

The Salvation Army, Mentoring and the *Anamchara*: Can the Celtic Soul Friend be used as a Model for Mentoring within The Salvation Army?

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Abstract

Experience and recent research by The Salvation Army indicates that many Salvation Army officers suffer unhealthy levels of stress and few have mentoring relationships which could lessen the likelihood of severe stress. This study considers if the *anamchara* (Celtic soul friend) could be used as a model for mentoring officers within The Salvation Army (TSA). Consideration is given to the context of TSA, the nature of mentoring and the *anamchara* before discussing the validity of this proposal. Although the *anamchara* is not wholly applicable, there are features which are helpful. Therefore, a working definition of a soul friend and a framework is proposed, which could be used for officer mentoring.

Introduction

As a Salvation Army officer working in various contexts, I have experienced, and observed, the positive impact of mentoring as well as recognising the need for Christian mentoring within the officer personnel. The UK and Ireland Territory (UKIT) has realised this need in recent years and is providing some opportunities for mentoring, but there seems to be the need for more comprehensive and appropriate provision. This study considers the place of mentoring for officers within the UKIT, explores Christian mentoring and the *anamchara* (the Celtic soul friend), to determine if this model could be utilised in the context of officership within the UKIT.

The Salvation Army and Mentoring

From its inception, TSA developed a dual approach involving both faith and action. Therefore, it is not surprising, that as TSA evolved, its officers were tasked to undertake practical work alongside the preaching of the gospel and pastoral care. Instead of a traditional job description, *Orders and Regulations (O&R)* were printed from time to time to outline what was expected. *O&R 1886* contains some interesting

themes, including expectations concerning the faith, character and lifestyle of the officer (The Salvation Army 1886:1, 2,5, 9ff,13).

Shakespeare (2011:19-20) notes that 'the spiritual life has always been central to Salvation Army officership,' however, within the 1886 *O&R*, one can see an undeniable emphasis on activity, speaking of an officer having a 'soldier's spirit' in that 'he would rather go out and fight than to stay at home at ease' (The Salvation Army 1886:9). There is a section on 'improvement' where every element is the officer's own responsibility, stating that there is 'no excuse for failure' and that he is 'responsible for everything', there should be 'no stopping hard work' or ceasing from 'self-denying effort' (The Salvation Army 1886:23). It is noteworthy that there is no suggestion of how an officer may be supported in this work, although there is some direction regarding self-care (The Salvation Army 1886:37-4). It is acknowledged that these 'orders' were written when the Salvation Army was in its infancy, but nevertheless, it could also be argued that this attitude and expectation were ingrained in the culture of The Salvation Army.

Although there is little in the 1886 *O&R* regarding who an officer could approach for mentoring or guidance, in the chapters concerning the training of cadet-lieutenants, there are some encouraging aspects which echo good mentoring practice (The Salvation Army 1886:440). Equally the relationship between a lieutenant and a captain who serve together is described as potentially 'lasting spiritual friends' (The Salvation Army 1886:453), and speaks of accountability, support, mutual respect and a strong, spiritual relationship, all of which could be seen as hallmarks of mentoring.

A hundred years on, in the 1988 *O & R for Corps Officers*, there is little change to the overall tone of the contents: the activist emphasis is still there (The Salvation Army 1988:5). However, despite there being a strong emphasis on the officer being 'responsible for the physical and general well-being of himself' (The Salvation Army 1988:6), officers are advised that they 'will do well to seek the advice of those better equipped than himself' (The Salvation Army 1987:9). Another interesting aspect of Salvation Army officership is that officers enter into a covenant relationship rather than a contract. Shakespeare (2011:30-31) suggests that 'this document has a momentum which fosters an activist mind-set. When The Salvation Army began, the main

responsibilities of a Corps Officer were evangelism and discipleship. Since then, culture has changed significantly and with it the demands on, and responsibilities of, officers. Although all those original roles remain, many more have been added and these need to be managed in a much more complex, post-Christian society. Additionally, officers are appointed by Salvation Army leadership, which, although can be releasing in one sense, tensions and complexities can emerge. Thus, the need for support, encouragement, mutual journeying and safe places to share, explore and develop are even more vital.

