives (van Manen, 1997).

This study has been enhanced by concentrating on three aspects of phenomenological insight in relation to garden practice: hermeneutic observation of both internal and external dimensions; the experience of the body and senses; and languaging expression of experience in a way that is participative and insightful. Drawing on three distinct perspectives provides this study with increased depth. Specifically, this draws on the phenomenological insight of Gadamer (1975) and Heidegger (1962); embodied understanding of Merleau-Ponty (1962) and Gendlin (1997a) and poetic expression of Goethe (2009) and Kunitz & Lentine (2007) that is a participative, intuitive and direct

manifestation of lived experience in the garden. Each of these perspectives will be expanded in the following pages outlining methods employed to conduct this study.

Embodied enquiry comprises four attributes of importance to this study. Firstly, it focuses on the relationship between language and the experience of the body. Secondly, it acknowledges the importance of both cognitive processing (thought) and emotional responsiveness (feeling). Thirdly, because it does not rely solely on cognitive processes, it is open to creativity and the often unique nature of respective life-worlds. Lastly, embracing embodied understanding arising from embodied enquiry is humanising and does not attempt to objectify self or other (Todres, 2007). This is particularly important given the longer term aim of the study to achieve increased wellbeing for older people.

Within our daily lives observation is frequently seen as a key sensory awareness (this will be further discussed in following paragraphs), but within a garden setting the senses of smell, touch and hearing also provide valuable insight to our bodily experience of the world. It is these senses that provide depth to our memory of garden practices and are frequently the basis of the most poignant memories. The embodied nature of gardening practice has been explored during interviews with participants. This included seeking more information regarding: learning through doing, intuitive processing and sensory awareness. Importantly, for myself as researcher, Todres (2007) also describes the insight gained from inter-embodied listening. This means ensuring that I (as an interviewer) use words that are neutral and do not prompt or direct the interview in such a way that the interviewee feels bound to use certain words in response. This began with me being aware that my presence may restrict the inherent languaging of the felt sense of the interviewee. It followed, that I needed to emphasise the 'how' of what was being said and indicate a strong interest in the interviewee valuing a 'faithful presencing' of their experience in their own words (Todres, 2007). This opened the opportunity for inter-embodied experience, whereby the understanding of both party's shifts to a deeper level. As a shared experience this allowed understanding to be generated in an embodied way. This did not mean that the participant and I must have

identical previous experience, but rather that our independent ways of seeing the world have common dimensions.

Enquiry that allows focus to be placed on sensory experience, emotions and intuition makes it highly compatible with attempts to understand a spiritual nature within garden practice. A felt-sense of interaction within a garden setting is perhaps akin to an (unconscious) awareness of the sanctity of the earth and its natural processes.

3.1.3 Holistic Observation and Meaning Making

Attempts to gain a holistic understanding of a life-force within nature formed the basis of a scientific approach taken by Goethe over 200 years ago. Goethe's method of conducting science rested primarily on observation (Bortoft, 2009; Seamon, 1998). With this he not only produced detailed drawings of plants at various stages within their lifecycle, but also gained insight to an internal dimensionality of phenomena which he believed could lead to a closer relationship with nature (Miller, 2009). The scientific perspective of Goethe outlined in his work 'The Metamorphosis of Plants' first published in 1790 has provided guidance to this study. Goethe named his method of observation, Genetic Method. Written in the mid 1790s, this referred not to the science of genes, but to the origin or genesis of things. Observing plant life involved not only close examination of physical form, but also the underlying unity from which that form emerges (Miller, 2009).

Goethe sought to balance empirical experience and intuitive perception, such that what might be identified as successive empirically may be simultaneous intuitively (Amrine, Zucker, & Wheeler, 2012; Miller, 2009). He thought that moving from fixed forms to formative process – from parts to whole – required shifting mental gears, therefore acknowledging the importance of both empirical and intuitive understanding (Miller, 1998). Through meticulously identifying each formative step in the cycle of a plant, he was able to visualise a complete and unifying form. A metamorphosis that had unified features but was not entirely scripted and could be varied according to incident and

circumstance. Goethe was critical of the one-sided emphasis of science on understanding alone because it limited inquiry to the material surfaces of the natural world (Bortoft, 1996). For Goethe, scientific observation required full regard for intuition, emotion/feeling, and ultimately spiritual connection (Amrine et al., 2012; Naydler, 1996). Goethe's approach to observation clearly resonates with a phenomenological view of the world.

Goethe believed that the spiritual part of ourselves was in harmony with nature and could be called on to provide a deeper basis to our understanding 'through an intuitive perception of eternally creative nature we may become worthy of participating spiritually in its creative process' (Goethe cited by Miller, 1998, p.112).

In many respects, Goethe's approach was similar to initial descriptions of phenomenology in which Husserl attempted to return to 'things themselves' and describe them in intimate detail. Awareness and description in intimate detail means we must consider the concept of consciousness because it requires a level of observation that focuses on meaning making. The concept of consciousness has been considered by many within the discipline of psychology and psychiatry. Jung's perspectives are consistent with many of the concepts discussed above. He believed that if we never dwell on what is commonly incomprehensible, we become somewhat one-dimensional. Living with mystery is what gives meaning to life. Jung saw great importance in myth, ritual and nature and recognised the value attributed to each in earlier times. He considered that modern people were too objective and that their spiritual horizons were too narrow.

This had given rise to an awareness that many lives were lived almost entirely on the plane of the conscious, rational mind. This he believed was responsible for a rising incidence of neuroses. Consequently, Jung identified the spiritual dimension as a basic element of psychology (Jung, 1963; Tacey, 2009) capable of blending scientific and intuitive perspectives. So too the work of Goethe recognises the importance of balancing scientific and intuitive perspectives. It reinforces the notion that we are all

capable of developing the ability to observe and intuitively (and spiritually) connect with the plants in our care. This is compatible with a hermeneutic phenomenological approach of moving between parts and the whole phenomena.

Within this study, time spent by participants observing and being with plants was gleaned to determine how this contributed to knowledge, understanding and connection. This is supported by literature explored in the preceding chapter, together with previous study by the author describing a capacity to connect with nature after a period of engagement. This can be seen in the second layer of the model in diagram 1.2 which acknowledges internal and external dimensions of observation, emotional and spiritual connection and connection to self in the past, present and future.

3.1.4 Phenomenology and Poetry

With the above discussion in mind, a creative manner of languaging and expressing the phenomenon of garden practice is appropriate. A phenomenological approach to understanding is inherently expressive and draws strong parallels with poetic literary perspectives (van Manen, 1997). Significantly Goethe sought to bring art/poetry and science closer together because together they provided a holistic view of lived experience (Miller, 2009). Ironically, perhaps, Goethe is better known for his literary and poetic works than for his scientific practices.

Poetry is participative. It requires the reader to bring to a poem their own mores; blend this with the written word and find an interpretation that speaks to them (or not) (Kunitz & Lentine, 2007). A poem provides minimal text, so the reader must visualise and engage with the poem in order to draw meaning. Within this study poetry has provided an alternative means of languaging the felt experience of participants. It has drawn on the intuition of participants in choosing key words, thoughts, shapes, colours, smells, memories that accurately give voice to the felt sense of experience in the garden (whether in the past, present or future). Just as Goethe sought to make what is

empirically successive, intuitively simultaneous, poetic expression does not produce boundaries in how words are sequenced and expressed.

Poetry opens a world to dwelling because it allows us to feel the experiences of living with words that create images in our minds and sensations in our bodies (Kunitz & Lentine, 2007). In time and space, it blends the here and now with the notion of elsewhere and beyond. Thiboutot (2001) draws on the work of Bachelard (2013) in stating that whatever we encounter in daily life is always already permeated with poetic quality and metaphoric associations. Poetry installs thresholds in what would otherwise be an uninhabitable terrain. It is constantly at work beneath the surface of our daily routines and works beneath our strategic and calculating attitudes and activities to enable true encounters (Thiboutot, 2001).

As Goethe suggests, the poem can be seen as an art form and means of self-expression and is highly compatible with a phenomenological approach to research. The use of poetic expression in this study has also been greatly influenced by the work of Kunitz & Lentine (2007). As a well-established poet and gardener, his writing is deeply insightful and inspiring. Kunitz draws many analogies between the development and maintenance of a garden and the development and review of poetry.

‘I associate the garden with the whole experience of being alive,
and so, there is nothing in the range of human experience
that is separate from what the garden can signify
in its eagerness and its insistence,
and in its driving energy to live – to grow, to bear fruit.’
Kunitz cited in (Kunitz & Lentine, 2007, p.5)

The use of poetry in qualitative research is still relatively new (Falkner, 2009). It has been given many different names and taken different formats (Falkner, 2009; Taiwo, 2011; Gold, 2012; Hordyk, Soltane & Hanley, 2014). The question of the quality of poetry produced, and/or adherence to poetic traditions by researchers has also been

raised by several authors, but consensus remains unclear. Depending on the style of research being undertaken, some researchers view research poetry as an analytical tool, others seek to publish the poems as ethnographic and/or separate literary pieces.

Throughout this study I have been keenly aware of the difficulty experienced by most participants and academe in finding words to describe the emotion and depth of experience evident in the garden and in natural settings. Whether or not the components of experience are identified as spiritual, they have been frequently described as a primary source of continued wellbeing and a means to shift our level of consciousness (even if only momentarily). Such depth is inherent to poetry as it comfortably draws on everyday experiences as metaphor or symbol for deeper meaning.

Poetry calls upon the creativity of both reader and author and has been considered an expression of the imagination (Shelley, 1909). As a form of art, poetry does appear to stand alone and its integration with other forms of art, literary tradition, science and music has been a point of discussion for many centuries. Within this study poetry produced has been used primarily as an analytical tool, just as each part relates to the whole and generates a deeper level of knowledge and understanding. The development of poetry will be discussed in more detail in Section 3.2.

The use of poetry in research has been considered problematic; firstly because of the conventions of the craft itself and secondly because in the hands of a researcher the artistic merit of the form may be compromised or lost. Within the following paragraphs, I wish to provide an overview of poetry as an art form from the perspective of poets themselves. Its growing use within qualitative research enhances understanding of meaning within this study.

The potential integration of poetry into research is perhaps one of the latest attempts to unravel the depths of poetry. Poetry has often been associated with mystery – inaccessible except to those few determined to loosen embedded hidden secrets. Kunitz & Lentine (2007, p.26) relayed that “in the very act of writing a poem, one is

playing with language, playing with the capacities of the mind to hold together its most disparate elements". The purpose of a poem, in this respect, is to hold together as many contradictions and possibilities as can be conceived (Packard, 1987). Kunitz & Lentine (2007) believed that all modern arts were being threatened by the cult of the amateur, but that it was also possible they could be nourished by change (Packard, 1987).

The contention as to whether poetry can be integrated successfully with research superficially rests with issues of form. Poetic form embraces the rhythm, tenor and emotion of the spoken word. It engages the reader in the creation of an image in their own mind that not only corresponds to the written word, but also reaches a form of being in the world that is not frequently experienced (Shelley & Blunden, 1969). The variation of mental imagery within the human consciousness is a compelling reason for conducting research.

Adherence to the crafting rules of poetry does carry with it a respect for the craft, but adherence to form is not consistently seen amongst poets themselves. This would imply that its use is perhaps optional or that intuitive creativity may suffice. Poetic form undoubtedly gives poetry its musical, even dancelike quality (Levertov, 1965). Kunitz & Lentine (2007) further relays that prosody is not just about metrics; that it is closer to biology than mechanics. This includes everything that has to do with the making of a poem, the way it moves, the way it lives from word to word, the way it breathes (Packard, 1987). Packard (1987) relays an awareness that what is considered good or bad art is characteristic of the time in which it is written. With an intention of poetry to inspire and re-inspire both author and reader to create and re-create imagery in the mind it is perhaps evident that poetry can also be timeless. This is the essence of an art of the imagination (Packard, 1987).

A further concern for the use of poetry in research does in many respects rest on the word 'use'. It is perhaps understandable that poets themselves may feel their artistry is being 'used' for a lesser purpose. This may be due to a lack of adherence to form and historical precedent, but also a dissolving of its importance as an art of the imagination.

Blackburn (1985) believed that it was only through hearing a poem read aloud that its true form came to light. To him poetry contained a musical structure determined by the arrangement of sounds that mixed and crossed on the page. Punctuation and spacing could control the length of a pause. This relied on the way the eye runs across the page and the common way of reading to control the speed of the words as read (Conte, 2016; Fredman, 1979).

This concurs with the view of Levertov (1965), who believed that form allowed a poet to direct the experience of the poem in the same way a composer directs the playing of music. The way a poem appears on the page provides an accurate indication of how it should be read, but just as musical notations indicate when a section should be played loudly or softly, so too placement and juxtaposition of words may prompt pause, speed and tone. This provides flexibility to the reader, but also direction sufficient to achieve the desired effect of the author. Levertov (1965) further describes the psychological effect that placement of words on a page prompts in a reader. On a musical score a piece that is crowded with notes may provoke an agitated, busy feeling. A poem that fills up a page, psychologically may have a similarly intimidating effect. The way a poem looks on a page has an equal impact to that of hearing the poem read aloud. This sets up for the reader a kind of ear-eye coordination, each of equal importance.

In recounting his own use of form, Ashbery (1976) describes his early years of writing in strict adherence to form and meter. With more experience he progressed to free poetry, without the need to consider form. He recalls, however, that early attempts to write without traditional form were not particularly successful. After digesting form, he was able to focus on what he considered to be more important aspects of poetry.

Form in poetry has become very open. From Blackburn's perspective form was by no means a necessity. Each poem must find its own form and its own music. This, he believed, was much harder than writing quatrains all the time (Packard, 1987). The organic nature of form in poetry has been described by Levertov (1965) as exploratory and intuitive. Form exists in all things and in all experiences. It is the poet's task to

discover and reveal this form. Within this process a poet must recognise that we all perceive experiences and events differently and the discovery of form is based on intuition – a form beyond forms.

Poetry that follows organic form, Levertov (1965) believed, begins with an experience or collection of perceptions of great interest to the author, such that they feel compelled to describe it in words. Where such words follow organic form, the metric movement (or measure) of the poem is a direct expression of the movement of perception. The sounds of the poem reflect, not the sounds of the experience, but rather the feeling of the experience with all its emotional tone and texture. Together the measure and sounds of the poem come to resemble a kind of extended onomatopoeia (Levertov, 1965).

This bares great resemblance to the process followed by qualitative researchers particularly those practicing a phenomenological methodology seeking the essence of experience. A qualitative researcher must participate in an ongoing process of in-dwelling, constantly comparing their own experience and disposition to that of their participants and available literature (Swinton & Mowat, 2006). Levertov (1998) similarly describes a process of discovery in writing poetry. This process was likened to links in a chain: beginning with a Reverence for Life (our own and those of other living things), leading to Attention for Life (to the world outside our own and the voices within us), progressing to a highly developed Seeing and Hearing (often indistinguishable to the poet), to the Discovery and Revelation of Form (identifying the organic relationships of experienced phenomena), and ending in Form to Song (evolution of consciousness towards wholeness).

In identifying the similar nature of qualitative research, particularly that following a phenomenological methodology, and the development of poetry it is possible to draw parallels between the craft of poetry and the rigour of research. Both are fundamental to their respective development and credibility. Extending the reach of poetry into the domain of qualitative research marries two diverse mediums, each primarily seeking to

understand and express meaning. This would appear to present a mutually beneficial basis for endeavour.

Perhaps the most significant concern with integrating poetry and qualitative research falls within the long-held debate over the blending of art and science. This has a long history and primarily begins with Goethe in the late 1700s. Goethe is best known for his literary and poetic work but maintained a strong interest in science. He believed that science and art should be considered side by side. This is because our capacity to observe objects and events and apply perception, reason and meaning to their presence is consistent with the development of both art and science (Bortoft, 1996, 2009; Naydler, 2011a). Goethe's scientific endeavours were criticised (both in his time and subsequently) because they were based on the concept of an archetype or blueprint for growth and development (Pratt & Brook, 1996). Pratt & Brook (1996), however point to an under-estimation of Goethe's concept of archetype and liken it to the idea of a person expressing themselves through their own development.

Goethe focused on quality, believing that the Human Being is the most exact instrument. This contrasts with those whose approach to science he opposed, namely Newton and Darwin, whose focus remained directed toward quantity. This is partly because of a new-found fascination with what could not be seen with the naked eye (through microscopes) and because a distrust of reliance on human senses alone (in the absence of technology) was beginning to emerge (Pratt & Brook, 1996). For Goethe quality was maintained by retaining connection with the lived experience of human relationship with nature. The use of instruments that provide a quantitative perspective offer a potentially distorted and one-sided view of nature (Naydler, 1996). Quantity has remained the focus of scientific enquiry drawing heavily on (quantitative) mathematics for its justification (Bortoft, 1996). Thorough research of the history of science placed Goethe in a realm well beyond his time, because he was able to recognise that there were many different ways of conceiving the world. Science of his time, and arguably continuing to the present, conceived a very narrow view which in turn led to a belief that this was factual (Bortoft, 1996). Goethe's view of science was that of the "lived

experience of phenomena, instead of mathematical abstractions and microscopic explanations” (Bortoft, 1996, p10).

Another aspect to Goethe’s view of the world that differs to that of the scientific view, with which we are most familiar, pertains to the relationship between man and nature. Goethe described the archetype of a plant as the essence of the plant and that the precise expression of that development was dependent upon the circumstances surrounding development in much the same way as a human development (Pratt & Brook, 1996). With the exponential growth of science and technology has emerged an increasing separateness and notion that nature would be better off without the involvement of man. Goethe believed that nature and man belonged together, and that nature becomes more fully itself through man’s intervention. This describes a necessity in belongingness rather than an accidental conjunction (Bortoft, 1996). Goethe’s views were not, however, isolated from an historical and cultural context as they were consistent with that of the Romantics of the 18th Century (Pratt & Brook, 1996).

Paradoxically, as Naydler (1996, 2011b) points out, it is the very success of mainstream science that prevents us having a closer relationship with nature. We no longer trust our own perception of the world around us, instead accepting that the ‘real reality’ of nature is contained within a superior knowledge made up of authorised definitions, classifications and interpretations (Naydler, 1996). Goethe’s extensive investigation into a range of sciences (including colour, osteology, comparative anatomy, geology, botany, zoology and meteorology) focused on the sensory realm and aimed to gain a knowledge of the world that was distinctly human and enriched (rather than impoverished) human experience of nature. This was only to be gained through intensified experience and deepened understanding. Goethe was committed to revitalising our perception of the world so that we might regain our connection and sense of belonging. The growing remoteness of direct human experience and relationship with nature was at the heart of an ecological crisis with equal consequences for both nature and human consciousness (Naydler, 1996).

Goethe believed that every new object, clearly seen, opens up a new organ of perception in us. Yet, “there is a difference between seeing and seeing; ... the eyes of the spirit have to work in perpetual living connection with those of the body, for one otherwise risks seeing and yet seeing past a thing” (Goethe, 2006, p.115). Pratt & Brook (1996) acknowledge that Goethe, the poet, could see within the outwardly observable form of a plant, an expression of some inner undeveloped essential part of itself, that was not only revolutionary for the time, but also pointed firmly toward the modern era. Goethe recognised the difficulty of finding a language adequate to describe the phenomena observed in nature. This meant that scientists needed to utilise many different languages so that their writing could be as comprehensive and all-embracing as possible (Naydler & Bortoft, 1996). By inference this would support poetic expression within a research framework.

Within the 20th Century, scientific development and technological change have become a key feature of modernity. This has impacted poetry in two distinct ways. Firstly, poetry is no longer considered central to cultural awareness as it was in the 19th Century. Secondly, poets have sought cultural authority for a more experimental approach by drawing on scientific metaphor and technological change (Armstrong, 2003). A contradiction emerges, however, where poetry has incorporated science, but also continues to criticise science for dispersing and objectifying human knowledge rather than binding and subjectifying it. Armstrong (2003) describes contradiction itself as one of the keynotes of modernity.

The increasing abstraction evident in science, to some poets, came to be seen like a kind of poetry (Armstrong, 2003). The hypothetical nature of science, particularly the indeterminate aspect of ‘the new physics’ was also postulated as healing the gap between the subjective and objective worlds of poetry and science. The early part of the 20th century for both scientists and poets was seen as chaotic. This included a rejection of 19th Century materialism and a desire to seek the most elementary units (or essence) within the sciences and the arts (Armstrong, 2003).

The modern era has been shaped by changes in the relationship between people and nature. Savage (1942) describes a change in human consciousness, whereby man (sic) has been forced to objectify nature in order to progress to an acceptance of mechanisation. A process of separation from nature and increasing mechanisation has left an indelible mark on expression within culture. Savage (1942) draws a parallel between our estrangement from nature and an impoverishing impact on all facets of the arts, but particularly poetry. This is because nature provides us with the material basis of our being and the further removed from it we become the more simplified and abstract becomes our mode of perception. This mechanised form of perception cannot hope to maintain an intimate responsiveness to natural rhythms or participate with the inner life of nature (Savage, 1942).

The history of poetry (in England) shows that highly mechanised periods have, however, been followed by a deeper urge by poets to re-connect with nature. Savage (1942) identifies the necessity of a more organic relationship with reality in order to embrace a new wholeness with human living. Similarly, Kunitz & Lentine (2007) related that within poetic expression, reason cannot be dominant, feeling is much more important. “In rhythm and sound, language has the capacity to transcend reason” (Kunitz & Lentine, 2007, p.105).

Recognition of the contrast between rational thinking common to conventional science and intuitive perception identified with the poetic sensibility also underpinned the work of Goethe (Goethe, 2009). Rational thinking, he described as appropriate to fixed forms, whereas intuitive perception was more akin to formative process. Each had its place (in moving between the whole and the parts), but it was poetic sensibility that could get closer to nature, accessing natural phenomena which he described as the Divine (Goethe, 2009).

Nature generally and the garden specifically has provided rich metaphor for poetic expression. Kunitz & Lentine (2007) associated the garden with the whole experience of being alive. He believed that there was “nothing in the range of human experience that

was separate from what the garden can signify in its eagerness and its insistence, and in its driving energy to live – to grow, to bear fruit” (Kunitz & Lentine, 2007, p.3).

A poem provides a means to relate an energy or spirit below the surface. Kunitz & Lentine (2007) believed that a poem was muddled by too much explanation and that the energy of a poem lay in the secrets it enfolds. The secrets, rhythms and tensions within a poem give it a physicality and open up spaces for silence and void, as well as imagery and bloom. In a manner similar to phenomenologists, Kunitz recognised that each part must contribute to the whole such that what remains unsaid is just as important as what is said. A poem should reveal its secrets slowly so that the reader has time to create an image in their own mind. In the same way as Goethe, Kunitz appreciated the importance not only of blooms, but also the form a plant takes when it has finished blooming “as if blooming is all a plant has to do. That’s a complete fallacy and limitation” (Kunitz & Lentine, 2007, p.77).

Within a garden, just as in a poem, there is a danger in exacting too much control. If a garden is tamed too much it becomes a ‘thing’ and simply landscaping (Kunitz & Lentine, 2007). Where an author attempts to dictate every syllable, the potential force and energy of a poem is dissipated. Kunitz & Lentine (2007) believed that a poem contains within it the secret sources of one’s own life energy and life convictions and that this is embodied in the language of the poem. This perspective provides room to consider that poetry produced without full knowledge of poetic tradition maintains value for its capacity to explore energy and meaning-making.

The ability of poetry to create and re-create imagery is compelling. Shelley (1969; Sidney, 1890) describes a process of awakening and enlarging the mind itself as it takes in a thousand unapprehended combinations of thought. So too, the possibility of making familiar objects be as if they were not familiar provides a rich opportunity for the researcher to derive meaning in experience in a way not previously conceivable. For Shelley (1969) imagination was the great instrument of moral good because when expressed through poetry it could reach the essence of experience and the place in the

mind where thoughts first begin – outside of consciousness and will. “We know no more of cause and effect than a constant conjunction of events: poetry is ever found to coexist with whatever other arts contribute to the happiness and perfection of man” (Shelley, 1969, p.4).

As part of the Romantic movement, and a contemporary of Shelley, Samuel Taylor Coleridge also focused on imagination. Coleridge (2002) separated imagination into two modes: Primary Imagination that is a receptive phase of perception; followed by the Secondary Imagination, that is driven by conscious will and involving the active work of composition (Burwick, 2008). Coleridge distinguished between active and passive perception. Where active perception involves the mental power of comprehension and passive perception involves the mere receptivity of impressions. In a manner similar to Goethe, Coleridge believed that to see into the life of things, we must see into ourselves. This means we must effectively engage in an act of double consciousness, recognising ourselves as ‘the thinking Being’ in the act of beholding (Coleridge, 2002). In this way the act of perception is not passive, but rather our own sentient activity witnesses the motion it gives away in the things beheld (Burwick, 2008). For Coleridge the act of will in perception was an important precursor to creativity and imagination.

A link between creativity and poetry was also recognised by Cohen (2001, 2005) when considering the unrealised potential of elders. He believed that creativity was an untapped resource in older people and that it was potentially elevated in this stage of life. Cohen points to the work of William Carlos Williams (1951) as an example of a prolific and acclaimed output of poetry in the later stages of life. In an autobiography written by William Carlos Williams (1951, p.47) he described “my first poem was a bolt from the blue ... it broke a spell of disillusion and suicidal despondence ... it filled me with soul satisfying joy”. For Williams creating poetry helped him to overcome a significant episode of depression. This led to a highly productive output of published poetry while in his seventies.

Creativity has been described by May (1959) as a joy experienced due to heightened consciousness and the practice of actualising our own potential. Cohen (2001, 2005, 2006, 2009) saw the positive impact of the arts on health and illness in the second half of life and that promoting health with ageing was best realised by tapping potential rather than minimising harms. Similarly, Maduro (1974) recognised that older people are more in touch with their inner psychology than at any other time in the lifespan.

Within this study a relationship between poetry and research has remained foremost in my mind because of the many parallels between poetic endeavour and a phenomenological approach to qualitative research. A focus on the creative mind, imagination, (un)conscious thought and action, connection to nature and spiritual expression rest comfortably within both domains. In returning to the theoretical perspective of Gadamer, it can be seen that a methodological approach utilising the 'fusion of horizons' can encompass each of the above priorities. Horizons may be broadened when new perspectives are taken on existing views, hence producing potential for the creation of new views. For Gadamer (1975), emphasising a fusion of horizons recognises the tension between divergent beliefs. Fusion may occur as a result of dialogue which may be considered successful if new perspectives of a given situation or circumstance can be gained (Vessey, 2009). Given the above discussion, it would appear that without a fusion of horizons between art and science, thorough and meaningful understanding of phenomena may not be possible.

3.2 Method

“The garden communicates what it shows to you, but you also contribute to the garden some of what you are seeking in terms of your own life, your own state of being. One reason a garden can speak to you is that it is both its own reality and a manifestation of the interior life of the mind that imagined it in the beginning” (Kunitz & Lentine, 2007, p.73)

The following section will outline how this research was conducted. Firstly, I will begin with a description of the hermeneutic circle and fusion of horizons, drawn from theoretical positioning, and applied initially to the conduct of interviews and then to the process of data analysis. I will then introduce my participants using a general description of characteristics. Next, I will discuss sampling, data saturation, data collection. This will be followed by discussion of the elements of trustworthiness and authenticity (or rigour) and ethical considerations.

3.2.1 Fusion of Horizons

Acknowledging the fusion of horizons (first discussed in Section 3.2) has provided guidance to the interview process carried out with participants. As the primary form of data collection it was important to understand how my own perspectives were both distinguished from and blended with that of participants. The conceptual basis of the fusion of horizons (and to a lesser extent the hermeneutic circle) informed my previous study ‘Health, Wellbeing and the Domestic Garden: a phenomenological perspective’ completed as part of the Master of Health Sciences (at La Trobe University). This has been depicted in Diagram 2 below.

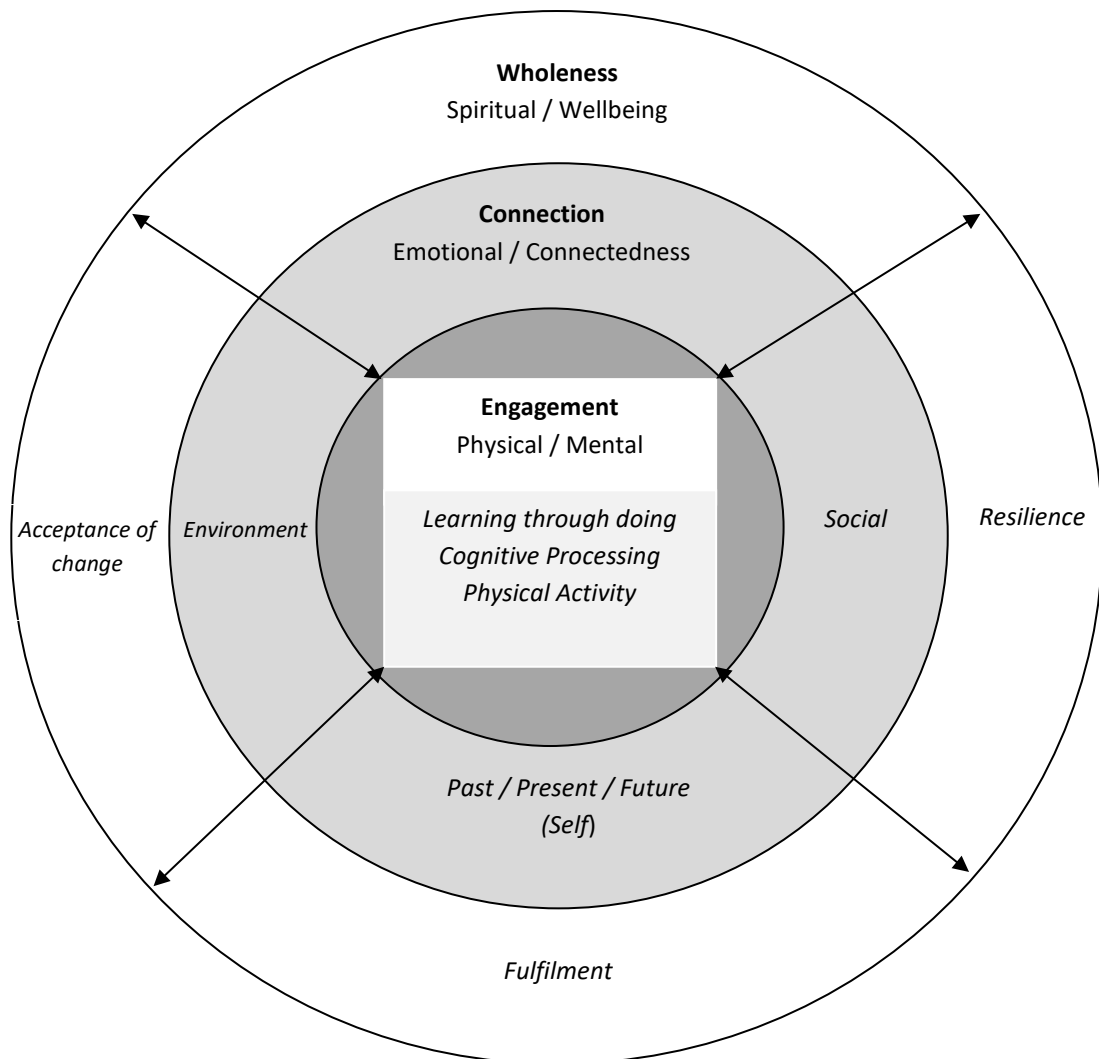


Figure 2 - Domestic Gardening Model

Adams, J. (2011). Health, Wellbeing and the Domestic Garden: a phenomenological perspective.

Unpublished MA dissertation. La Trobe University.

Within this figure the process of gaining progressive wellbeing from garden practice has been depicted in three layers. Similarly, to the hermeneutic circle, it presents a process of moving between the parts and the whole depending on context and circumstance. Previous participants were seen to move back and forth between each layer of experience with physical, mental, emotional and spiritual dimensions respectively. Each experience was unique, but the common basis for experience followed the same pattern. This model offers an intuitively consistent basis for considering the spiritual nature of garden practice and reflects the importance of an empathic (gardening) relationship between researcher and participant. It also helped in both the formulation of interview questions and their subsequent modification as interviews progressed.

Within Figure 3, (below) the model has been altered to reflect those elements of phenomenological insight that have guided this study. Embodied practice in the central layer reflects the process of engagement in the garden in which physical and mental energy combined in the physical act of doing/being. As an everyday experience within a domestic setting this provides an important basis for understanding the 'knowing' of the body. In the second layer a form of connectedness emerges from ongoing holistic observation. This layer is particularly akin to a phenomenological perspective because holistic observation allows an individual to draw meaning from experience. Emotional responsiveness is also significant within this layer. The outer layer relates to experience that has been described as spiritual. These phenomena are frequently 'beyond what words can say'. For this study poetic expression has been chosen to enhance description of this layer because it has the capacity to be reflexive, creative and participative.

Acknowledging a spiritual component to the research process is consistent with the scientific approach of Goethe. For Goethe, science (and by implication research) required an inner path of spiritual development just as much as it required an accumulation of knowledge of the physical world (Naydler, 1996). Within a research context this means calling not only upon skills of observation and thinking, but also skills that enable us to reach the spiritual dimension such as feeling, imagination, creativity and intuition (Naydler, 1996). It is this balance of inner and outer dimensions that enables us to see the 'whole' as well as the 'parts'. Goethe believed that the human being was the most powerful and exact instrument providing we could refine our sensibilities to the subtleties of nature and retain our connection with a lived human relationship with nature. Furthermore, Goethe believed that the extent to which nature is in need of being healed corresponds directly to the extent to which our consciousness of nature is sick. Through intensifying our experience of nature, it might be possible to reveal and participate in her spiritual dimension (Naydler, 1996).

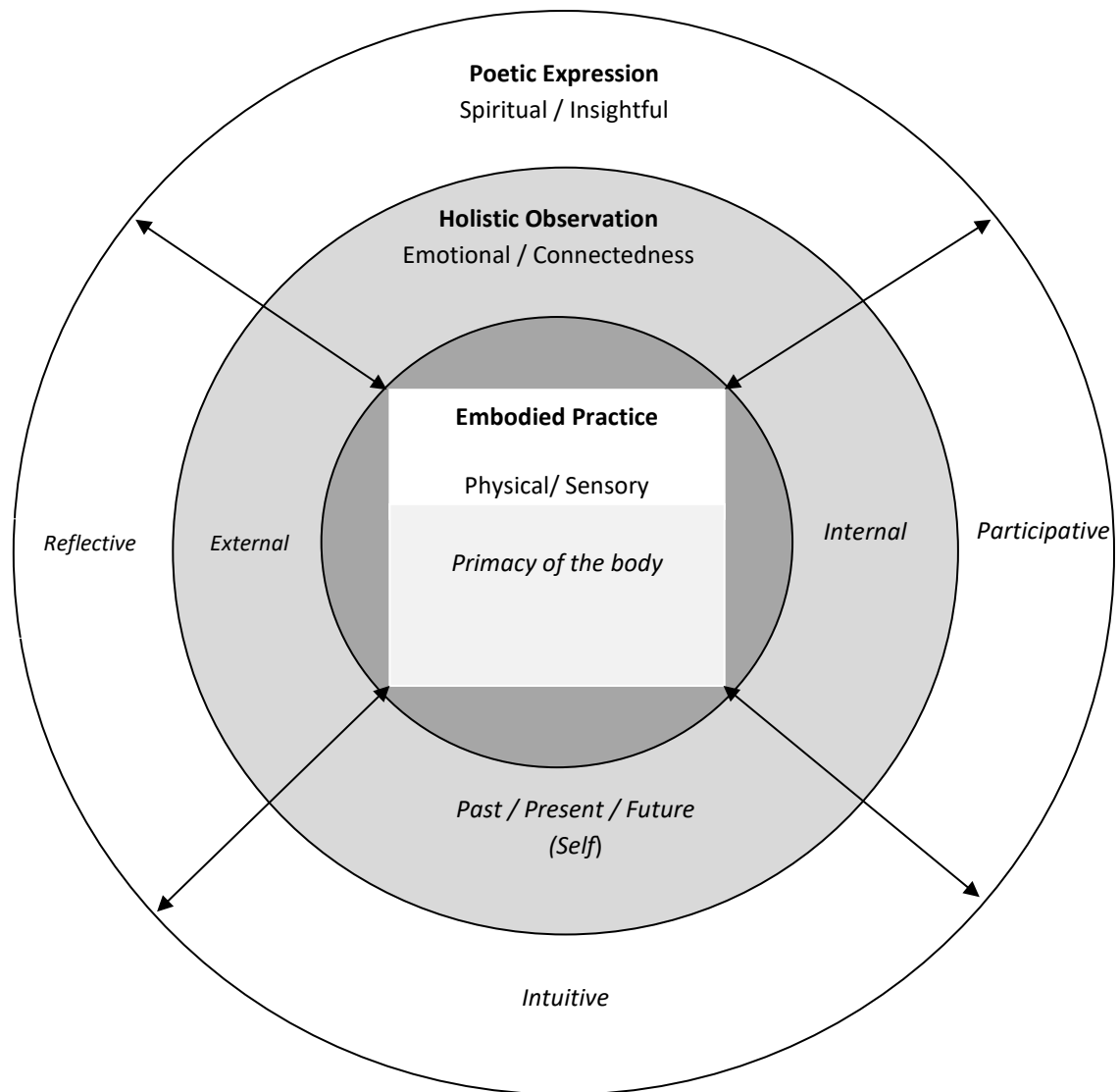


Figure 3 - Methodological Progression

3.2.2 Sampling and Data Saturation

Sampling for this study was purposive (Johnson & Waterfield, 2004; Liamputtong, 2013; Starks & Brown Trinidad, 2007). This accords with a phenomenological approach because only those that had experienced the phenomenon of garden practice (gardening) were included (Robinson, 2013; Starks & Brown Trinidad, 2007). Participants met chosen criteria for the purposes of the study, including age range (70 years plus), geographic location and interest in gardening. Snowball sampling also located one additional participant who fitted the given criteria (Liamputtong, 2013).

Primarily, sample size depended on availability of participants who met the abovementioned criteria. Importantly, the opportunity to reach data saturation was also a strong consideration because this would be the point at which data collection should cease (Guest, Bunce & Johnson, 2006). Bernard (2013) describes the importance of reaching data saturation, but also notes that the number of participants required to reach this point cannot be quantified. Similarly, Morse, Lowery and Steury (2014) state that the concept of data saturation has been defined and used in many different ways, yet failure to reach data saturation can impact upon the quality and content validity of the study (Fusch & Ness, 2015).

Similarly, Todres (2005) points to the importance of quality rather than quantity of participants. An adequate sample size is one that sufficiently answers the research question (Marshall, 1996). In this sense then generalizability is not sought by the researcher and the focus is less on sample size and more on sample adequacy (Bowen, 2008). Bowen argues that adequacy of sampling relates to the demonstration that saturation has been reached, which means that depth as well as breadth of information is achieved. Qualitative researchers often make decisions related to the adequacy of their sample based on the notion of saturation. There has been, however, a development of the ways in which saturation is understood and utilised by researchers. The consequence of this has been that there is now some confusion in terms of what saturation means, how it should be used and when it is applicable (O'Reilly & Parker, 2013). I aimed to gain rich descriptive data from participants. Data saturation was reached when no new themes or codes emerged from interview transcripts (Guest, Bunce, & Johnson, 2006).

3.2.3 Participants

Participants to the study shared many great insights and wisdom. I very much enjoyed spending time with them and in many cases far longer than the expected interview time. Participants were sourced primarily from a regional retirement village. Two participants were sourced from an independent contact and lived in the regional town. Within the

village each resident lived independently, and participants ranged in age from 71-93 years. All were involved in some capacity in maintaining the garden surrounding their unit or house and each shared stories of their previous gardens prior to coming to the village. Their accommodation ranged from one and two-bedroom units to separate houses. There were twelve participants in total with 11 women and 1 man (a gender balance was not sought).

Through arrangement with the Manager, residents were invited to an information session about the study. Invitations were specifically sent to members of the Garden Club and any other interested gardeners and flyers were placed in common areas of the village. Snowball sampling was also used in order to locate people who fit the given criteria outside the village (Liamputtong, 2013).

Interested parties were then contacted to check their suitability to chosen criteria (that is that they were 70 years plus in age and had a strong interest in gardening) and provide an opportunity to discuss the aims of the study. The voluntary nature of the study, anonymity and their anticipated role was also discussed (Robinson, 2013). A time and date for interview was then made. Participants were provided with detailed information regarding the study to ensure they were able to provide informed consent prior to interview. Any questions regarding the study were discussed over the phone or prior to the interview.

3.2.4 Data Collection

Data has been collected through the use of in-depth, semi-structured, open interviews (Guest, Namey, & Mitchell, 2013; Liamputtong, 2013). Inter-embodied listening was followed in conducting phenomenologically oriented interviews. Todres (2007) describes the possibility of gaining inter-embodied understanding based on this approach to interviewing because it seeks to clarify rather than direct discussion and employs sensitive decisions with regard to keeping the interview focused on the phenomenon of

the study. This corresponds to the approach of Gadamer in seeking a fusion of horizons in order to generate understanding.

Importantly, inter-embodied listening encourages interviewees to use words that faithfully describe their bodily sense of experience. Seeking 'words that work' (for both the participant and interviewer) enables shared sense-making to occur. 'Languaging and embodying is a procedure in which 'doing' provides more intricate possibilities for knowing' (Todres, 2007, p.39). The emotional framing of the interview also has significant impact on whether the outcome is either one of communion or conquest (Ezzy, 2010).

The interview has been described by Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) as the main method of data collection in phenomenological research because it provides a situation where the participants' descriptions can be explored, clarified and gently probed. Yet this requires great skill to gain clear insight (Wimpenny & Gass, 2000) and the establishment of trust such that participants have the opportunity to translate knowing into telling (van Manen, 1990). From a phenomenological perspective the intricacy of understanding, or knowing, comes not only from the content of the interview, but also the embodied performance that the interview process represents (Ezzy, 2010).

An interview guide was used to guide discussion (see Appendix A.1). This has been viewed with some contention with regard to phenomenological method (Bevan, 2014; Norlyk & Harder, 2010; Wimpenny & Gass, 2000). Bevan (2014) draws on the suggestion of Paul Ricoeur (as cited by Ihde, (1971)), that phenomenology must be structural and has no universal method. In keeping with this and yet enabling increased consistency and trustworthiness, Bevan (2014) developed a structure for phenomenological interviewing consisting of three domains: contextualisation, apprehending the phenomenon and clarifying the phenomenon. This has been adapted for use in this study and consists of general issues drawn from the literature. The interview guide was revised as the interviews progressed and any new information of interest emerged. A funnelling method (as described by Minichiello (2008)) has been used to guide the flow

of information. This allowed the interview process to be more relaxed and conversational, beginning with general and broad ranging questions and progressing to more direct questions (Minichiello et al., 2008).

