INTEGRATING FAMILY TREE INTO PSYCHO-SPIRITUAL COUNSELING AMONG THE PARISHIONERS OF REGINA CAELI CHURCH, KAREN-NAIROBI

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed at analyzing the integration of the family tree into psycho-spiritual counseling among the parishioners of Regina Caeli parish of Nairobi. The study objectives were to: examine the importance of family tree in psycho-spiritual counselling in relation to behavior, to explore the impact of the family tree in the spirituality of people, and to examine the awareness ‘effects of the family tree’s impact on behavior and spirituality. This study used interview guide which were responded by 2 CMA and 2 CWA and some members of their families. From the analysis of the data, the following were the findings: the family tree shapes the behavior and spirituality of people so much so that to understand a client and assist him/her efficiently, the psycho-spiritual counselor has to dig into the family background of the person in order to find out his/her psycho-spiritual and cultural development. The research also revealed that the lack of awareness of the impact, even subtle, of the family tree’s effects on the behavior and spirituality of people is the cause of many sufferings, misunderstandings, and conflicts. That is why the psycho-spiritual counselor should assist the client to become aware of the impact of the family tree’s effects in his/her life, since that awareness is already the beginning of the healing that will lead to the wholeness, the wellness, and the integration of the client. The study established the following recommendations: Family tree should be integrated into psycho-spiritual counseling as a tool of investigation of the real causes of the issues of the client. The study also concluded that African psycho-spiritual counselors working in Africa have to act as Africans; they need to study African cultures in general to be able to understand the clients “behavior or spirituality”. The clients have to be helped to draw their genogram which show the relationships and patterns of their families. To be able to assist the clients, the psycho-spiritual counselor has to draw his/her own family genogram in order to know better about himself/herself.

Keywords: Family tree, Psycho-spiritual counseling, Spirituality of people, Behaviour
INTRODUCTION

For Kifa (2011), we are born of two parents, four grandparents, and eight great grandparents and so on. This chain that goes back into the past is commonly referred to as the Family Tree or family background. Each human person is connected to individuals on earth by divine design. This connection can be viewed on a biological, geographical, social, emotional, intellectual, spiritual or another level. The degree to which one person is connected to other people varies in type and in strength. The strongest connection between human beings is the biological one, the relationship between members of one family. This connection is often attested to by the physical similarities and character traits that members of the same family tend to have. That is why, in the same family, there are some recurrent behaviors, sicknesses, and religious beliefs or spirituality. Manne (2009) said that the identity of our family energy field is shaped by our family’s history, as well as its religions and beliefs, in other word, its conscience. Also, family’s crucial events such as betrayal, victim or perpetrator ancestors, incest, abortions, miscarriages, early death of children, adoptions, suicides, and wars shape our family identity. Furthermore, the relationship of parents and grandparents impact our family character, as well as the altruistic and generous acts of our parents and ancestors brings benefit, while their harmful acts damage the family ground and later generations pay the price. In case, the hurtful acts of the ancestors damage the family ground, there is a need of family healing so that the later generations will not pay the price.

According to Hampash (1989), the healing of the family tree is like the transplantation of a tree from a toxic rubbish dump site to a rich productive soil. It is necessary for everybody to have a graphic image of their family in order to recognize the areas that need healing among the root, the branches and the fruits. Those areas can be psychological, spiritual, physical or moral. Payne (2005) developed the idea that every human being is a part of a greater “Soul” of a family, an ethnic group and a nation, each of which has a direct impact on the way in which we live our lives and also on our emotional, physical and spiritual health and well-being. Headley (1977) noted that family healing or therapy has changed the emphasis and the focus from the description of individuals and families as sick to that of a dysfunctional family, which implies that changes and improvements are possible and are a part of an ongoing process of family life. A dysfunctional family cannot be well understood and healed without excavating the family background or family tree as Kenyatta (2000) noted that the family is the first school where the values, practices, and the beliefs that people embrace are developed as the child develops through a series of important events. West (1997) affirmed that any considerations of spiritual and behavioral healing have to take into account the cultural context and the historical background. This affirmation is very important in African context because of the African understanding of the concept of family. Based on this understanding of the concept of African family, the researcher will investigate if the “integration of the Family Tree issues into Psycho-Spiritual Counselling” can help the parishioners of Regina Caeli parish in their healing process of the improvement of their behaviors and spirituality for their wholeness and integration. Mpolo (1985) defined healing as the process of being liberated and saved from what impedes the functioning of the body, mind and spirit--becoming whole, having peace. For Whitfield (1987), “Healing” means moving toward wholeness and integrating, in other words, “coming into order” (Epstein, 1986). Schwartz (2013) noted that, the Internal Family Systems (IFS) model of psychotherapy offers a clear understanding of human problems, as well as an innovative and enriching philosophy of practice that invites both therapist
and client to enter into a transformational relationship in which healing can occur. Indeed, existential questions or problems related to freedom and the search for meaning inevitably open up spiritual issues. Whenever the person faces an existential crisis or a close encounter with death, suicide, lasting sicknesses or misfortunes, spiritual concerns tend to surface. Thus, psychotherapy addresses life’s deepest questions. Psychotherapy can be understood as healing of the soul, self or the mind, and therefore, a place where our spiritual selves belong to. The psychotherapist, generally, focuses on behavior and relationship, including the client relationship with him or her. Ackerman (1966) stated that psychotherapy is a systematic process by which a professionally trained person seeks to influence through psychological means, the emotional functions of another person, the patient for his/her health. For him, “The task of psychotherapist is to eliminate the suffering and disabled functioning and to enhance the patient’s ability to fulfill himself as a person and as a member of society” (Ackerman, 1966).

