

Claude-Hélène Mayer

The Life and Creative Works of Paulo Coelho

A Psychobiography from a Positive
Psychology Perspective

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Claude-Hélène Mayer
Institut für therapeutische
Kommunikation und Sprachgebrauch
Europa Universität Viadrina
Frankfurt (Oder), Germany

Department of Psychology
University of Pretoria
Pretoria, South Africa

Although the content of this book describes the life and work of the writer Paulo Coelho, Coelho did not have any availability to participate on this book or to provide approval for releasing the material. Therefore, the book is not reviewed or authorised by Paulo Coelho and based only on literature reviews.

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*To my parents
Klaus und Gerlinde Mayer*

Preface

This psychobiography focuses on the life and selected creative works of Paulo Coelho, one of the most read authors in the world. It uses two theoretical approaches: the holistic wellness model of Myers, Sweeney and Witmer and James Fowler's faith development theory. The study aims to explore the uniqueness of this exceptional individual and responds to the question: "How can the life of the writer Paulo Coelho be described in terms of holistic wellness and stages of faith development?"

This is a psychobiographical study of a single case, and its methodological frame is based on Dilthey's modern hermeneutics. Through purposeful sampling, Paulo Coelho was chosen as the subject of research. Selected first-person and third-person documents were used for data analysis. Ethical considerations were taken into account in this research study.

The findings show that, over the 70 years of his life, Paulo Coelho has a strong holistic wellness, which is primarily based on selected life tasks (spirituality, self-direction, love) and life forces (family, religion, partly community). His holistic wellness is influenced by integrating local events (focusing on the present moment) and holistic life activities (such as self-expression through writing).

Findings highlight that Coelho's life and creative works are connected to a strong faith development, a vocation, his relationship with God and the creation of meaningfulness through writing.

Finally, the theories and methodologies used in this study are revised, the role of the researcher is reflected, conclusions are provided and recommendations for future research and psychological practice are emphasised.

Pretoria, South Africa

Claude-Hélène Mayer

*But couldn't everyone's life become a work of art?
Why should the lamp or the house be an art object, but not your life?
Michel Foucault*

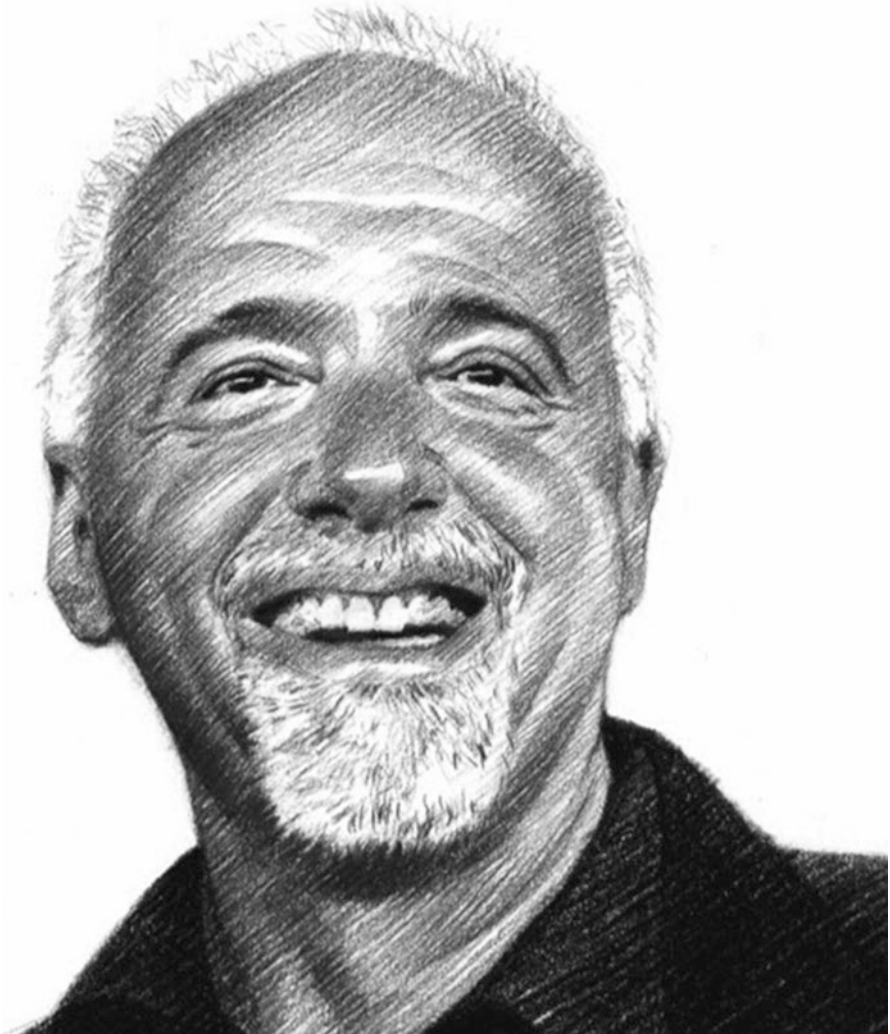


Fig. 1 Paulo Coelho portrait 2011–2013 (Source: Coelho, S.a.[b])

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*On the path of life,
we will always find problems that are hard to resolve.
That is when you need to let your
creative imagination take over.*

Paulo Coelho, The Pilgrimage

I would like to thank Blanchie, Lolo and Ecee for their inspirational and creative potential manifesting in my life, showing me how creative imagination can take over in one or the other way.

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Abbreviations

FDT	Faith development theory
HWM	Holistic wellness model
IS-WEL	The indivisible self
WOW	The wheel of wellness
Chap.	Chapter
Sect.	Section

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Your vision will become clear only when you can look into your own heart. Who looks outside, dreams; who looks inside, awakes.

Carl Gustave Jung, 1973, p. 33

1.1 Chapter Preview

This chapter provides an introduction to the psychobiographical study on Paulo Coelho. It serves as an orientation that guides the reader through the study, giving insight into the life and work of Paulo Coelho, the content and structure of the entire work in terms of theories and methodology used. The chapter describes the problem of research, highlights its purpose, aims and contribution. It emphasises finally the researcher's motivation regarding the research study (the view inside) and provides an overview on the structure of the study (the view outside). The chapter closes with a chapter summary. In the following a general orientation to the study is given.

Each chapter in this study starts with a quotation that relates to the context of the chapter or a specific aspect described in each chapter. However, the quotations are hardly actively integrated or analysed within each of the chapters. They are rather seen as part of the artistic reconstruction of the study with regard to the life and creative works of the writer Paulo Coelho.

1.2 General Orientation to the Study

The study of the individual is one of the most fascinating, intriguing and illuminating subjects in psychology (Schachter, 2004). Generally, psychobiographies deal with the life of an extraordinary individual, focusing on the inside of the person, as far as on the outside of him/her. A psychobiography is defined as “the study of historically significant and extraordinary individuals over their entire life spans with the aim to uncover and reconstruct their lives psychologically” (Fouché & van Niekerk, 2010, p. 2).

Psychobiographies have gained international recognition in psychology during the past decades (Alexander, 1990; Fouché, 2015; Fouché & Van Niekerk, 2010;

Schultz, 2005a; Van Niekerk, 2007), including studies on famous politicians (McAdams, 2011; Sharma, 2011), actors, religious leaders, psychologists, artists and writers (Eliastram, 2011).

This study¹ focuses on the life of Paulo Coelho, one of the most famous and most published contemporary writers in the world. Paulo Coelho is a world-known and extraordinary individual, whose work is read by millions of readers across cultures, influencing their lives in his role as a novelist and writer. His writings, such as stories, thoughts and reflections, novels and autobiographic books have been published in more than 70 languages and have impacted on the life and mindset of many readers (Morais, 2009). Although Paulo Coelho's creative work has been studied extensively (Martin, 2012; Mertel, 2000), no psychobiography could be found that reconstructs his life and creative work systematically on the basis of psychological theories.

This study focuses on and explores the life and work of Paulo Coelho based on the holistic wellness model (Chap. 4) and the stages of faith development (Chap. 5).

In this chapter, an overview on the life, theories and research methodology is outlined to provide the reader with orientation to this psychobiographical study.

1.3 A Short Introduction to the Life and Work of Paulo Coelho

This psychobiographical study focuses on the extraordinary life of the Brazilian writer and novelist Paulo Coelho. He was born on 24 August 1947 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil and was raised by devout Catholic parents, his father being an engineer with a very logical, reasonable and clear vision and world view (Morais, 2009). During adolescence Coelho was sent three times to a mental hospital by his parents because of his dream to become a writer. In his twenties, he was arrested and tortured in Brazil (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2013), but always kept dreaming his dream of becoming a writer. After his release he started studying, but dropped out to travel and to work for multimedia companies (Morais, 2009). He changed his life radically at the age of 36 years, after a pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela in Spain, when he experienced a spiritual awakening and felt inspired to write the book, "The pilgrimage" (Coelho, 1987). Only one year later, he wrote "The alchemist" (Coelho, 1988) in the course of a two-week spurt of creativity. "The alchemist" was Paulo Coelho's break-through as an international author. Since then he has published

¹Previously, this study was submitted as a PhD research study, Department of Psychology, University of Pretoria, Pretoria, South Africa. This previous version of the manuscript remained unpublished.

books at a rate of about one every two years. In 2013, approximately 150 million copies of his books were published in at least 71 languages. Several of his books are autobiographic in nature (Shema, 2013)² and deal with spirituality and faith, societal impacts on individuals and love.

In this research, biographical facts as well as creative works of Paulo Coelho are analysed to write this psychobiography on the writer. The (autobiographical) creative works are particularly important to understand the writer's life and development and are therefore used for analysis (see particularly Chaps. 3, 7 and 8).

1.4 The Theoretical Approaches to This Study

This study uses two theoretical approaches within the context of personality psychology and psychobiographical research particularly: the holistic wellness model (HWM) (Myers & Sweeney, 2008; Myers, Sweeney, & Witmer, 2000; Sweeney & Witmer, 1991; Witmer & Sweeney, 1992), and the stages of faith development theory (FDT) (Fowler, 1981, 1984, 1987). Both selected theories are defined as theories based within the positive psychology context will shortly be introduced in the following section.

This study draws on various theoretical and methodological contexts, frameworks and theories that are situated within broader theoretical frameworks: The psychobiographical study is viewed as a methodological approach used in personality psychology. Personality psychology therefore builds the broader framework for this psychobiographical study. At the same time, the theoretical framework for the HWM and the FDT is viewed as the framework of positive psychology. The two theories, using positive psychology constructs, such as wellness and faith, are therefore anchored in the broader framework of positive psychology. The methodological design is based on an explanatory-interpretative psychobiographical case study design within the research paradigm of hermeneutics. The various frameworks/contexts used for the different theoretical and methodological approaches are part of the scientific and artistic reconstruction of the life of Paulo Coelho and define the inter-disciplinary, multi-layered approach to this study.

²In this work, referencing usage might differ from the APA style in that regard that references are used also within sentences, if only part of the sentences are reflected within the referenced source. They will appear at the end of the sentence if the sources used reflect the statement of the entire sentence.

1.4.1 The Holistic Wellness Model

Over the past decade, research on health, well-being and wellness has increased (Mayer, 2011) and the importance of positive psychology concepts has been emphasised (Seligman, 2011). Positive psychology is understood as by Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2000) in terms of understanding and fostering the factors that allow societies, communities and individuals to flourish. One of the central concepts in the positive psychology movement is the neo-Adlerian HWM (Myers & Sweeney, 2008; Myers et al., 2000; Sweeney & Witmer, 1991; Witmer & Sweeney, 1992) which is based on the principles of holism by Adler, defined by Myers and Sweeney (2004, pp. 334–336), based on the Adlerian theory as the indivisibility of the self, the focus on the whole rather than on the parts, the focus on the interaction of the parts towards the whole and the social context contributing to the whole.

In the HWM, the five life tasks of neo-Adlerian Individual Psychology are used as an organising principle of the various components of wellness (Myers, 2009). Wellness is defined as a “way of life orientation toward optimal health and well-being in which body, mind, and spirit are integrated by the individual to live more fully within the human and natural community” (Myers et al., 2000, p. 252).

In the model, spirituality is conceived as the core life task of the five life tasks which are spirituality, self-direction, work and leisure, friendship and love (Myers et al., 2000). These life tasks are viewed as dynamically interlinked with external life forces (family, religion, education, community, government, media, business/industry). These life forces are seen as impacting on the life tasks and vice versa. Finally, global events (such as disease, war, pollution, economic exploitation, poverty) are connected to life tasks and life forces (Sweeney & Witmer, 1991; Witmer & Sweeney, 1992).

The HWM has been successfully applied in psychobiographical research (Burnell, 2013; Fouché & Van Niekerk, 2010; Nel, 2013) to reconstruct the lives of extraordinary individuals in a theoretically positive psychology framework. This model is used to reconstruct the life of Paulo Coelho in terms of a holistic wellness approach, integrating body, mind and spirit, life tasks, life forces and global events (Myers, Sweeney, & Witmer, 2001). The HWM will be described in-depth in Chap. 4.

1.4.2 Stages of Faith Development

The development of religious and spiritual faith has been of interest in psychology for several decades. James Fowler’s FDT has been the most influential framework relevant to religious and spiritual development during the past decades (Coyle, 2011). The FDT was first published by Fowler in 1981 in the book *Stages of faith*: (Fowler, 1981). It has since then attracted attention, inspired empirical research in the United States and worldwide (Streib, 2005), received highly critical responses

and consequently led the scientific discourse on faith and its development in human beings across disciplines (e.g. Ashdown & Gibbons, 2012; Coyle, 2011; Heywood, 2008; Hughes, 1997; Reich, 2005, 2008). FDT was viewed as a “framework for understanding the evolution of how human beings conceptualize God, or a Higher Being, and how the influence of the Higher Being has an impact on core values, beliefs, and meanings in their personal lives and in their relationships with others” (Fowler & Dell, 2004, p. 17).

The stages of FDT have been suggested for the use in qualitative studies (Streib, 2005) and psychobiographical research (Stroud, 2004). It has been used in psychobiographies before (e.g. Burnell, 2013) and was found to be suitable for the research. This study explores the life of Paulo Coelho in terms of the FDT throughout his life and in two selected creative works. The stages of FDT will be described extensively in Chap. 5.

1.4.3 Combining the Holistic Wellness Model and the Faith Development Theory

This sub-chapter briefly addresses the question why the theoretical approaches were chosen and combined in this psychobiography.

The wellness model has been successfully applied in psychobiographical research (Fouché & Van Niekerk, 2010) to reconstruct the lives of extraordinary individuals in a positive psychology frame. This model is used to reconstruct the life of Paulo Coelho to explore his holistic wellness in terms of integrating body, mind and spirit. Since several of Paulo Coelho’s autobiographical and creative works are based on descriptions of his personal spiritual life’s journey towards holistic wellness, the HWM seems to be an applicable theory to explore Paulo Coelho’s life topics in depth. During his life and in his creative work (e.g. Coelho, 2003b, 2011) the writer has integrated discourses on spirituality, meaningfulness in life, self-direction and love, which can be explored by the HWM that defines spirituality as the core of holistic wellness and that interlinks spirituality with the life tasks and life forces described (Myers et al., 2001).

Since spirituality and the spiritual development of the individual seem to be core issues in Paulo Coelho’s life and creative accounts (Coelho, 2003b, 2011), the development of his faith will be explored further. It is assumed that the application of faith development throughout his life span and with regard to selected creative works will provide further in-depth information of his faith development from childhood to 2015, including the concept of spirituality. Faith is of great interest in this research, because several of his autobiographical books deal with his personal faith development (e.g. Coelho, 2002b) and faith, holism and wellness in terms of spiritual wellness are important topics in Paulo Coelho’s biography (Morais, 2009) and in interviews (Arias, 2001).

Both theories are suitable for the theoretical background of the analysis of a single case study across a lifetime and have been used successfully in psychobiographical work before (Burnell, 2013). They have therefore been proven applicable to this psychobiographical study. They have been chosen for this research study due to these main reasons explained.

In the following, the theoretical and paradigmatic point of departure is explained.

1.5 Theoretical and Paradigmatic Point of Departure

The research is based on a psychobiographical study of a single case. Whilst the two theories are applied in the theoretical framework of positive psychology, the case study method is viewed in the broader methodological frame and research design of hermeneutics.

Hermeneutics defines human subjectivity as part of research and the research processes (Dilthey, 2002). Thereby, hermeneutic interpretation of a life requires an active, sophisticated subjectivity to comprehend subjective experiences and their expressions in life objectively. “Verstehen” (understanding), according to Dilthey, can only happen when a researcher applies a self-reflexive attitude to achieve valid interpretations of the text of lived experiences and their expressions (Ratner, 2002).

The concept of reflexivity is defined in this study as emphasised by Myerhoff and Ruby (1982, p. 6): “Being reflexive is structuring communicative products so that the audience assumes the producer, process and product are a coherent whole.” This means for the study, that reflexivity includes the communicative act of the structured analysis of the data, the process of data handling and research, the expression of the researched (through the data used) and the perception of the researcher. By reflecting on the assumptions and procedures, the reflexive researcher applies a scientific attitude (Myerhoff & Ruby, 1982, p. 28). The terms “reflexive” and “reflective” are used in this study according to the authors cited, whereby authors do use the terms “reflexive” and “reflective” synonymously. If this is not the case, the term “reflective” is defined according to the author cited.

Dilthey’s understanding of hermeneutics integrates the main aim of interpreting ideas, purposes and other mental states expressed in the world of human action (Babbie & Mouton, 2006; Dilthey, 1976). It is therefore defined as a suitable research paradigm for this study.

Many of the psychobiographies of the late twentieth century use idiographic (single case explorations), hermeneutic perspectives, life story analysis and case study approaches. Currently, psychobiography falls into the hermeneutic traditions in which the author of a text is viewed as a “real phenomenon who can be explored and interpreted psychologically” (Kováry, 2011, p. 765). Psychobiography is viewed as a “method of idiographic approach in personality psychology”, which originally aimed at the analysis and understanding of “the dynamic and developmental determinants of artistic creativity” (Kováry, 2011, p. 764). According to this understanding of psychobiography as being a method of idiographic approach in

personality psychology, personality psychology is seen as one of the broader contexts of psychobiographical studies and their anchoring in the discipline of psychology. Personality psychology is therefore used as a theoretical frame for this psychobiographical study.

1.6 Research Methodology

The following sub-chapters provide a short overview on the research methodology used in this study.

1.6.1 Research Design and Sampling

The study uses a psychobiographical case study design (Elms, 2007) that is qualitative and concerned with the analysis of a single unit of analysis (Yin, 2009). The single, holistic case study offers the opportunity to study a unique phenomenon – here the individual’s life-in depth, to test a well-formulated theory while aiming to explore, understand and explain the complexities of a social phenomenon (Yin, 2009). The study is person-centred, focusing on Paulo Coelho’s uniqueness and providing a holistic description of the selected individual (Carlson, 1988; Stroud, 2004). Behavioural patterns and processes of an individual’s human development over a life continuum can be traced through psychobiographical case study research to provide a view of the whole person (Fouché & Van Niekerk, 2005a).

The subject of this research is Paulo Coelho who was chosen through purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is a form of “non-probability sampling in which decisions concerning the individuals to be included in the sample are taken by the researcher, based upon a variety of criteria which may include specialist knowledge of the research issue, or capacity and willingness to participate in the research” (Oliver, 2006, p. 245–246). The reasons why Paulo Coelho was purposefully chosen will be elaborated on in the study in Sect. 2.7 and in Sect. 6.8.1 from a sampling methodology perspective.

1.6.2 Data Collection and Analysis

The data collection process in this psychobiographical case study is based on the distinction of Allport (1961) who differentiates between first-person and third-person documents. The following first-person documents are used: autobiographical essays and scripts on the internet or in journals and newspapers, autobiographically based literature and novels written by Paulo Coelho, interview scripts and statements (e.g. from newspapers, journals, internet sources), film documentaries,

personal written and oral statements, as well as video statements from Paulo Coelho on the internet, selected literary products (novels, published short stories, books, films). For the analysis of his literary and creative works, two autobiographical novels are chosen as first-person documents for analysis. Firstly, “The pilgrimage” (Coelho, 2003b) is chosen, as it is Paulo Coelho’s first autobiographical novel. Secondly, the novel “Aleph” (Coelho, 2011) is chosen for in-depth analysis, as one of his recent autobiographical novels and one of his most personal manuscripts (Purwandoyo & Kurnia, 2013).

With regard to third-person documents, a biography (Morais, 2009), a biographic book in interview form (Arias, 2001), case studies and excerpts published by third persons in journals, newspapers or on the internet (e.g. Mihály, 2012) are analysed.

Content analysis is used in analysis to identify “key issues” in the data throughout the life span of Paulo Coelho and in his creative works. By analysing key issues with regard to holistic wellness and faith development stages within the data, content analysis will guide the process of analysis. Content analysis is defined as a subjective process between the researcher and the texts (Mayer, 2011). Yin (2009) emphasises that content analysis is conducted through inter- and intra-individual verification processes aimed at adhering to particular processes of analysis and regulations, thereby verifying the findings.

According to Streib (2005, p. 102), content analysis can either use pre-defined categories or alternatively inductive-analytical procedures. The psychobiography at hand uses pre-defined categories (as provided in the two theories applied) and inductive-analytical categories – which were developed through familiarisation with the texts analysed. The process of content analysis as described by Terre Blanche et al., (2006) is understood as an act of subjective involvement of the researcher and as a hermeneutic interpretation and reconstruction between the researcher and the researched. It has been defined as a systematic and replicable technique to create categories from large text databases (Mayring, 2014; Weber, 1990). The data analysis in this study is conducted through the five-step process of content analysis by Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Kelly (2006, p. 322–326). The process will be explained in depth in the study in Sect. 6.9.

1.7 Problem Statement and Justification for the Study

With regard to the growing literature on psychobiography, a research need has been identified to contribute to a new and complex psychological understanding of extraordinary individuals who act as outstanding universal and positive role models. These role models might have a positive impact on individuals and societies, bringing about reflection, new ideas and change. By using two positive psychology theories as the theoretical paradigm, this study emphasises holistic wellness and faith development in the life and selected creative works of Paulo Coelho to focus on

selected positive aspects within the individual and to contribute to a positive psychology perspective (Luthans, 2002; Mayer & Van Zyl, 2013) in psychobiography.

By using the HWM as well as the FDT, this study emphasises the positive aspects of the selected individual, based on the theoretical positive psychology paradigm. Burnell (2013, p. 2) highlights that the HWM as well as the FDT used in psychobiographical research “provide a eugraphic and holistic approach in contrast to the traditional pathographic approach with which to view an individual life”.

By using the described theoretical framework, the study contributes to a positive psychology perspective onto the wellness and spiritual development of the selected individual. The emphasise of the positive psychology perspective in psychology is urgently needed from a psychological, as well as from a societal perspective: new and positive role models are required to provide guidance in times of global changes, insecurity, disorientation and crises. Due to the global challenges individuals and societies are facing, the search for holistic well-being (Mayer, 2011), wellness and for spirituality increases (Powers, 2005). In times of global crisis, new worldly challenges across cultures, wars and increasing conflict potentials, universal leaders are requested to become role models to contribute to a peaceful, healthy and sustainable future (Leeder, Raymond, & Greenberg, 2007). Paulo Coelho is viewed as a highly influential writer who aims at contributing to a more just, peaceful and spiritual world (Morais, 2009).

Psychobiographers can learn from personality psychology, as a contextual framework of psychobiographical work, as explained by McAdams (2005), however, personality psychology can gain new insights and understanding from in-depth, single case psychobiographical research within the positive psychology paradigm to develop an understanding of life-long psychological processes to face life’s challenges in the context of holistic wellness and faith development. These new insights for personality psychology can derive from the application and rethinking of psychological theories within the context of a single psychobiographical case study and by explaining the motives behind the thoughts, feelings and behaviours of a person.

At the same time, according to Schultz (2005a, 2005b, 2005c, 2005d), more research on artists and writers is needed which promotes a positive psychological view from a psychobiographical perspective and which do not create psychopathological artists and writers, as, for example, in the case of Van Gogh (Schultz, 2005c, 2005e). Research on exceptional writers and artists – who have generally rarely been studied in the past – should be studied from a positive psychology framework to contribute to an in-depth understanding of their wellness, their spirituality and faith, their resilience and their ability be that outstanding person they are.

This study serves as a first attempt to systematically review the life of Paulo Coelho under a positive psychology framework whilst focusing on holistic wellness and faith development throughout his life. It serves, further on, as an example of how a scientific psychobiographical study can be structured and anchored in a specific theoretical and methodological framework.

Data searches across various international search engines, conducted in English, German and French failed to reveal an existing research study that deals with the writer Paulo Coelho with the focus on his life and the theoretical and/or methodological approaches of this research study applied to his life. No psychobiography written on Paulo Coelho could be found. Therefore, this study contributes to new relevant scientific information on the writer Paulo Coelho, as well as on the HWM and qualitative FDT.

1.8 Purpose, Aims, and Contribution of the Research

Referring to the quote of Jung (1973) at the beginning of this chapter, the purpose, aim and contribution of the study are connected to gaining a view into the inside of the researched, the researcher and the subject of research.

The purpose of this research study is to uncover a selected individual's life scientifically, creatively and artistically by exploring the uniqueness of his life and selected autobiographical and creative works, using the theories described, applying an intuitive approach to reveal the data and creatively reconstructing the life and selected creative works based on the theories applied in new categories. The uncovering of the selected individual's life is primarily focused on from a scientifically sound and structured qualitative research approach. However, creative and artistic aspects are used within this structured approach in, for example, the creative and artistic implementation of quotes at the beginning of each chapter, the combination of analysis and interpretation of first- and third-data documents in terms of the life and the creative work of Paulo Coelho and the reconstruction of findings in Chap. 9. However, in Sect. 9.9 it is also explained why the scientific and structural reconstruction of data in this study is dominant to the creative and artistic side of it.