Hitchings & Jones (2004) have documented the importance of conducting interviews in the location where the practice of interest occurs, the garden. Walking in the garden triggers conversations and insights as an array of prompts unfold for discussion. This includes triggers from past experience and memory, attributes of plants in varying seasons and an understanding of everyday activities undertaken (Hitchings & Jones, 2004). This is also consistent with a public health approach to study in which the setting provides greater insight to the experience of participants (Victora, Habicht, & Bryce, 2004). In this way the plants themselves are integral to the method because they can prompt actions and conversations. This has enhanced data gathered in a way not possible in a setting removed from the garden. The importance of environmental features in shaping discussions is similarly supported by Evans and Jones (2011) in their description of the walking interview. With the permission of participants interviews were conducted in their garden.

The importance of establishing rapport was carefully considered for each interview. Minichiello et al. (2008) describe the importance of openly approaching the interview as an opportunity to learn rather than impart knowledge. Respect was shown for the knowledge and experience of each participant and in a manner consistent with Todres (2009) perspective, importance was placed on gaining some understanding of how each participant viewed the world. It was also imperative not to pre-empt the participant's perception of what the researcher regarded as important.

Interviews were digitally recorded with the permission of the participant. While the garden setting made recording more difficult, the size and portability of current equipment made this possible (Evans & Jones, 2011; Hitchings & Jones, 2004).

Interviews were approximately one hour in length and were preceded by providing information regarding the intention of the study and interview, and how that data will

be used. This was supported by provision of a participant information sheet and completion of participant consent form.

Interviews began in September 2014. Initially, it was planned to conduct two interviews with each participant with an interval of 6 months. This was to ensure clear memory of discussion between interviews and to ensure interviews occurred in a different season, hence prompting potentially different insights from participants. Due to personal circumstances, the period between interviews was approximately 12 months. Three participants were unavailable for a second interview. The first interview placed particular emphasis on gaining an understanding of the participant's view of the world and range of experience in the garden. The physical experience of garden practice was discussed (in the past and present), and the significance of memory. At the first interview the generation of poetry was discussed. Participants were invited to either write a poem or suggest key words to be put towards the development of the poem that I would later write. From this I gained an understanding of how important the garden has been (and continues to be) for the general health and wellbeing of both the participant and their family.

The second interview presented an opportunity to confirm my own understanding of the participant's perspective and to share either a poem they had written or one that I had written based on transcript information. At the second interview, one participant had written a poem. For others sharing a poetic version of the interview transcript that I had written provided a deeper insight to the experiences described. Poetry developed as part of this process formed an important part of the findings. With the permission of participants, poetry shared as part of the interview process may be published separately at a later date.

In developing poetry with participants, I was aware of varying levels of knowledge and confidence with poetic form. The development process was therefore entirely voluntary. I employed a flexible approach in the preparation of poetry. Poems were pre-prepared using participants own words from the transcript of their first interview.

At the second interview participants were invited to review the poem and make any changes to ensure it reflected their felt sense of garden experience.

3.2.5 Data Analysis and Development of Poetry

A hermeneutic approach to data analysis and interpretation was adopted in this study because it allows focus to be placed on language and context (Liamputtong, 2013). Language is a precondition to understanding and once transformed into text it becomes an object of interpretation. Ezzy (2002a) refers to Gadamer (1975) in describing hermeneutic analysis as a dance where the interpretations of researcher and participant are 'repeatedly interwoven' to enable a sophisticated understanding to emerge (p.25). A fusion of horizons becomes possible when insights are shared and an understanding of possible difference in perspective is reached. This approach to analysis is enhanced by the insights of Goethe in considering how moving between the parts and the whole can reveal a unifying basis to experience, or metamorphosis of form (Miller, 2009).

In utilising the fusion of horizons, analysis became an iterative process of reflection and interpretation throughout the progress of interviews (Koch, 1996). Key statements were gleaned from participant transcripts and grouped by relevant themes. A homogeneity of perspective became evident amongst participants. Coding of themes was a process shared with my Research Supervisors who similarly noted the resemblance of shared insight amongst participants. Emerging themes were then considered in light of relevant literature and a period of researcher reflection. Moustakas (1990) describes the period of researcher reflection as a heuristic process in that intuition guides the steps taken and the researcher focuses 'inward' on feeling responses to the outward situation. Data analysis combined consideration of data, existing theory and empirical research, as well as researcher intuition.

Poetry developed from the second interview enhanced the standard form of presenting findings. This meant that the essence of the conversation could be captured in poetic form through a process of condensing key statements. Poetry allowed a re-creation of

lived experience and evoked emotional responses while remaining true to the sociological understanding of the participants story (Richardson, 1993, 1994). It provided a creative way of representing interview data that respected the tone and movement of the original conversation in ways that traditional research forms cannot (Cahnmann, 2003). The choice of whether to provide findings in prose or poetic form depended on the flow of the conversation at interview. Some findings were presented in prose and others in poetic form.

An example of how poetry was developed from transcripts can be seen in the following conversation with a participant identified as Constance (not her real name). Our interview was much like a conversation and was conducted while sitting outside in her garden. In the following extract, broken into two parts, she describes her delight in sitting and watching all that went on in the garden. She recognised that others may not find the same level of enjoyment, but that her level of enjoyment could be sustained for extended periods of time. Time spent in the garden led to interaction in the form of pulling out weeds. In condensing this transcript into a poem I identified the key features of the conversation as: fascination with the wildlife in the garden; an acknowledgement that others may not understand her fascination; and the action of pulling out weeds and being left with black hands as a lasting image of time spent in the garden. In my own mind this was also coupled with a photographic image of Stanley Kunitz with black hands after working in his garden and consideration of my own hands when I have spent sometimes unexpected amounts of time in the garden, culminating in pulling out weeds.

Minutes	Voice	
07:38	Constance	And a lot of people wouldn't like to just sit here and watch. I could sit here for hours
	Jo	Yeah, yeah. There's plenty to see and to hear
07:47	Constance	Yes, yes
	Jo	You can hear the birds
	Constance	And I've got an, a little lizard about that long and they're usually around here. They just don't worry about that
	Jo	No, no
	Constance	And the magpies they walk round here. I'll be sitting here and they'll walk around here

	Jo	They're used to you sitting here [both laughing]. They can be cheeky though can't they
16:29	Constance	Thriptamine. It's the wattle flower of the Grampians. Its quite pretty isn't it.
16:40	Jo	It is pretty yeah. So you were talking about when your parents had a garden. So do you think that most of the things you learnt came from your parents. Or do you think you just learnt as you went.
16:49	Constance	No I think I've just learnt a lot because I've just enjoyed doing anything in the garden. I sit here and I think oh I'll just pull that out and I look round there and there's another one there. I go inside with black hands and a pile of weeds. Since its been mulched its been a lot better

Figure 4 - Example of poetry development

Black hands and a warm heart
Did I stay too long?

How could I ever start
To explain all the wonder

Colours, shapes, creatures dart
Time stands still and yet

With black hands and a warm heart
I know I've had my fill.

Extract of an interview with Constance

A field journal was kept to document researcher perspectives. Mostly this contained my thoughts and feelings in the form of poems I had written. Some poems from this journal are prefaced in the Findings and other sections of the thesis where they are deemed relevant to the discussion. The journal in its entirety appears in Appendix A.3 and is divided into topics such as: ageing, gardening in a range of circumstances, family life within the garden, experiences of hardship and illness, emotional responsiveness, personal thoughts and ambitions, historical perspectives on the garden and consciousness. These helped not only to reflect my own reactions both to what participants had shared and my own personal experiences, but also in the development of themes and their subsequent modification. This not only reinforced the rigour of the process, but also facilitated thematic analysis (Tuckett, 2005).

Within a hermeneutic phenomenological approach, the role of the researcher is intrinsic to the gathering and interpreting of data. A personal perspective, together with information gleaned from relevant literature and the experience of participants, is layered within the data gathered. Walent (2008), further points to the deep rooted nature of religious and spiritual beliefs and the importance of the researcher carefully examining any pre-understandings that may pose a threat to the authenticity of findings.

The reflective journal, together with the development of transcription poetry (Lahman et al., 2010; Lahman & Richard, 2013) became part of the fusion of horizons and enriched my capacity to reflect upon my own experience, the lived experience of participants, and existing empirical and theoretical literature (Ezzy, 2002a). Furthermore, transcription poetry was shared and modified with each participant at a follow-up interview.

3.2.6 Trustworthiness and Authenticity

Within the interpretivist or hermeneutic tradition of phenomenology, consideration of rigour and validity has been subject to change and some contention (Schwandt, Lincoln, & Guba, 2007). The approach of Guba and Lincoln (1994) has perhaps been most enduring and can be seen as an extension of how we interpret principles of truthfulness, honesty, correctness and actionability in our everyday life (Schwandt et al., 2007). Guba and Lincoln (1994) describe principles of rigour in naturalistic evaluation using the terms trustworthiness and authenticity (Schwandt et al., 2007). Carpenter and Suto (2008) further assert that such principles are based on the constructivist assumption that there is no single reality, but rather multiple realities formed by individuals. A study that employs appropriate rigour will ensure authentic and plausible representation of lived experience.

Strategies to ensure trustworthiness and authenticity within this study have been based on the above principles and accord with those outlined by Liamputtong (2013) including:

methodological choice, engagement and fieldwork, rich (thick description), interpretation and evidence, reflexivity and triangulation.

The phenomenological methodology and method chosen for use in this study provides consistency in theoretical perspective. Exploring lived experience through embodied enquiry, alternative modes of observation and sensory awareness and shared (collaborative) means of expression provides depth to analysis and presentation of findings. Including two interviews with participants has provided a valued means of reducing any undue influence on my part (Padgett, 2009). My Research Supervisors reviewed transcripts and resulting coding which also assisted in this regard. Rich (thick) description of the methods and processes undertaken also assisted to demonstrate increased reliability of data (Carpenter & Suto, 2008). This accorded with principles of data saturation outlined in 3.2.2 above.

In keeping with a phenomenological approach to inquiry, researcher reflexivity has formed an important part of the study. As outlined above this assisted with data analysis, but acknowledging my own assumptions and observation also assist to increase the trustworthiness and authenticity of the study (Grbich, 1999; Johnson & Waterfield, 2004; Koch, 2006). The field journal also provided poetic reflection of researcher experience in the garden.

Triangulation has been described by Liamputtong (2013) as the most powerful means of strengthening credibility in qualitative research because each strategy used provides a different perspective of reality. This study has been based on a wide cross-section of multi-disciplinary perspectives of the significance of spiritual expression and garden practice for older people drawn from peer reviewed sources. The study has also employed several methods of data collection, namely in-depth interviews, observation and poetry. Multiple quotations from participants has been used to illustrate emerging themes. Additionally member checking, or participant validation of transcripts and poetry occurred during the second interview with participants. This has been used to ensure the trustworthiness and authenticity of the study (Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

3.2.7 Ethical Considerations

The ability of participants to provide informed consent to their participation in the study was very important. It is acknowledged that older people have an increased vulnerability due to possible frailty and reduced cognitive function. This vulnerability is heightened particularly when research is conducted within their own home. I was conscious of this when discussing the study with the retirement village Manager. Presenting the study and myself within the village meeting space provided opportunity to reduce any potential discomfort of participants prior to them assessing documented information regarding the study. It also provided a forum for discussion both with myself and with fellow residents of the village. Participants were given detailed information regarding their participation in the study and invited to ask questions about anything they did not understand. Participant consent has been documented and participants were advised they may withdraw from the study at any time.

Participant confidentiality was an important consideration for this study. All names used throughout are pseudonyms. All data has been de-identified and appropriately stored with password protection for computer files and locked cabinet for hard copy details. Information for participants regarding these measures was described in an information sheet (National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) & Universities Australia, 2007 (Updated 2018)).

For all participants the garden had been and continued to be an important part of their lives. It represented strong links to past, present and future. I was keenly aware that the garden generally and some plants in particular, were strongly emotive. For some participants they represented lost partners and family members. For some, health conditions and frailty were immediately obvious, for others similar conditions may have been less obvious. I was also aware that many participants had been widowed, some recently and others many years previously. This raised potential issues of concern for both the participant and myself as researcher (Dickson-Swift, James, Kippen, &

Liamputtong, 2007; Sque, 2000; Sque, Walker, & Long-Sutehall, 2014). Researcher consideration for the participant means having respect for the participant and acknowledging that they are sharing lifetime experiences with you that may not be easy to discuss. This requires skill in developing rapport and making assessments about the depth of conversation and the potential for emotional impact on both the participant and yourself. It also requires the researcher to draw on a capacity to maintain boundaries, avoid developing friendships, and manage emotions appropriately (Dickson-Swift et al., 2007). I had information available regarding support services for participants should they be necessary.

Due to the age of participants, I was aware of potential difficulties with memory, concentration and frailty. Participants within this study were however living independently and did not require additional assistance. Potential risk to the researcher of conducting interviews within the garden and/or home of participants due to the presence of pets, or actions of others was considered. This was discussed with the manager of the village primarily to minimise any disturbances or difficulties (National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) & Universities Australia, 2007 (Updated 2018)).

This study was granted ethics approval from La Trobe University Human Research Ethics Committee prior to commencement (Reference number FHEC14/122). This ensured that research proceeded with the approval of a recognised authority and that participants have the opportunity to voice any concerns with an independent authority.

CHAPTER 4 - FINDINGS

This study aimed to explore the meaning and experience of gardening for older people. On this basis, the words of participants, based on interviews conducted provide a central focus, not only for the analysis of data and inter-relationship of relevant literature, but also for recommendations for future practice and further research. They represent the central core of my study. They are imbued with many years of experience and yet also dependent on my own skill as a researcher to represent them faithfully. With this in mind, I have represented findings in the following format. Findings are also the first step in addressing the aims of this study to explore the meaning and experience of gardening for older people.

Firstly (within 4.1), a preamble giving a background to my approach to interviews, the interview process a general overview of the perspective of participants. Secondly, as a means of guidance and visual representation, findings are presented in graphic form. This helps to demonstrate visually how the subsequent themes of the study relate to one another. It also gives guidance as to the starting point of experience and the progression of that experience over time. This will be further expanded in the Discussion.

Thirdly, the actual words of participants are provided in two literary styles including prose and poetic form. The prose format is taken directly from interview transcripts. The poetic format, drawing on the words of participants, was developed following the first interview and is representative of my interpretation of the interview. As previously discussed, participants were invited to contribute key words toward poetry, but very few felt comfortable with actually writing poetry. Each poem was discussed at the second interview to be certain it reflected the intent of the participant. This is acknowledged throughout the findings following each poem.

Lastly interspersed with the actual words of participants, I provide poetry from my own journal. This has been included only where it encapsulated the essence of thought and feeling of the respective theme.

4.1 Findings Preamble

“Had I not harboured the world within me by anticipation, I would have remained blind with seeing eyes, and all research and experience would have been a lifeless and futile effort” Goethe cited in (Naydler, 1996, p.123)

The interview process within this study has been, for me, both compelling and inspiring. It confirmed my own passion for the garden, but also extended and challenged my thinking with regard to expression, communication and analysis. The garden has been a key feature within each of the participants lives and had, in many cases, shaped and re-shaped their perspectives of life and wellbeing. I quickly gained great admiration for the longevity, resilience and insight of participants and the great value of story-telling. This section will provide a preamble to findings by focusing on the challenges of discussing spirituality and spiritual expression and giving an overview of my participants circumstances and generational perspectives.

Through spending time with participants, I became keenly aware of two fundamental differences between my own experience and perspectives and that of participants. Firstly, my participants came from a different generation to my own. This meant that while our views were culturally consistent, they had been shaped by different historical, technological, material and developmental experiences. Secondly, as a researcher, my experience of the garden together with my own views on spirituality and spiritual expression have guided development of this study. Having a passion to drive the study was important, but so too an awareness of how this may shape outcomes. This cognisance is particularly important in the presentation of findings and acknowledgement of my own thoughts as distinct from those of participants.

Hermeneutics is a fundamental act of being human or being in the world and referencing Gadamer’s fusion of horizons was helpful during the interview process in reconciling difference.

From a hermeneutic phenomenological perspective, Gadamer recognised that much of the experience of being is beyond words and remains unsaid. This is particularly the

case with intangible concepts such as faith, spirituality and meaning-making. Garden experience was common to all participants but putting language to its meaning was not. Gadamer believed the use of language was highly important in reaching understanding but use of the written and spoken word also had limitations. Similarly, Heidegger recognised the flow of the unsaid and saw a productive tension between the said and the unsaid (the revealed and the concealed) (Todres, 2007).

If language cannot comprehensively describe the 'lifeworld' of lived experience, then it remains that the body and perhaps spirit of a human being must be more fully considered. The notion of embodied enquiry has therefore contributed to how the interview process has been carried out. Drawing on the views of Gendlin (1997a), intimate participation in life has been understood as the grounds that makes knowing and languaging experiences possible. Embodied enquiry acknowledges the primacy of the human body in 'sense-making' and that the felt sense of the body comes before the structure imposed on experience via cognitive processing and analysis (Todres, 2007).

For my participants, a difficulty in expressing thoughts and feelings associated with often intense meaning was evident. This is perhaps because participants had not previously been asked to openly consider the nature of feeling associated with their garden experiences, or because such experiences occur on an unconscious level. Through embodied enquiry, the depth and complexity of feeling was evident in participants' facial expressions, attention to detail, physical mannerisms and extent to which the garden represented a central component of their ongoing wellbeing. Where expression and words were difficult to find, together we searched for key words and drew on memories and specific instances of joy and sometimes pain. Poetic expression frequently provided a more holistic means of portraying such lived experiences. Through poetic expression it becomes more evident that a complete understanding of a phenomena is never completely obtained because the experiencing body continues to experience phenomena in and of itself as well as between individuals.

Difference is often incremental between generations. Technology has brought about rapid change within the last two centuries. The impact of such change has been proposed in many different forums. The lived experience of this change is, perhaps, most apparent within the generation of my participants. This is evidenced within themes to emerge from interviews. Throughout this study I have attempted to look back on previous generations with great respect, because in looking back we are better placed to also look forward.

The following poem is based on a conversation with one of my participants and describes the circumstances that many of them shared:

We call ourselves the depression kids
We had pure air
We grew everything we ate.
We had all the almonds, the figs and that
We had everything in our own back yard.
We all had our own chooks and eggs
We had our own chicken
But we had pure air
Everything was pure
That's why we are so healthy and living
(Dawn)

My participants were experienced gardeners. They each grew up with an understanding of the domestic garden that had purpose and value. Predominantly they were women living on their own, within the relative independence of a retirement village (two participants were living in the family home at the time of interview). The retirement village setting provided a number of options in accommodation, ranging from smaller one and two bedroom units located closely together within the grounds of the central village (sharing joint access), to detached housing with larger gardens and independent access. The central village contained a post office, shop, dining, recreational, health care and hair-dressing facilities that were accessible to all residents. Residents could choose

to make use of facilities, or live independently, but each resident also had access to emergency call systems for additional support. The village used the services of a gardener, but each resident was also able to maintain their own garden. Participants had lived at the facility for varying periods of 6 months to 12 years. Each had given priority to establishing a garden.

All participants were of Euro-Australian descent and had grown up within south-east Australia. They now lived within the same regional centre, but some had previously lived on farms and smaller towns and others originated from large cities. Their single status was generally due to the loss of a partner. For some this loss was very recent, for others it was up to 40 years ago. Most participants had children whom they saw in varying frequencies and ranged in age from 71 to 92 years.

There was a resilience evident in all participants because they had lived through periods of time in which scarcity was common. Hard work was expected and a capacity to creatively make do with less was frequently expressed. Some had clear and vivid experience of World War II and others relayed how their parents coped with The Great Depression and World War I. The roles of men and women were clearly designated, and religion was structured into everyday life, particularly on Sundays. Most participants had a Christian background but were aligned with a range of denominations. There was certainty in the expectations of society and although technology and science were progressing quickly, their impact on everyday life (for most) was minimal. This provided a slower pace of life to the current period and perhaps contributed to a generation in which conditions associated with mental and spiritual (ill)health were less evident and certainly less articulated.

The access and impact of technology perhaps provides the biggest point of difference between this generation and the present. Very few of the participants used current technology and most anguished at the high dependence of the current generation on technology. This led to a view that, while younger people had information at their fingertips, they had forgotten how to appreciate simple pleasures and exercise the

patience required to achieve longer term goals. Perhaps related to this disposition, was the recognised tendency of the younger generation to be more cynical about faith and/or religion and cultural structures which intended to guide behaviours.

Enjoying the simple pleasures and anticipating longer term outcomes was particularly evident in relation to the garden and gardening practices. A common characteristic of participants (and this generation generally) was childhood experience of the domestic garden. As a child, each learnt from a significant adult in their family. This was either a parent, grandparent, aunt or uncle. Value was placed on maintaining a garden, because it provided a family with fruit, vegetables and flowering plants. A capacity to be self-sufficient carried importance often because of a common experience of scarcity. Roles in maintaining a garden were frequently well established. For most participants, the man of the family would tend the vegetables, fruiting plants and lawns, while the woman would care for the flowering plants and any artistic character within the garden.

Artistic or creative activities were encouraged for women and often played a key component of home-making for a family. This included producing clothing, quilts, curtains, furnishings, paintings and other crafts. A capacity to continue participating in these activities was very important to most participants. Creativity was a valued outlet and was frequently compared to the garden in its importance. Participation in multiple forms of creative self-expression was common amongst participants. A key component of creativity was a capacity to notice and observe small changes and differences. By contrast it was recognised that men did not have the same opportunity and inclination toward creativity.

Participants generally had a stoic attitude toward health and wellbeing. All were living independently, but with varying degrees of health/ill-health. This impacted on activity levels and expectations of what could be achieved individually or with assistance of others. Many expressed the continuing importance of faith and this together with the garden were central to their ongoing wellbeing. One participant who did not maintain faith in a conventional religious way, instead placed faith in nature and the notion that

this held its own mysteries and solutions. Finding words to express the meaning and significance of faith and the garden was frequently difficult. It was evident in the faces, expressions and joy attributed to the garden and life generally.

The above represents a summary of key characteristics and values of participants. There was of course variation between individuals, but acknowledging cultural, historical and structural influences on the perspective of participants may provide some indication of how other generations might respond to garden practice and alternate forms of spiritual expression. Within the following pages I will present findings from interviews arranged within themes that emerged from the interview process. With the fusion of horizons in mind, findings reflect both the words of participants and my own thoughts relevant to emerging themes. Findings have been provided in prose and/or poetic format and attributed individually.

4.2 Researcher Reflection and Poetry

In acknowledging Gadamer's (1975) 'fusion of horizons', I wish to briefly offer some indication of my own perspective of garden practice and ageing. I provide this in the form of prose and poetry taken from my poetry journal. Throughout my PhD poetry has been a constant companion. It has helped me to untangle my thoughts, express my emotions and document my progression through some very challenging times. My own garden has been central to this experience and as such I share many common experiences with participants to this research. I wish to share and elaborate on some of the poetry written during this process to demonstrate more clearly the reflective process I have used to analyse available data. The common nature of inter-subjective experience (relating part meanings) and the creation of poetry has facilitated my capacity to intuit the experience of the whole (Holloway & Todres, 2003).

The following provides examples of poetry I have written during the progress of this study. In particular they focus on the process of ageing and the garden. More examples of my own poetry with a broader range of topics appears in Appendix A.3. Poems were

not written intentionally to topic, but rather occurred organically in accordance with my thoughts and experiences at the time of conducting the research. I will explain my process of using poetry with participants in the method section.

Ageing

Poems describing ageing are reflective of my thoughts on what ageing represents, how it is portrayed and what it means to me. The first poem relates to reflection of a time I spent working within aged care when I was aged 20 and had travelled to the United Kingdom to work. It occurred to me at the time that the quality of care received by residents depended on the capacity of the carer to comprehend what it might be like to be old. The richness of the lives of those I cared for at this time often struck me, even though I had little direct experience of what that might be like.

The stories of those I cared for were fascinating. I became aware of previous occupations and difficult times particularly experiences of living in London during the First and Second World Wars. One resident had been a gardener and I often lament since that time that he had limited opportunity to spend time in the garden. Another had lived a single life since losing her finance in the First World War, but recounted stories of her brothers travels to Australia in the 1920's. She later graciously gifted me with a book that had been written by her brother of his time in Australia.

My thoughts of those I cared for and subsequent experiences led me to think deeply about the way our society views ageing. The second poem describes a perceived imbalance in the way society values ageing and youth. Within my previous Master's study I was greatly inspired by the resilience of older gardeners. The richness of experience of participants to this study was refreshing and reassuring. With so much emphasis being placed on the beauty, value and capacity of youth, detriment is likely to be experienced not only by older people, but also by youth themselves.

I Remember

I remember

Their faces, stories, places

They lived, but barely lived.

Personalities were strong

No need for pretention

Small pleasures, blocks of time

Spent in contemplation

I remember

The carers, did they know how to care

Their minds often absent

Fed from beyond where

The faces, stories and places

Could reach

In time they may know

What pretention might mean

But caring is thankless to those who don't see

Small pleasures, blocks of time

Memory

Youth and Ageing

We talk of the cycles of life

Echoed by the seasons

Growth and decline, ebb and flow

All within natures fold

But in truth

The balance has long been skewed

Toward youth and all its trappings
Youth is valued, revered and sought
That to which we must aspire
Yet the tree that offers most shade
Is aged beyond our years
It sustains a multitude of life in its branches
Holds firm to the earth and sky
Ageing now seems full of shame
Like any of us had a choice
As our bodies change we see
Opportunity shrinks
Experience holds little value
Are we forced to alter pace?
With longer lives our fates are sealed
A love of youth, disbelief

Ageing

Ageing,
Such paradox
We try so hard to live
A long and healthy life
Yet we are so unprepared
For it to end

Ageing,
Such disguise
We ignore it for too long
Focused on pursuits
That keep us in the game, a
Youthful blend

Death,
is a part of life
Ignored, disguised, feared
Reflected all around us
Yet unrelated to ourselves
Our world without end

Garden Poetry

My own garden has been my rudder throughout the writing of this research. It provided me with inspiration, retreat, solace and renewal. My musings in the garden have related to all manner of feeling and sensation including faith, sadness, the workings of nature, the seasons and fascination with historical associations of the garden. Many of these feelings and thoughts I have shared with participants. Despite the generational divide, I found that my own experiences resonated with participants. The insights that participants shared with me have had a profound influence. Following discussion with participants I was often prompted to plant a favourite plant of theirs in memory of them. In some cases, participants gave me cuttings of their own plants which I placed in my garden.

The first poem which has been discussed within previous chapters will not be discussed further here, except to provide a precursor to those that followed. Participants to this study frequently found solace and meaning in the garden.

Does Faith Begin and End in my Garden

A quest for faith appears unfathomable,
A disquiet longing to materialise in my senses
To touch, to smell, to hear, to see

Amid the blur that is the rest of my life

My garden draws me close

Mesmerising, calming, enabling

Physical, mental, emotional, spiritual

My garden absorbs and re-shapes my energy,

Its strength and virtue, felt deeply.

Enduring and responding to an-other

My garden is a sentinel of change

I am called to collaborate, nurture, engage.

If I did not convey body, mind and spirit,

Would it cease to be so?

A quest for faith begins and ends in my garden

Within poetry the garden has frequently been used metaphorically in relation to feelings. In the following poem it reflects a personal sadness at my own capacity to process events and frustrations within my life. It acknowledges that personal strength is always present, but sometimes waivers. That sadness is a part of life and sometimes it can be addressed head on and other times you just need to wait and let it pass.

Participants to this study all shared with me times of sadness that they had subsequently shared with their gardens. The garden was an important place for renewal and patience.

A Garden of Darkness

Darkness descends upon my garden

Yet there are some glimmers of light

Leaves that are strong enough to reflect dim light

Sometimes darkness is comforting

A blanket softening all beneath
But not today

It is forbidding
The strong leaves are wilting and cannot find the light
I await the day break with hope of clear sight

The garden is a constant hive of activity with the many creatures that inhabit our one-acre block. Birds of a vast array of types are a constant source of background noise. For me this is a reminder that life goes on regardless of what else may be happening. There is also constant movement if you take the time to notice. Logic tells you that each movement is directed by a purpose. It might be possible to work out what the birds are doing (feeding, building, protecting territory) and how that relates to the noises they make. Metaphorically, this is akin to me trying to analyse each thought in my head and feeling overwhelmed by the task. Acknowledging the importance of being present in the moment without analysis is an important lesson of being in the garden. One participant shared with me her interest in ants and lizards. She would watch their progress with fascination but did not try to follow or question why they did what they did, she was simply content with being fascinated.

Noise

My garden is full of noise
Or is that just inside my head
Wings darting through the trees
Small and fast, with poise
Letting the moment direct each need.

The noise is constant amid the trees
Like the thoughts inside my head
Fragment, rhythm, words unsaid

Should I discern a need for each noise
Or should each respective moment render it dead.

Constant, yet changing
In a split second, gone
Movement, rhythm, shape and form
Life with a script beyond need for reason
Punctuated by each new season
Constant, yet changing
In a year reborn
If only we noticed the coming dawn

My research has also required me to consider the purpose of a garden and what its presence in our lives may mean. I was fascinated by the historical context and the way this has been variously described throughout time. It deepened my understanding and insight into the importance of gardens and gardening practices. The following two poems consider the historical pre-text of creating and nurturing a garden. They allude to the relationship between a garden and nature and our changing relationship with nature over time. Historically, the garden has been a source of reflection, creativity and relationship with nature. It is evident that this relationship has changed considerably over time.

What then is a Garden

The origins of our lifeforce
The artists muse
A spiritual authority unspoken or
An aid to intuition's path.

The art of reflection seems lost
We no longer like what we see

Reflection, intuition, prayer,
Acknowledging presence of spirit

Except for nature's silent authority
Once feared but now beckoned
In a desperate effort to see
What then is a garden.

The Ancient Garden

What would the ancients say to us
Are we so far distant that we could not see
A garden
Symbolic, timeless, kindred
Human nature unmasked, free for all to see

Would the ancients approve
Of lifestyle choices now
A garden
Distant, unfamiliar, worthless
Dwellings full of objects, what can you see

The starkness of changing seasons is a strong feature of this local region. With very hot summers and relatively cold winters, the seasons provide a great contrast. Summer is a very challenging time for gardeners. With the frequent imposition of water restrictions, it is often very difficult to keep plants alive. Resilience was a consistent attribute of gardeners to this study. Many discussions with participants focused on the impact of the weather on the garden. Most has resolved to plant only those plants that could cope with the conditions and many favoured native plants. Of course, the rapid growth of weeds when conditions start to become more favourable was also discussed, along with remedies and consolations.

The Sun

The ground is melting, saturating
Any nutrient that would give life
Every blade of green that can be seen
Will struggle to survive.

The sun whose might we contemplate
Is unrelenting full of spite
Summoning every drop of moisture
Each gardener would invite.

Not all plants resent the sun
Some understand its glare
In three short months it will be done
Resilience gifted to native fair.

Autumn Dawning

The freshness of the morning
Is a blessing to the soul
The cooler breeze that lets you know
That summer's time has gone

Sun scorched leaves will be replaced
But the dryness still runs deep
My admiration for surviving plants
Strengthens my bond to keep

Hope for greenery renewed

Seasons changing just in time

Touching the chord, reigniting the hue

A message, so sublime.

The following poems relate to my reading of Goethe and Naydler regarding the importance of observation in the garden. Spending time with each plant in the garden, watching and waiting, allowed me to gain insight into their changing needs. This was felt as a kind of intuition for what needed to be done. This required patience and attuning mind, body and spirit. For myself and many participants to this study, the plants in our care become like children that we took time to nurture. That nurturing was more effective if taken from a wholistic perspective, across seasons and changeable conditions. This meant not directing the plants simply to our own preference but acknowledging their own needs and preferences.

Rhythm and Rhyme

Constant, yet changing

In a split second, gone

Movement, rhythm, shape and form

Life with a script beyond need for reason

Punctuated by each new season

Constant, yet changing

Awaiting the dawn

Watching and Waiting

I watch, I see

As keen as can be

To see life unfold in my garden

I watch, I see

Characters turn free

Each form addressing my pardon

I watch, I see

Mystery on the breeze

Each day closer, closer, my garden

Could I Be

Could I be like the fresh buds of Spring

Fresh and new, full of hope and potential

Or could I show the strength of Summers growth

Ready to stand up to the glare of the sun.

Maybe I could show others the beauty

Of Autumn and glow with pride from within

Or could it be I am the crumbling leaves

Of Winter, retreating from life in the cold.

In truth, I am all of these, sometimes all at once

I am full of potential, I am strong and bold

I glow with beauty, I embrace retreat

In the earth's soul.

4.3 Findings

“As if the external world did not everywhere reveal to those who have eyes the most mysterious laws by day and night. In this persistence of the infinitely manifold I see most clearly the handwriting of God” Goethe (Goethe, 2006, p.111)

Findings to be discussed in the following pages are represented within the following graphic (Figure 5 – Thematic Guide). This forms part of a graphic (Figure 6) used within Chapter 5 describing how themes interact with embodied practice (in the inner circle) and spiritual expression (in an outer circle).

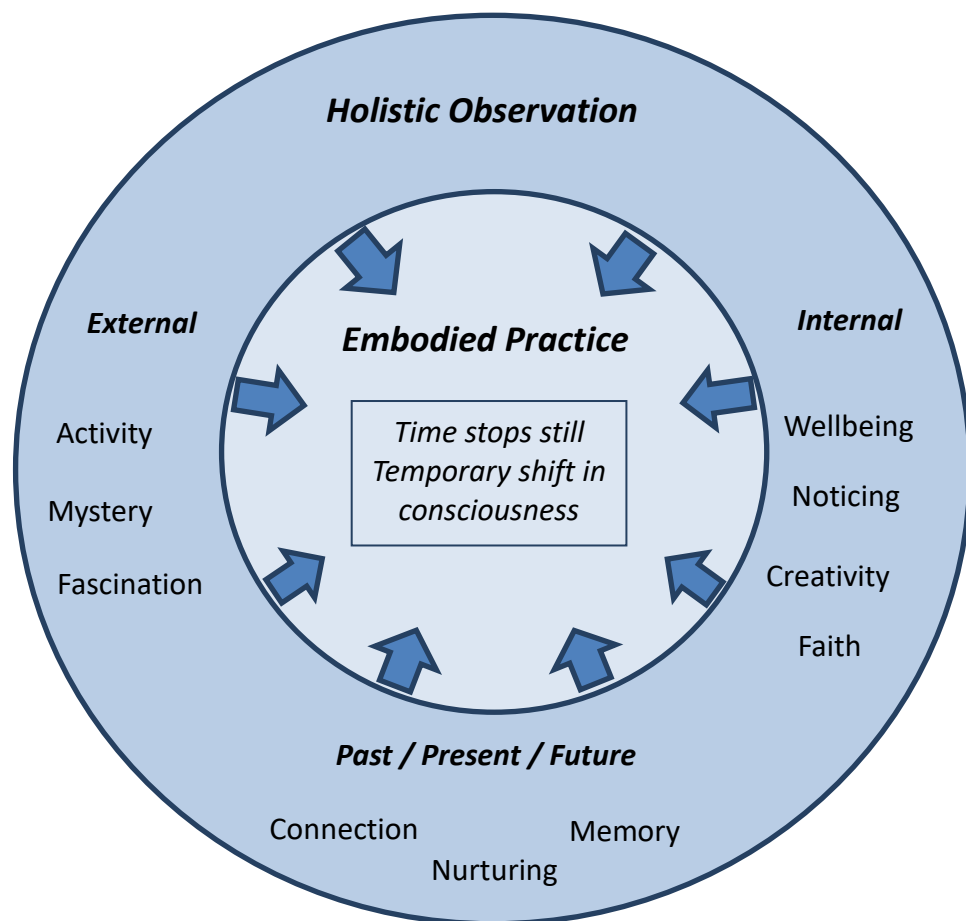


Figure 5 – Thematic Guide

4.3.1 Embodied Practice

Embodied practice formed a core theme for this study. It was inclusive of physical and sensory activity in the garden as discussed within Chapter 2 and provided a place of beginning for the following themes.

4.3.2 Holistic Observation

Internal Dimensions

Internal dimensions of holistic observation are those that embrace our inner being in the world. Within this study they include: faith, wellbeing, noticing and creativity. Internal dimensions are those that are not immediately apparent and often not readily discussed. They reflect how our past experiences of the world shape our perspective of the present.

Faith

The faith of each participant took different forms throughout their lives. Most had been brought up with the structure of the church and the commitment of each Sunday being a day reserved for faith and family. Despite difficulties with changing views toward the Church as an institution, many participants still attended Church regularly. Some participants had changed Christian denomination as a result of changing circumstances or limited access. Others felt that it was not necessary to attend the building of the Church to be a good Christian.

Childhood experience of the Church was sometimes very confusing. Stories were recounted by Jocelyn of a sternness and foreboding in Church attendance as a child. This did not necessarily lead to a refusal to continue with religious faith in later life, but did diminish allegiance to particular denominations of Christianity.

I've always relied fairly heavily on faith
I was brought up Catholic and then,
That total indoctrination as a child,

It doesn't ever really go away.
Oh it was fear of everything.
I can remember as an eight year old

Having to go to confession

On a Friday afternoon
Worrying myself about what I had done so wrong

Trying to make up these things
I can still remember that as plain as anything,
They're the things that shouldn't be, for a child

Based on a conversation with Jocelyn

Changes in societal views of the Church were recognised and processed individually, yet the value of attending Church for some did not diminish. This was particularly the case for Elizabeth who still felt there was value in visiting the Church as it offered a dedicated time of peace and quiet.

The Church has gone out of fashion
Scandal of some, but only a few
Hardly anyone goes
I still go every week
An hour of quiet time
The world today has changed a lot

Based on a conversation with Elizabeth

Hope was expressed by June that the Church still held value in the community despite a noted downturn in general attendance and that change and increased attendance was possible.

Going to Church
Is like knitting
It goes around in cycles
People are knitting in pubs now
Going to Church
Is coming back
People are searching for something

Based on a conversation with June

There was disillusionment surrounding change, and varying levels of optimism about the future of faith and the value of the Church. Constance expressed anger toward changes

in societal observation of Sunday as a day reserved for family time and Church attendance. She recounted this as a special time for dressing up and coming together as a family.

I get so angry to think
Sunday trading has ruined religion
You see people went to church as a family.

We dressed up and we had gloves.
We'd come home, take our Sunday dress off
and have the rest of the day.
You went as a family.

That's gone out the window.
I think we're lacking
that constant family together.

Based on a conversation with Constance

Faith provided guiding principles for participants to live by and a perspective on the world that guided behaviour and attitude towards life events. During the course of their lives many had their faith tested through loss, disappointment and life events. The positive attitude of so many participants was very inspiring.

"I've just had the most amazing life, I really have, but I've just been so blessed by God for some reason. I believe I was put here to learn and to teach others and that's what I've done. I've learnt all I can and then I teach others". Dawn

The opportunity to share faith with others was often affected by reduced levels of participation in religious services. With less people attending Church regularly, it was no longer a common topic of conversation. Faith was no longer openly discussed or made visible. This also impacted upon opportunities to share faith with children and younger generations. For Jocelyn this prompted a view that laying foundations during childhood to which children could return when they were older could in some way make up for a reduced presence in daily lives. This was identified as a challenging process, but also one that required time and patience.

“But I think it’s the old saying, you know, if you plant little seeds I think you reap later. You know regardless of what it is, whether its religion or gardening. Or when they’re learning anything. I think if you just get the ideas there and you know, later they might blossom”. Jocelyn

For some participants, the thought that others lived without faith was a concern. Many had seen the impact of this throughout their lives, particularly in times of crisis. Faith, in this instance was seen as an important backup, providing support and guidance. Yet it was also acknowledged that faith was a difficult concept to accept.

It’s sad
For people that have no faith.
I’ve seen it such a lot
 You go along to a family
 In the instance where they’ve lost a child
 They’re falling apart
 They’ve got nothing,
 Nowhere to go, they’re just in limbo,
 In no man’s land.
It’s awful, it’s sad
To see people in that state.
No faith, no back stop

Based on a conversation with Jocelyn

Acknowledging that faith was a difficult concept to accept demonstrated an acceptance of difference and also of need. The need within the community for proof before acceptance of faith was cited, but so too the knowledge that in a crisis the Church was something that people turned to. Jocelyn expressed a fear, however, that if the Church does not receive community support and acknowledgement that it would not be able to offer care when it was needed the most.

Faith is blind, there is no proof
The book is not of today
But after 2000 years
Why do we still practice, Christianity
Is it just a crutch for when it suits

A crisis hits and there's nowhere to go
Do you have to go to the building
To live a Christian life
Treat others as you want to be treated

Faith is blind, there is no proof
And yet
Without support
Will the church be there when its needed

Based on a conversation with Jocelyn

For one participant, spirituality had no religious affiliation, but rather represented a link to nature. For Penny an absence of religious faith did not inhibit her sense of awe at nature. The concept of awe has been recognised in relation to spiritual significance by authors such as Rudolf Otto (1952).

"... my belief is, that spirituality is a link with nature. That's my belief, I don't believe in a higher being, but I believe in that sort of nature. Yes and the wonder of it all. Really I don't, I don't wonder why, I just accept and think well it's just wonderful. And I think well why worry, just accept and wonder at it, because it is pretty fantastic really when you think about it ... there is a great link, a great spirituality there. Which I think is really interesting in that a lot of people who are perhaps really, really religious, some people wouldn't have that link." Penny

Another participant perceived that a general lack of spiritual experiences led to an inability to understand spirituality. Spiritual experience was described by Maggie as those times when happenings occur for no explicable reason and can be likened to intervention from unseen or unknowable sources. From her perspective it is spiritual experience that makes spirituality more real and accessible.

"If people haven't had any spiritual experiences and they think there is just the physical stuff. It reminds me a bit – if we were sitting here on a cloudy day and if you'd never seen the sun and I was trying to tell you, look there's a sun up there that's bright and warm or whatever, you'd just think I was telling you bullshit (both laughing). So I think it's a bit like that – its trying to explain spirituality to people who

haven't had any spiritual experiences. And the mystery to me is why don't people have more spiritual experiences ... Maybe when we were kids, riding our bikes along the creek or swimming we were out in nature. Maybe we were more open to those sorts of experiences." Maggie.

Wellbeing

What then is a Garden

The origins of our lifeforce

The artists muse

A spiritual authority unspoken or

An aid to intuition's path.

The art of reflection seems lost

We no longer like what we see

Reflection, intuition, prayer,

Acknowledging presence of spirit

Except for nature's silent authority

Once feared but now beckoned

In a desperate effort to see

What then is a garden.

Poetry Journal J Adams

The concept of wellbeing encompasses elements that are indicative of physical, mental, emotional and spiritual health. Each adding to the balance of challenges and available resources. Wellbeing is the capacity to find balance that is holistic. Achieving balance with physical, mental, emotional and spiritual components occurred along a continuum. The necessary adjustments therefore varied but were expressed from a holistic perspective – that is impacting on the whole person.

For some, wellbeing was most strongly supported by achieving an ongoing source of satisfaction. This satisfaction was felt more keenly when it provided a tangible outcome or end product that was useful and had purpose.

