The impact of Healing of Memories workshops: a case study of KwaZulu-Natal churches

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ABSTRACT

Trauma is worldwide phenomenon that affects many individuals and communities. In the case of South Africa, the apartheid regime has been the major cause of trauma for individuals as well as for communities. Although the Truth and Reconciliation Commission played a kind of healing role for traumatized individuals and communities, many were left unhealed and not reconciled.

To bridge the gap left by the TRC in the context of trauma healing, some NGOs, such as the Institute for Healing of Memories, have taken up the task by organizing workshops aimed at healing affected individuals, churches and communities. In addition, they also helped people to forgive one another, reconcile and build peace. This research examines the impact of Healing of Memories workshops carried out in Durban some years ago. The participants reported significant progress towards trauma healing and reconciliation.

DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I wish to state that this dissertation has not been submitted for a degree at any university.

The general perception is that trauma healing is soft, a warm fuzzy, that it has a little or nothing to do with realpolitik and no role to play in reducing violence.

Yet trauma and violence are integrally linked: violence often leads to trauma, and unhealed trauma, in turn, can lead to violence and further loss of security.

<div align="center">Carolyn E. Yoder</div>

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ANC: African National Congress

CSVR: Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation

DELP: Durban Evangelical Lutheran Parish

DRC: Dutch Reformed Church

DRC[1]:   Democratic Republic of the Congo

DUT: Durban University of Technology

Ds.   Dominee (Reverend/Pastor)

ELCSA: Evangelical Lutheran Church of South Africa

ELCSA-NT: Evangelical Lutheran Church of South Africa /Natal-Transvaal

FELSiSA: Free Evangelical Lutheran Synod of South Africa.

HOM: Healing of Memories

HROC: Healing and Rebuilding Our Communities

IHoM: Institute of Healing for Memories

IFP: Inkhata Freedom Party

ISS: Institute for Security Studies

LCS: Lutheran Church of South Africa

UDF: United Democratic Front

URC: Uniting Reformed Church

PTSD: Post- Traumatic Stress Disorder

STAR: Strategies for Trauma Awareness and Resilience.

DEDICATION

To my mother Famiya Mukuba, you are a treasure in my life especially for your endless love and showing me the way at my first school. You have been the pillar of strength for my entire life.

To my father's Mazambi Lengwa Bofio and Mukambilwa Munyololo Kitambila, you have gone so early to see this work. You will always be in my heart. May your souls rest in peace.

To my maternal uncle Kisamba Elias you have inspired and given me the sense and the value of one going to school and learn about the world. Even though you are no longer there to see my achievement your words are still reasoning in my head.

To my wife Mukambilwa Wakulungwa Rose, we have been hurt, stressed and traumatized. But, with our mutual love, companionship, support and wisdom we have come to understand that there's a way out of stress and trauma. I thank you and will always do for you companionship and love despite the fact that we have been living at long distance for the past four years. Let us pray for our reunification through the grace of Almighty God.

To my children: Francine Musombwa, Mukambilwa Walumona Altesse, Mukambilwa Lubusa Nathalie, Mukambilwa Musombwa Prince and Mukambilwa Benjamin. Guys' being without you around has always put me under stress and mostly leaving me traumatized.

I have carried this research with tears as; I was always under stress due to your absence. Now it is almost over. Thank you very much for your understanding, prayers and accepting that your father could be away from you for such a long period of time. This has been a sacrifice and would like all of you to follow my footsteps one day.

To my nephews and nieces, Dieu-donne Mambo Mukambilwa, Napoleon Mukambilwa, Bonfils Mukambilwa, Yvonne Mukambilwa, Bofio Mukambilwa and Yvette Mukambilwa, voici un example a suivre. I have done this just to demonstrate that whenever there's a commitment the achievement is always possible. A vous de jouer.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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APPENDICES

PART I. INTRODUCTION

This part deals with the background of trauma events in the African continent in general and South Africa in particular.

It also elucidates the main objective and specific aims of the study and gives an overview of the different chapters that will be developed in the dissertation.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1   Background

Trauma is a worldwide phenomenon and its consequences, if not well treated, can be devastating. Many people around the world have been and are still being affected by traumatic events and South Africans in particular have not been spared from these events, although its impact is often not understood or acknowledged by the affected and those living with them.

Retief (2009:13) explains that

> The truth of the matter is that the people around them often feel ill at ease about their situation, and consequently their emotional pain and suffering are avoided in conversation: not only by others; they themselves do their best to conceal their condition-sometimes even from themselves. In our culture it is particularly men who find themselves in this unviable situation.

An explanation of how our culture influences attitudes towards dealing with trauma is given by Joseph (2006:44) who argues that "our cultural goal seems to be just the opposite: not to face trauma and heal it, but to avoid it altogether. Failing to grasp this element of renewal, we are increasingly ruled by fear and anxiety".

The level of trauma within South African communities has been very high due to the country's apartheid history which divided the country and its citizens and practiced extensive abuses of human rights. To the direct violence of apartheid could be added its structural violence. Kaminer and Eagle (2010:10-12) remark that

> It is therefore apparent that very few South African live lives completely untouched by trauma and, for many, exposure to potentially traumatic experiences ...forms of violence and traumatization were particularly common in South Africa during apartheid included the political detention and torture of those who were active in the anti-apartheid struggle, the abduction and murder of suspected political activists, stoning, shooting….

To the violence of apartheid can be added violence within household, in schools and in communities. And today, there are other sources of traumatization, including unemployment, poverty, HIV/AIDS.

Faced with this, it is therefore necessary to find a way of creating a new society in South Africa with a lesser traumatized and healthy population. Kaminer (2006:481) notes that "Given the high rates of trauma exposure in and post-traumatic stress disorder in South Africa, providing effective interventions for trauma survivors is a priority for both public and private mental health practitioners".

Despite the good work that the Truth and Reconciliation Commission has achieved Waterson (2009:32) states that "only twenty thousand South Africans victims of apartheid and seven thousand perpetrators had the opportunity to appear before the TRC" and offered some measure of healing. Consequently, many victims of apartheid remain traumatized. (Kaminer and Eagle 2010: 11-12) note that

> It is possible that some torture survivors in South Africa, as in other countries, have never revealed their torture experiences to anyone, due to a deep sense of shame and humiliation, feelings of guilt for having given evidence against their comrades as a result of torture, a fear of reprisals by agents of the former government.

Trauma is very dangerous if not dealt with in the early stage and might led to Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) which is more dangerous than the trauma itself. David Becker, cited in Hamber (2003:77), remarks that

> Extreme traumatization to describe a situation where the psychological make-up of individuals and communities is continuously overridden, resulting in the destruction of individuals senses of belonging to society and their being unable to perform the normal activities required for society to function.

But, what is post-traumatic stress disorder? "Post-traumatic stress disorder is an intense physical and emotional response to thoughts and reminders of the event that last for many weeks or months after the traumatic event". (CDC: 2012). For Carlos and Ruzek (2003:2), they explain that "post-traumatic is a specific set of problems resulting from a traumatic event". Bremmer (1999:349) considers PTSD "as a final common pathway occurring in response to many different types of catastrophic stressors, including burn injury, concentration camps, combat and natural disasters".

This definition seems to fall short as there are other factors such as a lack of appetite, sleeping problems, lack concentration, unhappiness and fear which can also lead to the post-traumatic stress disorder.

Baker (2010:32-33) explains that "Many symptoms of the PTSD are intrinsically distressing-nightmares, flashbacks, sleep problem, irritability…diminished interest or participation in significant events, or avoiding places or people, difficulty of concentrating and hyper vigilance".

According to Mark (2011:1) "post-traumatic stress disorder is a constellation of disabling behavioral and emotional symptoms that occur in some individuals who experience severe psychological trauma such as combat, sexual abuse or natural disasters".

Despite these explanations, PTSD is not the only consequence of trauma as has been emphasized by most western therapists. For many critics trauma is not a single event but it is multidimensional. Wessells (2008:11) notes that:

> Although torture survivors may experience PTSD and other maladies and may benefit from counseling, no amount of counseling will correct the structural violence, human rights violations, and systems of state oppression that produce many forms of trauma…PTSD is only one of many overwhelming problems for people living in war zones. In many emergencies, trauma is believed by many practitioners to be less overwhelming than are grief and multiple losses.

Following the same analysis of how PTSD has been interpreted by psychologists, clinicians and many others therapists, Hamber (2003: 79) argues that

> PTSD should not be used as the principal vehicle for explaining the impact of the traumatic situation on the individual or society. Rather the symptoms or (reactions) must be viewed from a position of understanding the origins of violence and its meaning to those involved, as well as the social and cultural context.

It is very important, however, for a person exposed to a traumatic event to know how he/she is coping after that event and if necessary to seek assistance.

> …experiencing the truth about one's experiences are so important for individual and family healing and also repairing the longer social fabric in which individuals and families are embedded. Silence is one of the most psychologically and socially destructive aspects of ethnographical trauma. (Stepakoff 2007: 411)

However, sometimes it is very difficult for people to open up and share their traumatic situation with those who are close to them such as family members, friends and community members. As human being especially men we pretend to be stronger than others due to their culture and mostly masculinity while being affected by traumatic events and refuse to seek assistance.

Retief (2009: 14) writes that

We live in a society in which people are not encouraged to seek help for emotional wounding. Indeed, it is regarded as a sign of weakness, and wounding is denied. As a result, many of the people around us are emotionally scarred. This affects not only the persons themselves, but also their relationship with those near them.

This coincides exactly with what we hear on a daily basis in many African − communities that men do not cry. They are compared with tigers that always hold back their tears in any given situation showing how strong they are and in control everything.

1.2   Healing from trauma in South Africa

It is clear that other ways must be found to help people heal from the trauma they face. One such initiative is the Healing of Memories workshops (HoM), established by Fr. Michael Lapsley, an Anglican Priest and founder of the *Institute for Healing of Memories*. These workshops are conducted in most of South Africa's provinces and abroad as well. These workshops provide opportunities for the traumatized people to 'tell their stories in a safe space' in small groups of people who have been through trauma. As Marlin-Curiel (2002:279) explains, the Healing of Memories workshops "function as an individual and collective journey of exploring the effects of the apartheid years on us. The emphasis is on dealing with these issues at an emotional, psychological and spiritual level rather than intellectual one".

Other therapeutic methods such as the *Theatre for Development,* also offer victims of trauma a chance towards healing through story-telling. Marlin-Curiel (2002:275) writes that "For many survivors, both those who did and those who did not qualify as victims of gross human rights violations to the TRC; theatre creates a therapeutic space where they can share their stories".

This case study of the Dutch Reformed Church in Amanzimtoti, the Uniting Reformed Church in KwaMakhutha, south of Durban and the Lutheran churches in Durban, intends to assess how Healing of Memories workshops contributes to trauma healing and the building of unity, forgiveness and reconciliation amongst individuals, communities and congregations.

In coming together, these different churches aim for their members to forgive each other and set each other free from the past and start a new life. They have realized that this may be the only way for them to heal from the past trauma.

> Forgiveness is the culmination of healing, the most vital need of a victim, and a way to freedom from victim hood. As such, it creates a solid ground for developing a new identity. The past cannot be restored, but the transformed person is no longer the person

who needs that past. Forgiveness reveals the true meaning of suffering, as a reuniting with spiritual strength and deep level. (Bothcharova 2001:230)

1.3   Overall objective and specific aims

The primary aim of this dissertation was to examine the impact of Healing of Memories workshops carried out seven years ago in several KwaZulu-Natal church congregations.

The specific objectives were:

- To describe the nature, extent, causes and consequences of trauma, with particular reference to South Africa.

- To investigate the main approaches to dealing with trauma.

- To explain the Healing of Memories approach to trauma healing.

- To evaluate its effectiveness in dealing with trauma among members of several KZN church congregations.

- To examine the extent to which trauma healing has had an impact on reconciliation.

1.4   Motivation for the study

At a personal level, I began studying peace in 2004; I have been interested in finding how we could promote forgiveness in order to achieve sustainable reconciliation in our families, communities and society at large.

When people forgive one another, they are like new-born people, even though they might still remember about their past. Forgiveness does not mean erasing what happened to an individual. In other words. it does not mean forgetting about the past. The most important thing is to know how to manage our past and live a free life. Da Silva (2001:303) states that

> For it's only in remembering that we can call up courage to forgive…Memory makes the past available to us so that we can work through events and traumas without trivializing or denying them, in fact memory makes it possible to reclaim and reinterpret past events in light of the present and future.

As a trained facilitator with the Institute for Healing of Memories (IHOM), I have been working with people from various societal levels who were traumatized during the apartheid, but also with those who have been victims of the various types of violence which are so widespread in South Africa.

My experience also as a refugee living in South Africa for almost sixteen years helps me to understand how one becomes traumatized day by day. Starting from my surname, my culture and the way I communicate myself in IsiZulu or English. traumatizing questions have always been asked of me about who I am.

Communities and some churches were divided by the apartheid regime according to race. It is in this context that the Dutch Reformed Church (Predominantly white) in Amanzimtoti gave birth to the black Uniting Reformed Church in KwaMakhutha. But also the Lutheran churches (community) in South Africa in general and in Durban particularly have also been divided by the color of their skin. With the assistance of Healing of Memories workshops these churches have realized the necessity of coming together and finding a way of reconciliation so that they could be united. The DRC and URC for example have been celebrating services together since 2004 as a result of greater unity.

I have been very motivated to explore this attempt by these churches to see if it could be adopted by other congregations, communities or countries, with forgiveness and reconciliation as the ultimate goals.

1.5   Research design and data collection method.

This research is qualitative. We need to understand the experience and feelings of participants, how they came to an agreement for the renewal of relationships after a long period of separation and mutual hurting and the impact this had on their trauma. I will utilize semi-structured interviews questions and focus groups with a total of twenty respondents.

1.6   Ethical consolidations

The research maintained the anonymity of respondents and did not use their names but used pseudonyms as necessary. I promised to respect their dignity and that of their congregations and every effort was made to ensure the objectivity of the study. I strove to avoid any harm to participants.

1.7. Overview of the thesis

This research contains five parts with seven chapters.

In chapter one, I present background on trauma and its healing especially in regards to South African history. I also elaborate on the overall objective and the specific aims of the study, the research design and methodology and the ethical consolidations.

In chapter two, I review relevant literature, in particular the different ways in which individuals can heal from trauma.

Chapter three deals with the nature, extent, causes and consequences of trauma in the African context in general and South Africa in particular and its impact on individuals and communities.

Chapter four explains the methods that were used for data collection and justification of their choice.

Chapter five presents a brief history of the *Institute for Healing of Memories* and how the workshops were conducted.

Chapter 6 reports on the data collected.

Chapter 7 is the conclusion.

PART II. LITERATURE REVIEW

This section analyses the meaning of trauma through different literature. It explains the understanding of trauma in the Western and African context and the mechanisms used for trauma healing in the Western and African environment. The relationship between trauma healing and peace building is dealt with in this part.

CHAPTER TWO.

MEANING OF TRAUMA AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO PEACE BUILDING

2.1   Introduction

Trauma is understood in different ways. (Kaminer and Eagle 2010:2) note that

> The origin of the word trauma lies in a Greek word meaning 'to tear' or 'to puncture'. In the case of psychological trauma this understanding is reflected in a notion of psychological wounding and the penetration of unwanted thoughts, emotions and experiences into the psyche or being of a person.

For Western psychiatrists, psychologists and other practitioners, the best way of assisting traumatized people is through counseling, medication and other therapeutic methods. Walsh (2007:207) notes that "The predominant therapeutic models used for treating trauma and survivors of major disasters have been individually focused pathology based, centered on identifying and reducing symptoms of post-traumatic disorder, characterized as mental health".

However, we should understand that the Western therapies are very expensive and simply not available for people living in developing countries. Citing the case of child soldiers who demobilized themselves in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC[1]) Juma (2012:385) remarks that

> The coast of treating the medical problems caused by the wound are too high to be provided by the local organization…some self-demobilized child soldiers go through basic stress and trauma counseling sessions, although owing to a lack of know-how these services are not available to all children requiring them.

In the same context Kaminer et al (2001:376) explain that

> Given the high cost of medical and psychiatric care in the context where resources are scarce, as well as the arguably limited cultural applicability modalities, indigenous healers and existing community resources also have an important role to play in the recovery of survivors of human rights abuses in South Africa.

Thus, in countries coming out of armed conflict, in which civilians are the main victims, there are a range of alternative interventions, ranging from truth commissions, rituals and cleansing. All can be important for trauma healing and peace building.

Traumatic events might arise from natural disasters and unnatural events (rape, murder, hijacking, gender based violence…). While some individuals deal with their own trauma, the majority will need support and assistance. (Carlson and Ruzek 2003:1) assert that

> Because most trauma survivors are not familiar with how trauma affects people, they often have trouble understanding what is happening to them. They may think trauma is their fault, that they are going crazy, or that there is something wrong with them because other people who experienced trauma don't appear to have the same problems.

Trauma which is not dealt with can negatively affect individuals and their communities. Shalev and Ursano (N/D:6) write that "Traumatic events certainly disrupt a person's sense of coping and therefore lead to temporary periods in which individuals may be flooded by distress, feeling of worthlessness and maybe unable to make use of help offered". In this situation, individuals or community members will become aggressive and violent toward other people and even other communities. Therefore, peaceful relations among individuals and communities are compromised. (Van der Merwe and Vienings 2001:344) state that "But failure to deal with trauma may have even more dire consequences than effectively disabling individuals; if ignored, certain victims of past violence are at risk for becoming the perpetrators of retributive violence or displaced social and domestic violence".