Spirituality is generally considered to be broader than any religion one might practice, as it takes into account cognitive and philosophical areas of thought as well as aspects of emotions and behavior. Whitfield (1989) defines spirituality as the relationships that we have with our self, with the universe and with others. Spirituality is not a stage, but an ongoing process throughout suffering, healing and serenity. For many, spiritual beliefs play a significant role in the ability to cope with adverse events in life. Manne (2009) noted that, through being born into a family, we inherit not only our biological genes, but also our belief systems and behavior pattern. Therefore, we carry the psychological, spiritual, and moral effects of our family lineage or Family Tree. Family Tree in Psycho-Spiritual Counseling can act as a tool to understand different life situations. Counseling is the application to mental health, psychological or human development principles through cognitive, affective behavior or systematic interventions, using strategies that address awareness, personal growth or career development elsewhere pathology (ACA-American Counseling Association, 2010). The researcher investigated on the integration of the Family Tree issues in Psycho-Spiritual Counselling for the wholeness and wellness of the clients.

Furthermore, there is evidently very little research that has been done on this topic in Africa, especially in Kenya. The researcher came across only one book of prayer written by a Kenyan priest, which some parts talked briefly of the importance of healing the family tree patterns (Linyiru, 2006). Few of the researches that have been done on family tree were conducted in Uganda, Nigeria, and Benin. Other studies exploring the experiences of the effects on the family tree in people’s lives were conducted in India and USA. None of these studies is about the integrating of the family tree into psycho-spiritual counselling. This is a gap which needs to be filled.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM
According to Ofoegbu (1976), many Christians are going through a litany of woes and calamities in their families such as: mental sicknesses, witchcraft, sorcery, destructive anger, failure in their business and works that lead them in a deep state of confusion, depression and distress. Brown (1984) observed that some Christians fail to understand, despite whatever they do, the behaviors of their children who turn against them and against God from one generation to another. Other Christians do not understand their spiritual stagnation, after accepting the Lord gladly, growing for a while, and then finding themselves unable to maintain a close relationship with God, even unable to study the Bible and to pray. Many churches are marked by divorce, suicides, alcoholism, incest, physical illness, and conflicts within the ranks of their members. Their members never grow in spiritual depth. These problems affect the whole churches as well as individual lives from one generation to another have become big issues. According to Udelhoven(2015), in Zambia, although most people join the Christian faith, the realm of spirits and ancestors, ghosts and demons, magic and divination has not lost its grip on them. They believe that this sphere comprises very potent powers and presents alternative helpful models more convincing in times of crisis such as death, sickness, misfortune, disaster, than the Christian discourse. Many Christians use medicines to retain their spouses, find promotion, get job, win a football match and secure customers for their businesses. These beliefs, conceptions and behaviors are common to all Churches ‘members in Africa (Kenya, Tanzania, South Africa, Nigeria, Ivory Coast etc.) as noted by some African theologians. The African theologian, from Benin Republic, Penoukou (1986) stated that the first and fundamental question in Africa is that of identification and authentication of the object to be believed because those who believe in Christ still, at the same time, commit themselves to other spiritual powers, cosmic or metacosmic. This shows the failure to identify Jesus Christ successfully in order to confess him radically.

In the same line, the African Bishops, meeting in Rome for the 1994 African Synod, seem to concur with Penoukou’s insight when they repeatedly complain that: “After the first evangelization, many Christians find themselves leading double lives: one foot in African tradition and another in the church” (McGarry, 1995). According to Ofoegbu( 2010),because the ministry of healing is not taken seriously by the Church, many Catholic believers are seeking healing from gurus and healers coming from other religions and sects and they fall prey to esoteric and new age practices. This quest for healing or miracle, and this failure of identification of Jesus Christ or the double lives of Africans result from the psychological and spiritual African traditional values transmitted to them through their family background or Family Tree. In Africa, whether traditional or modern, Religion is found in every aspect of life. Magesa (1997) emphasized that, for Africans, religion is a way of life or life itself. There is no distinction or separation between religion and other areas of human existence. The African counsellor practicing in Africa has to know the worldview of Africans. Indeed, in African Traditional Religion (ATR), people are very sensitive to their family problems. A chain of negative and tragic events in the homes will compel them to ask their gods if all is truly well. Most of the times, they have premonition that they are laboring under the effects of their ancestors’ curses. They consult the diviner, perform all kinds of sacrifices in order to pacify their gods and cleanse their family line from ancestral curses. Afterwards, things change for them, from worse to better. Diviner works sometimes as a medicine man. According to Mbiti (2010), the medicine person acts as a doctor and a counsellor as well, listening to people’s troubles of all kinds. Medicine people may be either men or women and are found in every African society. They are herbalists, diviners, mediums, rain-makers, priests and even rulers. With their skills, knowledge, and religious activities like sacrifices, prayers, and rituals, they help to stabilize
society. They are the waterways, the canals and the networks of good fortune, good health, fertility, welfare, and peace. Traditional African medicine is used for many purposes because African peoples think and believe that there are always mystical causes such as curse and witchcraft behind every death, sickness, disease, accident and so on.

That is why the parishioners of Regina Caeli parish and most African Christians, because of their psychological and spiritual African education or African understanding, are discouraged with their faith because they don’t see in their lives, the effectiveness of their Christian practices of prayers, retreats, counseling etc. Therefore, they need counselling, but not just any kind of counselling. For Gichinga (2007), “as people of Kenya and Africa evaluate what psychotherapists and counsellors are doing, they must see practitioners who understand their context” (p.23). That is why the researcher investigated whether the integration of the family tree into Psycho-Spiritual Counselling would be a way, a technique, and a strategy to understand the context or background of people issues in order to improve their behavior and spirituality for their wholeness and wellness.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

i. To examine the importance of family tree in psycho-spiritual counselling in relation to behavior.
ii. To explore the impact of the family tree in the spirituality of people.
iii. To examine the awareness of the impact of the family tree on the behavior and spirituality.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Family Therapy

This study is based on Family systems therapy characterized by a variety of theories and approaches, all of which focus on the relational aspects of human problems. Although the seeds of a North American family therapy movement were planted in the 1940s, it was during the 1950s that systematic family therapy began to take root (Becvar, 2006). A family systems perspective holds that individuals are best understood through assessing the interactions between and among family members. The development and behavior of one family member is inextricably interconnected with others in the family. Symptoms are often viewed as an expression of a set of habits and patterns within a family. That is why the researcher found out whether the behavior and the spirituality of people were connected with other members of their families background or Family Tree and whether psycho-spiritual counselling could help them to understand the effects of their families background in their lives.