"The satisfaction that something is growing ... with gardening you see an end result. You're getting something that's growing. You can either pick it for the flowers or eat

the vegies. I've never been more satisfied in my whole life, than to be able to see vegies grow and the flowers grow and know that I put them in". William

For others it was the opportunity to change focus away from yourself and onto something else. The garden had the capacity to completely capture the attention of participants in a way that very few other activities could. It provided a balance of physical and mental activity.

"I guess because you're focusing on something else rather than yourself. For your problems or what else might be happening around you. You're sort of focusing on ... doing, or looking, or just enjoying. And yeah, you get a nice sense of peace".

Jocelyn

"Sometimes if you're not feeling 100%, mentally or physically, something might have upset you, just to go out there and look around the garden and think oh well they all look happy and cheerful, why aren't I, sort of thing". Clare

"There's peace out in the garden – and you're with God and the angels and the fairies. You just feel their presence. The beauty, the beauty, all the colours and the beautiful fresh air" Dawn

The garden also provided an interest that while it could be shared it could also keep its owner from needing to draw on the resources of others. For Constance this took many forms. There were limited tasks that she was still able to physically do herself. For those that she could no longer do she employed a gardener or enlisted the help of the gardener employed by the Retirement Village. At the time of interview Constance was actively involved in a planning process for re-development of common areas in the Village. She also actively encouraged her peers to be more active in the garden. Importantly, the garden represented a form of independence because it held her interest personally and individually and yet it could also be shared.

I'm not a loner,
but I don't crave company
that's another thing too with aged people
a person with a garden

doesn't need people,
they've got something to do,
you're not dependent on other people
for an interest"

Based on a conversation with Constance

For Ivy, the garden represented a central pillar in maintaining her wellbeing. For her it represented joy. Ivy was still physically able to complete many tasks in the garden. She took pleasure in offering help to others in the Retirement Village with physical limitations. Her physical fitness was a source of pride. During the course of interview Ivy also recounted how much the garden had helped her to cope with times of emotional hardship.

Now, let's get this straight
The garden isn't work, its sheer joy
People say why
Make so much work for yourself
They just don't understand

Based on a conversation with Ivy

The garden was seen as much as a form of mental stimulation as it was physical. Maintaining an active interest had the potential to change perspective on all manner of conditions. For one participant the thought of not having access to a garden was hard to contemplate.

"Yes, I would be very very lost. I was going to say mentally and physically, but I would, mentally particularly if I didn't have a little garden. I think if you're really disabled or anything like that, there's nothing to stop you a little tub and putting a few little seeds in, seedlings. That's your garden then. It all depends on which way you want to look at it". Clare

Ageing was shared as a difficult time for some – a paradox of gains and losses on a personal level. For some participants their sense of self-identity and purpose within life that so closely related to their previous career, was now very different. In this

case the garden provided a tangible source of satisfaction that may have otherwise been missing.

"I haven't been able to get that finality of what the purpose of me being here is. Now that I've retired where does that leave me now. I'm not sure, I'm really struggling with that". William

The garden provided an important outlet in this transition.

"I think that's also a part of growing old that you look back on your life and say what have you done. Here I was producing something that had a purpose. It is a purpose, its something you can look at. I play a lot of bowls now and that's great, but there's no satisfaction like you get with the garden. It's something that is very important to me personally to have that source of satisfaction – I need that."
William

William was keenly aware that he was one of very few males in the retirement village. His activity in the garden provided not only tangible produce such as vegetables and flowers, that could be shared with neighbours; but also an opportunity to help those less physically able than himself. He recognised the value the garden held to others and the loss they felt in not being able to maintain their own garden as they had in the past.

As you get older
I think you appreciate
the little things
the little things
make life worthwhile

Based on a conversation with William

Constance acknowledged the negative perception of ageing felt by many of her peers and how it prevented them from making the most of their current lives.

I think a lot of people
as they get older, they think
Oh I'm old, I've got to do what old people do.

That's wrong - you've just got to be.
Life's a blessing.
Every day is a blessing.
Because you're alive another day

Based on a conversation with Constance

The garden was a source of joy at many times throughout the year, particularly in spring. This was experienced in different ways and often shared with others in sometimes unexpected ways. Clare loved the colour yellow and described how it made her feel happy. Happiness came both from seeing yellow flowers in bloom and when she wore clothes that were yellow.

Yellow such a happy colour
Always makes me smile
Daffodils, roses, golden wattle
Vibrant joy for just a while

The yellow of the garden
I choose to wear in my clothes
People say it suits me
And we both smile.

Based on a conversation with Clare

Ivy relayed how the garden meant everything to her and that without it she may not have survived difficulties in her life.

"Do you know Jo I think there's one thing I think that gardening has done for me, it's like my knitting and crochet stuff, I've been through a separation and it wasn't very nice ... Well if I didn't have the garden, I did think I would jump off the (bridge). It's been 10 years, but it's terrible. If only for the garden. The garden is just everything to me. It means so much, you know". Ivy

There was also a fear for the future expressed in terms of health and wellbeing for the current generation. For one participant this was due to changes in our human relationship with the environment, from the air we breathe to the foods we eat.

“When I was a kid it was very rare that someone was diagnosed with cancer – we had no cancer because everything was pure. Now everything is poisoned – mankind is ruining the whole world”. Constance

Noticing

I watch, I see
As keen as can be
To see life unfold in my garden
 I watch, I see
 Characters turn free
 Each form addressing my pardon
 I watch, I see
 Mystery on the breeze
 Each day closer, closer, my garden
Poetry Journal J Adams

Noticing was a key component of garden practice. A keen observation kept participants alert to change. All participants keenly noticed change in their garden. Watching for new growth, noticing changes and acting in advance of future needs of the garden. An active participation in the garden was important. Attention to detail meant that participants were in tune with the needs of the garden. Many participants felt you had to be taught to notice, but for others it was seen as innate.

Constance spent a great deal of time sitting and observing her garden and surrounds. She maintained an active interest in the activity of the smallest creatures in her garden including ants, lizards and birds. She observed the subtle changes in the garden relating to colour, light, temperature and weather patterns.

People just feel,
 Oh, oh I've got dementia.
 They haven't really got dementia.
They've only got a bit of old age.
 They can talk themselves into it.
 They lose interest in everything.
People probably think I'm stupid

Sitting here just watching the garden.

Based on a conversation with Constance

Noticing change was ongoing throughout the year. Noting the changes of season and the different forms a plant may take was a constant source of joy (and sometimes frustration) - each season with its own unique identity and characteristics. This was particularly the case within this regional centre where four distinct seasons were evident. Keen observation also meant that changes in the health of each plant were noted and acted upon where possible.

“Well I like change. So I like to see the seasons change. I definitely couldn’t live somewhere that was just similar seasons or similar, ... I just like seeing the changes in the foliage ... And you know you see the changes in the plants and weather, and yeh I just like the, I like change, a lot of people don’t, especially older people”. Penny

“No I think I’ve just learnt a lot because I’ve just enjoyed doing anything in the garden. And I think well every day’s a bonus. And I think well aren’t I lucky to be here – sitting here”. Constance

Yeh well I think it’s just nice to go out and sit there and even on a hot day out there on the veranda and you can see birds come and the little critters come around And the different flowers, it’s amazing to go around and just see what’s come out in the last few days and what’s grown and what’s changed. Hope

Living things did not always conform to expectation. That didn’t matter to most participants, but rather it added to the mystery and interest.

“I suppose its living things. You know really, you put a bulb in and wait till it comes up and then you watch it until the bud comes up. Now I’ve been watching for those daffodils to come up and they still haven’t come up, but they should’ve come up. And you think you’re watching every week there’s something new going on. Something to take your attention. You just can’t be bored.” Constance

The fruit, the flowers
over on that apricot tree.
You see the flowers
then you see the fruit forming
then you see it ripening.
It's all so lovely.

Based on a conversation with Constance

The lizards
they must be all asleep
but they're wonderful.
You just watch them.
Have you ever watched ants.
They try to carry it all.
They won't let another person help them.

Based on a conversation with Constance

When asked to consider why they felt drawn to the garden, one participant felt there was a combination of mystery and spiritual connection

"Well I think it might be a combination of both. Because something has drawn you to the garden to start with. Maybe like me, I wonder how those seeds are going. Yeah, now something draws you to it. Your interpretation of what that is, is yours. Well we always said, God's gift is a garden. Maybe that's why; I've been brought up like that" Clare

Creativity

The Creative Mind

The creative mind is said to be
The gift of just a few and
Yet creative acts take on many forms
Undefined, unlimited and true

The creative mind used to be
Inherent in the ancient world
Stories and images in a range of forms
Interpreted uniquely, and anew

The creative mind nurtured to be
A link to the mysteries of life

An ability to have faith in many forms
Nature, the universe, suffice

Poetry Journal J Adams

The notion of creativity has always fascinated me. The common understanding that it means being able to create something of beauty or have a good appreciation of how to put colours and shapes together is simplistic. For participants it appeared to mean this and much more. As a form of self-expression, creativity allowed participants to shape their garden in a manner not only pleasing to their eye, but also reflecting their own personality and past connections that would be sustained into the future.

A nice garden, an interesting house
Shape, colour, form
Arrangement, overall effect
Pieces of me all around

A nice garden, an interesting house
The older I get, the more I see
Meaning in the things I collect
I can accept more now than before

A nice garden, an interesting house
My garden sets an example
Knowledge, interest, past and future
My children can see I'm happy

Based on a conversation with Elizabeth

From conversations with some participants I could see that creativity meant having an open heart, an open mind and being able to listen to the voice within. This provided great inspiration but was often difficult to describe in words. For others, creativity was enhanced by the satisfaction of gaining an end product that was either useful or provided ongoing enjoyment. An end product could be shared and/or provided ongoing pleasure to others.

"Because, I mean if you create a quilt you've created it for a purpose, or use. The same as you have done in the garden. You've created the vegetables to sustain you

or the flowers to enjoy. A quilt is the same, it keeps you warm... Yeah, I mean even in painting, you know. You create something to look at because you've enjoyed doing it and you can continue to enjoy it by looking at it. The garden's the same".

Jocelyn

"Making something of beauty – creating it yourself, something you have achieved, you feel good". William

For most participants creativity had been important throughout their lives and was applied to many different facets of their life including the garden. This was evidenced in one conversation with a participant who when asked about different forms of creativity, responded:

"No, I think they're all ... equal, because they're all creative. Creating a garden, creating a quilt, creating whatever it is. Because that's what you're focused on at the time and you get that sense of achievement as well. There's a great sense of achievement in all those. When it's finished, or when the thing flowers, or when you pick the vegetables". Jocelyn

For another participant, while acknowledging that all creativity was important, the garden took priority because it was a living entity. It required nurturing and ongoing care.

"Yeh well I used to do a patchwork, but I have no time to finish a lot of that yet. Too busy doing things in the garden. You can put patchwork in the cupboard, but you can't stuff the garden in the cupboard for two or three years till you get around to doing it". Hope

Creativity was seen as important by participants on several levels. It provided a sense of satisfaction, but it also represented an interest that kept the mind and body active. It called on imagination, initiative, time and patience, and notions of self sufficiency.

In considering whether creativity can be taught or whether it was innate, Jocelyn felt concerned that the current generation of young people did not value creative processes.

"Because they don't see creativity as important. And that's creativity in all its forms. Its just as easy to go and buy something, rather than sit down and make it or produce it". Jocelyn

While this was related to the availability of material possessions, it also reflected on an ability to use the imagination.

"You know I think this generation has too much materially. You know we just didn't have footballs, we just used rolled-up newspaper and tied it with string and kicked that around. We used to paint cricket stumps on the lamp posts and use an old bit of wood. And sometimes a newspaper ball because you didn't have one. You didn't have dolls, you made peg dolls. All these things and so you had to use your imagination and today they don't use their imagination. Their creativity is gone because they just go and buy – its already done. So their mind – their creative aspect just doesn't exist anymore". Jocelyn

"I really think that, you know, children right from the beginning need to learn, need to be encouraged to use their creativity. Because then they start to appreciate how things are made". Jocelyn

When trying to tease out where the feelings of joy come from, I further enquired whether or not creativity could be linked with spirituality.

"I think it depends on how you view it. It depends on where you're coming from on that. Yeah, because if you have a Christian outlook then you believe that it's God's creation, so you believe that everything falls within that category". Jocelyn

It was clear from the widespread participation in creative activity that the process was important, but remained difficult to pinpoint its origins.

The creativity of one of my participants was shown in the following poem that she had written for me prior to our second interview

SPRING IN THE GARDEN – written by June

Its sour sob time again

So out comes my little digger.

They just don't get a chance
When I pull them up with vigour.

The capeweed and the corkscrew
Receive the very same treatment
As I try to grow a nice green lawn
To sit on in the summer.

The nectarine is lovely
With its beautiful pink flowers
And daffs and golden wattle too
Brighten up the hours

Lavender and rosemary
Present their grey green foliage
And in the spring their mauve flowers
Bring honey bees to forage.

My garden always gives me pleasure
Sometimes more than others
But there always seem to be some flowers
To enjoy the sun and showers

External Dimensions

External dimensions of holistic observation are those that embrace our outer being in the world. Within this study they include: mystery, fascination and physical activity. External dimensions are more evident to those around us. Often it is only these aspects of experience that are fully considered, but each dimension is of equal importance.

Mystery

You thrive, you die
For no particular reason
Try as I might
Acknowledging the season

Your power is immense
Yet fragile and fine
Running through every pore
Your soul and mine

Poetry Journal J Adams

Mystery in the garden was an element of experience that often began during childhood. It encompassed the awe and wonder of nature. It meant appreciating an occurrence without needing to seek an answer. Mystery is also very much about being in the present and accepting life as it is. Acceptance that bears no expectation of understanding appreciates possibility without judgement.

Another element of mystery was the notion that complete control was never possible in the garden. Plants retained their own mystery – thriving or dying for no particular reason – despite the efforts of the gardener. This meant that gardeners were frequently kept guessing despite experience, skill and knowledge.

“I can’t believe what I’ve done wrong here – 2 punnets of nasturtiums for the grandchildren and they’ve died, and nasturtiums are so easy to grow ... so whether they didn’t like the potting mix I brought I don’t know ... but look there’s a real failure there. I’ll have to go out and buy 2 more punnets before they come” Maggie

Mystery is distinguished from Fascination because it builds on previous encounters and the understanding that repeat events occur with variation and are never quite the same and may be unpredictable.

For Maggie, the mystery of interconnection was powerful. It could not be explained, but it could be felt and could manifest in a variety of ways

Well I think
that somehow
in some mysterious way
we are all
interconnected and
that we come from the same great love
we manifest

in different ways”

Based on a conversation with Maggie

For Faith, nature represented a great source of mystery. She described this as a kind of magic particularly in relation to the inherent potential of tiny seeds.

If you open a seed pod
 there's something
 very difficult to define
 as to the magic of it
the way the seeds have been created.
 It doesn't look like anything at all.
I guess we as humans
 we don't look like anything either
 when we start off

Based on a conversation with Faith

Seeds of magic
 Fine as dust
Visible only to a few
 Seeds of magic
 A gift held in trust
 If only they all knew
How precious the legacy
 Each has its place
A delicate balance to ensue

Based on a conversation with Faith

For one participant the mysteries of the garden were likened to the mysteries of life which she relayed to her children. The garden was a source of teaching both metaphorically and literally.

“This is what I tell my children – gardening is a bit like life, you do lose some and you have to accept the losses and then things come good”. Maggie.

The following poem was based on a conversation with Constance in which she described the wonder of the garden and how it was able to completely captured her attention for unplanned periods of time. With intentions to only go out for a short time, she frequently lost track of time and returned to the house with black hands, but a sense of satisfaction.

Black hands and a warm heart
Did I stay too long?

How could I ever start
To explain all the wonder

Colours, shapes, creatures dart
Time stands still and yet

With black hands and a warm heart
I know I've had my fill.

Based on a conversation with Constance

Fascination

Constant, yet changing
In a split second, gone
Movement, rhythm, shape and form
Life with a script beyond need for reason
Punctuated by each new season
Constant, yet changing
Awaiting the dawn

Poetry Journal J Adams

Participants shared how a fascination for life in the garden led to a complete absorption of their attention. Fascination was distinguished from mystery because it often led to understanding and acquisition of knowledge. This required no effort but maintained individual focus for extended periods of time. Curiosity for happenings within the garden extended to shifts of colour and shape, actions of small life forms in the garden such as ants, bees and lizards. It also included intense interest in the changes evident in plants and their responsiveness to their environment. Participants were present in the moment with attention fully directed to events within their garden space.

The capacity to remain curious or fascinated by the garden and nature was clearly seen amongst participants. The joy of being in the garden came with a knowledge that each day is different and the garden is constantly changing. Curiosity kept the mind active looking for new and different features however small.

You're watching every week,
 there's something new going on
 something to take your attention
 you just can't be bored.
I just feel very smug sitting here,
 I think how lucky I am,
 there's no boredom at all,
 its just lovely
 It must be spiritual I think"

Based on a conversation with Constance

It was apparent from conversation with Faith that seeking out the opportunity to lose yourself in the garden was an important feature of spending time there. This was sometimes also described as a time of peace or relaxation. The notion that 'time stops still', or that you could easily lose track of time was consistent amongst participants.

I just love being able to lose myself,
It doesn't matter what worries you've got
 You can come out and
 Time just seems to stop still

Based on a conversation with Faith

I love a messy garden
That changes throughout the year
Responding to the call of each season

I love a messy garden
I choose not to interfere
Just to sit and watch, no expectation

I love a messy garden
Full of mystery and quirks
Fascination for no particular reason

Based on conversation Penny

Physical Activity

Digging, raking, twisting, turning
A servant to the cause
Wriggling, shaking, clipping, sowing
A future to behold

Poetry Journal J Adams

Be still my mind
My body will show the way
Prosaic pleasures in routines mastered
The spirit of the garden to unfold

Unison of body, mind and soul
Within the dream that is the garden
Remembering seasons past because
We three I must embolden

Poetry Journal J Adams

Levels of activity within the garden and elsewhere varied for participants to this study. This of course was dependent on physical health, but also on attitudes to the importance of remaining physically active. Maintaining meaningful contact with the garden did involve some level of physical interaction however small that might be. Generally, it formed part of everyday activities and routines. This was facilitated in some cases by raised garden beds or other forms of assistance.

For many participants activity was an important part of their youth and this continued into older age. Remaining active was important on several levels. It kept the mind and body alert, warded off any notion of restriction in older age or laziness, and was a source of pride.

"It's healthy because you come outside. And you're in the air. And you're looking at things. It's an interest. You can't just sit in the garden and not think of what you've got and what's coming next week". Constance

You have to keep moving
 My husband was always moving
 Would never sit still
I like to keep moving
 The garden keeps me moving

Based on a conversation with Elizabeth

Pretty good for eighty
 I help the others
To weed in places they can't go
 The garden keeps me fit
 I'm very proud of that

Based on a conversation with Ivy

Being in the garden provided a time and space where participants could be completely absorbed in the activity at hand and feel a sense of relief from other thoughts. Levels of activity in the garden contributed to the notion that time stopped still or that perception of time was somehow altered. Activity appeared to correct the balance between mind and body.

"And, you just don't think about anything except what's in hand, if you've got any problems or worries you just get out there and it's just gone". Hope

"When the kids were younger, I had to remember to get dinner organised before I went out into the garden because I knew that time would just fly past and I'd be caught short". Faith

For many participants responsibility for a garden kept them active where otherwise they may have stayed indoors. They were also great advocates for keeping their peers active too.

"People are too lazy, they sit in front of the TV. You've got to push yourself. That's why I'm all right at 92 it's because of the water exercises". Dawn

Constance was very enthusiastic at the thought that other older people could be encouraged to garden, even if only on a small scale.

"I think that window boxes are a good idea, especially in nursing homes ... people don't need – I wouldn't need anyone to help me look after a window box. I mean that's a little thing to do. And from that window box, beds could start". Constance

Timed Dimension (Past, Present, Future)

Timed dimensions of holistic observation are those that embrace our awareness of past, present and future. Within this study they include: memory, connection and nurturing. Each express how our previous experience contributes to our present and future and continues to re-shape our perspectives.

Memory

Ebony's Garden

There are fairies in our garden
And magic in my heart
As I skip around the flowers
Glistening in the light
I can feel their presence
I know they help things grow
They inhabit a different world but
They will never show
The tears they cry because we forget
How wisdom from their world
Could teach us how natures flow
Binds us more than we could know
There are fairies in our garden
And magic in my heart
And hope that there will come a day
When we can share their path

Poetry Journal J Adams

I Remember

I remember
Their faces, stories, places
They lived, but barely lived.
Personalities were strong
No need for pretention
Small pleasures, blocks of time
Spent in contemplation

I remember
The carers, did they know how to care
Their minds often absent
Fed from beyond where
The faces, stories and places
Could reach

In time they may know
What pretention might mean
But caring is thankless to those who don't see
Small pleasures, blocks of time
Memory

Poetry Journal J Adams

Memory associated with the garden came in many forms. Beginning with childhood memory and experience of the garden and progressing through to previous gardens, people and places that had been experienced throughout the lifetime of participants.

Childhood memory of the garden was highly significant. The first smell, sight, or touch of particular plants or experiences in the garden are often those that flood back when that sensation is experienced again. The garden holds memories of times spent with family or friends and specific plants come to be identified with particular people in the past or the present.

The foundation provided by childhood experience provides a pivotal link between the past, present and future. This deepens its meaning and significance over time. It reinforces the cyclic metaphor of nature – an impermanent yet ongoing life force.

Memory of significant events throughout the lifespan of participants were often represented within a garden or by particular plants/flowers. Such events may have been happy or sad.

That geranium used to be Grandma's, so
every time I've moved I've taken it with me
its a pink,
but it's not one I've seen anywhere else, so
I've got to keep one in a pot coming on
so I don't lose it

Based on a conversation with Faith

My mother was a good gardener
she'd give me a packet of seeds
I had a little piece of the garden,
my own little area,
not very big,
but that was my garden.
I was taught how to dig it
how to plant those seeds, and
I still use those principles now

Based on a conversation with Clare

Plants were often related to events from childhood, and they became favourite plants. At times the memory of the event may have faded, but a favouritism towards the plant remained. Through discussion, this could sometimes be unravelled, as in the following poem based on a discussion with Penny.

The purple violet
Has always been
A favourite flower to me
When asked I wondered
How this came to be

Slowly it came clear
Like the lifting of a veil
A gesture of love
I witnessed as a child
Bouquets of violet
A gift from Dad to Mum

Violets are rarely seen now
Yet always in my garden
Despite the summer heat and dry
I keep a range of violets
Purple, pink, mauve and white
A gesture of love from me

Based on a conversation with Penny

The depth of meaning associated with the garden was evidenced during difficult times. This can be seen in the following poems reflecting the loss of loved ones and loss resulting from drought.

Through many gardens
We have travelled
And in each one, a shrine

Remembering a son
Whose love of flowers
Brought joy to my heart

Faith has helped me heal
It understands my rite to anger

And ownership's fleeting glance

Remembering a son
Like flowers in a garden
The love of each garden of mine.

Based on a conversation with Jocelyn

The climate was always so harsh
Drought, bushfire, frost and flood.
Sometimes my mother would lose the lot.
Except for the boobialla at the back door.
All it got was the washing up water

Mum would always start again
Replanting, re-newing her losses in the garden
I wish I had talked more with her
About how she kept going
In such harsh conditions
But I will always remember her for that.

Based on a conversation with Ivy

Memory of the past for most participants was expressed in layers, but for most the constancy of garden experience laid a thread which they could trace back through each respective layer.

Connection

Autumn Dawning

The freshness of the morning
Is a blessing to the soul
The cooler breeze that lets you know
That summer's time has gone

Sun scorched leaves will be replaced
But the dryness still runs deep
My admiration for surviving plants
Strengthens my bond to keep

Hope for greenery renewed

Seasons changing just in time
Touching the chord, reigniting the hue
A message, so sublime.

Poetry Journal J Adams

Connection is a capacity to feel a sense of closeness between ourselves in the present and something or someone else (even if that someone else happens to be ourselves in a different time frame or mode of being). Connection in the garden appeared on many levels: to nature; to self (in the past, present and future); to others (socially, loved ones, past and present). Feeling a sense of connection was very powerful, not only in terms of wellbeing, but also in a spiritual sense. It meant that participants never felt alone in the garden because, in spirit, others were present.

Life in the garden is a clear reminder of natural processes of growth and decline. Many participants felt comfort in acknowledging the cycles of life evident in their garden. Relating this to their own experiences of growth and decline, joy and sadness. Participants experienced a connection to nature and an understanding that we are all connected by a shared life force. Connection to nature takes time to develop. A key characteristic of ongoing connection is the notion of working with nature without attempting to exact control.

For Faith, a connection to the garden was a central component of her life. Interaction with plants in her garden helped her to feel more alive.

I feel that part of me
would die if
I couldn't garden
its a very powerful feeling

Based on a conversation with Faith

The connection Constance felt to the garden was inseparable from a connection to nature. She relayed an inability to comprehend why someone might not be interested in the garden.

Really, a garden is nature isn't it.
The point is if you're not,
If you're not interested in gardening,
What would you be interested in.
It can absorb you so much,
It can rule you
But you don't have to be ruled by it.
You can take it as a leisure.

Based on a conversation with Constance

Following a conversation regarding connection to nature and/or a spiritual presence, one participant relayed a close connection to a spiritual presence both of God and to her husband who was deceased.

"Oh I think there is ... I don't know if you've seen a little sign up there 'There's nearer to God's heart in the garden than anywhere else on earth.' And I do think that there's that connection". I can sort of feel that my husband is out there as well. And yeh I do think that's, you know you've got that connection - because he's laid it out and did a whole lot of the work there". Hope

For another participant who had recently lost her husband to cancer the garden provided a sense of connection to life and to nature. She jokingly described how within a grief support group she had been described as sooky (prone to crying unexpectedly). Yet it was that flow of emotion that helped to release grief and remain connected to natural cycles.

"It's my connection to gardening and music – I've cried and cried, the tears well up, I've learned to accept that and the sookiness means I'm still connected to what's happened. The sookiness can turn to laughter very quickly, it has to flow and isn't that what being connected to nature is, it's all flowing, it's changing. Feeling connected to life and feeling connected to nature is very important to me." Maggie

In considering whether that feeling of connection was experienced at any other time, one participant shared

"Well I think at prayer it can be a similar feeling when you're praying... or when you're you know doing Bible Study". Hope

The garden could be seen as a gift to be shared with others who could enjoy it just by walking past.

“No, no well its nice. I mean on the spiritual side, we’re here to live. Now it’s not the fact that we’ve got to live ourselves. We’ve got to be neighbourly and you don’t live yourself in isolation. You’ve got to share your talents with people. And you give what you can give”. Constance

Sharing what the garden produces with others was a tangible means of connecting with others in a range of circumstances.

“But that’s you know that is an enjoyable part of it, that you can go out and you know go and visit somebody and go and pick a few flowers and take them over or if they’re in hospital or if anything happens you can just take a few flowers around ...”. Hope

A very special connection with ourselves in the past and our loved ones was also expressed by participants.

“I mean I can remember. I just love the fact that the daffodil is the cancer flower because I remember when my Dad died. I was there and the Nun was there and she said to me ... she asked me if I would like to help lay my father out. And I said yes I would and I did. And it was in August and the daffodils were out and I brought in a bunch of daffodils and I put them around my father’s head on the pillow, just laid them on the pillow around his head. So I never see a daffodil now without seeing Dad’s face”. Jocelyn

For Maggie, the garden helped her to process a period of grief following her husband’s death. She continued to plant things she knew he would like to actively remember his presence in the garden.

He and I didn’t always agree
On the things we put in the garden
So he had his and I had mine
Our own special creations
But now he’s gone
For the time being

I buy two of everything
One for me and one him
In the place he now rests

Based on a conversation with Maggie.

Nurturing

Nurturing the bud
Resting the soul
A child filled with hope

Nurturing the bud
Fortifying the soil
The child to come forth

Nurturing the bud
Beginning anew
Was it all just a dream

Poetry Journal J Adams

For most participants, the role of nurturing had traditionally fallen to the female of the house. With all but one participant being female, the notion of nurturing was a clear analogy to draw (although note that the only male participant clearly named nurturing as part of what he found satisfying in gardening). But nurturing in itself is a complex phenomenon and has its own frustrations. Perhaps it is more akin to patience and wisdom, but it does seem that the garden teaches both. It requires great patience to continue to nurture plants from seed/ling through to established plant. It became apparent that by nurturing the garden, participants were also nurturing themselves and others who shared the experience of their garden.

For one participant, nurturing the garden meant having a continuing connection with her husband who had passed away.

Oh well I enjoy being out in the garden and my, my husband planted a lot of it, a lot of the plants and things and I just like to keep them going like he had them. (Hope)

For another nurturing led to a great sense of satisfaction and sense of finality to a natural process.

“That’s one of the great things, if you nurture the plants all the way through you’ll see the final results and that’s part of the satisfaction – nurturing and seeing that they get up” William.

For other participants the role of nurturing was likened to that between a parent and child. In the following poem based on a conversation with Jocelyn, it was apparent that the nurturing process was holistic and cyclic and had implications not only for individual children (or plants), but for future generations and nature more generally.

They require nurturing
 If you don’t nurture spirituality,
 If you don’t nurture nature
Within each generation,
 It does exactly what its done
 It falls by the wayside.
Things go in cycles.
 Life goes in cycles.
 People stop teaching their daughters
To knit, to sew, to crochet.
 The next generation questions why
But these are all nurturing things.
 Teaching your children gardening.
 Teaching your children Christianity,
 Spirituality, love of nature, love of people.
 All this has to be taught, nurtured
If not it falls away.

Based on a conversation with Jocelyn

This was concurred by another participant

“I think you’ve got to be taught these things from your mother or father – to say look at that colour, or look at that tree – you’ve got to be taught to notice” (Dawn)

It was acknowledged, however, that teaching does not occur all at once and may not always be apparent in the first instance.

“But I think it’s the old saying, you know, if you plant little seeds I think you reap later. You know regardless of what it is, whether its religion or gardening. Or when they’re learning anything. I think if you just get the idea’s there and you know, later they might blossom”. Jocelyn

Each of the above-mentioned themes act together to contribute toward practice that is embodied and holistic. Each part contributes to the whole and a balance of each dimension is necessary in order to gain the basis of the experience.

4.3.3 Spiritual Expression

The findings from this study point to a possibility of being open to spiritual expression. This was made possible due to the depth of connection individuals felt with the plants in their care and was reflected in participants experiences in the garden. Having everyday interaction with nature in a garden allowed some recognition that the life force within plants might resonate with our own life force. This connection was experienced on multiple levels, but ultimately gave some release from the constraints of competing thoughts and emotions. It is this connection that forms the basis of spiritual expression. The ease of access to domestic garden spaces and general acceptance within the older population makes the possibility of enhancing this experience for others even stronger.

For each participant a life-time in the garden has been accompanied by the themes discussed above. The experience of each participant describes a lived experience which changes over time; the essence of which is individual but has components that may be shared and extended by the process of sharing. Offering poetic form within a phenomenological framework of analysis appears to make the depth and extension of this expression more possible. It encompasses the rhythm and tenure of conversation and provokes a visual image within the mind of the reader. From a phenomenological perspective, this serves to enrich the basis of the study.

Within the next chapter, key findings of this study will be discussed in relation to literature outlined in Chapter 2, and the experience of participants described above.

CHAPTER 5 – DISCUSSION

This chapter will discuss the basis of findings in light of literature provided in Chapter 2. Within section 5.1, I will expand on themes developed through analysis of findings and discuss relevant literature, in particular, key authors perspectives. Following this, sections 5.2-5.7 draw specifically on content raised within the literature review along with the perspectives of participants to this study. The chapter closes with recommendations for practice and further research.

5.1 Discussion Preamble

“Great innovations never come from above; they come invariably from below, just as trees never grow from the sky downward, but upward from the earth”
(Jung, 1928, p.177)

A hermeneutic phenomenological approach to interpretation has guided the generation of study findings. In particular, the fusion of horizons described by Gadamer (1975) acknowledges the importance of merging perspectives gleaned from participants in full awareness of my own perspective and that of available literature. Gaining knowledge and understanding of complex phenomena by moving between the parts and the whole of experience has been a consistent feature of many discussed processes that have informed this study. This includes the writing of poetry (Kunitz & Lentine, 2007), phenomenological interpretation (Gadamer, 1975; Merleau-Ponty, 1962; Gendlin, 1997 and Todres, 2007) and the Genetic method of observation (Goethe, 2006, 2009). This way of seeing the world has, represented a thread of understanding throughout this thesis.

Themes to emerge from participant interviews focus on those components of holistic observation that contribute to embodied practice. Embodied practice forms the basis of creative/spiritual expression that will be discussed within this chapter. Each of these elements have been central to the experience of participants in the garden. In combination, they have led to what I have identified as a temporary shift in consciousness during which ‘time stops still’. For this period of time, participants were completely absorbed in the moment - in the presence of the plants in their care. The notion of a shift in consciousness is consistent with the writing of Goethe and phenomenological theorists mentioned previously. Themes identified in this study and expanded upon within this chapter have made this experience possible. The lived experience of garden practice allows a form of spiritual connection to take place. A time when a space in the mind was opened to allow connection with a higher consciousness.

Interviews identified the depth of feeling associated with garden practice, but not necessarily with the spoken word. Spending time with participants in their garden meant that I could see the depth of experience through actions, expressions, story-telling and motivation. Given the limitation of words in prose format to reach this dimension of experience I have chosen to draw on poetic expression. Through poetic expression it is possible to demonstrate action whether it be repetitive, fast, slow or rhythmic. It is also possible to picture the expression on the face of participants as they describe the joy of a vibrant colour or the discovery of a new bud. Through poetic expression it is possible to condense the thread of a story and reveal the essence of connection.

This allows an extension of breadth and depth, rather than a means of compare and contrast. The choice of format has been dependent on how topics arose during conversation. Some actual words of participants when placed on the page in ordered sequence or separated by breaks in line provided a poetic form that embraced the rhythm and pace of conversation and formed a succinct poem. Other words of participants required more introduction to indicate the topic of the conversation initiated. These are presented in prose form with parentheses. During conversation with participants, stories would unravel that could not readily be captured using actual words. In these instances, I have provided the thread of their story in poetic form. Each presentation has been attributed to an individual.

During the progress of this study, I have kept a poetry journal of my own thoughts and feelings. The garden features strongly throughout the journal, sometimes metaphorically and sometimes actual. Some of these poems have been included within findings where they support the essence of the theme being described. From a hermeneutic phenomenological perspective this demonstrates my presence as researcher as an intrinsic part of the experience of interview.

For the guidance of the reader I provide below a table representing the layers relating to each theme. These will be extended in this chapter where each theme will be discussed in relation to both the literature and the words of participants

Findings from the fieldwork presented in Chapter 4 highlight the complex nature of garden experience. It is multi-dimensional, but also highly individual. Participants to this study were all keen gardeners for most of their lives. The experience of others (outside this study), who do not identify as gardeners, but rather maintain a garden, may be considerably different. Parallels between garden practice and spiritual expression are therefore focused on those who identify as gardeners. Through gaining a greater understanding of the lived experience of older gardeners it is hoped that others may share some of the benefits gardeners have described.

My discussion begins by providing a graphic representation of findings. This provides a theoretical perspective of study themes, particularly in relation to key authors. Discussion then relates participant experience to respective sections outlined within the literature review (Chapter 2). This includes: poetic reflection on ageing, contact with nature, wellbeing, spirituality and ageing in the garden and finally spirituality within Health Care Settings. The chapter then concludes with recommendations for aged care practice and further research.

5.2 Thematic Presentation

“There’s a conversation that keeps going on beyond the human level, in many ways beyond language, extending into the atmosphere” (Kunitz & Lentine, 2007, p.62)

Through this study I have come to appreciate gardening as a means to communicate and connect the spirit within ourselves with that form of spirit that lives beyond us. For myself, and participants to this study the garden represents an opportunity to balance the actions of body, mind and spirit. For some participants this action became ritualistic in nature (as was evident in the reported findings in Chapter 4). This will be discussed further in this section.

The domestic garden offers an opportunity to practice this in an everyday setting of our own choosing (and making). By interacting and connecting with nature within the garden it is possible that nurturing the spirit within, gives us the capacity to cherish spirit within other living things (Naydler, 2011a). Yet Swinscow (1992) acknowledges that this takes time and requires perseverance. From cultural and historical perspectives, a need to acknowledge and appreciate the spirit within is not readily accepted or discussed (Bortoft, 2009; Naydler, 2011a; Tacey, 2009). For experienced gardeners (and participants to this study) however, activity within the garden represents a very strong foundation for beginning to do this more.

Within the following pages, I wish to describe how the themes of this study highlight the essence of this experience, and in particular the notion that ‘time stops still’. This provides a picture of how the experience of gardeners may help others. The collective experience of participants represents a great pool of wisdom accumulated over a lifetime of interaction in their respective gardens. Firstly, I provide a graphic representation of findings and discuss how Gadamer’s fusion of horizons has provided guidance to the analysis of findings. This demonstrates a process orientation and integration of themes. I will also discuss how and why these themes emerged from the data. In the following sections these themes will be developed further in relation to the literature and experience of participants.

5.2.1 Graphic Representation

A graphic representation of themes to this study, appearing at the beginning of the findings section, is expanded here (in Figure 6) to describe how holistic observation is preceded by embodied practice and occurs prior to spiritual expression. This experience resonated with all participants and myself. Gardening is offered as a form of spiritual expression – that is an activity that facilitates connection with spirit. This is a multi-dimensional experience that takes place over time.

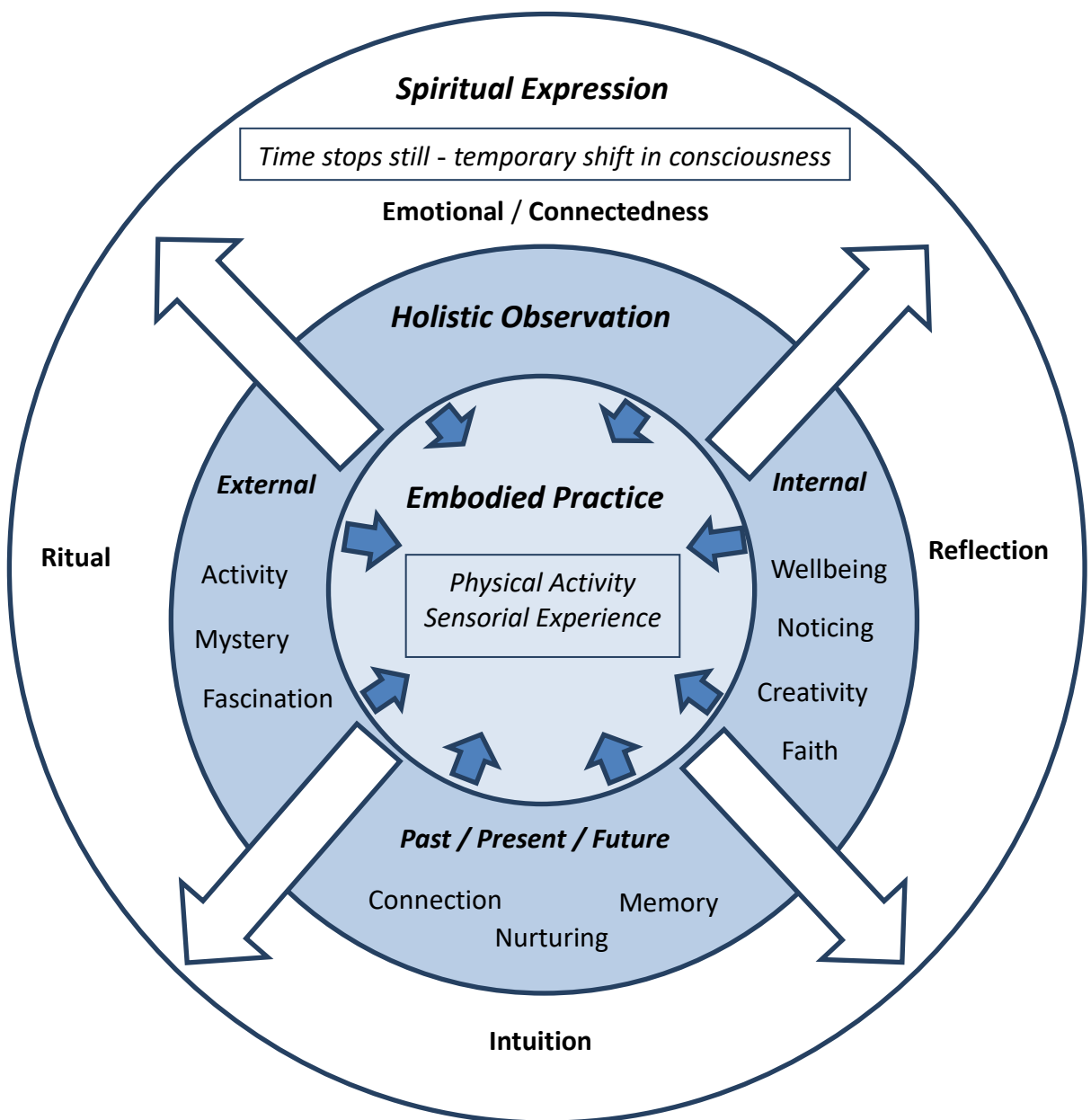


Figure 6 – Garden Practice for Gardeners

The core of this experience is described as embodied practice. It primarily centres on the actions of the mind and body. With attention completely absorbed in the activity of gardening, it was apparent that a temporary shift in consciousness was occurring. Body and mind reach a synchronicity, with neither in complete control. For myself and participants it was almost as if the body intrinsically knew what to do and how to respond to the task at hand. Gardening as a form of embodied practice is fostered by an accumulation of practice and knowledge but becomes almost instinctive in terms of action.

The graphic next identifies a process of holistic observation encompassed within the themes of internal, external and timed dimensions. This represents a threefold view of experience consistent with that of Goethe and a hermeneutic phenomenological perspective. It acknowledges that our view of the world is not just what is physically in front of us, but also what we bring to the experience of observation.

Within its outer layer, the graphic provides an indication of spiritual expression as experienced by a gardener. It demonstrates a form of connectedness between the spirit within ourselves and the spirit present in the garden. In a manner similar to that described by Naydler (2011), this form of expression is often ritualistic, because it occurs regularly and subconsciously. It was often experienced by participants as a point when 'time stops still' and a reprieve from competing thoughts and emotions can be experienced. Being in the garden for experienced gardeners represents an opportunity to exercise intuition and reflect on our place in the world.