In 2011, there was a recognition in the UKIT, that within the officer body, 'Psychological wellbeing is a frequent concern, specifically the prevalence of anxiety, depression and stress' (Pearson, Watson & Chape 2013:5); these conditions accounted for around half of officer absences due to illness. This led to research being undertaken, the results of which were published in 2013 in a *Stress in Officership Report*. The report highlighted several factors that required serious consideration and the results were generally helpful, identifying trends and themes which made for sober reading. This led to the formation of the *Well Being Unit (WBU)* whose framework centred around 'living life in all its fullness' (John 10:10). With this biblical concept as its foundation, the unit encompasses areas of both reactive and preventative support, including coaching and mentoring. This is a positive development and internal statistics show that there is an increasing uptake of this service. However, this is still small in terms of the number of officer personnel. Thus the need to explore other ways in which mentoring within The Salvation Army (UKIT) could be undertaken.

Mentoring

The practice of mentoring is now commonplace within the world of work and broader social communities (Parsloe and Leedham 2017:3). However, mentoring is understood and defined in many ways, and there is debate regarding its relationship to coaching. Therefore, it is imperative to have a working definition of Christian mentoring for this article as such is the focus of this work.

Clutterbuck and Megginson (1999:3) suggest mentoring is 'off-line help by one person to another in making significant transitions in knowledge, work or thinking.' This definition indicates that the purpose of mentoring is for one person to help another to

move forward in some way. Some would argue that this is also the remit of coaching. Indeed, Whitmore (2002:8) states that 'coaching is unlocking a person's potential to maximise their own performance. It is helping them to learn rather than teaching them.' There are obvious similarities which is why there is much debate about the relationship between mentoring and coaching, and indeed other 'helping' roles. Downey (2003:200, 202) aids the discussion by suggesting the focus of coaching is helping the person with the task or work they are involved in, whereas a mentor is concerned with more long-term goals, rather than immediate performance issues. This leads to the suggestion that coaching is more task-focussed, short-term and less likely to be the coachee's agenda, whereas mentoring is person-focussed, long-term and driven by the mentee's agenda. Zachary (2000: xx) would concur suggesting mentoring is about aiding learning rather than transfer of knowledge. One vital aspect is that mentoring is focussed on looking forward and helping another to grow, rather than looking backwards, being remedial in nature and aiding healing (Collins 2001:16), which is the role of a counsellor (Downey 2003:119).

In terms of Christian mentoring, again there are a myriad of definitions which also reflect the difficulty in forming a clear distinction between coaching and mentoring; for example, Krieder (2008:14) calls for 'spiritual mentors who act as mature coaches.' However, amidst this seeming confusion there are some features of Christian mentoring which appear consistently which can help us to form a working definition. Sanders (2009:5) describes Christian mentoring as long-term and holistic. Many writers agree but also emphasise that the central focus should be that of character formation (Wright 2013:3; Lewis 2009: 33; Wilcox 2018: 60; Horsfall 2008: 21; Pue 2005:15; Stoddard 2003:7). It involves developing Christian maturity, something Paul encourages in his writing to the people of Colossae (Colossians 1:28). This is a specific feature of Christian mentoring and could be seen as being significantly different to many forms of secular mentoring. As with all mentoring, an important feature of Christian mentoring is that it is relational, but there is an additional dimension due to a reference to God in many definitions. Anderson and Reese (1999:12) make this clear describing Christian mentoring as 'a triadic relationship between mentoree, mentor and Holy Spirit.'

Therefore, taking account of all that has been discussed, the working definition of Christian mentoring for this article will be as follows:

Christian mentoring is an intentional, dynamic relationship of trust between mentee and mentor, guided by the Holy Spirit, empowering the mentee to flourish as a child of God and become a spiritually mature disciple of Jesus.

Biblical basis

The term *mentoring* has only become more widely used in recent years, but the notion of mentoring is ancient; the word *mentor* originates from Greek Mythology, approximately 3000 years ago in Homer's poem *The Odyssey* (Garvey, Stokes and Megginson 2018:7). However, although the history of mentoring is quite fascinating, this will not be considered in this article and will instead briefly consider a biblical basis for mentoring.

Firstly, it should be noted that, although the word *mentoring* is not found in the Bible, it can be argued that the concept is there. Additionally, Lewis (2009:42) brings a word of caution warning against 'over-representation of mentoring relationships' within the Bible but also states that there are identifiable themes that could be helpful in terms of mentoring today. One such example is the relationship between Moses and Jethro, characterised by mutual respect (Exodus 4:18) (Snodde 2019), sharing of experiences (Exodus 18:8) provision of wise counsel (v17-23), asking open questions (v14) and a willingness to challenge (v17). Jethro was aware of the work of God in Moses' life (v19), and their conversation was 'Lord-centred', both men recognising the need to look to God in any decision-making (Van Brugge 2013:7).