Bowen’s Intergenerational Therapy

Bowen was one of the original developers of mainstream family therapy. Much of his theory and practice grew out of his work with schizophrenic individuals in families. According to Sears (1974), Bowen started inviting the family of his clients to Menninger's Clinic in Kansas where he was working. The clients would act out when the parents fought. He began to see the client's mental
illness as an effort to assuage a dysfunctional relation between the parents, and when he worked with the parents alone, the client would often be healed. Bowen added that families could best be understood when analyzed from a three-generation perspective because patterns of interpersonal relationships connect family members across generations.

With this understanding of Bowen’s generational theory, the researcher investigated how psycho-spiritual counselling can analyze with the client, at least, from three generations perspective the issues brought by him in order to see whether they are family tree issues or not. It could be one generation issue which is not family tree issue. In case of family tree issue, the researcher will investigate how psycho-spiritual counsellor will journey with the client in his process of triangulation and differentiation from negative emotions and patterns of his family so that they will not affect the future generations. For Horn (1995), wherever there is differentiation of self, different members of the family may be more reactive than others to changing conditions, a matter that is dependent on their individual physiology, heredity and historical conditioning. Corey (2009) noted that the major contributions of Bowen include the core concepts of differentiation of the self and triangulation. While Kerr (1988) added that, from Bowen's many contributions, one of the most enduring is the family diagram.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Behavior and Spirituality upon 3 Generations
- Genes
- Culture (education, initiation)
- Addictions (alcohol, sex, food)
- Beliefs, spirituality
- Multigenerational transmission
RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The study used a case study research design. The researcher chose a case study because it was deemed appropriate in helping the researcher address the issues of the family tree raised in the literature. The case is the family free. The researcher used qualitative methods to carry out his
investigation because other methods such as experiments would not be practicable or ethically justifiable. Family tree issues are particular to a particular family and in particular context. The study also used the constructivism or subjectivism epistemological paradigm because the goal of this study is to get as much as possible the subjective views of the participants on the topic. The Target Population for the study was Catholic Men Association (CMA) and Catholic Women Association (CWA) Christians of Regina Caeli parish in Karen. The number of CMA =2 and CWA =2. Their common characteristic is the fact that they are all Catholics from the same parish. Each person represents a family. And we are dealing with African families where the concept of family embraces parents, children, brothers, sisters, cousins, aunts, uncles, grandparents, ancestors (departed), babies in the womb. The choice of this parish is based on its proximity, accessibility and the good relationship the researcher has with the parishioners. The sample in this research is a set of respondents selected from the large population of the parishioners and these respondents will be 2CMA and 2CWA. The researcher investigated upon three generations because of the family theory that supports his work. That theory is Bowen’s. The researcher used purposive sampling to select the participants. Given that the purpose of this study is to integrate family tree into psycho-spiritual counseling, the researcher used Interview guide. Data was analyzed using thematic analysis method which consists of identifying, analyzing and reporting patterns within data (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

RESULTS
In this section, the researcher will show some generational issues between the members of the family of the respondents through their genograms. An interview with Mr. A., a Luhyia by tribe from western Kenya was conducted on the 5th July 2016 at 4p.m. He narrated that his grandfather was a Christian and very respected man in the society. Many in the family depended on him for advice, especially in decision making. This same behavior or character trait was also found in his father. He is good at keeping time and respects appointments. He is a respected man in the village. Like his father, he is depended upon in decision making. Both his grandfather and his father, said Mr. A., have leadership behavior. Concerning genetic illness, Mr. A. said that his three brothers died from sickle cell at 5 years, 6 years, and 14 years. His children have similar symptoms and could have died. Mr. A’ son is also a sickler, but he has been treated. Mr. A. himself is a sickler (Figure 2).

Mr. A’s family tree
Figure 2: The genogram of Mr. A’s family tree

Figure 3: The Family tree of Mr. B

This family is characterized by cancer. Mr. B. was interviewed on Wednesday the 6th July 2016 at 4pm. Mr. B. said that there are some similarities between himself, his father, and his children. His father was time conscious and business oriented. He was a Christian, but was not frequent in the church. As far as his business was concerned, he was organized and kept details about things. Mr. B. said that he himself has the same behavior with his children. Concerning genetic illnesses, cancer has killed many members of the family: his father, some of his brothers; he, himself is diagnosed as well as his sister.

Mrs. D’s family tree
Mrs. D.’s family tree is characterized by: anger from her father’s side and generosity from her mother’s side. Concerning genetic sicknesses, the members of this family, generally Christian, develop blood pressure. It has also been Christian family for many generations.

Mrs. C’s family tree

Figure 4: The genogram of Mrs. D.’s family tree

Figure 5: The genogram of Mrs. C.’s family tree
Mrs. C.’s family tree is characterized by: incest, divorce, jealousy, hatred, and above all alcoholism. This family has developed negative spirituality like witchcraft and many evil devo tions. These behaviors and spirituality have been transmitted from generation to generation. Hypertension and cancer have killed many people in the family.

The Key

Deceases

Man

Woman

Marriage

Separation

Divorce

The Importance of The Family Tree in Psycho-Spiritual Counselling in Relation to Behavior.