5.2.2 Embodied Practice

Working in a garden is a physical act. Combined with mental acumen, or planning, it produces a desired result. Activities of pruning, weeding, planting, composting, harvesting all, by necessity, combine physical and mental activity. For many experienced gardeners, the balance of mind and body in the environment of the domestic garden leads to a more

profound experience. Swinscow (1992) describes how acquiring knowledge through the process of gardening supports and deepens the intuitive response that develops over time. An instinctive, or intuitive reason to act is driven by the apparent needs of the plants for which we care. A sense that you are working with and for the garden, rather than imposing your own ideals often emerges. This is an important distinction because from an historical perspective (described in 2.6) exercising control over the garden diminishes the opportunity for connection with it. For a gardener, it often makes sense that your body 'knows what to do'. The notion that the experience of the mind and body are somehow different and yet combined, embraces the concept of embodied practice described by several identified authors including Gendlin (1997b), Todres (2007), Naydler (2011), McGuire (2007), Csikzentmihalyi (1975) and Rachel and Stephen Kaplan (1989).

The notion that the attention could be completely absorbed was also discussed by Kaplan & Kaplan (1989) in Attention Restoration Theory (ART). This was described as involuntary attention and seen to be restorative because it required no effort and allowed escape from other competing thoughts in the mind. Kaplan & Kaplan (1989) also recognised the diversity of experience that the activity of gardening allowed including passive, active and cognitive processes; each involving the action of the body in varied ways.

Acknowledging the importance of embodied practice within the garden allows focus to be placed on two factors: the primacy of the body in experience and establishing the foundation of ritual. Within the above model, embodied practice was experienced by all participants while in the garden and was related as a peaceful and relaxing time which they sought to repeat on a regular basis. Some participants openly acknowledged that they lost track of time while in the garden but that their families always knew where to find them. Many of the activities undertaken became part of a routine within a regular pattern. Certain times of the day were reserved for garden activity. Similarly, Bhatti (2009) describes a prosaic pleasure that may come from tactile, sensuous experiences of an everyday nature in a domestic setting, such as a garden.

The body is the primary source of knowing because it is our body that allows us to experience the world. Merleau-Ponty (1962) identified the body itself as the conscious subject of experience. He attempted to shift focus from the subjectivity of human intellect to a subjective awareness of the body. For Merleau-Ponty, all subjectivity or awareness rests first in the corporeal being. This has strong implications for the intellectual process of applying language to describe experience without full awareness of the sensual process underpinning it. The experience of participants and the understanding of theorists such as Merleau-Ponty (2004) and Gendlin (1997b) tell us that often the language applied to experience is inadequate to fully describe its meaning.

Language and cognitive/analytical processes are frequently confined within mechanistic rather than creative paradigms. Yet experience seeks out words in order to be shared and better understood. Gendlin (1997b), believed that intimate participation in life is the grounds that makes knowing and languaging experiences possible. The body and the situation are one system or event. A phenomenological approach to understanding allows focus to be placed on intimate participation in life. It is inherently expressive and draws strong parallels with poetic literary perspectives (van Manen, 1997). The medium of poetry has provided an alternative means of languaging the felt experience of participants. Poetic expression does not produce boundaries in how words are sequenced and expressed (Shelly, 1890).

Within embodied practice our cognitive processes are allowed to become neutral and the primacy of the body in experience is enacted. This occurs through the establishment of routines. Repetitive action can be soothing because it creates a re-assuring familiarity for both body and mind. The body instinctively knows the actions that will take place. For many older people this is akin to pottering around in the garden, yet routines are an important part of home-making. Within this study many of the actions of participants were consistent with those home-making activities described by Bhatti et al. (2009) and occurred as a series of actions. This may be likened to ritual. The term ritual is frequently defined using religious terms and related to participation in solemn

ceremony, but Davies (2012) acknowledges that ritual may cover many aspects of life including healthcare, crises of wellbeing, death and bereavement. For older people, rituals may serve as a buffer to the impact of change because it provides a sense of security when other things appear to be disrupted or unstable (Niven, 2008). Ritual has also been described by Reader (1995) as something that provides clear and defined codes of action that regulate and structuralise behaviour and action. Embodied practices within the garden which form part of established routine may therefore be a form of ritual.

5.2.3 Holistic Observation

The physical act of gardening is entirely supported by our capacity to observe. Experienced gardeners keenly observe their gardens in all manner of conditions and seasons. Holistic observation undertaken by participants in this study is akin to the Medieval awareness of dual forms of a plant; one internal, creative and spiritual (*Natura naturans*) and the outer observable or physical form (*Natura naturata*) (Naydler, 2011). From an internal perspective this was evidenced through rich description of what respective plants meant to individual participants and how they made them feel. They saw and experienced a myriad of emotions when they looked at plants in their care including: memory of loved ones, experiences from childhood, experiences of joy, sadness, and sometimes frustration. Some also relayed an understanding that the life force of the plant beared some resonance with the life force within themselves. The notion that observing and caring for a plant in an ongoing capacity can bring forth rich emotion leads to a sense of connection with that plant and the environment of which it is part. Connection on an internal level is reinforced by awareness of the external or outer vision of the plant. Participants described and experienced: visions of colour, awareness of texture and scent, relationships between plants (and other living things) within the garden, and witnessed natural cycles of growth and decline. This is comparable with the Genetic Method employed by Goethe in development of his work the “Metamorphosis of Plants” first published in 1790 in which he described an intense awareness of the inner and outer components of a plant. The inner components having

a spiritual, intangible quality and the outer components having a range of different forms and structures depending on natural cycles of growth and decline (Goethe, 2009).

Holistic observation is by nature multi-dimensional because it encompasses internal dimensions, external dimensions and timed dimensions. This is fuelled by observation in all manner of circumstances and seasons. It provides emotional and physical responsiveness and acknowledges the varying impact and connections with our past, present and future. Each theme has been generated based on the experience of participants and in many cases on the words that they commonly used. I have chosen to classify themes as internal or external based on what I have seen as the best fit. It may well be the case that others would choose to classify them differently.

Internal Dimensions

Internal dimensions of holistic observation have been distinguished from external dimensions in this instance because they are generated from within ourselves. Within this study subthemes include: faith, wellbeing, noticing and creativity. They are established over a life-time embracing our inner being in the world and yet are not immediately apparent and often not readily discussed. Internal dimensions change as we gain experience, awareness and understanding of ourselves within the world around us. Frequently, they reflect how our past experiences of the world shape our perspective of the present.

From a Goethe(ian) perspective this relates to the experience of the soul because it describes the way in which we link our personal experience, through feelings such as joy and sorrow. From a hermeneutic phenomenological perspective this acknowledges that our 'being' in the world generates meaning and understanding derived from our intentionally constructed social world (Swinton & Mowat, 2006).

Langer (2004) focused on the strengths older people had exhibited throughout their lives in order to cope with current difficulties. Resiliency evident in the past may be

eroded by an older person's current circumstances, but experiences are an important source of strength and meaning. This provides some capacity for re-storying past experiences and directing them toward the future (Langer, 2004). Internal dimensions of experience are what provide a sense of self identity and gaining some understanding of the lens through which older people have lived their lives, helps to focus strengths toward future challenges.

For many participants each sub-theme became more poignant as they approached the final stages of their lives.

Faith

Within this study, the word faith was often more comfortable for participants to name experiences than spirituality. Faith had a broader and more accessible meaning. The faith of each participant took different forms throughout their lives. I have taken faith to relate to an individual capacity to believe either in ourselves, others or something beyond ourselves in such a way that it relieves anxiety and gives hope for the future.

Within this generation, faith was built into cultural structures and expectations. It created certainty as to what constituted right or wrong action and circumstances. Faith, in this instance was seen as an important backup, providing support and guidance. Every participant had in one form or another been exposed to the concept of faith in God and most had participated in religious practices. For some participants religious practice was no longer part of their lives, but faith remained. Distinguishing between faith that was linked to religion and faith that related to a much broader concept was therefore important throughout this study.

For some participants the notion of faith rested more comfortably in a connectedness to nature, other people, or a belief that a larger plan within the universe existed. For other participants, it was both of these things. With the progression of age, faith became a more personal concept, no longer bound to the institutions from which it was

introduced. This was consistent with theory surrounding 'stages of faith' developed over several decades (Fowler, 1991, 2001; Fowler & Dell, 2006; Fowler & Levin, 1984).

Having faith implies acceptance without proof, or evidence to verify the existence or credibility of a phenomenon (Rice et al., 2017). For many participants in this study faith was also akin to a sense of intuition, foresight and wisdom. A capacity to retain faith also had parallels with an aptitude for creativity in a variety of forms. Faith was a life-long journey with many challenges. This supports the writing of Klink (1965) who described faith as a resolution of conflicting experiences. This may begin with a naïve childhood certainty of goodness in the world but is repeatedly challenged by a perceived threat to human existence (for the non-religious) or a perceived separation from God (for the religious) (Klink, 1965). These both represent danger and threat to our perceived reality. Faith provides an individual with an adaptive and defensive capacity. It instils a notion of compromise that is neither logical nor predictable (Klink, 1965). For participants to this study such compromise came in the form of wisdom and acceptance that life is not always predictable and hope for the future can appear in many different forms, including a connection to nature.

Creativity

It is possible that a sense of creativity is generated from a capacity to open the mind to possibility, to envisage a plan or a dream and follow it to a desired end. For most participants creativity was an important part of their lives, both within the garden and outside of it. For some this was borne of home-making traditions and traditional roles of maintaining a family home. Interestingly, however, most participants had also had an active working life and creative endeavours were important because they offered an outlet for expression. Many actively participated in creative activities such as knitting, sewing, quilting, painting and drawing, mosaicking and furniture restoration.

Creativity was highly valued by many previously mentioned authors. In particular, Goethe believed that the arts and science should be considered collectively and that one

without the other led to an inability to see the whole picture. Conversely, creativity in the garden has been taken to mean taking absolute control of plantings, growth and natural tendencies of plants in order to achieve a desired effect. This might involve such things as topiary and bonsai. However, Hitchings (2006) and Swinscow (1992) contend that exacting too much control, diminishes a possible connection with plants. Kunitz & Lentine (2007), saw every true garden as an imaginative construct, reflecting our own sensibility and concept of beauty. In this way the garden becomes a synthesis creating a new kind of beauty relating a complex and multiple world.

The creative process of participants was not only present in the garden. It was frequently present in other activities such as painting, drawing, quilting, knitting, sewing, mosaicking and singing. Each creative act resulted in a tangible outcome that was useful. This created great satisfaction for its maker. The creative process for participants resulted from acquired skill, patience and the knowledge that the end product was of use and created a legacy for family and friends.

Within the literature, creativity has been variously described, so too the roles of imagination, perception and intuition. To borrow Cohen's (2000) phrase of creativity with a small c, the work of many participants was creativity within their means, expectations and opportunity. The way it is accepted as a legacy will be more fully discussed in the following sections. For some participants, however, the creative act itself, or the process of achieving the end result, was of equal satisfaction to the end result itself. The creative process kept mind and body in tune in a similar manner to activity in the garden.

The importance of creativity to this study is expanded later in this chapter in section 5.6

Noticing

All participants keenly noticed change in their garden. It was a key component of garden practice and kept participants alert to change. This included watching for new growth,

signs of decline, need for water and nutrients. An active participation in the garden was important. Attention to detail meant that participants were in tune with the needs of the garden. Many participants felt you had to be taught to notice, but for others it was seen as innate.

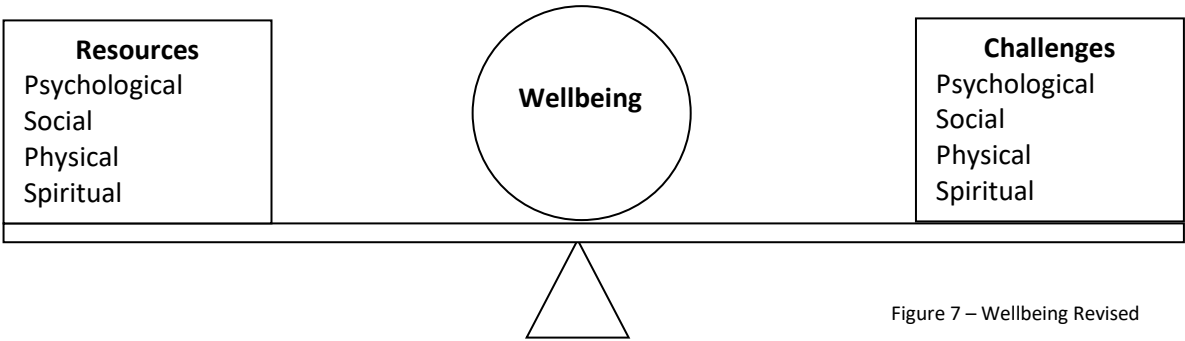
A capacity to notice may come from an innate interest in the world around us. It is possible that this can be taught, but initially it is driven by an internal interest in our surrounding environment. Importantly, it is also driven by the power of the sense of wonder, which, as Goethe (2009) pointed out, is the most highly desired feature of observation. It was also noted as fundamental to Attention Restoration Theory (ART) proposed by Kaplan & Kaplan (1989). Some participants mentioned the need for parents to teach their children to notice by consciously pointing out aspects of nature and describing them. It is through actively noticing that we might also recognise change, whether that be in a positive or negative sense.

Noticing or being observant of the surrounding environment is what Goethe referred to in his method of observation. For him noticing a plant meant not only observing its beauty when in flower, but also observing its character during the other seasons when it sleeps in the depths of winter, when it loses its leaves, when new shoots emerge in spring. Observing the change of seasons and the impact on plants in the garden is central to a gardener's being. Without noticing the changing needs of plants in our care, it might not be possible to enjoy the beauty of blooms, because they may not occur.

Keen observation meant that changes in the health of each plant were noted and acted upon where possible. Noticing change was ongoing throughout the year. With each new season different forms within a plant may take shape. This was a constant source of joy (and sometimes frustration). Each season expressed its own unique identity and characteristics. This was particularly the case within this regional centre where four distinct seasons were evident.

Wellbeing

The definition of wellbeing proposed by Dodge, Daly, Huyton and Sanders (2012) and described within Chapter 2 points to a possible balance in the achievement of wellbeing. To this I have added a spiritual dimension.



Wellbeing is recognised as a dynamic process which can be applied at any point throughout the lifespan. As previously mentioned, this is consistent with a phenomenological perspective that acknowledges a distinction between a conscious (or cognitive) knowledge of the world and a knowledge of the world gained through the actions of the body or embodied knowing of the world. For participants, ageing was shared as a difficult time for some – a paradox of gains and losses on a personal level. A sense of self-identity and purpose within life that so closely related to their past, was now very different. For some participants, they could no longer participate in gardening in the same way they had previously, but with wisdom, knowledge and creativity, they were still able to gain satisfaction from gardening. In this way the garden continued to provide a tangible source of satisfaction that may have otherwise been missing.

From the perspective of participants, it was evident that the spiritual dimension was particularly important. It acknowledged the life story to which they related, but it also represented the challenges they had met and overcome. This was evident in the loss of loved ones, memory of past events and practices and hopes for the future. For

participants a sense of wellbeing was drawn from within. It encompassed past experiences of what it meant to be well, physically, emotionally and spiritually. Maintaining an active interest had the potential to change perspective on all manner of conditions. For one participant the thought of not having access to a garden was hard to contemplate.

From a Goethean perspective, internal dimensions are driven by our feelings and emotional responsiveness to our surroundings (Bortoft, 2009; Naydler, 1996). From a phenomenological perspective internal dimensions are representative of our lived experience of phenomenon particularly as it relates to the garden.

External Dimensions

External dimensions of holistic observation are those that are generated from our external environment and our interaction with it. They embrace our outer being in the world. Our external environment provides stimulation for cognitive processes and opportunities for activity that is either intentional or perhaps unintentional. Sub-themes within this dimension include: physical activity, (sense of) mystery and fascination. External dimensions are more evident to those around us. Often it is only these aspects of experience that are fully considered, but each dimension is of equal importance. From a Goethe(ian) perspective external dimensions related to the experience of the body gathered through the senses. From a hermeneutic phenomenological perspective, it recognises that understanding is enabled through experience and this must first occur through the body.

Mystery

Our sense of mystery comes from our desire to solve a puzzle or to understand how and why something works the way it does. Mystery and a sense of wonder were at the heart of the processes of observation described by Goethe (2009) that he believed led to greater connection to the spirit within ourselves and the spirit that exists in other life

forms. That sense of mystery combined with a highly developed form of observation led to Goethe's understanding of the essence of plant form.

Swinscow (1992) describes the mystic garden as something we strive to achieve because it represents the imagined perfect form of a garden. He relays that this frequently begins in childhood and that the education that a garden provides a child may be of lifelong value. To Swinscow (1992) the garden moulds the mind of a child leaving a permanent notion of tenderness within the senses. The wonder and mystery of childhood, he believed evolved into the serenity of old age: 'a garden can lay the foundations for an equable temper at twenty, a balanced judgement at forty, a feeling of achievement at sixty and fulfilment at eighty' (Swinscow, 1992, p22).

For participants, mystery in the garden was an element of experience that often began during childhood. By encompassing the awe and wonder of nature, it meant appreciating an occurrence without needing to seek an answer. Mystery was also about being present in the moment and accepting life as it is. Acceptance that bears no expectation appreciates possibility without judgement. A tendency to be more accepting of change is often attributed to older people (Tornstam, 2005), but it is also indicative of the acquisition of wisdom often aligned with a developed form of spirituality (Bianchi, 2005; Yount, 2009). The extent to which participants in this study were able to accept change varied, but the importance remained a constant.

The mystery of the garden was translated, by some participants, into tangible and creative activity. For one, the mystery of nature became a passion for propagating native seed. Her wisdom and experience of nature was shared with others through the plants she raised. She kept soil from property she previously owned because of its 'magic' properties – containing just the right nutrients to raise native seed (often hard to raise with regular commercially produced potting mixes). For another participant, the mystery of nature led to an interest in producing and testing a range of natural fabric dyes (derived from native plants) – particularly used in the dyeing of spun wool.

Mystery is also closely associated with notions of consciousness. Similarly to Swinscow (1992), Naydler (2011) suggested that the garden calls to us from the future, where it exists as a still unrealised ideal. This, he describes as an effort to align our own consciousness to that of the garden. Therein lies the mystery of attunement – our own imagination and creativity meeting the creative mystery of nature living within the confines of our own garden. A sense of mystery is, of course, difficult to describe or define, but Nayler (2011) equates this to the understanding that a photograph of a garden can never quite convey the actual experience of being in a garden. This represents a stark contrast to a more psychological approach to understanding a fascination for the garden and its consequent impact on cognitive functioning within our brain.

Fascination

A sense of fascination comes from observation without having to understand or probe, but simply watching as a phenomenon unfolds before us. For one participant watching the processes of nature was reverential. This could be as simple as watching the clouds roll across the sky, or watching the ants follow a set trail. It needed no explanation, but simple observation - to sit and enjoy the moment. The capacity to remain curious or fascinated by the garden and nature was clearly seen amongst participants. The joy of being in the garden came with a knowledge that each day is different and the garden is constantly changing. Curiosity kept the mind active looking for new and different features however small.

The fascination of participants is consistent with the work of Kaplan & Kaplan (1989) in the development of Attention Restoration Theory (ART) because it recognises that human fascination revolves around issues of process as well as content. They recognised that humans are fascinated by carrying out various information-based activities under circumstances of some uncertainty, such as in a garden. Gardening allows an individual to follow a thread of interest and gradually acquire understanding of a bigger picture, rather than simply being taught new things (Kaplan & Kaplan, 1989).

Fascination also informs many other psychological approaches to considering the importance of nature (Bratman et al., 2012; Chun, Golomb, & Turk-Browne, 2011; Keniger et al., 2013). Importantly, it is the intriguing stimuli evident in nature that modestly secures attention in a bottom-up manner that in turn allows top-down directed attention abilities to be restored and replenished (Berman, 2008).

Participants shared how a fascination for life in the garden led to a complete absorption of their attention. That moment when 'time stops still' was often preceded by a period of fascination. A reprieve from competing thoughts allowed this to occur. This required no effort but maintained individual focus for extended periods of time. The extent of fascination, of course, varied amongst participants and was moderated by mood, time and competing interests. The notion of fascination continues to be explored within the growing field of environmental psychology with particular emphasis on fascination and the quality and quantity of experiences in nature (Berto, 2014; Sato & Conner, 2013).

Physical Activity

Physical activity in older age is perhaps an obvious feature of health and wellbeing. For many, however, types of activity often correspond to what was modelled to us as children and/or behaviours that were enjoyed. Physical activity may also be prompted by current activities inspired by nurturing, a sense of mystery or fascination.

Physical activity amongst participants varied according to capacity. For some this remained relatively strenuous. For others it was mediated by age related conditions and ailments. Physical capacity did not necessarily restrict participants. In most instances they found a way to compensate for activities they could no longer perform. This included modifying the way tasks were done (i.e raised flower beds or pots and tools), or employing someone to do specified tasks. This is consistent with the findings of other studies reflecting on the capacity of older gardeners to adjust their practice with the constraints of age (Milligan & Bingley, 2015; Wang & MacMillan, 2013).

Physical activity for older people is, of course, an important feature of maintaining health into later years. The possibility to improve mobility, strength, balance and flexibility through physical activity in the garden reduces the risk of developing Frailty and the increasingly recognised frailty syndrome (Ahmed et al., 2007; Woo, 2017; Xue, 2011). It is evident for those older people living with frailty, that there is a higher risk of changes in mental and physical health following minor events which challenge their health (Woo, 2017). The possibility that frailty could impact participants to this study was a factor considered by all participants. They recognised that minor events could significantly challenge their health, but approached this with a determination to do as much as they could for as long as they could.

From a Goethian perspective, external dimensions come from our interaction with the physical world. Through physical activity we participate in the environment. In nurturing other life forms, we actively seek to care for the needs of others (including plants). We gain a sense of mystery from the physical environment and the occurrence of events we witness or know to exist. Our sense of fascination grows in response to phenomena we observe and yet choose to remain separate from. From a phenomenological perspective, external dimensions demonstrate our own being in the world and our physical responsiveness to it.

Timed Dimensions (Past, Present, Future)

Timed dimensions of holistic observation are those that clearly link us through time to our past, present and future. Within this study they include: memory, connection and nurturing. Our consciousness rests so squarely in the timed present, but a shift in consciousness that may be experienced in the garden somehow allows time to stop still, even for just a short time. Through timed dimensions we can more clearly see how our previous experiences contribute to our present and future and continue to re-shape our perspectives. From a phenomenological viewpoint this reinforces the transient nature of experience and that interpreting and re-interpreting our view of the world continues through each point of our lives.

Memory

Memory is highly significant, particularly as we age and feel compelled to look back on the purpose and meaning of our lives. Timed dimensions also encompass hope, because in planting a garden we must imagine how it will appear in the future and what it might contribute to the future. Participant memory associated with the garden came in many forms and was frequently laced with significant meaning.

Childhood memory of the garden was highly significant. Often such memories represented first experiences - first smell, sight, or touch of particular plants or experiences. Such memories often flooded back when that sensation was experienced again. Semantic memory has been identified as that which deteriorates least as we age (Levine, Svoboda, Hay, Winocur, & Moscovitch, 2002; Piolino et al., 2006; St. Jacques & Levine, 2007). For older people, memory of times spent in the garden with family or friends and specific plants are therefore often more accessible than other more episodic memories. This may, in turn, reinforce the cyclic metaphor of nature – an impermanent yet ongoing life force.

During the course of this study I have often considered my own memories of childhood gardens and recognised their enduring power to influence my current perspectives. I have also been very conscious of establishing memories for my own children in the garden we share.

Connection

Connection has been identified as a theme within timed dimensions because a sense of connection has significant impact on our wellbeing. Connection may be experienced at different times (past, present and future) to people, spirit, nature or places.

A connection to spirit, within the setting of the garden, has been a powerful and sustaining source of faith and wellbeing for participants to this study. Identifying and describing spirit in words was often difficult. The strength of feeling was more clearly evident. Spirit was felt as: a presence; a memory; a smell or sensation; a life force; and/or something that reminds us that we are part of something much larger than ourselves. It was also expressed as that place where our mind and our being can rest and be at peace – a sanctuary for the mind.

Studies exploring connectedness to nature reveal, not only an increase in the felt sense of connection to nature, but also increased attentional capacity, positive emotions and ability to reflect on a life problem (Frantz, Mayer, Norton, & Rock, 2005; S. F. Mayer & C. M. Frantz, 2004; Mayer, Frantz, Bruehlman-Senecal, & Dolliver, 2009; Perrin & Benassi, 2009). For participants, life in the garden was a clear reminder of natural processes of growth and decline. This bore clear analogy to their own experiences of growth and decline, joy and sadness. A key characteristic of ongoing connection is the notion of working with nature without attempting to exact control – this is perhaps central to all forms of connection as was seen within section 2.6.

Nurturing

A capacity to nurture others may relate to our own experience of being or witnessing a process of nurturing for people, pets or plants. Nurturing is by nature a self-less activity. Many participants regarded their plants as being similar to children that required ongoing care, but also space to develop as necessity required. The role of nurturing and stewardship of plants undertaken by older gardeners was recognised by Wright and Wadsworth (2014) because it provided increased health, community awareness and a connection to future generations.

Swinscow (1992) points out that nurturing and development of a garden often takes years of perseverance and that only after an extended period of time, with both achievement and failure can we truly appreciate the experience of gardening. No two

plants are ever the same, because each plant has interacted with a different environment and growing conditions. A gardener is therefore called upon to nurture each individual acknowledging this difference (Swinscow, 1992).

Nurturing in itself is a complex phenomenon and has its own frustrations. Perhaps it is more akin to patience and wisdom, but it does seem that the garden teaches both. It requires great patience to continue to nurture plants from seed/ling through to established plant. It became apparent that by nurturing the garden, participants were also nurturing themselves and others who shared the experience of their garden. Nurturing was paired with the different forms of older people's care for place by Wiles and Jayasinha (2013), in consideration for how these efforts positively impact on older people and the communities in which they live.

5.2.4 Spiritual Expression

Spiritual Expression is described within this study as the opportunity to experience that moment when 'time stops still' and we gain absolute reprieve from competing thoughts and concerns. It may be experienced resulting from other activities such as prayer meditation, art, music or dance, but in the context of this study, spiritual expression is deepened because it includes collaboration with another life-form, namely nature. That life-form is not singular or separate, but universal and something of which humans are intrinsically part (even if we have forgotten the extent of that partnership).

Within the thematic model the possibility of spiritual expression is preceded by embodied practice and holistic observation. This means that the actions of the body and a sensory experience of interaction are intrinsic to the process. This is distinguished from meaning that might be gleaned from a garden setting that is not of our own making and occurs spontaneously. Embodied practice and sensorial experience in the garden is deepened through Holistic Observation (inclusive of internal, external and timed dimensions) which actively call on all our past experiences and notions of the world we live in. The foundations of ritual laid in embodied practice become more revered

because they are enhanced by intuition, reflection and emotional connectedness. The domestic garden provides a timeless environment filled with memory and association with chosen plants. It is created in collaboration with nature, yet it is highly individual.

We express ourselves spiritually in the garden because of our capacity to connect ourselves in mind, body and spirit to a living entity much larger than ourselves. We can shift our level of consciousness (even if just momentarily) while participating in a creative and intuitive process. The garden is intensely personal to those that create it, and yet it can be readily shared, through strong association with others in the past, present and/or future.

For participants to this study spending time in the garden was identified as peaceful and relaxing. This is not to deny that the work of a gardener is often hard and it is not without its frustrations, but for an experienced gardener the process continues to unfold. Change is inevitable and largely welcomed as a renewed opportunity to learn and develop anew.

A desire for peace and relaxation embraced a wide range of human experience. For those experiencing the loss of loved ones, the garden enabled a means of connection to that person(s). For those experiencing difficult times it provided an outlet for engagement of the entire self (body, mind and spirit) that was soothing and healing. For others experiencing illness, it provided incentive to keep active and/or remain hopeful. For all it provided a source of joy and satisfaction. For most participants the garden was a central part of maintaining an inner sense of wellbeing. Nurturing the spirit within and the spirit without.

In understanding the lived experience of those that have spent a lifetime tending gardens of various kinds, it is incumbent on me as a researcher to see how the benefits of this experience may be broadened to others. In the following sections I will describe how available research and literature together with the experience of gardeners may assist others.

5.3 Poetic Reflection on Ageing

“The universe is a continuous web. Touch it at any point and the whole web quivers”
Stanley Kunitz (Kunitz & Lentine, 2007, p.4)

I provide a separate section here for poetic expression for two reasons. Firstly, expressing thoughts, feelings and connections associated with garden practice and spiritual expression frequently reaches beyond the use of standard forms of communication, but rests comfortably within poetic expression. Secondly, I have come to understand that ageing is one of the most difficult phases within our lives. We each aspire to it, but without a capacity to re-imagine ourselves and our place in the world, it can be extremely challenging. Many poets have described this journey. The poetry of Stanley Kunitz, who was both gardener and poet has provided great insight to this study and the process of ageing. In particular, his poem ‘Between the Layers’, first presented in section 2.2 will be discussed.

Poetry describing the garden has also been an important aspect of understanding the essence of the garden experience. The poetry of philosopher and gardener, Jeremy Naydler, first presented in section 2.6, has also guided my thoughts surrounding the lived experience of garden practice and a Goethean manner of viewing the world. But firstly, I wish to return to the foundation poem that began this study. I have frequently reflected on this poem and feel its progression sheds light on how my own thinking has developed.

5.3.1 Foundation Poem

Faith is a complex phenomenon. It is at odds with a scientific mindset, because it cannot be proven or empirically measured. My own personal quest for faith was outlined at the start of this study and in beginning to establish the meaning and implications of my study. This poem describes a quest for faith, but it has become clearer to me that faith is a multi-dimensional phenomenon. It is intensely human (with all the weaknesses, strengths and imperfections that this encompasses), but importantly it begins with a

faith in self. A faith in self that transpires and equates to a faith in something larger than the self. Accepting of all that we are and have been during our lives. This is both humbling and reassuring because it demonstrates the possibility of interconnection. Faith may have a religious and/or cultural structure, or it may centre on the notion that nature and the universe have a divine being or presence.

DOES FAITH BEGIN AND END IN MY GARDEN	SPIRITUAL EXPRESSION AND THE GARDEN
<p>A quest for faith appears unfathomable, A disquiet longing to materialise in my senses To touch, to smell, to hear, to see</p> <p>Amid the blur that is the rest of my life My garden draws me close Mesmerising, calming, enabling</p> <p>Physical, mental, emotional, spiritual My garden absorbs and re-shapes my energy, Its strength and virtue, felt deeply.</p> <p>Enduring and responding to an-other My garden is a sentinel of change I am called to collaborate, nurture, engage.</p> <p>If I did not convey body, mind and spirit, Would it cease to be so? A quest for faith begins and ends in my garden <i>J Adams – poetry journal</i></p>	<p>A quest for faith, indeterminate Beyond my level of consciousness Let go my mind, reprieve, be still</p> <p>My part in the universe Clearer, clearer and yet diminishing With one energy and many faces</p> <p>Senses alert, no effort to apply Time stops still, and still I am fascinated, curious, alert</p> <p>All thoughts combined beyond The limits of my garden My heart and mind flooding</p> <p>With the spirit of nature Resounding in everyday space Faith revived, inspired and renewed. <i>J Adams – poetry journal</i></p>

Figure 8 – Poetic Development

The first poem describes the tension of (attaining and) maintaining a faith without tangible experience of how that faith manifests in everyday life. For me the garden has become that tangible expression of faith because it allows me to participate in a flow of energy that is infinite and yet private within my own domestic space.

Within the second poem a confidence that this connection is a valid pathway toward spiritual expression becomes more evident. It describes more clearly that during that time when time stops still, the opportunity to allow spirit into everyday life emerges. This is a time when our senses are allowed to define our identity. We can merge with the garden around us and feel a sense of combined energy and life force. A sense of connection may go beyond the immediate garden in the form of interest and empathy for nature beyond our space. Spiritual expression is facilitated by our ability to be fascinated, curious and alert to our surroundings. For me the garden experience renews and revives my faith in the presence of spirit.

Spiritual presence within the garden is something that all participants to this study alluded to. For some this was explicit and shared openly in discussion. For others it was more implicit and shared in enthusiasm, joy and levels of satisfaction. Some described the presence of God and related the garden as the place where you could be closest to God. Others felt the presence of loved ones lost, either in relation to the garden they had built and tended or to particular plants. For others the presence of nature itself was relayed as spiritual. In Naydler's (2005) poem 'The Priesthood' a spiritual atmosphere is playfully described in the garden, and yet acknowledges the potential simplicity of accepting the garden as a place of spiritual significance.

In either case, gardening was a central feature of each participants life and was repeatedly sought because it provided a sense of peace, tranquility and escape from other daily pressures. The experience of participants was similar to my own, although I acknowledge they had many more years to process its significance and develop wisdom. For me, awareness of a spiritual presence in the garden developed over time. The strength of that presence varied depending on my own mood or disposition, but an understanding that this connection could be called on remained with me always.

The way we describe and relate experiences of the spirit may vary greatly. Yet the notion of presence and awareness that time spent in the garden was a central part of

their wellbeing was particularly important to participants. The terms spirituality and spiritual expression are problematic. Not only because notions of spirit have been subject to a great deal of change, but also because we are seldom asked to acknowledge or describe such things. The sensation that time stops still while in the garden was consistent with all participants. It was a time when body and mind were engaged in an activity that was seemingly effortless, as similarly relayed by Kaplan & Kaplan (1989). It took place in a personalised domestic environment and engaged the senses in a way that was not always possible during other activities. This was similarly described by Bhatti (2006) and Bhatti et al. (2009). Losing a sense of time has been identified as a change in consciousness. This is a time when it is possible to 'be' completely in the moment and for a short time maintain a responsiveness only to the surrounding environment. This represents a connection with a life-force beyond our own, and over which we have limited control. Yet for myself and all participants this time led to a distinct sense of peace and relaxation. This sensation is consistent with the notion of flow described by Csikszentmihalyi (1975) and the experience of creativity described by May (1959) and Cohen (2009).

The subtleties of the gardening process are frequently underestimated in their potential. Maintaining a garden takes time and patience. Yet if we are able to shift our perspective just slightly we might more clearly recognise the value of connection to nature and spirit. In Naydler's (2005) poem 'The Gardeners Hand' it can be seen that the actions of the gardener in planting the seed allows spirit to grow. The analogy of the seed was one that was used by several participants in describing not only the magic of the garden, but also the possibility of inspiring in others (particularly children) to develop awareness of faith and the presence of (an)other in their lives. Naydler (2005) saw an interface between soul and garden, such that inner experience could find itself reflected in outer reality.

The garden provides rich metaphor for the cyclic nature of life itself. It demonstrates these changes through growth and decline. Access to a garden allows the possibility for 'time to stop still', to experience another dimension, so that we might gain some reprieve from other pressures within our lives. Kunitz was a very keen gardener and

believed that one of the mysteries of gardening is that the garden reflects the viewers own state of being at the time (Kunitz & Lentine, 2007). A garden communicates when it shows itself to us in multi-sensorial ways. In return, we give to the garden some of what we are looking for in our own lives and state of being. 'One reason a garden can speak to you is that it is both its own reality and a manifestation of the interior life of the mind that imagined it in the beginning' (Kunitz and Lentine, 2007, p.72). This highlights the importance of having a garden within the domestic space of daily living, so that this communication may be ongoing. It also demonstrates the partnership that is possible between people and plants that perhaps both supports and extends the work of Hitchings (2006).

Growth and decline within a garden were related by Kunitz to the layers and the litter within our own lives. In his poem 'The Layers' (provided in full in Chapter 2), Kunitz provides a compelling view of the final stages of life. The poem encourages us to acknowledge the essence of our being that remains with us throughout our lives. It recognises that changes will continue to occur right until the very end of our lives. The events that have passed we cannot change and yet each step along the way should be considered precious in terms of shaping who we are. Kunitz describes a need to live within the layers rather than on the litter and how we are compelled to look back over our lives. To live on the litter is to dwell on the past, unaccepting of change and its impact, but to live in the layers is to acknowledge the multiple dimensions and possibilities within our lives.

In relating the poem to the themes of this study, the interrelationship of dimensions can be gleaned. The poem suggests that holding on to the mystery and fascination (external dimensions) for life aids our capacity to maintain faith and creativity (internal dimensions) in approach. That memory and connection (timed dimensions) to our past shapes and provides depth to our futures. That nurturing and activity (external dimensions), help us more clearly to notice, reflect and maintain a sense of wellbeing (internal dimensions). For many participants to this study, maintaining a garden throughout their lives gave them a defined way to process change. Some recounted an

awareness that change was inevitable, and that the garden helped them to put this into perspective because change in the garden was also inevitable with natural cycles of growth and decline, death and new life.

Within the final stages of life, clearly a capacity to remain active is difficult. For older people, this creates concern in being able to maintain a garden. But a garden need not be large. Planting a seed and watching it grow may be just a few pots, or a window box. For one participant to this study the thought that older people could be encouraged to maintain a window box filled her with great joy. She revelled in the prospect of sharing the joy of gardening and encouraging greater activity and participation amongst her peers.

Taking joy from small pleasures was something I learnt from many of my participants. Despite the processes of ageing there were many small pleasures still to be explored and enjoyed such as a few pots or a window box. Acknowledging the 'layers' and the 'litter' of our own lives also helps us to prioritise those things that are important and help us to keep moving forward. In the following poem titled Epirrhema, Goethe writes of his view of nature. In considering the inter-connectedness of all living things, it seems fitting to reconcile the process of ageing with the notion that despite any or all of our losses we remain connected with all other living things.

Science of nature has one goal:
To find both manyness and whole.
Nothing 'inside' or 'Out There,'
The 'outer' world is all 'In Here.'
This mystery grasp without delay,
This secret always on display.
The true illusion celebrate,
Be joyful in the serious game!
No living thing lives separate:
One and Many are the same.

Through the literary and creative arts, we are reminded that phenomena can be observed with as much intensity and rigour as if following a scientific method but gain a completely different insight. What Goethe sought was a balance between the two, rejecting neither. What we see is therefore dependent on our perspective and purpose in viewing, but also on the cultural and historical circumstances within which seeing occurs. This was evidenced in the quote by Thoreau (written in 1851) describing the view of a sunset within section 2.6. In considering how our relationship with plants within the garden can be enhanced, and our capacity to more fully observe the subtleties of change strengthened, we must be cognisant of accounting for a range of possible perspectives.

A capacity to witness and accept a range of possible perspectives is recognised within processes of creativity (May, 1959; Cohen, 2001, 2006). This will be discussed in more detail in section 5.6. It is also consistent with developmental stages in later life that describe the wisdom of elders and their ability to transcend more narrow perspectives (Erikson & Erikson, 1998; Tornstam, 2005). This was evident in most participants to this study who sought balance in their activities with a range of creative pursuits including working and spending time in the garden.

The connectedness of all living things – the manyness and the whole – was what Goethe sought to understand. This is reinforced in the following poem taken from ‘Vermachtnis’ (‘Legacy’) Goethe: Selected Verse (trans David Luke)

Nothing that is can dissolve into nothingness!
In all that lives the Eternal Force works on:
remain, rejoicing, in Being!
Being is eternal;
for laws preserve the living treasures
with which the universe has adorned herself.

Further precedent for the value of gardening found in poetry can be seen in the poem *Hortulus* written by Walafrid Strabo (Payne & Blunt, 1966). This is provided in Appendix A.4 and is perhaps the first writing to describe the act of gardening. Strabo, a Benedictine Monk, born around 809 in Alemannia (which is now south-west Germany) was a talented academic who wrote in the style of Virgil's *Georgics*. His work emphasising the physicality of gardening and the joy of the experience still clearly resonates with the experience of gardeners today.

It is apparent from this work, that the art of gardening has remained constant over thousands of years. The actions and challenges of mind and body working in unison, the quest to understand the needs of the plants and to negotiate the elements of weather, season, soil and positioning of the garden. The joy and peace that gardening brought to the Monks back in the 800s is consistent with the joy and peace it gave to participants, despite the drastically different lifestyles, technologies, and cultural practices. The process of gardening remains consistent, but it is clear, that our perception, awareness, attitude and opportunity are influenced by the historical/cultural context within which we live. This gives me great hope for the future of everyday gardening practices. This will be discussed more fully within the next section.

5.4 History and Inter-Generational Paradigms

Youth, large lusty loving –
youth, full of grace, force, fascination,
Do you know that Old Age may come after you,
with equal grace, force, fascination?
Walt Whitman cited in Cohen 2000, p114.

Acknowledging the historical context of human experience forms an important element of Gadamer's (1975) fusion of horizons. The history of gardens and garden practice allows us to see how the relationship between humans and plants/nature has changed throughout centuries of development. This relationship is clearly influenced by the dominant culture of the time. Hyams (1971) described how the way we see plants and gardens was linked to the strength and priorities of the predominant culture. Many of the changes in garden practice are linked to demonstrations of strength and prestige, scientific advances, and prevailing views of beauty, its origins and nature (Naydler, 2011a; Thacker, 1979). Culture lays the foundations of spiritual and/religious concerns. It describes how conquest is considered and wealth is dispersed. It determines how status is displayed and charity is distributed. It also influences our perception of creativity, logic and reason. Throughout history the garden and nature has featured in each of these aspects of human society. Through reflection on periods of history we might better understand how our current generation may view the garden and contact with nature.

From a cultural perspective, we can also identify nuances relating to each successive generation. MacKinlay and Burns (2017) point to the importance of seeing respective generations within the context in which they have lived their lives. While there is a danger in generalising the attributes of a recognised generation, acknowledging the subtleties of change can provide a more in-depth understanding of relationships. In particular our relationship with nature have been subject to great change at both the micro-level (within gardening practices) (Hyams, 1971; Naydler, 2011a; Thacker, 1979) and the macro level (with loss of native habitats and climate change) (Albrecht et al., 2007; Higginbotham, Connor, Albrecht, Freeman, & Agho, 2006; Naydler, 2011a). Of

particular interest to this study is also the notion that older people have been associated with a role as stewards of the earth (Collins, 2007; Moody, 2009; Pillemer, Wells, Wagenet, Meador, & Parise, 2011; Wright & Wadsworth, 2014) and for having particular concern for leaving a legacy for future generations (Warburton & Gooch, 2007). It is also noted that the impact of climate change and environmental degradation is likely to be higher on older populations due to increased vulnerability and frailty (Horton, Hanna, & Kelly, 2010; Sykes, 2005).

Within this study the importance of nature within both garden and natural settings was clearly expressed by participants. They were able to identify changes to the environment and climate within their lifetimes. Many also saw the importance of providing sanctuary for birds, lizards, plants and other lifeforms within their own garden. Warburton & Gooch (2007) similarly describe a connection between older people, the longer-term future of the environment and a need to leave a lasting legacy for future generations. In accordance with Erikson's approach to human development the older years have been seen as a time to contribute to the environment as part of a broader cycle of life (Warburton & Gooch, 2007).

Naydler (2011a) points to the shifting nature of our consciousness in relation to the cultural environment into which we are born. In particular, he relates this to our relationship with plants and nature. This has been traced through a history of gardening in section 2.6. Our capacity to shift consciousness and relate more directly to plants and nature was also identified by Goethe (2006). This was reduced when our relationship with nature was weakened. In turn this limits our capacity to express ourselves spiritually (Goethe, 2006). For this study, reflecting on the history of gardening has helped to provide a bigger picture. In understanding how our relationship with nature is shaped by culture we might be better placed to re-shape the perceived distance between ourselves and nature in the present (Naydler, 2011a).