2.2   Western and African understandings of trauma.

The definition of trauma has varied through the centuries and sometimes different meanings to trauma have been given by psychiatrists and psychologists around the world. (Hollick and Connelly 2010:8) explain that

> The term 'trauma 'is widely used by medical profession to refer to physical injuries, our interest is with psychological trauma (sometimes referred to as psychiatric trauma) which may or may not be associated with physical injuries, but often occurs when the body is unharmed.

Juma (2012:398) explains that "Contrary to stress, trauma is a word used for any event that causes major distress to a person. Trauma may be physical, such as a wound, or it may be emotional, such as grieving for a death". However, Atkinson et al (2010:135) argue that "It remains contentious whether the world 'trauma' relates to an event, a series of events or environment, to the process of experiencing the event or environment, or to the psychological, emotional and somatic effects of that experience".

In the same way Hamber (2003:77) remarks that:

It is important constantly to bear in mind that trauma is not simply a collection of symptoms, as it is often portrayed-in fact symptoms may not follow all traumatic situations. In its essence, trauma is the destruction of individual and/or collective structures of a society.

The definition of Duplessis et al (2001:444) is a helpful one and will be used in this dissertation as the standard Western understanding:

A person is traumatized when exposed to a traumatic event which involved actual or threatened death or injury, or threat to the physical integrity of himself or another person, and the person's response is one of helplessness or horror. There is therefore a sense of loss and an irreversible change of circumstances such as the loss of a loved one, and at the same time the person experiences a severe impairment of his normal coping abilities.

The normal Western response to such a person is one-to-one therapy with a trauma counselor. However, Western definitions of trauma do not necessarily portray the way Africans perceive or how they try to deal with it.

Africans feel much more part of a community than individuals may do in the West. Indeed, trauma is often felt by whole communities. As a consequence, if Africans feel traumatized, it is more natural for them to engage in communal rituals and ceremonies, in the same way that they do in respect of forgiveness and reconciliation. If individuals feel detached from their communities, as in the case of migrant workers, they may deny the presence of trauma or they may try to sort out it by themselves. In either case, unless trauma is dealt with, it may have negative consequences for individual or the entire community.

2.3   Trauma healing and peace building

In Africa, the connections between healing trauma - whether individually or communally felt - and peace involve practices and procedures very different from the commonly assumed Western model of one-to-one trauma counseling.

The link between trauma healing following violence and peace building is forgiveness and reconciliation. "Without some form of reconciliation and resolution, the collective traumas of the past will continue to have enduring effects that are undesirable and unwanted". (Nytagodien and Neal 2004:375). No peaceful community can exist without forgiveness and reconciliation which are essential to building better relationships and trust among community members.

In the aftermath of political trauma, healing and recovery require addressing not only individual issues but also collective issues of polarization, social divisions, hatred and fear, and issues of

structural violence that underlie them. It is of fundamental importance to link psychosocial support for individual and groups with wider processes of transformation for social justice that change the structures of oppressions, marginalization, and exclusion that help to spark violence and that continue to stimulate destructive conflict. Wessells (2008:22)

The link between trauma, healing, forgiveness, reconciliation and peace building can operate between individuals and their community, and also between communities. In this chapter, I will give example of these various levels.

2.3.1 Traditional rituals and ceremonies

The healing of trauma following the civil war in Mozambique was almost entirely carried out in communities using traditional rituals and ceremonies. In the words of Honwana (1998:76):

> It is by means of spiritual understandings that people can restore meaning and a sense of balance to their lives following traumatic experiences…these people are not assuming that the government and or other outsiders will meet their needs, but are using the means available to them to heal the social wounds of war and to restore stability in their communities.

Former child soldiers in Mozambique and Angola were accepted back into their communities after they made 'confessions', committed themselves to better behavior and asked forgiveness:

> We all make meaning of our lives in the light of our own experiences and those around us. Community based cleansing and healing rituals seem to be effective in dealing with the emotional and social problems of war- affected children, helping them to come to terms with their war experiences and facilitating their reintegration into family and community life. (Swartz 1998:260)

Other authors consider music, dances, prayers, singing, meditation, exercising as ways of trauma healing, which once again demonstrates that not only the pathologic method should be given attention in the context of trauma healing. Walsh (2007:213) writes that: "Prayers, meditative practices and faith communities can provide strength and support. Music, such as participation in community or congregational singing, can release sorrow and be uplifting, restoring spirits to carry on". The influence of ancestors in promoting social harmony is strongly acknowledged.

Often, then, these rituals involve some plans for ongoing support. Rituals are considered as a strong spiritual component. Juma (2012:385) explains that in the city of Uvira in the east of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC[1]):

> Psychological support is also provided through what is mostly known as 'nyumba ya mahombi'. These Christian homes, which are not only popular but also a major means of healing all kinds of sickness in local communities, are used cast out evil spirits through intensive and prolonged prayers.

Similarly, Hart (2009:2) emphasizes that:

> There are other important and culture specific methods of healing individuals and their communities that include prayer and meditation, breathing exercises, dancing, singing, and story-telling. Rituals and symbols can be used to heal trauma, as well as community rebuilding and restorative justice education.

All these discussions demonstrate how much the traditional ways of dealing with trauma has been neglected by Western therapeutics. In the African context, trauma events are multidimensional and sometime intergenerational. Wanganeen (2010:269) argues that

> Just as healing oneself is all in the timing for finding new approaches to a new model of healing grief; it's important for Western civilization and all its health systems to understand that mental illnesses are derivative of intergenerational (ancestral) supposed unresolved grief and that there are two forms of grief, healthy and toxic.

Clearly, it is also very important to consider African culture and beliefs when dealing with trauma either at individual level or community level because traumatic events are always associated with malevolent forces (for example, bewitchment) and the anger of the ancestors.

2.3.2 Healing workshops

In the Great Lakes region and Kenya the Healing and Rebuilding Our Communities (HROC) workshops were established to help deal with the trauma caused by the genocide in Rwanda, the wars in Burundi and DRC[1] and the violence in Kenya after the election. The workshops bring victims and perpetrators together in recognition of the fact that both groups are suffering from trauma (Website reference 6). Workshops of this kind are a kind of synthesis of traditional community conflict resolution approaches and a Western workshop where self-reflection and sharing is encouraged in a psychologically safe environment.

2.3.3 Truth commissions

Truth and commissions, of which the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) is the most famous example, are designed to make the truth clear following societal trauma and, at least in the case of the TRC attempted this by listening to the stories of some 20,000 victims and encouraging perpetrators to admit their action, with the incentive of possible amnesty from persecution.

However, some people have disputed whether the TRC has had much impact on trauma healing, given that many issues were left unresolved. It had been hoped that the TRC:

> … would itself provide mental health benefits by enabling people to make their previously invisible suffering and pain, however, the anticipated mental health benefits may have been offset by other factors. Many survivors continued even after the TRC to live in abject poverty while they watched some of the perpetrators who had testified living lives of privilege and relative opulence. (Wessells 2008:50).

Some scholars reject the idea that truth telling can bring any psychological healing. They argue that having individuals explain their traumatic ordeal can re-open their wounds and re-traumatize them. Brouneus (2010:429) notes that the "…assumption that truth telling is healing, suggesting instead that witnessing per se involves psychological risks that hitherto have been neglected". He suggests that once-off testifying before a TRC or similar organization cannot heal trauma as this needs to be done gradually. Mendeloff (2009:603) argues that

> We do not know, for example, how many victims likely benefited from their TRC experiences, or how many might have been harmed by them. The actual numbers - even rough estimates - are maddeningly vague. Some victims benefited from the TRC process because it was empowering and offered some a sense of relief and 'closure'. For others, it was at best a profound disappointment, at worst a cause of renewed emotional distress or 'retraumatization'.

In the same vein, Kaminer et al (2001:375) also state that

> There was no significant difference in the rates of depression, PTSD or other anxiety disorders for participants who gave public testimony, closed testimony or no testimony to the truth commission…Any short-term relief associated with giving testimony is unlikely to be sustainable in face of chronically high levels of community trauma.

On the other hand, the many black South Africans were mostly concerned about the amnesty procedure which they see as encouraging false confessions and false reconciliation.

Other critics have drawn attention to the pressure to forgive and reconcile which underpinned the TRC process. Brudholm (2008:78) remarks that "the resistance to forgive or the expression of resentment can be consistent with a striving for reconciliation and mutual recognition of humanity; that is, exactly, what was excluded from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission process in South Africa".

Despite such criticisms, it is clear in the words of Stepakoff (2007:411) that silence is one of the most psychologically and socially destructive aspects of ethnographical trauma". Retief (2009:157) writes that "…forgiveness is essential for the mental and psychological health and

growth of the persons who need to forgive. It prevents bitterness from finding a grip on them and it is the last, indispensable step in the healing process". I will remember Fr. Michael Lapsley (founder of the Institute for Healing of Memories) saying that he had forgiven himself for what happened to him after receiving a letter bomb send by the apartheid regime which left him heavily wounded. We can understand such self-forgiveness as a central part of self-trauma healing. Lander (2012:4) explains that

> Forgiveness lacks a consensual definition. However, at the centre of various approaches is the idea of a person deeply and unfairly hurt undergoing a transformation in which negative emotions toward the offender are decreased, including anger, hate, hostility, bitterness and resentment. In addition, motivation to seek revenge and to avoid contact with the individual who caused injury or betrayal is lessened.

These many and varied opinions about the TRC illustrate how South Africans felt about the blanket forgiveness given to the perpetrators of human right abuses committed under the apartheid regime for the sake of reconciliation. Some have even said that it is the government that has forgiven the perpetrators instead of the survivors doing so (Hamber and Wilson 2002:45) state that:

> When 'reconciliation' has become the order of the day, victims who persist in their demands are seen as imprisoned in the past, as hostages to their own harmony and therefore obstructions to the process of selective forgetting advocated by reconciling national leaders.

This can also be explained by the way that many South Africans felt that they have been cheated by the new government. They thought it would care about their past, but unfortunately it has not given them the opportunity to seek reparation needed for the closure of their wounds. This would have given them full healing. Hamber (2003:80) states that

> Survivors can experience national processes of reconciliation, especially in the absence of justice, as 'false reconciliation'. This is because the national process of 'moving forward and making amends' does not coincide with the process of the individual's coming to term with the situation, or because reconciliation has not ensured sufficient social justice to complement the individual healing process.

Surely, this situation is of great concern for trauma healing either at a personal, community or national level, as it does not lead to sustainable peace building among individuals, communities and the whole nation.

However, the reality on the ground and the aim of building a new peaceful and democratic South Africa did not leave much room to maneuver for the TRC, as explained by Villa-Vicencio

(2000a:76): "South Africa had a choice between the silence of perpetrators without justice being done, and learning the truth without perfect justice having been done. The choice of the latter involves amnesty". The new South Africa was in need of a mechanism that could bring all its community members together in trying to heal the traumas of the past. As mentioned earlier on, trauma might be individual or collective, but if not dealt with, it can have important negative consequences. (Nytagodien and Neal 2004:375-376) explains that

> Just as traumas at the individual level appear recurrently in nightmares, sleepless, loss of appetite, and flashbacks during working hours, collective traumas from the past continue to have a living influence upon the contemporary present. The historical effects of collective trauma show up in a sense of malaise and despair, and sporadic and disruptive acts of violence.

Other truth commissions have struggled with similar issues. The Argentinian truth commission has left the mothers of the disappeared children (known as the mothers of plaza de Mayo) still asking to know where the remains of their children are buried. Fisher (1989:81-82) cited in (Rigby 2001:68) writes that "They wanted to stop the word 'disappeared' being used. This was their way of burying the issue. Perhaps they thought they could buy our silence…"

For these mothers, accepting reparation would be seen as betrayal of the memories of their children and at the same time become accomplices of their death. "Accepting reparations would be too guilt-inducing, and implies giving up hope and rendering the lives of their children as meaningless" Hamber (2000:225).

In Chile, the commission set up to deal with human rights abuses committed under the Pinochet regime left many survivors disappointed and re-traumatized, particularly because of the protection of perpetrators from persecution and more importantly, not giving victims an opportunity of telling the truth. As Roberta Bacic cited in Rigby (2001:89) puts it "All the activity and arguments demonstrate that the topic is neither forgotten nor forgiven, and that Chilean society has not been reconciled…how victims and perpetrators can coexist without having at least recognized the harm which has been caused?"

There needs to be an opportunity for perpetrators to hear what it is like for the victims. (Johnstone and Van Ness 2007:13, 37) explain that

> One significant way in which offenders can do this is to meet with those harmed, listen respectfully to them, and answer any questions they may have, apologize and agree to reasonable

reparative actions which they suggest…reparation, both material and symbolic, has a primary role in redressing the wrong. As such it is central to restorative justice.

When the survivors and perpetrators cannot come together in search of trauma healing, the situation will always remain tense and reconciliation is almost impossible. Hayner (2002:10-31) explains that

> The uneasy dialectic between perpetrators and victims is central to understanding the process by which collective traumas become embedded in the social heritage of any given group of people. At its core, the relationship is adversarial because the victim and the perpetrator are locked into a battle of assessing blame and responsibility.

For healing and reconciliation to happen among the survivors of violent traumas, there must be a good understanding and clear communication between them which might lead to a peaceful community. Staub et al (2005:302) insist that "healing and reconciliation need to go together, especially when the groups that have engaged in the violence against each other continue to live together. It has been a common belief that healing for trauma survivors requires a feeling of security".

Another illustration is that of the pursuit of justice by victims of the Tantung Priok massacre of 1984 in Indonesia. Unfortunately for the victims, this process was hindered by the government machinery and survivors were left more traumatized as the perpetrators became victorious and showing no remorse for what they have done. Wahyudi, cited in Waterson (2009:41), shows how survivors were affected by the outcome of the flawed reconciliation process:

> Survivors have suffered four layers of trauma. First, they suffered as a result of the past tragedy itself; second, from the stigmatization that the state has inflicted on them for years, third, they feel terrorized by fellow victims. Fourth, and most ironically, their years of struggle to prosecute the perpetrators in the end led to some of the victims themselves giving evidence that protected the perpetrators from being found guilty.

In the same context and emphasizing the significance of responsibility, Hayner (2006:188) argues that "…what survivors appear to want most of all is that perpetrators should explain what they did and their motivations for doing it, accept responsibility for their deeds and show genuine remorse". Without this, reconciliation is not possible and the collective or individual trauma healing becomes problematic and an obstruction to peace building.

In summary, one could say that trauma healing emanating from a well–organized truth commission, be it at a personal or community level, is a good channel for forgiveness, reconciliation and peace building. Nytagodien and Neal (2004:380) suggest that

> Perhaps it is more feasible to use the past to construct society in which similar abuses are never allowed again. We may find that complete reconciliation is not possible or even necessary to advance social justice and to create a more viable democracy. Forging a new society in South Africa requires agreement on the ugliness of the apartheid, although the burden of unwanted memories can never be completely eliminated.

2.4   Summary and conclusion

In this chapter I have elaborated on the different definitions of traumatic events and how survivors react to them. This chapter has also analyzed the linkage of trauma healing to peace building processes of forgiveness and reconciliation. For peace building to happen, individuals and communities' members should work through their past trauma**.** (Yoder and Barge 2011:17) argue that

> Peace building processes help people focus their energy on critical questions that need to be asked, basic practices of engagement with others, and creative problem solving while experiencing healing from past traumas, people come to understand how to avoid spiraling into destructive cycles of violence in the future.

In order to deal with the collective trauma from human rights and other forms of abuse, many countries have embarked on establishing truth and reconciliation commissions as a mechanism of healing and at the same time creating an opportunity for forgiveness in order to build a lasting peace among individuals and communities. As we will see in the following chapter, there are many people in South Africa wounded from apartheid, as well as those more recently traumatized by violence.

It is in this environment that different NGOs such as the Healing of Memories Institute have continued the unfinished business of the TRC.

We are mindful that some authors and researchers have found that these commissions do not contribute to trauma healing. On the contrary, they argue that the commissions may have worsened the situation for trauma survivors. This speaks to the need to carefully plan and implement rituals, workshops and truth commissions in ways which are sensitive to the victims and meet their need to hear an explanation from the perpetrators of what they did, and why.

CHAPTER THREE
TRAUMA IN CONTEMPORARY SOUTH AFRICA

3.1 Introduction

The African continent in general and South Africa in particular are violent places and therefore home to many traumatized people. According to (Kaminer and Eagle 2010:4)

> South Africa's history of political violence coupled with its contemporary high rates of violent crime, sexual abuse and domestic violence and road accident injury (amongst other issues), has unfortunately meant that the country represents, in some ways, 'a natural laboratory' in which to study the impact of traumatic events and their consequences.

According to the most recent book on trauma in South Africa (Kaminer and Eagle 2010), the country has very high levels of post-traumatic stress disorder. According to this book and insightful studies of the Centre for Study of Violence and Reconciliation (CSVR), there are at least five major areas of violence in South Africa which frequently result in traumatized individuals, families and communities:

- The direct as well as structural violence which was a central feature of Apartheid.

- Violence against women (gender based violence) and children (corporal punishment).

- Violence in school, including corporal punishment, gender based violence and bullying.

- Violence in communities including violent crime and violence with longstanding political origins.

- A big proportion of the large number of refugees comes with traumatic backgrounds, which are often added to by xenophobia. Much of this trauma is hidden or denied.