The first objective of this study was to determine the importance of the family tree in psycho-spiritual counselling in relation to behavior. The study sought to explore how an individual’s behavior is not only the result of the environment, but carries something from the family background upon, at least, three generations. That is why the respondents were asked to look into their families whether there are some similarities of behavior, cultural education impact, addictions, genetic illnesses, beliefs or religion, ancestors’ veneration, witchcraft, and the awareness and efforts of healing their family issues in order to avoid the transmission from generation to generation.

Similarities of Behavior

All of the respondents noticed some similarities of behavior with their parents. Mr. A said:

*My grandfather’s behavior was that he was very much respected, gifted in leadership skills, and consulted by many people in decision making. This pattern seems to run through the entire family; my father, his siblings and I have the same behavior, even my son.*

While Mr. B. shared:

*My father is time conscious and business oriented. This behavior characterizes me. Even though, I’m a medical doctor, I like doing business. About keeping time, I have never been late to any function since my primary school. I don’t understand why some people are always late. My daughter is like me characterized by time consciousness and business orientation. That is why she is studying Business Administration.*
Mrs. C. said:

There are some similarities about divorce, inherited wife, and lack of love in my family. My father’s mother V. died when my last born aunt, i.e. my father’s youngest sister was about 2 years old. My grandfather, P., a village elder/chief, then took over, by inheritance, his wife’s younger sister and married her, and with whom they begot 13 more children to the already surviving 6. My mother’s father, J. a local chief/elder also died when my mother's last born sister, (they were two girls only) E. was 2 years old and their mother, V., was inherited by my grandfather’s brother, with whom they begat other children.

About the lack of love, it would appear that there was no love and affection in the marriages above. The relationship between the siblings is one of dislike, suspicion, hatred, competition, malice, jealousy, bitterness, anger etc. and this has trickled down to us children. We cannot relate well with each other. My parents lived under hard conditions such that they found themselves in marriage to get away from the problems of mistreatment from their step parents both sides. This information I was able to get it from my parents independently. Furthermore, my mum’s sister, Aunt T., in search of affection and love, divorced her husband and got children with various men, especially those who could buy her expensive clothing, beer, or drink and maintain for her a high life. She died last year January 2015 still taking beer seriously even when she had suffered stroke due to high blood pressure. Similarly, step aunt, Z. sold her body and also enticed the young nieces to sexual orgies to get men buy her booze and maintain her lifestyle. She died of HIV Aids in 1995.

Today, the majority of women and men, including myself and our children, nephews, nieces, are divorced and single parents.

Mrs. D. shared:

My grandfather (father’s side), my father, my uncles, my son and some of my sisters are hot tempered, dictators, generous. My father used to beat my mom and his girlfriends. My uncles do the same with their wives. My mother told me that my grandfather (father’s side) was beating my grandmother, his wife. From my mother’s side, my grandmother, my mother, and some of my sisters are humble, generous, merciful, even my daughter.

Cultural Education: Initiation

The four interviewees talked about initiation as cultural education which impacts their behavior. In many cultures, circumcision takes a special place in the rite of initiation up to today. The naming ceremony is determinant in all cultures.

Mr. A. said:

I and my family’s members are born and circumcised in Nairobi’s hospital because my parents have been living in Nairobi since many years. We don’t go to the village. However, during the time of our circumcision, we went through a special training and teaching for two weeks according to Luhya culture.

Mr. B. spoke of:
I’m a kikuyu, born in Nairobi and circumcised in hospital, with my peers. Many churches organize every year at a particular time circumcision for the teenagers with two weeks of training, teaching about manhood. Also, in kikuyu culture, we are named after our parents. The first born (boy and girl) are named in their father’s family and the second boy and the second girl in their mother’s family. For instance, my name is …. This name is from my paternal grandfather. I noticed that I behave like him. He was greedy. It is not easy for me to share.

Mrs. C.

Men are not circumcised in my culture. In place, their six front teeth are removed during the ceremony of initiation. Initiation as a cultural practice is so strong both in the Bukusu (dad’s) and Bagisu (Mum’s) tribes. It is such an elaborate exercise and taken seriously in both tribes (Kenya) and (Uganda). Both cultures name children according to seasons, events and at times, I never got to understand how our names came about. No-one gave me proper explanation and I left it at that. However, we have been named after some relatives of my father’s lineage, being a patriarchal society. Twins automatically get to be called Mukhwana and Mulongo, (Wamono and Mukhwana in my mother’s culture) with the follower of the twins being called Khisa. My mother had twin brothers and she gave birth to twin daughters. My young sisters (late) gave birth to twins also. Upon the death of a parent of twins, the cultural rites to be performed require the expiry of three days before other activities can be done, after burial. It also affects the burial rites and the like. I never got into the details as they sounded more than complex. Serious attachment to the values is emphasized and practice.

Mrs. D. said:

As a kikuyu, initiation is very important. I remember that my brother has been brought to a place to stay for two weeks with young people of his age. He told me that he received a special formation about some values. Concerning naming, we name after our parents, the first borns in the father’s family and the second in the mother’s family.

Addictive Behavior
The four interviewees have some cases of alcoholic addictions.
Mr. A. said:

My grandfather and my father are not addicted to alcohol. But one of my father’s cousins was addicted and died because of drunkenness. My brother was an alcoholic sometimes ago; he has recovered. One of my paternal and one of my maternal uncles are drunkards today because of some frustrations in their business.

Mr. B. said:

There is no case of alcohol addiction in my family, except one of my brothers, a lawyer with a good job, who is a drunkard and uses all his salary in drinking.

Mrs. C. shared:
There are alcoholism and incest in my family. The lack of love in the marriage brought about search for love outside the parents/home such that my father resorted to drinking, a trait or habit that is in all my brothers, save for maybe only one or two, out of 15 brothers, including my step brothers. This habit is also among girls, born to my father. Drinking is never an issue. Alcohol is taken just like water, not for any apparent reason. All my nephews have taken up the habit and some have been expelled from schools for drunkenness at the age of 15 years as well as taking drugs. It has affected some of them, particularly my elder step sister and young step brother, all of whom are affected mentally. Some nieces and nephews have followed suit. My mother’s brothers drank themselves silly until the elder brother almost lost his life. He later quit. The younger twin brothers also took alcohol until they got Islamized while serving under Gen. Idi Amin’s regime in Uganda since Islam did not permit drinking. Smoking is also a habit and some family members still do so, with the nephews taking up the habit as well.

