



The Salvation Army Youth Outreach Service

Spirituality Framework



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The Salvation Army Youth Outreach Service

Spiritual Framework

Introductory Comments

The Salvation Army Youth Outreach Service (YOS) seeks to be intentional about transforming the whole person, body, mind and spirit. This document explores the spirituality component of the YOS Independence Framework in more detail.

YOS recognises that the term “spirituality” conjures a wide and varied response within people, therefore, the purpose of this document, this “Spiritual Framework,” is to outline the what, why and how of spirituality in the YOS service context.

THE SALVATION ARMY:

Understanding the Broad Foundational Context that Informs Practice

International Mission

The Salvation Army is an evangelical part of the universal Christian church. Its message is based on the Bible and its ministry is motivated by love for God. Its mission is to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ and to meet human needs in His name without discrimination. The Salvation Army is committed to serving ***the whole person – body, mind and spirit*** – with integrity and respect, using creative solutions to positively transform lives. ¹

Australia One: National Mission Statement

The Salvation Army is a Christian movement dedicated to sharing the love of Jesus. We share the love of Jesus by:

- *Caring for people:*
 - Being there when people need us most.
 - Offer care and compassion as a sacred encounter with transformative power.
- *Creating faith pathways:*
 - Taking a holistic approach to the human condition that values spirituality.
 - We graciously share the Good News of Jesus and grow in faith together.
- *Building healthy communities:*
 - Investing ourselves in relationships that promote mutual flourishing.

¹ salvos.org.au

- We find the wholeness God intends for us in community.
- *Working for justice:*
 - Tackling the social systems that harm creation and strip away human dignity.
 - We join God’s work to build a fairer world where all can thrive. ²

The Salvation Army Social Program Department

The Fundamentals Framework

The social department states, “*our purpose in serving people in our community is to ensure that every person is supported: practically, socially, and spiritually*”. The recently published Fundamentals Framework reminds us that as a department within the social program we are more than simply a service provider. The Salvation Army mandates that as a distinctly Christian organisation we are transparent and honest and that we see all people as equal, made in the image of God. Our service provision, in both words and actions, should seek to bring wholeness to all people in need, welcoming them, and planning with them for new growth and sustainability.³

The Fundamentals Framework further details how what we believe about God (theology) shapes who we say we are, why we do what we do, and what it looks like to work with people on a daily basis (practice). The document reminds us that every person is unique and is of equal value and worth. Every person is entitled to be treated with respect regardless of any differences or group categories which may be applied, such as race, religion, status, age, gender, or sexual orientation.⁴

Practically, the purpose of our work is to facilitate opportunities through which people can make positive and personal concrete changes for themselves. Socially, the purpose of our work is to build meaningful relationships to connect people to the communities of their choice. Spiritually, the purpose of our work is to support people spiritually. ⁵