From an historical perspective our relationship with plants and nature was weakened during times of prosperity, industrialisation, increased wealth and power. This was

identified previously in the Rise of the Roman Empire, The Renaissance and The Industrial Revolution. Conversely, in the period since Ancient Egypt, Mesopotamia and Greece, it was strengthened during times of reported decline and crisis. Medieval times have been identified as a time when the human relationship with nature was significant. Advocates of the Romantic period of the early 1800s who lamented the impact of industrialisation on the human relationship with nature were inspired by Medieval times (Lowy & Sayre, 2018). Naydler (2011a), particularly notes a shift in consciousness at this time. Arguably this is may be because little is known of scientific endeavour during this period (Lindberg, 2003; Lindberg & Numbers, 2003).

Participants in this study spanned two generations identified as the Federation Generation 1901-1925 and the Builders 1925-1945 (MacKinlay & Burns, 2013; McCrindle & Wolfinger, 2010). None of the participants fell within the designation of Baby Boomers. From a general perspective they experienced different levels of prosperity and decline/tragedy. The Federation generation were born into a peaceful time, but as young adults were potentially affected by the aftermath of their parents (and for the very old of the group – the impact on their childhoods) of two world wars and the Great Depression. The Builders generation were born into a period of crisis experienced by their parents, but as young adults started families in the post war boom (the parents of the baby boomers) (McCrindle & Wolfinger, 2010). The influences of each of these periods within the Australian culture will be expanded in the coming pages.

While it is possible to note differences in the attributes of each generation, it is perhaps the corresponding levels of consciousness that provide greater insight. This understanding may enable greater capacity to attain and maintain levels of connection that could provide the most accessible opportunity for spiritual experience. While I do not advocate a return to Medieval or Ancient times, if historical patterns are to be considered in relation to value attributed to the (domestic) garden, it seems likely, that the possibility of ignoring the link between ourselves and nature is coming to an end. In current times human control over nature has remained strong; but natural resources are being depleted, the environment is increasingly affected by climate change and toxic

pollutants and health and wellbeing is arguably riddled with a complex set of needs and circumstances that have not been experienced before (Beyer et al., 2014; Frumkin, 2001; Frumkin et al., 2017; Gascon et al., 2016; Hartig et al., 2014; Naydler, 2011b; Watts et al., 2015). While this represents a macro level view, it is perhaps the micro level that is equally important (Naydler, 2011a, 2011b).

Historically, as Naydler (2011a) points out, the value attributed to the garden and contact with nature has diminished. A continuing diminution and alienation from nature has many cultural and generational roots. Indeed, this was first recognised in the Science of Goethe, two centuries before. From a Goethean perspective an ecological crisis re-counts a crisis in human relationship with nature and ‘the extent to which nature is in need of being healed corresponds directly to the extent to which our consciousness of nature is sick’ (Naydler, 1996, p23).

Within present times, domestic homes no longer prioritise outdoor spaces purely for the purposes of gardening (Power, 2005). An increase in housing density means that the distance between ourselves and natural settings is further increased. Any space that is available around the home is more likely to be reserved for outdoor entertaining (Holmes et al., 2008). Reduced space surrounding the home is not solely related to population density, but to lifestyle choices and priorities. Importantly, however it is the influence of many popular television programs that espouse an approach to gardening that sees the perfect outdoor space appearing within just a few days that creates distinct inter-generational differences (Holmes et al., 2008).

For the two identified generations of participants to this study (living within an Australian context) the domestic garden had noted value. Governments of the early 20th century encouraged gardening as a virtuous activity (Holmes et al., 2008). Garden suburbs were promoted as a means of avoiding the squalor of city slums. A home surrounded by a garden was most conducive to producing civilised living. The virtuous gardener kept a neat and orderly garden, populated with exotic plants. Participants in this study described in great detail the types of plants their parents maintained. Garden

competitions were commonplace within the garden suburbs. This promoted great pride in maintaining a bountiful garden and often resulted in clearly defined household roles. Typically, as participants recalled, this meant that the man maintained the lawns and vegetable garden, while the woman cared for the flowers and aesthetic arrangement of the garden. Holmes et al. (2008) describe a desired process of transformation not only of the individual garden, but also of the surrounding township. Gardens would contribute a healthy community and a safe and known, albeit controlled, entity.

This theme was continued into State education in the 1920s. Teaching horticulture in schools was seen to benefit the nation as a whole. Cultivating a love of gardening was thought to promote civic and moral health. It nurtured a sense of the aesthetic which it was hoped would result in a desire to beautify their future homes. The work of State Schools' Horticultural Societies grew in strength in the 1920s and 1930s. This continued into the period of World War II when the 'Dig for Victory' movement was imported from Britain encouraging school children to contribute to the greater cause. Other projects at the time included the 'V for Vegetables and Victory' which similarly urged assistance from gardeners (McKernan, 1995; Holmes et al., 2008).

During World War II, Australians were encouraged to convert their garden space to accommodate vegetable production (McKernan, 1995). Gardeners and non-gardeners were urged to assist in the nations war effort by growing vegetables in their home gardens. Where previously the government had described the virtues of maintaining a garden, they now enlisted their skills toward a broader effort. Even public garden spaces were converted to market gardens in order to provide valued produce (Holmes, et al., 2008).

The notion of functional self-sufficiency continued beyond the war period (McKernan, 1995). Holmes et al. (2008) describe Australian culture of the time instilling clear roles and functions within the backyard and front yard of homes. This extended to the gendered roles of both men and women, functions to be attended to and activities that were to be encouraged. Participants in this study particularly related to this aspect of

their childhood gardens. Many remembered the roles their parents undertook in the garden and being encouraged to go outside and play. Some were also given their own space in the garden to select and tend to their own plants. This accorded with parenting recommendations at the time (Holmes et al., 2008).

An abundance of material possessions was acknowledged by participants as a point of difference between the current generation and their own. Similarly, the abundant availability of fruit and vegetables within modern societies means there are less pressing needs for us to produce our own fruit and vegetables. Consequently, the skills and knowledge to do so have declined. With decreased space available within domestic settings an increasing interest in community and shared garden spaces has emerged (Hall, 2010). Documented evidence of the benefits of increased social interaction and consumption of fresh fruit and vegetables is beginning to develop (Turner, 2011; Kingsley et al., 2009; Kingsley & Townsend, 2006). Minority and disadvantaged groups within the population have been particularly encouraged to participate in community and shared garden spaces. School groups are increasingly undertaking gardening activities to increase knowledge of fresh produce. There is also increasing interest in having community gardens adjacent to hospitals and health facilities. From recent research it can be seen that community and domestic gardens share some of the benefits to health and wellbeing and yet in many respects they are also entirely different.

Participants in this study have been active in the garden all their lives. They have highly tuned capacity for observation, and their bodies are familiar with the action of gardening. The embodied practice of gardening makes activity in the garden so much more than just a leisure activity. It is a central component of their wellbeing strengthened by actions of imagination, intuition and creativity. Many of them would acknowledge that the garden does not interest everyone, particularly younger people. This has occurred for a number of reasons, not least of which lies in the lifestyle choices currently being made that leave us time-poor with often heavy financial commitments to maintain.

The current generation of Australian elders (aged 70 years plus) are perhaps the last to grow up with a culturally accepted awareness of value attributed to the domestic garden. In their youth, for many, it provided valued resources to the family including vegetables, fruit, flowers and space to keep chickens for eggs and meat. Within the domestic space the garden was a source of pride and contributed to making a home. Even for those who may not have utilised the full potential of the domestic garden, an awareness of how others benefited from the garden would be present. With a value set already in place, the potential to build on this offers an opportunity.

Additionally, this generation grew up with religious structure within their lives. The predominately Christian religious institutions provided respected and trusted guidance on how to lead a morally fulfilling life. This permeated many activities and related organisations. Since that time the institution of the Church has lost a great deal of respect and no longer carries the authority that it once did (Bouma, 2006; Tacey, 2004, 2013). In many instances reduced respect relates to serious wrongs, but it also reflects a much wider range of choice within an increasingly sceptical cultural environment (Clifford & Johnson, 2019; Hudson, 2016; Tacey, 2011). For most older people, the foundation of religion was laid during childhood and the choice to accept or turn away is based on some knowledge of alternatives. This is perhaps not the case for younger generations who have limited exposure to religious teaching. Undoubtedly, however, a reduced strength within the Church and its institution is compensated by activity in the garden for the participants in this study. Many felt they were closest to God while they were in their garden.

Memories from youth provide an important source for reminiscence, particularly those of a sensory nature. The richness of memories relayed during interview with participants clearly spoke of the importance of the garden and religion and how this was transferred between generations. While it is not possible or desirable to undo that which has gone before us, having some respect for the experience of our own elders, perhaps sheds some light on how we might also respect the experience of those in

ancient times who were equally bound by the circumstances in which they found themselves.

Within the domestic setting a gardener has autonomy and may make choices regarding plants and manner of care. Such choices reflect characteristics of a life lived. Kunitz & Lentine (2007) believed that the garden shows itself to us in multi-sensory ways, but to this we contribute our own perspectives and experiences. Hence, we do not always see the same things that others might. This means that we will all make highly individual choices about plantings, activities and ongoing care. Often these choices are reflective of our life stories. Plants we know about because they were in gardens of our childhood.

Our understanding of historic relationships between gardens/nature, culture and prevailing attitudes provides insight to this study. In times of wealth, prosperity and scientific endeavour, our connection with nature has been shown to diminish. In more challenging times where wealth, control and scientific advance are less prominent, our relationship with gardens and nature appears to be strengthened. There may be a variety of reasons for this, but what appears to remain constant is the experience of gardeners and the depth of their insight. The next section will discuss these relationships and consider more closely how contact with nature in the garden is experienced.

5.5 Contact with Nature in the Garden

“I associate the garden with the whole experience of being alive, and so there is nothing in the range of human experience that is separate from what the garden can signify in its eagerness and its insistence, and in its driving energy to live – to grow, to bear fruit”.
(Kunitz & Lentine, 2007, p.3)

Contact with nature is by its very nature, physical. We experience contact with our physical bodies. The very act of our body moving through time and space together with the action of our senses creates a basis for interaction. For an experienced gardener the actions of the body in the garden become somewhat instinctive. They are intuitive, calling on the imagination and the sense of wonder relayed through a gardeners capacity to observe and acknowledge the needs of the plants in their care.

Re-enchantment of the everyday and the ordinary was considered possible in relation to garden practices and the everyday act of ‘doing’ by Bhatti, Church, Claremont & Stenner (2009). The ordinary domestic garden could provide a creative place inhabited by people and nature. Bhatti et.al. (2009) acknowledged the mystery of the garden setting and that simple pleasures can have profound meaning. This they attributed to the combined effect of nature, emotion, body and memory. Very few activities with equivalent modes of access hold such possibilities. From their phenomenological perspective, Bhatti et.al. (2009) also described the poetic nature of the garden and experience of enchantment. Time, place and memory acted together in a similar manner to the notion that ‘time stops still’ as identified within the present study. Enchantment, in this context would appear to equate with spiritual awareness and expression.

If enchantment and spirituality are to be considered similarly, the words themselves both carry similar burdens of connotation attached to their general understanding. Spirituality with religion and enchantment with magic. The words used to describe action, intuition, feeling and emotion experience generational changes in understanding and use. This combined with a culturally recognised (Australian historical) tendency not

to readily express emotional sentiment leaves current generations of Australians ill-equipped to describe experience associated with the garden. Hitchings (2006) similarly discovered the limitation of using words to describe garden experience, particularly when used in the conventional manner of prose. For Goethe, the inherent spiritual part of human nature was in harmony with broader aspects of nature and could be called upon to gain a deeper understanding. Without it our understanding was incomplete. The garden offers the opportunity to counterbalance this tendency and experience a sacred presence, in the everyday setting of the domestic garden.

The domestic garden, as part of a home environment, allows gardeners to observe plants on an everyday basis, at different times throughout their life cycle. Fascination, mystery and observation, fuel a creative energy. They prompt a capacity to have an open mind with regard to change and uncertainty. For experienced gardeners, change and uncertainty were aspects of gardening that were most appreciated. This was reflected by participants in this study who described selecting discounted poorly looking plants at nurseries because they provided an extra challenge in reviving them. The nurturing process that gardening required did not promise automatic rewards, but rather the joy of experiencing renewed growth and a life cycle in the present moment. Plants could not be fully controlled by a gardeners actions, but care, skill, energy and nurturing often yielded positive outcomes. Participants agreed that this is an aspect of gardening that many inexperienced gardeners find difficult to accept. Even the most skilful gardeners have losses for inapparent reasons.

The striving of plants to complete a process of growth (and decline), according to Goethe, was a coordinated result of the innate laws of nature. This meant that each plant was constituted by respective form and then modified by the surrounding environment. Organic form therefore developed from within to without and from without to within. Goethe related the tendency of plants to that of all living things, including ourselves, describing a collective impulse toward wholeness. In this sense each of us were ascending on a spiritual ladder (Goethe and Miller, 2009).

Plants represent a link to our present and the environmental circumstances that we live in. The plants in our care form part of the future garden and home we hope to enjoy. Plants provide a powerful link to our past within our memories. They can remind us of people, places, pets, and events from our past. This was clearly evidenced within the transcripts of participants. Memory of the past is frequently multi-sensorial. Our sense of smell is often a more intense reminder than visual memory. The garden provides greater connection both to ourselves and others, but also to nature and the broader environment. The lived experience of participants in this study provided a strong link to the perspective of Goethe and Naydler.

Through observation of plants, Goethe recognised a constant polarity in the creative process (Goethe and Miller, 2009). He identified this as a dynamic interplay of opposites such as the alternating forces of expansion and contraction, growth and decline. Goethe's work is distinguished from others of his time and later because of his vision that plants were striving for 'wholeness' rather than pre-determined form. That wholeness was sought both as an individual organism and in inter-relationship with other organisms. This gave the work of Goethe an ecological framework long before the term was formally introduced (Goethe and Miller, 2009).

The inter-relationship of all living things has become commonly accepted within current scientific understanding, but the spiritual inter-relationship, at least from a Western/European perspective has not. Within our current times identification of spiritual inter-relationships and opportunities for spiritual expression are not as prominent as they once might have been. Acknowledgement of the presence of spirit in our daily lives is not generally recognized within our cultural structures. Rituals that might embrace spiritual presence in our daily lives, while available, are often not endorsed in a manner that acknowledges their inherent value to health and wellbeing on multiple levels. For the current generation of older people (aged 70 years plus), the garden retains cultural value based on respective life experiences (Same, Lee, McNamara & Rosenwax, 2016; Wright & Wadsworth, 2014; Cheng, Patterson, Packer & Pegg, 2014; Wang & MacMillan, 2013). This may not be recognised as a spiritual dimension, but it does provide a value

base from which to build. This same value base arguably does not exist in younger generations.

It is possible that many experienced gardeners feel a spiritual presence in the garden, though this is often difficult to substantiate empirically (Brook, 2010; O'Brien, 2010; Bhatti, 2009; Cooper, 2006; Kaplan & Kaplan, 1989). For participants in this study, this was often recognised as a sense that 'time stops still'. An understanding that a life force was present in plants and in oneself and that somehow they were connected in that point and time. It was characterised by a feeling of peace, relaxation and reprieve from daily life, to which they were continually drawn. For participants with a religious background, this was related to God's presence, for others it represented the power and majesty of nature, for others it was both. Naydler (2011a) describes how we might bring the sacred back into our daily lives by acknowledging the spiritual presence in the garden. He believes that the garden calls to us from the future where it exists as a still unrealised potential. It also calls to provide a counterbalance to a consciousness driven by a technologically driven mindset/culture. It is likely that if we choose to respond the benefit will be as much for ourselves as for nature itself (Naydler, 2011b).

The possibility of spiritual connection to the garden for experienced gardeners has been identified within this study. This may be because of a process of re-sensitising to the spiritual qualities of the garden environment. It is likely, that since the garden has been a central component of the lives of participants over their entire lives that this possibility has been felt and realised. As Naydler (2011) suggests it may also be because participants have been able to creatively engage with the inward dimension of nature through their gardening. In this instance the garden provides the possibility of opening a window to spirit. The experience of participants in this study provides some guidance as to how that might happen. Through drawing on each of the themes described they provide an example of inherent potential.

The process of gardening is by nature a physical or embodied process. The mind and body must work in unison to achieve a desired result. The importance of this union to a

satisfaction with gardening was described by Kaplan & Kaplan (1989) and further identified as a means of experiencing fascination within the theory of ART. It may be that this process requires unison that is balanced, but it is also the case that instinctive, or intuitive action is decidedly mindful in nature. This means that the mind is governed by the actions of the moment. The benefits to wellbeing of activity that is mindful and creative will be discussed further in the next section.

5.6 Embodied Practices, Wellbeing and Spirituality

“The garden instructs us in a principle of life and death and renewal. In its rhythms, it offers the closest analogue to the concept of resurrection that is available to us” (Kunitz & Lentine, 2007, p.120)

Embodied practice and embodiment are terms that have increasing use and yet sometimes entirely different meaning depending on the discipline and context within which they are discussed. Within this study embodied practice relates solely to the actions of the body, particularly in relation to gardening and garden practice. Importantly, however, those actions are also mindful and occur in balance. In this instance, gardening is a general term describing tending to plants in an organised manner, whereas garden practice refers to the repeated sequences within gardening that may be undertaken by an experienced gardener, that is embodied practice within the garden.

Within this study gardening is an activity that provided an environment of ongoing stimulation for participants. Constantly changing with the seasons, prevailing weather and the often-unpredictable actions of plants themselves. Activity in the garden was (and increasingly became) familiar. This activity was every day in an environment of the owners choosing. Selected plants and activities were autonomous and based on the life story of the participant. Gardening has been historically and remains currently an activity of sharing. Sharing of plants, knowledge, skills and produce is common. Skill levels varied and with the addition of friendship groups and/or gardening clubs, skill levels could be increased to meet the needs of the individual.

The skill of an experienced gardener is made up of many years of practice. In some instances this relates to practices taught to them by their parents and remembered when potting up a plant, or placing new plantings into the ground. For a gardener, knowing the processes to follow in terms of skill is enhanced by experience and a level of instinct or knowing. This is difficult for gardeners to describe. In following the theory of embodied practice it may be argued that somehow the body knows what to do because

it has done it many times before. This is supported by theory of embodied practice described by Gendlin (1997), McGuire (2003, 2006) and also witnessed by others such as Swinton when describing the actions of older people in response to church based rituals (Swinton, 2013). Similarly, Bhatti et al. (2009) describe the enchantment possible when participating in action that is repetitive, familiar and ultimately soothing to the spirit. For Bhatti this is related to the notion of home-making. This is in effect what occurred for participants in this study when establishing a garden surrounding their homes that reflected their personality, history, interests and hopes for the immediate future.

For those participants who had, within recent years, moved to the retirement village the process of re-establishing their home and garden was a fresh experience. Inevitably many had moved from larger homes with established gardens, but priority was immediately given to beginning a garden in their new home on a smaller scale. Often this was done with assistance due to limited physical capacity, but always it involved re-establishing connection with plants in familiar ways. Participants described planting favourite plants, moving individual plants (or establishing cuttings) from their former home and getting to know which plants were best suited to their new setting. Establishing a garden helped to build connection to a new location and establish new routines. Often those new routines replicated previous one practices because they involved following caring for plants in familiar ways, but in a new location. Having the opportunity to garden in this instance was central to feeling positive about living in a new environment.

The everyday nature of garden practice may be described as pottering. It may be purposeful in achieving set tasks or non-specific. Repeated actions may be comforting and reflective of past activities. This may be action that is intuitive and/or occurs in response to careful observation of what particular plants require. Physical activity that is related to garden practice can vary greatly depending on the tasks undertaken. Invariably, it includes walking, lifting, twisting/bending and balancing. It may also include work that produces a higher cardio-vascular workout when it includes digging and shovelling. The extent of activity frequently goes un-noticed by the gardener until

the end of the day when tiredness sets in. From the perspective of health for older people, this makes undertaking physical exercise less onerous and highly accessible. In a study measuring balance and gait speed of older adults, it was found that gardeners reported significantly better balance and gait speed and had fewer chronic conditions and functional limitations than non-gardeners (Chen & Janke, 2012).

The potential for stimulation whilst in the garden is very high. The environment of the garden is unpredictable and loaded with not only cognitive stimulation, but also sensory stimulation. It provides opportunity to combine skill with physical activity and on many occasions requires considered problem solving to adequately meet the needs of not only the plants themselves, but also the restrictions of space, time and resources. In many respects it is inherently creative, because responding to an unpredictable environment often requires an open heart and an open mind. Kaplan (1973) reminds us of the psychological benefits of gardening, and the capacity of the garden to completely absorb our attention such that we might find benefit from the involuntary nature of such absorption (Kaplan & Kaplan, 1989; Kaplan, 1995).

For many participants in this study creativity had formed an important aspect of their life. Their ongoing wellbeing was greatly enhanced by the opportunity to continue being creative. Beyond creativity in the garden participation in creative activity included singing, painting and drawing, music, spinning, wool dyeing, knitting and weaving, mosaicking, upholstery, decoupage, china painting, flower arranging, quilting, sewing and knitting. At its core, creativity is a capacity to have an open mind to all manner of influences - to allow creative energy to flow and intuition to guide action within defined limits of a craft.

A capacity to make something with a clear purpose or use and gain the satisfaction for having done so themselves was a clear motivator for participants to continue being creative. It also defined the importance of patience in working toward a desired goal and understanding that something produced by hand held value to themselves and others. Participants creativity was often directed toward making something for family

members or friends. This gave the added satisfaction of giving to others and in some cases leaving a legacy. This sense of value was something that most participants observed was not present in younger generations. Many feared that this was indicative not only of changes in lifestyle but also a capacity to set and achieve longer term goals. While this may be a fairly typical pattern in comparing intergenerational differences, it does highlight the perspective and concerns of the generation of participants. McCrindle and Wolfinger (2010) describe similar disparities between generations, particularly where differences in prosperity and hardship are noted.

A life of experience enriches our capacity to be creative (May, 1959). It provides a combination of characteristics, that given the opportunity and appropriate medium, allows an individual to explore the rich fabric of their lives (Cohen, 2000). Creative expression is akin to spiritual expression because each calls upon our individual resources and challenges us to make sense of a defined number of inputs (many of our choosing, but some which are not).

Creativity in relation to the garden was not something that I had previously considered central to this study. During discussion with participants, however, it became readily apparent that being creative both inside and outside of the garden was an important and ongoing aspect of their lives and sense of wellbeing. This led me to consider more closely the role of creativity whether it be within the garden itself or parallel to activity within the garden. Due to the consistency with which it was important for participants to exercise creativity in a variety of ways, I believe it is timely to expand further on the work of authors mentioned briefly within the literature review chapter who explored the notion of creativity particularly as it related to ageing.

The richness of experience as we age, is what Cohen (2000) believed magnified the possibility that creative endeavours in older age are more dynamic and fruitful. Cohen (2000) identified several characteristics that are supportive of creativity. These included many attributes present in participants to this study such as: self-motivation, persistence, resourcefulness, independence, curiosity; the ability to imagine; a

willingness to take risks, to dream and draw inspiration from within oneself. These characteristics are activated at different times and under differing circumstances. It is therefore possible for any and all of us to be creative if circumstances allow it. Cohen (2000) believed that such circumstances require us to unlock our inner and outer barriers to self-expression.

Creativity may be personal or public. Cohen described creativity with a little c or a big C, denoting the scale and magnitude of creative acts that influence our lives. A little c is for those who participate in creative acts on a small or personal scale, whereas a big C is for those whose creative acts reach the public arena and may receive fame and accolade. Creativity may be aligned to the expressive arts, or it may be creativity in a social context. Similarly, May's definition of creativity is "bringing something new into birth" (May, 1959, p.263) which may be 'frosting' or creativity that brings a new form of reality or consciousness. May (1959) believed that creativity is the most basic manifestation of fulfilling your own being in this world. Creativity in this form represented the highest degree of emotional health. It extended to all manner of occupations because it is a process of 'making', of 'bringing into being'. He describes the creative process as beginning with an 'encounter' - full immersion within a topic with intensity of awareness, heightened consciousness and a period where 'time stops still'. This linked to feeling sheer joy: the effect that goes with heightened consciousness and the experience of actualising one's own potentialities. The 'encounter' was followed by a period of 'engagement'.

The feeling that time stops still was also described by Csikszentmihalyi (1975) within the concept of 'flow' expanded by Nakamura and Csikszentmihalyi (Nakamura et al., 2002) to optimal experience resulting from a period of optimal development. May, Nakamura and Csikszentmihalyi's description of the creative process has many parallels to the feeling described by experienced gardeners. For participants to this study, full immersion in garden activity often led to a period where 'time stops still'. The joy of gardeners is apparent in their committed engagement and acknowledgement of benefit to their wellbeing. Heightened consciousness may also be likened to the intuition felt by

gardeners in 'knowing' how to respond to the needs of plants and feeling a strong sense of connection to the plants in their care.

Goethe similarly valued the essence of creativity both within scientific endeavour and within the literary and performing arts. Characteristics that facilitated and encouraged creativity were foundational to all learning and to an holistic view of phenomena. For Goethe, art and science were highly complementary and in fact necessary to gaining a complete understanding.

Cohen's (2009) study focused on how behavioural neuroscience has enabled increased understanding of how maintaining sustained access to creative activity benefits our brains and minds. When the brain is challenged through new activities and surroundings, new synapses (or contact points between cells) may be formed. This stimulates new opportunities for ideas and activities. The brain, just like the muscles, benefit from ongoing challenge. In studies conducted by Cabeza (2002), reduced lateralisation of brain activity has been found in older adults. This indicates a capacity within the brain to change in older age. This may be a compensatory response to ageing, but nevertheless, it appears likely that better integrated left and right brain communication may explain why creative activities are more appealing to older people. This also reinforces that older people can continue to develop their intellectual growth and creativity in the later period of life (Cohen, 2009).

Current knowledge of brain plasticity comes largely from studies of mammal responses to enriched environments (Diamond, 1988; 2012). Mammals consistently responded to stimulation provided by an enriched environment. Enrichment included incorporation of physical activity, consistent and variable mental stimulation and social interaction (Diamond, 2001). This had positive influence on the brain with visible thickening of the cerebral cortex and growth of connective dendrites. Comparable enrichment in human environments is complex, but evidence suggests that a similar occurrence is likely (Cohen, 2005). Research surrounding reduced lateralisation of the brain in ageing requires further research to understand the purpose of this occurrence. Hemispheric

asymmetry reduction in older adults or the HAROLD Model is supported by function neuroimaging and other evidence in the domains of episodic memory, semantic memory, working memory, perception and inhibitory control (Cabeza, 2002). How this might relate to environmental enrichment is a topic for further research.

Evidence may take time to come, but within the lives of many people in later life, clear examples of inspired creativity are available (Cohen, 2000). Cohen (2000, p.115) cites the words of American Poet, Somerset Maugham “When I was young I was amazed to learn that the elder Cato (a Roman statesman) began at the age of eighty to learn Greek. I am amazed no longer. Old age is ready to undertake tasks that youth shirked because they would take too long”. Maugham saw capacity for focus and enterprise in later life. To this example I would add the lives of my own participants whose continued acts of creativity on a range of scales has enabled them to live long and productive lives. Cohen (2000) described creative capacity in two parts: firstly, a capacity to experiment and secondly, the significance of time. Experienced gardeners, such as the participants within this study, have both of these qualities in spades.

It must be noted, however, that gardening is not something that interests everyone. This was acknowledged by participants within this study, and extended not only to younger generations (including members of their own families), but also to some of their peers. In many respects, the wellbeing of experienced older gardeners is taken care of, so long as they can continue to garden. For other older people who have not previously found joy in gardening a broader perspective must be taken. This, together with ongoing care for experienced gardeners, will be discussed in following pages considering health care and home-based settings and recommendations for future practice.

5.7 Health Care Settings – Ageing and Spiritual Expression

“If you have built castles in the air, your work need not be lost; that is where they should be. Now put the foundations under them”. *Henry David Thoreau*
(cited in Cohen, 2001, p10)

While none of the participants to this study were currently residing in Aged or Health Care facilities, the majority had made the decision to transition to a facility that provided additional support, within a Retirement Village. They had undergone the process of re-making their home within a different environment. With the exception of two, each of the participants had made the choice to live within a retirement village setting. As previously described in 4.1 Findings Preamble, this setting provided a number of options in accommodation, ranging from smaller one and two bedroom units to detached housing with larger gardens and independent access.

For one of the more recent residents, moving from her home, although a sad process, had come with some relief. Her new garden was small, but with raised beds. In just a short period of time she had planted seeds and begun to put in her favourite plants. The seeds and other plants she watched eagerly, waiting for the first sign that they were beginning to grow. She was full of optimism for the development of her new garden. For these residents, it was understood, however, that if they required nursing care, they could no longer remain at this facility and would need to transition to another facility.

For each participant the opportunity to experience a garden during childhood was particularly important. Each had the value of the garden instilled from an early age. Many tended separate gardens of their own, for which they were responsible, within the family garden. The skills of gardening were generally taught by other family members – parents, grandparents, aunts or uncles. The shared experience of gardening was something remembered fondly by participants and many continued the practices taught then into the present day. A strong childhood foundation continued into adulthood when participants became responsible for their own garden. Many transferred the value of the garden to their own children and grandchildren either directly or indirectly.

Continuing to have a garden was therefore important to them in this more supported time of life.

Older people are not passive in their relationship with their environments (WHO, 2015). In fact, it is likely that the expectations of the next generation of older people, will be much higher than the current one (MacKinlay, 2017). They will continue to make choices in response to changes in their situation and have the education and fortitude to take action. Retaining the ability and right to choose is closely linked to notions of agency and autonomy. Murphy and Welford (2011) describe autonomy as central to the quality of life of older people who transition to residential care facilities. Such facilities will be their home for the remainder of their lives and the capacity to exercise autonomy has been shown to have a powerful influence on an older person's dignity, integrity, freedom and independence (Lindberg et al., 2014; Welford et al., 2012).

The concept of autonomy, however, is not absolute and should be viewed in light of each individual. Importantly, it is necessary to recognise the individual in relation to others and to the surrounding environment. Lindberg et al. (2014) identify autonomy as a process of (re-) constructing autonomy in relation to others. This balances three key attributes: to be seen as a person; have capacity to act; and retain the obligation to take responsibility for one's own actions. It is cognisant not only of the unique nature of our 'being in the world', but also that relationship leads to interdependence. Changes in a care relationship, particularly in response to episodes of reduced capacity, ultimately influence the incidence of vulnerability. The experience of autonomy in a caring environment is also subject to change due to changes in key relationships and capability in decision making. Re-establishing autonomy is therefore a continual process. Having an awareness of an older person's experience of vulnerability and its impact on the felt sense of autonomy is therefore very important (Lindberg et al., 2014).

A key feature of maintaining and/or retaining autonomy resides within opportunities to re-make a home in a changed location (Burgess, 1989; McGuire, 1997; Menec, 2003; Rappe & Topo, 2007). Bhatti (2006, 2009) described the complexity of this process, but

also reinforced that everyday activity should be coupled with the possibility of re-telling our story within our environment and beginning to establish routine and ritual.

Everyday activity in and around the garden setting need not be onerous and can be adapted to suit the individual.

In returning to the role of health care settings in response to ageing, it is important to reconsider the notion of intrinsic and extrinsic capacity. Both intrinsic and extrinsic capacity have direct relation to autonomy, cognitive stimulation and physical activity. Such capacity, though uniform in its progression is highly variable in relation to age. The health care system and other care environments must therefore focus on firstly recognising capacity (WHO, 2015). The extent of our current system does not have a broad enough reach because, by necessity, it continues to focus on the experience of ill-health and/or chronic conditions. For those currently experiencing high and/or stable capacity, action that supports continued health promotion, management of risk factors and emerging or existing chronic conditions is important (WHO, 2015). This ensures preparedness should decline occur. Continued activity in the garden or in being part of gardening or appreciating a garden should be encouraged and facilitated. This would include ensuring activity is carried out safely.

A well designed garden can reduce difficulties experienced with gardening due to reduced physical ability and still provide a wide range of therapeutic benefits that will increase self-esteem, success and self-confidence (Kwack et al., 2005). This includes modifying activity to suit an individual's strength, physical ability, clinical condition and personal preferences. Studies revealing that home-based physical-activity interventions for older people have better long-term results (Ashworth et al., 2005; Dorner et al., 2013; Opdenacker et al., 2008) are supportive of efforts to adapt garden activities in order to overcome physical limitations. This is not only because home-based interventions remove barriers to exercise such as transport, but also open the opportunity for more community focused and leisure based activity (Wendel-Vos et al., 2004).

Modifications can be made to the height and width of garden beds. Greater flexibility in garden practice can be achieved by planting in movable pots and or hanging pots/baskets. Weighted materials can be better managed through the installation of a pulley system. For many older people using tools and following life-long techniques becomes problematic due to changes in grip strength, hand strength and ability to reach and bend. Such issues can be overcome with changes to grip structure and the addition of long-handled tools (Kwack et al., 2005).

For those with declining capacity, activity in the garden should continue to be encouraged, but with further modification to the physicality of the actions undertaken. Maintaining regular contact with the garden remains important. For participants to this study, some of whom could no longer actively carry out tasks, their role in managing the garden extended to tasking others to work in the garden (often under strict supervision). In some cases this was in a paid capacity, but in others it was family members and friends who happily undertook the tasks. This enabled participants to maintain connection with the garden and autonomy with its management and care.

As decline moves toward significant loss of capacity, continued contact with the garden should remain a priority. This contact may be more passive in nature. Spending time sitting in the garden, watching, listening, smelling, touching plants and other garden fixtures provides ongoing connection. This connection is multi-dimensional. It allows continued association with plants that represent a connection to the past, present and future. The garden (however small) and choice of plants within it tells a story of the person who created, or is in the process of creating, the garden. It reflects autonomy and choice through selection of significant plants. From a spiritual perspective ongoing contact with nature in the garden reinforces the natural order of life – with birth, growth, maturation, decline and death. Each having a natural and necessary part in the cycle of life. For participants to this study the garden was a central component of their wellbeing and most could not imagine life without it.

It is clear, however, that our current health care system appears to cater more to the stage identified as having significant loss of capacity. It is declining capacity and increasing vulnerability that often require older people to make changes to their living environment. This may include adapting their current residence, relocating to a more supportive environment or residing in a care facility. It is often the familiarity of their existing home, its surroundings and community that influence this decision most. It is evident that a sense of identity and therefore autonomy are strongly linked to our home and often the surrounding neighbourhood (Lindberg et al., 2014; Wiles et al., 2012). Yet it remains that individual characteristics and available opportunities to access the services and activities of our choosing also influence quality of life and autonomy (Bonifas et al., 2014).

For participants to this study residing in a Retirement Village provided access to services, social networks and activities. Some chose to use such services and gained much enjoyment from the social interaction and variety of activities. Others chose not to participate. Institutional settings are sometimes seen as dehumanizing and as posing structural and cultural barriers that impede social interactions (Bonifas et al., 2014; Rumbold, 2007). This has provided impetus for the growing trend toward what has become known as “ageing in place”. This encourages older people to remain in their own home, community and neighbourhood independently, but with the addition of in-home care and services. An increasing governmental preference for older Australians to age in place (at home) is reflected by increased capacity within the system to deliver community-based care (AIHW, 2018).

A psychosocial approach to the notion of home, however, enables us to consider materiality, sociality, and emotionality as key elements in the practice of everyday life (Bhatti, 2006). This reminds us that a home never ‘is’ in the complete sense of the word, but rather, it is always in the process of ‘becoming’ and that everyday processes of home-making interact with stages or movements in the life course, as well as with much wider processes evident within dominant cultures. Rowles and Bernard (2013) describe an ongoing process of creation and abandonment with each successive move to a new

home. Creation in this sense involves finding new ways of 'being' in the new space, and abandonment means giving up established routines and practices, including those established in a garden. In identifying daily home-making activities, Bhatti (2006) also describes many of the processes that "un-make" a home. These occur when fixed social and spatial interactions may suddenly change or become dislocated. It may relate to the death of a spouse, onset of illness or injury or when an older person is forced to move to another location that may not contain a garden. In each instance this removes foundational features within an individual's life that have been sustaining and/or fixed.

Bhatti (2006) concurs that for individuals experiencing significant changes in later life that the garden figures strongly as a place from which to maintain engagement with the broader environment and challenge ageist principles (of expected behaviour). Gardens are an important part of older people's sense of home, and gardening as a form of bodily action is highly significant in home making. There are many psycho-social and health benefits to be gained where older people are encouraged to carry on gardening. Not least of which is the capacity to have a measure of control of their own physical space. This is important at a time in their lives when levels of control in other areas may be diminishing. Therefore, to have the opportunity to be in the garden to do something that is creative and active, that brings happiness and pleasure is crucially important to an older persons feelings of 'being at home' (Bhatti, 2006). It should be possible for older people to maintain and/or access a garden irrespective of where they call home, whether that be in an independent, managed or care environment.

This possibility is largely dependent on the value attributed to the garden and gardening. Health promotion messages aimed at older people should be cognisant of the benefits of ongoing contact with nature in the garden environment (Barnicle & Midden, 2003; McGuire, 1997; Wang & MacMillan, 2013). For participants to this study the garden provided a significant coping strategy for dealing with stressful life events. This concurs with studies conducted by Unruh (2002) and Unruh & Hutchinson (2011). For experienced gardeners a sense of connectedness to the garden provides an expression of inner being, a form of spiritual activity and a partner in a spiritual journey (Unruh &

Hutchinson, 2011). If less experienced or novice gardeners can be shown the benefits of garden practice, a deeper respect is afforded to older people experiencing the final chapter and tasks of their lives.

The task of ageing in the final stages of life is immense. It precedes a need to make significant lifestyle changes, adjust to physical decline and/or disability, reconcile the purpose and meaning of life and process the many changes impacting their own life and the lives of their families. Blazer (2010b) reminds us, however, that we must balance a propensity to look for risk of factors such as depression, against a capacity to remain resilient. He points to the possibility that older people may have an innate buffer of resilience that helps them to cope with change. This includes two main factors; firstly, a tendency that allows older people to selectively optimise the positive elements of experience and secondly, a capacity to apply the benefit of wisdom gained through life experience (Blazer, 2010b). Wisdom is a somewhat nebulous concept, but for older people appears to include: accumulation of factual and procedural knowledge over time; life span contextualisation (akin to the development of integrity described by Erikson (1975)); relativism of values and life priorities (allowing a growth in tolerance of difference); and the recognition and management of uncertainty (based on past experience). For those in the later stages of life, challenges are, for the most part anticipated, and this appears to reduce the likelihood of depression (Blazer, 2010b).

Recognition of resilience and capacity to cope with change in older people lends further optimism to this study. This means it may be possible for older people who do not identify as gardeners to appreciate the potential value of the garden. Resilience and wisdom were certainly factors identified during interview with participants and highlight the importance of listening to and understanding the stories of older people in whatever circumstances they find themselves in order to enhance the final stages of life.

Acknowledging spiritual need within health care settings has become a more prominent consideration within most models of care, yet providing spiritual support remains problematic because many health care professionals do not receive training nor have

the time to provide such care. MacKinlay (2008) concurs that focus must be maintained on health promotion and opportunities for everyday experiences and activities cognisant of spiritual promotion. Through regular experience, the possibility and hope of building capacity for resilience and transcendence is more readily realised (MacKinlay, 2008). It is the premise of this study that everyday activities (such as gardening) that can be linked to spiritual care and expression, and yet are not overtly religious will have a broader appeal to both older people and their carers. This would also reduce the need for more specialised training of health professionals in potentially contentious religions and religious practices.

Further research should focus on spirituality as seen through the eyes of older people and the practice of everyday activity. Where value can be more greatly attributed to the role of gardens and gardening in respect of health, wellbeing and spiritual expression, benefits to both the older person and their carer could be realised.

5.8 Study Recommendations

“The highest achievement of the human being as a thinking being is to have probed what is knowable and quietly to revere what is unknowable” Goethe
(Naydler, 1996, p.128)

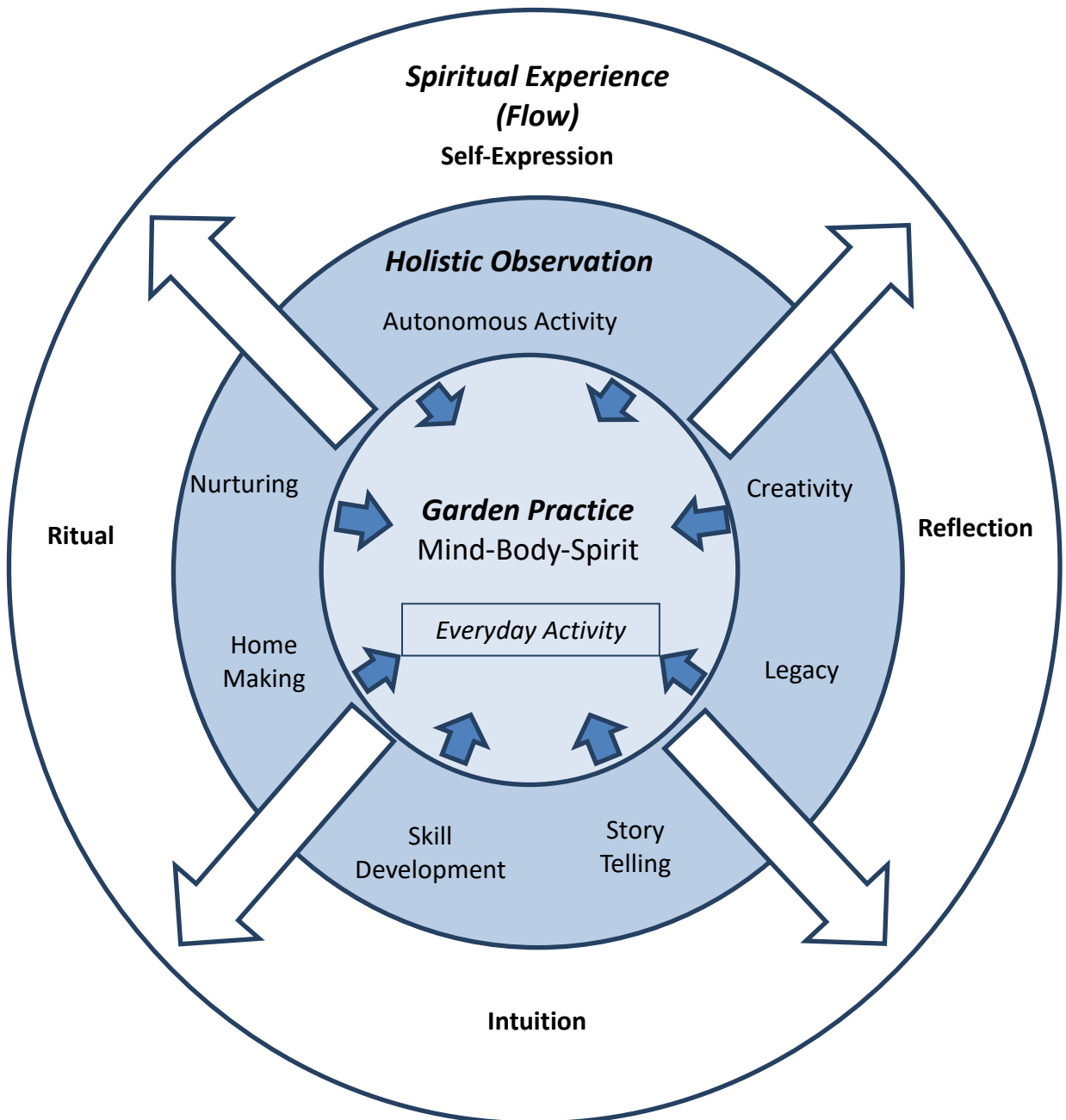


Figure 9 – Garden Practice for beginning gardeners

This study has focused on the experience of older gardeners. The value they attribute to the garden is reflective not only of their current experience, but also their experiences

throughout a lifetime. Yet, an understanding of the history of gardening tells us that such experiences are also responsive to the cultural influences of the time they occurred. They have shaped the lives of participants to the current day. Cultural influences on generations since are different again and perhaps more likely to be driven by the influence of technology.