Many people are not ready to acknowledge the effects of trauma on their lives and always take the situation as normal and mostly not willing to seek any assistance. (Jones and Wessely 2007:1640) remark that "hitherto, it was argued that if a healthy individual suffered psychological effects as a result of a life-threatening event, these would resolve themselves naturally, a self-healing wound, with no long-term effects". In addition, there is a culture of an

African man being very strong and able to confront every situation/challenge head on without any assistance. Men are always compared with tigers which do not cry. With time passing the event will also pass by and forgotten. Retief (2009:14) notes

> Time is also a physical healer, but without the necessary medical interventions serious lesions often remain, which may impair the subsequent functioning of injured. In the same way your emotional wounds can, with the passing of time, be healed to some extent, yet you may retain debilitating emotional scars.

Cultural thinking and behavior are also considered as an element of annihilation in the situation of trauma healing. Hart (2009:2) writes that

> It may also be that cultural expectations disallow the healing process to take place, e.g. standing 'strong' in the face of fear and danger or the call to 'just get over it'. The result is that individuals and groups are less likely to comprehend what happened to them and how they might live and act in new ways.

The same culture portraying men as being strong has allowed men to abuse girls and women in various ways such as harassment, multiple partners, rapes, and gender based violence. Schlottman (2011:82) argues that "It is difficult to imagine a culture turning on its women and children, especially when one considers the behavior involved – child rape, infant rape, murder and astronomical crime – and the resulting high rates of infant maternal mortality and trauma".

Furthermore, many Africans think that traumatic events do not happen by accident but are always the result of a negative force. That is why they have to, in many circumstances, consult traditional healers, to do cleansing and others rituals to heal from trauma. Wessells (2008:5) writes that "…many rural Africans view the events in the visible world as caused by events in relations with the invisible world…many African people understand psychosocial issues and also treatment through the lens of their culture".

As Eagle (2005:200) states, there is a strong emphasis on why bad things are happening:

> Traumatized client commonly search for the explanations and meaning in the aftermath of such events…within a traditional African worldview there are explanations of the kinds of events that cause traumatic stress and customary practices for the restoration of harmony and balance.

Furthermore, while Westerners are thought to focus on one traumatic event, Africans may feel traumatized by the way of life they have to endure:

> …whereas outsiders tend to focus on traumatic experiences such as attack and exposure to life threatening events, many Africans report that their greatest suffering arises from the less visible,

every day and chronic ravages of poverty, hunger, not being able to fulfill roles such as mother or father, and uncertainty about the future. (Wessells 2008:8)

This shows that when talking about trauma and its impact on individuals or communities in Africa, we should not only limit our attention and intervention on the single event that the survivor has witnessed but also look at other situations and the environment in which the event has happened.

3.2   **Contemporary sources of trauma**

There are many causes/sources of trauma that range from natural disasters to human tailored traumatic events. Baker (2010:12) gives the following list:

> …car accident, railway accident, robberies, earthquake, heart attack, physical or sexual abuse as a child, life as a refugee, in prison or concentration camp, torture, wartime combat, being hostage, hearing about violence or murder of those you love, near-death experience…

All these natural and artificial events become traumatic when they impact negatively on the life of an individual or community members who have witnessed or been victims of traumatic events. Their impact is seen through the emotions and behavior that the individual or members of the community will manifest after the traumatic event. This might appear after a month or even years and might last a short period of time, weeks or for months or years. Rentea (2009:1) writes that

> Traumatic events can show their nature sometimes only years later. It was only five years later after the original destruction of the federal building in Oklahoma City that the helpers of first response began to show psychological consequences of their exposure to the traumatizing human suffering that they had witnessed.

There are also traumas that can be qualified as transmissible through generation to generation by such individuals or community members who have directly or indirectly been victims of traumatic events. Children who grow up in a violent environment which leaves them traumatized tend to reproduce the same violent behavior in their adulthood and consequently traumatize other people either by way of revenge knowingly or unknowingly. (Atkinson and Atkinson 1997:7) remark that

> …the endemic nature of violence over a number of generations has resulted in a situation where 'violent behaviors become the norm in families where there have been cumulative intergenerational impacts of trauma on trauma, expressing themselves in present generations as violence on self and others.

In African societies, as noted, people are also being traumatized by their daily living situation and by the need to understand why bad thing are happening. For example, when someone is going through a series of bad things such as the loss of a child, unemployment, accident and many other difficulties, he or she will think that there is something behind these situations. Either the person will say that the ancestors are not happy as she/he did not perform some rituals to honor them or that she/he has been bewitched. (Kaminer & Eagle 2010:114) write that

> …individuals seek to make meaning of traumatic events and that such meaning is often socially and culturally located. For example, we noted that in traditional African belief systems misfortunate is generally viewed as caused by some agent or set of events, rather than as purely accidental.

Women are almost invariably the victims of gender–based violence and ensuing trauma. To illustrate this Kessel et al, cited in Bessel et al (2005:389-390). write that:

> whereas men – the initial population studied to establish the diagnostic criteria of PTSD – most frequently are traumatized by accidents, war, assaults and natural disasters, childhood abuse is by far the most frequent cause of traumatization in women…women are much more likely to be traumatized in the context of intimate relationships than men are.

Bereavement is another source of trauma; due to fact that those who are left behind will always find it difficult to accept that the person who was their breadwinner, father, mother, sister or brother is no longer there among them. Baker (2010:55) writes "The death of someone closer means there is much more emotionally distressing material to process than for a critical remark. At first, the person may feel shock, unbelief, or numbed at death of their loved one". As far as crime in general is concerned, South Africa is among the highest rated in the world. Mnisi (2011:8) argues that

> There are still many places where women are not allowed to appear before, or address, customary courts directly – instead they must be represented by male relatives. This put women at a disadvantage if they are without adult male relatives, or if their relatives are the ones with whom they have dispute. This is so especially when the matter before the courts concerns a marital or family dispute or the status of the women rights vis-à-vis those of male relatives.

This provides an indication that many women in the rural areas in South Africa are left traumatized by gender-based violence, masculine behavior and exclusion of decision-making either in their families or communities.

One indicator of the extent of trauma in the African context is the high number of asylum-seekers, refugees and internally displaced people throughout the continent. Through my own

work with asylum-seekers and refugees, I have realized to which extent they have been traumatized in their countries of origin, during their journey to South Africa and while living in their host country. Robert et al (2006:2) explain that:

> Prior to migration refugees, are often exposed to violence. The traumatic experiences of refugees tend to be interrelated and generally cumulative, unlike single-event traumas…greater emotional distress among refugees, documenting high levels of post-traumatic stress, anxiety and depression and to lesser extent other mental health…

Coming mainly from war-torn countries, refugees have witnessed killings of their loved ones, friends, community members and other people unknown to them. Some of the refugees have been victims of human rights abuses which have left them very traumatized and some of them experience PTSD. (Gorst Unworthy and Goldenberg 1998:9) remark that

> Refugees may suffer systematic physical and psychological torture. There is a history of years of discrimination, persecution and harassment, perhaps enforced exile or a period of hiding. Once in exile there are social factors which may contribute to further psychological problems.

During some of the Healing of Memories workshops with asylum-seekers and refugees in Durban, the level of trauma has been demonstrated. Two testimonies of participants are presented in support of this:

> I want to thank the organizers for this important workshop that gave me the opportunity to share my story. This workshop will forever be in my mind even in many of my fellow refugees… I fled from my country because of the war and lost my friends, family and land; I have become a slave and a prisoner in my heart I have really been traumatized.
>
> I am sure that refugees need healing. Refugees are facing many problems and difficult situations, therefore become victims of their past, exposed to discrimination, xenophobia and forced to illegal activities.
>
> During the story telling session, I realized that every person has suffered in the past, and I find that the conflicts of the past have led to a deeply divided refugee community and starting hurting one another in this country of refugee. Many refugees are still unable to share their stories because of lack of trust in the community. (Anonymous, 30th of April 2006).

The second testimony reads as follows:

> I thank the organizers for this workshop for healing of memories that gave me the opportunity to share my life story and to heal myself by forgiving others. This is the testimony of what I experienced in my heart during the story telling with other refugees from other countries that fled their countries during armed conflicts, national disaster… healing of memories workshop is a safe and secret place where those who are traumatized can tell their stories to someone who can listen, can be healed and reconciled even if it very painful. During the story telling session, it always surprises me to find that every single person has a bag of pain, anger. I am pleased to say: I am

not alone and you are not alone. It gives me hope as well to go and strive for peace Building in our communities. (Mr Omari. R.K, 30th April 2006).

Finally, poverty and inequality are contributors to individual and community trauma. (Kaminer and Eagle 2010:137) explain that "…although not necessarily categorized as traumatic stressors in the classic sense, it is apparent that poverty, political repression, gender oppression and various form of discrimination create a climate for traumatization".

3.3   Consequences of trauma

Trauma affects the individual but also members of the household and the community:

> A person suffering from trauma will find it difficult to relate to friends and family and will more than likely not be able to contribute meaningfully to initiatives to rebuild families and communities after violence or war. These symptoms consist of the person's attempt to reduce exposure to people or places that may elicit memories of the event (or intrusive symptoms). This also involves symptoms such as social withdrawal, emotional numbing, and a sense of loss of pleasure. (Van der Merwe & Vienings 2001:344-345)

Other victims of trauma feel ashamed by what has happened to them. They consider themselves as being inferior vis-à-vis other people and useless in their family and community. This might be one of the reasons why traumatized people often prefer to isolate himself/herself from other family or community members. In other cases the traumatized will isolate herself/himself from the public for fear of being asked about what happened. (Kaminer and Eagle 2010:32) write

> This avoidance may not be restricted to the trauma-specific situation, but may also generalize to the point where the person avoids leaving their home at all, or only goes out when absolutely necessary, and this may substantially restrict their participation in their usual activities.

Some traumatized people might also change their behavior and become aggressive and violent towards others. This might be due to the fact that they need to take their frustration out on other people.

> But failure to deal with trauma may have even dire consequences than effectively disabling individuals; if ignored, certain victims of past violence are at risk for becoming the perpetrators of retributive violence or displaced social and domestic violence". (Van der Merwe and Vienings 2001:344)

In the African context, trauma at the individual level is a collective problem since the behavior of the affected person will also impact on his/her family and whole community at large. This is explained by the fact that the person belongs to the family and community and cannot be separated from these two entities.

3.4 Summary and conclusion

In this chapter I have discussed some of the major sources of trauma in Africa in general and South Africa in particular. The numbers of traumatized people in a violent country such as South Africa are likely to be very high and to overwhelm the Western and traditional responses to trauma. This opens the door for NGOs such as the Institute for the Healing of Memories to carry out their work.

Identifying ways of trauma healing for the betterment of individuals as well as for the community members is vital. This allows them to establish new relationships based on trust and respect which could give them a new start and consequently allow them to live in peace and harmony.

PART III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND CONTEXT

This part explains the research design and data collection methods used in the field. The research design is that of qualitative research and focus group discussions and personal interviews were used as methods for data collection. It gives also the location and brief history of the churches concerned with this study. The research plan, validity and reliability and ethical considerations are also developed in this part.

The Healing of Memories origins, philosophy and practice have been dealt with in this section. Reference is made to related workshops that are being run by different organizations in Africa for trauma healing and reconciliation.

CHAPTER FOUR
RESEARCH DESIGN, DATA COLLECTION AND RESEARCH PLAN

4.1   Introduction

In this chapter, the research design for this study is discussed together with the data collection methods that will be used. The chapter will describe the geographical location of Amanzimtoti and KwaMakhutha and provide a brief history of the areas in order to provide a context for the research. The data collection methods which will be used will be explained and justified and the steps taken to build validity and reliability will be discussed, as well as the ethical consideration.

4.2   Research design

Research design, in the words of Kothari (1985:19), is considered as "the conceptual structure within which research would be conducted and its function is to provide for the collection of relevant information with minimal expenditure of effort, time and money" and De Vaus (2001:9) emphasizes that research design "is to ensure that evidence obtained enables us to answer the initial questions unambiguously as possible".

The research design provides the guidance for researcher in order that he/she can

- Make an informed decision about the research methodology (the researcher has to decide how data are to be collected and analyzed, and needs overall configuration of the research process to ensure success)

- Adapt the research design to cater for limitations and constraints (these include limited access to data or insufficient knowledge of the subject or an inadequate understanding of the subject or time constraints)

- Determine which research methods would be appropriate for the particular study. (Botes 2009:128)

The two main research designs are quantitative and qualitative. The former typically involves getting limited information from a large number of respondents and presenting this in statistical form. By contrast, qualitative research involves a small number of respondents who are

investigated in depth. The nature of the data involved in the present study (e.g. on attitudes, stories memories) as well as the limited number of respondents potentially available caused me to choose a qualitative research design.

The research approach taken is a case study. That is, it examines the experience of congregations in different churches. It is not possible to generalize the findings to a wider context and can only speak with any confidence about this study. However, to the extent that it confirms the finding of other studies, it can add to a more general understanding of trauma healing using small group methods.

4.3   Case study 1: Amanzimtoti and KwaMakhutha.

4.3.1   Location and history.

Amanzimtoti is at about 25 km. from Durban and covers many localities including Isipingo, Prospection, Athlone Park, Umbongintwini, Amanzimtoti, KwaMakhutha, Ezimbokodweni, Magabheni, Adam's Mission, Umbumbulu, Doonsside, Kingsburgh, St. Winifreds, Winklesprit, Illovo Beach, Umkhomaas, Windenham and Clansthal (Web reference No. 4). Amanzimtoti was founded in 1928 and was included within a colonial decree as a 'Native Reserve', a circumstance that endured until it was designated as a White town. It was proclaimed a township in 1939 and became a borough in 1952.

On the other hand KwaMakhutha Township was established in 1966 as a native reserve in terms of the Group Areas Act to provide temporary shelter for employees for the AECI and Tioxide companies. It also provided domestic workers for the nearby conservative white suburban towns such as Amanzimtoti and Ezimbokodweni (Umbongitwini).

Before the establishment of the township, the original residents were forcefully moved from this area which became known as Stonehill. In the words of one of our interviewees:

> When the Apartheid regime proclaimed semi-independence for the KwaZulu Homeland or the so-called self-governing authority, KwaMakhutha became part of the homeland, like other townships such as Umlazi, Kwamashu and many others. Notably there was no resistance in the township about the incorporation, unlike the neighbouring township which resisted such as Lamontville and Chesterville. (Interview in KwaMakhutha, 23 August 2012)

In the late 1980s, KwaMakhutha was a scene of political violence between the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) and United Democratic Front (UDF). It is alleged that the IFP was supported by the apartheid regime in its endeavors of organizing the attacks in KwaMakhutha.

> The violence spread all over and divided the township in two rival camps. It was very rough in KwaMakhutha as it became very difficult if not impossible to move from one section to another. This led to the massacre of the Victor Ntuli family in 1989 which left twelve members of this family dead. (Interview in KwaMakhutha, 23 August 2012)

The United Reformed Church (URC) played an important role in accommodating those who had fled the violence and later when Rev. Khuzwayo, a former pastor at the URC, initiated mediation talks among the conflicting parties for peace building and reconciliation.

> The involvement of Rev. Khuzwayo in the community work brought on board the Diakonia Council of Churches which helped to build the Community Resource Centre in KwaMakhutha. This Centre was run in beginning by Rev. Mbonambi's Wife with the support of the Red Cross. It provided social and educational assistance to the community but also continued to accommodate those who still run from the violence. (Interview in KwaMakhutha, 21 August 2012)

4.3.2 The need for healing and reconciliation

This section explains the relationship between the Dutch Reformed Church in Amanzimtoti and Uniting Reformed Church in KwaMakhutha. It describes what kind of relationship had existed between these two churches, how long they had been together and to understand what prompted the collapse of this relationship. The other element needed to be known is what motivated the leadership of these two churches to seek the Healing of Memories workshop as a way of renewing their relationship.

The Dutch Reformed Church in Amanzimtoti (DRC) and the KwaMakhutha Uniting Reformed Church had enjoyed a long and good relationship for many years. This relationship has led to the development and growth of the Uniting Reformed Church as a church sister of the DRC in Amanzimtoti. Rev. Martinus of the DRC, interviewed on the 24th of July 2012, explains that

> The relationship between the URC KwaMakhutha and the DRC Suidkus stretches for many years.

> In the 1960's the relationship between these two churches was that of a mother and daughter. The Dutch Reformed Church was the mother church, and the then called Dutch Reformed Church in Africa was the daughter church. It was like that right through South Africa. The daughter church came to existence because of the work of the Dutch Reformed Church.

The mother church was involved in building a parsonage for the first minister. Because of the fact that there was no church-building, the congregation-members gathered in the parsonage which had a big living-room. The church-building was later on build with the help of the DRC. During the opening ceremony two trees were planted symbolizing the brotherly love that existed. Today these two trees are huge and there branches are interconnected. (See Appendixes 1 and 2)

These two churches operated in this manner for a long period of time, cooperating for the betterment and primarily for the spiritual growth of their congregations. However, as years passed and with the new laws of the apartheid regime, thing started going wrong and conflicts erupted between members of the two churches. The political system of the time penetrated the church and mostly the DRC as it was mostly an Afrikaans church. The apartheid insistence on the separate development of the different race groups was a cause of the separation of the previously-close churches.

Rev. (Dominee) Annĕ Verhoef (*The Mercury,* Tuesday 10 August 2004) explained that

Both denominations were from the same church family but had been separated by apartheid. The Zulu and Afrikaans congregations had maintained good relationships before the KwaMakhutha massacre of 1989and through the subsequent violence. The relationship had become difficult to maintain when it has become dangerous to venture into the KwaMakhutha Township.