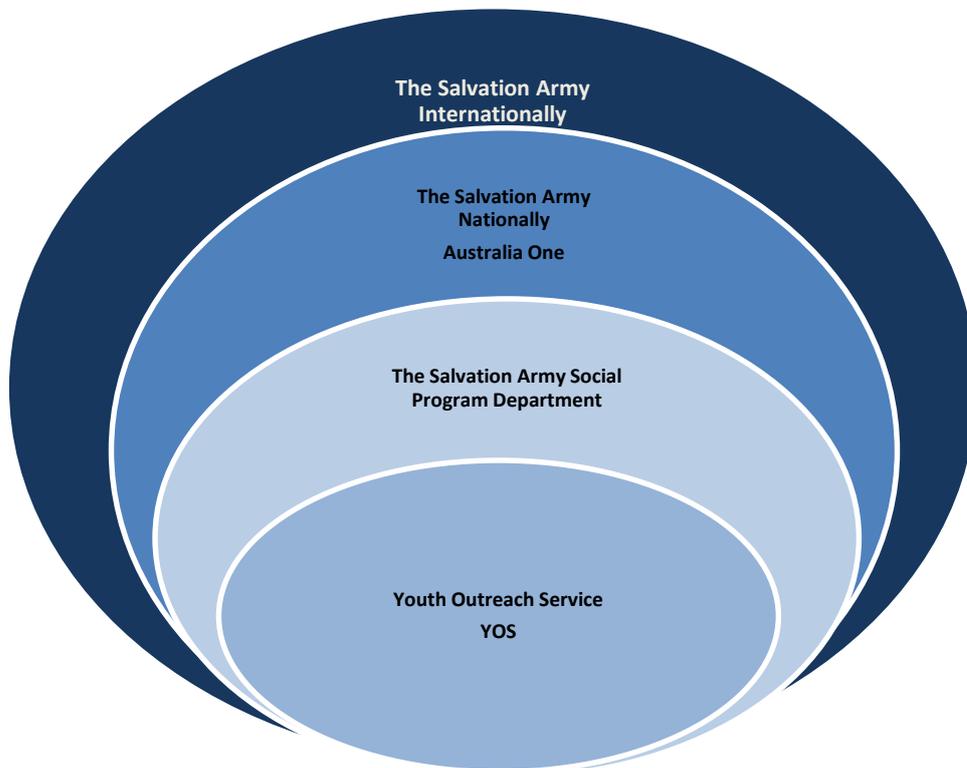
Understanding this broad foundation that underpins all our work under the banner of The Salvation Army Youth Outreach Service is imperative as it continually voices the repeated mandate – body, mind and spirit.

² my.salvos.org.au/australia-one

³ The Fundamentals: Made in the Image of God: A Theologically Informed Practice Framework for People Work, 2017, Live Draft.

⁴ The Fundamentals: Made in the Image of God: A Theologically Informed Practice Framework for People Work, 2017, Live Draft.

⁵ The Fundamentals: Made in the Image of God: A Theologically Informed Practice Framework for People Work, 2017, Live Draft



Implications for YOS

As can be seen from this broad foundational Salvation Army context, the mandate for transformation of the whole person, body, mind and spirit is clear. It would be a dis-service to young people accessing YOS services and programs not to allow provision for client directed opportunities to address spirituality.

Spirituality, for the purposes of YOS, is not about making converts to Salvationism but rather it is about exploring the individual's faith journey, their way of seeing, being and acting in this world. Spirituality can most simply be understood as the way our lives are shaped by what we love and what we give ourselves to, what we place at the heart of our lives.⁶

We understand that not everyone who works for The Salvation Army identifies as Christian. The expectation, however, is that everyone who works for The Salvation Army is willing and able to facilitate a person's access to faith in Jesus Christ in a respectful and helpful way.⁷ We are called to simply present Jesus. We are not called to criticise, attack or demolish the alternatives to Jesus. We are called to offer Jesus and allow people to make up their own minds.⁸

⁶ www.whatiflearning.com/big-picture/christian-spirituality

⁷ The Fundamentals: Made in the Image of God: A Theologically Informed Practice Framework for People Work, 2017, Live Draft

⁸ http://hazelden.org.uk/pt02/art_pt068_modified_engel_full.htm

With the broad Salvation Army foundations outlined, and the implication for YOS understood, the following sections of this document will explore the what, why and how of spirituality in the YOS service context.

YOS Independence Framework Domain

ENRICH: Spirituality

Description: To address the “whole person” includes “body, mind and spirit” and this domain allows for the enrichment of the young person’s life by considering the universality of spirituality to all of humanity. The outworking of this will differ for every individual but may include examining values and beliefs, understanding a way of existing in the world and defining one’s sense of purpose. For young people to explore spirituality, youth workers must be aware of their own spirituality in order to provide a safe and secure environment, free of judgment or bias, for young people to voice their own expression of, and questions pertaining to, “faith” or “spirituality.”