There is evidence of Moses being a mentor to Joshua; he gave him responsibility (Exodus 17:8-16), developed his spiritual life (Exodus 24:13, Exodus 33:11), was an example (Numbers 12 and 14), asked questions to provoke reflection (Numbers 11:29), as well as developing his military skills. The relationship between Elijah and Elisha is similar to that of Moses and Joshua in terms of it being an apprenticeship model. Elisha's call to prophecy was marked by the very public action of Elijah throwing his cloak around Elisha's shoulders (Lewis 2009:47).

These examples of mentoring focus strongly on an elder person mentoring one younger or less experienced. Also found in the Old Testament is peer-mentoring or mentoring through friendship, seen primarily in the relationship between David and Jonathan (1 Samuel 18). Their relationship was characterised by trust, loyalty, wanting the best for the other, commitment through adversity (1 Samuel 19-20) and encouragement (1 Samuel 23:16-17). It could be argued that these are purely characteristics of friendship, but there seems to be a depth of relationship which makes it more than friendship. This is the kind of model that some *anamchara*/soul friendships are based upon, which will be discussed later.

In the New Testament there are many examples which could be seen as mentoring relationships. Jesus could be seen as a mentor, most significantly with the twelve disciples; as he was an example, a teacher and advisor on many occasions, mentoring them as a group (e.g. John 9:1-5, John 17:17-33). However, Jesus could also be seen as mentoring one-to-one, for example Peter (Matthew 16:21-23, John 13:6-10), but also with the three disciples who were often with Jesus at the most significant moments; John, Peter and James (e.g. Matthew 26:36-46, Mark 9:2-13).

In the early church, Priscilla and Aquila saw potential in the life of Apollos and invested in him that he may be equipped for what God required (Acts 18:24-26). The relationship between Barnabas and Paul is another example (Acts 14:12). Paul could be seen as a mentor in many ways – indirectly through his letters, and more directly with those he encouraged in the faith, a particular example being Timothy (Wilcox 2018:37).

Having considered these examples, it is apparent that there are different ways in which mentoring can be done; traditional one-to-one mentoring where the mentor is a more experienced person to the mentee (apprentice model), mentoring by a mentor to a group or a two-way relationship, that of peer or co-mentoring. Stanley and Clinton (1992:157) suggest that many people, leaders in particular, are looking to a group of people for their mentoring needs; they refer to this as the constellation model. In fact they propose that a variety of relationships are imperative for a Christian to flourish (Stanley and Clinton 1992:159). Traditionally, mentoring is somewhat formal with agreed format, timescales and such like. However, informal mentoring also has its

place, especially in the contemporary world with the millennial generation. (Emelo 2013:1).

The *Anamchara*

The *anamchara* literally means 'friend of the soul'; *anam* meaning soul, *chara* meaning friend. The *anamchara* is a person with whom one could share the whole of life (Simpson 1999:3). The term *anamchara* and Celtic soul friend will be used interchangeably in this article, unless otherwise stated. Within the Celtic church, it was expected that everyone should have a soul-friend (Leech 1994:45). To substantiate this emphasis, Brigit is often cited, stating that 'a man without a soul friend is a body without a head' (Simpson 1999:9; Sellner 2002: 216; Bradley 2000:102; Sellner 2002:62).

Over the last 30 years there has been a growing interest in the Celtic church demonstrated by the number of books on the subject (Robinson 2000: xi; Tanner 2009:63). Although in some ways, this has been a helpful exercise, resulting in a reconsideration of features such as community, hospitality, prayer, appreciation of the natural world and companionship, it is important to acknowledge that there has been a tendency to over-romanticise and be highly selective (Meek 2000:3). Equally, it is acknowledged that the main sources of information concerning the *anamchara* are hagiographies which were often recorded up to two centuries after the death of the saint and the *anamchara* wasn't always explained in great detail (Simpson 2008:89). Nonetheless, having noted these difficulties, there still remains much that can be learned about, and from, the *anamchara*.