Rev. Martinus (Interview in Amanzimtoti, 24 July 2012) concurred with this interpretation

As political tension was building up in the country, as well as fear rose over political violence in the country, a break in relations between the congregations started. A lot of suspicion between people started to take place. There were other circumstances playing a role like the Border War between South Africa and Angola and the bombs planted in of the Amanzimtoti malls [in 1985].

It is alleged that the bomb was planted in the Sanlam shopping centre by Andrew Sibusiso Zondi an ANC *Umkhoto we'siswe* member as revenge for the ANC members killed in Lesotho by the apartheid forces.

On the 23 December 1985 the explosion of the bomb in Amanzimtoti killed five civilians and forty other were injured. The ANC *Umkhonto we'siswe* cadre Andrew Sibusiso Zondi who detonated the bomb was executed by hanging in 1996. In a submission to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the ANC later stated that Zondo acted in anger at a South African Defense Force (SADF) raid in Lesotho (Website reference 3).

The political violence and tensions which followed the bomb explosion contributed to the erosion of the relationship between the members of the two churches and reinforced their separation. Rev. Martinus states that "another thing that played a major role was the breakaway of the Dutch Reformed Church in Africa to become the Uniting Reformed Church.

KwaMakhutha was now the URC KwaMakhutha, a congregation separated from the 'mother-church', standing on its own feet" (Interviewed in Amanzimtoti, 24 July 2012).

Another point of discontent for the Uniting Reformed Church was on the economic level. Their congregation members saw themselves as a receiving church which did not know how much was raised by the DRC on their behalf. But the DRC limited itself to some material donations and a meager stipend for the URC Minister. When one of the URC pastors started questioning the whereabouts of the funding raised for their church, the DRC did not hesitate to suspend the small stipend that was being paid to him.

This economic disparity caused the URC members to see themselves as inferiors. To date this remains a point of concern for the growth of the Uniting Reformed Church, as its Minister does not receive a salary, while his counterpart at the DRC is getting paid on a monthly basis from the far more substantial weekly congregational collections. The outcome of this situation is that currently the URC in KwaMakhutha has only a part-time pastor who has to look to his family for support.

Despite the fact that the relationship between the two churches had broken down the Dutch Reformed Church Rev. Anne Verhoef was still going occasionally to preach in KwaMakhutha. Rev. Martinus explains that "During this time of political transformation sporadic contacts between the two congregations still took place. The ministers from the DRC went to preach at the URC in KwaMakhutha. However, there was no interaction between the members anymore" (Interview in Amanzimtoti, 24 July 2012)

This situation continued until 2003 when Rev. Anne Verhoef from the DRC and Rev. Khuzwayo Mbonambi of the URC and Rev. Deon Snyman from the Diakonia Council of Churches started engaging in order to see how they could revitalize the relationship between the two churches and their members. This was in line with the Diakonia Council of Churches reconciliation project. The workshop took place in 2004. The process chosen will be explained later in the chapter dealing with evaluation of the Healing of Memories workshop.

4.4 Case study 2: The Lutheran Churches in the Durban

4.4.1 Location and history

The presence of Lutheran church in South Africa can be traced as far back as the 17th century. Rev. Dr. Knutson (2005:1) explains that

> Before mission work began among the indigenous people German Lutheran immigrants were already part of the early European settlements at the Cape. From 1665 Lutherans of good standing were permitted to partake of the Lord's Supper in the Dutch Reformed Church. The Lutheran Church in Strand Street (now affiliated to the ELCSA - Cape Church) has a long history dating from the 1780's and is a well-known landmark of Cape Town.

However, it took several years before the presence of the Lutheran Church could be recognized in Natal, especially in Durban, where they established themselves and started their liturgical services at the end of the 19th century.

> A Lutheran 'Church' in Durban existed in 1895. The more or less regular services, disrupted by the war, were held at various venues around Durban. In 1912 the German Lutheran Protestant Congregation was founded (later renamed as Evangelical Lutheran Congregation Durban), but its own church building, the 'Luther Kirche' was only built in 1952. (Notes from Pastor Georg Meyer and Chundran Chetty, 15 November 2011).

The Lutheran community identified in this study is located in the inner city of Durban, municipality of eThekwini, and comprises two congregations: the Evangelical Lutheran Church in South Africa (ELCSA) and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in South Africa Natal-Transvaal (ELCSA-NT), which constitutes today what is called the Durban Evangelical Lutheran Parish (DELP). Through the formation of the DELP and mostly from the different meetings of its pastors, with the assistance of the Diakonia Council of Churches, they saw the need of coming together in the Healing of Memories workshop given the need for trauma healing and reconciliation.

4.4.2 The need for trauma healing and reconciliation

The Lutheran churches in South Africa have not only been divided along racial lines but mostly on structural and synodical settings, which have contributed to a greater lack of unity among them. This thoughtful citation explains the situation as follows:

Separate churches developed alongside each other: one for the settlers and one for the converted heathens. To maintain order in their newly won congregations, the missionaries introduced a very strict hierarchical structure. This structure was retained by the newly-formed "black" churches and is still very apparent today in the strongly top-down approach of these churches.

In contrast, the settlers formed their own congregations after settling in South Africa. From the beginning they were the driving force behind their own congregations: they donated the land, they employed and paid their pastor, etc. Only slowly did loose federations of congregations (synods) become established, which later churches became. In these churches all power is held by the individual congregations. The highest body in the church is the bi-annual synod, which writes and votes on proposed church laws.

While the structural differences are ran parallel to cultural and racial differences in the past. (Website reference 7)

These divisions led some Lutheran churches to support the apartheid regime while others fought against the system which they considered as an evil one. Another difficulty faced for both black or white missionaries and their members was that of language. Knutson (2005:2) remarks that

The history of the Lutheran church in South Africa is one of the most complexes of all. Unlike the churches of English and Dutch origin, for Lutherans, "There were barriers of language and of approach which made cooperation and efforts at union much more laborious.

Lutherans were also pro- and anti-apartheid government ... [and that Lutheran] consolidation has not proceeded very far at all.

It is because of this background that the DELP took the first step of bringing all its pastors together as a way of creating unity among themselves but also for their members. This was due to the fact that the leaders and their churches have been, as explained above, not only on the church level but also with the apartheid regime.

As Lutherans in Southern Africa, we have found ourselves living in a denominational 'patchwork' family; ELCSA, ELCSA N-T, ELCSA (Cape) and Moravians are all members of the Lutheran Communion in Southern Africa (LCSA), not forgetting the FELSiSA and (its mission partners). This hotchpotch of institutions should be understood against the background of Apartheid segregation and an omnium-gatherum of foreign Lutheran Mission agencies, but certainly not continue as status quo. (Notes from Pastors Georg Meyer and Chundran Chetty, 15 November 2011)

It is with the aim of trying to change the historical situation of the Lutheran churches in the Durban area that the DELP pastors organized their first meeting in 2008 in order to discuss and plan about the future of their churches and its members. In their notes of 15 November 2011, Georg Meyer and Chundran Chetty explain that

In August 2008, a first informal meeting of about 12 Lutheran pastors from the greater Durban area took place in Chatsworth. From that meeting a 5-person Steering Committee, co-chaired by the Reverends Chundran Chetty of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa (ELCSA) and Georg Meyer of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa NT (ELCSA N-T), was formed to plan and facilitate regular meetings for Lutheran pastors within the greater Durban area with the aim of establishing and strengthening relationships, being reconciled to God, being reconciled to self, being reconciled to the neighbor, being reconciled to nature as well as building bridges.

With the spirit of unity already among them and the vision of building new relationships based on reconciliation and forgiveness, these pastors, with the assistance of the Diakonia Council of Churches, organized a series of Healing of Memories for their pastors.

From 2008 to March 2009, a joint group of (ELCSA and ELCSA N-T) pastors participated in a process facilitated by the Institute for the Healing of Memories. This enabled those who participated to engage on a very deep personal level, laying an important foundation for trusting relationships. (Notes from Meyer and Chetty, 15 November 2011)

The sharing of life stories in the HoM workshop was an eye opener for all the pastors who attended. As a follow up the DELP has organized Healing of Memories workshop for youth and women. In explaining the importance of their reformation service and what they aim for the future to be, Meyer and Chetty state that "we are aiming to build on this tradition, in particular during the remainder of the Luther decade leading up to 2017".

The following chapter will examine the HoM workshops and see if they brought any change among the DELP members especially, in the case of past trauma healing.

4.5   Data collection methods.

The research was a case study of two Christian congregations based in Amanzimtoti and KwaMakhutha and the Lutheran community in Durban. Primary data was collected using focus groups and interviews: Hox and Boeije (2005:293) explain that "data collected for specific research problem at hand, using procedures that fit the research problem best." This data was supplemented by secondary data (for example, books, articles, newspapers, and websites) which provided useful data.

Reading about what have be written for trauma healing and specifically in communities that have been torn apart by events such as wars, human rights abuse, or gender based violence, assisted

me in understanding how to deal with this case study and to learn from other findings to see how they applied to this study.

Data was collected to meet the overall objective and specific aims of the study. (Hox and Trotter 2005:594) explain that

> The most advantage of collecting one's own data is that the operationalization of the theoretical constructs, the research design, and data collection strategy can be tailored to the research question, which ensures that the study is coherent and that the information collected indeed helps to resolve the problem.

Focus groups and face to face interviews were the tools of data collection. These methods allowed me to understand the impact of trauma on the members of these two churches, how they have been coping with trauma through the years and what has assisted them to get over their trauma.[1]

4.5.1 Focus Groups

Focus groups were a major tool of data collection with the participants from the DRC in Amanzimtoti, URC in KwaMakhutha and the Lutheran community in Umbilo. Focus groups as defined by Kitzinger (1995:399) "are a form of group interview that capitalizes on communication between research participants in order to generate data using explicitly interaction as part of the method." In a focus group the researcher plays a low-key role. He/she provides a limited number of questions - say four or five - which fit the aims of the research. His/her role then is to keep the discussion on the topic. Participants have a natural conversation, much like those held in everyday life. Opinions are put forward, robust discussions can take place, alternatives can be raised and minds can be changed. Thus (Krueger and Cassey 2000:5) define focus group as a "carefully planned series of discussions designed to obtain perceptions on a defined area of interest in permissive, non-threatening environment" (Rennekamp and Nell Undated:1), remark that

> The goal of a focus group is to promote self-disclosure among participants. Because a group, rather than an individual, is asked to respond to questions, dialogue tends to take on a life of its own. Participants 'piggy-back' on the comments of others and add a richness to the dialogue that could not be achieved through a one-on-one interview.

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[1] I should note here that I am a qualified Healing of Memories facilitator.

The recruitment of the sample for the focus groups was done with the assistance of ministers from the Amanzimtoti DRC and the KwaMakhutha URC and the Lutheran church at Umbilo. My position was that they know their members much better than I did, further, they were able to use their relations and networking in the recruitment. The sampling was therefore purposive and based on convenience. In the event, around half of those who had participated in the workshop in the Amanzimtoti and KwaMakhutha had left the area.

Six focus groups were planned, two focus groups meetings in Amanzimtoti (one for females and one for males) and two in KwaMakhutha and another two with the Lutheran church at Umbilo with the same structure. Each focus group was to have six to eight people if possible.

Given that I was dealing with people who have been traumatized and living with their traumas, I believed focus groups would be of great value as some participants should find it easy to express themselves in this exercise much better than during the face to face interview. That is, "…groups' processes can help people to explore and clarify their views in ways that would less easily accessible in a one to one interview" Kitzinger (1995:399). Participants can engage themselves in constructive discussions of the issues that are raised by the researcher.

Usefully distinguish between focus groups and group interviews Bloor et al (2001:42-43) state that

> In focus groups…the objective is not primarily to elicit the group's answers…but rather to stimulate discussion and thereby understand (through subsequent analysis the meaning and norms which underlie those group answers. In group interviews the interviewer seeks answers; in focus groups the facilitator seeks group interaction.

Recent examples of South African research which used focus groups include:

- The study conducted by Mulumeoderhwa and Harris ('Girlfriends, sex and violence: attitudes and reported behavior of adolescent males in South Africa township') used focus with school males and followed this up with personal interviews.

- The study analyzing the behavior of young learners in rural KwaZulu-Natal on HIV infection and AIDS (Sathiparsad and Taylor 2006) used the focus group discussions followed by individual interviews for their data collection.

- Mathenjwa and Pranitha ('Female condoms give women greater control': A qualitative assessment of the experiences of commercial sex workers in Swaziland') used the focus

group discussions and thereafter in-depth personal interviews. Their findings reveal that the focus group discussions had a strong impact on participants, permitting them to feel at ease and empowering them to use the female condoms.

- The study on how gender roles influence sexual and reproductive health among South Africans adolescents (Varga 2003) employed the focus group discussions followed by personal interview for data collection.

Despite the advantages of the focus groups, I note that if not well organized and controlled, focus groups can be problematic. For example, one or two participant(s) might become more talkative(s) and hijack the whole process. In this case, it is the responsibility of facilitator/researcher to be bold enough to bring order by requesting that everyone be given a chance to speak. Another danger may be if one person very forcefully expresses an opinion and possibly discourages alternative viewpoints.

The focus group questions were designed to meet the specific aims of the research and are presented in table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1 Focus group questions

1. How did the Healing of Memories (HoM) workshops come about?
2. When you think about it, what are your main memories of the workshop? Can you please say a bit more about that?
3. What was the most valuable thing about the workshop?
4. How do you understand the word healed and healing? A one off event, then move on OR coming to terms with/handling trauma better OR an ongoing process or what?
5. Did you think that HoM workshops have a place in present day into South Africa?
6. Did the workshop do anything to promote reconciliation between blacks and whites? (What, How)

The cooperation and enthusiasm was to be enhanced by the listening skills, attitude and behavior of the facilitator/researcher during the focus groups meetings. It is the duty of the facilitator/researcher to motivate participants in order to clarify their responses but also to probe for more information.

4.5.2 Interviews

An interview is "a conversation between the people in which one person has the role of researcher…a well-conducted interview is a powerful tool for eliciting rich data on people's views, attitudes and the meanings that underpin their lives and behaviors" Gray (2004:213). Interviews provide an opportunity to recognize individual issues that were brought up in the focus group meetings and to probe these more deeply. It was an occasion to concentrate more on personal feelings. Patton (1990:353) states that "A good interview lays open thoughts, feelings, knowledge, and experience not only to the interviewer but also to the interviewee".

Through interviews I hoped to gain trustworthy data which would add value and consideration to the study and consequently render it useful. Gray (2004:218) notes that "One prime driving force behind the design of interview is the search for credibility by ensuring that findings can be trusted, which includes issues of validity and reliability".

I also planned to interview people who have been involved in the organization of the Healing of Memories workshop that brought together the DRC and URC members. Although most of them are no longer living in Durban, I decided to send them the questionnaire through e-mail so that they could contribute to the study. This is very important because they are the ones who saw the need for such a workshop and would be able to explain what motivated them to go that route.

The interviews were semi-structured with "open ended questions which will allow informants to answer from their own frame of reference rather than being confined by structures of pre-arranged questions. Informants express their thoughts freely". (Bogdan and Bilken 1992:1)

It is interesting to note that interview and (presumably focus groups) can increase the perception of the participants. Gray (2004:235) remarks that

> After a good interview, the interviewees know more about themselves and their situation than they did before. This, in itself, may be quite therapeutic (or not as the case may be), but the purpose of the researcher is to collect data, not to change people opinion.

The proposed questions to be asked in the interview are listed in Table 4.2 but were subject to modification once the focus group data was analyzed.

Table 4.2 Proposed interview questions

1. Can you tell me about the trauma (conflicting situation) you were facing before the HoM workshop?

2. At the end of the workshop, did you feel anything had changed for you? If yes, please explain what. Any thoughts on why it changed?

3. Was your healing something that happened at a particular time or was it something that happened over a period of time? If at a particular time, was it the HoM workshop? If over time, what role if any did the workshop paly?

4. What has been the most important thing (s) which helped your healing?

5. Have the things you learned in the HoM workshops been of use to you [may be to others] when you have faced other traumas?

As noted, the sample was purposively selected to assist in achieving the overall objective and aims of the study. The size of the sample need not be considered as a shortcoming for this study. Botes (2009:141) argue that "there is no ideal or prescribed sample size. They state that the sample size depends on the discipline, the level of confidence expected in the answers, and anticipated response rate" and we could add on the number able and willing participants. The numbers of such people are small, the explanation given to us is that the Amanzimtoti congregation is ageing and the young ones are no longer attending ecumenical services due to the economic challenges which keep them busy at work seven days a week. As for the Uniting Reformed Church of KwaMakhutha, few men are coming to services (Interview in Amanzimtoti, on 24/07/2012). The same problems are also encountered by the Lutheran church in Umbilo.

Participants were between 40 and 80 years, the reason being that now most of the young involved in the struggle against apartheid in the late seventies would be forty years old and able to explain and relate clearly to what they went through during those dark years of South African history. I opted to have equal numbers of women and men despite the fact in the church environment women are more numerous than men and that women have been and still are more exposed to trauma than men.

4.6   Data analysis

I had been convinced that an interpretative thematic analysis would be suitable for me to reach the aim of analyzing the data collected. Fereday et al (2006:82) defines thematic analysis as a "search for themes that emerge as being important to the description of the phenomenon…it is a form of pattern recognition within the data, where emerging themes become the categories for analysis". Dey (2005:21) argues that

> Categorization brings together a number of observations which we consider similar in some respects; by implied contrast with other observations…this means that by assigning something to one category, we do not automatically exclude it from others. We discount other possibilities, rather than exclude them altogether.