Spirituality – A Lifelong Journey

Spirituality is a life long journey. The aim of YOS is to enable both staff and young people to explore their own faith journey, a journey as unique as the individual, in a safe and supportive context, recognising that everyone has their own unique experiences and stories that inform their beliefs and their place in the journey. While we may journey together we are all at different points on the pathway.

The Theology

As a distinctly Christian organisation, it is helpful to understand the theology behind the Christian spiritual journey. To this end a few examples are sited:

Willow Creek define this journey as a continuum with individuals progressing through four stages, being 1. exploring Christianity, 2. growing in Christ, 3. close to Christ and 4. Christ-centred.⁹

⁹ www.ghclc.org/welcome/spiritual-growth/

Millard Erickson defines the steps in the journey as a process of growth and progress through salvation's steps of calling, conversion (repentance and faith), regeneration and sanctification.¹⁰

The Modified Engel Scale shows the journey as a continuum from minus twelve recorded as 'no God framework' through to positive four, 'being part of leadership' as depicted in the table below.¹¹

LEVEL	DESCRIPTION
-12	No God framework
-11	Experience of emptiness
-10	God framework
-9	Vague awareness and belief in God
-8	Wondering if God can be known
-7	Aware of Jesus
-6	Interested in Jesus
-5	Experience of Christian love
-4	Aware of the basic facts of the Gospel
-3	Aware of personal need
-2	Grasp the implications of the Gospel
-1	Challenged to respond personally
0	Repentance and faith
+1	Holy Spirit and baptism
+2	Functioning member of local Church
+3	Continuing growth in character, lifestyle and service.
+4	Part of team leadership

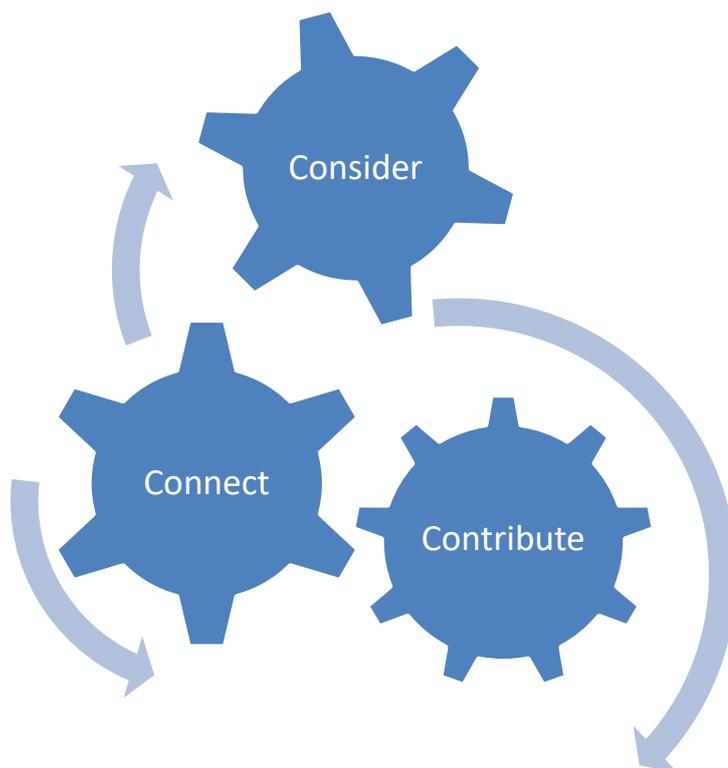
A Model for YOS Practice

Each of the models presented in the theology section of this document display the spiritual journey as a linear progression, however, a more accurate description of a dynamic, evolving spiritual journey may sometimes be one step forward, two steps back, a step out to the side, perhaps more cyclic, somewhat messy. There is no printed map to follow, however, the goal is to continue exploring and responding to our individual spiritual journey.

¹⁰ Erickson, Millard, J. "Christian Theology" 2nd Edition, 1993.