When considering the roots of the *anamchara*, McNeill and Gamer (1990: 25) associates the *anamchara* with the *acharya*, a spiritual guide or director as described in the ancient Indian Brahman codes. However, two much more likely origins of the *anamchara* are the druids and druidesses of the pagan Celts, and the 'Desert Fathers and Mothers' who were early Christian spiritual guides who lived in the deserts of Egypt, Syria and Palestine between the third and fifth centuries (Sellner 2002:23). Often held in great esteem, druids and druidesses took on roles of spiritual guides, mentors and mediators as well as those of leadership (Sellner 2002:44-45). Understandably the druidic influence on the *anamchara* is rather contentious, with

Finney (1998:133) and Meek (2000:156) opposing this, whereas Simpson (1999:62) describes the Druids as, 'the pagan equivalents to a soul friend.' Tanner (2009:70), referring to the Druids and the desert elders, agrees that 'the *anamchara* seems to have emerged from the convergence of these two visions.'

The 'Desert elders' were renowned and valued as spiritual directors and guides, often given the titles of *abba* or *amma*, father and mother respectively as a sign of respect. They were seen as spiritual parents, also referred to as *pneumatikos pater* or *pneumatike mater*, translated literally as 'spirit father' and 'spirit mother' (Sellner 2002:55). It was believed that a friendship with a desert elders could have a major impact on another's spiritual journey, primarily through the way they lived. They encouraged open and honest conversation, believing that self-disclosure was good for the soul and the opening of one's heart, *exagoreusis*, led to peace of heart, *hesychia* (Simpson 1999:52; Connolly 1995:14). Eusebius of Caesarea (c260-339), Athanasius (c295-373) and Basil the Great (c330-379) all wrote about the desert Christians, but the most influential writer was Cassian (c360-435) (Bradley 2000:91). His writings significantly influenced the Celtic church, particularly in terms of the *anamchara*, having observed that 'the desert was pervaded by a deep spirit of friendship' (Simpson 2008:87).

In exploring the *anamchara* there are two major sources to consider; the hagiographies of the saints and the Irish penitentials. The hagiographies drew upon the rich oral tradition of storytelling (Sellner 2002:151), and the monastic authors depict the early *anamcharas* as having a variety of roles and functions, but alongside their main focus of their ministry, each of them was also a soul friend to one or more people.

The penitentials were handbooks of penance written mainly in Ireland and Celtic Britain during the sixth to ninth centuries (Tanner, 2009:64). They were guides for those who sought to help others on their faith journey, and in particular for soul friends (Tanner, 2009:70). The intended purpose of these books was to help address the sinfulness of Christians, and became well used across Christian Europe. Their compilation and usage acknowledged a growing realisation that Christians continued to sin after conversion and thus highlighted a distinct change in theology, that is that

Christian discipleship was a 'journey into holiness [rather] than a once-for-all conversion (Tanner 2009:66). Interestingly, for this discussion, this is something which would resonate with contemporary Salvationists, who recognise that sanctification is an ongoing, lifelong process (The Salvation Army 2010:194).

Unfortunately in some places and traditions, the penitentials became handbooks to administer punishments for sins rather than for their intended use (Tanner 2009:64). Cassian (360-435) proffered a different approach, one that many of his students followed when writing their penitentials. He saw sin as a 'sickness of the heart,' and so understood confession and penance as a form of medicine for one's heart and soul, rather than a punishment (McNeill and Gamer 1990:19). This link can be seen in the early church; James calls his readers to 'confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed' (James 5:16). However, the *anamchara* was not only concerned with the spiritual life; in Celtic Christianity there was not such a divide between the sacred and the secular resulting in a holistic approach to such interaction (Miller 2020).

Features of the *Anamchara*

In exploring the history and nature of the *anamchara* several main features emerge. Firstly, the *anamchara* relationship is centred on God. Soul friendship is not merely a relationship between two people, but one in which God is actively sought. The *anamchara* relationship is also one of affection, intimacy and depth. It is a relationship that has deep commitment, connection and trust. Benner (2002:76) emphasises the difference between ordinary friendship and soul friendship, stating that '[soul] friendships ... are relationships of soul intimacy.'

Anamchara relationships are also defined by a strong sense of mutuality. There is a deep respect for each other, in terms of wisdom, experience, knowledge and source of blessing, regardless of age or gender differences (Sellner 2002:205). This requires each to have learnt humility. However, as Benner (2002:76) notes, 'mutuality does not mean equality.' It could be argued that Jesus shared spiritual friendships with his disciples (John 15:14-15); theirs was a relationship of intimacy and mutuality, but what Jesus offered the disciples was different to what they offered him.