The study's purpose is further on to provide a new understanding and perspective on the writer in the context of the selected theories, as explained in the following section.

The HWM is used to reconstruct the life of Paulo Coelho to explore his holistic wellness in terms of integrating body, mind and spirit. Since several of Paulo Coelho's autobiographical and creative works are based on descriptions of his personal spiritual journey, the HWM seems to be an applicable theory to explore Paulo Coelho's life topics in depth. During his life and in his work, Coelho (2003a, 2003b, 2003c, 2011) has integrated discourses on spirituality, meaningfulness in life, self-direction and love, which are explored through the HWM that defines spirituality as the core of holistic wellness and that interlinks spirituality with the life tasks and life forces described (Myers et al., 2001).

Since spirituality and the spiritual development of the individual seem to be core issues in Paulo Coelho's life (Coelho, 2003a, 2011), the development of his faith will be explored further. It is assumed that the application of faith development throughout his life span and with regard to selected creative works will provide further in-depth information of his faith development from birth to 2017. This is of

great interest, because several of his autobiographical books deal with his personal faith development (e.g. Coelho, 2002a). Both theories have been used successfully in psychobiographical work before (Burnell, 2013) and have also been proven applicable to this psychobiographical study.

After having defined the purpose of the study, the aim is defined in the following:

The primary aim of this psychobiographical study is to explore the life of Paulo Coelho based on the holistic wellness model (Myers et al., 2000; Witmer & Sweeney, 1992) and the stages of faith development (Fowler, 1981).

The secondary aims are defined as follows:

1. The study aims to explore the uniqueness of an exceptional individual by exploring his development over his life span in detail, with special attention to psychological descriptions of his behaviour, achievements and failures (Elms, 1988).
2. By providing a detailed description of a single case, the study aims as contributing to an in-depth understanding of the person (Edwards, 1998) Paulo Coelho within his socio-cultural context.
3. In doing so, it further on aims at designing a new understanding of Paulo Coelho as a writer and spiritual person. The study thus allows readers to improve their knowledge of Paulo Coelho's holistic wellness and faith, creativity and success (Howe, 1997).
4. As defined for other psychobiographical studies, this study might provide inspiration for readers to reflect on their own experiences, existence, possibilities and fortunes (Runyan, 1984) and for students and researchers to gain insight into the psychobiographical method.
5. Approaches dealing with spirituality, faith and the soul have previously been referred to in a perjorative way and/or have disregarded or ignored the spiritual character of psychological reality (Harman & Clark, 1994). In this study, concepts of holistic wellness, spirituality and faith as concepts that contribute positively to wellness are being presented in Chaps. 4 and 5.
6. Finally, through an in-depth analysis of Paulo Coelho's life and selected creative works, the study aims at developing and enhancing the theories applied through the in-depth psychobiographical study of the individual (Carlson, 1988). On a theoretical level, this study aims at further promoting psychobiography as an in-depth positive psychology research approach, whilst contributing to the exploration and expansion of psychobiographical theory approaches by exploring holistic wellness and FDT across the life span. The in-depth analysis shall support a deep reflection on the enhancement of the theories applied in the context of life span research.

With regard to these six points, the study contributes new information and insights to the field of the subject of psychobiographical research in psychology.

The study's primary and secondary aims are defined in accordance with the definition of the general aims of psychobiographical research emphasised by Fouché and van Niekerk (2010), to study a (historically) significant and extraordinary individual over his life span; to uncover his/her mind; and to reconstruct his/her life psychologically.

In conclusion, this psychobiography on Paulo Coelho firstly contributes to, promoting psychobiographical research in general, with special regard to novelists and writers; secondly, increases in-depth knowledge and understanding, as well as a detailed scientific reconstruction of Paulo Coelho's life and selected creative work from a psychobiographical holistic wellness and faith development perspective; and thirdly, enhances the theories applied. With regard to the third point of contribution, it will be discussed whether the theories are applicable to analysing this single case or if there might be specific developments in the life of Paulo Coelho that demand specification, change or enhancement in the theoretical approaches.

The defined purpose and the aims lead to the following main research question of the study:

How can the life of the writer Paulo Coelho be described in terms of the holistic wellness model and the stages of faith development?

By responding to this research question, the intention of the study is to describe, interpret and reconstruct the life of Paulo Coelho in terms of the HWM and the FDT to gain deeper knowledge of the writer Paulo Coelho.

1.9 Motivation for the Research Study

The researcher's motivation to write this psychobiographical study is based in her own subjective reality as a scientist, therapist, writer, lecturer and researcher. The researcher's professional background as a qualitative-oriented scientist, her background in cultural and health psychology, as well as her personal passion for writing have influenced the decision to conduct a psychobiographical study of the writer Paulo Coelho. The publication of this work is particularly motivated by the idea to provide an example of a comprehensive and scientifically based psychobiographical study for students and other researchers specialising in this area of research and the wish to contribute to the body of scientific literature in the field of psychobiography.

The key interest which led the researcher to conduct this study was the following pre-formulated and positive-psychology-based question: which individual resources

support an individual to cope with life's challenges, follow his/her dream with integrity and strength and become a successful writer against all odds?

However, the research interest was not only based on a personal and subjective interest of investigation and a passion for writing, but was also based on the scientific background as a research professor who is specialised in salutogenesis, mental health and spirituality in culture-specific contexts. This theoretical research base built the foundation of exploring the positive psychology theories within the hermeneutical methodological paradigm. The researcher took it as a new challenge to abandon and question the previously used and applied personal and scientific paradigms by conducting research within the frame of the new, highly qualitative research methodology of psychobiographical research.

The motivation for this research is multifolded and is motivated by:

1. the idea of contributing to a highly qualitative, single case research methodology in psychology;
2. providing an example of an excellent in-depth qualitative psychobiographical study for students and researchers interested in the field;
3. promoting qualitative research methodology within the often quantitative research paradigm of psychology;
4. contributing to scientific research on psychobiography of an exceptional individual;
5. the interest in exploring the mind of an extraordinary individual, particularly a writer, through an in-depth understanding of this exceptional person's life and creative works and thereby reflecting on the self and the researcher's own life;
6. the deep interest in the positive psychology framework, as well as in theories on health and wellness, holistic approaches in science, faith and spirituality and holistic life-span research
7. the interest to increasing practical knowledge on the person studied as well as on wellness and faith with regard to the selected subject; and
8. the personal fascination of Paulo Coelho as one of the most famous, most successful and most sold writers in the world who has managed to be read by readers across all cultures, ages, genders and religions.

Summarizing, the motivation to conduct this psychobiographical study on Paulo Coelho is based on scientific, personal and psychological interests of the researcher. The question of why the study focuses on Paulo Coelho will be addressed in Sect. 2.7 and in Sect. 6.8.1 in more depth.

1.10 The Structure of the Research Study

With regard to the structure and organisation, this research study is divided into nine chapters.

The first chapter, Chap. 1, builds the introduction and orientation of for the reader and provides a short overview on the context – the life of Paulo Coelho -, the com-

plex theoretical and methodological background of the study. It also provides insights into the aims, purpose, justification, as well as the research question and contribution of the research. It includes the problem statement and the motivation for research. Chapter 2, provides the reader with insights into psychobiographical research, while Chap. 3 gives a chronological insight into the life and creative work of Paulo Coelho. Chapter 4 is the first theoretical chapter that describes the HWM, and Chap. 5, as the second theoretical chapter, describes the FDT. The research methodology which includes the research design and methodology are extensively explained in Chap. 6. This is particularly important with regard to the in-depth qualitative research approach. Research design, strategy, approach and setting are introduced. Quality criteria for the study are established. Ethical considerations are discussed and methodological limitations are presented. Chapter 6 includes the data collection process, the data analysis, data reporting and evaluation of data. Chapter 7 presents the findings of the study with regard to the analysis of the entire life of Paulo Coelho. Qualitative findings are presented and reconstructed according to the research purpose and aims. The findings of the analysis of two selected creative works of Paulo Coelho are presented in Chap. 8. Chapter 9 provides the summary of the findings, the conclusion, theoretical and practical revisions and recommendations for future psychobiographical research and practice. Finally, the references are presented.

1.11 Chapter Summary

In this chapter, a general introduction into the study is provided. A general orientation on the life of Paulo Coelho, the two theoretical approaches applied and the research methodology is presented. The chapter provides an overview on the problem statement, the purpose, the aims, and contribution of this study. It includes the description of the motivation of the researcher and finally provides an overview on the structure of the study. This study is based on a previous PhD qualification study and serves as an example for students and researchers how to conduct scientifically sound research in the area of psychobiography from a positive psychology perspective. It is the first of its kind to consciously anchor a psychobiographical study in the positive psychology frame. In the following chapter, a literature review on the psychobiographical research is provided.

Chapter 2

Psychobiographical Research

Understanding is the rediscovery of the I in the Thou.

Dilthey, 1996, p. 192

2.1 Chapter Preview

This chapter is concerned with introducing psychobiographical research as a theoretical approach and research method. Firstly, it provides a brief outline of the definition of psychobiography. Secondly, it gives an overview of psychobiographical research as a theoretical approach and research method. Thirdly, the chapter illuminates psychobiographies in the realm of creativity, artists and writers. Fourthly, psychobiographical research is demarcated with regard to related concepts. Fifthly, psychobiographical research is reviewed critically and valued with regard to its contribution. Finally, the chapter explores why a psychobiography is written on Paulo Coelho. The chapter ends with a chapter summary.

2.2 Defining Psychobiography

The Nigerian writer and novelist, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, is an internationally highly recognised West African author who is inspired by stories that she defines as “jewels in the crown of diasporan literature” (Adichie, 2009). In her talk on life and culture, she speaks about the idea that “our lives and our cultures are composed of many overlapping stories” (Adichie, 2009). She points out that hearing a single story about another person or country, can “risk a critical misunderstanding” (Adichie, 2009) in so far that it might lead to stereotypic perceptions of the self and/or the other. She highlights: “the single story creates stereotypes, and the problem with stereotypes is not that they are untrue, but that they are incomplete. They make one story become the only story” (Adichie, 2009).

Many texts exist on the world-known author Paulo Coelho; however, they mostly seem to recreate one single story: Paulo Coelho is one of the world’s best sold

authors (Morais, 2009). He developed his idea of becoming a writer during his teenage years, was thrice sent to an asylum by his parents, turned to drugs, was tortured by Brazil's ruling militia, turned to satanism and changed his life at the age of 36, walking the pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela in Spain, starting his career as a writer while becoming a magician and an active member of an old Catholic order, as well as internet fanatic (Arias, 2001; Jeffries, 2013; Morais, 2009; Wilson, 2010).

The psychobiographic story told in this study is different. It explores Paulo Coelho's life from a positive psychology perspective, from a perspective focusing on holistic wellness and faith to create a new life story of the writer. The study is different to previous work on the writer by providing new insights based on selected psychological theories (see Sect 1.8).

Psychobiographies have become a vibrant area of research (Kováry, 2011). In psychology they have gained international interest during the past decades (Alexander, 1990; Fouché, 2015; Van Niekerk, 2007). The study of the individual is one of the most fascinating, intriguing and illuminating subjects in psychology (Schachter, 2004). Psychobiography is defined as "the study of historically significant and extraordinary individuals over their entire life spans with the aim to uncover and reconstruct their lives psychologically" (Fouché & van Niekerk, 2010, p. 2).

Schultz (2005c) emphasises that the aim of psychobiographical research is to gain – as far as possible – a holistic view of an individual's life. The central questions of psychobiographies – such as "Which mask is most real", "Who exactly is the person analysed", "Can this person really be known?" and "How does the material analysed support the 'knowing' of the person?" – are challenging questions in psychobiography (Schultz, 2005e, p. 113).

Psychobiographies describe, explain and interpret data gained about the life of a selected individual (McAdams, 2006a). They refer to the above questions and other questions posed. Psychobiographies use selected psychological theories to "transform a life into a coherent and illuminating story" (McAdams, 2006a, p. 503). These "stories" derive from the narratives of self and others about the individual person. The narratives contribute to the construction of the internalised, intra-psychological, and externalised, inter-psychological, identity of an individual person within his/her life's contexts (Mayer, 2005). According to McAdams (2005), these life stories and narratives need to be understood in a constructivist and interpretive way to gain insights into individual patterns and processes.

There are various perspectives on psychobiographies and theoretical approaches: Runyan (1984) relates psychobiography to the use of systematic psychology in biography. Fouché (1999) emphasises that a psychobiographical researcher engages with psychological theory systemically and self-consciously to improve the understanding of an individual's life. Stroud (2004) adds that psychobiography relates particularly to lived lives to provide explanations for certain aspects that cannot be explored through the use of common sense of psychological principles. Kramp's (2012) portrait of Anton Boison uses a psychobiographic approach that is positive and aims at reconstructing the focus on this life from a psychiatric diagno-

sis towards a more inclusive investigation. It provides a new view on the person. Psychobiographies can give alternative explanations, can provide various interpretations of lives, life incidents or outstanding aspects. These alternative explanations might be founded in the researcher's own self, the theories used, the relationship of a researcher with a subject of research, the resemblances or the differences a researcher seems to see in the subject researched or the way he or she feels about the subject (Runyan, 2005b, p. 96).

According to Roberts (2002), life experiences need to be understood in the context of their cultural, contextual and structural settings to provide insightful information on an individual's past, present, and future. They are also concerned with the exploration of his or her social networks and relationships. To understand the individual's life in-depth, the individual is contextualised within his or her socio-cultural, economic and historical life period. This contextualisation then facilitates the analysis, interpretation and discussion of the person's psychobiography within the theoretical and methodological paradigm used.

2.3 Psychobiographical Research

Since the interest in psychobiographies has grown rapidly, a variety of psychobiographies on extraordinary individuals have been published. These psychobiographies include research studies on politicians, actors, religious leaders, serial murderers, psychologists, artists and writers (Alexander, 1990; Eliastram, 2011; Fouché, Rogers, & Naidoo, 2017; Van Niekerk, 2007) who had an impact on society on a global level and across cultures (Kováry, 2011).

Psychobiographic study started, according to Runyan (1988a), already before Freud's study on Leonardo da Vinci at the beginning of the twentieth century (Freud, 1910), which is often seen as the starting point of psychobiographical research. Kováry (2011, p. 741) agrees and also highlights that he sees the first pioneering work on psychobiography in the works of Plutarch (45–125 AD), as well as in Vasari's (1998) work on the lives of artists in the sixteenth century. However, McAdams (2006a, 2006b) states that in these early works, hardly any psychological concepts were employed to analyse and interpret the individual lives, which is one major criterion of psychobiographical research (see Sects. 2.6 and 6.6). Perry (2012) emphasises as well that the studies cited by Runyan can hardly be considered psychobiographical studies, since they do not involve formal psychological theories. The definition of the starting point of psychobiographical research is therefore still under discussion.

During the 1910s, 1920s and 1930s psychobiographical studies gained popularity (Schultz, 2005a) and until 1960 about 300 studies were published using psychobiographies with a psychoanalytical approach (Kováry, 2011). Fouché and Van

Niekerk (2005b), however, mention that during these decades of the twentieth century, psychobiographical research was seriously criticised for its strong relation to psychoanalysis.

In the long term, psychobiographical research was affected by many ups and downs: While psychobiographical research was hardly conducted in the 1940s, it slowly regained popularity and acceptance in the 1950s (Kováry, 2011). This acceptance grew in the 1960s and 1970s (Perry, 2012). Runyan (1982, 1988b, 1988c) emphasises a strong increase in psychobiographical research in the 1970s. At the time, psychobiographies became more institutionalised in the United States of America (US) (McAdams, 1994, 2006a, 2006b). However, Barenbaum and Winter (2003) emphasise that life-history analysis – and also psychobiographies – were rather marginalised from the 1950s onwards for some decades. According to Kováry (2011, p. 740), the psychobiographies that were based in the psychoanalytic and personological psychology tradition were hardly accepted anymore because of nomothetic approaches becoming more hegemonic within personality psychology.

Strong criticism on established research methodologies led in the 1970s to Carlson's (1971) famous question, "Where's the person in personality research?" This question introduced the narrative turn in psychology, which flourished in the 1980s (László, 2008). However, for a long time, psychobiographical research was seen as a "taboo art" (Schultz, 2005a, p. 13) which was only resurrected from the 1980s onwards. This resurrection was backed up by the increasing interest in narrative approaches in the US (Barenbaum, & Winter, 2003; Runyan, 2005a, 2005b), as well as by Murray's concept of personology, which expanded the psychoanalytic tradition and thus contributed to a more holistically oriented psychology (Kováry, 2011, p. 749). Kováry (2011, p. 749) speaks of "a renaissance of psychobiography" in the following decade, the 1990s, using psychoanalytical, personological traditions as well as integrated narrative perspectives in psychobiographical research. Since then, psychobiographical research has flourished and several foundational works have been published (Alexander, 1990; Elms, 1988, 1994; McAdams, 1988; Runyan, 1994; Schultz, 2005a).

Psychobiographical research expanded as a popular field of psychological research at the beginning of the new century (Kováry, 2011; Roberts, 2002; Schultz, 2005a). It was established scientifically as an interdisciplinary and international research field (Schultz, 2005a), including disciplines such as psychology, psychiatry, politics, literature, sociology, anthropology, psychoanalysis, history and religion (Carducci, 2009). The main centre of psychobiographical research still seems to be the US (Biggs, 2007). Schultz (2005d, p. 17), who is a well-known psychobiographical researcher based in the US, highlights that psychobiographical research, as a part of personality psychology, is still struggling, but increasingly active and more accepted in the mainstream than in the 1980s. He also provides an overview on dissertations and journal articles published between 2000 and 2003 in the US and highlights that psychobiographical research follows a vivid research tradition in various cultures and contexts, such as, for example, the context of psychohistorical

research on Nazi Germany (Schultz, 2005d, p. 23). At the same time, a recent study highlights that still very little is known about psychobiographical training and dissertation research in psychology departments in the US (Ponterotto, Reynolds, Morel, & Cheung, 2015). Others (Fouché, 2015; Fouché & Van Niekerk, 2005b) refer to the psychobiographical tradition, for example in post-apartheid South Africa. In his doctoral thesis on Olive Schreiner, Perry (2012, p. 130) provides an overview on master's dissertation and doctoral theses on psychobiographies produced in South Africa from 1939 to 2011, including 24 master's dissertations and six PhD/DLitt/DPhil studies, showing the growing popularity of psychobiographical research in the country since the beginning of the twenty-first century.

According to Roberts (2002), psychobiographical research has increased because researchers are generally developing an interest in studies on the life course, qualitative research in psychology and qualitative research methods. The growing interest in the subject might also be based on disillusion with static approaches to data collection and a growing concern with quantitative data not revealing and expressing live experiences. This might be connected to a growing interest in the spiritual quest and the search for purpose and meaning in life across cultures and work contexts (Mayer & Geldenhuys, 2014).

Because of the frame of the study, it cannot provide a holistic overview on psychobiographical research and the personology tradition in its historical and present development during the past century.¹

2.4 Psychobiographies in the Realm of Creativity, Artists and Writers

Besides psychobiographies being connected to personal psychology and psychoanalytical approaches, they are also part of "creativity research" (Kováry, 2011, p. 740). According to Blum (2001), psychobiography is clearly connected to psychoanalytic inquiry in terms of artistic creativity. Also, Csikszentmihályi (1996) mentions that psychology and personality functioning are interlinked with creativity, as well as with healthy self-functioning processes of the individual. Therefore, psychobiography is part of personality psychology, but also of creativity and wellness research.

In the early psychobiographical works, Freud (1957) explored the life of Leonardo da Vinci and addressed the questions of life history, life philosophy and the dynamics of creativity in artists' lives (Kováry, 2011). He thus contributed to explanations of creativity in psychological terms and concepts. Later, Freud (1955) continued applying psychobiographic approaches to Goethe and Dostoevsky (Freud, 1961), as described in Kováry (2011). At the same time, these early

¹For more comprehensive overviews please see, for example, Wiggins (2003), Schultz (2005a, 2005b, 2005c, 2005d, 2005e) or Kováry (2011).

psychobiographical explanations have shown the problem of human subjectivity in qualitative research, which is always connected to the researcher and his/her view on the subject of research (Dilthey, 2002). This new understanding led to the focus on idiographic, hermeneutic approaches in personal psychology (see Sect. 6.3). Psychobiographies, as a particular approach in personality psychology, have also contributed to the acceptance of the biographer being a researcher, as well as an artist (Schultz, 2005a).

This was a revolution in psychobiographic research, particularly since Freud had led psychobiographical research into a psychoanalytic research direction earlier in the twentieth century, which focused, for example, on concepts such as narcissism and contributed to a rather psychopathological understanding of psychobiographies (Kováry, 2011).

Based on the early approaches of Freud, psychobiography and the study of artists became popular at the beginning of the twentieth century (Runyan, 2005a; Fouché & Holz, 2015). However, according to Kováry (2011, p. 747), psychobiography as a method to analyse creative works of artists was highly criticised; on the one hand it was criticised for its psychopathological approach, on the other hand it was positively acknowledged by others for its potential to explore dynamics of creative processes in artists.

In the context of psychological research on art and creative works of authors, painters or other artists, such as singers (Kasser, 2013), Niu and Sternberg (2001) have emphasised that the explanations and interpretations of art works do require a comprehensive understanding and knowledge of the times, the context and the conventions of art and artistic expression to understand and contextualise the artworks. Only then valuable conclusions from the creative work of artists can be drawn from descriptions and interpretations. For interpreting arts and for drawing psychological conclusions on art works, the interpreter needs a comprehensive and extensive understanding of the times, the symbols, the imagery, the conventions and socio-cultural context to really gain an understanding of the art, the art work and the individual. At the same time, Kováry (2011) emphasises that it is a challenge to analyse and interpret life-stories by drawing on works in terms of literature and psychology. It is also a challenge to differentiate life narrations and creative works, particularly since life stories can include literary and psychological work as, for example, the one on Freud.

Early psychobiographical studies on writers include an analysis of Shakespeare as analysed through Hamlet by Jones (1910) and a psychobiography of Edgar Allan Poe (Krutch, 1926). Several psychobiographies on artists, especially writers, such as Bonapartes' (1949) work on Edgar Allan Poe or Laforgue's (1932) work on Charles Baudelaire, were founded in a psychoanalytical background. The psychoanalytical background was commonly used from the 1910s to the 1940s (Kováry, 2011) and still is, as shown in the work of Fouché and Holz (2015) on Roald Dahl and his psychosexual development, based on analytical psychobiography and Freud's psychoanalytic approach.

These works often aimed to expose neurotic or other pathologic features or patterns in famous and influential individuals and open secretly hidden pathological

features in their lives and works (Scalapino, 1999). According to Kováry (2011, p. 747), the psychoanalytic approach to studying artists and writers has been criticised from the viewpoint of highlighting psychopathic patterns, but has also been accepted by surrealists as a “relevant method to explore the dynamics of creative processes.”

From the 1930s onwards, psychobiographical studies on writers were, for example, conducted on Tolstoy (Rancour-Laferriere, 2007), Dostoevsky (Breger, 1989), Goethe (Holm-Hadulla, 2009, 2012; Holm-Hadulla, Roussel, & Hofmann, 2010), Mann (Neumann, 2003); Hölderlin (Joppien, 1998), Nietzsche (Safranski, 2002), Blanchot (Mehlman, 1980), Drieu la Rochelle (Leibovici, 1994) and Coleridge (Weissman 1989) who were writers, but also philosophers and lyricists, such as Friedo Lampe (Badoux, 1986)

Several psychobiographical studies on artists were written during a time when Henry Murray (2008) developed the concept of personology research, which is the in-depth study of individuals through the study of life narratives by collecting autobiographies (McAdams, 1994). In the 1950s psychobiographical research increased with regard to the analysis of writers, artists, musicians and others (Fouché, 1999). This period can be declared a period in psychobiographical research publications that show “both a more rigorous methodological and self-conscious application in psychobiography and are thus regarded as examples of psychobiography’s maturation” (Chéze, 2009, p. 18). Schönau and Pfeiffer (2003) highlight that Kris (2000) contributed to a new understanding of artists and writers through psychobiography, particularly since the early works of Bonaparte and Freud only showed the inner conflicts of the artist and writer, but did not reflect a presentation and representation of the inner biography of the artistic individual, which is less biased. The interest in psychobiography moved from clinical questions on artists towards an interest in aesthetics and creative processes. However, according to Schönau and Pfeiffer (2003), the question is still unaddressed, if the biography of the writer is relevant to his or her scientific literature and literary studies. The relationship between the author or writer and the creative work has not yet been explored in depth and needs further exploration (Schönau & Pfeiffer, 2003, p. 11).

2.5 Demarcation of Psychobiographical Research and Related Concepts

For a scientific approach to psychobiographical research, psychobiographies need to be demarcated from other related research concepts to gain a clearly defined understanding of the psychobiographical approach applied.

Psychobiography reflects the synthesis of psychology and biography while attempting to discover in-depth insights into the life of an individual and the development of a single person (Fouché & Van Niekerk, 2005b; McAdams, 2006a). Fouché and Van Niekerk (2005b) highlight that – based on the views of personality theorists such as Erikson, Allport or Murray – a psychologically informed biography

seems to be the best approach to capturing a human life story. Kováry (2011, p. 740) states that psychobiographies are part of personality psychology, psychoanalytical approaches and creativity research. According to Kováry (2011, pp. 741–743), there are different historical approaches and antecedents to psychobiography: (a) literature and psychology, (b) psychobiography as a medical approach in terms of pathography and finally, (c) philosophy and in particular the “continental Lebensphilosophie” (life philosophy).