Recommendations for this study focus on potential within older age. This potential is recognised by the qualities demonstrated by participants. The common elements of which are described in the essence of garden practice. In particular, the potential for spiritual expression that may be experienced separately from religious practice, holistic observation that emanates from intense observation over extended periods of time and embodied practice that relates to attaining balance in the actions of mind, body and spirit. For each element the garden provides a central point of access.

For those who can no longer live independently and for those who may not be experienced in the practice of gardening, I have developed a new model (Diagram 9 above). This is based on the first model developed from analysis of data, but incorporates information gained from the literature. Importantly it includes the concept of flow and knowledge about creativity in the later years. With the experience of participants as a guide, the above diagram provides some indication of how the attainment of spiritual experience / expression may be achieved even for those with limited experience in the garden and/or the necessity to continually modify tasks undertaken within the garden. It may also relate to different age groups, including children, adolescents and (younger) adults.

This new model would need to form the basis of further research but builds on the experience of participants. At the core of the model, participants utilised embodied practices in the garden based on many years of experience. They instinctively balanced mind, body and spirit in a manner that enabled them to achieve the sensation of peace and relaxation, or as I have described it – the feeling that time stops still. This has been

related to the experiences described by Naydler (2011a), Goethe (2009) as a shift in consciousness, and Csikszentmihalyi (1975) as the creative experience of flow.

Whether or not gardening has been a key feature of an older person's life, it remains, that a recognised task of ageing includes looking back at the purpose and meaning of life. Similarly, there are other times in our lives when activities that convey meaning become increasingly important. This process is highly individual and cognisant of emotional and spiritual needs (Brown & Lowis, 2003; Clayton, 1975; Erikson & Erikson, 1998; Tornstam, 2005).

For less experienced gardeners, or those new to the gardening process, it is proposed that some form of suitable activity occur in the garden on a regular basis (2-3 times per week). This activity would actively seek to balance the workings of the mind, body and spirit by engaging in a range of activities that draw on dimensions described within the thematic analysis of participant data. Specifically, this would include: autonomous activity, creativity, legacy, story-telling, skill development, home making and nurturing. The manner in which this occurs relates to the next layer of the model, Holistic Observation.

Holistic Observation inclusive of the above themes could include periods of time in observation of plants; noticing their features, requirements for water, and responsiveness to the season. It might also include learning a new skill, such as potting/repotting a plant or planting / harvesting seeds. This would involve physical activity, modified to suit the individual, and may include bending, twisting, walking, balancing and lifting as required. It might also include taking special note of plants that are remembered from childhood, learning how to care for them and telling future generations why they have meaning. From Goethe's (2009) perspective each of us is capable of developing the skills of observation. In particular, he believed that such observation did not only include what is obvious to the eye, but also what can be gleaned through the senses and our own intuition.

Within the outer layer, elements of ritual, intuition and reflection are similar to that of experienced gardeners because they may facilitate self-expression which ultimately leads to emotional connectedness and the experience of spiritual expression/experience.

The following steps are proposed to facilitate this process and build on the experience of older people (and potentially other age groups), taking account of their considered capacity (intrinsic/extrinsic) to participate.

5.8.1 Reinstating the Value of the Garden

The value of the garden must firstly be re-instated. For older people this includes understanding the role of the garden that may be remembered from childhood. It may also include gaining an understanding of the garden's importance to others in a domestic setting through the provision of produce, cut flowers, and other known aspects of health and wellbeing. Memory is a highly significant aspect of re-instating the importance of gardens for older people. This might include childhood memories of spending time in a garden, either that of their own family or of friends. So too, for younger people the possibility of forming memories in the garden is also important. In either remembering or forming memories, participation in activities that connect the individual with the garden is central to beginning garden practice. Activity in the garden may be physical such as planting or harvesting (within the limits of individual capacity), but may also include creative activity.

5.8.2 Creativity in the Garden

Creative activity in the garden may include a range of activities. It could begin with planning out or designing a garden (on a scale suited to the individual). Selection of plants could be made based on colour, scent or texture. These may be plants that hold familial significance or that have been newly introduced. Planning and designing a garden may extend beyond what one may be responsible for (perhaps in surrounding

common/public spaces of a facility) or on a smaller scale for which an individual may be responsible with a simple garden box or series of pots. It may include making or painting ornaments for the garden. It could include a variety of tasks selected by individuals that suited their own personality, background and preferences. The exercise of choice provides some measure of control/autonomy within the home environment. It extends the opportunity for self-expression and the possibility of leaving a legacy for family or friends.

5.8.3 Cognitive Stimulation

Cognitive stimulation is an important feature of garden experience. It may include learning new skills, or it could simply be pointing out attributes of the garden and how they change with the seasons. Cognitive stimulation may begin with noticing and general awareness of the range of colours, textures and shapes in the garden. This is highlighted through noticing how various plants attract particular insects and birds (at varying times of the year). Cognitive stimulation is extended through the acquisition of new skills. These need not be complex and may include plant awareness, planting seeds, taking cuttings, propagating seeds, displaying flowers/plants and making produce from fruit and vegetables harvested or sourced either from the garden or locally. For those with a particular interest, cognitive stimulation may be further extended by activities designed to attract various wildlife into a garden. This may include providing water and seeds for birds, habitat for lizards and insects and planting local indigenous plants.

5.8.4 Physical Activity

Physical activity would form part of the above processes as this would include movement throughout the garden or outdoor areas. This could begin with limited activity and gradually extend with confidence, practice and motivation. Significantly, physical activity that takes place in the achievement of separate goals often requires less (cognitive) effort on the part of the individual. Physical activity in the garden may include whole body movement or gross motor skills, and more defined movement or

fine motor skills. Whole body movements involved in everyday functions such as sitting upright, standing and walking, are further developed in garden practices with additional stretching, bending, lifting and balancing appropriate to the individual. Such activities may assist to improve overall mobility and physical fitness. Fine motor skills involving smaller movements of the wrist, hands and fingers would also be utilised in garden practice, particularly in activity associated with handling seeds, cuttings and (modified) garden equipment. This would assist with hand and grip strength which is currently recognised as an indicator of frailty, sarcopenia and disability in older people (Gale, Martyn, Cooper, & Sayer, 2006; Roberts et al., 2013; Stevens et al., 2012). Both motor skills (gross and fine) assist with coordination and a range of daily activities. They have also been associated with factors aligned with measures of quality of life (WHO 2015).

5.8.5 Intergenerational Activities

The above activities focusing on older people who do not identify as gardeners or who have had limited experience of garden practice, would be greatly facilitated and encouraged through involvement with other generations. Inter-generational activity could include young children of pre-school or primary school age who already have an involvement with school gardens and gardening, and/or be connected to the activities of a local community garden group. Inter-generational activities with a gardening focus have increasingly been shown to be beneficial to both the older generation and younger generations (Elings, 2006; Larson, 2006; Milligan et al., 2004; Shostak & Guscott, 2017).

It is also evident from the experience of participants to this study that gardening has been a life-long activity that has provided ongoing benefits on multiple dimensions. This lends support to the notion that gardening should be encouraged for younger generations not only because of the need to live more sustainably and consume fresh produce, but also because of the potential of the garden and garden activity to provide a life-long means to utilise daily practices that allow access to health and wellbeing that is cognisant of physical, mental, emotional and spiritual dimensions.

5.8.6 Further Research

This study aimed to explore the meaning and experience of gardening for older people. For most participants this equated to experience spanning from childhood through their entire lifetime. The garden has had great significance in their lives. I have proposed that contact with nature in the garden over extended periods has enabled the possibility of spiritual expression and experience. An understanding of spiritual expression and experience is impacted by limited research in this area. In particular, there is limited understanding of alternate means of spiritual expression and how these might contribute to improved wellbeing in the final stages of life.

Further research is required to gain a greater understanding of these concepts. This would focus more specifically on processes surrounding spiritual expression. I have proposed that this may occur during gardening because of the closeness of relationship between the gardener and the plants in their care as per the model on page 188. This may be possible in circumstances beyond gardening practices.

Findings from this study have been related to the possibility of benefiting older people who do not identify as keen gardeners. Further research would be required to explore this possibility. Similar studies may also consider the impact on older people from different cultural groups, those diagnosed with dementia, or those living in different domestic circumstances. This may help to determine support for the findings of this study.

As this study has touched on a lifetime of activity in the garden, further research may also focus on the importance of the garden for other age groups, particularly in relation to spiritual dimensions of gardening and contact with nature.

CHAPTER 6 - CONCLUSION

“Keep your eyes fresh and open and joyful, and move with sure steps, yet flexibly, through the fields of a world so richly endowed” Goethe (Naydler, 1996, p.29)

In exploring the meaning and experience of gardening for older people, this study has addressed a topic of great personal interest, but also one that draws on traditions that are not widely accepted within the increasingly evidence-based health sciences. It encompasses a wide range of disciplines that do not necessarily share a common audience or goal. Qualitative research is still met with some uncertainty as to its validity and broader application within existing health care settings. Those who provide spiritual guidance within health care settings are also increasingly subject to the need to provide evidence to support their ongoing funding and development. I am hopeful that this work will emphasise the importance of spiritual health and the domestic garden not only in older age, but in all stages of life.

In adopting a new focus for exploring garden practice and spiritual expression, this study has drawn on a broad base of available information. This is, perhaps, both a strength and a weakness, because whilst it enhances the validity of the project and the extent of its audience, it also presents a complex array of sociological and environmental factors to consider. The complexity of settings for health promotion is, however, acknowledged within health promotion frameworks. The qualitative nature of the study has allowed in-depth exploration of the topic and provides strength to the study. Furthermore, a phenomenological methodology allows focus to be placed on the meaning of everyday activities and their contribution to spiritual expression.

The sample population of the study has been defined by age criteria and focused on those with an interest in gardening in order to better understand the spiritual nature of garden practice both retrospectively and currently. This study has not sought to be generalisable. However further research exploring the garden practice with older people for whom the garden is less important may shed further light on the findings of this

study. So too, focusing on a different age group or providing an intergenerational basis to research may generate further insight. Due to restrictions of time, budget and geographical area this was not possible.

Pulling each of the threads of previous discussions together has been a considerable challenge. Not least because of the inadequacy of currently used terminology to articulate the very complex meanings to which they are adhered. In particular words such as spirituality and spiritual health, 'successful ageing', faith, embodied practices and the many concepts that surround notions of creativity, self-expression, home-making and of course ageing itself.

Just as our words are inadequate to describe our needs, many of our support structures remain focused on a scientific paradigm which leaves little room for viewing spiritual health from a more holistic perspective. This does not discount the important work being done within the health sciences to advance treatment and care, but simply points to how much better this might be by considering a spiritual dimension.

I have provided an overview of the health status of older people and identified the changing emphasis toward intrinsic and extrinsic capacity. I have traced the context of spiritual care within current health care systems and discussed the difficulties of adjusting a system to suit the needs of all who need it. The health care system, particularly as it relates to older people, is burdened by the difficulty of unravelling the above concepts, budgetary constraints, and a work force pressed for time and recognition. Within aged care, in particular, employees are generally low skilled, low paid and often short staffed to provide the level of care required. It is very pleasing to see that many health care settings are now incorporating gardens within their environs. It is time to take one step further and encourage awareness, participation and connection within a garden setting. This must be done in full awareness of the historical context of the garden setting which has both evolved and devolved in accordance with cultural and technological influences. Research looking at the benefits of contact with nature also provide perspective for the analysis of our ongoing relationship with nature.

Gardens within a domestic setting have a considerable and varied history. They have been recognised as intrinsic to our connection with spirit, inspired literary and creative arts, demonstrated wealth and status, represented political, educational and moral ideals, informed medicinal practices, enhanced environmental protection, provided much needed produce in times of need and facilitated self-expression and home-making. The value attributed to the garden has waxed and waned, often in accordance with our cultural attributions toward nature, beauty and domestic appearances. In more recent times, the value of the garden appears to be somewhat splintered. For many the space surrounding our homes is shrinking, or contrived in line with our often time-poor lifestyles. It is often regarded as an activity that will become more appealing as we age and have more time. There are, of course, some of us who continue to draw many benefits from the domestic garden despite the many changes occurring around us. It must also be noted that there is increasing interest in community gardens, school gardens and the increased consumption of fresh produce that is produced sustainably and within local environs.

I have discussed concepts of wellbeing and how they relate to spiritual awareness. I pointed to a need to find alternative forms of expression. In particular, the potential for more embodied practices that give an holistic perspective of spiritual expression and broaden this beyond traditional spheres of religion. Practices that involve physical, mental, emotional and spiritual energy can be found within the everyday location of a garden. I have provided a model to discuss how this has unfolded for experienced gardeners and how it has been a central focus of health and wellbeing in the later stages of their lives. Encouraged as an alternative or complementary form of spiritual expression, it might be possible to improve the quality of life for a broader range of older people.

I have looked extensively at literature and academic studies analysing our relationship with plants. Contact with nature has been examined by many different academic disciplines and whether or not their intent was to demonstrate wellbeing from such

contact, each study consistently implied this possibility. Doubtless the level of contact we have with nature has dramatically changed and having a garden surrounding our homes is no longer a priority for many home owners. I have described the importance of having access to a garden within an everyday setting. There is increasing evidence to support the health benefits of both working within and simply experiencing a garden. Participants to this study have unanimously acclaimed the benefits they have received from gardens throughout their lives.

Exploration of the historical nature of garden practice enabled some perspective to be placed on the changing nature of our relationship with nature and plants within our care. I have been constantly astounded by how much was previously known and has been subsequently lost. Cycles of growth and decline in all manner of awareness has been ever-present. This has left me with a feeling of hope that even though we are being continually alienated from nature, change is inevitable and just as likely now as in the past. Knowledge of the past, however, does hopefully better equip us to move forward with greater awareness. From a historical perspective it is conceivable to acknowledge the possibility of gaining a different level of consciousness in our relationship with plants and nature in general. Gardens have been an important part of human lives since life was first acknowledged in the Garden of Eden. The changing nature of this relationship reflects the prevailing attitudes of those in power, as well as the priorities of the culture within which that power is exercised.

I have included description of alternative forms of expression, focusing particularly on poetry. Poetry has been recognised for its powerful capacity not only to express our own thoughts and feelings, but also to describe the feelings of others within a research context. There are, of course, many other forms of self-expression that I could have mentioned such as fine arts, music, dance, theatre and the rapidly developing digital arts. This would be beyond the scope of this work. The importance of participation in creative activity throughout the life span has been widely discussed, but the potential to expand this for older people needs further exploration.

Theoretically, this study has been guided by a hermeneutic phenomenological approach. This is because it allows full immersion in the experience of gardening and allows in-depth analysis of the lived experience of participants. Incorporating poetry within the analysis and expression of findings has broadened the scope of this study. Poetry is compatible with a phenomenological approach because it seeks the essence of experience. Poetry allows the reader to formulate an image in their mind and in doing so attempts to provide new perspectives. For the poet and the reader this helps to break down barriers to understanding and provides the possibility of what Gadamer (1975) identified as a 'fusion of horizons'.

Within current times (in western/European contexts) there is much that we have forgotten with regard to the importance of spiritual presence within everyday experience. As a consequence, achievement of a sense of balance has potentially been impacted. Balance has been considered indicative of a sense of wellbeing. For many individuals the terms religion and spirituality are seen as ambiguous and their importance is diminishing. Acknowledgement of the presence of spirit in everyday settings is not commonly recognized within prominent cultural structures. Rituals that might embrace spiritual presence in our daily lives, while available, are not endorsed in a manner that acknowledges their inherent value to health and wellbeing on multiple levels. This is particularly the case for the domestic garden and daily contact with nature through the care and maintenance of the garden.

In concluding my study, I feel drawn to the importance of my initial feeling of deep respect for older people. The richness of their experiences, the cultural shifts and events they have witnessed and the link they provide to our collective pasts is irreplaceable. Where the final stages of their lives might be enriched by greater opportunities for spiritual expression, that respect is given action. Action from which we might all stand to benefit. Recognising the increased potential for creativity in the later stages of life has provided a valuable basis from which to recommend greater environmental stimulation of older people within their home/residential/nursing environment.

I wish to again thank my participants for their generosity in sharing their time and experiences with me. Their stories will forever remain in my heart and mind. Just as many of their sayings are committed to memory from repeated listening to their transcripts, their love of the garden has been transferred to me in multiple ways. Cuttings they gave me live in my garden and some of their favourite plants have since been planted in my own garden. Such is the depth of sharing of garden knowledge, understanding and appreciation.

APPENDICES

“... *active wisdom*--an entire cohort with something new to offer to the world as years of experience combined with continuing health” (Bateson, 2011, p.52)

A.1 Participant Interview Guide

The following represents a general guide drawn from the reviewed literature for discussion with participants. This was reviewed and modified as necessary as interviews progress.

Garden tour and introduction

- Garden beginnings – started by self or others, planning and development
- What is grown in the garden – type of plants, reason for choice, care required
- Activities undertaken in the garden – seasonal basis, amount of time, reason for doing

Personal Characteristics

- First experience of gardening
- Development of interest (age, understanding, application)
- Acquisition of skills and knowledge (inspiration, development)
- Time spent in the garden (gardening, relaxing, socialising)
- Vision for current garden (future plans, development)

Benefits received from Gardening

- What gives the most enjoyment in gardening (activities, relaxation, contemplation)
- What is most valued and aspired to in the garden (creativity, order, beauty)
- Perceived benefits of gardening to self (physical, mental, emotional, spiritual)
- Any other benefits (environment, enjoyment of others)
- How does the garden hold your interest over the years
- Choice of particular plants in the garden (memory, use, appearance)
- What meaning does the garden and gardening have in everyday life

Challenging Aspects of Gardening

- Aspects of gardening least enjoyed
- Factors which detract from gardening
- Overcoming any difficulties experienced in the garden

Spiritual Aspect of Gardening

(Explain/discuss definition of spirituality i.e. broad concept)

- Lifeforce within plants (cycles of life)
- Connection between life forms
- Role of the garden in achieving a sense of connection (self, others, environment, other)
- Spiritual and religious expression

A.2 Participant Information Consent Forms



LETTER OF INVITATION - INTERVIEW

Dear Gardeners

My name is Joanne Adams, I am a student at La Trobe University Bendigo, enrolled in the Doctor of Philosophy program within the faculty of Health Sciences. As part of my studies I am undertaking a research project designed to explore a possible link between gardening, wellbeing and spiritual expression. This research aims to identify how and why gardening might be beneficial to the wellbeing of older people and whether it might be considered as a form of spiritual expression. It is anticipated that your participation in this study will form a very important basis for future planning in wellbeing and spiritual care for older people who may be living at home, in the community or within aged/residential care. This project has the approval of the La Trobe University Human Research Ethics Committee.

I am seeking support from gardeners who currently tend a garden either at home, within the community or within an aged/residential care facility. This will involve participation in a face-to-face interview conducted (with your permission) in your garden of approximately 1 hour duration. During the interview I will be interested to hear your views, concerns and thoughts about the experience of gardening. In order to be sure I have understood your views, a follow up interview will also be arranged of approximately 1 hour duration.

A detailed information sheet describing the interview process is attached. If you would like to participate in this study, please complete the section below and return it in the reply paid envelope.

I would like to thank you for taking time to read this letter and hope to hear from you soon. If you have any further enquiries, please feel free to contact me on (03) 5444 7674 or email me at jlcomer@students.latrobe.edu.au.

Yours sincerely

Joanne Adams

I would like to participate in the research project 'The Spiritual Nature of Garden Practice.

I give my permission for the researcher to telephone me on the phone number provided to arrange an interview and/or further information

Signature: Date: Contact No.:



PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET - INTERVIEW

Project Title: THE SPIRITUAL NATURE OF GARDEN PRACTICE
Researcher: Joanne Adams, Student, Doctor of Philosophy Candidate
Supervisor: Dr Virginia Dickson-Swift
HREC Approval No.: 2014/122

This project is designed to gain greater understanding of how gardening may benefit the wellbeing of older people and whether it might be considered as a form of spiritual expression. It is hoped that findings from this study will emphasise the garden as a valued setting for maintaining wellbeing.

In order to trace the benefits of gardening for older people, participants will be aged 70+ and currently tend a garden in either the domestic, community or aged/residential care setting (or a combination of settings).

INTERVIEW TOPICS

Interviews will be casual, much like a conversation. I will be interested to hear your thoughts and feelings about your garden. This will include discussing:

- how your interest in gardening developed;
- what you enjoy most about gardening;
- how you acquired knowledge and skills to help create and maintain your garden;
- what having a garden means to you (and your family);
- how your feelings about the garden may have changed over time;
- how the garden might help in achieving a sense of wellbeing;
- what spiritual expression might mean and why it might be important;
- any additional points you may wish to discuss.

INTERVIEW FORMAT

So that the plants may act as a prompt for our discussion, with your permission, I would like to conduct the interview in your garden. The interview will take approximately 1 hour.

With your permission, I would like to record the interview. This will assist my recall of our conversation and enable accurate data analysis. You may still participate if you prefer not to be recorded.

It may also be helpful to take photographs of particular plants in your garden. If so, with your permission, photographs may be taken by the researcher. In order to protect your privacy, great care will be taken to ensure that no identifying features of the garden are included. As any photographs taken will be digital, they may also be viewed by participants, at the time of interview, for approval.

USE OF DATA

In order to maintain your confidentiality, all identifiable information such as your name and address will be removed from recorded data after I transcribe it to text for analysis. Once the data has been transcribed, it will only be used for this project and the files will be password-protected. Following the completion of the project all original data (including notes, photographs and recordings) will be securely stored at the Bendigo campus of La Trobe University until it is destroyed after 5 years.

The data collected during the project will be analysed for common themes and ideas with which I will be able to identify those aspects of the gardening experience that are most important. In order to be certain that I have understood your feelings and experience of gardening, I would like to conduct a follow-up interview. With your permission, this interview will revise the transcript of our first interview and clarify any points as required. It may also be an opportunity to add any additional points that may have come to light. At the follow up interview I would also like to discuss the development of a poem based on your experience in the garden and information in our first interview.

Data collected and analysis undertaken will form the basis of a Doctorate thesis. It is also expected that during or at the conclusion of the project a paper will be produced and published in a professional journal. It may also form the basis of a presentation at a professional seminar. If desired, a copy of the final paper can be sent to you prior to publication for your reference. If at any time prior to completion of the project you wish to view your data, please contact the researchers on the details below.

Participation in this research is entirely voluntary and you may withdraw before, during or after the interview process. You are asked to complete the Withdrawal of Consent Form or to directly notify the researcher by phone if you do wish to withdraw from the project within four weeks following the interview. It is anticipated that participants will enjoy discussing their experiences in the garden, but if our discussion has raised any issues of concern or distress, please contact a local counselling service for support such as Centrecare on 5438 1300, or Lifeline on 131 114.

My supervisor for the project is Dr Virginia Dickson-Swift, Senior Researcher, La Trobe Rural Health School. Any questions regarding this project may be directed to me, via my supervisor, on (03) 5444 7852.

If you have any complaints or queries that the researcher has not been able to answer to your satisfaction, you may contact The Secretary, Faculty Human Ethics Committee, Faculty of Health Sciences, La Trobe University, Victoria, 3086, Telephone 9479 3583; email fhehealth@latrobe.edu.au.

Thank you for your interest and participation in the project,

Joanne Adams



PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Project Title: THE SPIRITUAL NATURE OF GARDEN PRACTICE
Researcher: Joanne Adams, Student, Doctor of Philosophy Candidate
Supervisor: Dr Virginia Dickson-Swift, Snr Researcher, La Trobe Rural Health School
HREC Approval No. 2014/122

I, (participant), have read and understood the participant information sheet and consent form and any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction.

- I agree to participate in the project, realising that I may physically withdraw at any time and may request that no data arising from my participation is used, up to four weeks following the completion of my participation in the interview.
 - I agree that research data provided by me or with my permission during the project may be presented at conferences and published in journals on the condition that neither my name nor any identifying information is used.
 - I agree to allow the interview to be digitally recorded.
 - A copy of the participant information sheet has been provided for me to keep.
- Additionally, I agree to be contacted at a later date for a follow-up interview by post or phone.

Yes No ☐ please tick ☐ appropriate box)

Participants name (block letters):

Signature: Date:

Name of Researcher: Joanne Adams

Signature: Date:

Name of Student Supervisor: Dr Virginia Dickson-Swift

If you have any complaints or queries that the researcher has not been able to answer to your satisfaction, you may contact The Secretary, Faculty Human Ethics Committee, Faculty of Health Sciences, La Trobe University, Victoria, 3086, Telephone 9479 3583; email fhehealth@latrobe.edu.au .



WITHDRAWAL OF CONSENT FOR USE OF DATA

Project Title: THE SPIRITUAL NATURE OF GARDEN PRACTICE
Researcher: Joanne Adams, Student, Doctor of Philosophy Candidate
Supervisor: Dr Virginia Dickson-Swift, Snr Researcher, La Trobe Rural Health School
HREC Approval No. 2014/122

I,, wish to WITHDRAW my consent to the use of data arising from my participation. Data arising from my participation must NOT be used in this research project as described in the Information Sheet and Consent Form. I understand that data arising from my participation will be destroyed provided this request is received within four weeks of the completion of my participation in the interview. I understand that this notification will be retained together with my consent form as evidence of the withdrawal of my consent to use the data I have provided specifically for this research project.

This form must be submitted within four weeks following the completion of participation (four weeks after your interview).

Date of Interview:
Final date for withdrawal:
Participants name (printed):
Signature:
Date:

If you have any questions regarding any part of the project, please contact the researchers by either:

email: jlcomer@students.latrobe.edu.au

Phone: Virginia Dickson-Swift (Supervisor) (03) 5444 7852

If you have any complaints or queries that the researcher has not been able to answer to your satisfaction, you may contact The Secretary, Faculty Human Ethics Committee, Faculty of Health Sciences, La Trobe University, Victoria, 3086, Telephone 9479 3583; email fhehealth@latrobe.edu.au.

A.3 Poetry Journal

Throughout my PhD poetry has been a constant companion. It has helped me to untangle my thoughts, express my emotions and document my progression through some very challenging times. My own garden has been central to this experience and as such I share many common experiences with participants to this research. I wish to share and elaborate on some of the poetry written during this process to demonstrate more clearly the reflective process I have used to analyse available data. The common nature of inter-subjective experience (relating part meanings) and the creation of poetry has facilitated my capacity to intuit the experience of the whole (Holloway and Todres, 2003).

I have chosen to divide poetic reflection by topic, rather than chronologically because the process of reflection in many ways negates the time frame within which it occurred. The subject topics are as follows: ageing, garden, family and myself. The poems were not written intentionally to topic, but rather occurred more organically in accordance with my thoughts and experiences at the time of conducting the research.

Ageing

Poems describing ageing are reflective of my thoughts on what ageing represents, how it is portrayed and what it means to me. The first poem relates to reflection of a time I spent working within aged care when I was aged 20 and had travelled to the United Kingdom to work. It occurred to me at the time that the quality of care received by residents depended on the capacity of the carer to comprehend what it might be like to be old. The richness of the lives of those I cared for at this time often struck me, even though I had little direct experience of what that might be like.

The stories of those I cared for were fascinating. I became aware of previous occupations and difficult times particularly experiences of living in London during in the first and second world wars. One resident had been a gardener and I often lament since

that time that he had limited opportunity to spend time in the garden. Another had lived a single life since losing her finance in the first world war, but recounted stories of her brothers travels to Australia in the 1920's. She later graciously gifted me with a book that had been written by her brother of his time in Australia.

My thoughts of those I cared for and subsequent experiences led me to think deeply about the way our society views ageing. The second poem describes a perceived imbalance in the way society values ageing and youth. Within my previous Master's study I was enamoured by the resilience of older gardeners. The richness of experience of participants to this study was also refreshing and reassuring. With so much emphasis being placed on the beauty, value and capacity of youth, detriment is likely to be experienced not only by older people, but also by youth themselves.

Other poems in this section describe our often-limited exposure to death and a prevailing fear and uncertainty. How so many of us aspire to live a longer life, but don't really appreciate where that might place us in the future.

I Remember

I remember

Their faces, stories, places
They lived, but barely lived.
Personalities were strong
No need for pretention
Small pleasures, blocks of time
Spent in contemplation

I remember

The carers, did they know how to care
Their minds often absent
Fed from beyond where
The faces, stories and places

Could reach

In time they may know

What pretention might mean

But caring is thankless to those who don't see

Small pleasures, blocks of time

Memory

Youth and Ageing

We talk of the cycles of life

Echoed by the seasons

Growth and decline, ebb and flow

All within natures fold

But in truth

The balance has long been skewed

Toward youth and all its trappings

Youth is valued, revered and sought

That to which we must aspire

Yet the tree that offers most shade

Is aged beyond our years

It sustains a multitude of life in its branches

Holds firm to the earth and sky

Ageing now seems full of shame

Like any of us had a choice

As our bodies change we see

Opportunity shrinks

Experience holds little value

Are we forced to alter pace?

With longer lives our fates are sealed

A love of youth, disbelief

Ageing

Ageing,

Such paradox

We try so hard to live

A long and healthy life

Yet we are so unprepared

For it to end

Ageing,

Such disguise

We ignore it for too long

Focused on pursuits

That keep us in the game, a

Youthful blend

Death,

is a part of life

Ignored, disguised, feared

Reflected all around us

Yet unrelated to ourselves

Our world without end

Garden Poetry

My own garden has been my rudder throughout the writing of this research. It provided me with inspiration, retreat, solace and renewal. My musings in the garden have related to all manner of feeling and sensation including faith, sadness, the workings of nature, the seasons and fascination with historical associations of the garden. Many of these feelings and thoughts I have shared with participants. Despite the generational divide, I found that my own experiences resonated with participants. The insights that

participants shared with me have had a profound influence. Following discussion with participants I was often prompted to plant a favourite plant of theirs in memory of them. In some cases, participants gave me cuttings of their own plants which I placed in my garden.

The first poem which has been discussed within previous chapters will not be discussed further here, except to provide a precursor to those that followed. Participants to this study frequently found solace and meaning in the garden.

Does Faith Begin and End in my Garden

A quest for faith appears unfathomable,
A disquiet longing to materialise in my senses
To touch, to smell, to hear, to see

Amid the blur that is the rest of my life
My garden draws me close
Mesmerising, calming, enabling

Physical, mental, emotional, spiritual
My garden absorbs and re-shapes my energy,
Its strength and virtue, felt deeply.

Enduring and responding to an-other
My garden is a sentinel of change
I am called to collaborate, nurture, engage.

If I did not convey body, mind and spirit,
Would it cease to be so?
A quest for faith begins and ends in my garden

Within poetry the garden has frequently been used metaphorically in relation to feelings. In the following poem it reflects a personal sadness at my own capacity to process events and frustrations within my life. It acknowledges that personal strength is always present, but sometimes waivers. That sadness is a part of life and sometimes it can be addressed head on and other times you just need to wait and let it pass. Participants to this study all shared with me times of sadness that they had subsequently shared with their gardens. The garden was an important place for renewal and patience.

A Garden of Darkness

Darkness descends upon my garden
Yet there are some glimmers of light
Leaves that are strong enough to reflect dim light

Sometimes darkness is comforting
A blanket softening all beneath
But not today

It is forbidding
The strong leaves are wilting and cannot find the light
I await the day break with hope of clear sight

The garden is a constant hive of activity with the many creatures that inhabit our one-acre block. Birds of a vast array of types are a constant source of background noise. For me this is a reminder that life goes on regardless of what else may be happening. There is also constant movement if you take the time to notice. Logic tells you that each movement is directed by a purpose. It might be possible to work out what the birds are doing (feeding, building, protecting territory) and how that relates to the noises they make. Metaphorically, this is akin to me trying to analyse each thought in my head and feeling overwhelmed by the task. Acknowledging the importance of being present in the moment without analysis is an important lesson of being in the garden. One participant

shared with me her interest in ants and lizards. She would watch their progress with fascination but did not try to follow or question why they did what they did, she was simply content with being fascinated.

Noise

My garden is full of noise
Or is that just inside my head
Wings darting through the trees
Small and fast, with poise
Letting the moment direct each need.

The noise is constant amid the trees
Like the thoughts inside my head
Fragment, rhythm, words unsaid
Should I discern a need for each noise
Or should each respective moment render it dead.

Constant, yet changing
In a split second, gone
Movement, rhythm, shape and form
Life with a script beyond need for reason
Punctuated by each new season
Constant, yet changing
In a year reborn
If only we noticed the coming dawn

My research has also required me to consider the purpose of a garden and what its presence in our lives may mean. I was fascinated by the historical context and the way this has been variously described throughout time. It deepened my understanding and insight into the importance of gardens and gardening practices. The following two

poems consider the historical pre-text of creating and nurturing a garden. They allude to the relationship between a garden and nature and our changing relationship with nature over time. Historically, the garden has been a source of reflection, creativity and relationship with nature. It is evident that this relationship has changed considerably over time.

What then is a Garden

The origins of our life force
The artists muse
A spiritual authority unspoken or
An aid to intuition's path.

The art of reflection seems lost
We no longer like what we see
Reflection, intuition, prayer,
Acknowledging presence of spirit

Except for nature's silent authority
Once feared but now beckoned
In a desperate effort to see
What then is a garden.

The Ancient Garden

What would the ancients say to us
Are we so far distant that we could not see
A garden
Symbolic, timeless, kindred
Human nature unmasked, free for all to see

Would the ancients approve
Of lifestyle choices now
A garden
Distant, unfamiliar, worthless
Dwellings full of objects, what can you see

The starkness of changing seasons is a strong feature of this local region. With very hot summers and relatively cold winters, the seasons provide a great contrast. Summer is a very challenging time for gardeners. With the frequent imposition of water restrictions, it is often very difficult to keep plants alive. Resilience was a consistent attribute of gardeners to this study. Many discussions with participants focused on the impact of the weather on the garden. Most has resolved to plant only those plants that could cope with the conditions and many favoured native plants. Of course, the rapid growth of weeds when conditions start to become more favourable was also discussed, along with remedies and consolations.

The Sun

The ground is melting, saturating
Any nutrient that would give life
Every blade of green that can be seen
Will struggle to survive.

The sun whose might we contemplate
Is unrelenting full of spite
Summoning every drop of moisture
Each gardener would invite.

Not all plants resent the sun
Some understand its glare
In three short months it will be done
Resilience gifted to native fair.

Oxalis

Oxalis how you grieve me so
Just as the rain revives the land
You come forth with such might

Laying dormant all through the heat
You are bulbous, barbed, and slight of hand
You take control of the garden so tight

But then bring forth a radiant beauty
Of brilliant yellow glory
If you were an invited guest, I would gladly admire

Such is the dilemma of maintaining a garden
Preference given to those that tell our story
Does greater pleasure come from nature's complete glory

Autumn Dawning

The freshness of the morning
Is a blessing to the soul
The cooler breeze that lets you know
That summer's time has gone

Sun scorched leaves will be replaced
But the dryness still runs deep
My admiration for surviving plants
Strengthens my bond to keep

Hope for greenery renewed
Seasons changing just in time
Touching the chord, reigniting the hue
A message, so sublime.

The following poems relate to my reading of Goethe and Naydler regarding the importance of observation in the garden. Spending time with each plant in the garden, watching and waiting, allowed me to gain insight into their changing needs. This was felt as a kind of intuition for what needed to be done. This required patience and attuning mind, body and spirit. For myself and many participants to this study, the plants in our care become like children that we took time to nurture. That nurturing was more effective if taken from a wholistic perspective, across seasons and changeable conditions. This meant not directing the plants simply to our own preference but acknowledging their own needs and preferences.

Rhythm and Rhyme

Constant, yet changing
In a split second, gone
Movement, rhythm, shape and form
Life with a script beyond need for reason
Punctuated by each new season
Constant, yet changing
Awaiting the dawn

Watching and Waiting

I watch, I see
As keen as can be
To see life unfold in my garden
I watch, I see

Characters turn free
Each form addressing my pardon
I watch, I see
Mystery on the breeze
Each day closer, closer, my garden

Could I Be

Could I be like the fresh buds of Spring
Fresh and new, full of hope and potential
Or could I show the strength of Summers growth
Ready to stand up to the glare of the sun.
Maybe I could show others the beauty
Of Autumn and glow with pride from within
Or could it be I am the crumbling leaves
Of Winter, retreating from life in the cold.
In truth, I am all of these, sometimes all at once
I am full of potential, I am strong and bold
I glow with beauty, I embrace retreat
In the earth's soul.

Family Poetry

Poems relating to my family and family experiences, while highly personal are an important part of my perception, not only of my own lifestyle and priorities, but also those of others. The writing of this PhD came at a difficult time within my family. One of my children began a difficult mental health journey which I endeavoured to share with him and provide support. Inevitably this impacts the rest of the family. For me faith was an important part of coping with these challenges. Participants shared with me many difficult times in their lives and this led me to reflect on how such episodes shape our lives. The choices we make throughout such times are tempered by a capacity to reflect and draw meaning.

I have shared many discussions with my parents regarding spirituality and faith. The first poem I wish to share is based on the writing of my father in relation to his own spirituality.

Spirituality and Me

I accept

The traditional definition of spirituality

Personal transformation in accordance with religious ideals.

I was born a Catholic

Went to a Catholic school

Religious grounding has remained with me

In more recent times

The concept of spirituality

Is often separate from religion

The biggest spiritual factor

In my life now is "nature"

People, the night skies, flora, fauna, culture

Nature gives joy and pleasure

Connection to God

This is the essence of spirituality to me.

My abiding belief that there is a God

And a life hereafter

Continues to serve as a centre point of my being.

The next five poems describe aspects of family life. They include: my musings around the number three and its impact on my life; the experience and joy of having a dog in the garden; my daughter's thoughts about what the garden means to her; a favourite climbing tree; and the process of nurturing within a family and garden.

The Number 3

The number three stands firm
Like a pyramid in my mind
Aspiring to a balance of
Mind, body, spirit
Thought, senses, intuition
Father, Son, Holy Spirit
Children, pets, life's ambition
The number three takes the pace
Of lives as they unfold
Like a pyramid in my mind
A rhythm for my thoughts

The Dog has got his Ball

The dog has got his ball
His gaze fixed and true
With determination admirable
He returns it right on cue

The dog has got his ball
Though I try so hard to hide it
A magnetic force appears unspoken
That guides him to find it

The dog has got his ball
Fathom my frustration
When to catch my eye he'll place the ball
In the worst locations

In amongst the clean washing
On the back of my chair
In between my garden plants
That he pulls out without a care

The dog has got his ball
And with such a mournful stare
He begs me to play his game
How could I not, I declare

Ebony's Garden

There are fairies in our garden
And magic in my heart
As I skip around the flowers
Glistening in the light
I can feel their presence
I know they help things grow
They inhabit a different world but
They will never show
The tears they cry because we forget
How wisdom from their world
Could teach us how natures flow
Binds us more than we could know
There are fairies in our garden
And magic in my heart

And hope that there will come a day
When we can share their path

The Climbing Tree

The climbing tree was huge
It had bedrooms and steps
A lounge room and a cellar
And bathroom for a guest

Two or three at a time
Could climb upon the branches
Toys and pillows were included
No one taking chances

But that was many years ago
And the tree has now shrunk
The rooms that were once so big
No longer fit the trunk

The children are much bigger
But the magic of that tree
Remains in their minds and triggers
Memories of a garden for three

Illness

I remember who I was
Before my illness
I was confident
Certain that I could do

What was expected of me
I could run like the wind
I had boundless energy
But when I became ill
Everything changed
I didn't know who I was
Or where I was headed
I had no energy
And the wind just blew
Right through me
I remember who I was
But now, I have to rebuild
A stronger more certain me
Nurturing

Nurturing the bud
Resting the soul
A child filled with hope

Nurturing the bud
Fortifying the soil
The child to come forth

Nurturing the bud
Beginning anew
Was it all just a dream

The next poems describe more difficult moments of being a parent and balancing the needs of children with my own (and my husbands) needs. The first poem describes the challenges of providing emotional support to a family (myself included) undergoing strain. It considers our own instinctive reactions to circumstances that appear beyond

our control. The second poem describes how sadness from some members of the family impacts and permeates others within the family. The third poem reflects the feeling of being a parent, unconditionally providing for a family.

Instinct

The first instinct
Is to run
There is better than here
Over there is agreement
Peace in my head
Will over there become like here
Where the words don't make sense
And the pain reverberates
Instinct has no care for the future or the past
The consequence of fear
The absence of love
Perhaps instinct has spirit
A chance to separate the body and
The interminably strong mind

Sadness

How do we quell the sadness
That creeps into our bones
It spreads throughout our bodies
Making us feel utterly alone.

Sadness rests within our soul
With an uneasy balance
Disturbed by perception of our role

Uncertain vision of our purpose

Sadness sensed like thought-speak
Particularly within the home
Where families struggle to communicate.
With resources stretched and cloned

Our view of sadness needs to change
Before it becomes persistent
Perhaps its presence reflects our desire
For a happiness that is unrealistic

The Servant

The patience of a saint
The persistence of a fox
How then do I serve you?

The honour of positive vision
The disappointment of a loss
How then do I serve you?

The hope of launching safely
The fear of losing face
How then do I serve you?

The peace of mind in effort
The frustration of misplaced trust
How then do I serve you?

The role of parent treasured

Over all else, place and time

How then do I serve you?

Yet also serve myself.

The next three poems relate specifically to providing support to my son suffering with severe anxiety and attempting to participate in normal daily routines. This was a difficult time, but also a time of great sharing and growth for myself and my son. Many participants also shared stories of sadness and grief in relation to their children. Anxiety was a topic that many of them readily shared. While this was beyond the scope of the interview topic it was indicative of the level of sharing between myself and participants. Such conversations emerged spontaneously during conversation and ultimately strengthened rapport.