This trend of marrying many women or impregnating women all over and getting children seems to be in the family both sides. This also appears to have affected marriages in the family, creating a spirit of lust among the children. Uncles, nephews and nieces even cousins make passes at others with a view to having sexual relationships with them. For instance, a cousin in Uganda – F.– always makes passes at his own sister, nieces, ourselves as cousins and never hesitates to challenge any one of us for such an affair.

Mrs. D. said:
My father was an alcoholic, but has stopped drinking. Nevertheless, there is stealing addiction in the family. My father’s sister, my aunt, steals and almost all my nephews from different parents steal.

Genetic Illnesses
All the families have genetic illnesses but different.
Mr. A. said:
Three of my sibling brothers died of sickle cell and my father, my children, and myself are the carriers of sickle cell symptoms. There is also cancer in my father’s and mother’s families. It has killed four members of the family.

While Mr. B shared:
Cancer has killed half of the members of my family: my father, father’s sister, one of my brothers, and my sister was diagnosed as having cancer tumor.

Mrs C. said:
Maybe. From recollection, There are also arthritis, hypertension and asthma/bronchitis/pneumonia that are predominant, especially among all the male children in the entire P. family and generation to our children. My mother had diabetes, hypertension and acute arthritis, such that her knees caved in. Her brothers in Uganda also suffer from the same.
Also, blindness (total) in one eye in almost all our children, irreversible is also very common. My daughter C., my nieces T., P., B. and nephew Z. are all totally blind in the left eye only. No medical cure is available. My mother's brother (one of the twins) in Uganda just went blind and deaf without any cause. He still suffers from it. The younger twin suffers from arthritis and extremely high incurable hypertension. The same applies to all my siblings. Indeed, silent sufferers from these terminal illnesses/ailments.

Concerning cancer, except for the two exceptional cases of my father's prostate cancer and young brother's ameloidosis (cancer in the bone marrow!!!) diagnosed a month to his death, which later after dad's baptism and prayers, cleared completely, I am not sure it runs in the family. These two deaths turned out to be witchcraft events. Also, my elder step sister, Y., a lecturer at E. University, and their last born brother, K., suddenly turned insane/mad. I do not know much about their mother's family tree.

Mrs. D. said:

Blood pressure has killed many people in my family. Even now, my mother and I are suffering of it.

The impact of the family tree in the spirituality of people.

Family’s Idols, Shrines or Religion

For the interviewees 1, 2 and 3, their families are Christians from different churches; they were born Christians and grew up in Christianity in Nairobi city.

Mr. A said:

I’m a catholic, my parents and grandparents also. There are no idols, shrine and another religion in my family. As I have said, I was born in Nairobi where I grew up and was educated. My father and my mother were also born in Nairobi town.

MR. B. and Mrs. D. gave themselves the same answers. However, Mrs. C. shared:

I know about a particular idol/shrine in the family – it is not easy for me to tell this, since we were all brought up in Nairobi all our lives and never visited the village, until late in our lives. Precisely, from 2002, when we started travelling to the village for burial of my mother, N., who was the first to die in our family.

There was a jacaranda tree in the middle of my father’s homestead which I found dried up completely. Having had a vision/dream of my late father sitting under that tree one night, I travelled upcountry and with the help of my uncle, had it cut down. The repercussions were hard felt. The felling of that tree nearly had me killed as I felt as if something was wringing my intestines and internal organs without pity. I almost blacked out but thanks to the charismatic companions I had travelled with. They quickly applied holy oil on my head, chest and stomach and I recovered instantly. While driving back to Nairobi the next day after felling the tree, I got a strange black-out at Mbaruk, some few kilometres to Nakuru, and temporarily passed out, on the driving seat. Fortunately I never got an accident. Instead I came to after a while and had to be taken to Merica Hotel, where I called a pastor to pray for me as I came back to avoid arriving at night. I was alone with my son J., then only 3 years and sleeping in the back seat. However, my late sister's dairy
cow was found to have 24 brand new nails in the stomach and it died. My elder sister M., had a black snake crawl out of her house just a day after the felling of the tree. In the meantime, my brother who had been addicted to alcohol, had his metal cup/glass/mug break/tear or split from the top to the middle, without any cause or interference by anyone. I have the photo in my phone. Thereafter, on Sunday evening, a day after the large dry tree was felled, a loud explosion, emitting ashes, was heard from the tree stump and I was called by my young steps.

**Family’s Veneration of Ancestors and Witchcraft**

The four interviewees do not have any other veneration of the ancestors except the way of doing it in their churches. They offer prayers for the departed according to their church. Regarding witchcraft, the interviewees 1, 2, and 4 do not have any evidence about it in their families. Mr. A said:

As I said previously, we are all Christians in my family since my grandparents. We offer mass for the dead. About witchcraft, I don’t have any evidence in my family.

Mr. B and Mr. D. gave the same answer while Mrs. C. said about the ancestors:

Since we have not lived in the village, I cannot comment on this, lest I misquote or report anything. No comment. And she added about witchcraft: it cannot be underestimated. This is prevalent. My step mothers kept snakes, bees, cats, dogs, employed funny looking herdboys all of whom ate almost 6 kgs of ugali in a sitting. I sprinkled holy water where they sat and on their food, forcing them to choke and leave the homestead. I did this to at least two of them and drew the wrath of my step-siblings. They still bay for my blood for disclosing their mother’s witchcraft activities.