Other authors, such as Kornbichler (1994), point out the interdisciplinarity of psychobiographical research, which includes the in-depth psychobiographical approach using biographic concepts, the critical analysis of in-depth psychological constructs and biographies (Schütze, 1981, 1983, 1984) that might be historiographic, anthropologic, historic or psychological and are connected to culture-analytical hermeneutics.

Obviously, various interdisciplinary concepts are closely related to psychobiographic research and/or overlap with it, such as life histories and life stories, life narratives, psychohistories and historical psychology, as well as autobiography and case studies (McAdams, 1988, 2006a, 2006b; Runyan, 1982, 1988b; Schultz, 2005a). In the following section, the demarcation of psychobiographical research with regard to selected related concepts will be described.

2.5.1 Psychobiography and Life History

The study of life histories in the context of psychobiography has gained importance in the twentieth century (Runyan, 1982; Tierney & Clemens, 2012). “Life history resides within the larger category of narrative approaches” and overlaps with auto-ethnography, biography, cultural biography, life story and oral history (Tierney & Clemens, 2012, p. 266). Life histories have been contextualised with regard to biographical works (Langness & Frank, 1981) and psychobiographies (McAdams, 2001, 2006a, 2006b; Runyan, 1982). According to McAdams (2006a, 2006b), the concepts of psychobiography and life histories are very similar. The main difference between psychobiography and life histories is that the latter usually focuses on relationships across many lives, while psychobiographies usually examine one single life. Life history research therefore tries to find and understand differences and similarities in the lives of different individuals. According to Rosenwald (1988), psychobiographies seek the uniqueness and individual aspects in a single life. Both approaches might use subjective and objective data and information in the research study: they refer to biographical facts and bring experiences together to create meaningfulness within a specific culturally normed framework (McAdams, 2001).

This study focuses on the life of one individual only and does not compare it to other individuals who live during the same period.

2.5.2 *Psychobiography and Life Narratives*

McAdams (1988, 1990, 1993) and McAdams et al. (2001) highlight that life narratives are stories of individuals about their own lives and are therefore autobiographical, while Sarbin (1986) mentions that narratives could provide a new root metaphor for the psychological discipline as a whole. Schultz (2005d) highlights in his “Introduction to Psychobiography” that the narrative approach might be close to the psychobiographical approach; however, there are differences that need to be considered. On the one hand, he defines psychobiographies as “multimethodological and essentially theoretically anarchistic” (Schultz, 2005d, p. 16) and emphasises that most of the psychobiographers do not use a narrative methodological approach as life narratives do. On the other hand, the author mentions that psychobiographers are “structuralists”. When they talk about the biographies and minds of their subjects, they propose to discuss something “*real*” (Schultz, 2005d, p. 17). In comparison to psychobiography, in narrative-based models mind is text, text is story and story is fiction and is therefore not based on reality (Ochberg, 1988, Schultz, 2005d).

Fouché and Van Niekerk (2005b) emphasise that the study of life narratives or life stories concerns either oral or written accounts based on subjective experiences and narrations. Usually, life stories are limited to the description of subjective experiences of situations, events, circumstances and relationships (Cole & Knowles, 2001). However, life stories and life narratives became popular with regard to studying meaningfulness and coherence in life (McAdams, 2001). They were also associated with case studies (Allport, 1965), psychobiographies (Erikson, 1958) and identity research (McAdams, 1996).

The study at hand does not use a life narrative approach. In this study, “something real” (Schultz, 2005d, p. 17), the life of Paulo Coelho, is discussed, as is common in psychobiographical approaches.

2.5.3 *Psychobiography and Autobiographies*

While in psychobiographies researchers focus on the life of another person by using and applying formal psychological theories, autobiographies are the documentation of an individual’s life, a self-expression of the life and/or a section of a person’s life that is written by the individual him/herself (Eakin, 1992). Autobiographies are used in studying lives (Kováry, 2011; Kramp, 2012) and are sometimes defined as part of life history research (Bakery Bá & LeFrancois, 2011).

Psychobiographical research might draw from autobiographical writings and publication to gain data for analysis and interpretation (Elms, 1994; Ferguson Smith, 2014). Autobiographies are viewed as first-person documents (Allport, 1961), because they do provide first-hand insights into a person’s life from his/her own perspective.

This study is a psychobiography on the life and selected works of Paulo Coelho. It does use autobiographic accounts and novels to analyse the life and works of Paulo Coelho from a psychobiographic perspective.

2.5.4 Psychobiography and Psychohistory

According to Runyan (1982), psychobiography and psychohistory do not see themselves as a unified tradition in the research realm, but rather define themselves as semi-autonomous sub-traditions. The approach of psychohistories is mainly based on psychological theory, which is applied to historical events (Schultz, 2005a). The approaches are often psychoanalytic to interpret socio-cultural, political and/or historical events in a historical perspective (Runyan, 1988b). At the same time, historical psychology studies psychological phenomena in the course of history (Runyan, 1988b, 1988c). Erikson (1968), who is one of the main representatives and a pioneer in psychohistory, highlighted how the life of an individual might become an outstanding historical event. He thereby made psychobiographical work a major tool in psychohistorical approaches, which are affected by emotions and the researcher's bias through his own motives, emotions and unconscious assumptions (Erikson, 1968).

This study does not focus on historical events (Schultz, 2005a), but on the single life of Paulo Coelho. It does not use a historical perspective or psychoanalytical approaches as common in psychohistories.

2.5.5 Psychobiography and Case Study Research

Case study research is historically based in psychology and has become a popular psychological research method, particularly when the “why” and “how” of a situation are explained (Yin, 2009). Psychological case studies focus on the individual from various perspectives, using different interpretations. According to Bromley (1986), the psychological case study deals with the documentation of specific events, certain experiences and situations, emotional episodes at a specific point in time, while psychobiographies usually focus on the entire life. According to Fouché and Van Niekerk (2005b), case studies aim at recording specific changes that occur in response to the application of specific methods so that conclusions can be drawn. The authors highlight that findings from case study research aim at relating new insights to a generalisable theory or reconstructing theories.

In terms of methods used in psychobiographical case study research, McLeod (1994) emphasises that biographies, autobiographies, diaries, letters, and other qualitative material can be used to describe the individual. Psychobiographies are therefore often integrated with other research methodologies and approaches to provide comprehensive and coherent insight into the individual and his or her life (see Sect. 2.4).

This study is a psychobiography that can be seen as a case study at the same time, particularly since it refers to the “why” and “how” of a person’s life. However, it is not limited to a single situation, but provides insight into the entire life of Paulo Coelho, highlighting certain events and developments in accordance with the theories applied. The study is therefore defined as an explanatory and descriptive psychobiographical case study design (Elms, 2007) (see also Sect. 6.2).

After a demarcation of the study, critical views on psychobiographical research are presented.

2.6 Critical Views on Psychobiographical Research

As referred to above, psychobiographical work has an ambiguous standing in personality psychology (Runyan, 1994; Schultz, 2005d), has gained popularity and acceptance, but has for a long time hardly been accepted in the broader field of psychology (Fouché, 2015; McAdams, 2005, 2006a, 2006b). In the following section, critical views on psychobiographical research will be presented.

Schultz (2005d) highlights that there are several advantages of conducting psychobiographical research: “Theories, or at least hypotheses, also emerge out of psychobiography” (Schultz, 2005d, p. 4). In addition, the study of lives brings various findings on single lives, thus “discovering what works and what doesn’t” (Schultz, 2005d, p. 4). However, this in-depth insight into a small number of individuals who are prominent has been criticised, particularly because the influence of the context of socio-political and economic factors and the impact of societal forces seem to be neglected (Le Goff, 1995). Runyan (1988a) emphasises that besides the elitist approach of psychobiography, it is worth studying outstanding individuals for the fact that scientific findings can also provide information on the context and the broader society.

However, one of the advantages of psychobiographical research is the assumption that psychobiography studies focus on real individual lives and that this is its main contribution in its own right: “making the person the focus of attention” (Perry, 2012, p. 134) and bringing the person back into psychology (Carlson, 1971).

In parallel to the criticisms of the historical sciences, critics from psychology have referred to psychobiography as a highly subjective, too interpretative, non-experimental approach, which is too reliant on psychoanalysis and is not compatible with statistical and/or experimental psychology (Schultz, 2005d, p. 14). McAdams (2006a, 2006b) adds that – besides the criticism that psychobiographical studies are highly subjective – psychobiographies are criticised from a quantitative methodological viewpoint for lacking reliability and external validity. This is why Elms (2007) argues for the inclusion of statistical and quantitative approaches in psychobiographies to explore all the methodological options that can contribute to particularly the comparative analysis of biographic categories and frequencies and thereby contribute to statistical conclusions that derive from psychobiographical research.

Although psychobiographies mainly refer to single cases and individuals, what they have often been criticised for is that they offer a high degree of “relevance” (Schultz, 2005d, p. 5), not least through being made up of research that is “alive” (Elms, 1994, p. 13). Elms (1994) points out that particularly psychobiographical research has contributed to his complex understanding of human beings. Carlson (1971) mentions that personality needs to be studied by using extensive data – first-person, as well as third-person documents (Allport, 1961) – on a person’s life, taking into account the biographical facts and interpreting them in a contextualising way to gain deep understanding of the person and his/her life’s ways and the person’s identity. Therefore, psychobiographies need to be seen for what they are: an in-depth approach to understanding the individual. Countering the criticism on the mainstream of psychobiographies focusing on single cases, a new trend in psychobiographical work in terms of comparative psychobiographies can be recognised that has led to the analysis of dual cases and new methodological approaches of comparison (Elms, 2007). However, these comparative approaches are not used in this study.

At the same time, Runyan (1988a) emphasises that biography as a method of historical research is elitist, simplistic and reductionist. Reductionism in a psychobiographical context means that explanations as well as interpretations of a persons’ thoughts, behaviour, feelings and worldviews are reduced to a certain period, such as, for example, childhood experiences, a particular situation or trauma experienced or a specific relationship (Runyan, 1982). Schultz (2005d) elaborates in this context that psychobiographies can only contribute to an in-depth understanding of a person, if the explanation and interpretation of life events, behaviour, thoughts and attitudes are based on a broad base of data over the entire life span. It responds to Carlson’s (1971) question: “Where is the person in personality research?” and makes psychology as a discipline humanistic, yet scientific (McAdams, 2006a, 2006b).

Schultz (2005d, pp. 10–11) argues that psychobiographies can be criticised when they diagnose the subject of research or “pathologies” the individual studied. In these cases, psychobiographies do not contribute new insights or comprehensive knowledge on a person’s life, but rather stigmatise. Therefore, psychobiographies only make a positive contribution when they aim at explaining the entire person in an integrated way, by applying well-chosen theories, particularly since – according to Schultz (2005d, p. 12) – “psychobiography is only as good as the theory on which it rests.”

Several authors (Runyan, 1988b; Schultz, 2005a) have pointed out that psychobiographies are often bound to psychoanalytical frameworks and theories (Elms, 1994, p. 9). These frameworks are viewed as inadequate, reductionist and biased, with a focus on particular periods in life (e.g. childhood), which lack proper documentation or which are based on reconstructions done at a later time (McAdams, 2006a; Gay, 1988). However, Runyan (1984) has counter-argued that psychobiographies do not need to be based on psychoanalytic theories and frameworks and can use theories from other psychological disciplines, such as social psychology or developmental psychology. If the subject studied is an artistic figure,

psychobiographies can even use the creative works to study the individual and his/her psychological state (Schultz, 2005a). Kováry (2011, p. 758) adds that “For today’s psychobiographers, a broader theoretical arsenal is available” and psychobiographies are not reduced to certain theories and methodologies anymore, always focusing on the personal significance and not on the statistical significance through analysing single cases in-depth. Kováry (2011, p. 757) concludes by citing Schultz (2005d), who says that good psychobiography markers include cogency, narrative structure, comprehensiveness, data convergence, sudden coherence, logical soundness, consistency and viability. In contrast, so-called “bad psychobiography markers” include pathography, single cues, reconstruction, reductionism, peer theory choice and a proper narrative structure.

Another common criticism of psychobiographical research is that often in psychobiographical research, no direct contact with the subject can be established, since most of the time the life has already ended (Stroud, 2004). If the person being studied is still alive, it is usually difficult to get in contact with this person because of his/her fame and status as a celebrity. However, other researchers argue that the data on the life are mostly rich and the information about the life can be gained from various resources other than direct contact, even though the most powerful and insightful view might derive from direct contact (Anderson, 1981).

Finally, McLeod (1994) emphasises that psychobiographical research is longitudinal - focusing on a person over a long period of time - as well as cross-cultural in nature. Anderson (1981) also declares psychobiographical research as a form of cross-cultural research, focusing on the life of a person within and across cultural viewpoints. However, this statement has been criticised extensively and other authors have highlighted that in psychobiographical research contemporary theories are generally applied to historical periods (Runyan, 1984). Later, theories were used and applied to the lives of individuals who came from a different culture than the one in which this theory was created (Berry, Portinga, Segall, & Dasen, 1989). Anderson (1981) emphasises that the researcher can develop empathic and cross-cultural understanding of the subject researched, even if the researcher is from a different culture and/or period. The cross-cultural understanding can be based on an extensive literature research and explorations of individuals who are from the same culture as the subject studied. However, as in any other psychological study, it is important to take care when psychological theories and methods are applied and cultural bias needs to be considered (Mayer, 2004, 2008, 2011). Intercultural competences, such as cultural sensitivity of the researcher, tolerance for ambiguity, emotional intelligence and the ability to change perspectives (Mayer, 2011) can be useful to avoid the researcher’s specific cultural bias and contribute to cross-cultural understanding, as well as a constructivist understanding of cultural contexts and their impact on psychobiographical research (see Sect. 9.6.1.2). Based on these assumptions, psychobiographical research is seen as a possibility to expand cross-cultural understanding and to contribute to a more in-depth way of understanding individual lives across time, space and culture. Therefore, psychobiographical work can be seen as cross-cultural psychology work and refers to the statement of Schultz (2005d, p. 5) that “in taking one life at a time, psychobiography achieves assimilation;

it integrates the discipline's split selves." This means that psychobiographies include many different facets of psychology at a time that they reunify the various approaches within the discipline itself.

2.7 The Value and Contribution of Psychobiographical Case Studies

After having discussed the anticipated advantages and disadvantages of psychobiographies, the contribution of this approach and method needs to be discussed for this study, because it is multifold in itself. This section provides the reader with a short overview of the value and contribution of psychobiographical case study research that applies to the study at hand.

Psychobiographies support the study of significant and extraordinary individuals and phenomena (McAdams, 2005; Schulz, 2005b, 2005c), as does this study in terms of the life of Paulo Coelho. They provide in-depth knowledge about a person and his/her life, which contributes to the development of an in-depth understanding of selected human phenomena that might be transferred to similar phenomena in other human beings (Van Wynsberghe & Khan, 2007). Since psychobiographical research usually focuses on a single individual's life, it allows researchers to integrate multiple theories and bodies of knowledge while focusing on one particular individual. Psychological theories can therefore be integrated (Schulz, 2005c) and interlinkages between phenomena and theories might be established. Various psychobiographical researchers have highlighted life history research as valuable to develop, test and advance theories relating to personality and human development (Carlson, 1988). Roberts (2002) points out that psychobiographical research can be used to illustrate selected psychological theories, or to gain new conceptual insights and expand theories.

According to Perry (2012, p. 3) psychobiographical research "contributes to the advancement of personality theory" by addressing fundamental questions of personality development across the life span and with regard to specific events during the life. The new insights gained through psychobiographical research can lead to new assumptions and theoretical explanations of personality traits, behaviour and other factors and their association, influence and/or impact on a person's life's outcome (Runyan, 1984).

At the same time, while focusing on an individual's life, attention in the research is not only paid to the individual, but also to the context in which the individual lived, acted and interacted (Runyan, 1984). This contextual framework includes the family as well as the family history, the life within the socio-cultural setting and particular socio-cultural experiences, as well as socialisation processes in the specific context (Roberts, 2002; Stroud, 2004).

Another important contribution is the fact that psychobiographies do not focus only on a specific event in time, but trace the person's development over a lifespan

(Gronn, 1993) and thus contribute to the understanding of patterns and processes of an individual over a defined period in time, most of the time, over his/her entire lifetime (Sokolovsky, 1996).

Finally, a contribution of psychobiographical research is the fact that the researcher, as well as the reader, needs to empathise with the individual studied to explore and understand the subject's world and thereby explores the subject's, as well as the researcher's self further (Uys, 2010).

At the time this study was undertaken, no psychobiography on Paulo Coelho was known to the researcher and only one study of psychobiography written by Burnell (2013) could be found that used the same theories – HWM and FDT – to analyse the life of an extraordinary person – in this case Beyers Naudé. This study therefore contributes to the creation of new knowledge and deeper insights on Paulo Coelho while using two theories that have been used before in one psychobiography, but have generally hardly been used in psychobiographical work before.

Generally, the contributions of psychobiographical research presented apply to the study at hand.

2.8 Why a Psychobiography on Paulo Coelho?

The question of why the particular subject was chosen is an important one in psychobiographical research, which the researcher needs to explore and make transparent for the reader (see also Sect. 1.8). Schultz (2005b, p. 42) emphasises that often a subject is chosen for “reasons partly conscious yet usually mostly unconscious.” Schultz (2005b) emphasises that there is usually a particular pull towards a specific individual and asks further: “Why this individual in particular?” (Schultz, 2005b, p. 42). According to the author a researcher might be drawn towards a particular individual because a particular type of person fascinates the researcher, maybe because of resemblance, or admiration of certain talents this person has and the researcher would like to have. Schultz (2005a, 2005b, 2005c, 2005d, 2005e, p. 42) highlights that “doing of psychobiography occasionally careens into autobiography”. As highlighted in the quote by Dilthey (1996) at the beginning of this chapter, this psychobiography is connected to the process of the researcher to rediscover herself through the writing process and through the analysis of the life of Paulo Coelho.

The question of why a psychobiography is written on Paulo Coelho is explored through the researcher's self-reflexive process to gain conscious awareness of the pull factors towards exploring Paulo Coelho and the possible biases of the researcher affecting this study.

When my interest in psychobiography grew during 2012, I soon had two individuals in mind for an in-depth exploration through psychobiographical work: The German chancellor, Dr. Angela Merkel, and Paulo Coelho, the Brazilian writer. Both of them are famous, are world leaders in one or another way, connected to masses of people who listen to their ideas and thoughts. Both have strong spiritual

and religious roots and both are global players, being looked up to by many people and being criticised by many others. Both appear healthy and well to me, both seem to be strong, have coping mechanisms to deal with challenges and both seem to have found their vocation in life. I felt a pull towards both of them: Angela Merkel drew my fascination, being one of the few female global leaders in world history with a huge impact, and I was keen to learn more about her life, her career and how it developed. However, I soon recognised that I was not interested in exploring the context that surrounded her: The German reunification of East and West, her pastoral home in the previous East Germany, the context of the political parties and the strong Christian values, which I know myself quite well. Although she fascinated me as a female global leader in her position and because of her diplomacy and her ecological and sustainable approach to environmental care and economics, I felt personally much more pulled towards the other person of interest, Paulo Coelho.

From the beginning, I was convinced that I just wanted to focus on a person who was in my opinion a spiritual and a successful person – successful in terms of having followed his/her life's dream, having recognised his/her particular talent. I wanted to focus on an outstanding person who fascinated me in terms of his/her success and talents and who was - in my eyes – outstanding, inspiring and positive. At the beginning Paulo Coelho seemed to fulfil these criteria and it was only later, during the data collection process, analysis and interpretation, that I discovered that the world-renowned author went through several crises during his life, which were rather challenging and depressing (see Chap. 3).

Consciously, I decided on Paulo Coelho, because I liked to read his books, his novels, his short stories and essays, as well as his autobiographical and fictitious/fiction publications. I actively wanted to find out more about him as a person to understand how a person can develop into one of the world's most widely read authors of all times. I wanted to understand how he got where he was when I started my work on him. I believed that such an outstanding and extraordinary person could only get into this position by being mentally healthy and well and by pursuing a strong faith.

One moment I doubted if my choice of Paulo Coelho was the right one. That was at the point when I realised that Paulo Coelho was still alive and not deceased like most of the outstanding individuals studied. I started to look for studies that analysed the life of living individuals and came across a statement of Kraft (1998 in Kováry, 2011). Kraft highlights that studies on living artists can contribute significantly to the understanding of a person, either from a psychoanalytical paradigm as promoted by Kraft (1998 in Kováry, 2011) or from a psychobiographical paradigm. I also felt that the study on a living subject could have an impact on the contemporary discussion of the subject and his life and deepen the understanding on the subject who was still being alive - which I interpreted as an advantage in itself. The researcher therefore promotes the point of view that an analysis of a living artist might be more rewarding than the analysis of a departed artist, following the argument of Kraft (1998 in Kováry, 2011).

In Anderson's (1981, p. 474) words: I developed an "empathetic relationship with the subject" while reading and reflecting increasingly on him. Anderson

emphasises that a psychobiographer can best “listen” to a subject when he/she feels empathetic towards this subject. This kind of empathetic relationship helped me in reading Paulo Coelho’s creative works, as well as his biographical and autobiographical manuscripts and “listen” to him (Anderson, 1981). While working through the life of Paulo Coelho, I not only reconstructed his life and his biography from a psychological perspective and a specific theoretical viewpoint and stance, I also consciously, as well as subconsciously, reconstructed my own identity and self, starting to see myself not only as a researcher, but also as a writer and artist. My self-concept changed through the study and I developed an inner understanding of Paulo Coelho and his creative processes as a writer, an artist and a human being. I started to create a new story of Paulo Coelho and of myself.

During my data collection work on exploring Paulo Coelho, I was reasonably well aware of my inner states of mind, my feelings towards the subject, as indicated by Beres (1959) to be aware of the feelings of the psychobiographer towards to subject to avoid and limit misinterpretations and misunderstandings.

At the same time, I engaged myself in the context of Latin America, of Brazil and the history of the country, since I believe in the hermeneutic tradition that a life experience and expression can only be understood within its temporal, historic, socio-cultural and political context (Dilthey, 2002). I also enjoyed gaining more knowledge on the political, cultural and socio-economic context Coelho was socialised in during his childhood and youth. I explored a new culture, a new field of interest.

I also was interested in Paulo Coelho’s life as a world-known author, in his jet-set life as a famous person and an international traveller, not at least because I love to travel myself. Particularly, I was interested in the role his belief, his spiritual belief and faith, played in the development of his life course. At the same time, I asked myself how a person who had experienced extreme situations in his/her life – as Coelho did in terms of his times in the asylum, but also as political prisoner who experienced torture – can remain holistically well and successful at the same time. I was wondering what the daily life routine of such a person would look like, what he thought, how he felt about certain experiences and what he believed in, where he drew the meaningfulness in his life from. I wanted to increase my “Verstehen”, my understanding, of this individual in terms of Dilthey (2002). I also wanted to find out about the connections between the life history and the biography of Paulo Coelho and his peculiarities as an individual and a writer, which are described in Kovary (2011, p. 747), as one of the reasons to engage in psychobiography.

At the same time, I was intrigued to find out more about Paulo Coelho as a person, as an author and about his work. It was quite soon after I had re-read all of his books, novels, non-fiction and fiction that I realized that the person described in the books might include parts of the person Paulo Coelho, but he might not be the same as the protagonists in his books. I started to understand Conant (2001), who emphasised in his publication on philosophy and biography that the life of a person and his/her work should not be confused and rather be viewed independently from each other. The more I realised the similarity as well as the divide between the person Paulo Coelho and his creative work, the more I became interested in understanding

his outstanding creativity, his productivity as an author, his ability to promote himself and his works effectively, his belief and the development of his personal faith, as well as his approaches to wellness. Another fascinating question arose for me, namely how the person Paulo Coelho, his life and his creative art were interconnected.

I knew I wanted to focus on the author Paulo Coelho from a positive psychology perspective, using a positive approach to the person's life. This was based on my background in positive psychology research and my personal belief in the idea that one should surround oneself with positivity rather than pathological concepts. I finally ended up using the two theories introduced (Chaps. 4 and 5) to understand the development of faith and the concept of faith across Paulo Coelho's life span and the concept of health and wellness in the person's life researched.

On a more unconscious level – and that I only realised in the process of studying Paulo Coelho's life and his work – there were even more aspects why I chose the topic of psychobiography, Paulo Coelho than the two theories I applied.

During my whole academic career I always felt I enjoyed the qualitative scientific approach and I found psychobiography to be deeply qualitative, scientific and informative at the same time. This method of research seemed to me the research methodology I wanted to explore in more depth. In addition I do have a favour for detail and for the exploration of the depth of personality, a person and his/her soul. I found psychobiography an interesting method of science for me as a scientist. I was thrilled when I read Schultz (2005d) referring to psychobiography as a science and an art:

To write psychobiography one acts not like a scientist but an artist (same goes, really, for doing it). Narration is required. One seeks the best form, not always beginning at the beginning. Details are dwelt on, caressed, finessed. One wallows in nuance, never rushing ahead to oversimplification or generalization. (p. 13)

At the point in time when I read this statement, I was already an established scientist and researcher and I felt drawn to the world of writing. I had just published three children's books as well as a novel on intercultural development, which was rooted in a scientific theory and I felt an urge to integrate my scientific writing with arts and creative works. Psychobiography as described by Schultz (2005d) seemed to integrate these aspects that were important to me, opening doors to be a scientist and an artist and writer at the same time. It was then that I recognised that I chose a writer as my subject of research, because I loved writing myself.

In addition, reading and re-reading the creative work by Coelho stimulated my thoughts on spirituality, living my dreams, walking my path in life, travelling and inspired me to be creative and live my life's dream as well: being a scientist and an artist at the same time, or an artistic scientist.