Just Another Day

The day started low

Hopes glow had dimmed

Expectation a mismatch to the possible

Sharing mind and heart disarmed

Distraction became the aim

The glow to be regained

Don't be a passenger I was told

Sharing too closely, too much to withhold

Bribery allowed a shift to begin

A glimmer to reignite the glow

Positive energy held within

Sharing mind and heart, the dream

An Anxious Mind

The time it takes
To mend a mind
Wrecked with anxious fear
Immeasurable and immense

The chasm widens and contracts
With never-ending momentum
Like a roller-coaster
We travel on
This ride to uncertain end

And yet it has innate value, doesn't it?
Like meaning drawn from grief
Patience, strength, wisdom
Gained from small pleasures and faith
Life crises and the quest for meaning.

The Glass Box

Within the glass box we sit
Watching, waiting, wondering
We listen to the sounds around
And consider how they mesh
He with fear in his eyes
I with pensive hope
Sitting in the box is safe
And yet too separate to relate
To the experience of the others
To which he needs to make
The leap of faith

That all will be well

And acceptance will be found.

Myself

The following poems come from fragments of conversations with participants, and contemplation of the literature I have read throughout the study. The life stories of participants were rich with experience and discussion spanned childhood through to the current times. In particular, creativity was an important aspect of most participants lives. This led to many thoughts on the role of creativity more generally. The importance of mystery and contemplation were also evident in conversations. The spanning of many generations within discussion also made me think more closely on historical perspectives of nature and the importance of having a garden. Each of the above has led me to question how we consider and communicate our own priorities, expectations and adopted roles.

If the Earth was Flat

Have you ever wished

That the earth was flat

With beginning and end

We could comprehend

Less mystery in our history

Less majesty in our tragedy

World without end

Upon which we depend

We seek such certainty

In the world around us

Yet the complexity we create

Serves to confound us

It is mystery that sustains us
Like a treasured prize
We seek until we may find
Regardless, ultimately blind

To the presence of living creatures
The beauty of nature in our midst
Our place in this world
We are yet to comprehend

The Creative Mind

The creative mind is said to be
The gift of just a few and
Yet creative acts take on many forms
Undefined, unlimited and true

The creative mind used to be
Inherent in the ancient world
Stories and images in a range of forms
Interpreted uniquely, and anew

The creative mind nurtured to be
A link to the mysteries of life
An ability to have faith in many forms
Nature, the universe, suffice

Expectation

Expectation looms like a cat
Searching out its prey
A flash of movement
Beckons the chase
But often it will allay
Fear of disappointment
Inability to keep the pace
With hopes and dreams
Of mystery to appease
The ordinary games at play
Expectation makes us a fool
It can bring us to our knees
Our faith may waiver and seem cruel
An outcome cursed
Yet so it is, if we can see
If we return to the cat
That the truest joy
Comes with the flash
Movement, dynamic, connection
There was no expectation in that cat
It was simply living
In the moment

Ancient Sensitivity

Did the ancients view sensitivity
As a gift or a vice;
Did it guide their search for wisdom
Intuiting nature, the web of life

When they gazed upon the stars
And dreamed of passages spent
Did they acknowledge foresight and wisdom
Or judge it, irrelevant

Sensitivity must have given them
A richness to their stories
A way of presenting knowledge
Respectful of past glories

Yet sensitivity has become a curse
Its relevance in disrepute
A predisposition to mental ill-health
No longer valued, void and mute

If only we saw value
In the complex of the sensitive
We might better understand
How minds have become so defensive

The complex of logic and reason
Now the highly treasured prize
Demonstration of our advance
From our history and our demise.

Poetry

My child's mind did not comprehend
The beauty of poetry and verse
Perhaps that's because I was yet to gain

The images needed to rehearse
The scenes that poems portrayed
Pictures ripe for narration
Reinventing in my mind their very creation

But now as I am older
Poetry has allowed me to renew
An interest in how we communicate
All manner of different views
I hope I can do it justice
And make it speak my name
To reflect a journey full of substance
Imaginings still without a frame.

Painting Images

Painting images with words
Must surely give us scope
To tell our stories and dare to hope
That they will be understood

Intuition called to ripen
Thought counter-intuitive
We must feel to be able to see
As the ancients once knew.

Life's Ambition

Life's ambition was always presented
As something you must have
A passion, a dream, a talent

To follow and take to the grave

To have a singular objective
Was always elusive to me
Choices that would be protective
As a future deserved to be

For me it was a search for meaning
That drove the choices I made
Direction unclear and seaming
To be a rudderless ride of trade

Yet if I pray and ask for guidance
I must be prepared to take a leap
Priorities not necessarily at pace
With that of a professional steed

What then is the aim of passion
Does it ensure life's ambition
If ever an assurance can be fashioned
It seems to come to very few

If only we can feel the presence
Of the divine and their token
When we listen to the inner voice
So many times unspoken

A Child of the Eighties

A child of the eighties
I always thought

That anything was possible

Family, career, life fulfilled

All within my reach

A child of the eighties

I did not appreciate

The role of homemaker, mother

A stable presence, calming

It alone was not enough

A child of the eighties

And mother of three

With a feeling of being duped

What greater role than to truly guide

These children, our youth

A child of now

All is knowable, instant, resolute

But sources are riddled with change

Oh for the stable presence, calming

These children, our youth

A child of now

Overwhelmed, anxious, ever alert

To threats inside their mind, inescapable

So many voids, truths untold

These children, our youth

Earth to dust

With a mind that belongs to the universe
And a body that belongs to the earth
We reconcile our differences
In the hope that we might speak
In youth it seems so easy
With a fervour and lust for life
Both mind and body sing
A tune of expectant fulfilment begins
But the universe gets larger
And the earth begins to shrink
Reunite or dissolve, fervour or mistrust
Earth returning to dust

A.5 Influential Poetry

The Metamorphosis of Plants

A poem by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

First published in June 1798

The poem has been redacted from this thesis due to copyright restrictions. The following link may be used to access this poem.

<https://poems.com/poem/the-metamorphosis-of-the-plants/#:~:text=You%20are%20perplexed%2C%20my%20love%2C%20by%20this%20tho usandfold%20mixed%20profusion%2C&text=Watch%20now%20and%20be%20transfor med,emerge%20in%20blossom%20and%20fruit!>

Hortulus (Payne & Blunt, 1966)

The following is an extract from Hortulus, written by Walahfrid Strabo.

On the Cultivation of Gardens

The poem has been redacted from this thesis due to copyright restrictions. The following link may be used to access this poem.

<https://www.huntbotanical.org/admin/uploads/hibd-hortulus-facsimile.pdf>

Prayer of St Francis of Assisi

Lord, make me an instrument of Your peace;
Where there is hatred, let me sow love;
Where there is injury, pardon;
Where there is discord, harmony;
Where there is error, truth;
Where there is doubt, faith;
Where there is despair, hope;
Where there is darkness, light;
And where there is sadness, joy.
O Divine Master, Grant that I may not so much seek
To be consoled as to console;
To be understood as to understand;
To be loved as to love.
For it is in giving that we receive;
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned;
And it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

How the Camel Got His Hump

A Poem by Rudyard Kipling (2005)

The poem has been redacted from this thesis due to copyright restrictions. The following link may be used to access this poem.

<https://rpo.library.utoronto.ca/poems/how-camel-got-his-hump>

REFERENCES

- Abram, D. (1996). *The Spell of the Sensuous: Language and Meaning In a More-Than-Human World*. New York, NY: *Vintage Books*.
- Adams, J. (2011). Gardening proves beneficial for seniors. *Aged Care Insite*, Dec 1, 2011. Retrieved from <https://www.agedcareinsite.com.au/2011/12/gardening-proves-beneficial-for-seniors/>
- Adams, J., Pascal, J., & Dickson-Swift, V. (2014). Spirituality and aging in place: the impact of extreme climatic conditions on domestic gardening practice. *The International Journal of Aging and Human Development*, 80(1), 10-26.
- Adevi, A. A., & Mårtensson, F. (2013). Stress rehabilitation through garden therapy: the garden as a place in the recovery from stress. *Urban Forestry & Urban Greening*, 12(2), 230-237.
- Ahmed, N., Mandel, R., & Fain, M. J. (2007). Frailty: An Emerging Geriatric Syndrome. *The American Journal of Medicine*, 120(9), 748-753. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.amjmed.2006.10.018>
- Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) (2018). *Older People at a Glance*. Retrieved from <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/older-people/older-australia-at-a-glance/>.
- Albrecht, G., Sartore, G., Connor, L., Higginbotham, N., Freeman, S., Kelly, B., . . . Pollard, G. (2007). Solastalgia: the distress caused by environmental change. *Australasian Psychiatry*, 15(sup1), S95-S98.
- Ammerman, N. T. (Ed.) (2007). *Introduction: Observing modern religious lives*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Amrine, F., Zucker, F. J., & Wheeler, H. (2012). *Goethe and the sciences: A reappraisal* (Vol. 97): Springer Science & Business Media.
- Anderson, G. (2001). Designed for prayer: A bibliographical essay on medieval monasticism for contemporary designers and gardeners. *Cistercian Studies Quarterly*, 36(4), 457.
- Armstrong, C. (2003). *Romantic organicism: From idealist origins to ambivalent afterlife*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan.
- Ashbery, J. (1976). *Self-portrait in a convex mirror: poems*: Penguin.
- Ashworth, N. L., Chad, K. E., Harrison, E. L., Reeder, B. A., & Marshall, S. C. (2005). Home versus center based physical activity programs in older adults. *Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews*(1).

- Astrow, A. B., Wexler, A., Texeira, K., He, M. K., & Sulmasy, D. P. (2007). Is failure to meet spiritual needs associated with cancer patients' perceptions of quality of care and their satisfaction with care? *Journal of Clinical Oncology*, 25(36), 5753-5757.
- Atchley, R. C. (2009). *Spirituality and aging*: JHU Press.
- Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) (2017). *Population Projections, Australia, 2017 (base) - 2066*. Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia
- Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) (2013). *Losing My Religion*. Canberra: Commonwealth Government of Australia Retrieved from <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/4102.0Main+Features30Nov+2013#introduction>
- Bachelard, G. (1971). *The Poetics of Reverie; Childhood Language, and the Cosmos*. Boston: Beacon Press (First published in French in 1960).
- Bachelard, G. (1994). *The Poetics of Space*. Boston: Beacon Press. (First published in French in 1958).
- Bachelard, G., & Lescure, J. (2013). *Intuition of the Instant*. Chicago: Northwestern University Press.
- Balboni, M. J., Puchalski, C. M., & Peteet, J. R. (2014). The relationship between medicine, spirituality and religion: three models for integration. *Journal of Religion and Health*, 53(5), 1586-1598.
- Barnicle, T., & Midden, K. S. (2003). The effects of a horticulture activity program on the psychological well-being of older people in a long-term care facility. *HortTechnology*, 13(1), 81-85.
- Bastow, D. (1976). Otto & Numinous Experience. *Religious Studies*, 12(2), 159-176.
- Bateson, M. C. (2011). *Composing a further life: The age of active wisdom*: Vintage.
- Beard, J. R., & Bloom, D. E. (2015). Towards a comprehensive public health response to population ageing. *The Lancet*, 385(9968), 658-661. doi:[https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(14\)61461-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(14)61461-6)
- Beard, J. R., Officer, A., de Carvalho, I. A., Sadana, R., Pot, A. M., Michel, J., . . . Chatterji, S. (2016). The World report on ageing and health: a policy framework for healthy ageing. *The Lancet*, 387(10033), 2145-2154. doi:[https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(15\)00516-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(15)00516-4)
- Berman, M. G., Jonides, J. and Kaplan, S. (2008). The Cognitive Benefits of Interacting with Nature. *Psychological Science*, 19(12), 1207-1212.
- Bernard, H. R. (2013). *Social research methods: Qualitative and quantitative approaches* (2nd Edition ed.). Thousand Oaks: Sage.

- Bernard, M., & Davies, V. H. (2005). Our ageing selves: Reflections on growing older. In *Women ageing* (pp. 72-87): Routledge.
- Berto, R. (2014). The role of nature in coping with psycho-physiological stress: a literature review on restorativeness. *Behavioral sciences*, 4(4), 394-409.
- Bevan, M. T. (2014). A Method of Phenomenological Interviewing. *Qualitative Health Research*, 24(1), 136-144. doi:10.1177/1049732313519710
- Beyer, K., Kaltenbach, A., Szabo, A., Bogar, S., Nieto, F., & Malecki, K. (2014). Exposure to neighborhood green space and mental health: evidence from the survey of the health of Wisconsin. *International journal of environmental research and public health*, 11(3), 3453-3472.
- Bhatti, M. (2006). 'When I'm in the garden I can create my own paradise': Homes and gardens in later life. *The Sociological Review*, 54(2), 318-341.
- Bhatti, M., & Church, A. (2004). Home, the culture of nature and meanings of gardens in late modernity. *Housing Studies*, 19(1), 37-51.
- Bhatti, M., Church, A., Claremont, A., & Stenner, P. (2009). 'I love being in the garden': enchanting encounters in everyday life. *Social and Cultural Geography*, 10(1), 61-76.
- Bianchi, E. (2005). Living with elder wisdom. *Journal of Gerontological Social Work*, 45(3), 319-329.
- Biggs, S. (2014). The Promise of a Long Life? Cultural Adaptation to Productive Aging, Spiritual Empathy, and a Sustainable Future. *Journal of Religion, Spirituality & Aging*, 26(2-3), 96-108. doi:10.1080/15528030.2013.855964
- Bishop, P. (2006). The idea of the numinous in Goethe and Jung. In A. Casement & D. Tacey (Eds). *The Idea of the Numinous: Contemporary Jungian and Psychoanalytic Perspectives*. Routledge, London, pp 117-136.
- Blackburn, P. (1985). *The Collected Poems of Paul Blackburn*, ed. E. Jarolim, New York, NY.
- Blanchflower, D. G., & Oswald, A. J. (2008). Is well-being U-shaped over the life cycle? *Social Science & Medicine*, 66(8), 1733-1749.
doi:<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2008.01.030>
- Blazer, D. G. (2006). Spirituality, depression, and the elderly. *Southern Medical Journal*, 99(10), 1178-1179.
- Blazer, D. G. (2010a). The Origins of Late-life Depression. *Psychiatric Annals*, 40(1), 13-18.

- Blazer, D. G. (2010b). Protection from late life depression. *Intergenerational Psychogeriatrics*, 22(2), 171-173.
- Bonifas, R. P., Simons, K., Biel, B., & Kramer, C. (2014). Aging and place in long-term care settings: Influences on social relationships. *Journal of Aging and Health*, 26(8), 1320-1339.
- Bortoft, H. (1996). *The wholeness of nature*: SteinerBooks.
- Bortoft, H. (2009). *Goethe on Science. An Anthology of Goethe's Scientific Writings*. (J. Naydler, Ed.). Edinburgh: Floris Books.
- Bouma, G. (2006). *Australian soul: religion and spirituality in the 21st century*: Cambridge University Press.
- Bowe, P. (2010). The evolution of the ancient Greek Garden. *Studies in the History of Gardens & Designed Landscapes*, 30:3, 208-223.
- Bowe, P. (2009) The sacred groves of ancient Greece. *Studies in the History of Gardens & Designed Landscapes*, 29:4, 235-245.
- Bowen, G. A. (2008). Naturalistic inquiry and the saturation concept: A research note. *Qualitative Research*, 8(1), 137-152.
- Bowler, D. E., Buyung-Ali, L. M., Knight, T. M., & Pullin, A. S. (2010). A systematic review of evidence for the added benefits to health of exposure to natural environments. *BMC Public Health*, 10(1), 456.
- Bowling, A. & Dieppe, P. (2005). What is successful ageing and who should define it? *British Medical Journal* 331(7531):1548-1551.
- Bradburn, N. M. (1969). The structure of psychological well-being.
- Bratman, G. N., Hamilton, J. P., & Daily, G. C. (2012). The impacts of nature experience on human cognitive function and mental health. *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, 1249(1), 118-136.
- Britt, H. C., Harrison, C. M., Miller, G. C., & Knox, S. A. (2008). Prevalence and patterns of multimorbidity in Australia. *Medical Journal of Australia*, 189(2), 72-77.
- Brook, I. (2010). The Virtues of Gardening. In D. O'Brien (Ed) *Gardening Philosophy for Everyone: Cultivating Wisdom*. Wiley-Blackwell, Chichester.
- Brooker, J. S. (1998). In J. S. Brooker (Eds) *Conversations with Denise Levertov (ppxi-xvii)*. University Press of Mississippi, Jackson.
- Brown, C., & Lowis, M. J. (2003). Psychosocial development in the elderly: An investigation into Erikson's ninth stage. *Journal of Aging Studies*, 17(4), 415-426.
doi:[https://doi.org/10.1016/S0890-4065\(03\)00061-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0890-4065(03)00061-6)

- Burgess, C. W. (1989). Horticulture and Its Application to the Institutionalized Elderly. *Activities, Adaptation & Aging*, 14(3), 51-62. doi:10.1300/J016v14n03_05
- Burwick, F. (2008). Coleridge's Conversation Poems: Thinking the Thinker. *Romanticism*, 14(2), 168-182.
- Cabeza, R. (2002). Hemispheric asymmetry reduction in older adults: the HAROLD model. *Psychology and Aging*, 17(1), 85.
- Caelli, K. (2000). The changing face of phenomenological research: Traditional and American phenomenology in nursing. *Qualitative Health Research*, 10(3):366-77.
- Caelli, K., Ray, L., and Mill, J. (2003). 'Clear as Mud': Toward Greater Clarity in Generic Qualitative Research. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 2(2).
- Cahnmann, M. (2003). The Craft, Practice, and Possibility of Poetry in Educational Research. *Educational Researcher*, 32(3), 29-36. doi:10.3102/0013189x032003029
- Carpenter, C., & Suto, M. (2008). *Qualitative research for occupational and physical therapists: A practical guide*: Wiley.
- Carrette, J. R. (2000). *Religion and Culture: Michel Foucault*. Routledge. London.
- Catanzaro, C., & Ekanem, E. (2002). Home gardeners value stress reduction and interaction with nature. In *XXVI International Horticultural Congress: Expanding Roles for Horticulture in Improving Human Well-Being and Life Quality* 639 (pp. 269-275).
- Cesari, M., Vellas, B., Hsu, F. C., Newman, A. B., Doss, H., King, A. C., ... & Pahor, M. (2014). A physical activity intervention to treat the frailty syndrome in older persons—results from the LIFE-P study. *Journals of Gerontology Series A: Biomedical Sciences and Medical Sciences*, 70(2), 216-222.
- Chadwick, A. (2008). *Performance in the Garden: A Collection of Talks on Biodynamic French Intensive Horticulture*: Logosophia.
- Chapman, N. J., Hazen, T., & Noell-Waggoner, E. (2007). Gardens for People with Dementia. *Journal of Housing For the Elderly*, 21(3-4), 249-263. doi:10.1300/J081v21n03_13
- Chatterji, S., Byles, J., Cutler, D., Seeman, T., & Verdes, E. (2015). Health, functioning, and disability in older adults—present status and future implications. *The Lancet*, 385(9967), 563-575. doi:[https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(14\)61462-8](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(14)61462-8)
- Chen, T. Y., & Janke, M. C. (2012). Gardening as a potential activity to reduce falls in older adults. *Journal of Aging and Physical Activity*, 20(1), 15-31. Retrieved from <http://www.scopus.com/inward/record.url?eid=2-s2.0-84055200348&partnerID=40&md5=952f8ec09da01894b828913cb4394f66>

- Chen, Y., & Koenig, H. G. (2006). Do People Turn to Religion in Times of Stress?: An Examination of Change in Religiousness Among Elderly, Medically Ill Patients. *Journal of Nervous & Mental Disease, 194*(2), 114-120. *Annals of Leisure Research, 13*:3, 395-419.
- Cheng, E. H. Patterson, I., Packer, J. & Pegg, S. (2014) Identifying the Satisfaction Derived from Leisure Gardening by Older Adults.
- Chodzko-Zajko, W. J., Proctor, D. N., Singh, M. A. F., Minson, C. T., Nigg, C. R., Salem, G. J., & Skinner, J. S. (2009). Exercise and physical activity for older adults. *Medicine & Science in Sports Exercise, 41*(7), 1510-1530.
- Chun, M. M., Golomb, J. D., & Turk-Browne, N. B. (2011). A taxonomy of external and internal attention. *Annual Review of Psychology, 62*, 73-101.
- Clayton, V. (1975). Erikson's Theory of Human Development as it Applies to the Aged: Wisdom as Contradictive Cognition. *Human Development, 18*(1-2), 119-128. doi:10.1159/000271479
- Clifford, R., & Johnson, P. (2019). Embodied witness to alternative spirituality seekers. *Practical Theology, 12*(3), 271-282. doi:10.1080/1756073X.2019.1598685
- Cobb, M., Puchalski, C. M., & Rumbold, B. (Eds.). (2012). *Oxford Textbook of Spirituality in Healthcare*: Oxford University Press.
- Cohen, G. D. (2001). *The Creative Age: awakening human potential in the second half of life*. New York: Quill.
- Cohen, G. D. (2005). *The Mature Mind: The positive power of the aging brain*: Basic Books (AZ).
- Cohen, G. D., & The Center on Aging, Health & Humanities, The George Washington University (GW) (2006). The Creativity and Aging Study: The Impact of Professionally Conducted Cultural Programs on Older Adults. Retrieved from http://hsrc.himmelfarb.gwu.edu/son_ncafacpubs/2.
- Cohen, G. D. (2009). New theories and research findings on the positive influence of music and art on health with ageing. *Arts & Health, 1*(1), 48-62.
- Coleman, R. A., & Neimeyer, R. A. (2010). Measuring meaning: Searching for and making sense of spousal loss in late-life. *Death studies, 34*(9), 804-834.
- Coleridge, S. T. (2002). *Coleridge's Notebooks: A selection*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Collins, C. S. (2007). *Older gardeners as keepers of the earth: a phenomenological study*. Maryland University, Unpublished Dissertation.

- Connell, J. (2005). Hillsong: a megachurch in the Sydney suburbs. *Australian Geographer*, 36(3), 315-332.
- Conte, J. M. (2016). *Unending Design: the forms of postmodern poetry*. New York: Cornell University Press.
- Cooper, D. E. (2006). *A Philosophy of Gardens*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Covinsky, K. E., Yaffe, K., Lindquist, K., Cherkasova, E., Yelin, E., & Blazer, D. G. (2010). Depressive Symptoms in Middle Age and the Development of Later-Life Functional Limitations: The Long-Term Effect of Depressive Symptoms. *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society*, 58(3), 551-556. doi:10.1111/j.1532-5415.2010.02723.x
- Creswell, J. W. (1998). *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among five Traditions*. London: Sage Publications.
- Crowther, M. R., Parker, M. W., Achenbaum, W. A., Larimore, W. L., & Koenig, H. G. (2002). Rowe and Kahn's Model of Successful Aging Revisited: Positive Spirituality—The Forgotten Factor. *The Gerontologist*, 42(5), 613-620. doi:10.1093/geront/42.5.613
- Csikszentmihalyi, M., & Csikszentmihalyi, I. (1975). *Beyond boredom and anxiety* (Vol. 721). Jossey-Bass. San Francisco.
- Cummins, R. A. (2010). Subjective wellbeing, homeostatically protected mood and depression: A synthesis. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 11(1), 1-17. doi:doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s10902-009-9167-0>
- Currier, J. M., Holland, J. M., & Neimeyer, R. A. (2006). Sense-making, grief, and the experience of violent loss: Toward a mediational model. *Death studies*, 30(5), 403-428.
- Daines, A. (2008). Egyptian gardens. *Studia Antiqua*, 6(1), 5.
- Dalby, P. (2006). Is there a process of spiritual change or development associated with ageing? A critical review of research. *Aging & Mental Health*, 10(1), 4-12. doi:10.1080/13607860500307969
- Daniels, R., van Rossum, E., de Witte, L., Kempen, G. I., & van den Heuvel, W. (2008). Interventions to prevent disability in frail community-dwelling elderly: a systematic review. *BMC Health Services Research* 8(1), 278.
- Daniels, R., van Rossum, E., Metzelthin, S., Sipers, W., Habets, H., Hobma, S., . . . de Witte, L. J. C. r. (2011). A disability prevention programme for community-dwelling frail older persons. *Clinical Rehabilitation* 25(11), 963-974.

- Davies, D. J. (2012). Ritual. In M.Cobb, C.M. Puchalski & B. Rumbold (Eds) Oxford Textbook of Spirituality in Healthcare. Oxford University Press. Oxford pp 163-168.
- Davison, T. E., McCabe, M. P., Mellor, D., Karantzas, G., & George, K. (2009). Knowledge of late-life depression: An empirical investigation of aged care staff. *Aging & Mental Health*, 13(4), 577-586. doi:10.1080/13607860902774428
- Diamond, M. C. (1988). *Enriching heredity: the impact of the environment on the anatomy of the brain*: Free Press.
- Diamond, M. C. (2001). Response of the brain to enrichment. *Anais da Academia Brasileira de Ciências*, 73(2), 211-220.
- Diamond, M. C. (2012). Response of the Brain to Enrichment. *International Journal of Interdisciplinary Education*, 1(1).
- Dickson-Swift, V., James, E. L., Kippen, S., & Liamputtong, P. (2007). Doing sensitive research: what challenges do qualitative researchers face? *Qualitative Research*, 7(3), 327-353.
- Dodge, R., Daly, A. P., Huyton, J., & Sanders, L. D. (2012). The challenge of defining wellbeing. *International Journal of Wellbeing*, 2(3).
- Dorner, T. E., Kranz, A., Zettl-Wiedner, K., Ludwig, C., Rieder, A., & Gisinger, C. (2007). The effect of structured strength and balance training on cognitive function in frail, cognitive impaired elderly long-term care residents. *Aging, Clinical and Experimental Research*, 19(5), 400-405. doi:10.1007/bf03324721
- Dorner, T. E., Lackinger, C., Haider, S., Luger, E., Kapan, A., Luger, M., & Schindler, K. E. (2013). Nutritional intervention and physical training in malnourished frail community-dwelling elderly persons carried out by trained lay "buddies": study protocol of a randomized controlled trial. *BMC Public Health*, 13(1), 1232. doi:10.1186/1471-2458-13-1232
- Dovey, K. (1985). Home and Homelessness. J. Altman & CM Werner (Eds.), *Home Environments* (pp. 33-64). In: New York: Plenum Press.
- Dunnett, N., & Qasim, M. (2000). Perceived Benefits to Human Well-being of Urban Gardens. *HortTechnology*, 10(1), 40-45.
- Eisenhandler, S. A. (2005). Religion is the Finding Thing. *Journal of Gerontological Social Work*, 45(1-2), 85-103. doi:10.1300/J083v45n01_06
- Elings, M. (2006). People-plant interaction: the physiological, psychological and sociological effects of plants on people. In *Farming for health* (pp. 43-55): Springer.

- Elkins, D. N., Hedstrom, L. J., Hughes, L. L., Leaf, J. A., & Saunders, C. (1988). Toward a humanistic-phenomenological spirituality definition, description, and measurement. *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, 28(4), 5-18.
- Engel, G. L. (1977). The need for a new medical model: a challenge for biomedicine. *Science* 196(4286), 129-136.
- Erichsen, N.B., & Büssing, A. (2013). Spiritual needs of elderly living in residential/nursing homes. *Evidence-Based Complementary and Alternative Medicine*, 2013 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1155/2013/913247>.
- Erikson, E. H., & Erikson, J. M. (1998). *The life cycle completed (extended version)*: WW Norton & Company.
- Erikson, E. H., Erikson, J. M. & Kivnick, H. Q. (1989). *Vital Involvement in old age*. WW. Norton & Company. New York.
- Erikson, J. M. (1991). *Wisdom and the senses: The way of creativity*: WW Norton & Company. New York.
- Evans, J., & Jones, P. (2011). The walking interview. *Applied Geography*, 31(2), 849-858.
- Ezzy, D. (2002a). Coding data and interpreting text: methods of analysis. In D. Ezzy (Ed.), *Qualitative Data Analysis: Practice and Innovation* (pp. 80-110). Crows Nest, NSW: Allen & Unwin.
- Ezzy, D. (2002b). *Qualitative Analysis: Practice and innovation*. Crows Nest: Allen & Unwin.
- Ezzy, D. (2010). Qualitative Interviewing as an Embodied Emotional Performance. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 16(3), 163-170. doi:10.1177/1077800409351970
- Ferngren, G. B. (2014). *Medicine and religion: a historical introduction*: John Hopkins Univerisy Press, Baltimore.
- Ferngren, G. B. (2017). *Science and religion: a historical introduction*: John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore.
- Ferrer, J. (2008). What does it mean to live a fully embodied spiritual life? *International Journal of Transpersonal Studies*, 27(1), 3.
- Finnegan, R. (2005). *Communicating: The multiple modes of human interconnection*: Routledge, London.
- Firth, C., Maye, D., & Pearson, D. (2011). Developing “community” in community gardens. *Local Environment*, 16(6), 555-568. doi:10.1080/13549839.2011.586025
- Fleming, R. (2003). Depression and Spirituality in Australian Aged Care Homes. *Journal of Religious Gerontology*, 13(3-4), 107-116. doi:10.1300/J078v13n03_08

- Fleming, V., Gaidys, U. & Robb, Y. (2003). Hermeneutic research in nursing: developing a Gadamerian-based research method. *Nursing Inquiry*, 10(2), 113-120.
- Ford, A. B., Haug, M. R., Stange, K. C., Gaines, A. D., Noelker, L. S., & Jones, P. K. (2000). Sustained personal autonomy: a measure of successful aging. *Journal of Aging and Health*, 12(4), 470-489.
- Forgeard, M. J. C., Jayawickreme, E., Kern, M. L., & Seligman, M. E. P. (2011). Doing the right thing: Measuring wellbeing for public policy. *International Journal of Wellbeing*, 1(1).
- Foucault, M. (1976). *Mental Illness and Psychology*. Harper and Row. New York.
- Fowler, J. W. (1991). Stages in faith consciousness. *New Directions for Child and Adolescent Development*, 1991(52), 27-45.
- Fowler, J. W. (2001). Faith development theory and the postmodern challenges. *The International Journal for the Psychology of Religion*, 11(3), 159-172.
- Fowler, J. W., & Dell, M. L. (Eds.). (2006). *Stages of faith from infancy through adolescence: Reflections on three decades of faith development theory*. Sage, Thousand Oaks.
- Fowler, J. W., & Levin, R. W. (1984). Stages of faith: The psychology of human development and the quest for meaning. *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion*, 15 (1), 89-92.
- Frame, T. (2009). *Losing my religion: unbelief in Australia*. University of New South Wales Press, Sydney.
- Frankl, V. E. (1963). Man's Search for Meaning: An Introduction to Logotherapy. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 33(2), 390-390.
- Frankl, V. E. (1985). *Man's search for meaning*: Simon and Schuster, New York.
- Frantz, C., Mayer, F. S., Norton, C., & Rock, M. (2005). There is no "I" in nature: The influence of self-awareness on connectedness to nature. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 25(4), 427-436.
- Fredman, S. (1979). Paul Blackburn The Translator. *Chicago Review*, 30(3), 152-156.
- Freeman, C., Dickinson, K. J., Porter, S., & van Heezik, Y. (2012). "My garden is an expression of me": Exploring householders' relationships with their gardens. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 32(2), 135-143.
- Frenk, J., Chen, L., Bhutta, Z. A., Cohen, J., Crisp, N., Evans, T., . . . Kelley, P. (2010). Health professionals for a new century: transforming education to strengthen health systems in an interdependent world. *The Lancet*, 376(9756), 1923-1958.

- Frumkin, H. (2001). Beyond Toxicity: Human Health and the Natural Environment. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 20(3), 234-240.
- Frumkin, H., Bratman, G. N., Breslow, S. J., Cochran, B., Kahn Jr, P. H., Lawler, J. J., . . . Wolf, K. L. (2017). Nature contact and human health: A research agenda. *Environmental Health Perspectives*, 125(7), 075001.
- Fukagawa, N. K., Wolfson, L., Judge, J., Whipple, R., & King, M. (1995). Strength is a major factor in balance, gait, and the occurrence of falls. *The Journals of Gerontology Series A: Biological Sciences and Medical Sciences*, 50 (Special_Issue), 64-67.
- Fusch, P. I., & Ness, L. R. (2015). Are we there yet? Data saturation in qualitative research. *The Qualitative Report*, 20(9), 1408-1416.
- Gadamer, H. G. (1975). *Truth and method* (G. Barden & J. Cumming, trans.). New York: Seabury.
- Gale, C. R., Martyn, C. N., Cooper, C., & Sayer, A. A. (2006). Grip strength, body composition, and mortality. *International Journal of Epidemiology*, 36(1), 228-235.
- Gascon, M., Triguero-Mas, M., Martínez, D., Dadvand, P., Rojas-Rueda, D., Plasència, A., & Nieuwenhuijsen, M. J. (2016). Residential green spaces and mortality: a systematic review. *Environment International*, 86, 60-67.
- Gendlin, E. T. (1997a). The responsive order: A new empiricism. *Man and World*, 30(3), 383-411. doi:10.1023/A:1004271921792
- Gendlin, E. T. (1997b). How philosophy cannot appeal to experience, and how it can. In D.M. Leven (Eds.) *Language beyond postmodernism: Saying and thinking in Gendlin's philosophy* (pp 3-41). Northwestern University Press, Evanston.
- Geraedts, H., Zijlstra, A., Bulstra, S. K., Stevens, M., & Zijlstra, W. (2013). Effects of remote feedback in home-based physical activity interventions for older adults: a systematic review. *Patient Education and Counseling*, 91(1), 14-24.
- Giesecke, A. (2014). *The mythology of plants: botanical lore from ancient Greece and Rome*: Getty Publications, Los Angeles.
- Giesecke, A., & Jacobs, N. (2012). *Earth perfect?: Nature, utopia and the garden*. Black Dog Publishing, London.
- Gigliotti, C. M., & Jarrott, S. E. (2005). Effects of Horticulture Therapy on Engagement and Affect. *Canadian Journal on Aging/La Revue canadienne du vieillissement*, 24(04), 367-377. doi:doi:10.1353/cja.2006.0008
- Glover, T. D. (2004). Social capital in the lived experiences of community gardeners. *Leisure Sciences*, 26(2), 143-162.

- Goethe, J. W. (2009). *The Metamorphosis of Plants*. The MIT Press. Cambridge.
- Goethe, J. W. (2006). *Goethe on Science: An Anthology of Goethe's Scientific Writings*. Floris Books, Harrison Gardens.
- Goh, R. B. (2008). Hillsong and “megachurch” practice: semiotics, spatial logic and the embodiment of contemporary evangelical protestantism. *Material Religion*, 4(3), 284-304.
- Gomes, G. A. D. O, Cintra, F. A., Batista, F. S., Neri, A. L., Guariento, M. E., Sousa M. D, L. R. D., & D’Elboux, M. J. (2013). Elderly outpatient profile and predictors of falls. *Sao Paulo Medical Journal*. 131(1), 13-18. doi:10.1590/s1516-31802013000100003
- Grahn, P., Tenngart Ivarsson, C., Stigsdotter, U. K., & Bengtsson, I.-L. (2010). Using affordances as a health-promoting tool in a therapeutic garden. *Innovative Approaches to Researching Landscape and Health*, 1(5), 116-154.
- Grant, B. C. (2006). Retirement villages: An alternative form of housing on an ageing landscape. *Social Policy Journal of New Zealand*, 27, 100-113.
- Grant, M. J., & Booth, A. (2009). A typology of reviews: an analysis of 14 review types and associated methodologies. *Health Information & Libraries Journal*, 26(2), 91-108. doi:10.1111/j.1471-1842.2009.00848.x
- Grbich, C. (1999). *Qualitative Research in Health*. Allen and Unwin, St Leonards.
- Green, L. W., Richard, L., & Potvin, L. (1996). Ecological foundations of health promotion. *American Journal of Health Promotion*, 10(4), 270-281.
- Grinde, B., & Patil, G. (2009). Biophilia: does visual contact with nature impact on health and well-being? *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 6(9), 2332-2343.
- Guba, E., & Lincoln, Y. (1994). *Fourth Generation Evaluation*. Sage Publications, Newbury Park.
- Guest, G., Bunce, A., & Johnson, L. (2006). How Many Interviews Are Enough? An Experiment with Data Saturation and Variability. *Field Methods*, 18(1), 59-82.
- Guest, G., Namey, E. E., & Mitchell, M. L. (2013). *Collecting Qualitative Data: A field manual for applied research*. Sage, Thousand Oaks.
- Gullette, M. M. (Ed.) (2015). *Aged by culture*. Routledge, New York.
- Gunn, J. M., Ayton, D. R., Densley, K., Pallant, J. F., Chondros, P., Herrman, H. E., & Dowrick, C. F. (2012). The association between chronic illness, multimorbidity and depressive symptoms in an Australian primary care cohort. *Social Psychiatry and Psychiatric Epidemiology*, 47(2), 175-184.

- Gwyther, H., Shaw, R., Dauden, E. J., D'Avanzo, B., Kurpas, D., Bujnowska-Fedak, M., Kujawa, T., Marcucci, M., Cano, A. & Holland, C. (2018). *Understanding frailty: a qualitative study of European healthcare policy-makers' approaches to frailty screening and management*. *British Medical Journal*, 8:e018653, pp1-11. doi:10.1136/bmjopen-2017-018653
- Hall, M. (2010). *Escaping Eden: Plant Ethics in a Gardener's World*. In D. O'Brien (ed.), *Gardening - Philosophy for Everyone: Cultivating Wisdom*. Wiley, Chichester.
- Hall, T. (2010). *Life and death of the Australian backyard*. CSIRO Publishing, Collingwood.
- Ham, C. (2010). The ten characteristics of the high-performing chronic care system. *Health Economics, Policy and Law*, 5(1), 71-90.
- Hansen-Kyle, L. (2005). A Concept Analysis of Healthy Aging. *Nursing Forum*, 40, 2, 45-57.
- Hartig, T., Mitchell, R., De Vries, S., & Frumkin, H. (2014). Nature and health. *Annual Review of Public Health*, 35, 207-228.
- Headey, B., & Wearing, A. (1989). Personality, life events, and subjective well-being: toward a dynamic equilibrium model. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 57(4), 731.
- Hedges, L. V., & Cooper, H. (2009). Research synthesis as a scientific process. In H. Cooper, L.V. Hedges and J. C. Valentine (eds) *The Handbook of Research Synthesis and Meta-Analysis (2nd Edn)*. Russel Sage Foundation, New York.
- Heidegger, M. (1962) *Being and time*. (J. Macquarrie & E. Robinson, trans.). New York. Harper & Row.
- Heliker, D., Chadwick, A. & O'Connell, T. (2001). The meaning of gardening and the effects on perceived well being of a gardening project on diverse populations of elders. *Activities, Adaptation & Aging*, 24(3), 35-56.
- Hendry, L. B., & Kloep, M. (2002). *Lifespan Development: Resources, Challenges and Risks*. Thomson, London.
- Hernandez, R. O. (2007). Effects of Therapeutic Gardens in Special Care Units for People with Dementia. *Journal of Housing For the Elderly*, 21(1-2), 117-152. doi:10.1300/J081v21n01_07
- Higginbotham, N., Connor, L., Albrecht, G., Freeman, S., & Agho, K. (2006). Validation of an Environmental Distress Scale. *EcoHealth*, 3(4), 245-254.
- Hitchings, R. (2006). Expertise and Inability: Cultured Materials and the Reason for Some Retreating Lawns in London. *Journal of Material Culture*, 11(3), 364-381.

- Hitchings, R., & Jones, V. (2004). Living with Plants and the Exploration of Botanical Encounter with Human Geographic Research Practice. *Ethics, Place and Environment*, 7(1-2), 3-18.
- Hockey, J., & James, D. A. (2003). *Social Identities Across the Life Course*: Palgrave MacMillan, New York.
- Holloway, I., & Todres, L. (2003). The Status of Method: Flexibility, Consistency and Coherence. *Qualitative Research*, 3(3), 345-357. doi:10.1177/1468794103033004
- Holloway, J. (2003). Make-believe: spiritual practice, embodiment, and sacred space. *Environment and Planning A*, 35(11), 1961-1974.
- Holloway, J., & Valins, O. (2002). Placing religion and spirituality in geography. *Social and Cultural Geography (Editorial)*, 3(1), 5-9
- Holmes, K., Martin, S. K., & Mirmohamadi, K. (2008). *Reading the Garden: The Settlement of Australia*. Melbourne University Press, Carlton.
- Horton, G., Hanna, L., & Kelly, B. (2010). Drought, drying and climate change: emerging health issues for ageing Australians in rural areas. *Australasian Journal on Ageing*, 29(1), 2-7.
- Hudson, C. (2016). *Australian Religious Thought*. Monash University Publishing, Melbourne.
- Huskinson, L. (2006). Holy, Holy, Holy: the misappropriation of the numinous in Jung. In A. Casement & D. Tacey (Eds). *The Idea of the Numinous: Contemporary Jungian and Psychoanalytic Perspectives*. Routledge, London, pp 200-212.
- Husserl, E. (1989). Ideas pertaining to a pure phenomenology and to a phenomenological philosophy, second book. *Studies in the Phenomenology of Constitution*, 152-153.
- Hyams, E. (1971). *History of gardens and gardening*. Praeger Publishers, New York.
- Ihde, D. (1971). *Hermeneutic phenomenology: The philosophy of Paul Ricoeur*. North Western University Press, Evanston.
- Jak, A. J. (2011). The impact of physical and mental activity on cognitive aging. In M.C. Pardon and M.W. Bondi (Eds) *Behavioral Neurobiology of Aging* (pp. 273-291): Springer.
- Janoff-Bulman, R., & Berger, A. R. (2000). The other side of trauma: Towards a psychology of appreciation. In J. H. Harvey & E. D. Miller (Eds.), *Loss and trauma: General and close relationship perspectives* (pp. 29-44). Brunner-Routledge, New York.