4.7   Validity and reliability

Joppe (2000:1) defines "reliability as the extent to which results are consistent over time and an accurate representation of the population of the total under study" while validity "means that correct procedures have been applied to find answers to a question". Kothari (1985:2). Validity in quantitative research is established by statistical estimates of reliability based on either a full census or random sample of some minimum size. So, for example, we could estimate the income of 100 household as being between R 350 and 400 per month with a 90 per cent level of confidence.

In qualitative research, such exactness is not possible. Reliability refers to methodological accuracy and is normally dealt with by providing detailed information of research methodology including sampling, data collection methods (including questions) and data analysis methods. In qualitative research, validity concerns its objective aspects. How do we know whether the research heard the truth, recorded it accurately and interpreted it appropriately?

Triangulation – the use of several different methods of data collection – is a way to confirm the research findings. Another is to compare it with the results of other studies. Another (unfortunately impractical in this study) is to form a research team to independently collect and analyze data and compare the results. This last specifically answers the question whether another researcher would come up with the same results.

Efforts were made to ensure that these two principles are maintained for the study's credibility. However, it is noted that it is often difficult to give guarantees of reliability and stability. Miller (undated :3) writes of the need to "…be aware that reliability is necessary but not sufficient for validity…for something to be valid it must be reliable but it must also measures what it is intended to measure".

4.8   Research plan

As explained above, the study involved a sample of forty members of the two churches who formed the focus groups. Of these twenty were interviewed face to face.

The plan for this research was for one full academic year (2012) scheduled in this way:

1. End of February 2012: Finalization and submission of the proposal.

2. At the end of March 2012: I expect that the research proposal will be approved.

3. The month of July 2012 will be dedicated to our field work for data collection. This means travel on daily basis between Durban and Amanzimtoti or KwaMakhutha for data collection. Considering the availability of the interviewees we might be obligated to commute on same day from Durban to Amanzimtoti and KwaMakhutha.

4. The intention is to complete the analysis of the data by the end of October 2012.

4.9   Ethical considerations

Ethical clearance was obtained from the Durban University of Technology (DUT) and permission from the Dutch Reformed Church of Amanzimtoti, the Uniting Reformed Church of KwaMakhutha and the Lutheran congregations of Durban in order to conduct this study with their church members.

 I guaranteed their autonomy by not using their names but using pseudonyms if necessary. I promised to respect their dignity and that of their congregations and every effort was made to ensure the objectivity of this study. Participation of interviews was consensual and no money or other incentives were paid to those who volunteered to be interviewed. The privacy of participants was respected throughout the study and any participant might withdraw from the study at any time she/he wishes. The nature of this study was explained to the participants so that

they could be at ease during the focus group meetings and personal interviews as it is not harmful to them.

Focus group discussions and personal interviews were tape recorded with the permission of all the participants involved. If necessary, I would seek professional advice if any participant showed signs of trauma. The information provided remained confidential and all participants and their congregations were protected. I was aware that the participants in this study have been direct victims or witnesses of trauma and particular care was needed so that they are not re-traumatized by thinking about these experiences. The focus is a positive one − on the healing processes.

I promised that during the interviews I would be very positive toward the interviewees. I should immediately stop the interview whenever the interviewee manifests discomfort with the questions or any other circumstances that might happen during the interview.

4.10   Summary and conclusion

After providing geographical and historical context of the case study, this chapter has focused on the research design and data collection methods to be employed. A qualitative research design was adopted and focus group supplemented by personal interviews were used as the principal means of data collection.

CHAPTER FIVE

HEALING OF MEMORIES: ORIGIN, PHILOSOPHY AND PRACTICE

5.1   Origin of the Institute for Healing of Memories.

Many individuals, communities and countries around the world have been traumatized by their past history or recent traumatic events and are actively seeking always ways to heal from their past trauma. The indigenous people of many countries have an understanding of trauma which often appears very different from western understanding and believe that most traumas can be healed without counselling and other similar methods.

In this context, Peeters (2010:289) argues that

> The Marumali [an Australian tribe] concept of healing differs in this regard from other consumer driven or Western models of recovery. Our journey is one of recovering our culture and identity as Aboriginal people, not one of recovering from a mental illness. Healing involves mind, body, spirit, culture and sometimes (if we are lucky) country. It is about finding our 'belonging place', whatever that might mean to each of us.

Healing from trauma is, of course crucial as it promotes mutual understanding and trust and the creation of new relationships among individuals or communities that might otherwise live at loggerheads following past traumatic events. Yoder and Barge (2011:7) write that "Unhealed trauma fuels cycles of victimhood or violence that are visible in re-enactment behaviours. Current and future generations are harmed by these acting-in or acting-out patterns in families, communities, organizations and nations".

5.2   Healing of Memories beginning in South Africa

Following the brutalities of the apartheid regime and the birth of the new democratic South Africa the new government realized that there was a major need to find a mechanism to begin to heal the trauma that all South Africans went through during the apartheid. Archbishop Emeritus of Cape Town Desmond Tutu, in his forward to Bloomfield et al (2003:1), wrote that

> There is no handy roadmap for reconciliation. There is no short cut or simple prescription for healing the wounds and divisions of a society in the aftermath of sustained violence. Creating trust and understanding between former enemies is a supremely difficult challenge. It is, however, an essential one to address the process of building a lasting peace.

The new government initiated the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) in order to begin to deal with the ills of the apartheid regime but recognized its limitations:

> At the time of South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (1996-97), it was clear that only a fraction of all South Africans would have the opportunity to tell their story before the Commission. It was felt by many that additional platforms were needed to enable all those who wished to share their experiences and be heard compassionately. (Website reference 4).

A similar view was expressed by investigator of the TRC Piers Pigou, cited in Huyse (2001:363), when he wrote in the Sunday Independent of June, 1998 that

> It is, however clear that many thousands of violations have not been reported...it is also evident that all perpetrators have not come forward...In spite of all the that TRC has achieved, I fear that it has just only begun to scratch the surface of past violations. What happens next is therefore crucial. The limitations of the process must be acknowledged and recommendations that the work continue will provide a powerful impetus to address the many unattended matters...

Despite recognizing these shortcomings, the government did not set up any alternatives for the masses of traumatized people who did not get the chance of appearing before the TRC. Hence, many NGOs such as the Institute for Healing of Memories have taken over the process of healing trauma. These work not only on healing trauma caused by the apartheid regime but also on trauma emanating from gender based violence, HIV/AIDS, crimes and poverty.

The Institute of Healing of Memories was founded in 1998. It grew out of the Chaplaincy Project of the Trauma Centre for Victims of Violence and Torture, of which Father Michael Lapsley; SSM was one of the founder members. (Website reference 4).

The Institute of Healing of Memories has a vision that it will contribute to the healing journey of individuals, communities and nations. Its principles are that all people:

- Are spiritual beings and of infinite worth
- Share responsibility for the past and are therefore responsible for shaping the future
- Are capable of being both victim and victimiser
- Should face history and face themselves. (Website reference 4).

Healing of Memories workshops started at a small level with some people who had testified at the TRC and some who had not. It offered help to both survivors and perpetrators in order to help heal their emotions.

> ...'healing of memories workshops' which ran in parallel to the TRC as an additional means of providing support to victims and survivors of apartheid violence. The purpose of the workshops was to facilitate reconciliation between different racial groups and to heal emotional wounds, in order that individuals might contribute positively towards the reconstruction of South Africa. The workshops were also used to give further support to those who testified before the Commission. (Website reference 4).

"Over the following two years, healing of memories workshops were offered through the length and breadth of the country, and in 1998 the first workshops took place outside South Africa, in the USA, Rwanda and Sri Lanka" (website reference 4).

Although the Institute's work is now nationwide, it has only one provincial office located in KwaZulu-Natal Province which was opened in 2007 and works in the province and the SADC countries. Other satellite offices have since been opened in the USA, Australia and New Zealand.

5.3   Healing of Memories philosophy.

The Healing of Memories "seeks to contribute to the healing journey of individuals, communities and nations. Our work is grounded in the belief that we are all in need of healing, because of what we have done, what we have failed to do, and what has been done to us" (website reference 4).

This sentiment is also echoed by Thesnaar (2010:266) when he states that "The goal of the Healing of Memories workshops is to engage people from different racial backgrounds to journey with one another on the road to healing and reconciliation"

It is important to note that healing is a process. Ds. John Schoeman explained that

> Healing is not an event but a process. One can never fully heal after a traumatic event / period. As long as one has a memory of the traumatic event that event will still stay with you. The process to healing can be assisted through an acknowledgement of the abuse, sincere apology through acts of restitution. (Interview in Amanzimtoti, 22 August 2012)

This argument is supported by Hamber (2003:77- 87) who comments that

…healing is inevitably a lengthy and culturally-bound process. There is often no clear starting point and there will be few markers along the way-indeed, it is rare for the psychological impact of the past ever to be completely dealt with. This does not, of course mean that programs in pursuit of healing are a waste of time-quite the contrary. Assistance with healing can be invaluable for individuals and their communities… Healing is not one dimensional or easily attained, and it is as much about what already exist within the communities and cultures as about learning from other approaches…social justice is a foundation stone for lasting healing. It is certain that genuine healing is protracted and requires sustained personal, community and political attempts to integrate the suffering of the past into the present.

Although this discussion does not dwell much on the issues of reparations, it is well known that restorative justice through reparations can be a vital component for trauma healing between individuals but also at intercommunity level.

In the same way of thinking Hart (2009:3) also suggests that "Trauma healing best takes place in a context where both the tangible issues of rebuilding homes, schools, mosques and churches happens while also addressing … issues related to psychological, spiritual and identity needs"

5.4   Healing of Memories practice

People have been wounded in one way or another either through human rights abuses, sexual abuses, and gender based violence, HIV/AIDS....therefore, there is a need to unbind our wounds, clean them and put on some medicine for their healing to happen. That's what the Healing of memories is all about.

 Healing of Memories workshops run over three consecutive days starting in the evening on the first day; the second day is full and the third day ends after lunch. Depending on the circumstances and organizers, the workshop can be run either during week days or on weekend.

On first day, participants are welcomed by the facilitators and given their rooms. This is because the workshops are always residential. After dinner, the first session began by the background of the Institute for Healing of Memories which is given by one of the facilitators. Some ground rules are set by the facilitators and participants. Thereafter, the introduction of participants is done in pairs: the pairs have to share four things: their names, where are they coming from, why they are at the workshop, the happiest and most embarrassing moment in their life. The typical number of participants is a maximum of 25 and 5 facilitators. However, in some circumstances the number of participants might be less than 15 and in such case 2 or 3 facilitators will be

needed. The explanation here is that facilitating these kinds of workshops is very draining and no facilitator should have in his/her small group more than 8 participants. It is noted that the facilitator is also considered as a participant and should share his/her life with the group members. The night ends up by giving to participants some questions which they have to reflect on for the following day. After every session, facilitators have to meet in order to check how everyone is coping with the workshop. This is because at one stage a facilitator can be overwhelmed by the stories he/she hears.

The second day of the workshop starts by a recap of what was done the night before and followed by the introduction of the drawing exercise. Participants are given a flipchart paper on which they have to draw their life story. This can take any shape, given that each individual has their own life story and anything that the person has drawn has got a meaning for himself/herself. These drawings will be used in the small groups during story telling. No words or writing are put on the flipchart. This is because some participants might not be able to write but mostly a drawn symbol can express thousands of words. That's why participants are encouraged to use the whole paper page and different colours to express their feelings. The drawing might take any shape that makes sense to the participant.

Then every person has 30 to 45 minutes to share his/her story and to be listened to without any disruption, judgement and comment. ''We believe that when personal stories are heard and acknowledged, individuals feel healed and empowered. Through deep listening and meaningful sharing, human relationships can be transformed and restored'' (Website reference 4).

 Listening is a skill that most of us lack or do not use. We have grown up in a society where we are not given the opportunity to talk about ourselves and be listened to by those who live with us in our family or community settings.

So the whole of the day is spent in these small groups until the last person has shared her/his story. The small groups create a safe space where every participant feel trusted, loved and confident to speak even about things he/she perhaps never spoke about before coming to the workshop.

The story telling session in the small groups assist participants in lifting the weight of the trauma that they have been carrying for years. (Van der Merwe and Vienings 2001:346-347) state that

Using incident debriefing is one way of working with trauma that has affected entire groups of people. In this process the victims are encouraged to share their stories with other members of the group and in that way go through a process of reframing and releasing the trauma. Other methods include symbolic ceremonies where the trauma is remembered and where people have an opportunity to express their grief, anger, and guilt. Community members can hold these ceremonies themselves, and there are many ways in which community have done this.

Rev. Fananaye Musomi from the URC who attended the Healing of Memories workshop with the DRC members commented that "sharing the stories brought the change among us. We understood each other more deeply than before. It was really a powerful tool" (Interviewed in Durban, 13 August 2012)

This experience has theoretical supports. (Yoder and Barge 2011:7) also argue that "Healing happens through processes that provide safety (human security), acknowledgement (truth telling of one own history and the 'others' history, mourning, rituals), and reconnection (justice, mercy, faith, conflict transformation). These healing processes and self-care build resilience".

In the evening after dinner, participants, with the facilitators, reconvene in order to check/investigate how everyone is feeling after the story telling session. Here, facilitators take notes of individual feelings, themes and questions that came out during story telling into small groups. Thereafter, facilitators ask for four to five volunteers who will prepare for the liturgy for the following day. The night ends up by the coming together ceremony. This is a party where participants and facilitator share drinks, snacks and the music are played just to allow them to relax before going to sleep. The day has been long, hectic and heavy as people have to revisit their past trauma. They dance and share jokes all this in order for them going to bed in a relaxed mood.

The third and last day starts with a recap of the last activities. The facilitator introduces the clay exercise and hands each participant a portion of clay in order to make a peace symbol which will be used after the liturgy. This is also a personal exercise which is done in silence. The symbols are made from the clay and individual can make any symbol which he/she believe represent his/her hope (future) and explains to the group what the peace symbol mean.

After making the peace symbols, participants come together for the liturgical service and symbols offering which then conclude the workshop. Symbols sharing offer to the participants the opportunity to look into a new future and consequently starting the healing journey. (Yoder

and Barge, 2011:15) explain that "with the sharing of symbols, the barriers of race, gender, nationality, class and religion diminished in the common crucible of suffering. Everyone was just a human being, looking for hope in the cracks of resilient beyond what sometimes seemed fathomable". Participants are also encouraged to take their symbols home as reminder of the healing journey they have just started.

In the case of workshops run by the Strategies of the Trauma Awareness and Resilience (STAR) (Yoder and Barge, 2011:12) note that

> Symbols of Hope gave participants the option of placing an object they had brought with them on a table and telling the group the meaning it held for them. Participants brought chaplain badges from the ground Zero, photos of loved ones, poetry, jewellery, special song…

Expressing the value and role that symbols can play during the healing process either at individuals or community and country as whole, Humber (2003:85) notes that

> The healing value of symbolic acts, objects and rituals lies in the way they can help concretize a traumatic incident, serving as a focal point in the grieving process. Such symbols are most effective if they are personalized and culturally relevant. They can also have a wider community- or society-level benefit, as markers to remind society of the lessons of the past which need to be carried into the future.

It is a principle for the Institute for Healing of Memories that after three to four weeks all participants and facilitators meet again for two to three hours for a debriefing session. The aim of this meeting is to check how facilitators and participants have been doing after the workshop. How do they feel after having shared their life story with other participants in the small groups? It is at this stage where those who feel the need for psychological assistance and others are identified and referred to appropriate professionals. In fact, the debriefing sessions are frequently not held.

The Healing of Memories workshops are run for communities, individuals, churches, offenders, people living with HIV/AIDS etc. on the basis that everyone need healing. A person can attend as many workshops as possible if he or she wishes to do so.

> Over the years, we have worked with people from a rich diversity of backgrounds, as well as with refugees, offenders, HIV/ AIDS sufferers, and victims of domestic violence. The effectiveness of the Healing of Memories workshop has been widely documented and the methodology has been used in countries as far afield as the USA, East Timor, Rwanda and Northern Ireland (Website reference 4).

The Healing of Memories workshop gives participants a safe place to share their life story in a small group… The facilitator has a role of guidance and must be active in all activities. "In a safe, supportive space, guided by expert facilitators, participants are helped to confront sources of alienation, misunderstanding and personal suffering..." (Website reference 4).

Story sharing and listening allows participants to understand much better his or her trauma better and at the same time give to that person the opportunity to realise that he/she is not the only one who has been hurt. In realising so, the traumatised person can now live with his or her trauma without continuing to blame himself or herself despite the fact that what happened will not be forgotten. (Van der Merwe and Vienings 2001:347) remark that

> Although trauma does change the individual and is likely to leave emotional scars, the person can learn to live with the experience in a functional way. Some people may be able to draw new strengths and insights as a result of having coped with the trauma

The Healing of Memories workshop is all about the feelings, it concerns mostly about how the person feels and not how he/she thinks. In other word it is about what is into the heart and not in the head of the person. Thesnaar (2010:266) writes that "The journey is an individual and collective experience exploring the effects of the apartheid years. The emphasis is on dealing with these issues on emotional, psychological and spiritual level, rather than an intellectual level."

Listening involves empathy and compassion on the part of the listeners. Johnson (2001:35) cited in Thesnaar (2010:271) explains that "the key component to compassion is empathy. Empathy is to try to feel what the other person is feeling, to climb into his/her shoes and look at the problem from his/her point of view"

It is very important to note that facilitators do not promise immediate healing to the participants or insist that they should forgive those who wronged them. Healing is a personal and painful journey which takes time to happen. Peeters (2010:290) remarks that

> No two healing journey will be alike. For some it will be a long journey, for others it will be short...For many of us, the journey will be lifelong. The healing journey is a cycle, and many of us will go around the circle many times as we deepen our healing each time our memories and experiences are triggered.