After having reflected on my personal interest in studying the life and creative works of Coelho, I started to write this psychobiography on Paulo Coelho.²

²During the years 2012 to 2016 I tried to establish contact with Paulo Coelho through email and mail, via his website, through his publisher and his agent. I made a huge effort to contact him and only received a response from Coelho's agent in 2016 via email, after I had almost finished to write this book on him. The message said that he does not have time to read this work or meet with me to discuss it.

2.9 Chapter Summary

This chapter commenced with the definition of psychobiography as an approach and method. It provided a brief overview of psychobiographical research and in the following sub-chapter gave an insight into psychobiographies in the realm of creativity and artists. The chapter showed how psychobiographies developed over time from an approach mainly based on a psychoanalytical concept towards an approach that strives to be an inclusive part of the psychological discipline. The chapter discussed selected demarcations of psychobiography in the context of life history research, life narratives, autobiographies, psychohistory and case studies. It provided the reader with critical views, advantages and disadvantages of the approach and method and a summary on the value and contribution of psychobiographical case study research. Finally, the chapter ended with a reflection on the researcher and selected explanations why the researcher chose to write a psychobiography on Paulo Coelho. Various conscious and subconscious reasons are provided by the author to contribute to an in-depth understanding of the choice of subject. The chapter ended with a chapter summary.

Chapter 3

The Life and Creative Works of Paulo Coelho: A Chronological Overview

The simple things are also the most extraordinary things, and only the wise can see them.

Paulo Coelho, 2002b, p. 15–16

3.1 Chapter Preview

This chapter provides an overview of biographical information on Paulo Coelho. In the literature, selected information on Paulo Coelho varies and is controversially discussed. Therefore, this chapter presents not only historical facts, but also interpretations of the life events of a single person. It is acknowledged that different biographers provide varying information and interpretations on Paulo Coelho's life in journal articles, biographies, interviews and documentaries. Paulo Coelho's creative works, his films, stories and statements on his personal webpage are seen as autobiographical narrations of his own life. Many of his books include personal statements or prologues, narrations and information about his life, which are included in this chapter about his life.

This chapter includes insights regarding biographical “facts” as well as (autobiographical) creative works of Paulo Coelho, which are integrated to provide complex information on the writer from different perspectives. It is therefore already an interpretation of the information analysed on the life of the writer from the researcher's perspective.

This chapter relies on the data in first- and third-person documents provided in biographies and his own creative works and is arranged in chronological order from his birth to 2017, with Paulo Coelho turning 70 years old. It also deals with emerging life themes, relationships he has been in as well as geographical localities, such as Rio de Janeiro, London, Saint-Martin or Genève.

3.2 Paulo Coelho's Early Childhood (1947–1953)

Paulo Coelho de Souza's life began with a complicated birth on 24 August 1947 in the hospital of Sao José in Humaitá, a middle-class area in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (Morais, 2009). Paulo Coelho was the first-born child of Lygia Araripe Coelho de Souza, who was at the time of the birth 23 years old, and her husband, Pedro Queima Coelho de Souza, who at the time was 33 years old. His father was an engineer with a very logical, reasonable and clear vision and world view, while his mother was a housewife with a very strong Catholic belief (Coelho, 2006, p. 11).

Paulo Coelho hardly survived his birth (Morais, 2009); during the birth, his collarbone broke and the doctor declared him dead. Since Paulo Coelho's parents were devoted Catholics, his mother prayed to St Joseph to bring back the life of her son. When a nun came to "give the last rites to the dead child" there was a faint mewling sound. The nurse found Paulo Coelho alive, but in a deep coma (Morais, 2009, p. 38). He survived, although he was tiny and light, but he soon recovered and became quite a healthy child during the course of his early childhood. He only suffered occasionally from a strong cough during the first years of his life (Morais, 2009, p. 38). His development was normal: "At eight month[s], he said his first word, at ten month, his first teeth appeared, and at eleven month[s] he began to walk without ever having crawled" (Morais, 2009, p. 38).

At the age of three, Paulo Coelho started to pray to God, always praying for good health for his family and himself. During this time, Paulo Coelho already showed an outstanding way of thinking. Morais (2009, p. 39) highlights:

When, at the age of three, Lygia caught him behaving badly, he said: 'Do you know why I am being naughty today, Mama? It is because my guardian angel is not working. He has been working very hard and his batteries have run out.

From birth until the age of 11, Paulo Coelho grew up in a high-security complex in Botafogo, a middle-class area of Rio, not far away from Botafogo beach (Morais, 2009). He was brought up in a very safe environment and only started leaving the security estate when his parents enrolled him in kindergarten at the age of four and a half in 1952. He stayed in kindergarten for 2 years, before entering school in 1954 (Morais, 2009).

3.3 Childhood and Schooldays (1953–1961)

During his primary school years, Paulo Coelho lived with his parents in the Botafogo secured estate to protect him from bad influences in the world around it. However, he was responsible for many "odd things that were happening in the community" (Morais, 2009, p. 40). This was connected to his "secret organization" named "Arco", which he had built up together with his friend and extended family member

Paulo Araripe. Together they specialised in “sabotage” of the estate (Morais, p. 41), playing tricks in the neighbourhood.

In 1954, at the age of 6 years, Coelho’s parents enrolled him in a primary school called “Our Lady Victorious School”, which was seen as one of the best schools in the city. This school was supposed to later on lead him to one of the best and traditionally most established secondary schools in Rio, called St Ignatius. The main values at the primary school were hard work and respect for others (Morais, 2009, p. 41). After the first 2 years in school, in which Coelho had done very well, his marks slipped drastically. He loved reading and he became the best storyteller in the estate, while not achieving in school what his parents expected from him (Morais, 2009).

Paulo Coelho’s love of stories and his ability to write were already evident in primary school. In 1956, he participated in his first writing competition at school. Although he lacked confidence and himself voted for another pupil, he was surprised to find himself the winner of the competition (Morais, 2009, p. 43). Although he was very successful in writing and storytelling, he did not perform well in other subjects and failed his first entry examinations for the secondary school, St Ignatius. As a punishment for his failure, his parents sent him to a camp where he attended private lessons and had to do physical exercises every day for 2 months (Morais, 2009, p. 44). However, he failed the entry examinations again. Finally, Coelho studied the whole year of 1958 and passed the examination with an average mark to enter St Ignatius in the same year. Even in his secondary school, St Ignatius, his school career was not flourishing and his marks and monthly grades were a “nightmare” and “disastrous” to his parents (Morais, 2009; p. 53). However, he did not care about his marks and loved reading stories. He was highly interested in novels and adventure stories, but not in the books he had to read at school.

When Paulo Coelho was about 12 years old he started writing a diary on a daily basis (Morais, 2009, p. 51). For the first time in his life, he wrote down a short self-portrait, introducing himself to the world. At the same time he started recording short messages and thoughts on a tape recorder and collected the tapes. On these records he spoke about his emotions, described his actions and referred to the “perverse side of his personality” rather than to his more generous and sensitive side (Morais, 2009, p. 52). On these tapes he also recorded his feelings towards the girlfriends who had started to come into his life. He also reported on the first incident with his girlfriend who left him when he spent holiday time at Araruama with his extended family (Morais, 2009, p. 53).

During his childhood, Paulo Coelho was skinny, thin-legged and seemed to be physically weak. He experienced some physical weaknesses and suffered from respiratory problems. However, he managed to make up for his bodily weakness by knowing more than his friends (Morais, 2009, p. 42). At times, when he stayed at Araruama—the place where his aunt and uncle lived—during the holidays his asthma increased. In this sickly condition, he started writing letters to his parents who were very worried about his well-being. Out of this habit of writing letters to his parents

he later developed the regularity to write letters to other family members or scribble his thoughts onto pieces of paper that he then hid in secret places (Morais, 2009, p. 51).

3.4 The Teenage Years (1962–1966)

During his teenage years, Coelho grew up in a strict Jesuit tradition and it was around this time that he turned away from religious dogma and became an atheist (Arias, 2001, p. 13). Many years later he recalls that the Jesuits provided him with an excellent grounding in discipline, but “they gave me an horror of religion, from which I ended up distancing myself” (Arias, 2001, p. 33). It was during the same time that Paulo Coelho’s respiratory problems turned into a debilitating asthma, which was unpredictable and caused by the weather, dust, mould or smoke (Morais, 2009, p. 49).

The only thing he was interested in during his teenage years was the idea of becoming a writer, his friendships with girls and his struggle to believe in God (Morais, 2009), as described in the following section.

3.4.1 *Becoming a Writer*

At the end of 1962, based on the wish of his father, Paulo Coelho enrolled for the scientific stream at St Ignatius. He would have wished to enrol in the arts stream, but preferred to follow the wish of his father. His marks decreased with every school year. Coelho pursued the hobby of building model aeroplanes, then rockets and collecting stamps, but all his new interests quickly disappeared again (Morais, 2009).

It was in 1962 that for the first time in his life Paulo Coelho developed the *idée fixe* of becoming a writer (Morais, 2009, p. 62). In an autobiographic story Coelho (2006, p. 11) reports a dialogue between his mother and himself. When he told her in 1963 that he wanted to become an author, his mother seemed sad and referred to the fact that his father was an engineer. As an engineer he was a logical, thinking man who looked at the world with a precise, accurate and objective view. Coelho’s mother proposed that he should become like his uncle, who was a civil engineer by profession and who wrote and published books in his leisure time. However, he was convinced already at this stage that one can only become successful when one is dedicated. He said to his mother, “No, mother, I just want to be a writer. Not an engineer who writes books” (Coelho, 2006, p. 11). Inspired by his talk with his mother, he started inquiring about what exactly a writer was and came up with the following ideas (Coelho, 2006, p. 11):

1. A writer wears glasses and does not brush his hair.
2. He should not be understood by his own generation.

3. Only other writers understand what the writer wants to say.
4. A writer knows difficult terms in language and likes to shock his environment.
5. When a writer wants to win the heart of a woman, he says that he is a writer and writes her poems.
6. Since a writer is educated, he can always become a well-recognised critic of literature.
7. When he is asked what book he is reading, he usually mentions a book nobody knows.
8. A writer is fascinated by the book “Ulysses” of James Joyce.

Despite the fact that his mother emphasised that Coelho did not wear glasses and that it was more difficult to become a writer than to be an engineer, Coelho felt as if he was a writer already, because of his uncombed hair, the cigarettes in his pocket and the theatre play under his arm (Coelho, 2006, p. 14).

3.4.2 The Retreat at St Ignatius and Paulo Coelho’s Belief in God

It was in the same year, 1963, on Christmas Eve, that his mother told him – because of his very low school marks – that she had made an appointment with a neuropsychological specialist. She took Coelho for a check-up early in 1964. However, the specialist did not find anything wrong with him and the visit remained without consequences (Morais, 2009). Coelho started to go to theatre plays and read as many books as he could, with the aim to increase his understanding of himself and society (Morais, 2009, p. 71).

During the same year, his grandfather Cazuza died unexpectedly of a heart attack and Coelho started questioning God and his faith. The death of his grandfather became a key issue with regard to Coelho’s belief in God, as well as his general faith (Morais, 2009). He found himself in a dilemma: on the one hand he was terrified by the thought of losing his faith, on the other hand he felt lost and lonely and abandoned by God. However, he could not hold his faith: he was under enormous pressure because of his deteriorating school career and the death of his beloved grandfather. His religious doubts took over (Morais, 2009, p. 73).

Particularly during this time in his life, Coelho remembered the time he spent in the school retreat in 1962. He had to stay there for 4 days together with some of his school mates. At the time, his parents were pleased, because he decided to attend this retreat, which had been organised by the Jesuit school. What his parents did not know was that he decided to go to the retreat because of a tremendous feeling of guilt and panic caused by his sexual desires, which made him fear to suffer in hell for eternity. Attending this Jesuit retreat, however, had also filled Coelho with new courage and he went for his “first encounter with God” (Morais, 2009, p. 55). Through the school and its belief-oriented value system, Coelho became familiar with the mysterious rituals of religion, which at times left him feeling curious,

encouraged, certain about his belief and – in the next moment – doubtful (Morais, 2009, pp. 58–59). His faith was strong in one moment and shaken in the next. He started hating the priests in his school and the duties that he had to fulfil in the name of God (Morais, 2009, p. 74), while fearing the punishment of God for his thoughts.

These recurring issues of doubt and encouragement from his teenage life returned strongly in 1994 (Morais, 2009) when Coelho again felt torn apart between accepting that God ignored him and his requests, hating God, fearing the consequences of this hate and the certainty that God was not there for him.

3.4.3 Moving to Gávia and Rota 15

In 1962, the family moved into a newly built house in Gávea, which was a great shock to Coelho. He had enjoyed his unchallenged leadership role in the estate. To protect Coelho from the outside world, his father decided that he, now 16 years old, would not be allowed to go out at night and his daily activities were reduced to sleeping, attending school at St Ignatius and reading, which he called “recreational reading” (Morais, 2009, p. 61). The reading helped him to overcome stress and stay healthy and only 1 year later he started writing. At 17 years, Coelho wrote his first play in 1963 during the school holidays, pretending that he was studying. He called his play “The ugly boy”, which reflected himself: a young boy who feels rejected by his parents and society and in the end commits suicide (Morais, 2009, p. 76). In 1963, at 17, Coelho founded a literary club called Rota 15 at Gávia and published a mimeographed booklet of poetry. In the same year he wrote the poem, “Thirteen-year-old woman”, which won the top prize in the Academia Literária Santo Inácio.

Only 1 year later, in 1964, he started approaching the editor of the newspapers of *Correio da Manhã* and sent him several of his new poems, but the editor responded aggressively and his work remained unrecognised. He felt very frustrated by this backlash and his recently won self-confidence about having found his vocation in life was undermined by new doubts (Morais, 2009, p. 79). It, however, did not take him long to regain his self-belief and decide to “fight to realize his dream” (Morais, 2009, p. 79).

Despite his doubts, Coelho managed to convince his father to buy him a typewriter, a Smith Corona, which was later in his life replaced by an electric Olivetti and even later by a laptop computer (Morais, 2009, p. 69).

3.4.4 Transfer to Andrews College

The conflict between self-belief and doubt intensified when his parents were called in to the school and asked to take Coelho out of the school and enrol him somewhere else. In 1964 his parents enrolled him in Andrews College, which was co-educational and much more liberal than St Ignatius. Although he was enrolled in the science

stream again, Andrews College also offered political discussions, film study groups and an amateur drama group, which he all joined immediately. He loved the school change and particularly the amateur theatre group called Taca (Morais, 2009).

Coelho's school marks were still not sufficient and therefore his father punished him by finding him a dreadful job at the docks at Rio de Janeiro where he was working at a dredging company, so badly paid that he could not even cover his cigarettes and the travel costs to the workplace after the morning lessons in school. He compared this work to the Greek myth of Sisyphus as a never-ending story (Morais, 2009, p. 77).

The punishment meted out by his parents did not motivate him at all; he became even more indifferent to school. He accepted his job at the dredging company and failed the school year. His desire to write increased, whether in the form of novels, poetry or plays. He was sure that being a writer was "my chosen profession" (Morais, 2009, p. 78). However, he experienced a blockage to start writing, although he felt he had lots of things to say and write about and if he started, he did not have the patience to continue.

In an attempt at not having to go back to school and to leave the country, Coelho applied to join the American Field Service, an exchange service programme that sent young Brazilians to the US. However, during his selection interview he had an asthma attack and he was not selected for the programme. It was difficult for Coelho to accept his failure and he blamed it on his mother who had travelled to the US before and on his intellectuality: "They believe, at least this is how I interpret it, that I'm too much of an intellectual for America" (Morais, 2009, p. 81).

3.4.5 The Dream, the Design of Life and the New Freedom

At the beginning of 1965, Coelho fell deeply in love for the first time and started a relationship with Márcia, who was a neighbour and a member of Rota 15. He felt peaceful and content and was not even upset about his poem he had submitted to a poetry competition to the Instituto Nacional do Mate not being placed (Morais, 2009, p. 83). However, only a few months later Márcia's parents forbid their relationship because of Coelho's ugliness, sickliness and Márcia's mother's fear that he could have contagious diseases besides being a communist, an existentialist and a bad dancer. The relationship did not last long, because Márcia felt she was dependent on her parents and could not stand the pressure they put on her to leave him. Coelho sank into a deep depression and because of his devastated mindset his parents allowed him to go on holiday to Araruama, which ended in a drama when he was driving illegally with a few friends as passengers in the car, caused an accident and fled the scene. He had left a young boy seriously injured and for a few days it was not clear if he would survive. Coelho was in despair and because of the threat of the injured boy's father to kill him if his son died, Coelho was not allowed to leave his uncle's house. He was scared of being arrested or killed, but a few days later the boy was out of danger and he could return to Rio de Janeiro and start school

again. As a consequence of the accident, his lies to his father and the costs for the injured boy, Coelho had to cope with various punishments from his father (Morais, 2009, p. 90).

The only thing that kept Coelho alive and striving was his dream of becoming a writer and he did not stop reflecting on the “problem of establishing myself as a recognized writer” (Morais, 2009, p. 90). He wanted to live everything to the full, wanted to do everything that he liked (Arias, 2001, p. 37). Coelho referred to this dream in a short autobiographical story (Coelho, 2006, p. 84) and highlighted that each and every person has to fulfil his/her personal life’s dream, even when confronted by criticism, negative feedback and ignorance. Every person works for his/her life dream, because it is the source of happiness (Coelho, 2006, p. 84) and critics help writers develop (Arias, 2001, p. 164). However, sometimes human beings are held back from living their life’s dream, just because there are sometimes little puzzle pieces missing that distort the original life design (Coelho, 2006, p. 122).

In many of his novels and stories and autobiographically written excerpts Paulo Coelho recalls the importance of living one’s dreams. Coelho (2006, p. 20) highlights that in the Bible, in the Old Testament, the word “dream” occurs five times, where it is four times related to Joseph and the story that an angel appeared to Joseph to convince him to do exactly the opposite of what he wanted to do. The essence of following one’s dream is based on hard work and the belief in succeeding (Coelho, 2006, p. 22). Coelho was prepared to work for his success to become a recognised writer and made up a literary programme for himself in 1965 that included buying the newspaper, checking on book reviews, sending articles to relevant people and calling them to talk about his ambitions of becoming a writer, finding contacts for publication and repeating these processes for magazines and radio stations, finding out the addresses of famous writers, going to book signings, organising productions of plays that he had written and trying to get in touch with the new generation of writers (Morais, 2009, pp. 91–92). Despite all his trials in 1965, Coelho remained unknown during his teenage years (Morais, 2009, p. 92).

At the age of 17, a new world opened to Coelho through meeting Joel Macedo, who took him along to the “Paissandu generation”, a club of intellectuals and left-wing activists in Rio. At about the same time he found a job as a cub reporter, working in the afternoons in a small newspaper office, writing articles for the *Diário de Notícias*. These new changes in his life took him further away from Andrews College, and Coelho lived in his own world, spending most of the time with his friends, enjoying his new freedom (Morais, 2009).

3.4.6 The First Mental Hospital Encounter in 1965

However, after Paulo Coelho had forged the signature of his father to help a friend to get a job, his parents decided to take him to an asylum, telling him they were taking him to a check-up for his asthma. The reasons for taking him to a mental hospital included him being a bad student, behaving irritably and in a hostile manner and

being politically opposed to his father. His mother had concerns regarding his sexuality and his refusal to undergo circumcision (Morais, 2009, p. 97). Since his parents had even read Coelho's diary about his sleepless nights, his anxiety and his plan to kill himself, they were sure that their son was insane and therefore sent him to the mental hospital (Jeffries, 2013; Wilson, 2010).

During Coelho's first mental hospital encounter, he spent 28 days in an asylum, where he was forced to take strong psychotropic substances and medication. At the end of his first stay in the asylum, he was totally confused and in a fragile state and sure that he had been falsely admitted to the mental hospital. However, the diagnosis of the psychiatrist read differently. He classified Coelho as (Morais, 2009):

A patient with schizoid tendencies, averse to social and loving contact. He prefers solitary activities. He is incapable of expressing his feelings or of experiencing pleasure. (p. 101)

Looking back at his first stay, almost a month in hospital, Coelho managed to define his stay as an extraordinary experience and boasted to his friends that he had been through an experience that none of them had been through, which left him with new impressions of the life of a madman. Shortly after returning from the asylum, Coelho went back to all the memberships he had joined at Andrews College, became even more interested in politics and was dismissed by the newspaper because of an article he had written that had raised eyebrows in society. Andrews College suggested to his parents that he should rather be moved to a fifth-rate college where they just had to pay and Coelho would be able to finish his school career (Morais, 2009, p. 106). After he had failed at Andrews College again, his parents forced him to undergo group therapy three times per week. He finally completed his science course in 1965 in one of the worst colleges in Rio de Janeiro (Morais, 2009, p. 45).

Coelho was already on his way to follow his dream and took part in "Pinnocchio", a theatre play, which was presented at Andrew College. He became part of the world of the theatre, following a theatrical vocation, which his parents did not accept since they felt it was the world of communists, homosexuals and drug addicts (Morais, 2009, p. 109). Coelho was 18 years old when he invited his parents, grandparents and sister to the première of Pinnocchio and they all turned up (Morais, 2009, p. 109).

3.4.7 The Second Mental Hospital Encounter in 1966

At the age of 18, Coelho became a womanizer, going out with Márcia, Renata Sorrah and Fabíola Fracarolli at the same time (Morais, 2009, pp. 110–111). He felt that he was a writer and actor, having acted on stage. Although he still stayed at his parents' house, he felt free and returned home late at night. This was not acceptable to his father and one night when Coelho came home drunk at 4 o'clock in the morning, breaking the glass windows of the house, Pedro, the father, had had enough: only a few hours later, Coelho was taken to an asylum by a doctor and two male nurses, this time by force. He was kept in the asylum for about 3 months. Some

friends came to visit him and he declared his love to Rennie. In hospital, Coelho was given psychiatric medication and spent a lot of time sleeping. Sometimes he read a book, but he did not feel like writing. He just felt lonely and his emotions ranged from enthusiasm to depression and panic attacks about the fact that he had to stay in the asylum (Morais, 2009).

During his talks with the doctor, he talked about his dreams, saying that everything was worth experiencing as long as one followed one's dreams – particularly if one followed a route rejected by mainstream society (Morais, 2009, p. 134). Coelho felt that he was not insane and was just being punished for following his dream.

Even 40 years (Coelho, 2006) later, he repeatedly states in his novels and autobiographical texts that a person should not listen to what neighbours say (Coelho, 2006, p. 53) or what society defines as normal and thereby lose sight of one's dream and personal objective. He cites Robert Frost (Coelho, 2006, p. 42):

*“Vor mir lagen zwei Straßen.
Ich wählte die weniger begangene.
Und das genau machte den Unterschied”*

*“in front of me lay two streets.
I chose the one less travelled.
And this has made all the difference.”¹*

One day in September 1966 the doctor started electroconvulsive therapy and Coelho felt weakened and could not recognise his environment for some time. When his parents came to visit him, he begged them to take him out of the hospital, but they did not (Morais, 2009, p. 135). The idea grew to try escaping from the hospital, particularly since he had had a haircut and felt he was not recognisable any more. He fled with one of the hospital patients and spent a week wandering around with Renata. After a week he called his parents, who were truly concerned about his physical and mental state and agreed to take him back without sending him to the hospital again. He returned home, but was soon afterwards really convinced that he was not sane: he was apathetic, not reacting to anything for about 2 weeks (Arias, 2001, p. 39).

Only a few weeks later, his maternal grandfather, Tuca, offered Coelho a small apartment to live in on his own right in the commercial centre of Rio (Morais, 2009, p. 139). Coelho accepted and after a while he was involved in his first theatre play for adults: “Captains of the Sands”, a play that had been written almost 30 years before by a Brazilian author, Jorge Amado. It was a success, but after the euphoria of the production, he became deeply depressed, felt lost and empty, mainly melancholic and only sometimes joyful (Morais, 2009, p. 142). Aged 19, Coelho felt empty-handed and lost. He had become anti-religious and anti-Catholic and had abandoned the faith of his parents, although he had not given up certain aspects of his childhood faith (Arias, 2001, p. 115).

¹English translation by the researcher.

After his second stay in hospital Coelho developed side effects of retrograde amnesia, which he had experienced after electrical shocks: he felt very close to his psychiatrist and felt particularly secure in his presence. This phenomenon, which is called the “Stockholm syndrome” is the sudden and inexplicable feeling of emotional dependence some hostages feel towards their hostage-takers (Morais, 2009, p. 141). He often still went to see his doctor when he was in a crisis or had problems with his love life.

After a few months in which he had stayed in the grandfather’s house, Coelho moved back to his parents, feeling sad and humiliated, but he could not stand the loneliness and his recurring nightmares (Morais, 2009, p. 143).

3.5 The Twenties (1967–1976)

Back at his parents’ house in 1967, Coelho felt a deep melancholy, which was mixed with euphoria and rage. It did not take long for him to be taken back to the mental hospital.

3.5.1 Women, Theatre and the Third Mental Hospital Encounter

Coelho was taken to the mental hospital for the third time and when he came out again decided that this had been his last stay in mental hospital (Coelho, 1998b, p. 25). He also decided that he would at some time in his life write a book about his experiences, which he did in the novel “Veronika decides to die” in 1998 (Coelho, 2000), although he had promised his parents not to talk about his stays in the mental hospital (Arias, 2001).

After the third time in the asylum, Coelho again went through various emotional states, finally ending up smashing and breaking everything in his room in his parents’ house. Coelho’s parents called the doctor of the clinic but he could not be found and the clinic sent another doctor, who refused to take Coelho back to hospital again and rather suggested that he should attend therapeutic lessons twice a week. Coelho was surprised and accepted this offer.