Within a soul friendship, common values are shared; Benner (2002:76) describes this as 'being kindred spirits.' A vital feature of soul friendship is accountability; although a relationship of affirmation and non-judgement, it is also one of challenge. The *anamchara's* role is primarily about aiding transformation and flourishing, it is one of spiritual concern, not merely camaraderie (Crites 2019). However this was to be done in the right manner as exhorted in scripture (Galatians 6:1, Colossians 3:16). In order to have such an attitude, the *anamchara* must themselves be self-aware, empathetic and humble, conscious that they are also on a journey of forgiveness, restoration and transformation.

For there to be accountability within a soul friendship, each party must be willing to be honest and open and share a deep level of trust (Aelred of Rievaulx trans Laker 2009:60). The *anamchara* must be a skilled listener, not merely listening to the spoken word, but being 'attentive to the workings of the heart' (Sellner 2002:218). Equally, in this triadic relationship, the soul friend also has the task of listening to God (Simpson 2008:59). A specific listening role of the *anamchara* was that of confessor and the prescriber of penance. As noted above, the penitentials were sometimes misused, but, within the Celtic tradition, penance is seen positively (Simpson 1999:129). Thus the *anamchara* was aiding the transformation of another by providing ways in which they might become more Christ-like, always seeking the will of God (Connolly 1995:180-181). Once the act of penance was completed, the seeker would be absolved. In The Salvation Army, the understanding that another person could grant forgiveness would not be aligned with its theology; however, the encouragement of confession and seeking ways to overcome weakness or sinful behaviour has some merit and should not be rejected outright.

In keeping with the holistic perspective of the Celtic church, the *anamchara* was concerned with whole life discipleship, believing that one aspect of life affected another (Simpson 2008:43-4). The *anamchara* relationship also survived separation in terms of geography, chronology and even, at times, death. Alongside this was the importance of the *anamchara* at times of significant change and transition (Simpson 2008:75). These could be interesting aspects to explore given the frequent relocation of Salvation Army officers. The idea of soul friendships lasting beyond death, however, may strike a discordant chord with some, particularly within the evangelical tradition.

However, writing about spiritual friendship within the Catholic tradition, Poust (2010:124) proposes that those spiritual friendships made on earth, will continue in eternity, something with which Nouwen (1993:117) concurs.

The *Anamchara* as a model for Mentoring within The Salvation Army

Having considered the features of the *anamchara* it is apparent that there are some features that correspond well with Christian mentoring, as defined above. The term 'soul friend' is also used in a variety of ways within the contemporary church, which were also explored when this study was undertaken, but could not be included here due to the need for brevity.

The God-centred nature of the *anamchara* relationship aligns with the idea that Christian mentoring encourages guidance by the Holy Spirit. Both relationships are also intentional and dynamic in nature; they are deliberate and have a focus, which is the development and flourishing of the seeker.

The Christian mentoring relationship is also one of trust, honesty and accountability and both involve attentive listening, respect and mutuality. The *anamchara* relationship was also characterised by intimacy and affection. Although it could be a hallmark of some mentoring relationships, there can be trust within a Christian mentoring relationship without the level of intimacy and affection that was common in Celtic soul friendships. Also, for an effective Christian mentoring relationship there needs to be some common ground, such as a shared faith in Jesus and a commitment to Christian values; similarly soul friends would usually share common values. The *anamchara* was concerned about the whole of the seeker's life. Again, the Christian mentor understands that flourishing as a disciple of Jesus necessitates a holistic approach.

In the sharing of life, it was common for an *anamchara* to be present at times of transition; given the holistic nature of Christian mentoring, these would be times when the presence of a mentor could be significant. This could be particularly helpful to Salvation Army officers when faced with being relocated every five years or so, as well as in the usual transitions of life. However, a particular feature of the *anamchara* is that they would often be present at what could be viewed as the greatest transition one faces, the time of death. Although a Christian mentor can be a great aid to another

when facing change of various kinds, there would not usually be the same expectation surrounding death. This also raises the question of the *anamchara* relationship continuing after death. Although, this does not usually feature within contemporary Christian mentoring, it may be that a mentor's writings, advice or memory continues to be a positive influence after death.

A key role of the *anamchara* was that of confessor and administrator of penance. This is the main aspect which would deviate from that of the contemporary Christian mentor within the mainstream evangelical tradition. A Christian mentor may indeed hear the confessions of a mentee as part of the accountability relationship, but, in the context that we are exploring, the seeker would not find absolution. The mentor may suggest spiritual disciplines or ways to make amends, but these are not understood as penances. The mentor may be the means by which a mentee feels able to confess to God and seek his forgiveness, but the mentor does not take on the role of confessor; this, in the Protestant non-conformist tradition, is for God alone. As this is a central role of the *anamchara*, this presents an issue when seeking compatibility with Christian mentoring in the context of The Salvation Army.