There is no need to rush the person for healing as this could destroy that person and eventually render him or her more hurt than before the healing process. It is therefore the responsibility of every participant to decide the pace he/she takes towards personal healing. Peeters (2010:289-290) notes that

> Whether a trigger will set off a healing journey will depend on what else is happening in the person's life. If they are not safe enough to face the pain of healing, they can just close down and keep going. It is very dangerous to push someone to heal before they are ready to do so. No one has a right to set another person's healing agenda. Nor is it possible for one person to 'heal another'. Each of us needs to be recognized as the expert of our own healing, and it is crucial that we are able to control the speed, direction and outcome of own healing journey.

During the Healing of Memories workshops there is no note-taking. It is well understood that if notes were allowed this would distract participants and at the same time losing their focus to the workshop; mostly the workshop is about individual stories which are considered as precious and holy.

Trauma healing of this kind is being practiced in other African countries that have been devastated by wars, human rights abuse, gender based violence, HIV/AIDS etc. and we explain some of these in the next section.

5.5   Similar workshops

In countries such as Burundi, Kenya and Rwanda which have gone through a series of civil wars, genocide and election violence, the Healing and Rebuilding Our Communities (HROC) is playing a role in bringing together people who have been divided by the events named above.

The HROC workshops as the HOM workshops require that participants talk and listen to each other at the same time. It is sometime very difficult for people who have been hate/traumatized to talk about their painful experiences. Fortunately, during these workshops they get the opportunity to open up to other people. Perhaps the first time they have spoken about their experience. Mahler et al (2007:6) explain that

> For many the HROC workshops give them the opportunity for the first time to talk about what happened during the genocide, the first time they have felt courageous enough to be around other people...The first time they asked for or granted forgiveness, the first time they have even spoken to the 'other' in over a decade.

The HROC workshops in Burundi and Rwanda are conducted for three consecutive days and bring survivors, perpetrators of violence and their family members together in the workshop. In Rwanda, released prisoners who were convicted of genocide crimes are also part of the workshop as this would allow the survivors a chance to talk to the perpetrator (released prisoner) and provide perpetrators an occasion to repent and seek forgiveness.

Using somewhat similar methods to the Healing of Memories, HROC has made changes in the lives of people from these countries by re-establishing relationships that have been broken for so long. Their three day workshop aims among other things to help people "recognize and understand trauma and symptoms of PTSD, learn how to access skills to overcome trauma, re-engage with life after traumatic events and re-connect with community members and rebuild their societies" website reference 5. Through these aims the HROC workshops encourage participants to rebuild their broken relationships and facilitate the reconciliation at the individual's level but also among community members.

The HROC workshops do not insist on participants seeking or granting forgiveness as this is seen as personal issue which each individual has to consider when and how to do it. In other words, no one is forced to forgive or seek for forgiveness. Mahler et al (2007:2) write that

> The workshop content never introduces the topic of 'forgiveness'. Yet, this topic comes up consistently among the HROC participants who then decide on their own who they want to forgive and how to go about it. This is the only way true forgiveness can happen: innately.

As it was the case with TRC and still with HOM in South Africa, the Healing and Rebuilding Our Community (HROC) workshops are considered as "mostly unique in the sense that participants are both survivors and perpetrators or their family members" (Website reference 5).

Considering some of the testimonies from the participants either in Burundi, Rwanda or Kenya, the HROC workshops should be promoted as a trauma healing mechanism and a reconciliation tool in countries where there have been a huge amount of mistrusts among individuals or community members due to violence and human rights abuse. An evaluation of Rwanda HROC workshops, Mahler et al (2007:11) find that

> ...Rwandans supported each other and gave what they had when someone else needed it. Relying on one another and working as a united community was simply how people survived. Since the genocide this system has disintegrated due to mistrust, suspicion, and fear between neighbours. But according to participants, HROC has brought it back.

However, despite the fact there has been a huge demand for HROC workshops in Rwanda and Burundi, survivors of genocide and released prisoners (perpetrators) who have attended the HROC workshops are being threatened by those who have not attended. On one hand, released prisoners are accused of betrayal because they have spoken about what they did and sought forgiveness from survivors for their wrong doing. On the other hand survivors who have accepted to forgive the perpetrators are also seen by other survivors as sell outs. This situation has prompted the Rwandese government to provide to some of these participants in the province of Cyangugu a twenty for ours security. Mahler (2007:18) explains in this long citation that

> After attending a HROC workshop in the summer of 2006, several participants encountered perilous resistance from locals in their village. Filled with new ideas, fresh, hope and desire to see reconciliation, others in the community who hadn't attended the workshop did not understand the changes and felt threatened by it. There were stories of people who denounced others and then find their houses burned down or their food poisoned or were even killed. Some participants were harassed and ridiculed when they were seen with participants who were supposed to be enemies. Mukayaranga Beatrice's fellow survivors told her she was foolish and stupid for forgiving the released-prisoners. She now lives with government supplied guards watching her house a night. Similarly, Komezusense Samuel was threatened with death after encouraging other released prisoners to tell the truth and inevitably others.

In Zimbabwe, survivors and perpetrators of the organized violence which happened after the elections in 2002 and the years that followed have been attending a Tree of Life workshop for trauma healing and reconciliation. This three day workshop starts by creating trust among participants.

Its impact in trauma healing has been recognized by different individuals and community members who have attended this kind of workshop. Templer (2010:108) notes that

> To date, Tree of Life has been positively received in most areas where it has been piloted. Some facilitators describe its approach as a healing and empowerment process for all Zimbabweans who wish to avail of it. Because it's free of any political agenda, it's perceived as non-threatening.

Numerous challenges have been noted during the process of these workshops in Zimbabwe due to intolerance and the on-going political situation in that country. Some survivors and perpetrators are afraid to attend these workshops because of threats they have received. Templer (2010:108) explains that

> There are large numbers of individuals and communities who could benefit from Tree of Life workshops, but if the organization is perceived to be political in any way or to support a particular group over another, its ability to operate would be severely curtailed...the political and social

climate in Zimbabwe is such that suspicion and mistrust remain rife. Tree for Life therefore operates with considerable caution, because those involved know that the mere fact of meeting in a group of five or more people can potentially put participants in danger.

Compared with the healing initiatives in South Africa, these examples show that there are many challenges at individual and community level, making participation dangerous for some survivors and perpetrators. For the sake of past trauma healing and perhaps reconciliation, the intervention or support of government to these initiatives may be of great importance.

5.6   Summary and conclusion

I have argued that if well organized, Healing of Memories workshops can contribute positively to the past trauma healing of individuals, communities and the nation as a whole. They are different from other workshops as they are based on listening skills and only deal with what is into the heart (feelings) of the individual and not what is in her/his head. The philosophy of the Healing of Memories is translated in this motto "Every story needs a listener". This is to say that the person has to listen with compassion and with her/his heart. In this way judgemental attitude or bad behaviour is avoided as each story is considered as being holy and consequently being honoured. At the same time there are also similarities to some other group based healing models.

PART IV

DATA ANALYSIS

Chapter six begins with a discussion of the process of data collection and the method of analysis. The central part of the chapter reports the main themes in an attempt to meet research objectives four and five.

> Since forgiveness is a culmination of healing, and a primary need of the victim, it is unconditional in nature… We cannot build a future if we remain afraid to know our past. Painful memories must be examined and a joint history written, free from biases of national mythologies. Continued conflicts are directly related to unhealed wounds. (Botcharova 2001:291)

CHAPTER SIX

THE IMPACT OF HEALING OF MEMORIES WORKSHOPS

6.1   Introduction.

In this chapter, I will first discuss the data collection experience (section 6.2) and the data analysis approach which was followed (section 6.3). After, a discussion of validity and reliability in (section 6.4), I present the data, categorized under five themes. The chapter will attempt to meet specific objectives 4 and 5 (see section I.X).

6.2   The data collection process

Field work took place during the months of August and September 2012. Four focus group meetings were followed by 20 personal interviews. Two focus group meeting were held at the DRC and URC churches two more at the Lutheran church in Umbilo; each focus group had five participants. The questions used in the focus groups as well as for personal interviews were semi− structured, open− ended questions and started always by the easiest and moved slowly to the complex or more difficult. These are included in Tables 4.1 and 4.2.

This was intended to allow the participants to feel at ease by helping them feel able to respond to all questions without any challenges. Both focus group discussions and personal interviews were tape recorded with the permission of the participants and later transcribed for subsequent analysis.

The interviews were valuable as they permitted me to get a deeper understanding of the information provided in the focus groups. I found people were more comfortable and relaxed in the interviews than in the focus group discussions. However, Eysenck (2006:4) cautions that "data obtained from interviews may reveal more about the social interaction processes between the interviewer and the person being interviewed than about the interviewee's thought processes and attitudes".

In general, I found the participants were interested in the issues and willing to talk in both focus group and interview situations. The focus groups and interviews were conducted in English.

6.3   Data analysis

Grey (2004:327) explains that "Analysis involves the process of breaking data down into smaller units to reveal their characteristic elements and structure", while Dey (2005:31) states that "Analysis too involves breaking data down into bits, and then beating the bits together. It is a process of resolving data into its constituent components; reveal its characteristic element and structure".

An interpretive thematic analysis method was in use to analyze the data. This choice was guided by the assumption that interpretative thematic methods will help us to comprehend the patterns of mutual and communal understanding of the participants and any inconsistency in those patterns. (Braun and Clarke 2006:79-81) remark that

> Thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analyzing and reporting patterns (themes) within data. It minimally organizes and describes your data set in [rich] detail. However, frequently it goes further than this, and interprets various aspects of the research topic…it can be an essentialist or realist method, which reports experiences, meanings and the reality of the participants.

This method led me to an in–depth reading and re–reading of transcripts. By so doing, I intended to capture the feelings of participants in the focus group discussions and mostly to become familiar with the participant's perceptions as expressed during the focus group discussions and personal interviews. This has allowed me to gain a primary understanding and meanings of the occurrences to be explored. Dey (2005:12) notes that "Meaning is essentially a matter of making distinctions…meaning is bound up with contrast between what is asserted and what is implied not to be the case".

As I read, themes began to emerge. Some of these, it needs to be said, were already partly identified by the questions that were asked during the focus group discussions and personal interviews and which were designed to meet the overall objective and specific objectives of this study. Fereday et al (2006:83) define a theme as "a pattern in the information that at minimum describes and organizes the possible observations and maximum interprets aspects of the phenomenon". To (Braun and Clarke 2006:82), "a theme captures something important about the

data in relation to the research question, and represents some level of patterned response or meaning within the data set".

The five themes are as follows:

1. Motives for holding the HoM workshops.
2. Significant things learned through the workshop.
3. Healing began to happen.
4. The relevance of such workshops in the new South Africa.
5. Reconciliation began to happen.

I have found it valuable to quote what participants said during the focus group discussions and personal interviews. Eysenck (2004:2) indicates that "those carrying out qualitative research sometimes make use of direct quotations from their participants, arguing that such quotations are often very revealing".

6.4   Validity and reliability

One of the strengths of qualitative research design is the capacity for in-depth analysis. At the same time, there is the possibility of unreliable results (in the sense that another researcher, doing the same research, might reach different conclusions) or invalid results (in the sense of drawing incorrect conclusions). These dangers can be reduced by carefully using established data and collection methods and by procedures such as the use of several different methods of data collection (i.e. triangulation), by having several carry out the data analysis independently and by checking out the results with the participants.

The addition of the Lutheran congregation to the DRC/URC churches was a response to the fact that many DRC/URC members had left the area. The additional congregation – which organized its HoM workshops differently – provides another test of the validity of our findings.

6.5   Main findings.

This section reports the five main themes which came out of the data collected from the church congregations.

First theme: Motives for holding the HoM workshops.

Respondents from the focus group and personal interviews had different reactions with respect to this theme. Church leaders clearly knew what they needed to achieve in organizing these workshops while most of the participants were just invited to attend the workshops without any prior explanation of what was going to happen. This confused many people who were invited and resulted in some refusing to attend the workshop. One of the participants in the focus group discussions with the Lutheran community recommended that

> In order to increase the number of participants the Institute for Healing of Memories should develop a half day introductory course for potential participants and give them a brief preview of the workshop. He said that churches have money to support such initiatives.

The same sentiment was echoed by Muller during the Lutheran focus group discussions. For him, the Institute for Healing of Memories

> Need to have good advertising strategies for its workshops. When dates of the workshop are confirmed reminders should be sent to potential participants. The Institute website could advertise the workshops. It is only in this sense that the workshops will become more attractive to people.

Pastor Johannes, who attended the Healing of Memories workshop for the DRC and URC, had this to say during the focus group meeting:

> I think this workshop came about because individuals and church members have been divided along the line of the color of their skin. It was therefore very important as people of God to find a platform that would give us the opportunity of coming together and talk about our situation but at the same time to look at the future of our congregations and their members.

As Lederach (1997:26) notes that

> People need opportunity and space to express to and with one another the trauma of loss and their grief at that loss, and the anger that accompanies the pain and the memories of injustices experienced…opportunity must therefore be given for people to look forward and envision their shared future.

Considering the Lutheran history in South Africa, the DELP understood that probably the Healing of Memories workshops would be a catalyst to achieve that objective. They explain that:

> With the inception of a joint theological training in Pietermaritzburg in 1986 a new generation of pastors has understood their personal calling into the ministry to be closely linked to the movement towards one united Lutheran church. During the last two decades there have been various (unsuccessful) attempts at merging the various congregations in the greater Durban area. (Notes from Lutheran Pastors Meyer and Chetty, 15 November 2012)

In another statement during the focus meeting Muller stated that: "our broader vision is that of bringing together DELP churches. To reach a community free of anger from the past which was

not addressed? And I hope that the HoM workshops could assist us to achieve our goal". This new generation of young pastors understood clearly that it was time to find a way that could led to re-establishment of broken relationships among the Lutherans members but mostly to heal their past trauma.

Explaining how the workshop came about, Ds. Deon Snyman, who was working at the URC in KwaMakhutha as an assistant Pastor at the time, said that

> Diakonia Council of Churches initiated a reconciliation program in 2003. After thorough research it was decided to adopt the Healing of Memories model for the program. Although I was the manager of the program I was also part time minister of the Uniting Reformed Church Congregation in KwaMakhutha and had a close relationship with the Dutch Reformed Church Minister of the DRC South Coast Congregation. It was therefore quite easy to arrange for the two congregations to attend the workshop. (E-mail communication, 17th of August 2012)

In the same context, Rev. Marthinus (interviewed in Amanzimtoti, 2 September 2012.) emphasized that

> A minister from the DRC Suidkus was involved in Diakonia Council of churches. Another minister was working for Diakonia but also involved in URC KwaMakhutha. Together they organized a weekend where members of the congregations could meet and tell each other their stories, their pains, their losses – caused by the political situation in the country. Once again openness towards each other was established.

It is in this environment that the DRC, URC and Lutheran church members began planning the Healing of Memories workshop in order to make a safe place for them where they could start talking to one another, build trust and new relationships among themselves. In order to achieve this objective, Mpume (interviewed, KwaMakhutha 21st of August 2012) states that

> How could we continue preaching God's gospel while still divided along the line of being Whites, Black, Indians or Colored? Then the DRC leadership at the national level initiated the reconciliation process but unfortunately they took a top down approach. Luckily, Rev. Fananaye and Andrew played a major role in bringing some of the two church members at the HOM workshop. That's where it all started.

These feelings were also articulated by the participants in the focus group discussions held in Amanzimtoti. "We could no longer continue to live in isolation from one another especially when we are preaching the same gospel of love, forgiveness and reconciliation. As God's children we have to find a place to seat and talk through our issues as brethren".

Similar theological reasoning was expressed by Tombela from the Lutheran community in a focus group meeting when he said that

> As people of God there was a need to find that oneness. We all are God's creature despite the difference of our languages, cultures and skin color. The Healing of Memories workshop brought us together and gives us the chance to understand each other. Our aim was to find a mechanism to work together as unity.

Another participant from the same community emphasized that the Healing of Memories workshop

> Was a way of bringing the two churches (Blacks and Whites) together because we all preach the same gospel of love. Why then we have to live as enemies? We should see ourselves as God's children, as brothers and sisters. We have to listen to suffering, pain and anger of each of us in order for us to move forward and build new relationships among ourselves as church leaders but also between our members. The only way we could do this is through the Healing of Memories workshop.

One of the organizers of the Healing of Memories workshop for the DRC and URC members spoke of the stimulus of the workshop in the following edifying and constructive lengthy quotation which is genuinely worth mentioning:

> The workshop was the initiative of the Diakonia Council of Churches. The workshop was motivated by the fact that only the leaders of the two congregations normally had contact with each other and not the church members.
>
> There were also a lot of distrust in general, very little contact on equal level, and a lot of misunderstanding between races during that time.
>
> The workshop was intended to bring the different races of the churches together to talk about their perspectives about each other, their fears and hopes, and the need to trust each other in future. This was necessary because during the last few years of apartheid a lot of racial tension, division, misunderstanding, and racism developed and there were not opportunities to talk to each other.
>
> Furthermore, the uniting process between the two churches was (and still is) on the table and trust needed to be builds to continue with this process. There was in general (in my view) also the anger of the different races towards each other to deal with - from the black people the experience of apartheid through so many years and not getting the opportunity afterwards to talk about it (to restore their dignity, and not only to blame or judge) to white people; and from white people to talk about their loss of feeling part of the country's future anymore, their loss of children during the war in Namibia, their loss of security after apartheid because of the extreme violent crime (especially farm murders), and their experience of apartheid as often something they were not fully aware of, and their experience of reversed apartheid through affirmative action's and land reform (and the consequent "anger" towards other races). These feelings were all communicated to each other during the workshop in very respectful manner and environment. (Rev. Annè Verhoef e-mail communication of the 5th of September 2012)

From this point of view, the Healing of Memories workshop was seen as necessary to bring the DRC and URC members together to talk and find a platform in which they could also share their pains, angers, frustrations and empathy for the building of new relationships among individuals and two churches. Beginning to understand and trust each other and be open in acknowledging the causes of their past trauma would facilitate the healing process for the members of the DRC and URC.