After this incident, peace returned to the Coelho’s household (Morais, 2009, p. 155). Coelho decided to confront his madness and to stand on his own 2 ft (Arias, 2001, p. 41). Years later he emphasised that the doctor had saved him, “because I’d reached the edge of real madness, and the worst was that I’d accepted it, resigned myself to it” (Arias, 2001, p. 41).

One year later, in 1968, Coelho produced his own first play for the theatre he used to play in himself (Morais, 2009, p. 157). His girlfriend, Fabiola, sponsored the production of “Peter Pan” and helped to promote the play. The play was sold out and

all the investments were finally paid off. It was a great success for Paolo; however, his greatest dream remained the same: to “be a great writer” (Morais, 2009, p. 157). However, in the meantime he had to go on working in the theatre to live and soon became a member of the Brazilian Society of Theatre Writers.

In 1969, he met Vera Prnjatovic Richter. She watched him when he acted in “A widow but honest”. She became his girlfriend, although she was 11 years older.

At the time, Coelho was still torn apart by his urgent wish to become a writer, to be someone who was recognised and successful. He even seemed to be obsessed to be ‘someone’ (Morais, 2009, p. 162) and at the same time, he was very vulnerable in terms of how to deal with negative criticism, with which he found hard to accept (Morais, 2009, p. 163). This challenge to deal with criticism would remain for his entire life (Morais, 2009, p. 163).

3.5.2 Drugs and the Occult

In the 1970s, Coelho started consuming cannabis and marijuana and often started to live in his own world, free from parental control. His success with his theatre play production continued and provided him with more recognition than the writing (Morais, 2009, p. 173). However, he became angry when he realised that his new play was only listed second and did not win the first prize award.

Around his 23rd birthday, Coelho was still holding onto his dream of becoming a world-wide known writer and that seemed to be what kept him in the world, besides taking drugs. However, he was not successful in the short story competitions he was entering and he felt heart-broken (Morais, 2009, p. 180).

At the time, Coelho was introduced to the occult, witchcraft and satanism and he was convinced that in life there are no coincidences (Arias, 2001). He read many books on witchcraft and satanic topics and felt that he was “a magician preparing for his dawn” (Morais, 2009, p. 181). He separated from Vera and fell in love with a new girl called Christina, to whom he wrote 44 letters from the US, where he travelled for 6 weeks with his grandparents, which was a gift from his mother, a trip that took him away from the oppressing Brazilian dictatorship. He realised that he did not speak English well enough to survive in the US and started to learn English.

In 1971, back in Brazil, Coelho decided to leave the law school that he had joined a year before and take theatre courses. Only a few weeks later another article that he had submitted was rejected. He was tormented for days, but still dreamed of becoming a writer (Morais, 2009, p. 197). He believed that his good fortune had not yet turned up. At this point, Coelho became deeply involved in witchcraft.

During the same year, his grandfather died and Coelho struggled a lot with his death and accepting that his was not around anymore. He felt his grandfather was the only family member who had respected and accepted his “strange friends” (Morais, 2009, p. 198). Coelho felt deeply hurt by this loss, particularly since he considered his grandfather as a second father with whom he had an even closer relationship than with his real father (Arias, 2001).

At the end of 1971, Coelho met Gisa, whom he married several weeks after they first met. Gisa fell pregnant shortly afterwards, which drove Coelho into a deep crisis and he convinced her to go for an abortion from which she did not recover emotionally. She tried to commit suicide and he encouraged her to proceed. However, she survived. Coelho became obsessed with sects and tried various rituals to apply practical magic, such as calling the wind to blow or to break an ashtray with thoughts. Gisa also became part of these rituals. Coelho was introduced to Raul Seixas, who was working as a music producer. When Coelho introduced Raul to the occult, he was fascinated and the two of them start working together. In 1973, Raul and Coelho produced songs, Raul making the music, Coelho writing the texts on black magic, after he had turned a theatre course into a black magic workshop at the university (Morais, 2009, p. 214).

When he turned 25, Coelho was highly frustrated that he was still an unknown person and not yet a famous writer. He decided to make a pact with the devil, whom he called the “Prince of Darkness” (Morais, 2009, p. 221). He decided to promise the devil his soul if he made all his dreams come true. Not even an hour later, Coelho cancelled his pact with the devil and tried to overcome the dark temptations (Morais, 2009, p. 222).

Coelho continued writing and noted down many ideas for books, plays and essays. However, something seemed to be missing, such as inclination or inspiration (Morais, 2009, p. 201). He started working at a magazine and went on a trip to Europe in 1972 together with his mother and his grandmother. When he returned he entered a creative phase and 1973 was a successful year for him. He published his first book, called “Theatre in education”, engaged with the devil and earned large amounts of money through the success of Raul’s music and his song texts. Only 1 year later he bought an apartment in Rua Voluntarios da Patria in Botafogo together with Gisa (Morais, 2009).

Coelho had by that time been involved in black magic for 2 years and had developed an increased interest in satanism. He had joined and was involved in satanic sects and in 1974 he recognised the presence of the Evil around him, recognising a strange phenomenon in his apartment, which appeared to him as a black cloud (Arias, 2001, p. 118). He was later told that this was an initial phenomenon (Arias, 2001, p. 121) in the circle of the satanic sect he had joined. He panicked. During an interview with Arias (2001, p. 119) Coelho stated: “And, at that moment, all my childish religious beliefs came back to me.”

Coelho felt he was going to die and shortly afterwards left the sect, turning to the Lord (Arias, 2001, p. 120). In 2001, Coelho emphasised that he believed that a demon existed who was a fallen angel and the left hand of God on the one hand, and a demon that was “the product of the collective unconscious which personifies it” on the other hand (Arias, 2001, p. 123).

3.5.3 *Kidnapped and Tortured*

In 1974, Coelho and his wife, Gisa, were kidnapped by a paramilitary group in Rio de Janeiro. They were jailed and tortured for several days. He felt that it would be the end of his life, but they were released after a few days (Coelho, 2006, p. 103). Gisa suffered from paranoia and left Coelho. She was shocked that Coelho did not respond to her pleas to talk to him while they were held hostage. Coelho had been in the same room; however, he had been too scared to respond to her request. After they had been released she told Coelho not to mention her name ever again in his entire life (Morais, 2009).

Only a few months later, Coelho left for New York, together with Raul. After his return, their new song became a great hit and Coelho was hired to become a consultant. He became quite rich from success with music texts and his new job. However, on an emotional level, Coelho suffered from deep insecurity, which was combined with feelings of persecution and rejection that emerged particularly after his imprisonment. He was occupied by fear, problems, solitude, despair, paranoia and alienation (Morais, 2009, pp. 275–276).

In May 1975 he paid for a mass of thanksgiving to be celebrated at the church St Joseph, his protector (Morais, 2009, p. 276). During the same year he worked creatively with Raul on a new album and became engaged to a young woman called Eneida for 40 days, before he married Cissa in 1976. After less than a year she asked for a divorce, while Coelho and Raul published their fifth LP and Coelho was strongly involved in his dual professional career of lyricist on the one hand and Philips executive on the other hand.

3.6 The Thirties (1977–1986)

In 1977 Coelho decided to move to London together with Cissa and only a year later he started writing songs for all important Brazilian song writers.

3.6.1 *Nhá Chica*

In 1978, Coelho, for the first time, made contact with Nhá Chica, a poor woman who had dedicated her whole life to the poor and the building of a church in Brazil. After he had visited the place of Nhá Chica, Coelho witnessed a fatal accident in which many people died right in front of him. At that moment, he returned to spirituality; he returned to his dreams and his spiritual search for literature and a peaceful heart and his life, which he felt was the result of a miracle (Coelho, 2006, p. 135). He believed that Nhá Chica had saved him from becoming a victim in this car accident and he connected his dream of becoming a writer directly to Nhá Chica: if

he became a recognised and successful writer he would come back to Nhá Chica's church when he was 50 years old to thank her. That was what he did (Coelho, 2006, p. 136).

3.6.2 Cristina and Christian Belief

The year 1979 was again a very moving one for Coelho. He split up with Cissa, moved his professional career from Philips to CBS and met Cristina Oiticica at a family Christmas party. He fell in love with her and she was the next important woman in his life. The two did not get married, but they celebrated a blessing of the partnership with their parents in 1980.²

When Coelho met Cristina he was still involved in satanic thoughts and only Cristina helped him to overcome this chapter in his life completely through her strong Christian belief (Arias, 2001, p. 91). Cristina's influence was highly positive in terms of the revitalisation of Coelho's Christian belief (Morais, 2009, pp. 303).

In 1981, Cristina and Coelho started their new career together. Together they promoted their work in leaflets. Cristina, who was an artist and painter, started painting intensely, while Coelho was invited to take part in television shows. However, 1981 was also defined by travelling. Coelho and Cristina travelled to Madrid for 8 months and afterwards moved on to London. In 1982 they kept travelling and visited Vienna, Budapest, Prague, Romania and Bonn. Travelling became one of their common passions and their travels took them to many different places. One of the places they visited during their travels in 1982 was the former concentration camp in Dachau.

3.6.3 Dachau and RAM Practices

For Coelho, 1982 was the year of the "birth of the writer". When Coelho visited the concentration camp, Dachau, he felt he needed to become a writer while hearing the bells of a church tolling (Arias, 2001, p. 141). Coelho saw "someone", whom he later described as an apparition, and heard a voice that soon disappeared (Arias, 2001, p. 141). This key situation occurred shortly after he made promises to the infant Jesus of Prague, in Prague, to return to him, in case he even became a writer. However, Coelho was repeatedly tortured by his feelings of fear, solitude and torture.

Shortly after the visit to Dachau, Coelho and Cristina visited Amsterdam where he met a man in a café. He felt that this man was following him and that he had seen him before in the concentration camp in Dachau.

²Paulo Coelho and Cristina do not get married, but Coelho often refers to her as his wife. Therefore, in this study, she is also referred to as his wife or life partner.

Coelho talked to the man in the café and found that he had not visited Dachau. The man's explanation was, however, that his appearance to Coelho in Dachau might have been an "astral projection" (Morais, 2009, p. 320). During the talk in the café the man, who was called Jean, offered Coelho the possibility of becoming his master on a spiritual journey. This man is repeatedly referred to in many of the books Coelho wrote later in his life as "the Master", "M", "J" or "Jean". From the day in the café onwards, Jean became a very important part of Coelho's life and his personal and spiritual development. He was an active member of the old and mysterious Catholic religious order called RAM (Morais, 2009). In his earthly life, Jean was French and of Jewish origin, working as an executive for the Dutch multinational Philips in Paris.

RAM stands for Regnum Agnus Mundi, which is translated as "Lamb of the Kingdom of the World – or Rigour, Adoration and Mercy" (Morais, 2009, p. 321). RAM is a practice of the sacred; it is a small Catholic order and in 2001 had only four disciples (Arias, 2001, p. 145). RAM is a spiritual tradition that is about 500 years old and was born in the heart of the Catholic Church. It is known as the "feminine way" and aims at revealing the feminine side of the personality of a person (Arias, 2001, p. 93). The RAM tradition is about developing one's "strength of will, based on discipline and personal effort – on the feminine way you especially develop compassion, meditation, approaching the roots of life and the earth" (Arias, 2001, p. 95). In this order, tradition and symbolic language are passed down through oral traditions (Arias, 2001, p. 145).

Through RAM, Coelho embarked on a spiritual and magical journey – being still highly fascinated by the magical world – within the RAM tradition, accepting Jean as his master. With this agreement, Coelho committed himself to Jean's instructions without argument.

Coelho's first task was to drive to Oslo in Norway and visit a certain museum, where he met a blond woman in a museum who gave him a ring with a snake devouring its own tail. She then performed a certain ritual with him. Coelho felt reenergised and flooded by new spiritual energy, as if the blockages of his energy had been dissolved (Morais, 2009, p. 323).

After another 3 months in Amsterdam, Coelho and Christina travelled to Portugal and then back to Brazil. Only back in Brazil, Coelho started his initiation tasks with Jean. He received so-called "ordeals" that were to be admitted to RAM by call or by letter. His first task was to fill a glass that had never been used for water before with water, place it on a table, read a randomly selected piece from the New Testament and sign it with the date. The reading was followed by the drinking of the water. This ritual continued for 6 months and was followed by many more rituals during subsequent years (Arias, 2001; Morais, 2009).

3.6.4 Early Writings and Becoming Master of RAM

In 1982 Coelho and Cristina were building up their own enterprise and aimed at promoting and publishing Coelho's first edited book, "Arquivos do inferno", which included a foreword by Andy Warhol. During the same year, Coelho submitted

pieces to a poetry competition and compiled anthologies, gave interviews and released a book on vampirism, including a chapter that had been published under his name, but had been written by his friend and colleague, Tony Buddha (Morais, 2009, pp. 336–337).

His increased writing output and following of his dream of becoming a famous writer were accompanied by his spiritual development according to RAM practices. In 1986, Coelho was admitted as a Master of RAM, but failed during the last and final ritual (Morais, 2009, pp. 340–341). He was devastated by his failure. In the same year, 1986, Cristina bought tickets to Madrid to regain the sword – the symbol of being a Master of RAM. Coelho invited Toninho Buda (also referred to as Tony Buddha) to work for him as a “slave” without payment during the time in Madrid. Although Coelho offered terrible working conditions to his former friend, he accepted and travelled with Coelho (Morais, 2009). Coelho did not have empathy with him when Tony discovered that he had been trapped in slavery working conditions. Coelho treated him badly, not as a friend at all (Morais, 2009).

Only a little later, Coelho was allowed to become the Master of Magus and celebrated his new initiation into the RAM. However, soon after that he experienced deep depression when he realised that he was “still not an established writer” (Morais, 2009, p. 349). Coelho experienced a strong and enduring time of depression from October to December 1986, until he found a pigeon feather in a park in Spain, which he interpreted as a sign from God to start writing. During the same month of December he started writing before returning to Brazil (Morais, 2009). He started writing the book “The pilgrimage”, which described his experiences on the Road to Santiago and later became a world-wide bestseller. The spiritual journey on the Road to Santiago became Coelho’s way to regain his sword, become a master of RAM and finally become a famous and established writer.

3.6.5 “*I am a Magus*”

During the following years, Coelho described himself repeatedly in public as a magus, among others in an interview with Juan Arias: “Yes, I am a magus, but so is everyone who knows how to read the hidden language of things in pursuit of their personal destiny” (Arias, 2001, p. xix). He enjoyed interpreting the wonders of the day as “omens” and saw humanity to “veer towards the search for spirituality” (Arias, 2001, p. 7). To Coelho, the recognition of “omens” and signs for the choice of the right way happens through three stages, which are characterised by firstly, not believing in anything, secondly, thinking that one is mistaken, and thirdly, believing that everything is an omen.

Finally, when an omen crosses the path repeatedly, one realises that “you are facing a language that goes beyond reality” (Arias, 2001, p. 8). For Coelho, the French Saint Theresa was such an omen in his life (Arias, 2001, p. 8).

3.6.6 *The Road to Santiago – A Major Life Change*

The Road to Santiago changed Coelho's life radically at the age of 36 (Coelho, 1987). The pilgrimage became his awakening to becoming a writer. In an interview with Juan Arias (2001) he stated:

In every era men have searched for the unknown, for what is evident, tangible and material. They've searched in thousands of ways, sometimes making mistakes, in fits and starts, but the best men and women have always been pilgrims in search of the unknown. (p. 17)

For Coelho, the search for the unknown is a search for the infinite (Arias, 2001, p. 19) which – when carried out by the energy of the spirit and without being oppressed by Cartesian logic – can conclude in “creating a critical mass able to change things” (Arias, 2001, p. 20). Since his pilgrimage, Coelho has believed that each and every person is a master, a warrior of light, a new spiritual adventurer and enthusiast (Arias, 2001, p. 21). He experienced a spiritual awakening and felt inspired to write the book, “The pilgrimage” (Coelho, 1987), which is referred to in Sect. 8.3.

3.7 The Forties (1987–1996)

Coelho's life from 1987 to 1996 was characterized by him promoting his own work. He employed an agent, Monica, to promote his and Cristina's art work in Brazil and abroad. At the same time, Coelho, Cristina and their friends handed out leaflets at parties or night bars to promote their work. The promotion resulted in television shows and publicity (Morais, 2009).

Some projects, such as the “mystery travel project” – which was a spiritual package holiday – failed (Morais, 2009), but Coelho simply continued promoting himself. One strategy that really worked for him was revealing himself as a magus and as being able to “make it rain”. This marketing strategy moved him to new television shows and articles in newspapers (Morais, 2009).

3.7.1 *The Pilgrimage (1987)*

The first of Coelho's successful and famous books, “The pilgrimage” (2003), was published in 1987. In “The pilgrimage”, Coelho describes in an autobiographical way his experiences of travelling the Road to Santiago. The book tells his personal and spiritual journey on the Road to Santiago de Compostela, an old road for pilgrims. He describes his experiences, his thoughts, his emotions and personal spiritual development while walking on this road that runs through parts of France and Spain.

When Coelho started his journey he had just failed to become a master of the RAM practices and was therefore in search of his sword, a symbol of mastery in the tradition and belief of RAM. The sword had been hidden by his spiritual master, somewhere along the Road to Santiago. Coelho (2003a) described his personal development in terms of spirituality, spiritual insights and beliefs and how he was guided through the pilgrimage by his guide, Petrus. He shared with Coelho his ideas on God, spirituality, life and death, as well as on the RAM practices. Along the road Coelho practised ten exercises, which he had been given by his guide and which he presented in his book. He practised these meditative and spiritual exercises to develop himself spiritually and find his purpose and path in life. These exercises dealt with his personal development and spiritual growth, time, his change of mind and mindset, as well as the transition from negative towards positive thoughts and attitudes. He explored new ways of positive thinking, as well as the importance of intuition (Coelho, 2003a). However, Coelho also learnt exercises to gain experience with trance and meditative states of being to explore the unconsciousness even more than he had done before through his long walk to mastery. During his journey he confronted his personal death, and got to know the day of his death.

Coelho describes himself as fully aware and conscious about death and as a result he does not invest in accumulating riches, but rather “in life itself” (Arias, 2001, p. 59) by paying attention, doing things well, not leaving anything until the next day that can be done today and not entertaining feelings of guilt (Arias, 2001, p. 60).

Right at the beginning of the journey, Coelho was taught the messenger ritual, which connected him to the “messenger”, an inner voice that helped him to make decisions and connected him to himself and the world in a different way, by using his unconsciousness. When Coelho started the journey, he had already undergone many years of RAM training, practices and traditions. He had already experienced magic and magical aspects in his own life (Coelho, 2003a, p. 23) and had gained a certain view on spiritual concepts and the devil (Coelho, 2003a, p. 22), which he revised throughout his journey.

He learnt the importance of practising the RAM practices from a different perspective, by including breathing exercises and meditative states of being. The last steps to regain his sword were understanding of how to deal with his own shadow, with the sides of the shadow, listening to nature, and dance exercises that carried him into a certain dance state.

To deal with burdens that he had created in his life, Coelho (2003a, pp. 26–27) learnt the seed exercise, which at a certain point made him feel “reborn” (Coelho, 2003a, p. 29) and able to enjoy the beauty of life “up there” and the state of rebirth and reincarnation into a new spiritual thinking (Coelho, 2003a, p. 29) that would later, after the end of the journey, initiate the writing of his first broadly recognised book.

Coelho developed the idea that his search for the sword was a spiritual development that included ecstatic states, doubts and the training to be able never to lose sight of the objective, of the personal aim and dream for which an individual strives in his/her life (Coelho, 2003a, p. 34). Coelho learnt that the sight of the objective

needed to be balanced with the desire to arrive at the goal and the attention that needed to be paid to the walk on the road to Santiago (Coelho, 2009, p. 36). On the way, Coelho also learnt how to get pleasure from a speed he was not used to, to let a new person grow inside him (Coelho, 2003a).

The book became a world-wide success and Coelho was motivated to move on with his career as a writer. After having published his first autobiographical book, Coelho went on a trip to Cairo, in Egypt, with Claudia, a friend, and Paula, Cristina's mother. One evening, he saw an apparition in the desert, a lady with a pot of clay on her shoulder (Morais, 2009, p. 357). As the shape approached Coelho, it faded away and disappeared as mysteriously as it had come. The trip to Egypt inspired him to write the book "The alchemist". Coelho saw himself as a writer and therefore as a catalyst for the experiences of others (Arias, 2001, p. 22). When he returned to Brazil, he read in the newspaper that his book, "The pilgrimage", was on the week's best-seller list. However, shortly afterwards he was disappointed about not being nominated for the prize awarded by the Ministry of Education in Brazil. He was so disappointed that he seriously considered stopping to write (Morais, 2009, p. 357).

During 1988, Coelho asked the I-Ching, the Chinese oracle, how to sell his next book 100,000 times. The oracle told him that "The great man brings good luck." (Morais, 2009, p. 358).

In 1988, "The alchemist" was released and 40,000 copies of "The pilgrimage" were sold (Morais, 2009). Coelho focused on a strong market strategy and developed and distributed leaflets about "The alchemist" together with Cristina and some friends (Morais, 2009).

3.7.2 *The Alchemist (1988)*

After his trip to Egypt, Coelho wrote "The alchemist". He saw alchemy as the soul of the world or of Jung's collective unconscious, where a person connects with everything that is (Arias, 2001, p. 148). In the published interview with Arias (2001), Coelho stated that he was the character of the shepherd in "The alchemist" (Arias, 2001, p. 172): "In reality, I am all the characters in my books. The only person I am not is the alchemist."

Coelho emphasised that he was the shepherd in "The alchemist", the crystal merchant and even Fatima (Arias, 2001, p. 172). Coelho said that in "Beside the River Piedra I sat down and wept", he was the main character called Pilar (Arias, 2001, p. 182). Coelho emphasised that in all the other books he was the main character, even in "Brida" (Arias, 2001, p. 173). He further explained that in "The Valkyries" and in "The pilgrimage" he described himself. Therefore, he saw his books not as fiction, but as literary narratives based on his own experiences that are autobiographic in nature. They are autobiographical narratives, stories that tell parts of Coelho's life, as much such as "Veronica decides to die" tells the story of Coelho's time in the mental hospital.

“The alchemist” (Coelho, 2002b) is an allegorical novel about a young Andalusian shepherd called Santiago who starts a journey to Egypt, after having had a recurring dream of finding a treasure there. Accepting the dream as prophetic, the shepherd gets advice from a Romani woman in a nearby town to travel to Egypt to find a treasure in the Pyramids.

On his journey, Santiago, meets a king who tells him about familiarising himself with his “Personal Legend”, which is the core theme of the book (Coelho, 2002b, p. 30): “Because here is a force that wants you to realize your Personal Legend; it whets your appetite with a taste of success.”

The book is about the realization of one’s destiny and a person’s only obligation. It is about love and about the realization that true love does not stop a person from realizing his/her dreams and his/her heart’s desire. At the same time, the heart’s desire will always be supported by the universe (Coelho, 2002b, pp. 23–24): “Whoever you are, or whatever it is that you do, when you want something, all the universe conspires in helping you to achieve it.”

Twenty-five years after “The alchemist” was first published, Coelho (2014d) explained in his blog that the universe is an:

echo of our desires, regardless of whether they are constructive or destructive ones. One has to also keep in mind the difference between a dream and an obsession. I mention personal legend in *The Alchemist*, and I wrote a book about obsession, *The Zahir*. When you follow your personal legend, you walk your path and learn from it. The objective doesn’t blind you to the road that takes you there. On the other hand, obsession is what prevents you from admiring the teachings of life. It’s like trying to get to the objective without passing through the challenges. I realized that despite the fear and the bruises of life, one has to keep on fighting for one’s dream. As Borges said in his writings “there is no other virtue than being brave”. And one has to understand that being brave is not the absence of fear but rather the strength to keep on going forward despite the fear.

However, the book is not only about the dream and its realization, but also about faith and its expression, by using two major themes of mythology, the hero’s journey and the spiritual quest to find out about his true nature of being (Kremenik, 1996). It is about a positive outlook on life and a life’s journey on which Coelho takes the reader along by emphasising that if the reader takes the same journey as Santiago, humankind will become better and the world will become a better place (Kremenik, 1996). Coelho (2002b, p. 10), in the form of the shepherd, states: “I couldn’t have found God in the seminary, he thought, as he looked at the sunrise.”

Coelho emphasises nature and the simple approach to life, which he embraces. Yuliani (2009) highlights that the story describes the personality development of the shepherd boy during his hunt for the treasure: in the beginning the main character is doubtful, pessimistic and insecure, but at the end of the story he has changed into an optimistic person who is enlightened, optimistic and confident. Coelho describes his personal way of moving from the Jesuit seminary towards a more spiritual and optimistic approach to God and his faith. Hart (2004) emphasises that the story of Paulo Coelho is fundamentally based on cultural hybridity, on magical realism and a magical language, which catches the reader’s intention while using a “literary cliché expertly” (Hart, 2004, p. 304) and addressing what humans long for.

In 1988, Coelho received a new task from Jean, his master, which needed to be fulfilled: he was asked to spend 40 days with Cristina in the Californian Mojave Desert, practising the spiritual St Ignatius Loyola exercises. These spiritual exercises aim at discerning the soul and consist of meditations, prayers and contemplative practices, which are usually conducted within a 30-day period and based on the teachings of a Catholic saint who wanted to help people to deepen their relationship with God (The Autograph, 1914). The time in the desert in which Coelho conducted the exercises of St Ignatius led to the writing of the book “The Valkyries” (Coelho, 1992).

In 1989 Coelho moved to a new publisher, the Edition Rocco, and his books entered best-selling lists in different countries. His new agent, Monica, moved to Spain and started promoting his books in Europe. Coelho started becoming famous and rich through publishing his books (Aries, 2001; Morais, 2009).