My father’s sister – A.– even keeps an owl’s eggs. I cannot imagine what they look like, but last year on 13th March 2015, as I sent my non-believer step brother Sao to a pastor in Thika for prayers and counselling, at around 3pm while seated in the office with my step brother, my aunt called him and requested him to find an urgent buyer for the owl eggs. She believes in witchcraft and even took my dad to a witch-doctor in Tanzania for protection and revelation on who might have killed my father’s most favourite son, the late M., my younger brother who died in South Africa on 16th

The Psycho-Spiritual Impact of the Awareness of the Family Tree Issues

Psychologically speaking, the four interviewees said that the awareness of the family tree issues will remove their fear, anxiety about what is going on in their families and will increase their hope about their future because they will come to understand the roots of many family issues. Spiritually speaking, that awareness can help them to take the preventive measures for themselves and their children. Mr. A said:

I never knew that I was a carrier of sickle cell and my wife also. When my son got sick and the doctor said that it was sickle cell and asked me to do the test which confirmed I: I never believed that doctor. I thought he was not qualified. I went to see another doctor who confirmed. Many people have died in the family and we never thought about genetic cause. The awareness will help
to change our way of life and to help the children to be also aware in order to make healthy choice of partner.

While Mrs. C. shared:

This is a no-go zone for my siblings and family. Everyone believes everything is natural and we should not read too much into the events in the family lest we die from stress. Have been labelled a fanatic, lunatic, obsessed with issues I do not understand and no one desires to hear about anything to do with prayers. It is believed that attending Mass with a list of family members as above is sufficient to clean the family tree. In fact I was shocked and disappointed when my young sister died last year on 7th July 2015, and everyone in the family seemed to ask me how come it has happened again yet "I had assured them that going for prayers in the village to cleanse the home had worked the trick". I had to tell them that it requires effort of the whole family. Hence they joined me in the memorial, in the village, of all the deceased family members on 6th November 2015 after the sudden and shocking death of our young little sister EN. The months of June and July have been terrible for us since 2002 and the following are the dates of death and burial in the family during those two months

These occurrences have instilled so much fear in the family that by March of every year, it causes anxiety in the family members to even hear of an ailment of any kind within the members. It is my sincere hope that the root cause shall be found and a final and lasting solution found to the problem. It is scary but I believe we are almost there. So, we need counselling and prayer: counselling about our family tree and prayer to break curses. Our children are going through the same breakdown.

Analysis and interpretation

The importance of the family tree in psycho-spiritual counselling in relation to behavior

There are many patterns that determine the members of the same family.

Similarities of Behavior

According to the interviewee 1 there is leadership skills in his family from his grandfather to his children. The interviewee 2 noticed time consciousness and business orientation behavior in his family from his father, his children and himself. While the interviewee 3 stresses the lack of love among her brothers and sisters. This type of relationship has started since the time of her grandparents. The interviewee four described the kindness, humility, and anger in her family since her grandparents. All these show that behavior can be transmitted upon three generations. Leadership and business orientation skills are innate, inborn, natural, and transmitted in some families and characteristic of them. Leadership and business skills are like a tree planted in the family and the roots go back to many generations. Therefore the psycho-spiritual counsellor would not be able to help the client with behavior issues without digging into his/her family background or family tree. Otherwise, his therapy will be superficial, symptomatic, and even inefficient.

Cultural Education: Initiation
The first, the second, and the fourth interviewees were all born in an urban environment, in Nairobi, and were circumcised in the hospital. But the fact that they were born and circumcised in town, didn’t prevent them from going through the two weeks at least of training, teaching, and counselling according to their cultures. This training and counselling are very important in the process of initiation. The trainers and counsellors are not any kind of people. They are grounded in the knowledge of the cultural values and are respectable and highly-regarded. According to Bahemuka(1983):

“Among the Marakwet of Kenya, there was no event in the life of the individual which was of equal importance. Unless a person went through the ceremonies related to initiation, he or she was not allowed to join those who had been initiated. Circumcision was one of the central points of the initiation rites, but it was accompanied by much training and teaching the initiates about the ways of the Marakwet. Those who were to take part in the ceremonies were prepared over a period of time for the big day... Circumcision becomes very important as the whole family and society are involved”(p.71).

He added: “the initiates are taught important ways of the Marakwet: how to behave towards the elderly people, how to treat the opposite sex and how to deal with people of their own age group” (p.7).

Each tribe has its own way of education transmitted from one generation to another. Even the place of initiation and the ways of doing it can change, the psychology behind continues up to today. For instance, the naming of the children after the parents or ancestors does not change whether the child is born in town or village. This naming affects the behavior of people.

In addition, Bahemuka(1983) noted that the birth of a child started before the actual physical birth. When a woman notices that she is pregnant, she informs her husband to prepare for the birth of the child. The name is chosen. “The name given to the child would be symbolic of the role the child would play in society”(p.64). So, cultural education, whether it is traditional or modern impacts people’s behavior. That is why the researcher found necessary that the psycho-spiritual counsellor has to go through family background or family tree of the client so that he/she can understand the client’s behavior in order to help him to become integrated person.

Addictive Behavior
The four interviewees said there are some cases of alcoholic addiction in their families. In every human interaction there is a potential addiction. There are people addicted to sarcasm. They hardly ever speak an earnest word. Others are addicted to exaggeration. They cannot tell a story without adding several inches to the punchline. Some are addicted to their own anger. Carder (1991) noted that addiction is an energy that flows through the body and lodges itself in the mind. Initially, it saturates the body with a sense of longing and fills the mind with invasive and obsessive thoughts. These repetitive thoughts will not cease until some sort of compulsive act has been committed. It is a universal presence that lives in our unconscious and rises and falls according to the personal story of our life. It connects us in the present with a bond of human frailty and unites us with the lineage of those who came before us.