Zola (interviewed in Durban, 23 of August 2012.) a member of the Uniting Reformed Church thought that the Healing of Memories workshop was important for the reconciliation.

> With the new dispensation in South Africa it was a crucial time for transformation. It was time for reconciliation at individual level but also at community level. And as a church there were no ways that we could stay behind. Although church leaders at the national level did not see the immediate necessity for reconciliation because of politic and other social issues, at local level our champions (Pastors) were adamant in bringing the two church members together for a new future and mostly for the prosperity of the church.

> But, also we did learn from the good relationship for example among the Methodist church members from Amanzimtoti and KwaMakhutha and the question we asked ourselves was therefore why not us. I believe that these two examples motivated us a lot but also the leader's enthusiasm for reconciliation should be recognized.

Of course, reconciliation is hugely difficult to achieve. Hamber (2003:78) explains that "…It is also essential to deal with the causes of the distress and the symptoms. What need to be 'healed' is therefore the multitude of individual, political, social and cultural responses to traumatic situation and its aftermath".

Rev. Grobbler from the Lutheran church saw the aim of the HoM as

> … Helping our people (church members) to move out of their comfort zones in order for them to start talking to each other in a sincere manner. To talk in a safe environment by being honest to one another and accept, heard and not suppress what the other person has said or have to say although painful or hateful that might be. It is only in this way that we could understand our identity, respect each other and start together the process of healing our past traumas and move forward as human beings created to the image of God.

It is clear that after the event participants understood why their leaders organized the HoM workshops. Maybe if they had been briefed beforehand many more church members would attend.

Second theme: Significant things learned through the workshop

All participants expressed huge satisfaction from having attended the Healing of Memories workshops. They said that in the beginning it was scary as they did not know what would happen and for some this was the first time they sat and eaten with people of a different race group. In the focus group they agree that the workshop was like manna from heaven and that these kinds of workshops were long overdue for many of us. This magic is what we need in our churches, communities and the nation, said one participant in a focus group discussion. It provided for us an opportunity to start engaging each other.

Rodriguez (interviewed in Amanzimtoti, 28 of September 2012.) stated that:

> Coming from England and not really involved with the apartheid I was anxious not knowing if I will be accepted either by the white Afrikaners or blacks at that workshop. Amazingly I was received with kindness and during the storytelling people listened and acknowledged me as one of them. From that day I made a lot of friends (whites and blacks).

Johannes from the DRC (Interviewed in Amanzimtoti, 2 September 2012.09.) expressed his appreciation of the Healing of Memories in this way

> You know apartheid taught us that Blacks people were our enemies. Now during this workshop here I am seating with this black guy whom I know very well since we all grow together but on the opposite side. I was a soldier fighting blacks for the protection of my whites' brothers and sisters and he was an ANC activist fighting for the liberation of blacks. Seating in the same small group at the time of story sharing I listen carefully to his story and come to conclusion that apartheid was wrong. How we as God's creators could hate one another because of the color of skin? Story sharing was really the awakening call for me as from that day this chap became my friend. I have learned a lot but mostly the power of listening.

These two statements show us how much the impact of stereotypes can build barriers between and individuals or community members especially when they are reinforced by policies such as those put in place by the apartheid regime.

Zoleka from the URC (interviewed on the 3rd of October 2012) answered the question concerning the most valuable thing she learned at the HoM workshop with excitement:

> Through this workshop I came to understand that Afrikaners (whites) were also human beings as black people. I always compared Afrikaners with animals because of the way they were killing black people. I remember at one time white soldiers came to KwaMakhutha and started shooting randomly at people and there were no place for us to report such atrocities. But with the workshop I have learned a lot as I realized that both sides (blacks and whites) did have good and bad guys. It is not good to put all people in the same basket. I learned not to be judgmental.

> Also the story sharing and drawing exercise brought all of us together as human beings. We cried and laughed together as sisters and brothers. It was really wonderful to be at this workshop.

Zethu (interviewed in KwaMathutha, 16 September 2012) stated that "stories sharing were very important for me. I coughed out my anger and thereafter I was relieved. I will be very happy if I could attend another HoM workshop".

During the focus group meeting with the Lutheran community Vicky, said that "I am so grateful to meet such a group of people full of love, respect and patient to others. I was touched by the way they respected me as they never looked down to people like me".

Pume of the URC explained how wonderful it was for her to be at the workshop:

> I was very astonished by the fact that in my small group during the story sharing all people just kept quiet and listened with much attention despite the fact that I was talking and shooting by taking out my anger to whites people in my group because what of the apartheid did to us blacks. But, these people listened to me without any comments. From that day I learned to listen to other people without interruption.

Listening is therapeutic and always helps those who are depressed and traumatized. It also contributes to the building of new a relationship as the person feels respected, trusted and mostly valued by those around her/him and more importantly humanize the person that is being listened to. (The Healing of Memories, *Facilitators guidelines* 2005:5) stipulates that

> Listening is a gift we can give to people. Listening is also hospitality. It is the offering to someone of a space in which to feel welcome, to meet, to be listened to, to be heard, to feel safe, and free to be him/herself.

During the Healing of Memories workshop, participants in the small group have to listen to stories that are being told not only with their ears but mostly with their hearts i.e., they have to listen with love and compassion.

An interview with John from the Lutheran church referred to the understanding between different participants and the camaraderie that was created during the duration of the workshop and thereafter. He stated that

> For me, the workshop created a bond and new relations among us. Listening to people's stories give me the opportunity to understand them much better than I did before. I felt that empathy and put myself in their shoes realizing that we are in the same boat. From this moment I realized that we are all the same despite our skin colour.

Maya (interviewed in Amanzimtoti, 29th September 2012) stated her satisfaction with the workshop spent together with the URC congregation members

I have learned to respect other people's culture during the workshop and thereafter. You know that we whites do things in different ways than our black sisters and brothers. Sometimes, each group feels the sense of superiority vis-à-vis the other. But here we were seating sharing the same food and at the same time accepting each other in the way that our God created us. This was outstanding and positive element for our reconciliation. She also emphasized that if we could learn the language of the other people in our congregation it could help in healing our past trauma.

Vicky (Interviewed in Durban, 1st October 2012) from the Lutheran focus group made similar comments:

Seating there listening to one another was really wonderful and this despite our background and culture. My daughter is black but I had not much understood black culture and their anger toward white people because of what apartheid did to them until I attended the HoM workshop. It was a valorising experience which I will always cherish my entire life as my empathy toward other human beings increased. Another thing that stood up for me is the coming together ceremony. It is during this time that I felt relieved as we were sharing food, drinks and jokes as friends who were known to each other for a long period of time.

These feelings are echoed by what Niyodusenga and Karakashian wrote in their programme evaluation of the HoM Facilitators (2007:8) commenting that

Although the workshop is on individual healing through storytelling, mutual understanding and reconciliation can arise from the opportunity to listen to others who have had quite different experiences. People are often surprised at their ability to empathize with someone who might previously have been perceived as 'the other'. As the individuals begin to recognize their common humanity, the process contributes to the reconciliation of communities and societies.

This quotation summarizes the sentiments expressed by many participants after attending the HOM workshop. It is clear that after attending the HOM workshop participants saw change in their lives.

Oscar from the DRC (Interviewed in Amanzimtoti, 28 September 2012) expressed his feeling of joy and appreciation about the HoM in this way

I did not have any trauma to talk about during the workshop. And therefore my taught was almost evasive as I did not know what to expect. But my big shock came when one of the organizers at the first session said that 'healing yes. But where is my bicycle? Then I realized that there was a lot of anger from the URC members toward us from the DRC. What amazed me is that despite the anger, bitterness and pain people from both sides were prepared to talk as this did not happen before. I leaned not to judge other but to be a good listener and that restitution is a must for the complete reconciliation.

Through Healing of Memories workshops trust and mutual respect were rebuilt amongst the members of the churches. After the workshops, mutual celebrations were followed up by

member visits and other activities organized to consolidate their new relationships. An article in the Diakonia Council of Churches *newsletter Inselelo*, October 2005:9

> The Dutch Reformed Church (DRC) in Amanzimtoti and Uniting Reformed Church (URC) in KwaMakhutha have been journeying together in a process of reconciliation. As part of this journey both congregations worked together in the KwaMakhutha during the week of 12-19 June. They helped with restoration work on the church building, painted the manse and Pre-school and assisted in training the pre-school personnel. A further initiative of these two congregations was a stress and trauma healing workshop for the home- based care workers in the KwaMakhutha. Eleven home-based care workers attended the workshop on 31 August − 2 September 2009.

In the similar way, the DELP has continuously had more joint services with the aim of reinforcing their relationships in what they have coined as 'building bridges'. In their notes (Meyer and Chetty, 15 November 2011) explain that:

> A need was seen to continue this engagement on a grass-root level. The Lutheran congregations of St.Michael's (ELCSA) and Lutherkirche and St.Paul's (both ELCSA-NT) in the Durban City area agreed to hold joint services. Congregational Council members met and after one joint service, the idea of a joint committee to unite in social-outreach work was born.

However, all plans are not running as smoothly as hoped for. In the absence of more financial support this initiative to collaboration between congregations would collapse.

> The multi-cultural and multi-lingual context within the DELP and its surrounding communities has opened new possibilities and challenges. The greatest challenge is the financial survival of the two congregations, who are currently working towards building One Spiritual Home. The intention for the next 2-5 years is to utilize only one of the two premises for all the worship services and ministries, while renting out the other one. As from 1st Advent 2011, all services have been taking place at Luther Kirche, 17 Renshaw Road, Umbilo. (Meyer and Chetty, 15 November 2011)

In the case of these three churches the healing of past trauma started at the grass root level and has not been supported by the church hierarchy. The danger therefore is that without continued efforts by the pastors these initiatives are not sustainable.

Third theme: Healing began to happen

The concept of healing seemed difficult and confusing to almost all the participants. However, as discussions went on during the focus group meetings, they came to understand its meaning. This is because through the discussion every participant has to express his/her feeling about healing.

> Healing means, first of all, the creation of empty but friendly space where those who suffer can tell their story to someone who can listen with attention. This healing process helps us to further

our journey towards peace and reconciliation. It also helps us to try a new life for all. (Institute for Healing of Memories, *Facilitators guidelines* 2005:5)

Some participants during the focus groups discussions and personal interviews said that healing was something that happened during the workshop while others said that healing it still to happen to them.

Maya from the DRC said she was healed after attending the HoM workshop in this way

> My girl aged five was shot by a black guy. This is quite a long time ago. At the court the guy was given a bail of six hundred rand at that time. I lived with anger and bitterness through all my life. But fortunately, the workshop helped me a lot to move on with my life. I could say my healing just happened after that workshop. Today I do no longer carry any grudges, sorrows and grieves as they were all taken out of my life after the workshop. Another thing which assisted me was my faith and trust in God.

On the same theme Charles (interviewed in Durban, on the 2snd of October 2012) spoke tearfully:

> My trauma healing happened during that workshop. I was carrying many bad feeling especially as I could not do anything against apartheid. I realized the wrongness of apartheid and my own guilty of accepting that system as the right one. You know black people were not considered as human being by the apartheid. But during that workshop everything just changed as we all (Blacks and Whites) came together and shared that humanness as sisters and brothers which were taken away from us through the apartheid regime. This experience created the Christian love which was missing among all our church members. From that occasion I could drive easily to KwaMakhutha which I could not do prior to that workshop as we were always told that black people are very dangerous.

Zola expressed his sentiment about the workshop during the focus group discussions in this way

> Healing happened at the workshop. I cried a lot as it was the first time to share what was inside me. Anger, hate, sadness…after the workshop I established personal relationship and a good understanding of the fears of whites people.

Johannes a member of the DRC had mixed feelings during the focus group discussions about the healing of past trauma. He made the following statement

> This workshop gave us the opportunity to come together as blacks and whites which we have not done before because of the apartheid. Although the apartheid was abolished some of us still could not approach black people. But this workshop worked as a magic because after sharing my story I was aware of my anger, pain and guilty. At that moment I was healed as I could now relate to blacks as brother and sisters. Unfortunately, today I feel again traumatized mostly with the policies such as affirmative action which does not give to our children the opportunity to work in their country of birth and consequently are obliged to go and seek employment abroad.

Following similar thinking, Oscar also argued during the focus group meeting that

I witnessed some kind of healing during that workshop especially because there was now that understanding among us members of the DRC an URC. However, I am disappointed by some statements being made today by our politicians which are not promoting the spirit of forgiveness and reconciliation. This has led to some of us now being traumatized as we do not know what the future holds for us.

However, not all the participants either during the focus group discussions or during the personal interviews shared the same vision about healing. Muller from the Lutheran church explained his experience about healing in this way "Healing is a process. It is something that you tend to achieve, toward. Healing is not a one off event because it is continuity. In other words healing is a process".

John also echoed the reflection above, asking

> Who's the healer? There is a temptation to see ourselves pastors as healers. Healing is a process as you cannot be healed suddenly after attending a workshop. You might feel better today but a moth later you are again overwhelmed by the brokenness of the society. He concluded by saying that we are not holy until we reach our destination.

Vicky remarked in the same discussions that "During that workshop we just opened old wounds. It will take time for them to heal. So healing is not something that can happen spontaneously. It is a journey that one has to take slowly but surely".

Commenting on the same issue Zethu (interviewed in KwaMakhutha, 16th of September 2012) reflected on continuing suffering along with healing:

> I felt healed somehow after that workshop. But there is no change. Blacks' people are still suffering even after that workshop. The whites are not caring about us as they do not keep their promises. Despite these challenges we are coming together for prayers and services with whites at some special occasions.

Pume (interviewed in KwaMakhutha, 21 August 2012) echoed the above argument when stating that

> I was a bit healed when I was there because I managed to voice my anger and hate. The workshop was just one step as there are still many issues to be sorted out before one could say I am healed.

Fananaye (interviewed in Durban, 13 August 2012) provides a final quotation:

> For me it was not only the HoM that assisted me but it was mostly because of my exposure in many occasion at the TRC which played an important role as far as my healing is concerned. The HoM workshop was just addition on what already had happened into me. This is because before the TRC I always thought that only whites were perpetrators of violence ignoring what we blacks

were doing for our liberation. The HoM workshop allowed me to balance things and enter into other people shoes. I would say after that workshop some people were healed but not the church.

Also the workshop helped me to understand our gospel in a meaningful way especially when we talk about Jesus Christ as mediator and our reconciler to God.

Taking these different responses into account I would say that healing from the past trauma is a long process. Advocates of forgiveness and reconciliation have often neglected the issue of societal level justice which can be essential for long term progress towards healing. Hamber (2003:79) states that

…focusing solely on the distress of an individual and their symptoms can divert attention from the important role of social interventions such as justice, truth and reparation. Healing should be sought at the individual level but dependent upon and interrelated with social context.

One of the organizers of the HoM workshop for the DRC and URC church members discussed continuing inequality after the workshop. He was really struck by the response of the black man and that stood as the most valuable thing he learned from that workshop. His feelings are expressed in the following quote:

After the workshop I gave an Afrikaans speaking guy and a Zulu-speaking guy a lift back to their respective homes. I first dropped the Afrikaans man at his nice house in a nice suburb with beautiful manicured lawns. When driving the Zulu-speaking man to his shack without water and electricity in the township I asked him what he thought about the workshop. He was very honest when he said to me that he was angrier towards white people than ever before. At the workshop he got to know the white guy that I dropped first and realized that they had more or less the same intellectual capacity. 'When I saw the house this guy was living in I just realized his saying sorry does not mean anything to me. Look how much better is his life from mine. If he is really sorry something needs to happen to address inequality in South Africa'. (Ds. Deon Snyman, in an e-mail communication on 10th of August 20120)

The feeling, then, is that trauma healing needs to be accompanied by those who have benefited from the apartheid regime making amends. In this context Chapman (2001:267) has stated that:

In South Africa long term reconciliation will depend on achieving greater economic justice between the beneficiaries and victims of the apartheid system. And for that reason it is unfortunate that even after the TRC very few white South Africans are willing to acknowledge either their support for the apartheid system or the manner that they benefited from its operations…very few white South Africans are committed to sharing some of their wealth. Only a small minority of white South Africans (9%) are willing to rectify the injustices of the past through redistribution and affirmative action policies.

The same argument was made by Maya in focus a group discussion saying that "sharing of resources could help to the healing of past trauma in South Africa". While a better distribution of

income and wealth is essential for long term forgiveness and reconciliation although it is beyond the scope of this thesis.

Zoleka (interviewed in KwaMakhutha, 3rd of September 2012) gave a related comment that:

> For me there is nothing to say about healing. The situation is still the same because black's people are suffering even today. Our brothers and sisters of the DRC are not willing to share their resources with us. Yes, we can visits each other but our situation is that of desperate people. Can I then say that I was healed after the workshop? My answer is No.

Scarce resources and the unwillingness of those who have to share with those who have not is a stumbling block for trauma healing. It is therefore important for those conducting the Healing of Memories workshops to explain clearly to the participants that the workshop is not about material reparation; rather it is a first step towards personal healing.