Coelho had to follow a new task that he was given by his master, Jean. He was advised to travel the “Road to Rome” for 2 months. Coelho started his journey in Languedoc and travelled at the edge of the Pyrenees. While walking through the Pyrenees, Coelho lost his track and could not find the way back. He imagined how it would be if someone were to find his dead corpse the following summer on the mountainside. However, he finally found a path into a small mountain village and was saved (Coelho, 2006, p. 103). He travelled for a week with his agent, Monica, and reinforced his commitment to “follow your dream approach”. While Coelho was travelling, his friend and former counterpart, Raul Seixas, died on 21 August 1989. Coelho was shocked and sad (Morais, 2009). During this time, Coelho had an extraordinary spiritual experience. He met his guardian angel twice within 24 h and could have one wish fulfilled. He wished that his books would be read (Morais, 2009). On the same trip, Coelho met a young woman at the “ritual of fire”. This young woman would later become the main character of the book “Brida”.

After his trip on the Road to Rome, Coelho returned to Brazil and wrote the novel “Brida” in just 2 weeks. The book was printed and published in 1990 by Edition Rocco, with 100,000 copies in print for the first edition. The book was highly criticised, but Coelho stated: “my success is a ‘divine gift’” (Morais, 2009, p. 376).

3.7.3 *Brida (1990)*

The book “Brida” (Coelho, 1990) refers to Coelho’s experience with RAM and the feminine side of his personality. While walking the Road to Rome, Coelho met a woman whose experiences were close to his own magical and spiritual path. He described his personal and their common experiences in “Brida”. Coelho highlighted: “In some way, Brida is that woman I was looking for inside myself” (Arias, 2001, p. 93). To extend the feminine way, a person needs to pay attention to his/her intuition and her/his dreams, since dreams might be ancestrally linked to the feminine soul (Arias, 2001, p. 94). In “Brida” (Coelho, 1990) described the spiritual

development of a woman seeking answers regarding life. She travelled on her journey saying, “I would like to learn magic” (Coelho, 1990, p. 10). The author described Brida’s spiritual journey by introducing a female master, called Wicca, who finally initiated her into the moon tradition. Besides that, Brida learnt parts of the sun tradition through a wizard she met in the nearby forest in Ireland, who finally turned out to be one of her soulmates and one of her lost soul parts from former incarnations. Coelho presented in Brida parts of his own way of initiation towards the traditions of RAM. It was about learning to see and accept the bridge between the visible and the invisible world (Coelho, 1990, p. 201) and about taking risks in life to walk the way a person is supposed to walk (Coelho, 1990, p. 203).

In the book, Coelho (1990) described many rituals of the RAM practices, He started with a warning that in “The pilgrimage” (Coelho, 1987) he had changed two spiritual exercises to awareness exercises and that his master had told him that one is never allowed to change the tradition of the RAM practices. At the same time, Coelho warned his readers not to engage in these exercises without the guidance of a master (Coelho, 1990, Warning).

The core topics that are closely related to the search for spiritual fulfilment are the splitting of the soul across lifetimes and the search for the other part of the soul. The finding of this lost part requires an individual to go on a (spiritual) journey. Each incarnation gives opportunities to the individual to meet one of the lost parts at least once in a lifetime (Coelho, 1990, p. 37). However, the book also describes the search for and the way to God through “the heart” and through happiness (Coelho, 1990, p. 217). It thereby touches on many of Coelho’s life topics and in the end refers to the topic of accepting to become a warrior of the good fight (Coelho, 1990, p. 240), finding and living life’s dream (Coelho, 1990, p. 237). It is also about the recognition and acceptance of the connection of the body and the soul (Coelho, 1990, p. 224). In addition, it is a book about love that brings freedom and about the fact that love can only exist when it is set free (Coelho, 1990, p. 224).

“Brida” (Coelho, 1990) is a fable and at the same time a fairytale that deals with love, self-discovery, commitment, passion and spirituality. It is a story about the “spiritual side of erotic and the erotic side of spirituality.” (Brida, 1990, cover), but it is also just about following a female approach of the moon tradition, which is based on female intuition and change, as well as the male approach to spirituality that is seen in gaining knowledge. In the book, Coelho describes the God that is found in nature, in cosmic resonances and happiness and in love and he describes it as a God that integrates a female and a male side. The story explains that each and every person is born with a special gift, a special talent, that needs to be searched for and then applied in “God’s garden” to make life meaningful (Coelho, 1990, p. 57).

3.7.4 *The Valkyries (1992)*

Shortly after the publication of Brida, Coelho wrote an “evil” book and destroyed it before it was ever been read by anyone (Morais, 2009). In 1991 he published “The supreme gift”, which reached the best-selling lists and was followed by the

publication of “The Valkyries” in 1992. “The Valkyries” (1992) sold over 60,000 copies in the first 24 h, entered many best-selling lists across diverse countries and, like “Brida” (1990), was highly criticised by Paulo Coelho’s critics.

“The Valkyries” deals with Coelho’s experiences in the Californian desert, again an autobiographical experience. The book starts with a description of a true and real situation that Coelho experienced in Rio with his master, Jean, when handing him the manuscript of “The alchemist” (1988), which he had just written and which he had dedicated to his master. During the talk with Jean in Rio, Coelho confessed: “I’ve seen my dreams fall apart just when I seemed about to achieve them.” J. responded lyrically to Coelho’s confession and his question on how to resolve the destructive behavioural pattern. Jean responded in the book (Coelho, 1992):

And each man kills the thing he loves,
By all let this be heard,
Some do it with a bitter look,
Some with a flattering word,
The coward does it with a kiss,
The brave man with a sword. (p. 9)

To break “the curse” of destroying his dreams, Jean sent Coelho on a journey into the Californian desert, to find his guardian angel and complete the task (Coelho, 1992, p. 9). Shortly after the meeting with Jean, Coelho and Cristina left for a 40-day trip into the Californian Mojave Desert. In the book, “The Valkyries”, Coelho describes their adventures and metaphysical experiences, combining this with dramatic story-telling elements, magic rituals and a love story (Coelho, 1992).

The book is called “The Valkyries” (“Chooser of the slain”), who are female war-like virgins riding on horses with helmets and spears while deciding the death of warriors on the battlefields. The Valkyries, the dark angels, then take the dead either to Valhalla, a place for the dead that is ruled by the god Odin, or to the goddess Freya’s afterlife field, Folkvangr (Davidson, 1990). The myths of the Valkyries as female Viking warriors are founded in Norse mythology, which is centred in a North Germanic language that was spoken by Scandinavian inhabitants and the inhabitants of their overseas settlements during the Viking Age (Orchard, 1998).

During the search for his guardian angel in California, Coelho and Cristina got to know a young man who lived in a trailer and the Valkyries, a group of eight young women who roamed the desert on motorcycles. The group was led by Valhalla, a female warrior, who belonged to the same spiritual tradition as Coelho.

The book is a spiritual adventure, more (auto-)biographical than fictional, and deals, as many of Coelho’s other books, with the courage of the adventurer, the journey, the struggle, the hope and desperation. It is based on Christianity, spiritual Christian concepts and magic rituals. Coelho concludes at the end of the book that the search for the guardian angel is important and easy when a person keeps the eyes open. Again, the topic of following the dream is a recurring one in this book (Coelho, 1992):

“Have courage.”
Valhalla’s voice rang out clearly and strongly.

“Open your heart, and listen to what your dreams tell you. Follow those dreams, because only a person who is not ashamed can manifest the glory of God.” (p. 138)

Following the dream is on the one hand the manifestation of the glory of God, and on the other hand a social responsibility of individuals to set an example for the good (Coelho, 1992, p. 205): “The angel said that all the world needed was an example. People who were capable of following their dreams and of fighting for their ideas.”

Throughout the book, Coelho’s struggle to fight challenges, break a pact, accept forgiveness and feel alive by facing life at its best and speaking to the guardian angel who shows him the right path are described.

In the year of the book’s publication, 1992, five of Coelho’s books were on best-selling lists across the world simultaneously. Although he is often harshly criticised, Coelho’s success is unstoppable (Morais, 2009, p. 386): “The pilgrimage” and “The alchemist” were published in the US and in 1993 the publication of his books expanded to France. Monica, his manager and friend, sold the rights to Coelho’s books in 16 languages and countries and Coelho entered the Guinness Book of Records in the same year (Morais, 2009).

In the same year, Coelho’s mother died of complications of Alzheimer’s disease while he was in Canada. He did not attend her funeral because of his travels in Canada. In an interview in 2005 Coelho stated that his father was still alive, following his career (Day, 2005).

3.7.5 *By the River Piedro I Sat Down and Wept (1994)*

The year 1994 was another highly successful year: Coelho published “By the River Piedro I sat down and wept”, which sold 70,000 copies within the first day. The book is well recognised in France. The year 1994 marked the start of world fame and Coelho gained self-confidence and rejected the strong criticism of him in Brazil (Morais, 2009). “By the River Piedro I sat down and wept” (Coelho, 1996) also gained positive recognition from the clergy because of its symbols of Catholicism, rituals and magical themes. However, the book was torn apart by the Brazilian press and Coelho’s critics (Morais, 2009).

“In “By the River Piedro I sat down and wept” Coelho (1996 in English translation) deals with the story of a young woman who falls in love with a young man. However, he leaves the little town and becomes a charismatic, spiritual leader who has turned to religion as a refuge from his inner conflicts. After 11 years, he writes her a letter and the woman leaves her home town and goes on a journey through the French Pyrenees to discover the depth of his spiritual gifts.

In the author’s note, Coelho (1996, p. viii) highlights – while telling a story about a missionary and his contact with three Aztec priests on an island – that “God speaks all languages”. With this story, Coelho (1996, p. viii) highlights that human beings often do not recognise that they are “in the midst of the extraordinary”. He (1996)

points out that traditional religious practices are important to share communal experiences of adoration and prayer with others. However, it should not be forgotten that “spirituality is above all a practical experience of love” (Coelho, 1996, p. viii) and the “more we love, the closer we come to spiritual experience” (Coelho, 1996, p. ix). The two main characters in the book, Pilar and her companion, are fictitious and are in dialogue about many conflicts human beings encounter in the search for love (Coelho, 1996).

The book shows the spiritual development of Pilar’s companion and her struggle about her personal change while travelling with him. The book describes her friend as a spiritual master who can do magic, perform miracles (Coelho, 1996, p. 30) and dives into the magic moments of life to experience it fully (Coelho, 1996, p. 8). Through their dialogues, the main characters explore topics of how God expresses himself in nature and daily routines (Coelho, 1996, p. 8), the magic moments that people experience in daily routines as soon as they are mindful (Coelho, 1996, p. 8), the importance of joy, life as a transition, the recognition of miracles that God planted in the days and the “moment when all the power of the stars becomes a part of us and enables us to perform miracles” (Coelho, 1996, p. 8). However, the book also touches on the feminine side of religion and the masculine side of the dogmas, the laws and the male priests, while Pilar’s friend believes “in the feminine side of God” (Coelho, 1996, p. 12), which is represented in the moon and expressed in the water (Coelho, 1996, pp. 14–16).

One of the main topics of the book is love and that love is always connected to losing control (Coelho, 1996, p. 37), about turning the world upside down (Coelho, 1996, p. 47). It is also about the challenge to live the dream of love during one’s life without giving up when one feels defeated. It is about feeling and about being surprised about the orders of life, which often take a person into the unknown, even “when we don’t want to and when we think we don’t need to” (Coelho, 1996, p. 49).

Pilar describes her movement away from her strict religious belief and religion that had been part of her life and her childhood. However, this has passed. Pilar still says prayers, but in a rather “automatic” way, without knowing whether she still believes in it (Coelho, 1996, p. 54). At the same time, her friend talks about the “other”, the individuals and the society that generally teach us that a person has to live for money-making and not for the mystery of life (Coelho, 1996, p. 56). He gives a speech about living in the moment, separating the other from life and thus opening oneself to the Divine Energy that then enables one to experience the beginning of the performance of miracles, while following one’s dream and soul’s desire, (Coelho, 1996, p. 57). The book reiterates the well-known message of Coelho that “the universe always conspires to help the dreamer” (Coelho, 1996, p. 59).

Pilar and her childhood love experience their common love as well as the suffering that is connected to loving. The book describes the two characters and their way of deciding that it is their love that is stronger than “the other” (Coelho, 1996, p. 56) and that this makes them decide to be together. They leave their former life behind and start a new life together – they start living their dream. Coelho describes the inner dialogue of Pilar between herself and the other, fighting the “good fight” to love, trust and give up control (Coelho, 1996, p. 51).

The book is not only about love, “the other” and living a dream, but also about Catholicism on the one hand and a spiritual way of believing on the other. It is about the Virgin Mary and the idea of a goddess who makes life a mystery (Coelho, 1996, p. 69). Coelho describes a ritual in the book that Pilar and her friend experience and that probably belongs to RAM practices (Coelho, 1996, pp. 109) and might also be part of his personal life. He describes Pilar’s move away from the fearful God of the church that turns into a spiritual God that loves (Coelho, 1996, p. 91). He describes Pilar’s way of dealing with her fear and overcoming these fears (Coelho, 1996, p. 99) and the taking of risks while walking on God’s path (Coelho, 1996, p. 151). The story of Pilar and her companion, the feelings, thoughts and behaviours, carry many of Paulo Coelho’s life themes that recur in his books and are viewed as autobiographical, such as the spiritual path, the dilemmas of faith and belief, the combat of fear and the fight for the common dream.

3.7.6 The Fifth Mountain (1995)

Only a few months later, in 1995, British Magazine Publishing created a new word and phenomenon called “Coelhomania”, which is referred to “Coelhisme” in the French media (Morais, 2009).

Coelho changed his publisher from Edition Rocco to Editoria Objectiva to publish his new book, “The fifth mountain”. However, he was still ridiculed and excluded by the Brazilian writers’ association and his critics (Morais, 2009). He decided to go on a trip to France to sell his new book and to hold a party with about 600 specially invited guests. That same year, Coelho published the new book “Handbook of the warrior of light” and created his personal website (Morais, 2009).

“The fifth mountain” (Coelho, 1998a) is a story about a young man called Elijah who flees his home from prosecution. The novel begins in 870 B.C. and the prophet Elijah is in his early twenties and fleeing for his life. Elijah has been ordered by God to cross the desert and take refuge in the Phoenician city of Zarephath (called Akbar by its inhabitants), because he had denounced the “false gods” in which the king’s wife believes (Coelho, 1998a, p. 32). He takes refuge with a young widow and her son in the town of Akbar, because his death has been ordered by the wife of Israel’s King Ahab.

In Akbar, Elijah is taken on by a widow who believes in the God Baal who is believed to live at the summit of the “fifth mountain”. The widow and Elijah fall in love, but do not voice their feelings. When the widow’s son dies, Elijah is accused of having brought misfortune to the woman and is sent to the fifth mountain, where he is supposed to die. However, an angel of God appears at the top of the mountain and guides Elijah to restore the widow’s son’s life (Coelho, 1998a, p. 55). Elijah saves the son’s life and soon becomes an advisor to the governor as a high priest. Soon, he is torn apart by his growing love for the widow and her son and his urgent need to return to Israel to remove the king from his throne.

However, through a political change in the area and the interest in the fertile land, the city of Akbar finds itself at the centre of a military and political maelstrom. Elijah is challenged by the political situation and 1 day he leaves the city together with the widow and her son in the direction of Israel (Coelho, 1998a, p. 151). He follows his dream to change the belief in Israel and install his belief in the one God. In the meantime, the widow dies and Elijah promises her that he will look after her son until he can follow his own path (Coelho, 1998a, p. 175). Elijah and the son go on a journey towards Israel where they meet a shepherd and his wife and decide that they need to rebuild the city of Akbar (Coelho, 1998a, p. 180): “It is not difficult to rebuild a life, just as it is not impossible to raise Akbar from its ruins.”

The shepherd speaks on (Coelho, 1998a):

If you have a path that dissatisfies you, forget it now. Imagine a new story of your life, and believe in it. Concentrate only on those moments in which you achieve what you desired, and this strength will help you to accomplish what you want (pp. 180-181).

On their way back to Akbar, Elijah is in constant conversation with God. Arriving in Akbar, the boy and Elijah are prepared to love, to kill and restore their city, which becomes the image of the widow that had died because of a misunderstanding. The boy and Elijah follow their mission (Coelho, 1998a, p. 191). Slowly, but surely, the survivors of Akbar join in their work and help tidy up the city, while Elijah is constantly in conversation with God: “But the Lord was generous and had led him to the abyss of the unavoidable, to show him that man must choose – and not accept – his fate” (p. 205).

“The fifth mountain” is again a book about Coelho’s life, his striving for his own belief and acceptance of his fate. It is a story about a man who lives to fulfil his dream and do his duty while living his life. It is a story about the doubts of a man who experiences God and his power, which leads him and guides him on the one hand and lets him be doubtful on the other hand. The story ends with Elijah’s success in freeing Israel from the “false prophets” and his return to heaven (Coelho, 1998a, p. 240).

3.8 The Fifties (1997–2006)

By 1998 many master’s and doctoral studies had been written and published about Coelho’s creative pieces throughout Brazil, as well as internationally (Martin, 2012; Mertel, 2000). In 1999 a personal interview with Paulo Coelho was published (the English version being published in 2001) by J. Arias, who described Coelho as “a man of extremes, a passionate man, accustomed to what he calls ‘the good fight’, someone who does not mind arguing, always incredibly straightforward, though never entirely sure of anything, who knows how to listen and unable to admit he could be wrong.” (Arias, 2001, xvi–xvii). In this interview, Coelho described his fundamental idea that humanity is at a cross-road, moving into the new millennium, turning to spirituality (Arias, 2001, p. 7).

At the same time Coelho started the international jet set life and already in 1998 he had received many awards and acknowledgement for his creative work (Morais,

2009, p. 408). In addition, Coelho published the book, “Veronica decides to die” (1998). From 1998 to 2000 Coelho travelled non-stop, promoting his books.

3.8.1 *Veronica Decides to Die (1998)*

In “Veronica decides to die”, Coelho (1998b) touches on different autobiographical experiences, which he reworks within this story on an autobiographical and a fictitious level. He refers to his experiences in the mental hospital, the electroshock therapy, the violence of his father and his relationship with his parents. According to Morais (2009, p. 406), Coelho once said, “Veronica is Paulo Coelho”. The book broke all sales records. In the interview with Juan Arias (2001, p. 22), Coelho highlighted that in his opinion his books were so successful because the readers experienced themselves in his books. They, therefore, felt connected, they felt that the writer experienced the same that they experienced and they felt that Coelho told a story that they, at an unconscious level, already knew. The writer was the catalyst of the experiences of the reader as well as of himself (Arias, 2001).

Coelho explained in his interview with Arias (2001) that he had promised his parents never to talk about the hospital encounters. However, by 1998 his mother had already died and his father was following the success of his books. Both parents had asked his forgiveness for what they had done to him during his youth. Coelho highlighted in various interviews that he did not feel any bitterness towards his parents and that he had forgiven them, particularly since all family members involved had suffered through it (Arias, 2001, p. 43).

The story of the book (Coelho, 2000) is based on the subjects of madness, insanity and sanity and deals with the life and death narration of a 24-year-old Slovenian woman who decides to kill herself. However, her suicide fails and she wakes up in a mental hospital, where the doctor tells her that she has only got a few days to live because of the overdose of pills she had taken to commit suicide. During the days in the hospital she falls in love with another patient, Eduardo, who suffers from schizophrenia. She realises that – having only a few days to live left – she can do whatever she wants to do and that she can be whoever she wants to be, because she has nothing to lose anymore and she is not restricted by social norms: as a patient of a mental hospital she is unlikely to be criticised and she feels free to experience all the feelings she did not allow herself to feel before, such as love and hatred (Coelho, 2000).

The book deals with the topics of identity, of the individual in society, of the social norms and values of life and death, of boredom and freedom (Yunus, 2014). At the end, it shows the reader a basic lesson: how important it is to be aware of the miracle of life, to enjoy life every day to its full and to embrace challenges and tackle them without fear. On another level, the book is critical about the traditional medical and psychological approaches to deal with suicidal individuals. It promotes a very positive and natural approach of showing patients how precious one’s life is by telling them that they have only a few days to live left (Coelho, 1998b, p. 220).

This book is thus fundamentally critical about the concepts of sanity and insanity with regard to a societal perspective, about concepts of social acceptance and unacceptability in a society. Coelho (2000) highlights:

The collective madness is called insanity. Madness is the inability to communicate your ideas. It's as if you were in a foreign country, able to see and understand everything that's going on around you, but incapable of explaining what you need to know or of being helped, because you don't understand the language they speak there. We've all felt that. And all of us, one way or another, are mad. (pp. 30–31)

The topic of madness in Coelho's personal life is connected to his parents, their worldview and their assumptions of what is acceptable and what not in the world and Brazilian society. The book talks about Veronika's parents, particularly the mother, asking question about Veronika's life purpose, her path, while not understanding what emotional devastation she is going through. The book might reflect autobiographical aspects of Coelho and his relationship with his parents and the lack of understanding between them (Coelho, 1998b, p. 25).

Budiadi (2009) highlights in her analysis that Veronika in the novel experiences problems with love and being loved, her coping strategies and inability to fulfil unfulfilled needs. However, at the end of the novel, Veronika finally succeeds in coping with her problems, fulfils her unfulfilled needs and desires and enjoys life after having freed herself from societal restrictions and family bonds. Veronika is a success story of a woman who makes her way back into life and it is at the same time Coelho's success story of being resilient.

The story has been adapted for theatre and has also been published as a DVD (Young, 2009). It is definitely one of Coelho's novels based on autobiographical data and particularly one of the key experiences in Coelho's life: his time in the asylum.

3.8.2 *The Wanderer (2007)*

Besides the bestselling book, "Veronica decides to die", Coelho published another book in 2007, including many autobiographical short stories, thoughts, ideas, experiences with his master, and fictional stories that he had published during the years 1994, 1998 and 1999 in different journals and other booklets and books. It was called "The wanderer" (Coelho, 2007).

In this text collection various life topics of Coelho are addressed. Spiritual aspects, the relationship to God, belief and faith, daily life experiences, thoughts about life and death, life's challenges and life's changes, how to deal with the ideas and expectations of other people, self-reflection and self-recognition are prominent (Coelho, 2007). However, these short stories also deal with feelings of fear, anger, surprise, happiness and courage, while always returning to the question of which path to take in life to fulfil the individual life's dream and thus meaning in life in the context of God.

In his short stories, as well as in his novels, Coelho includes syncretism and mixed doctrines with different perspectives from Christianity, Judaism, Taoism and Islam to bring spirituality and transcendence into the life of the readers (Lätzel, 2007). Lätzel (2007) emphasises that Coelho's success is a huge challenge for pastoral care and practical psychology, particularly since it deals with the leitmotif of spirituality and individuality, the question of the individual's relationship with God and the personal responsibility of the individual to be successful in life while being supported by God throughout the individual's efforts.

3.8.2.1 Where Lives God?

During this time in his life, Coelho returned to Christianity and the Catholic belief, because "it is in my cultural roots, in my blood. For me it was a personal and free choice" (Arias, 2001, p. 96).

In the story, "Where lives God", Coelho (2007, p. 15) comes to the conclusion that God lives everywhere where he is invited to be and where he is allowed in. In another story about riches and richness, Coelho (2007, p. 17) highlights that only the person who carries God within his/her soul is rich. The story of "The last pearl" (Coelho, 2007, pp. 46–47) points out that God is within every human being and that, when a person has good intentions, this positive and loving intention is mirrored in each and every soul on earth. Love and care are expressed and mirrored in God's actions, which are an echo of the actions of the individual (Coelho, 2007, p. 70). God is a reflection of the actions of the individual, holding a masculine and a feminine face and combining intuition with logic and logic with mystery and the desire for the imaginary (Arias, 2001, pp. 96–97).

In addition, Coelho (2007, p. 51) describes in the text "About writing" that a person can be close to God when he/she is writing a diary, a letter or notes. The only important thing is that the soul needs to be in the writings (Coelho, 2007, p. 52). Being a writer needs fantasy, transgression, the courage to break the rules of conventional wisdom and the reconciliation of rigour and compassion (Arias, 2001, p. 166).

In parallel to the process of writing, Coelho emphasises the importance of a strong faith. In the interview with Arias (2001, p. 24), Coelho highlighted that to him, God was an experience of faith. It was an individual and personal experience. He wrote (Coelho, 2007, p. 61): "There is faith without prayer, but there is no prayer without faith." Coelho (2007, p. 105) sees prayer as a way to create a tighter spiritual relationship with God, but it also trains the person in discipline and in recognising and training his/her will. Praying needs to be done on a regular basis, with the right measure and within the right rhythm.

According to Coelho (2007, p. 89), humans use different approaches to God, such as believing and knowing that God is around, the negation of God or doubt about whether God exists or not. However, to experience God, a person needs to slow down, to stop, to move out of oneself and to see the universe. In these moments, a person can experience the wordless love that surrounds each and every human

being and tears might appear that are neither tears of joy nor tears of sadness (Coelho, 2007, p. 89). Coelho (2007, p. 117) concludes in his text “Gott gibt es zweimal” (English “God exists twice”) that God can on the one hand be viewed as a God that exists in terms of what the teachers teach and on the other hand in terms of a God that each and every person experiences, who talks to individuals. He thus refers on the one hand to the God he has been taught of by Jesuits during his childhood, which made him turn away from God owing to this negative experience that made him lose “my childhood faith” (Arias, 2001, p. 106). On the other hand, there is the personal, the individually created God, which includes a lot of mysticism. Coelho describes that he got into creating his personal God by reciting mantras, practising yoga, meditating and including Indian cosmogony and Oriental spirituality in his life (Arias, 2001, p. 108). Through the various experiences he became an initiate to the spiritual quest (Arias, 2001, p. 108).