In fact, there is a strong link between addiction and unresolved trauma. Trauma does not always have to be physical abuse, injury, or the witnessing of a catastrophic or frightening event. Trauma
can be subtle and perplexing and come from strong feelings emerging from childhood. A child who feels neglected, abandoned, or overlooked may experience emotional trauma. A child growing up with a narcissistic parent may not feel loved or supported and internalize a sense of being worthless. These feelings are stored in the young and undeveloped psyche and often turn into harmful beliefs. These beliefs, when they are not healed, are transmitted to the next generation. These beliefs ultimately serve as a catalyst to activate addiction later in life. Trauma does not create addiction, but it is a part of the energy surrounding it.

Spark (1974; 1973) described a breakdown in healthy family functioning as the result of unresolved accounts between first and second-generation family members that are projected onto, or lived out, in the marital and parental relationship. That is why the psycho-spiritual counsellor should dig into the family background or family tree when he/she is dealing with addicted clients, not to condemn them, but to find out the generational root or cause in order to be able to assist the clients for their wholeness, wellness, and holistic integration.

*Inheritance Impact on Behavior.*
The four interviewees noticed some genetic sicknesses in their families such as: sickle cell, cancer, blood pressure, hypertension, asthma, blindness. The fact that they are aware of the presence of genetic illness in their family will give them sometimes fear, anxiety, and worry which will affect their behavior. It will shake their psycho-spiritual being, i.e. psychologically, spiritually and socially. Even those who are not aware of genetic sickness in the family can’t always live and behave like healthy people.

Cattell (1982) and Loehlin (1985) studies which used twin and adoption strategies to look at the role of genetics, especially, the similarities among twins, showed that half of our behaviors come from inheritance. That is why to determine how some people are more dominant in social interactions than others, heredity was estimated to account for 48 percent of the influence in one study (Loehlin, 1985) and 61 percent in another (Bouchard, 1984). These studies found that our genes explain 40 to 60 percent of the differences between people behaviors such as the initiative to work hard to succeed, aggressiveness, the tendency to be nervous, the need for novelty and excitement, and the tendency to obey social rules, etc. Actually, these genetic studies enlighten the leadership skills found in the family of the interviewee 1, the time consciousness and business orientation found in the family of the interviewee 2, the aggressiveness of the parents of the interviewee 4, the alcoholic tendency in the family of the interviewee 3. Therefore, the researcher suggests that the family tree of the client can be used by the psycho-spiritual counsellor to look at the genetic impact in the personality or behavior of the client in order to counsel him/her about how to reinforce his/her behavior if it is positive or to differentiate when it is negative.

*Impact of the family tree on the Spirituality*

People’s spirituality depends on their family background.

*Family Idols, Shrines, and Religion*
The interviewees 1, 2, and 4 said that they were born into Christian families and were educated according to Christian values. Their grandparents were Christians. The children from these families, today, don’t go to the village for initiation and circumcision even though the psychology and spirituality behind the traditional or cultural initiation are kept. It is the most important thing.
Bahemuka (1984) observed that the initiation of the youth marks the changes from a passive life to one of active membership and introduces the individual to adulthood, socially, religiously, physically and psychologically. In the lives of the interviewees 1, 2, 4 and of their brothers and sisters, initiation has been done according to Christian values. According to the interviewees, many churches come together at a given time, to initiate their youth, circumcise them in the hospital, and train, teach, and counsel them for some weeks. The aim of the traditional initiation was the psycho-spiritual maturity and integration of the youth. The same goal motivates the modern or Christian initiation, but based on Christian norms that shape the desires and actions of the initiates in the society. This cultural education will reflect on their relationship to God, others, and the cosmic world. So, the spirituality of our family lineage or family tree affects our spirituality. Rolheiser (2014) noted that “the habits and disciplines we use to shape our desire form the basis for spirituality, regardless of whether these have an explicit religious dimension to them or even whether they are consciously expressed at all”.

Indeed, these habits and disciplines come from our spiritual education. The lives of the brothers and sisters of the interviewee 3 are full of hatred, jealousy, mistrust, incest, division, divorce, alcoholic addictions because of the spirituality of their grandparents in which their parents were brought up and transmitted to them. According to the interviewee 4, the grandparents and the parents relationships were unhealthy. Rolheiser (2014) added that “we act in the ways that leave us healthy or unhealthy, loving or bitter. What shapes our actions is our spirituality.” Our family history affects our personality and spirituality. That is why the researcher found the necessity to integrate family tree into psycho-spiritual counselling.

**Family’s Veneration of Ancestors and Witchcraft**

The interviewees 1, 2, and 4 said they don’t have any special veneration of the ancestors because they were brought up in Christian families and they pray for the departed according to their faith. Also, they don’t know about witchcraft in their faith. While the interviewee 3 said there is no veneration of the ancestors as such, but the ceremonies of marriage, funeral, initiation, naming of the child, require some prayers to the ancestors up to today. Concerning witchcraft, the interviewee 3 noticed some witches in the family. The family which believes that there is witchcraft among its members and the one which does not believe do not have the same spirituality or worldview. Olupona (2011) observed that witchcraft beliefs and accusations reflect areas of particular tension in society. When misfortune occurs in such societies, people may attribute it to witches. For those who do not believe, when misfortune befalls, they may attribute it to some spiritual power, perhaps resulting from the victim’s moral faults or conflict with the elders; but it is rare to find an explicit accusation of witchcraft.

The belief in witchcraft and unbelief in witches are different ways of thinking and approaches of life that involve particular actions and reactions. The way we think or behave is spirituality that results from family history or family background. That is why the researcher suggested the integration of the family tree as a tool for the psycho-spiritual counsellor in order to investigate deeply the issues of the client and to assist him/her efficiently.