There are clearly similarities with Christian mentoring, and this could indeed be used as a model for mentoring in some situations and traditions. However, I conclude that the *anamchara*, in its entirety, cannot be easily used as a model for Christian mentoring within the context of The Salvation Army, for the reasons intimated above. Nonetheless, I believe there are many features of the *anamchara* that could be beneficial in a mentoring context so propose that it should not be rejected outright as a model. Interestingly, many contemporary Celtic communities that encourage soul friendship have little or no mention of the confessor aspect of the *anamchara* (Simpson 2008:11).

This leads me to believe there is a way to encompass the most appropriate and useful aspects of the *anamchara* and that some form of soul friendship could be an extremely beneficial relationship for Salvation Army officers, in terms of their spiritual development, flourishing and general wellbeing.

Thus drawing on the study of the *anamchara* within the Celtic church and considered the understanding of the soul friend within contemporary literature I offer this definition of soul friendship to be used in the context of The Salvation Army:

A soul friend is one who accompanies another on their life journey, helping them to discern the voice and activity of God in their life in order that they may love God, love others and develop into the person God created them to be. The relationship is one of Christian love, trust, honesty and accountability.

Soul Friendship within The Salvation Army :Framework and Recommendations

Using the definition of soul friendship formed above, I suggest there are various ways in which this could be worked out in practice, depending on the needs, situation and personalities of the people involved. Therefore, a framework with three models is suggested:

- Soul Friend Mentor
- Soul Friends Together
- Soul Friend Circle

Each of these are built upon the same principles below and in each case a soul friend will sit outside line management responsibilities.

A soul friend helps another to:

- Become more aware of the work of God in their lives.
- Grow in their relationship with God and with others.
- Develop into the person God has created them to be.
- Apply the Gospel to every area of their life.

A soul friend will do this by:

- Meeting another at regular intervals, agreed by those involved.
- Allowing the other person to set the agenda.
- Attentive listening to the other person and to God.
- Asking pertinent questions.
- Keeping the other person accountable and being willing to challenge when appropriate and necessary.

- Encouraging the use of relevant spiritual disciplines and practices.
- Sharing their own experience, only when appropriate and under the guidance of God.
- Being non-judgemental, offering acceptance and hospitality of spirit.
- Being trustworthy and confidential.
- Keeping the shared journey the focus rather than the relationship.

The other person in the relationship commits to:

- Being open and honest.
- Being held accountable in the areas they have chosen.
- Being open to the work of God in their lives.
- Being willing to change.
- Keeping the shared journey the focus rather than the relationship.

Soul Friend Mentor: A Soul Friend Mentor is an experienced, mature Christian who accompanies another (seeker) on a one-to-one basis. Although there is still a mutuality within the relationship, the seeker is not a soul friend in this relationship. This is a form of traditional one-to-one mentoring.

Soul Friends Together: Soul Friends Together involves two people sharing a relationship of soul friendship in that they are soul friends to each other. This is a form of peer mentoring or co-mentoring.

Soul Friend Circle: A Soul Friend Circle is where at least three, and no more than six people share with each other in a soul friendship group. This is a form of group mentoring.

Additionally, I would envisage Soul Friend Ambassadors, who are passionate and committed to the concept and framework, whose role would be to encourage soul friendships to be formed and developed, as well as to be available for guidance.

Conclusion

Although having concluded that the *anamchara*, in its authentic, historical form, could not be used directly as a model for Christian mentoring within The Salvation Army,

there are many features of the *anamchara* which could be immensely helpful if used within a mentoring relationship for officers. The most important aim of soul friendship is that it deepens one's relationship with Christ, the perfect soul friend (Connolly 1995: 186). Soul friendship also provides Salvation Army officers with another, or others, who will accompany them on their journey, providing them with a safe place and space in which to be honest, express their hopes and fears, and become more aware of the work of God in their lives. The opportunity to share in this way, in turn, could reduce the level of stress of officers and increase resilience (Grimes 2011:2). Consequently, this empowering, accountable and Christ-centred, intimate relationship, outside of any line management, could enable an officer to not only flourish on their own spiritual journey, but also enable them to lead and pastor more effectively.

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