¹¹ http://hazelden.org.uk/pt02/art_pt068_modified_engel_full.htm

The YOS model deliberately steps away from “christianese” religious terminology in order to increase accessibility for both staff and young people. This gives recognition to the array of experiences that staff and young people may have had with “the church” to date, some of which may not have been positive. The YOS Model seeks to respectfully welcome everyone, and to this end will examine the components of YOS practice under the headings of **Consider, Connect** and **Contribute**.



The diagram of the YOS model highlights how the spiritual journey is inter-connected, not a simple linear progression.

CONSIDER

This component is about considering the individual’s passions, what shapes them, their personal story and their experiences to date. It allows people to simply explore spirituality and consider how their individual experience sits within the Christian narrative, to consider the person and vision of Jesus and what that might mean for them at this point in their journey.

This component broadly includes the pre-evangelisation, calling and salvation aspects of the church models discussed previously in the theology section.

CONNECT

The spiritual journey is a communal one. This component is about building community with God and with others. It allows for connections built on understanding, respect and trust. In YOS practice these connections are not likely to be formal church connections, however, that is not excluded but rather, the connections fostered will more likely be informal and varied in style and structure and allow for young people to experience and grow in their faith journey.

This component, as related to the church models, is about the growing and maturing of Christian faith in community with others.

CONTRIBUTE

This component is about how the individual lives out their spirituality. It includes the enriching of their personal journey, perhaps through spiritual disciplines, and also includes the contribution they make to transforming their community through sharing their story and applying their beliefs. The contribution may be as simple as sharing their story over a cup of tea. The contribution, like the journey, will be as unique as the individual and yet all contributions are of equal value in the richness and diversity they bring to the spiritual journey of us all.

In the church models, this component allows us to contribute by engaging in Jesus' mission in the world, often noted as service within the church. ¹²

While the spiritual journey may not be able to be outlined in a convenient, one size fits all, linear document the questions central to spirituality in the context of YOS remain. People are inevitably shaped into something. This is non-negotiable. The real question then is into what are people shaped and how?¹³ What opportunities does YOS provide for young people to consider their passion, what they will live for, their spirituality?

*The YOS Practice Model is about exploring together with young people the components of **Consider, Connect and Contribute**, however, having an easily accessible model is only effective if staff are equipped to implement the model into daily practice. To assist with this process this framework will examine the model in action.*

¹² "Catching Fire: Staff with Spirit, Spiritual Formation Framework for the Mission of Catholic Education" 2nd Edition. Archdiocese of Brisbane.

¹³ www3.dbu.edu/naugle/pdf/TheMegaChurchMistake.pdf

THE MODEL IN ACTION AT YOS

Exploration of the spiritual journey, while intentional, is in no way prescriptive. Exploring spirituality must be respectful of the young person and must, like all case work, be lead by the individual, recognising they are the expert in their own lives. This model is not intended to increase paperwork and/or workload. Rather than being an “additional duty,” opportunity for exploring spirituality should permeate existing interactions in simple conversation and actions, and thereby allow for more concrete activity for those young people who identify the need/interest. And as with other case work, there can be referrals and partnerships with other organisations.

The implementation of the model may include but is not limited to, the following actions and outcomes measurements:

CONSIDER	CONNECT	CONTRIBUTE
Client interview/ discussion where the following types of questions are being asked: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What do you most cherish? 2. What is your passion? 3. What is your purpose in life? 4. What are your goals in life? 5. What legacy do you wish to leave behind? 	Community dinners with intentional conversations about life considering spirituality, perhaps featuring a special guest such as a Salvo officer.	Gratitude pinboard – in office spaces and online
<i>% of young people asked as compared to total client numbers for period.</i>	<i>Number of attendees.</i>	<i>Number of young people contributing to pinboard.</i>
Provision of a quiet space for contemplation	Encourage and support partnership with Street Level and/or local church (Pine Rivers Salvos) or other faith community.	Spiritual journey “blog” monitored by and participated in by youth work and education staff.
<i>Number of young people accessing space compared with number accessing wider YOS space.</i>	<i>% of young people engaged with a faith community.</i>	<i>% of young people engaging the the blog.</i>
Providing Bibles for reading	Providing opportunity to discuss Bible readings and their meaning/application	Conversations about life considering spirituality
<i>Number of Bibles accessed for reading.</i>	<i>% of young people engaging in discussion.</i>	
Prayer request box in office and/or online	Providing opportunity to pray together with or for a young	Hospitality