However, Coelho (2007, p. 19) emphasises that God’s advice is sometimes “full of wonder, but never to a person’s disadvantage” The spiritual way should not be used as a way to resolve problems, but rather as a challenge in life (Coelho, 2007, p. 101). According to Coelho (Arias, 2001, p. 17), spirituality has a long tradition and has been explored by human beings in the search of the unknown, “for what is not evident, tangible and material”, therefore humans have been pilgrims in search of the unknown. Coelho (2007, p. 71) compares it to the making of fire: if one makes fire, the smoke makes it difficult to breathe at first and tears rise up in the eyes. If the fire burns, it brings light and peace. Personal growth is an important topic for Coelho (2007, p. 102). It is reached through finding one’s standing in the world while growing from within. Love is thus part of spirituality, which is seen as expanding. When a person loves somebody, the love expands and returns to the person, even doubled (Coelho, 2007, p. 119). The spiritual way is an unknown way that lets individuals experience life with enthusiasm without feeling themselves different or privileged (Arias, 2001, p. 21).

Coelho not only writes about spirituality; he also integrates practical rituals in his life. He prays every evening at 6 o’ clock, when the sun sets and again at midnight (Arias, 2001, p. xvii). He believes in spiritual rituals, even though he does not see himself as a spiritual person writing about the so-called spiritual topics (Husband, 2008), and adjusts his life accordingly, such as waiting for the sign of the appearance of a white feather to announce the “impending birth of a new book” (Arias, 2001, p. xix).

3.8.2.2 The Soul and the Purpose

To go with the rhythm of the soul needs patience and it is sometimes necessary to stop to wait for the soul to catch up with the speed of the body (Coelho, 2007, p. 20). At the same time, a person should surprise him/herself by changing actions, opinions and thoughts while not hurting anyone else and not being ashamed about the change. Coelho emphasises that a person should let the universe surround him/her and the person should enjoy it and should be surprised about him/herself (Coelho,

2007, p. 79). Out of this attitude, a personalised God can be discovered through the “colour of the consciousness of each human being” and great spiritual wealth that is connected to freedom and diversity and the opposite of fundamentalism (Arias, 2001, pp. 80–81).

He sees God as the “God of the courageous”, a God that helps a person through sleepless nights, when criticism of others and self-criticism try to paralyse the person and might let a person drift away from his/her personal way. He highlights how God gives a person strength through the most challenging times of his/her life (Coelho, 2007, p. 93) and that God makes one first see the worst of a person and then provides a chance for redemption (Arias, 2001, p. 88). However, a person can often only see the worth of something, of the dreams and ideas, when he/she has left the house and distanced her/himself from it (Coelho, 2007, p. 94). A person should always try not to get caught up in the daily routines, which let the day appear similar to the ones before: a person should look at the world as if it is new every day (Coelho, 2007, p. 134).

For Coelho (2007, p. 58), life’s purpose is to live the individual and personal fate and to fulfil the mission that is determined. The danger in that is that people tend to occupy themselves with actions that finally draw them away to fulfil their personal mission. Therefore, Coelho highlights (Arias, 2001, p. 167) that one should “not kill the child within”, which he addresses in his books as evolving, maturing and being born at every moment of the day.

However, Coelho refers repeatedly to the topic of dreaming and living one’s dream (Coelho, 2007, p. 93). He defines life as a “race” whose aim it is to live the personal life’s design (Coelho, 2007, p. 110). This living of the dream process requires that a person steps into the unknown at some time, even if he/she knows that he/she could do even better. To be successful and to walk one’s way, one has to experience and see, know and overcome personal limitations (Coelho, 2007, p. 93). The limitations can be overcome by passion (Coelho, 2007, p. 99): life is passion and love will support a person on the way to follow his/her dreams, because it is only the happiness within the heart that counts and not other human beings’ view on a person’s life. Simultaneously, Coelho (2007, p. 126) highlights that a person usually throws his dream into the world, as a juggler throws his balls or oranges up in the air. However, the dream is not always controllable. In these moments, a person needs to trust God to help so that the dream can make its way in dignity and return to the person.

3.8.2.3 Fear

Many of Coelho’s stories and thoughts are about fear and how to deal with fear in life. He feels that a person needs to address the deepest fears by walking forward without feeling intimidated by his/her inner fears and doubts (Coelho, 2007, p. 25).

Only a person who is fearful and fears to make mistakes will be unsuccessful. According to Coelho (2007, p. 125), fear leads a person to mediocrity. Only if fear has been overcome, the person moves into freedom and can overcome mediocrity.

To fulfil one's life's dream, a person needs to unbend, to get out of one's shell, to experience deep love, to take risks and to live his/her dream (Coelho, 2007, p. 33). However, a way only opens up to the person who is courageous (Coelho, 2007, p. 55) and a person can only grow by overcoming the fear of losing something in life (Coelho, 2007, p. 85). For Coelho (2007, p. 96), courage is the counter-player to fear: it only takes one courageous act to gain freedom. In 2001, Coelho emphasised that he had overcome his deep fears (Arias, 2001, p. 57) after he had a spiritual experience in the city of Avila, the city of Saint Theresa of Jesus, the great Spanish mystic. He refers to his fears in the book "The fifth mountain" (Coelho, 1998a) and "The pilgrimage" (1987) and describes the loss of the fear of death, after he had experienced his own death in a spiritual context on the road to Santiago (Arias, 2001, p. 58).

3.8.2.4 Luck

In a short text about "luck", Coelho (2007, p. 41) highlights that words change the individual and with him/her, they change the world. Therefore, people should talk about their luck and about all the positive things they do experience. According to Coelho, speaking about positive things attracts positive energies, which again contributes positively to the soul of the world. Coelho thereby presents his constructivist world view, which is connected to the importance of social connectedness. The issue of positive thoughts and energies recurred in the stories, texts and thoughts that Coelho published in the 1990s: he feels that positive memories are a blessing and influence a person positively in challenging times (Coelho, 2007, p. 44). In another text called "About the way of dealing with problems", Coelho (2007, p. 45) emphasises that a person needs to be a pioneer and fight. However, one should not forget that pioneers only talk about comfortable aspects: they do not mourn, but compose songs and joke about their problems. According to Coelho (2007, p. 85), a person needs to give up a lot of his/her usual behaviour to become a happy person.

3.8.2.5 Work and Individual Responsibility

With regard to the inner attitude of how to deal with work, Coelho (2007, p. 57) highlights that work needs to be balanced with leisure time or time to rest. Only if there is a balance between work and time to rest, can a person keep up his/her enthusiasm and move forward. When this balance is not maintained, a person will not get far. Coelho sees himself as a contented person who experiences ups and downs, with won and lost battles, but always with joy (Arias, 2001, p. 27). The release of a book, the product of his work, is to Coelho like a bullfight, like "throwing myself in the ring" (Arias, 2001, p. 27).

In his texts, Coelho also speaks about decision-making and the personal responsibility of the individual person (Coelho, 2007, p. 67). He emphasises that, if a person makes a decision, he/she cannot know for certain how the situation will turn out,

but needs to accept and live with the consequences. Connected to individual responsibility, is the responsibility to see the light and the shadow of oneself (Coelho, 2007, p. 68) to deal with both consciously and develop a holistic picture of oneself and others. The individual is consequently asked with every action to withstand the temptation of evil (Coelho, 2007, p. 71). By withstanding the temptation of evil, a person frees him/herself from danger. Every action should therefore be seen as a single action and should not become part of a habit that is not reflected (Coelho, 2007, p. 121). Within individual responsibility lies ethical commitment, one's own conscience, the faith and the spiritual path, because only individual responsibility leads to a spiritual path that needs no masters or captains (Arias, 2001, p. 79).

According to Coelho (2007, p. 87), time management is highly important in the context of work and decision-making: a person needs to know intuitively when it is the right time to wait and when it is the right time to act immediately. Therefore, intuition becomes an important aspect in decision-making. Coelho (2007, p. 107) writes: "The road-crossing is a holy place. Here, the pilgrim needs to make a decision. Therefore, the Gods usually sleep or eat at these crossings." In another text, he says (Coelho, 2007, pp. 127–128) that all ways lead to the same place. However, a person needs to choose his/her own way and walk the way until the end without trying to walk various ways at the same time.

3.8.2.6 Magic

Coelho believes in the magical element of life and sees magic as a tool and the magical as the product of the tool (Arias, 2001, p. 104). Magic is open to anyone and Coelho aims at developing his magical gifts and power, because that to him is what it means to be a magus (Arias, 2001, 105). Coelho (Arias, 2001, p. 114) distinguishes between white magic, which he defines as magic that does not influence anyone else's destiny, and black magic, which is magic that interferes in the destiny of others.

3.8.2.7 The Brazilian Academy of Letters

When the Brazilian writer Jorge Amado died, Coelho was devastated. Nevertheless, he applied for the first seat in the Brazilian Academy of Letters to become part of the renowned Brazilian writers' society. However, his attempt failed. Only a short time later he got the opportunity to reapply. He applied again to the society, but was insecure about the application process and asked the I-Ching what to do. The I-Ching told him to go travelling and not to come back to the application for a while (Morais, 2009, p. 421). Coelho travelled to France for 3 months and throughout the whole time fought his inner pressure and intent to return to Brazil to promote his application at the society. He succeeded in staying away and after his return, he was accepted by the Brazilian Academy of Letters in 2001. He gained his lifelong seat in the society.

Since Coelho believed that the I-Ching had helped him in the process of becoming a member of the society, he also asked the I-Ching about changing publishers (Morais, 2009, p. 424). The I-Ching is known as one of the oldest Chinese classic texts. It originally derived from a mystical Chinese tradition and is seen as the oracle of the cosmic ways (Anthony & Moog, 2002). Coelho believes strongly in the wisdom of the I-Ching and makes it his partner in decision-making. The I-Ching is a strong and reliable resource for him (Morais, 2009, p. 424), a source of magic.

3.8.3 *The Devil and Miss Prym (2000)*

In 2000, Coelho published the first edition of “The devil and Miss Prym” (Coelho, 2002a), thus ending the trilogy that he started with “By the river Piedra...” (Coelho, 1996) and “The fifth mountain” (Coelho, 1998a). The book was received well by Brazilian critics. The broad acceptance of this book probably also contributed to the acceptance of Coelho into the Brazilian Academy of Letters in 2001. Coelho became a global player in international high society and met Bill Clinton at the economic forum in Davos in 2000 (Morais, 2009). In the same year, Coelho fever spread across social, economic and cultural classes, regardless of sex, race, culture or age (Morais, 2009).

In “The devil and Miss Prym” Coelho (2002a) tells the story of the little village, Viscos, its inhabitants and the community dynamics that are devoured by greed, cowardice and fear. One day a stranger arrives in the little village, carrying a notebook and 11 gold bars. His arrival is observed by Berta (Coelho, 2002a, p. 5), an old woman who has lost her husband, but still talks to him. She has the ability to see things other people do not see: Berta sees the stranger arrive accompanied by the devil (Coelho, 2002a, p. 6). Coelho (2002a) describes in the story how the stranger becomes friends with the inhabitants and how he shows Chantal his riches that he buries in the nearby mountains (Coelho, 2002a, p. 13). The inhabitants of Viscos are told that if someone is murdered within the next 7 days, the stranger will give ten gold bars to the villagers. If nobody dies, he will take the gold and leave the city again (Coelho, 2002a, p. 78).

In the story, the stranger’s main aim is to find out if human beings are essentially good or evil and he puts the inhabitants to the test. The story shows the struggle between light and darkness and its relevance for the following of personal dreams, the courage to be different and to master the fear that prevents humans from truly living.

The book shows how difficult it can be for a person to stick to his or her own ethics without losing oneself in attractive offerings – it is about not losing the right path. In the struggle of good and evil, good wins and the stranger leaves the village.

3.8.4 *Eleven Minutes (2003)*

In 2003, Coelho published a new book called “Eleven minutes”. Within only a short time, Coelho sold about ten million copies and “Eleven Minutes” (Coelho, 2003c) became the second most sold book after “The alchemist” (1989).

“Eleven minutes” basically deals with the question of how to touch the soul – through love or through lust? – and the fundamental question of how the soul, love and lust belong to one another. Coelho responds to this question by exploring the impact of the spirit, the soul and the body and concluded the following, based on this faith (Coelho, 2003c):

Really important meetings are planned by the souls long before the bodies see each other. Generally speaking, these meetings occur when we reach a limit, when we need to die and be reborn emotionally. These meetings are waiting for us, but more often than not, we avoid them happening. If we are desperate, though, if we have nothing to lose, or if we are full of enthusiasm for life, then the unknown reveals itself, and our universe changes direction. (p. 151)

Coelho refers on a spiritual basis to the questions of life and life’s purpose and highlights throughout the book that the spiritual connection with the world and with others is more important than the bodily. He writes (Coelho, 2003c, p. 78): “I’m not a body with a soul, I’m a soul that has a visible part called the body.”

In this book, Coelho describes the life, emotions – particularly the fear of losing someone, of falling in love – and experiences of a young Brazilian prostitute called Maria. When Maria falls in love for the first time, she is heartbroken and concludes that love will always make a person suffer. Coelho (2003c, p. 123) emphasises: “Considering the way the world is, one happy day is almost a miracle.” He makes clear that life is a challenge and that happiness is difficult to reach because of the challenges humans face on a daily basis.

Maria moves to Switzerland and becomes a professional prostitute who not only specialises in sexual pleasure, but also knows how to deal with her clients psychologically. She becomes very successful; however, she is unhappy.

Over time, she drifts further away from love and becomes obsessed with sex. It is only when she meets a young painter in Switzerland that she has to decide to choose between sexual pleasure or “sacred sex”, which is viewed as sex in the context of love. In the end, the protagonist finds true love in terms of her own true “inner light” and thereby experiences a kind of ever-lasting love.

In the book, Coelho, (2003c, p. 50) deals with the topic of life crises and how a person deals with these crises, how to be resilient, fight the fear and move on the right path without giving up hope. He writes (Coelho, 2003c, p. 50): “Life always waits for some crisis to occur before revealing itself at its most brilliant.”

3.8.5 *Warrior of the Light (2003)*

In 2003, Coelho published his book “Warrior of the Light”, which is about the “good fight”. The warrior of the light is a synonym for Coelho himself and he describes what a person should do to reach his/her aims. The warrior of the light knows that he has to fight sometimes for things that he does not know or understand, but he is challenged to fight for them (Coelho, 2006, p. 152). The warrior is full of passion for what he is doing and should be excited about his success. He can distinguish between things that are eternal and things that pass by; his motto should be to pray and to be wide awake (Coelho, 2006, pp. 153–155), to listen to his intuition and to fulfil the tasks he is asked to fulfil by God. The warrior of light thus keeps asking questions and requests to look at the immense potential of a person (Coelho, 2006, p. 166). The warrior’s values might also be connected to the art of fighting with a sword: to keep silent and peaceful, to listen to the heart, to learn to listen to others and to be the other, to find the right master, to escape threats and to live in harmony with love (Coelho, 2006, pp. 191–193).

In another excerpt, Coelho (2006, p. 206) highlights that the warrior of light is aware of his/her actions, that these actions influence the next five generations and that perseverance is a path to success.

On 7 July 2014, Coelho (2014c) posted an excerpt of his “Manual of the Warrior of Light” in his blog (Fig. 3.1).

Even many years after the first publication of the book, Coelho referred to its content, to the humanness of the “warrior of light” on his website. The message is that a “warrior of light” does not lose the hope to improve him/herself, even after having failed in many different ways and at various times – the warrior of light does not give up and takes on challenges, always in the hope of doing better and improving him/herself. However, the topic that Coelho emphasises in this blog and in the title of his post again, is the feeling of fear that is initial to many different situations and that needs to be overcome.

3.8.6 *The Zahir (2004)*

In 2004, Coelho and Cristina bought an old mill in Saint-Martin in France and renovated it (Morais, 2009). At the same time, Coelho published a new book called “The zahir” (2005). “The zahir” (2005) is dedicated to Coelho’s wife, Cristina (Coelho, 2005, Dedication) with reference to their spiritual walks in the mountainside of the Pyrenees, which Coelho and Cristina consider to be sacred and where they have shared extraordinary moments.

“The zahir” (2005) is about a man who is obsessed by finding his wife who has left him without prior notice. One of the main characters is Esther, a war correspondent who is the winner of two international prizes for journalism and who has just returned from Iraq before disappearing without prior notice (Coelho, 2005, p. 3).

"Every warrior of the light has been afraid to enter a combat. Every warrior of the light has betrayed and lied in the past.

Every warrior of the light has lost faith in the future. Every warrior of the light has trodden a path which was not his own.

Every warrior of the light has suffered because of unimportant things. Every warrior of the light has doubted that he is a warrior of the light.

Every warrior of the light has failed in his spiritual obligations. Every warrior of the light has said yes when he meant no. And every warrior of the light has hurt someone he loved.

This is why he and she are Warriors of the Light...

They had endured all this without losing the hope to improve.

The Manual of the Warrior of the Light
by Paulo Coelho

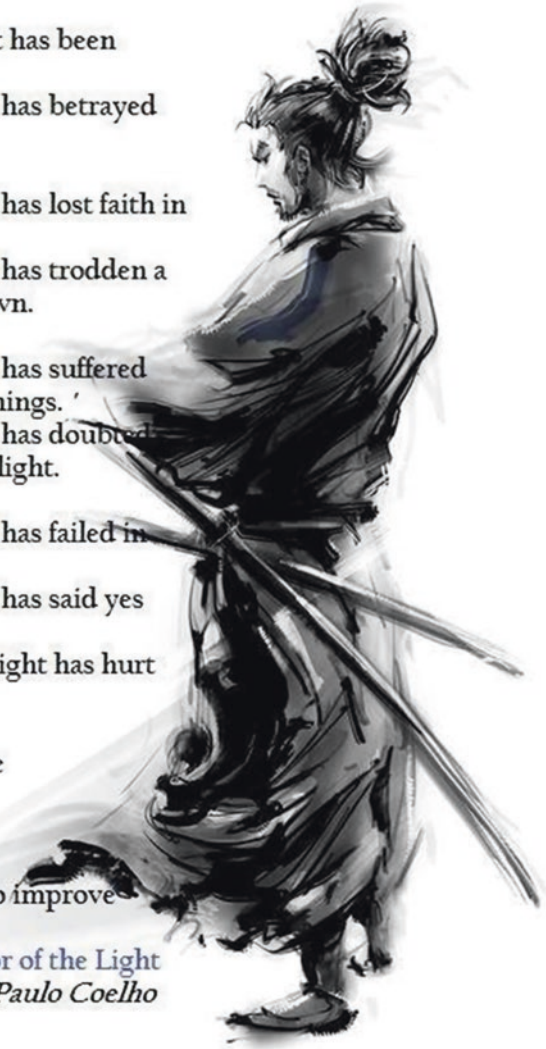


Fig. 3.1 Manual of the warrior of light (Source: Coelho, 2014c)

Esther's character in the book is based on and inspired by The Sunday Times journalist Christina Lamb (Morais, 2009, 326–327 documentary inlay). She states (Lamb, 2007):

When I stepped off the Ryanair plane in the medieval town of Pau in the French Pyrenees almost two years ago to interview the multi-million-selling author Coelho Coelho, the last thing I expected was to end up as the heroine in his next book.

Coelho was so inspired by her life and experiences as a war correspondent in Iraq that he took her as an inspiration for one of the main characters of this book. “The *zahir*” was banned in Iran shortly after it was published (Morais, 2009).

The unnamed narrator of the story, Esther’s husband, starts searching for his wife and his search becomes an obsession. He is a novelist and celebrity who lives in Paris with her. However, she is restless, in search of her own happiness. The search for Esther takes him on a totally unknown path on which he experiences a new understanding of the nature of love and the power of destiny. This book is a story about what it means to be a human being in a world full of possibilities. The narrator reflects part of Coelho’s life experiences, being a celebrity, always in search of his path in life, seeking love and fulfilment. At one point in time, the narrator, Esther’s husband, meets Mikhail, a young man who was last seen with Esther and who works with unhappily married couples. Through Mikhail, the narrator experiences a new spiritual perspective on love and starts reflecting his own values and thoughts (Brussat, & Brussat, 2017). The unnamed narrator becomes obsessed with what Coelho calls “the *zahir*”, which is a concept from the Arabic tradition. The *zahir* in Arabic means “unable to go unnoticed, someone or something, once in contact, occupies our every thought. The state of mind could be considered holy or maddening” (Calderon, 2009).

In the book, Coelho (2005) refers to concepts of health and ill-health by stating:

... there is always an event in our lives that is responsible for us failing to progress: a trauma, a particularly bitter defeat, a disappointment in love, even a victory that we did not quite understand, can make cowards of us and prevent us from moving on. As part of the process of increasing his hidden powers, the shaman must first free himself from that giving-up point and, to do so, he must review his whole life and find where it occurred (p. 241).

In this section, Coelho refers to resilience as a main concept to overcome trauma or defeat. This thought is – in “The *zahir*” (Coelho, 2005) – combined with the assumption that a person should not give in and accept his or her own fears that might keep him/her from enjoying and living her/his life to the full. The fear to live and recognise one’s full and true potential must be overcome.

According to Calderon (2009), the book is about a universal feeling, “the sensation of vanished outlooks, dark obsessions and the real meaning of letting go.” Like the book “The winner stands alone” (Coelho, 2008a), “The *zahir*” (Coelho, 2005) explores what it means to be a celebrity and the element of that lifestyle that gets lost in its false advertisement. According to Calderon (2009), the story teaches the reader to appreciate what human beings inadvertently take for granted.

Two years after the publication of “The *zahir*”, in 2006, Coelho was invited to a white tie function at Buckingham Palace (Morais, 2009). During the same year he travelled through the world for 4 months. This travel was part of his contract with Jean, his master of the RAM. Morais (2009, p. 436) highlights in the biography on Coelho that from 1986 to 2006 Coelho had to fulfil many responsibilities of RAM: he had to undertake new tasks, he had to have disciples and he had to undergo various tests across these years, such as praying, abstention from sex, walking barefoot and without a shirt through bushes, looking at a tree for 5 min every day and under-

going fasting rituals and processes. However, Coelho describes himself as rather lazy and impatient (Morais, 2009, p. 436).

In 2006, Coelho had to travel for three plus 1 months, according to his master's wish, without going to his two homes, in Brazil and France. Coelho took the opportunity to go onto a trip to Russia with his Russian publisher, Sophia. The publisher organised a promotion tour with Coelho travelling on the Trans-Siberian Railway through Russia. This trip later became the basis for his book "Aleph", which was published in 2011. However, only a few months after the promotion trip Coelho left the publisher Sophia and moved to a new Russian publisher, Astrel (Morais, 2009).

In the same year, Coelho published a new book: "The witch of Portobello" (Coelho, 2006).

3.8.7 The Witch of Portobello (2006)

According to Morais (2009), "The witch of Portobello" was first published in 2006, including two innovations in Coelho's writing style: the character of the descriptions of interview transcripts and the internet technology (Morais, 2009).

In "The witch of Portobello" (Coelho, 2007, p. 335), Coelho points out in the appendix – referring to the genesis of the book – that his aim was to write a book about the "feminine side of divinity, I wanted to plunge into the heart of the Great Mother. I felt I need to question why society had tried to lock away the feminine side of God."

He further states that the book "sprang both from theory and fiction" (Coelho, 2007, p. 335); the main character was inspired by a woman Coelho met in Transylvania and many other people and situations inspired the progress of the story of the book.

The main character of the book is the woman, Athena, who has had a challenging life, being an adopted individual originating from gypsy parents. In the book she develops herself personally. She follows her personal spiritual path and becomes a witch. Throughout the book, Athena is in dialogue with other individuals about God and his or her female side. She questions why people usually believe in a male, parental and hierarchic God that lives far away behind the clouds and why they do not see and believe in the female side of God, the mother earth, which is very close to people. To her, the answers become clear: on their spiritual path people feel they need (male) guidance, to be given orders and unquestionable wisdom. Believing in mother earth means accepting the miracles and the magical reality that is right in our lives and the freedom to "choose where our steps will go" (Coelho, 2007, pp. 280–281). It is a natural approach to God.

The witch Athena describes her spiritual path clearly and what she has gained from it: her spiritual development brought her the ability to see an aura, the feeling of happiness, the joy of being alive, the gift of healing and an idea of the purpose in life and the meaning that she is fighting for in life (Coelho, 2007, p. 281). She can feel the presence of the mother (Coelho, 2007, p. 283), not only in nature, but

primarily through dancing and through conversing, communicating and being with other people (Coelho, 2007, p. 283). Regarding the spiritual relationship with Lukas, Athena's ex-husband, she develops herself through music, which is a very old tradition and an ideology that takes the person to new spiritual levels. Coelho (2007, pp. 88–89) mentions dancing as a spiritual method to come closer to God as a certain technique in Sufism and gives the advice that to be close to Allah, Athena needs to lead a “decent life” and that this will be enough to be close to Allah (Coelho, 2007, p. 89). However, her conversation partner, Nabil Alaihi, tells her that he gets close to God by putting all his energy and passion into calligraphy (Coelho, 2007, p. 89). However, Athena, as the main character in the book, explains on various occasions that she feels empty if she becomes quiet, if there is silence around her: she is a restless person who always needs to act and do something to keep herself busy and out of emptiness and depression (Coelho, 2007, p. 147).