Fourth theme: The relevance of such workshops in the new South Africa.

> It is like we are preaching to the converted ones because only those who understand the importance of the HoM are keen to respond to our request. People are not interested to attend this kind of workshop as they are not aware of its value. We must find a way of explaining the whole process to people before calling them for the workshop. (Lutheran focus group participant).

Other participants went even further by saying that the HoM workshops are mostly attended by black people. Are they the only ones who have been traumatized by the past? This is another big challenge that organizers of workshops for community members should take in consideration. It seems that the lack of white participation in the Healing of Memories workshops is felt over South Africa.

It is in this way of thinking that Joseph (interviewed in Amanzimtoti, 28 September 2012) stated that:

> I do believe it (HoM) is of value. Unfortunately very few white people are attending these workshops. Efforts should be made to encourage white's people to come forward as they have been also traumatized either as perpetrators or survivors of the many ills of the apartheid regime. They are human beings and need also healing in one way or another.

Following the similar thought, Johannes (DRC the focus group discussion) acknowledged that

> The HoM workshops help in bringing people who have been torn apart together. Therefore, I would recommend these workshops to the communities and churches. But getting whites people included is going to be a challenge. The HoM can be a great vehicle that allows people to accept each other as human being despite the color of their skin, culture or language.

John added another element saying that:

> The HoM workshop is a need for our communities and churches. However, where are the men? You call people for the workshop and you get ninety percent of women. The setting also seems a bit problematic for those who are used to this kind of workshop. The way it is organized (drawing exercise, clay exercise...) some Africans might say this is a western culture which they are trying to impose on us.

Zola explained why he would always advice individuals, community and church members to attend HoM workshops:

> You know, today I conduct my own workshop for conflict resolution in different areas in KwaZulu-Natal using an adapted version of the HoM methodology. So, definitely the HoM workshop still a powerful tool for past trauma healing and it need to be promoted in our families, churches and communities. We have to find a way of conducting the HoM workshops for our people now rather than later.

Finally, the workshops were seen to have relevance for greater than trauma healing emanating from apartheid. Similarly, in same focus group Vicky resonated the same feeling saying that:

> The Healing of Memories workshop has changed my life and the way I was thinking about others. It helped me to seek forgiveness which really was a very difficult thing for me to do before attending this workshop. Definitely, the HoM workshop should be promoted in every corner of our communities and the country at large.

Tombela spoke about the HoM necessity in the focus group meeting in this manner "attending the HoM workshop has taught me to understand other people especially whites. I was influenced by the way I grow up separated from whites not really knowing who they are. My suggestion is to organize more of these workshops for our communities as the need is immense". He continued his thought:

> The Healing of Memories workshop is very important to our country even today. Look at what is happening in Marikana; people are carrying out their anger and frustration in violent way. There is still a lot to do deal with in relation to our past trauma, conditions and the life that the majority of black's people are in. the HoM workshops should involve more people on the grass roots level. (Tombela, focus group workshop)

Fifth theme: Reconciliation began to happen.

Although the aim of the HoM workshop is not centrally that of reconciliation among participants of different communities or churches, some participants found an opportunity to forgive and reconcile among themselves. Staub et al (2005:301) considers reconciliation as

A mutual acceptance by members of formally hostile groups of each other. Such acceptance includes positive attitudes, but also positive action that express them, as circumstances allow and require… forgiving involves letting of anger and the desire for revenge. It can help diminish the pain that results from victimization and moving away from an identity as a victim.

In fact the leaders of DRC, URC and the DELP had the idea of bringing their members together, getting them talking about their past and hopefully reaching reconciliation point.

Fananaye (interviewed in Durban, 2012.08.13) explained his view about the reconciliation of the DRC and URC churches and their members in this manner:

At individual level I could say yes reconciliation had happened as some have built good relationships among themselves. Unfortunately, at the church level nothing has changed. The church is affected by our politics because the whites church (DRC) is the only hope of the Afrikaners and is the only tool that still binds them together. The church is still using Afrikaans as the language of predication which is the stumbling block for the unity of the church either at provincial or national level. It is only here where they (Afrikaners) feel secured.

On the point of reconciliation between the DRC and URC, Pume had this to say "I think the workshop was just one step toward reconciliation. There is still a long way to go before reaching reconciliation despite our mutual visits. There is no reconciliation in the church especially the DRC".

Similarly in the focus group meeting Muller considered that:

The Lutherans are still at the beginning of the reconciliation process. There is a small impact but we are not yet there. The point is that only key people have attended our workshops. They have much benefited from these workshops and now there is a need to spread the workshops among our members. It is then from their reactions that we could measure the reconciliation between the Lutherans.

Vicky also followed the same way of thinking by stating that 'there has been a small move towards reconciliation. I remember one of the participant and our church member who perceived me as her enemy has become one of my best friend after we attended that workshop together'.

Both statements suggest that reconciliation cannot precede healing. The two have to go hand in hand for a good relationship among the parties that have been victims or perpetrators of trauma. Staub et al (2005:302) argue that "healing and reconciliation need to go together, especially when the groups that have engaged in violence against each other continue to live together".

Zola expressed a different feeling when he spoke about reconciliation between the DRC and URC. He argued that

Yes reconciliation happened after that workshop. However, since then there has been a lack of follow up and the appreciation of the leadership contribution to that process. We have lost champions who started the whole process and now it is going backward. That momentum has been lost because of the new leadership vision.

In the similar situation Charles (interviewed in Durban, 2snd of October 2012) commented with regret that

Before it could not be possible for white people to go and attend a service in KwaMakhutha. But, after that workshop a group of whites was eager to go to KwaMakhutha and celebrate with their brothers and sisters. Some personal relationships were established. Unfortunately, this kind of reconciliation could not be sustained due to the change of leadership in both churches. Thereafter, many whites became resistant to continue going to KwaMakhutha. I believe that we whites have to move out of our comfort zone for a good reconciliation to take place.

Zethu (interviewed in KwaMakhutha, 16 September 2012.09) was more positive:

I think somehow there has been a kind of reconciliation between whites and blacks from our two churches. You know because of the apartheid and before that workshop we could not visit the white church (DRC). We have now mutual visits and pray together. Today, I am able to approach a white person from the DRC and we some time do go out together. The Healing of Memories workshop brought a change in us all as we build new relationships. I can say we are now one congregation of blacks, whites, colored and Indians.

However, Maya (interviewed in Amanzimtoti, 28 September 2012) asserted that politic and political leaders are no longer promoting reconciliation. She stated that "because of interference into the church matters people are being turned against each other. I am worried since we might lose the kind of relationship that was already among us (Blacks and Whites)".

Charles (interviewed in Durban, 2snd of October 2012) later acknowledged that:

There was a kind of reconciliation as whites changed their attitudes in accepting blacks as brethren into their congregation. A middle ground English service was established at the DRC to accommodate IsiZulu and English speakers as they could not speak Afrikaans. However, it is very difficult to tell about specific examples of personal level contacts or relations. Despite attending the HoM workshop we still leave with the legacy of apartheid with the riches minority not willing to share with the poor's majority. Consequently, reconciliation then in this environment becomes a bit tricky.

On a different note, Zoleka commented in the focus group meeting that

The HoM has allowed the members of the URC to create new relationships with the whites from the DRC. I can say that our relationship is sustained as we can today use the DRC facilities for our services and functions which could not happen in the past. We even now attend together special services. Personally I did forgive my whites sisters and brothers after the burning ceremony at the workshop.

Another positive assessment came from Rev. Marthinus (interviewed in Amanzimtoti, 2snd of September 2012):

> Healing of Memories workshop has brought the DRC and the URC members together as this can be witnessed by the two trees that have been planted after that workshop as a sign of reconciliation. But the most important recognition of our reconciliation work was the granting to the DRC and URC congregations of the 'Cross of Nails' by the Cathedral's International Centre for Reconciliation (see appendix 3)

Ds. Deon Snyman (In an e-mail communication of 17 September 2012) explained that "Through the Healing of Memories workshop relationship between the two congregations was strengthened and Individual relationships were also formed between members of the two congregations".

Through such comments one can understand the frustrations that participants are faced with when talking about reconciliation. The big challenges are that reconciliation is necessarily gradual and may need to be accompanied by reparations.

Similarly, Oscar (interviewed in Amanzimtoti, 28 September 2012) emphasized that reconciliation in South Africa in general is under threat. He remarked that

> I am of the view that to some extend blacks and whites in South Africa have been reconciled. However, the danger of mistrust is starting to emerge especially now with some political statements which are being made by our leaders which are no longer enhancing reconciliation and consequently not contributing to healing of our past trauma. Everything now is against peace and respect.

6.6   Limitations.

This study was undertaken with the objective of analyzing the impact of the Healing of Memories workshops in the context of the members of three churches namely the DRC in Amanzimtoti, the URC in KwaMakhutha and DELP in Durban. My aim was that of finding if the Healing of Memories workshops had a positive impact on healing trauma in these three church congregations. Its findings cannot be generalized beyond these congregations, nor can this research compare the relative impact of such workshops with other methods of trauma healing.

6.7   Summary and Conclusion

This chapter has examined the impact of the Healing of Memories workshops on trauma healing and reconciliation of the three church congregations. Data was collected from four focus groups and 20 individual interviews. While there were different expressions of opinion, these were not apparent between genders or race groups.

The participants who attended the HoM workshops some years ago reported that the workshops were of great value for them as they were able to share their stories and being listened to without any judgmental attitude. Other said that these kinds of workshops were for them the first occasion to talk about what they went through during the apartheid regime. For others, it was also the first time in their life where they had shared their experience with people of different race groups. Participants expressed different feelings in connection with trauma healing after they attended HoM workshops. For some, their traumas were healed after sharing their stories in the small groups while others said that they were relieved after the workshop but that healing was a long process. The HoM workshops were recommended by all the participants as vehicle for trauma healing of individuals or community level.

As far as reconciliation is concerned, many participants agreed that at an individual level there has been a kind of reconciliation. After the workshop, new relationships were established and visits from one church to other continued. However, they also remarked that the church congregations were not reconciled, especially in the case of DRC and URC.

The chapter concluded by pointing to the limitations of the research, largely the result of its case study research design.

PART V

CONCLUSION

This part summarizes the results this study which has examined the HoM workshops as one way of trauma healing.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSION

7.1   Summary of results

This dissertation has been structured in five parts, seven chapters, with each one dealing with specific issues related to its topic.

The first part of this study starts by giving the background of trauma in the context of the African continent in general and particularly in South Africa. It was demonstrated that trauma is a worldwide phenomenon which affects many people in different ways and this without distinction of class, age, gender and race. Atkinson et al (2010:141) remark that "…Trauma is an all-encompassing pathology that does not spare its victims regardless of their status, their profession or their identity as Indigenous or non-indigenous"

I explained that despite having had the TRC in South Africa many people remain unhealed. In order to fill the void left by the TRC, NGOs such as the Institute for Healing of Memories assist those who are or have been traumatized in one way or another. Ward (2011:50-51) notes that

> Without any government-headed initiatives to help people cope with their trauma, the majority of traumatized people in South Africa remain without access to any relief. The responsibility of helping this large mass of people has therefore fallen on the shoulders of the private sector.

These NGOs are not using the TRC method of testimonies in public or issues of reparation or amnesty. What they offer to individuals is a safe space where their stories can be listened to. It is in this context that I have worked with the DRC in Amanzimtoti, the URC in KwaMakhutha and DELP in Durban whose members have attended the HoM workshops. The leaders of these different churches trusted the HoM process for their trauma healing.

The second part dealt with the literature review examined trauma and post-traumatic stress disorder. One aspect to be mentioned is that the Westerners understanding of trauma is seen to be very different with an African understanding and this also true as far as the treatment of trauma is concerned. Westerners may prefer the one-on-one counseling method, while Africans

traditionally use different methods such as cleansing, prayers, songs and rituals for trauma healing. Such methods have been used effectively for the re-integration of former child soldiers and also for communal trauma healing.

I have found through the literature that trauma healing is well connected to peace building. This can be explained by the fact that individuals or communities who have been traumatized by the past event can come together and analyze their situation and start building new relationships which might lead to a peaceful environment among individuals or communities. Father Michael Lapsley, cited in Rigby (2001:140) states that

> Through the stories of hope, pain, joy, anger, fear, we draw people's feelings into understanding issues of peace, justice, reconciliation and healing…it is extremely important to confront the past and wrestle with it, to not be consumed by it in the future.

On the contrary, individuals, families, communities and nations can be negatively affected by unattended trauma. (Hollick and Connelly 2011:22) remark that "An unhealed trauma may make us more vulnerable to similar events in the future…past trauma may cause us to respond to a new challenge with anger and aggression, accompanied by tension, and denial of what happened". In the same context, those who have been traumatized or have witnessed trauma events will always need support from friends, family and community members in order to start their healing journey.

As far as the nature and extent of trauma is concerned, I have argued that trauma in Africa is huge mostly due to wars and other factors. (Miller and Hill 2005:1) write that "Compared to other parts of the world, Africa and Africans have experienced violent encounters and traumatic aftermaths in considerable and disproportionate measure through time". In the case of South Africa trauma levels are very high not only because of its apartheid but also because of other issues such as gender based violence, poverty, HIV/AIDS, women and children abuse, corporal punishment, violent crimes and so on.

Through this part I have responded to the first objective of this study being that of describing the nature, extent, causes and consequences of trauma with particular reference to South Africa. The consequences of trauma have also been dealt with in this part of the study. I have argued that unhealed trauma is not good for individuals or the community at large. It is very important for those who are affected by trauma to deal with it. But how individuals or communities deal with

trauma is very important and challenging. Some individuals or community members choose not to speak about their trauma while others strive for assistance as early as possible for their trauma healing. Unhealed trauma can lead individuals or community members to become violent and creating a non-peaceful environment.

The third part has to do with the research design and methodology and the Healing of Memories origin, philosophy and practice. The chapter on research design, methodology and research plan; I explained the study's approach, the qualitative design, focus groups and personal interviews as my tools of data collection. In both focus group discussions and personal interviews I used semi-structured open ended questions. Into the same chapter I explained how I intended to analyze my data and showed that the analytical interpretative thematic method is appropriate. The issues of validity and reliability have also been discussed. I wanted to be sure that other researchers exploring the same research would reach to the same results.

The context of the three different congregations where explained. The main aim here was to look at what kind of trauma existed that the workshops were attempting to address. The chapter on the Healing of Memories focused on their origin, philosophy and practice of the HoM workshops. These workshops are compared with other NGOs such as HROC in the great Lakes region and Tree of life in Zimbabwe use similar methods.

The chapter on the main findings reports the results of my interactions with the participants through the focus group meetings and personal interviews aimed at responding to objectives four and five. The evidence indicates effectiveness of the workshops in helping heal individual trauma and reconciling the communities concerned.

7.2   Implications for the Institute for the Healing of Memories

The leadership of the three congregations concerned in this study had an expectation that the HoM workshops could assist their members in trauma healing, forgiveness and reconciliation.

As asserted by participants during the focus group discussions and personal interviews, changes were made in their personal lives which helped them to forgive, create new relationships and reconcile. Participants confirmed that the HoM has helped them to move forward despite their hurting experiences.

However, despite the fact that Healing of Memories workshops were appreciated and recommended by all our participants, some challenges described by them need to be mentioned.

First of all, many participants argued that the HoM workshops are not well advertised and suggestions were made that the Institute for Healing of Memories should develop a mechanism of explaining first-hand what the workshops are about.

This would be very difficult for the Institute:

- The issue of personnel going around the country and would stretch the Institute which has a small number of staff.
- Financially, the Institute cannot afford more staff due to its limited budget.

Secondly, during focus group discussions and personal interviews concerns were raised about men's participation in the HoM workshops. It was alleged that men especially whites are not interested in attending the HoM workshops. Men do feel that they are strong vis-à-vis any traumatic event so seeking assistance would be a sign of weaknesses. John commented in a focus group meeting that "world over men do not like to share their weaknesses. A man is always strong. Women are allowed to cry while men are seen powerful and ready to tackle every challenge they are faced with". This is a dangerous situation, as most violence is committed by men so something should be done to mobilize more men to attend the HoM workshops.

A different issue with financial resources was noted by some URC members as a stumbling block for reconciliation between the two churches (DRC and URC). The point was made that the URC's – even though money to support the URC was received from overseas-former pastors were not paid while their counterparts at DRC were paid on monthly basis.

Third, there is a lack of support from the hierarchies to which of the three congregations belong for reconciliation. It was said that those in higher positions are not interested of what is being done on the grass root levels in terms of healing and reconciliation. Consequently, those doing the job on the ground feel discouraged and ask themselves if what they are doing is worth to continuing.

Fourth, while participants agreed that on the individual level new relationships were built and individuals have been reconciled but at the church in general there is little reconciliation between

DRC and URC. The DELP, on the other hand seems to have made some good progress in reconciling the church. However, a challenging remark in the focus group meeting was that "as a church we must be very careful as we only emphasize on reconciliation, forgetting that we stand on two legs: reconciliation and restoration/social justice. There is no healing without restitution". Obviously this is important for the DRC and URC churches.

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APPENDIX 1: Tree symbolizing reconciliation at URC in KwaMakhutha.

APPENDIX 2: Tree symbolizing reconciliation at URC in KwaMakhutha

Receiving the 'Cross of Nails" are: From left Rev. Annĕ Verhoef (DRC), Rev. Mbonambi Khuzwayo (URC), Margaret Middleton (Coventry) and Rev. Mauritius Pienaar (DRC)