	person/people, conversational prayer.	
<i>Number of requests made per month.</i>	<i>% of young people engaging in prayer.</i>	<i>Number of young people participating (e.g. hosting dinner)</i>
A safe place to chat about any aspect of life	Spiritual journey “blog,” allowing for online connection, prayer and discussion of faith	Inclusivity
Listening to and reflecting with others about our experience	One to one or group experiences with spiritual mentors ¹⁴	Social justice/advocacy
	<i>% of young people requesting and engaging with a spiritual mentor.</i>	
Participating in an Alpha course or similar	Respectfully listening to, and reflecting with, others about our experience, hearing our stories.	Volunteering
<i>Number of participants</i>		<i>Number of young people in volunteering options.</i>
Weekly Bible verse displayed in YOS spaces. Written in a modern translation, such as The Message, and allowing for conversation around that verse and what it could mean for the individual.	Allowing time for the journey, intentionally including spirituality in case work.	Spiritual disciplines including meditation, prayer, study, solitude, service, celebration
<i>Number of young people engaging in conversation about verse.</i>		<i>% of young people engaging in these activities.</i>
	Dialogue with other traditions and faiths ¹⁵ as lead by the young people.	
	<i>Number of young people engaging in discussion.</i>	

¹⁴ www.sarmy.org.au/en/Ministry/Spiritual-Life-Development/Spiritual-Direction

¹⁵ “Catching Fire: Staff with Spirit, Spiritual Formation Framework for the Mission of Catholic Education” 2nd Edition. Archdiocese of Brisbane.

The process of exploring spirituality with young people cannot be forced or overly structured but rather it needs to be organic and free to evolve in response to the direction and needs of the young person. As previously stated, we are to present the opportunity to explore spirituality, to consider what this means for each individual and allow the young person to make their own choice, as with all aspects of our work with people.

Spirituality of Staff – Enriching the Work Experience

Recognising that the whole person, body, mind and spirit, comes to work, YOS also needs to provide opportunity for staff to explore their spirituality. While the body allows tasks to be completed and the mind allows thought, judgment and action, the spirit gives capacity to bring our passions to work. For most staff working in this field there are passions for justice, service and care and by integrating the whole person we allow for greater authenticity and subsequently, job satisfaction and productivity¹⁶.

Making time and providing space for staff to explore their own spirituality could be as simple as quiet reflection before meetings, praying together, sharing our stories and listening to others, allowing space for reflection and quiet time, celebrating achievements and highlighting the talents and passions that made it happen.

YOS already engages in many of these practices but by ensuring management promote the opportunities staff will be enriched just as the young people we work alongside.

¹⁶ Economy of Communion <https://eocnoam.org>

Conclusion

YOS management will need to be intentional about embedding the exploration of spirituality into case management and programming. Spirituality and how it is explored with young people needs to be as much a part of induction processes as workplace health and safety procedures. The challenge is to engage all staff to share the mandate for spirituality, respectful of individuals and meaningful to their background.

The spirituality domain of the Independence Framework is simply about allowing for transformation. It is about connecting with the individual's story and making meaning of it, companionship with them on their journey and recognising our own.

The following extract from Michael Leunig's, *Common Prayer*, is apt for all we undertake at YOS:

God help us to change.

To change ourselves and to change our world.

To know the need for it.

To deal with the pain of it.

To feel the joy of it.

To undertake the journey without understanding the destination.¹⁷

¹⁷ Andrews, David. "Not Religion But Love: Practising a Radical Spirituality of Compassion," 2001.