**Impact of the awareness of the family tree issues on the lives of people**

The interviewees 1, 2, 3, and 4, all of them affirmed that the awareness and acceptance of their various family tree weaknesses and strengths in order to reinforce the strengths and discourage the weaknesses will bring psycho-spiritual healing in their families.
Physically or biologically, the families can prevent many sicknesses that have been killing or paralyzing the members of the family by their way of life, the use of the right medication, and the choice of their marriage partners. For instance, the case of Mr. A.’s family which is a sickle cell family. Psychologically, the family members can overcome their fear, anxiety, stress, anger, jealousy, suspicion, negative thinking and judgment. Therefore, their spirituality will improve and become healthy. For instance, Mr. A.’s family tree is characterized by sickle cell that has affected many people while Mr. B.’s family tree is characterized by cancer that has affected many people. According to their reports, they didn’t believe, in the beginning, that it was sickle cell or cancer which was killing the members of their families; they were thinking about witchcraft or special curse. Many Christians have the same thoughts, and, consequently negative spirituality.

Spirituality, here, means “what shapes our actions” (Rolheiser, 2014). The relationships between the members of the family with themselves, with people, with God, with environment will become integrated when they have a healthy spirituality. According to the researcher, when the psycho-spiritual counsellor, in the light of the family tree and through the family tree of the client, examines the issue brought by the client, the counselor may find out that the client’s issue is symptomatic of his/her family’s problems. Indeed, Bowen noted that the person who is brought to the counselor with a problem is only a symptom of a systemic problem or family’s system; that person is the visible or superficial part of the iceberg.

Bowen found that when the parents were unaware of their issues and didn’t address them, the unconscious conflict would affect the children, who would then get entangled and carry on the pattern. For him, if the parents can identify their feelings and express them with their concerns and be heard or be able to work out differences, the child often get better without being directly treated. His behavior will change and become better. Otherwise, it can be transmitted from generation to another as can be seen in Mrs. C.’s family tree.

CONCLUSIONS

The researcher got the following conclusions based on the research questions used as a guide to the study. The exploration of the client’s family tree during the psycho-spiritual counselling sessions is necessary to understand the client’s issues. The behavior of the client will be best understood by the client himself/herself and by the counsellor when the counsellor uses the family tree, at least, upon three generations, as a tool, a technique and a strategy of investigation whether the client is Christian or not. The results of the analysis of the data collected among some CMA and CWA family’s members can be applied to every client who comes for counselling whether he/she is a believer or not. Cultural education, addictions, and inheritance characteristic of each family upon generation determine the personality of its members in term of similarities.

The study also concluded that the spirituality as a way of life since the grandparents shapes individuals spirituality. The spiritual family background disposes individuals to embrace a new spirituality. In another word, the quality of the faith of Christians today depends on the spirituality of their family lineage. All the problems that the researcher raised in the statement of the problems of this study found their roots in the spirituality of their family tree upon three generation at least. Cultural education, family beliefs, family religion, family relation with the living and the dead upon generation the family spirituality which is innumerable seeds planted in each member of the family as natural dispositions to be germinated in the same spirituality or a new one. The quality of the tree or of the fruits varies according to the quality of the seeds. Thus the spiritual problems
facing the church have their roots in the spirituality of the family background. That is why the researcher concluded the importance of the use of the family tree of the clients as a tool for the psycho-spiritual counselor to the best understanding of the client’s issues.

It has been revealed by the research that when people are aware of their family weaknesses and strengths and accept them as their family identity, they become different. Their spirituality changes. Their behavior changes. So the awareness of the family tree issues in the Christian families will strengthen their faith which will become authentic and inculcated, that is, enriched of African healthy spirituality and stripped of unhealthy African spirituality full of superstitious beliefs of seeing curse or witchcraft in everything, every misfortune, every sickness and maladaptive behavior. These Christians will be able to discern and identify what belongs to evil spirits (witchcraft or not). Moreover, they will be able to detect and recognize in their family histories or lineage the traces of the grace of God working through many blessings from the past generations to the present. That is why the researcher suggests that the psycho-spiritual counsellor should be able to use family tree’s tool to assist the clients to become aware of the weaknesses and strengths of their families, to accept them as part of uniqueness and to be able to differentiate from any unhealthy spirituality.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To the Psycho-Spiritual Counsellors
The psycho-spiritual counsellors should be aware of the fact that every client is unique and this uniqueness is shaped by the psycho-spiritual development of the family background or family tree. Different spiritualities in a family result from some family issues. Thus, the client’s issue is symptomatic of family’s issues or dysfunctions. Family should be understood in African context. The psycho-spiritual counsellors in Africa dealing with African clients in Africa have to think as Africans. Despite the variety of African cultures, modern and traditional, Africans are still carrying consciously or unconsciously what we can call: African soul shaped by many generations of Africans. For instance, when two people from the same tribe are together, they speak (when they know it) their maternal language anywhere in the world. However, many people are aware of the impact of the past generation in their lives. The psycho-spiritual counsellor has to help them to become aware of it through the drawing of their genogram. The psycho-spiritual counsellor has to learn how to draw and interpret a genogram. He/she has to draw and understand his/her own genogram and be able to teach the clients in order to determine the psycho-spiritual growth of their families.

To the Church’s Leaders
The seminarians should be taught about the family tree in general, and about their own family tree with the drawing of their family genogram. It will help them to know themselves (self-knowledge), their weaknesses and their strengths. The priests grounded with the knowledge of the family tree will be able to help the parishioners to understand their family history, to detect blessings and curses in their family lineage, to reinforce the behaviors and discourage the maladaptive. The priests should organize every month some healing programs, psycho-spiritual healing through seminars or workshops, deliverance prayers

To the Parents and Children
Parents and children should know their family story, their family background, and their family tree. They have to know the psycho-spiritual history of their family lineage. They have to protect their positive cultural values and differentiate from the negative. They have to organize family prayers for the living and the dead. They should go through genetic counseling which is a service that informs prospective parents who are at risk of giving birth to a child with a hereditary defect about the odds of that happening from their family histories and from medical tests to determine if they carry abnormal genes.

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