- Janz, N. K., & Becker, M. H. (1984). The Health Belief Model: A decade later. *Health Education Quarterly*, 11(1), 1-47.
- Johnson, R., & Waterfield, J. (2004). Making words count: the value of qualitative research. *Physiotherapy Research International*, 9(3), 121-131.
doi:10.1002/pri.312
- Jung, C. G. (1928). The spiritual problem of modern man. *Collected works*, 10, 74-94.
- Jung, C. G. (1929). Freud and Jung: contrasts. *Collected works*, 4.
- Jung, C. G. (1963). *Memories, dreams, reflections* (Vol. 268): Vintage.
- Kahneman, D., Diener, E., & Schwarz, N. (1999). *Well-being: Foundations of hedonic psychology*. Russell Sage Foundation, New York.
- Kaplan, R. (1973). Some Psychological Benefits of Gardening. *Environment and Behaviour*, 5(2), 145-162.
- Kaplan, R. & Kaplan, S. (1989). *The Experience of Nature: A Psychological Perspective*. Cambridge University Press. Cambridge
- Kaplan, S. (1995). The restorative benefits of nature: toward an integrative framework. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 15(3), 169-182.
- Katz, S. (2011). Hold On! Falling, Embodiment, and the Materiality of Old Age. In M. J. Casper and P. Currah (Ed.), *Corpus* (pp. 187-205). Palgrave Macmillan, New York.
- Katz, S., & Calasanti, T. (2014). Critical perspectives on successful aging: Does it “appeal more than it illuminates?” *The Gerontologist*, 55(1), 26-33.
- Kellert, S. R. (2002). *Experiencing nature: Affective, cognitive, and evaluative development in children*. In Kahn, P.H. and Kellert, S.R. (Eds). *Children and nature: psychological, sociocultural, and evolutionary investigations*, 117-151. MIT Press.
- Kellert, S. R. (1993). *The Biological Basis for Human Values of Nature*. In S.R. Kellert and E.O. Wilson (Eds) *The Biophilia Hypothesis* (42-71). Island Press, Washington.
- Keniger, L., Gaston, K., Irvine, K., & Fuller, R. (2013). What are the benefits of interacting with nature? *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 10(3), 913-935.
- Kerrigan, P. (2009). Resisting Darwin: the natural theological design of Gertrude Jekyll. *Studies in the History of Gardens & Designed Landscapes: An International Quarterly*. 29(4), 314-329.
- Kingsley, J. Y., Townsend, M., & Henderson-Wilson, C. (2009). Cultivating health and wellbeing: members' perceptions of the health benefits of a Port Melbourne

community garden. *Leisure Studies*, 28(2), 207-219.
doi:10.1080/02614360902769894

- Kingsley, J. Y., & Townsend, M. (2006). 'Dig In' to Social Capital: Community Gardens as Mechanisms for Growing Urban Social Connectedness. *Urban Policy and Research*, 24(4), 525-537. doi:10.1080/08111140601035200
- Kipling, R. (1902). *How the camel got his hump*. In R. Kipling, Just So Stories. Macmillan, London.
- Klink, T. W. (1965). The natural history of faith. *Journal of Religion and Health*, 4(2), 146-153.
- Knickman, J. R., & Snell, E. K. (2002). The 2030 problem: caring for aging baby boomers. *Health Services Research*, 37(4), 849-884. doi:10.1034/j.1600-0560.2002.56.x
- Koch, T. (1995). Interpretive approaches in nursing research: the influence of Husserl and Heidegger. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 21, 827-836.
- Koch, T. (1996). Implementation of a hermeneutic inquiry in nursing: philosophy, rigour and representation. *Journal of Advanced Nursing* 24, 24, 174-184.
- Koch, T. (2006). Establishing rigour in qualitative research: the decision trail. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 53(1), 91-100. doi:10.1111/j.1365-2648.2006.03681.x
- Koenig, H. G. (2007). Religion, spirituality and medicine in Australia: research and clinical practice. *Medical Journal of Australia*, 186(10), S45.
- Koenig, H. G. (2009). Research on religion, spirituality, and mental health: a review. *The Canadian Journal of Psychiatry*, 54(5), 283-291.
- Koenig, H. G. (2012a). Religion, spirituality, and health: The research and clinical implications. *International Scholarly Research Network (ISRN) Psychiatry*, 2012. doi:10.5402/2012/278730.
- Koenig, H. G., King, D., & Carson, V. B. (2012b). *Handbook of Religion and Health*, 2nd Edition. Oxford University Press, New York.
- Kowal, P., Chatterji, S., Naidoo, N., Biritwum, R., Fan, W., Lopez Ridaura, R., Maximova, T., Arokiasamy, P., Phaswana-Mafuya, N., Williams, S., Snodgrass, J., Mincuci, N., EÉste, C., Peltzer, K., Boerma, J. (2012). Data Resource Profile: The World Health Organization Study on global AGEing and adult health (SAGE). *International Journal of Epidemiology*, 41(6), 1639-1649. doi:10.1093/ije/dys210
- Kubzansky, L. D., & Kawachi, I. (2000). Going to the heart of the matter: do negative emotions cause coronary heart disease? *Journal of Psychosomatic Research*, 48(4-5), 323-337.
- Kunitz, S. (2002) *The Collected Poems: Stanley Kunitz*. WW Norton. New York.

- Kunitz, S., & Lentine, G. (2007). *The Wild Braid: A poet reflects on a century in the garden*. WW Norton, New York.
- Kvale, S., & Brinkmann, S. (2009). *Interviews: Learning the craft of qualitative research interviewing (2nd Edition)*. Sage, Thousand Oaks.
- Kwack, H., Relf, P. D., & Rudolph, J. (2005). Adapting Garden Activities for Overcoming Difficulties of Individuals with Dementia and Physical Limitations. *Activities, Adaptation & Aging*, 29(1), 1-13. doi:10.1300/J016v29n01_01
- Lahman, M. K. E., Geist, M. R., Rodriguez, K. L., Graglia, P. E., Richard, V. M., & Schendel, R. K. (2010). Poking Around Poetically: Research, Poetry, and Trustworthiness. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 16(1), 39-48. doi:10.1177/1077800409350061
- Lahman, M. K. E., & Richard, V. M. (2013). Appropriated Poetry: Archival Poetry in Research. *Qualitative Inquiry*. doi:10.1177/1077800413489272
- Landi, F., Liperoti, R., Russo, A., Giovannini, S., Tosato, M., Capoluongo, E., Bernabei, R. & Onder, G. (2012). Sarcopenia as a risk factor for falls in elderly individuals: results from the iSIRENTE study. *Clinical Nutrition*, 31(5), 652-658. doi:10.1016/j.clnu.2012.02.007
- Langer, N. (2004). Resiliency and Spirituality: Foundations of Strengths Perspective Counseling with the Elderly. *Educational Gerontology*, 30(7), 611-617.
- Larson, J. M., Hockenberry Meyer, M. (2006). *Generations Gardening Together: Sourcebook for Intergenerational Therapeutic Horticulture*. New Yoek: Howorth Press Inc.
- Lautenschlager, N. T., Almeida, O. P., Flicker, L., & Janca, A. (2004). Can physical activity improve the mental health of older adults? *Annals of General Hospital Psychiatry*, 3(1), 12. doi:10.1186/1475-2832-3-12
- Laverty, S. M. (2003). Hermeneutic Phenomenology and Phenomenology: A Comparison of Historical and Methodological Considerations. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 2(3), 21-35.
- Levertov, D. (1965). Some notes on organic form. *Poetry*, 106(6), 420-425.
- Levine, B., Svoboda, E., Hay, J. F., Winocur, G., & Moscovitch, M. (2002). Aging and autobiographical memory: dissociating episodic from semantic retrieval. *Psychology and Aging*, 17(4), 677.
- Levine, M.E., Suarez, J.A., Brandhorst, S., Balasubramanian, P., Cheng, C.W., Madia, F., Fontana, L., Mirisola, M.G., Guevara-Aguirre, J., Wan, J. and Passarino, G., (2014). Low Protein Intake Is Associated with a Major Reduction in IGF-1, Cancer, and Overall Mortality in the 65 and Younger but Not Older Population. *Cell Metabolism*, 19(3), 407-417. doi:https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cmet.2014.02.006

- Liamputtong, P. (2013). *Qualitative Research Methods* (4th Edition ed.). Oxford University Press, South Melbourne.
- Lichtenthal, W. G., Burke, L. A., & Neimeyer, R. A. (2011). Religious coping and meaning-making following the loss of a loved one. *Counseling and Spirituality*, 30(2), 113-135.
- Lincoln, Y. S., Lynham, S. A., & Guba, E. G. (2011). *Paradigmatic controversies, contradictions, and emerging confluences, revisited*. In N.K Denzin and Y.S. Lincoln (Eds), *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 4th Edition, 97-128.
- Lindberg, C., Fagerström, C., Sivberg, B., & Willman, A. (2014). Concept analysis: patient autonomy in a caring context. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 70(10), 2208-2221.
- Lindberg, D. C. (2003). *The medieval church encounters the classical tradition: Saint Augustine, Roger Bacon, and the handmaiden metaphor*. In D.C. Lindberg and R.L. Numbers (Eds), *When Science and Christianity Meet*, 112-114. The University of Chicago Press, Chicago.
- Lindsay, E. (2000). *Rewriting God: Spirituality in Contemporary Australian Women's Fiction*. Rodopi, Amsterdam.
- Liu, C. J., & Latham, N. (2011). Can progressive resistance strength training reduce physical disability in older adults? A meta-analysis study. *Disability and Rehabilitation*, 33(2), 87-97. doi:10.3109/09638288.2010.487145
- Liu, P., Gilchrist, P., Taylor, B., & Ravenscroft, N. (2017). The spaces and times of community farming. *Agriculture and Human Values*, 34(2), 363-375.
- Lowy, M. & Sayre, R. (2018). Raymond Williams, Romanticism and Nature. *Capitalism, Nature, Socialism*, 29(2), 75-91.
- Lyubomirsky, S., & Lepper, H. S. (1999). A measure of subjective happiness: preliminary reliability and construct validation. *Social Indicators Research*, 46(2), 137-155.
- MacDermid, J. C., & Graham, I. D. (2009). Knowledge translation: putting the “practice” in evidence-based practice. *Hand Clinics*, 25(1), 125-143.
- MacKinlay, E. (2006). *Spiritual growth and care in the fourth age of life*. Jessica Kingsley Publishers, London.
- MacKinlay, E. (2008). Practice development in aged care nursing of older people: the perspective of ageing and spiritual care. *International Journal of Older People Nursing*, 3(2), 151-158. doi:10.1111/j.1748-3743.2008.00119.x
- MacKinlay, E. (2017). *The Spiritual Dimension of Ageing* (2nd Edition). Jessica Kingsley Publishers, London.

- MacKinlay, E. (2012). *Care of elderly people*. In C. M. Puchalski, M. Cobb and B. Rumbold (Eds), *The Oxford Textbook of Spirituality in Healthcare* (pp. 251-256). Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- MacKinlay, E., & Burns, R. (2013). *Age-related life changing events and baby boomer health and spirituality*. Centre for Ageing and Pastoral Studies, Canberra.
- MacKinlay, E., & Burns, R. (2017). Spirituality promotes better health outcomes and lowers anxiety about aging: The importance of spiritual dimensions for baby boomers as they enter older adulthood. *Journal of Religion, Spirituality & Aging*, 29(4), 248-265. doi:10.1080/15528030.2016.1264345
- MacKinlay, E., & Trevitt, C. (2007). Spiritual care and ageing in a secular society. *Medical Journal of Australia*, 186, S74-S76.
- Maduro, R. (1974). Artistic creativity and aging in India. *The International Journal of Aging and Human Development*, 5(4), 303-329.
- Maller, C., Townsend, M., Pryor, A., Brown, P., & St Leger, L. (2005). Healthy nature health people: 'contact with nature' as an upstream health promotion intervention for populations. *Health Promotion International*, 21(1), 45-54. doi:10.1093/heapro/dai032
- Marcus, C. C. (2007). Garden of the Family Life Center, Grand Rapids, Michigan. *Journal of Housing For the Elderly*, 21(3-4), 285-304. doi:10.1300/J081v21n03_15
- Marshall, B., & Katz, S. (2012). The embodied life course: post-ageism or the renaturalization of gender? *Societies*, 2(4), 222-234.
- Marshall, M. N. (1996). Sampling for qualitative research. *Family Practice*, 13(6), 522-526.
- Maslow, A. H. (1962). *Some basic propositions of a growth and self-actualization psychology*. In Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) Yearbook Committee (Eds) *Perceiving, behaving, becoming: a new focus for education*, 34-49. Department of the National Education Association, Washington.
- Mastel-Smith, B. A., McFarlane, J., Sierpina, M., Malecha, A. & Haile, B. (2007). Improving Depressive Symptoms in Community-Dwelling Older Adults: a Psychosocial Intervention Using Life Review and Writing. *Journal of Gerontological Nursing*, 33(5), pp13-19.
- May, R. (1959). The Nature of Creativity. *ETC: A Review of General Semantics*, 16(3), 261-276. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24234376>

- Mayer, F. S., & Frantz, C. M. (2004). The connectedness to nature scale: a measure of individuals' feeling in community with nature. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 24(4), 503-515. doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jenvp.2004.10.001>
- Mayer, S. F., Frantz, C. M., Bruehlman-Senecal, E., & Dolliver, K. (2009). Why Is Nature Beneficial?: The Role of Connectedness to Nature. *Environment and Behavior*, 41(5), 607-643. doi:10.1177/0013916508319745
- McCrindle, M., & Wolfinger, E. (2010). Generations Defined. *Ethos*, 18(1), 8-13.
- McDonald, P. (2017). *Population Ageing: A Demographic Perspective*. In K. O'Laughlin, C. Browning, & H. Kendig (Eds.), *Ageing in Australia: International Perspectives on Ageing*, 16, pp. 47-61. Springer, New York.
- McGuire, D. L. (1997). Implementing Horticultural Therapy into a Geriatric Long-Term Care Facility. *Activities, Adaptation & Aging*, 22(1-2), 61-80. doi:10.1300/J016v22n01_06
- McGuire, M. (2007). Embodied practices: Negotiation and resistance. In N.T. Ammerman (Eds) *Everyday Religion: Observing Modern Religious Lives*.pp187-200. Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- McHugh, M. C. (2016). Experiencing flow: creativity and meaningful task engagement for senior women. *Women & Therapy*, 39(3-4), 280-295.
- McKaughan, D. J. (2017). On the value of faith and faithfulness. *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion*, 81(1-2), 7-29.
- McKernan, M. (1995). *All in! : fighting the war at home*. Allen & Unwin, St Leonards.
- McLeod, J. (2001). *Qualitative Research in Counselling and Psychotherapy*. Sage, London.
- Menec, V. H. (2003). The relation between everyday activities and successful aging: A 6-year longitudinal study. *The Journals of Gerontology Series B: Psychological Sciences and Social Sciences*, 58(2), S74-S82.
- Merleau-Ponty, M. (1962). *Phenomenology of Perception (translated by Colin Smith)*. Routledge and Kegan Paul, London.
- Merleau-Ponty, M., Davis, O., & Baldwin, T. (2004). *The World of Perception*: Cambridge University Press.
- Michel, J. P., Newton, J. L., & Kirkwood, T. B. L. (2008). Medical Challenges of Improving the Quality of a Longer Life. *Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA)*, 299(6), 688-690. doi:10.1001/jama.299.6.688 %J JAMA
- Miller, G. L. (2009). *The Metamorphosis of Plants (Introduction and Photography)*. MIT Press, Cambridge.

- Milligan, C., & Bingley, A. (2015). *Gardens and gardening in later life*. In J. Twigg and W. Martin (Eds) Routledge Handbook of Cultural Gerontology, pp 321-328. Routledge, London.
- Milligan, C., Gatrell, A., & Bingley, A. (2004). 'Cultivating health': therapeutic landscapes and older people in northern England. *Social Science & Medicine*, 58(9), 1781-1793.
- Minichiello, V., Aroni, R., & Hays, T. (2008). *In-depth interviewing: principles, techniques, analysis* (3rd Edition). Pearson Education Australia, Frenchs Forest.
- Monod, S., Rochat, E., Büla, C., & Spencer, B. (2010). The spiritual needs model: spirituality assessment in the geriatric hospital setting. *Journal of Religion, Spirituality & Aging*, 22(4), 271-282.
- Monod, S. M., Rochat, E., Büla, C. J., Jobin, G., Martin, E., & Spencer, B. (2010). The spiritual distress assessment tool: an instrument to assess spiritual distress in hospitalised elderly persons. *BMC Geriatrics*, 10(1), 88.
- Moody, H. (2009). Eco-elders: Legacy and environmental advocacy. *Generations*, 33(4), 70-74.
- Moore, K. D. (2007). Restorative Dementia Gardens. *Journal of Housing For the Elderly*, 21(1-2), 73-88. doi:10.1300/J081v21n01_05
- Moreira-Almeida, A., & Koenig, H. G. (2006). Retaining the meaning of the words religiousness and spirituality: A commentary on the WHOQOL SRPB group's "A cross-cultural study of spirituality, religion, and personal beliefs as components of quality of life" (62: 6, 2005, 1486–1497). *Social Science & Medicine*, 63(4), 843-845.
- Morse, W. C., Lowery, D. R., & Steury, T. (2014). Exploring saturation of themes and spatial locations in qualitative public participation geographic information systems research. *Society & Natural Resources*, 27(5), 557-571.
- Moustakas, C. (1990). *Heuristic research: design, methodology, and applications*. London: Sage.
- Moustakas, C. (1994). *Phenomenological research methods*. Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks.
- Murphy, K., & Welford, C. (2012). Agenda for the future: enhancing autonomy for older people in residential care. *International Journal of Older People Nursing*, 7(1), 75-80.
- Nakamura, J., Csikszentmihalyi, M. (2002). *Flow Theory and Research*. In C.R. Snyder and S.J. Lopez (Eds) Handbook of Positive Psychology (pp 195-206). Oxford University Press, Oxford.

- National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC), & Universities Australia. (2007 (Updated 2018)). *The National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research*. Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia
- Naydler, J. (1996). *Goethe on Science: A Selection of Goethe's Scientific Writings*. Floris Books, Edinburgh.
- Naydler, J. (2005). *Soul Gardening*. Godstow Press, Oxford.
- Naydler, J. (2011a). *Gardening as a Sacred Art*. Floris Books, Edinburgh.
- Naydler, J. (2011b). *Technology and Nature*. Abzu Press. Oxford.
- Neimeyer, R. A., & Burke, L. A. (2011). Complicated grief in the aftermath of homicide: spiritual crisis and distress in an African American sample. *Religions*, 2(2), 145-164.
- Niekerk, C. (2004). Why Hermeneutics? Rereading Gadamer's "Wahrheit und Methode". *Monatshefte*, 96(2):163-168.
- Niven, A. (2008) *Pastoral Rituals, Ageing and New Paths into Meaning*. In E. Mackinlay (Eds) *Ageing, Disability and Spirituality: Addressing the Challenge of Disability in Later Life*. Jessica Kingsley Publishers, London. pp217-232.
- Nolan, I., & Mills, T. (2011). *Spirituality in Aged Care Project Final Evaluation Report*. Retrieved from <http://www.hccvi.org.au/downloads/Spirituality%20in%20Aged%20Care%20Report%20April%202011.pdf>
- Norlyk, A., & Harder, I. (2010). What Makes a Phenomenological Study Phenomenological? An Analysis of Peer-Reviewed Empirical Nursing Studies. *Qualitative Health Research*, 20(3), 420-431. doi:10.1177/1049732309357435
- O'Brien, D. (2010). Planting the Seed. In D. O'Brien (Ed) *Gardening Philosophy for Everyone: Cultivating Wisdom*. Wiley-Blackwell, Chichester
- O'Neill, D. P., & Kenny, E. K. (1998). Spirituality and chronic illness. *The Journal of Nursing Scholarship*, 30(3), 275-280.
- O'Reilly, M., & Parker, N. (2013). 'Unsatisfactory Saturation': a critical exploration of the notion of saturated sample sizes in qualitative research. *Qualitative Research*, 13(2), 190-197. doi:10.1177/1468794112446106
- Opdenacker, J., Boen, F., Coorevits, N., & Delecluse, C. (2008). Effectiveness of a lifestyle intervention and a structured exercise intervention in older adults. *Preventive Medicine*, 46(6), 518-524.

- Ottosson, J., & Grahn, P. (2005). A comparison of leisure time spent in a garden with leisure time spent indoors: on measures of restoration in residents in geriatric care. *Landscape Research*, 30(1), 23-55.
- Ottosson, J., & Grahn, P. (2006). Measures of Restoration in Geriatric Care Residences. *Journal of Housing For the Elderly*, 19(3-4), 227-256. doi:10.1300/J081v19n03_12
- Packard, W. (1987). *The Poet's Craft: Interviews from the New York Quarterly*. Paragon House Publishers, New York.
- Packer, M. J. (1985). Hermeneutic Inquiry in the Study of Human Conduct. *Americal Psychologist*, 40(10), 1081-1093.
- Padgett, D. K. (2009). Qualitative and mixed methods in social work knowledge development. *Social Work*, 54(2), 101-105.
- Pahor, M., Guralnik, J.M., Ambrosius, W.T., Blair, S., Bonds, D.E., Church, T.S., Espeland, M.A., Fielding, R.A., Gill, T.M., Groessl, E.J. and King, A.C. (2014). Effect of Structured Physical Activity on Prevention of Major Mobility Disability in Older Adults: The LIFE Study Randomized Clinical Trial. *Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA)*, 311(23), 2387-2396. doi:10.1001/jama.2014.5616 %J JAMA
- Pargament, K. I., Koenig, H. G., Tarakeshwar, N., & Hahn, J. (2001). Religious struggle as a predictor of mortality among medically ill elderly patients: A 2-year longitudinal study. *Archives of Internal Medicine*, 161(15), 1881-1885.
- Paterson, D. H., Warburton, D. E. (2010). Physical activity and functional limitations in older adults: a systematic review related to Canada's Physical Activity Guidelines. *International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity* 7(1), 38. doi:10.1186/1479-5868-7-38
- Payne, R., & Blunt, W. (1966). *Hortulus, Walahfrid Strabo*. Hunt Botanical Library, Pittsburgh 38-41.
- Peach, H. G. (2003). Religion, spirituality and health: how should Australian health professionals respond? *Medical Journal of Australia*, 178(2), 86-88.
- Percival, J. (2002). Domestic spaces: uses and meanings in the daily lives of older people. *Ageing & Society*, 22(06), 729-749. doi:doi:10.1017/S0144686X02008917
- Perrin, J. L., & Benassi, V. A. (2009). The connectedness to nature scale: A measure of emotional connection to nature? *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 29(4), 434-440.
- Pillemer, K., Wells, N. M., Wagenet, L. P., Meador, R. H., & Parise, J. T. (2011). Environmental sustainability in an aging society: a research agenda. *Journal of Aging and Health*, 23(3), 433-453.

- Piolino, P., Desgranges, B., Clarys, D., Guillery-Girard, B., Taconnat, L., Isingrini, M., & Eustache, F. (2006). Autobiographical memory, autonoetic consciousness, and self-perspective in aging. *Psychology and Aging, 21*(3), 510.
- Power, E. R. (2005). Human-Nature Relations in Suburban Gardens. *Australian Geographer, 36*(1), 39-53.
- Pratt, V. & Brook, I. (1996). Goethe's archetype and the Romantic concept of the self. *Studies in History and Philosophy of Science Part A, 27*(3), 351-365.
- Pretty, J. (2004). How nature contributes to mental and physical health. *Spirituality and Health International, 5*(2), 68-78.
- Puchalski, C. M. (2001, October). *The role of spirituality in health care*. In Baylor University Medical Center Proceedings (Vol. 14, No. 4, pp. 352-357). Taylor & Francis.
- Puchalski, C. M. (2012). *Restorative Medicine*. In M.Cobb, C.M. Puchalski and B.Rumbold (Eds) *The Oxford Textbook of Spirituality in Healthcare*, 197-210. Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Puchalski, C. M., Blatt, B., Kogan, M., & Butler, A. (2014). Spirituality and health: the development of a field. *Academic Medicine, 89*(1), 10-16.
- Pudup, M. B. (2008). It takes a garden: Cultivating citizen-subjects in organized garden projects. *Geoforum, 39*(3), 1228-1240.
doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2007.06.012>
- Quine, S., & Carter, S. (2006). Australian baby boomers' expectations and plans for their old age. *Australasian Journal on Ageing, 25*(1), 3-8. doi:10.1111/j.1741-6612.2006.00147.x
- Rappe, E. (2005). *The influence of a green environment and horticultural activities on the subjective well-being of the elderly living in long-term care*. (Academic Dissertation). University of Helsinki, Helsinki. (Publication No. 24)
- Rappe, E., & Topo, P. (2007). Contact with Outdoor Greenery Can Support Competence Among People with Dementia. *Journal of Housing For the Elderly, 21*(3-4), 229-248. doi:10.1300/J081v21n03_12
- Ray, M. T. (2010). *Cultivating the Soul: The Ethics of Gardening in Ancient Greece and Rome*. In Dan O'Brien (Eds), *Gardening Philosophy for Everyone: Cultivating Wisdom*. Wiley-Blackwell, Chichester.
- Reader, I. (1995). Cleaning floors and sweeping the mind: cleaning as ritual process. In J. van Bremen & D. P. Martinez (Eds) *Ceremony and Ritual in Japan: Religious Practices in an Industrialised Society*. Routledge, New York. pp227-245.
- Rettler, B. (2018). Analysis of faith. *Philosophy Compass, 13*(9), e12517.

- Rice, R. L. H., McKaughan, D., & Howard-Snyder, D. (2017). Special (double) Issue: Approaches to Faith. *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion*, 81(1), 1-6. doi:10.1007/s11153-016-9610-1
- Richardson, L. (1993). Poetics, Dramatics, and Transgressive Validity: The Case of the Kipped Line. *Sociological Quarterly*, 34(4), 695-710.
- Richardson, L. (1994). *Writing: A method of inquiry*. In L. Denzin (Eds) *Turning Points in Qualitative Research: Tying Knots in a Handkerchief* (379-396). Sage, Thousand Oaks.
- Richardson, T. (2008). *The Arcadian Friends - Inventing the English Landscape Garden*. London: Bantam Press.
- Roberts, H.C., Syddall, H.E., Sparkes, J., Ritchie, J., Butchart, J., Kerr, A., Cooper, C. and Sayer, A.A., (2013). Grip strength and its determinants among older people in different healthcare settings. *Age and Ageing*, 43(2), 241-246.
- Robinson, O. C. (2013). Sampling in Interview-Based Qualitative Research: A Theoretical and Practical Guide. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 11(1), 25-41. doi:10.1080/14780887.2013.801543
- Robinson, W. (2009). *The Wild Garden: Expanded Edition*. Portland. Timber Press.
- Rodgers, V., Welford, C., Murphy, K., & Frauenlob, T. (2012). Enhancing autonomy for older people in residential care: what factors affect it? *International Journal of Older People Nursing*, 7(1), 70-74.
- Rosenstock, I. M. (1974). The health belief model and preventive health behavior. *Health Education Monographs*, 2(4), 354-386.
- Rowe, J. W., & Kahn, R. L. (1997). Successful Aging. *The Gerontologist*, 37(4), 433-440.
- Rowles, G. D., & Bernard, M. (2013). *The meaning and significance of place in old age*. In G.D. Rowles & M. Bernard (Eds) *Environmental Gerontology: Making meaningful places in old age*, 3-24. Springer Publishing, New York.
- Rumbold, B. (2006). The Spirituality of Compassion: A Public Health Response to Ageing and End-of-Life Care. *Religion, Spirituality & Aging*, 18(2-3), 31-44.
- Rumbold, B. (2012). *Models of Spiritual Care*. In M.Cobb, C.M. Puchalski & B. Rumbold Oxford Textbook of Spirituality and Healthcare, 177-184. Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Rumbold, B. D. (2007). A review of spiritual assessment in health care practice. *Medical Journal of Australia*, 186, S60-S62.

- Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2001). On happiness and human potentials: A review of research on hedonic and eudaimonic well-being. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 52(1), 141-166.
- Ryff, C. (1989). Happiness is everything, or is it? Explorations on the meaning of psychological well-being. *Journal of Personality Social Psychology*, 57(6), 1069.
- Same, A., Lee, E. A. L., McNamara, B. & Rosenwax, L. (2016). The Value of a Gardening Service for Frail Elderly and People With a Disability Living in the Community. *Home Health Care Management & Practice*, 28(4), 256-261.
- Samman, E. (2007). Psychological and subjective well-being: A proposal for internationally comparable indicators. *Oxford Development Studies*, 35(4), 459-486.
- Sato, I., & Conner, T. S. (2013). The quality of time in nature: How fascination explains and enhances the relationship between nature experiences and daily affect. *Ecopsychology*, 5(3), 197-204.
- Savage, D. (1942). Poetry and Nature. *Poetry*, 61(3), 496-504.
- Schulz, R., Wahl, H. W., Matthews, J. T., De Vito Dabbs, A., Beach, S. R., & Czaja, S. J. (2014). Advancing the aging and technology agenda in gerontology. *The Gerontologist*, 55(5), 724-734.
- Schwandt, T. A., Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (2007). Judging interpretations: But is it rigorous? trustworthiness and authenticity in naturalistic evaluation. *New Directions for Evaluation*, 2007(114), 11-25. doi:10.1002/ev.223
- Seamon, D. (1998). *Goethe, nature and phenomenology*. In D. Seamon & A. Zajonc (Eds) *Goethe's Way of Science: A phenomenology of nature*, 1-14. State University of New York Press, New York.
- Secker, J., Hill, R., Villeneuve, L., & Parkman, S. (2003). Promoting independence: But promoting what and how? *Ageing and Society*, 23, 375-391.
- Seligman, M. (October 7, 2010). Flourish: Positive psychology and positive interventions. *The Tanner Lectures on Human Values*, 31, 1-56. The University of Michigan, Michigan.
- Sempik, J., Aldridge, J., & Becker, S. (2003). *Social and therapeutic horticulture: evidence and messages from research*. Project Report. Thrive, Reading.
- Sempik, J., Aldridge, J., & Becker, S. (2005). *Health, well-being and social inclusion: therapeutic horticulture in the UK*. Policy Press University of Bristol, Bristol.
- Shelley, P. B., & Blunden, E. (1969). *Shelley's Defence of Poetry and Blunden's Lectures on "Defence"*. Darby Books.

- Shostak, S., & Guscott, N. (2017). "Grounded in the Neighborhood, Grounded in Community": Social Capital and Health in Community Gardens. In Food systems and health (Advances in Medical Sociology, Vol. 18, pp. 199-222). Emerald Publishing Limited. <https://doi.org/10.1108/S1057-629020170000018009>
- Sidney, P. (1890). The Defence of Poetry. *English Essays: Sidney to Macaulay. The Harvard Classics 1909*, 14.
- Simmons, H. C. (2005). Religion, Spirituality, and Aging for "The Aging" Themselves. *Journal of Gerontological Social Work*, 45(1-2), 41-49. doi:10.1300/J083v45n01_03
- Simons, L. A., Simons, J., McCallum, J., & Friedlander, Y. (2006). Lifestyle factors and risk of dementia: Dubbo Study of the elderly. *Medical Journal of Australia*, 184(2), 68-70.
- Skevington, S. M., Lofly, M., O'Connell, K. A. & WHOQOL Group (2004) The World Health Organization's WHOQOL-BREF Quality of Life Assessment: Psychometric Properties and Results of the International Field Trial. A Report From the WHOQOL Group. *Quality of Life Research*, 13(2): 299-310.
- Skevington, S. M., Gunson, K. S. & O'Connell, K. A. (2013) Introducing the WHOQOL-SRPB BREF: developing a short-form instrument for assessing spiritual, religious and personal beliefs within quality of life. *Quality of Life Research*, 22: 1073-1083.
- Soga, M., Gaston, K. J., & Yamaura, Y. (2017). Gardening is beneficial for health: A meta-analysis. *Preventive Medicine Reports*, 5, 92-99.
- Sque, M. (2000). Researching the bereaved: an investigator's experience. *Nursing Ethics*, 7(1), 23-34.
- Sque, M., Walker, W., & Long-Sutehall, T. (2014). Research with bereaved families: A framework for ethical decision-making. *Nursing Ethics*, 21(8), 946-955.
- St Leger, L. (2003). Health and nature - new challenges for health promotion. *Health Promotion International*, 18(3), 173-175. doi:10.1093/heapro/dag012
- St. Jacques, P. L., & Levine, B. (2007). Ageing and autobiographical memory for emotional and neutral events. *Memory*, 15(2), 129-144.
- Starks, H., & Brown Trinidad, S. (2007). Choose Your Method: A Comparison of Phenomenology, Discourse Analysis, and Grounded Theory. *Qualitative Health Research*, 17(10), 1372-1380. doi:10.1177/1049732307307031
- Steptoe, A., Deaton, A., & Stone, A. A. (2015). Subjective wellbeing, health, and ageing. *The Lancet*, 385(9968), 640-648. doi:[https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(13\)61489-0](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(13)61489-0)

- Stevens, P., Syddall, H., Patel, H., Martin, H., Cooper, C., & Sayer, A. A. (2012). Is grip strength a good marker of physical performance among community-dwelling older people? *The Journal of Nutrition, Health & Aging*, 16(9), 769-774.
- Stigsdotter, U. A., & Grahn, P. (2004, October). *A garden at your doorstep may reduce stress: private gardens as restorative environments in the city*. In International Conference on Inclusive Environments proceedings "Open space: people space". Edinburgh (Scotland) (pp. 27-29).
- Stigsdotter, U. K., Palsdottir, A. M., Burls, A., Chermaz, A., Ferrini, F., & Grahn, P. (2011). *Nature-based therapeutic interventions*. In K. Nilsson, M. Sangster, C. Gallis, T. Hartig, S. de Vries, K. Seeland & J. Schipperjin (Eds) *Forests, Trees and Human Health* (pp. 309-342): Springer, Dordrecht.
- Sulmasy, D. P. (2002). A biopsychosocial-spiritual model for the care of patients at the end of life. *The Gerontologist*, 42(suppl_3), 24-33.
- Swinscow, D. (1992). *The Mystic Garden*. Halsgrove Press: Tiverton.
- Swinton, J. (2001). *Spirituality and mental health care: rediscovering a 'forgotten' dimension*. Kingsley, London.
- Swinton, J. (2013). What the body remembers: Theological reflections on dementia. *Journal of Religion & Aging*, 26(2-3), 160-172.
- Swinton, J., & Mowat, H. (2006). *Practical Theology and Qualitative Research*. SCM Press, London.
- Sykes, K. (2005). A healthy environment for older adults: The aging initiative of the Environmental Protection Agency. *Generations*, 29(2), 65-69.
- Szafrńska, M. (2006). Place, time and movement: a new look at Renaissance gardens. *Studies in the History of Gardens & Designed Landscapes*, 26(3), 194-236.
- Tacey, D. (1995). *Edge of the Sacred: Transformation in Australia*. Harper-Collins. Blackburn North.
- Tacey, D. (2004). *The spirituality revolution: The emergence of contemporary spirituality*. Routledge, Hove.
- Tacey, D. (2006). *Spirituality as a bridge to religion and faith*. In M. de Souza, G. Durka, K. Engebretson, R. Jackson, A. McGrady (Eds) *International Handbook of the Religious, Moral and Spiritual Dimensions in Education* (pp. 201-213). Springer, Dordrecht.
- Tacey, D. (2009). *Edge of the Sacred: Jung, Psyche, Earth*. Daimon Verlag, Einsiedeln.

- Tacey, D. (2011). Grassroots spirituality as a holistic expression of the psyche. *International Journal of Jungian Studies*, 3(1), 36-52.
doi:10.1080/19409052.2011.542371
- Tacey, D. (2013). *The Darkening Spirit: Jung, Spirituality, Religion*: Routledge, London.
- Thacker, C. (1979). *The History of Gardens*. A.H. and A.W. Reed Pty Ltd, Sydney.
- Thiboutot, C. (2001). Some notes on poetry and language in the works of Gaston Bachelard. *Journal of Phenomenological Psychology*, 32(2), 155-169.
- Todres, L. (2007). *Embodied enquiry: Phenomenological touchstones for research, psychotherapy, and spirituality*: Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke.
- Todres, L. (Ed.) (2005). *Clarifying the lifeworld: Descriptive Phenomenology*. In I. Holloway (Eds) *Qualitative Research in Health Care*, 104-124. Open University Press, Maidenhead.
- Todres, L., Galvin, K. T., & Holloway, I. (2009). The humanization of healthcare: A value framework for qualitative research. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies on Health and Well-being*, 4(2), 68-77.
- Tornstam, L. (2005). *Gerotranscendence: A Developmental Theory of Positive Aging*. Springer Publishing Company, Inc, New York.
- Tuckett, A. (2005). Applying thematic analysis theory to practice: A researcher's experience. *Contemporary Nursing*, 19(1-2), 75-87.
- Tuckett, A. G. (2007). The meaning of nursing-home: 'Waiting to go up to St. Peter, OK! Waiting house, sad but true'—An Australian perspective. *Journal of Aging Studies*, 21(2), 119-133.
- Tufford, L. & Newman, P. (2012). Bracketing in Qualitative Research. *Qualitative Social Work*, 11(1):80-96.
- Turner, B. (2011). Embodied connections: sustainability, food systems and community gardens. *Local Environment*, 16(6), 509-522. doi:10.1080/13549839.2011.569537
- Underwood, L. (2006). Ordinary spiritual experience: Qualitative research, interpretive guidelines, and population distribution for the Daily Spiritual Experience Scale. *Archive for the Psychology of Religion*, 28(1), 181-218.
- Unruh, A., & Hutchinson, S. (2011). Embedded spirituality: gardening in daily life and stressful life experiences. *Scandinavian Journal of Caring Sciences*, 25(3), 567-574. doi:10.1111/j.1471-6712.2010.00865.x
- Unruh, A. M. (2002, August). *The meaning of gardens and gardening in daily life: A comparison between gardeners with serious health problems and healthy participants*. In XXVI International Horticultural Congress: Expanding Roles for

Horticulture in Improving Human Well-Being and Life Quality (pp. 67-73).
Toronto.

Vaillant, G. (2002). *Aging Well: Surprising guideposts to a happier life: From the landmark Harvard Study of Adult Development*. Little, Brown and Company, Boston.

van Manen, M. (1990). *Researching Lived Experience: Human science for an action sensitive pedagogy*. Althouse Press, London.

van Manen, M. (1997). From Meaning to Method. *Qualitative Health Research*, 7(3), 345-369. doi:10.1177/104973239700700303

van Manen, M. (2016). *Researching lived experience: Human science for an action sensitive pedagogy*. Routledge, London.

Vessey, D. (2009). Gadamer and the Fusion of Horizons. *International Journal of Philosophical Studies*, 17(4), 531-542.

Victora, C. G., Habicht, J., & Bryce, J. (2004). Evidence-based public health: moving beyond randomized trials. *American Journal of Public Health*, 94(3), 400-405.

Walent, R. J. (2008). Understanding and Reflexivity in Researching Religion, Spirituality and Aging. *Journal of Religion, Spirituality & Aging*, 20(1-2), 4-15.
doi:10.1080/15528030801921964

Wang, D., & MacMillan, T. (2013). The Benefits of Gardening for Older Adults: A Systematic Review of the Literature. *Activities, Adaptation and Aging*, 37(2), 153-181. Retrieved from <http://www.scopus.com/inward/record.url?eid=2-s2.0-84879528481&partnerID=40&md5=d9508bdfa361a9fe238e93a0c5ed0ee3>

Warburton, J., & Gooch, M. (2007). Stewardship Volunteering by Older Australians: The Generative Response. *Local Environment*, 12(1), 43-55.
doi:10.1080/13549830601098230

Ward, D. (2013). *Coleridge and the Nature of Imagination: Evolution, Engagement with the World, and Poetry*. Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke.

Waterman, A. S. (1993). Two conceptions of happiness: Contrasts of personal expressiveness (eudaimonia) and hedonic enjoyment. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 64(4), 678.

Watts, N., Adger, W.N., Agnolucci, P., Blackstock, J., Byass, P., Cai, W., Chaytor, S., Colbourn, T., Collins, M., Cooper, A. and Cox, P.M. (2015). Health and climate change: policy responses to protect public health. *The Lancet*, 386(10006), 1861-1914.

- Welford, C., Murphy, K., Rodgers, V., & Frauenlob, T. (2012). Autonomy for older people in residential care: A selective literature review. *International Journal of Older People Nursing*, 7(1), 65-69.
- Wendel-Vos, G. C. W., Schuit, A. J., Tijhuis, M. A. R., & Kromhout, D. (2004). Leisure Time Physical Activity and Health-Related Quality of Life: Cross-Sectional and Longitudinal Associations. *Quality of Life Research*, 13(3), 667-677. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org.ez.library.latrobe.edu.au/stable/4038849>
- Wiles, J. L., & Jayasinha, R. (2013). Care for place: The contributions older people make to their communities. *Journal of Aging Studies*, 27(2), 93-101.
- Wiles, J. L., Leibing, A., Guberman, N., Reeve, J., & Allen, R. E. (2012). The meaning of "aging in place" to older people. *The Gerontologist*, 52(3), 357-366.
- Wilkinson, A. (1990) Gardens in ancient Egypt: their location and symbolism. *The Journal of Garden History*, 10:4, 199-208.
- Williams, D. R., & Sternthal, M. J. (2007). Spirituality, religion and health: evidence and research directions. *Medical Journal of Australia*, 186(10), S47.
- Williams, W. C. (1951). *The Autobiography of William Carlos Williams*. New Directions Publishing, New York.
- Williams, W. C. (1971). *Imaginations: Kora in Hell/Spring and All/The Descent of Winter/The Great American Novel/A Novelette & Other Prose*. New Directions Publishing, New York.
- Wilson, E. O. (1984). *Biophilia*. Harvard University Press, Cambridge.
- Wimpenny, P., & Gass, J. (2000). Interviewing in phenomenology and grounded theory: is there a difference? *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 31(6), 1485-1492.
- Woo, J. (2017). Designing Fit for Purpose Health and Social Services for Ageing Populations. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 14(5), 457.
- World Health Organisation (WHO) (2015). *World Report on Ageing and Health*. Retrieved from <https://www.who.int/ageing/events/world-report-2015-launch/en/>
- World Health Organisation (WHO-GSAP) (2017) *Global Strategy and Action Plan on Ageing and Health*. Retrieved from <https://www.who.int/ageing/WHO-GSAP-2017.pdf?ua=1>.
- World Health Organisation Quality of Life (WHOQOL) (1995). The World Health Organization quality of life assessment (WHOQOL): position paper from the World Health Organization. *Social Science & Medicine*, 41(10), 1403-1409.

World Health Organisation, Quality of Life, Spirituality, Religiousness and Personal Beliefs (WHOQoL SRPB) Group. (2006). A cross-cultural study of spirituality, religion, and personal beliefs as components of quality of life. *Social Science & Medicine*, 62(6), 1486-1497.

World Health Organization, Quality of Life, Spirituality, Religiousness and Personal Beliefs (WHOQoL SRPB) Group. (2002). *WHOQOL Spirituality, Religiousness and Personal Beliefs (SRPB) Field-Test Instrument*. Retrieved from https://www.who.int/mental_health/media/en/622.pdf

Wright, S. D., & Wadsworth, A. M. (2014). Gray and green revisited: A multidisciplinary perspective of gardens, gardening, and the aging process. *Journal of Aging Research*, 2014.

Xue, Q.-L. (2011). The Frailty Syndrome: Definition and Natural History. *Clinics in Geriatric Medicine*, 27(1), 1-15. doi:10.1016/j.cger.2010.08.009

York, M., & Wiseman, T. (2012). Gardening as an occupation: a critical review. *British Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 75(2), 76-84.

Yount, W. R. (2009). Transcendence and Aging: The Secular Insights of Erikson and Maslow. *Journal of Religion, Spirituality & Aging*, 21(1-2), 73-87. doi:10.1080/15528030802265361