3.8.8 *God, Faith and Spirituality*

In the book, Coelho claims that different creative methods, such as music, dance or painting, all lead to God, if only they are followed with passion and with all life's energy. The spiritual path is not necessarily connected to one specific religion. At the same time, it is important for each human being to know where he or she comes from to understand where he or she is going to (Coelho, 2007, p. 103). Moreover, Coelho (2007) understands that he has to show the reader that the spirituality that is worth living is part of various religions and that different religions have responded to the quest for spirituality by developing certain rituals that are creative and spontaneous acts (Coelho, 2007, p. 99) and that lead to trance states and bring a person closer to God – however, God is called God, Allah or Yahweh. The key to greater energy is belief, undoubted belief: “believe that you can” and “thoughts that make you grow” (Coelho, 2007, pp. 180–181).

Further on, Coelho (2007, p. 151) describes spiritual and magical experiences, such as seeing a woman's face within the flames of the fire, trances and recognising the soul's partner. These experiences are usually contrasted with a materialised lifestyle of the antagonists of the main character who believe in a decent and hard work attitude, professional achievements in the job they are doing, while forgetting their dreams and the original meaning in their lives, such as Athena's adoptive parents (Coelho, 2007, pp. 150–154).

Coelho (2007) states that

To me, a witch is a woman who is capable of letting her intuition take hold of her actions, who communicates with her environment, who isn't afraid of facing challenges. (p. 335)

He explains further (Coelho, 2007, p. 340) that a witch is a person who usually does not comply with the rules, that she tries to dare, goes beyond the limits and celebrates life. Coelho highlights that society lacks belief in spirituality and that humans need to develop their feminine side, their intuition and that they should be

open to new perceptions of reality. The character of Athena enjoys freedom and courage and through her, the author honours and respects the mystery of life (Coelho, 2007, p. 336). He states, as in the interview with Juan Arias (Coelho, 2007, p. 336): “I am my books and they are part of my soul since they incarnate all my doubts and hopes. Athena embodies my feminine side, my compassionate side.”

In the interview with Valerie Reiss in the same book (Coelho, 2007, pp. 337–346), Coelho emphasises that he wanted to elaborate on the feminine side of God, particularly since many religions, such as Christianity, Judaism or Islam, deny the existence of the feminine side of God, which can be traced and is existent in the primary holy texts. Coelho “writes to understand himself”, to put his thoughts into order to “clearly see myself” (Coelho, 2007, pp. 243–344) and understand his own identity and the existence of God. He defines God as follows (Coelho, 2007):

God’s a verb. God is action. God is – is a verb, yes. You cannot define Him. When Moses asks ‘Who are you?’, He says, ‘I Am’. He does not say I am this or that or that. He just says, ‘I Am’. So I think this is the best definition, you know? He is. (p. 346)

3.8.9 Like a Flowing River

In 2006, Coelho published a book, “Sei wie ein Fluß, der still die Nacht durchströmt (English version: “Like the flowing river”, Coelho, 2010a). This book is a collection of stories and thoughts that were published before in journals, on his homepage or were unpublished texts and explorations. In the preface, Coelho (2010a, p. xi) refers to his autobiographical story during his adolescence, when he told his mother that he wanted to become a writer. He was sent to do research on how writers are and what they do. He was advised to rather step into the footsteps of his father and become an engineer. Many of his thoughts and autobiographical experiences are reflected in the short texts in this book.

Coelho writes about his daily activities, about his fascination with technology and the internet, but also about archery and his walks in nature that revitalised him and helped him to listen to the voice of nature and to the unseen world, which manifests itself quietly in the seen world (Coelho, 2006, p. 59). For Coelho (2006, p. 88), walking is a form of “meditation in movement”, to experience the joy of movement, the balance of the body and the challenge to move forward.

How a person approaches the world is connected to love. For Coelho, love is the major source of life, the most important when it comes to re-evaluating the lived life (Coelho, 2006, p. 78). The feeling of love provides a person’s life with perfection and the energy to proceed in life if this person integrates his/her soul and body – if a person does not experience love, he/she will always be imperfect (Coelho, 2006, p. 132). Coelho (2006, pp. 255–256) states that many people in the world live according to the “law of Jante”, which says that a person is worth nothing and that anonymity and mediocrity are the best choices; he himself turned this law towards the positive in his own life, believing that a person is worth even more than he/she

thinks, that being on earth is important and that a person has to live without fear, then he/she will win in the end.

Coelho defines work as a supportive source as long as it helps the individual to think about his/her actions. However, work is a spell, when it is used not to think about the daily actions and the meaning in life (Coelho, 2006, p. 71). When Coelho is working on his books and texts, he feels that the mind of the author is travelling and in his opinion books should travel from one person to the other (Coelho, 2006, p. 95). Coelho is constantly searching for meaningfulness throughout his life, knowing that “*Sic transit gloria mundi*” – all earthly glory is transient (Coelho, 2006, p. 159).

Despite all his success and fame, Coelho describes his work as a challenge, for example when he is asked to write texts for special occasions (Coelho, 2006, p. 98). He doubted himself, did not feel inspired and felt several times like declining the request to talk at the special occasion at which Shinin Ebadi received the Nobel price. However, he overcame all his doubts and fears, took on the challenge and in the end succeeded with his speech.

Coelho’s view on spirituality has been addressed in many of his novels, as well as in his autobiographical texts. He sees human beings as interconnected and uses the metaphor of a huge invisible spider web that connects each and every human being. He says that with his writings he tries to repair this spider web and reconnect to spirituality (Coelho, 2006, p. 106). His own great search has therefore always been the spiritual one (Arias, 2001, p. 150), striving to give his best at all times. However, Coelho also knows the laziness that tries to stop him from writing, telling him that he has already written enough, and it becomes difficult for him to start writing a new book (Arias, 2001, p. 152). To overcome this feeling of laziness, Coelho follows some rituals, such as writing in his home in Brazil where the diversity of the people and the deeply anchored mysticism inspires him, where he feels at home and has enough distance from Spain, one of the countries he loves (Arias, 2001, p. 157).

On a day in 2005, Coelho (2006, p. 118) reflected on the difficulty of simply sitting still, relaxing and listening to his inner being. He asked himself questions about why it is a challenge not to get up and buy things that are needed, not to switch on the computer or not to call a friend to talk to. He felt a strong trepidation within himself and only after he had overcome these negative feelings of fear and trepidation, he experienced a feeling of contemplation, which arose slowly and made him listen to himself and his soul. This time of quietness is important to him, because the most important aspects of life do not necessarily show their face when one is in action, but rather in silence (Coelho, 2006, p. 218).

3.9 The Sixties (2007–2016)

The sixth decade of Paulo Coelho’s life started with his sixtieth birthday, which he celebrated not on his birth date, but on St Joseph’s day in Spain. Since Coelho has dedicated his life to St Joseph, owing to his mother’s belief that St Joseph had saved

his life at birth, Coelho makes sure that he respects St Joseph publicly through open celebrations (Morais, 2009). However, on his sixtieth birthday in August 2007, Coelho felt very lonely, spending the day only with his life partner, Cristina, in their homestead in France (Morais, 2009). The biography of Paulo Coelho written by Fernando Morais ends with his sixtieth birthday.

In his official blog, Coelho stated (Coelho, 2014a):

At 23:15 on the 23rd of August I went to Lourdes so that at exactly 00:05 of the 24th, the moment I was born, I could be at the grotto of Our Lady to thank her for my life up to that moment and ask her to protect me from that moment on. It was a very powerful experience, but while I was driving back to St Martin (where I have a small mill to spend the summer) I felt extremely lonely. I said so to my wife.

“But you’re the one who chose it to be so!” she replied.

Yes, I had indeed made that choice, but now I began to feel bothered. We were both alone in this immense planet. I turned on my mobile phone. It rang immediately – it was Monica, my agent and friend. When I arrived home there were other messages waiting for me. I went to bed happy, and the next day I saw that there was absolutely no reason for me to feel the oppression of the night before. Flowers and presents began to arrive at the house. Communities of people over the Internet had done some extraordinary things using images and texts of mine.

In most cases this had all been arranged by people I had never seen in my life – one exception being Márcia Nascimento, who did some magical work and it gives me pleasure to say that I am a writer with a fan-club – and she is world president!

At that moment I understood two very important things. The first is that no matter how famous you may be, you will always have the feeling that you are alone.

The other is that no matter how unknown you may be, friends will always surround you, even if you have never seen their faces.

Even when I was unknown, there was always a hand held out to me when I needed it. So I let Kahlil Gibran – with his unique mastery – describe this sentiment (which I have adapted because of the size of the poet):

Your friend is the field where you sow with love and harvest with gratitude. He is your home, he is your table.

Even when he is silent, two hearts continue to talk
 When you have to leave him, don’t suffer, for you will see
 the importance of the friendship all the better because of this absence, just as a mountain
 climber
 sees the landscape around him better when he is far from the plains.
 May you be able to share with your friend all that is good.
 Let him know and share not only your moments of joy but also your moments
 of sorrow.

And know that a friend is not by your side to help you kill the time, but rather to help you enjoy life in all its fullness.

By 2008, over 100 million copies of Paulo Coelho’s electronic books had been sold in 455 translations and had been published in 66 languages in 160 countries (Morais, 2009). These numbers do not include pirate editions, which have been produced and sold on the streets of the world.

In the same year, Coelho supported the political campaign of Hillary Clinton in the US and was working on his new book, “The winner stands alone”, which was published in 2008.

3.9.1 *The Winner Stands Alone (2008)*

In 2008, Coelho published the book, “The winner stands alone” (Coelho, 2008a), which is about a man who follows his dream of love. The main character, Igor Malev, follows his ex-wife Ewa who has left him for a successful fashion designer. In the book, Igor has not recovered from the loss of his wife and follows her and her new partner to the glamorous International Film Festival in Cannes, France. He keeps to his promise to destroy whole worlds for her, just to win her back, and begins a 24-h campaign of extraordinary violence. Repeatedly, the question occurs if it would be “acceptable to destroy a universe in the name of a greater love” (Coelho, 2008a, p. 47).

In the preface, Coelho (2008a), highlights:

One of the recurrent themes in my books has been the importance of paying the price for following your dreams. But to what extent can our dreams be manipulated? During the past few decades, we have lived in a culture that has privileged fame, money and power. Many of us have been led to believe that these were the only values worth pursuing, unaware that the real, behind-the-scenes manipulators remain anonymous. These manipulators understand that the most effective power is a kind that goes unnoticed by anyone – until it is too late, and we are trapped. This book is about the trap. (p. 1)

Coelho (2008a, p. 1) classifies this book not as a thriller, but rather as a “stark portrait of where we are now” and reflects the values of individuals within the manipulative systems of power, success and ultimate reward. Indirectly, the book shows the reader the ways of the “good fight” that Coelho promotes in many of his earlier books, such as in „Warrior of the light” (Coelho, 2003a). “The winner stands alone” reflects societal developments towards success, materialism and fame in a critical way, by introducing three characters who believe that they are following their life dreams without recognising how societal values and mainstream ideas have manipulated their original dreams and how they are unconsciously trapped in the societal belief system that – in the beginning of their lives – they wanted to use to live their original dreams. Through the characters in the book, Coelho (2008a, pp. 53–56) describes the failures of post-modern societies that promote “studying to in the end find out that you are unemployable” (Coelho, 2008a, p. 53), “criticising anyone who tries to be different” (Coelho, 2008a, p. 54), or “making fun of anyone who seeks happiness rather than money and accusing them of ‘lacking ambition’” (Coelho, 2008a, p. 54).

In this book, Coelho shows the reader that an individual needs to fight the good fight for his/her own dreams, while constantly reflecting on the societal traps of success, fame, materialism and rewards that, often unconsciously, distract individuals from the original life path and from the dreams they have been waiting all their lives to fulfil. Coelho thus refers to recurring topics in his books and in parts of this book he refers to his autobiographic style of writing. Examples of his autobiographic life questions are, for example, the question about God and the rightness of Catholic orthodox belief (Coelho, 2008a, p. 5), or contact with satanism (Coelho, 2008a, p. 332). Coelho (2008a, p. 5) states: “God made the world in six days, but what is

the world? It's what you or I see. Whenever someone dies, a part of the universe dies too. Everything a person felt, experienced and said, dies with them, like tears in the rain."

According to Chhaged (2012), the book examines deeper moral and spiritual questions with regard to the obsession of society with power, fame, celebrity and the "insatiable need for stardom".

Recurring topics throughout the book include the question of what is good or ethical and what is bad or unethical, what a person's life dream is and how it can be acquired, as well as how to connect with spirituality and the own self in a manipulative world of materialism and distractions. Wong (2009) points out that Coelho describes the change from spiritual pilgrimages in the past to pilgrimages to worship celebrities caught up in the materialistic world of fame and money.

The book ends with a reference to the spiritual world that guides Igor, the main character, who has at the end of the book become a serial killer to regain the love of his live: "An angel with dark eyebrows is watching over him and will teach him which path to follow from now on" (Coelho, 2008a, p. 374).

The question stays open of whether the main character in the book will in future turn to the good or the evil angel, the light or the shadow. It pursues the idea and assumption that in each and every moment of his/her life, an individual has the possibility to decide on which side he/she stands.

3.9.2 "My Life" – Paulo Coelho in Documentary

In Paulo Coelho's first DVD documentary, he talks about his life, his outstanding experiences and his journey to become a writer. He explains that he started to write books because they helped him to "[understand] me better" (Coelho, 2010b, 0:53 min).³ To Coelho, a book responds to a question and gives the answer not only to himself as a person, but also to other individuals across various cultures (Coelho, 2010b, 1:00 min). He refers to the fact that his books were read in 2010 by approximately 500 million readers (Coelho, 2010b, 1:10 min) and he states that he feels "free to write" (Coelho, 2010b, 1:35 min), because he writes from his soul and for himself, to understand himself better.

In his documentary, Coelho (2010b, 3:43 min) still refers to his metaphor of the journey: "It is important to have a goal, however you must enjoy the pleasures of the way." And this is what he does: he enjoys his life while writing a book every two to 3 years. He has never lost sight of his goal to be a world-wide known writer, since he believes that if one does not have a goal, one does not arrive (Coelho, 2010b, 4:33 min).

A recurring topic in the documentary and in his life is the one of following one's dreams. Coelho highlights: "There are two ways: to follow your dream or to give it

³With regard to Coelho 2010b, a DVD documentary, the minutes of quotation are indicated.

up. I decided for the dream” (Coelho, 2010b, 5:30 min). For himself he has decided that if one wants to be successful, one has to put all one’s passion and heart into one’s dream (Coelho, 2010b, 11:29 min). He believes that “each individual has a dream to fulfill” (Coelho, 2010b, 12:37 min) and that “when you have a dream, you have to burn the bridges” to live that dream (Coelho, 2010b, 13:26 min). Coelho’s dream of becoming a writer was very strong: “I had a dream to become a writer, but I also wanted to be read: ‘Love me, it’s me’” (Coelho, 2010b, 20:02 min). Every human being has to find out what he/she lives for (Coelho, 2010b, 39:01 min). Coelho highlights that he was only 40 years old when he achieved success, but since then he has managed to live his human condition (Coelho, 2010b, 37:19 min), not losing his devotedness and his openness and relaxation while being successful (Coelho, 2010b, 36:45 min).

In his books, he asks questions (Coelho, 2010b, 27:40 min). The main “train of thought by writing a book is to understand myself” (Coelho, 2010b, Bonus 4:36 min), while the theme of the book “is always a surprise. It is growing. You don’t choose. It is nature work. So it is the miracle of creation” (Coelho, 2010b, Bonus 6:09 min).

As important experiences in his life, Coelho (2010b, 7:00 min) explains that he turned from spiritualism to a Catholic brotherhood that told him to go on a pilgrimage and it was only after the pilgrimage that he found that this was “a turning point in my life.” (Coelho, 2010b, 8:00 min). Since then he has chosen loneliness to be with his angels and demons (Coelho, 2010b, 40:57 min), or archery which is like meditation to him and which makes him feel as if “I’m alive” (Coelho, 2010b, 41:58 min). Life is worth living for Coelho (2010b, 42:00 min) when “you focus on the small things in life” and when a person “sees everything is one thing”, this person understands the “miracle of life” (Coelho, 2010b, 43:00 min).

However, he also highlights that he experienced a strict childhood, which then turned into a disturbed youth (Coelho, 2010b, 8:20 min). He felt he was ugly and skinny and he was only recognised when his peers discovered that he could do what other people could not do, namely “write poems” (Coelho, 2010b, 8:54 min). He states: “Writing helped me to clear myself and to find myself” during his youth (Coelho, 2010b, 9:35 min).

Another significant event was his experience in the asylum. After being seen by his parents as a revolutionary (Coelho, 2010b, 9:35 min) he was sent to an asylum and received electroshock therapy (Coelho, 2010b, 9:56 min). Even in his 60s the world-famous writer Paulo Coelho refers to his traumatic experiences during his teenage years. He started questioning society by asking philosophical questions, such as “What is reality?” and “What does the collective contribute to the meaning of life and society?” (Coelho, 2010b, 10:40 min). He even dropped his studies in law, because he could not see the sense of studying and being unemployed afterwards (Coelho, 2010b, 11:11 min).

Coelho turned into a “warrior of light” (Coelho, 2010b, 16:40 min) and his wife developed the symbol of the warrior of light for him. In this context, Coelho (2010b, 19:25 min) sees his responsibility as a world-renowned writer as commenting on that what he observes in the world, such as wars, and highlights that artists and

writers have the responsibility to build bridges across cultures: “We only have the cultural bridge. We have to take care of it. When it breaks, there is no way to communicate with other cultures” (Coelho, 2010b, 21:15 min). Being a warrior of light, Coelho (2010b, 20:18 min) fights for what is right: “Who is interested in what is forbidden, when the mind tells you what is right?” He refers to the fact that he violated his author’s and publication rights by putting his book texts online for his readers free of charge and was accused of an act of piracy. He enjoys being a warrior of light who doubts, but enjoys his fight (Coelho, 2010b, 32:29 min). Being a warrior of light, he uses several rituals: he prays every day at 6 o’clock (Coelho, 2010b, 27:00 min), he waits for a white feather to appear in a year in which he writes a book (Coelho, 2010b, 27:35 min), he travels since he believes that a writer needs to travel (Coelho, 2010b, 30:40 min), he walks to clean his soul and body (Coelho, 2010b, 31:30), like the “old greeks” (Coelho, 2010b, Bonus, 10:00 min).

Coelho (2010b, Bonus 10:19 min) sees himself as a Catholic, he lives the mystery of the Catholic Church, he enjoys the ritual of mass and has studied magic since he was 25 years old. He sees himself as a magician (Coelho, 2010b, Bonus 11:55 min). About the light and the dark side of magic and his life he says: “Dark means that all the light is not reflected. White is rejecting all the light. There is darkness in my soul and ... I am learning how to live with it” (Coelho, 2010b, 12:40 min).

3.9.3 *Aleph* (2011)

The book “Aleph” is Coelho’s fourteenth major book publication. It is based on the idea and book of “The aleph” by Jorge Luis Borges, a very well-known Brazilian writer. Both the book of Borges and the book of Coelho refer to the mythical space, the sacred and the profane (Mihály, 2012). However, Coelho highlights (Bosman, 2011):

He is my icon, the best writer in the world of my generation. But I wasn’t influenced by him, I was influenced by the idea of aleph, the concept. In the classic tradition of spiritual books Borges summarizes very, very well the idea of this point where everything becomes one thing only.

Aleph is defined as the point where all things are. According to Arias (2001):

Aleph is a Hebrew word, from the Kabbalah, the first letter of the alphabet. It is the point that embraces all things at one. In Borges’ story called “The Aleph”, a man is walking, he trips and falls, and completely by accident enters this point where he sees everything at the same time: all people, all the jungles, the rivers, all the universes. (p. 148)

Coelho’s book “Aleph” is an autobiographical account of his journey on the Trans-Siberian Railway. As claimed by Coelho himself, all of his books describe his own, personal spiritual journey (Furqon & Mustofa, 2014), “Aleph” being classified as one of his most personal novels to date (Purwandoyo & Kurnia, 2013):

It is viewed as a semi-fictionalized true story or a reconstructed biography. This is interesting as how this novel story goes from the writer’s own experience and the main character is

the writer itself. This makes the story more “realistic” though there are additions to the story to make it more suitable for storytelling.

The book starts with a conversation with Coelho’s master, J., as other books of Coelho do as well. This time, Coelho doubts the path he is following in terms of his actions, his thoughts, beliefs and feelings. According to J., Coelho is trying to become the “King of Kingdom”. Coelho feels a deep crisis of faith, a stagnation of his spiritual development and dissatisfaction with his spiritual growth (Purwandoyo & Kurnia, 2013). He feels that his spiritual development, as a major force in adult identity formation, needs to develop in terms of developing awareness of the self and others, engaging into connectedness with the divine, nature and humanity and defining new relationships with God, the community of believers and nature (Furqon & Mustofa, 2014). Coelho’s spiritual journey is based on the question of meaningfulness and the exploration of meaning of his spirituality by conducting identifications, exploration, experiments through magical and religious traditions to discover his personal spiritual path and identity (Furqon & Mustofa, 2014). The rituals provided by the RAM help Coelho to feel a sense of belonging (Furqon & Mustofa, 2014). To clear his thoughts and to live through the process and crisis of his own faith, Coelho convinced his Russian publisher to take him on a promotion tour through Russia and Northern Eurasia.

In Russia, Coelho met a young violinist, Hilal, who followed him into his carriage to travel with him through Russia. The story reveals that Hilal is a woman Coelho loved and betrayed 500 years ago, in another incarnation. It develops along the concepts of guilt and redemption. The two main characters undertake a mystical voyage through time and space and experience “The aleph” together. The author sees the aleph through the eyes of Hilal, who functions as a channel for the experience of the universe (Mihály, 2012). Mihály (2012, p. 208) concludes that the aleph is similar to the “center of a labyrinth/mandala, where the initiates would find the true face of themselves and the sacred universe.”

In the context of the experience of aleph, the protagonists experience love, forgiveness and the courage to tackle the challenges of life. However, “Aleph” is a story about reincarnation and about Paulo Coelho’s existential crises and his theological worldview, which is based in a manifestation of ideas which are linked through existentialism and theosophy (Sari, 2013).

Purwandoyo and Kurnia (2013) point out that the literary work of Paulo Coelho is “the reflection of the human being”. Sari’s (2013) qualitative study points out that Coelho describes his personal crises in “Aleph” and the importance of concepts of self-awareness, action and the aim to achieve something in life to improve the quality of life as an authentic human being. Sari (2013) suggests that more research is needed that connects the relationship of Coelho’s concept of existentialism and his biography.

Purwandoyo and Kurnia (2013), however, focus rather on the underlying aspects in the story than on the obvious: they highlight that the journey of Coelho is rather a “reflection on how a human is naturally often driven by their own subconscious towards things”. For them, the subconscious topics addressed in this story are based

on redemption, forgiveness, reconnecting with people, travel, spiritual renewal and growth. The book can help the reader (Purwandoyo & Kurnia, 2013):

in the discovery of inner peace, the realization that life is a beautiful journey that's filled with wonder. The concept of reincarnation might be a bit of a stretch for some readers, but one does not have to believe it to enjoy the book.

Reincarnation is a process of coming back to life in another body. In the novel, he claimed to have reincarnated many times and he could remember his past life nearly 400 years ago.

On the journey through Siberia, Coelho sought the renewal of his spirit and forgiveness for his past sins and errors that kept him away from spiritual growth and from being authentic, from redemption and personal happiness. In “Aleph” he received the information needed in this life, to recover (Purwandoyo & Kurnia, 2013) – it is similar to the “key moment flow”, which past life regression therapy uses to heal trauma and unconscious blockages from past life experiences (Weiss, 1992). Through travelling and personal self-renewal, he aimed at redemption, at the reconquering of his “kingdom” (Coelho, 2011, p. 11).

Furqon and Mustofa (2014) who describe the spiritual identity development of Coelho in the novel “Aleph” on the basis of Erik H. Erikson’s psychosocial approach, conclude that Coelho went through various stages – such as exploration, actuality and mutuality, adaptation, virtue and centrality, crisis and despair in terms of the clash of spiritual and religious values, and ego integration – meaning the integration of religious and spiritual values – of spiritual development before achieving a whole and healthy spiritual identity. The book will be analysed in this study in depth in Sect. 8.4.

The novel “Aleph” has been highly criticised for its duplicity and for its sexism that seems wrapped in an ode to femininity that ends in a huge generalisation, truisms and platitudes (Teutsch, 2012). Literary critics highlight the boredom of the endearing spiritual clichés, the anti-intellectualism, the self-praise, the simple sentence constructions and the few descriptions of the cultures and countries in which his novels take place (Tagesanzeiger, 2012). The main critic, however, highlights that Coelho only reflects himself and his own personal development without empathy for the other – he remains in his own self-review (Teutsch, 2012). Critics ask themselves how Paulo Coelho could become such a world-wide known and widely sold author (Tagesanzeiger, 2012) and Coelho comments on the questions regarding his success by emphasising that there are often many explanations for failure, but seldom explanations for success – for his personal success, there might be over 10,000 explanations (Bosman, 2011).

3.9.4 *Manuscript Found in Accra (2012)*

Paulo Coelho’s (2012, 2013 English version) book, “Manuscript found in Accra”, deals with a manuscript that had remained undiscovered for over 700 years. In this book, Coelho describes the questions of the citizens of Accra shortly before an

invasion. The action is placed in the year 1099 in Jerusalem while the inhabitants of the city await the invasion of the crusaders.

In a spiritual way, Coelho (2012) provides readers with a powerful exploration of personal growth, everyday wisdom and joy, while letting citizens speak about their fears, hope and comfort. The foundation for this book is a manuscript written around 1307 AD that was discovered by an English archaeologist, Sir Walter Wilkinson, in 1974 in Egypt.

Coelho in this book provides the reader with an exposition of philosophy regarding love, defeat, loyalty, fear, beauty and other aspects of human existence. As in his previous books, this book is about overcoming fear, overcoming loneliness, getting to know yourself and connectedness to the world and God through the universe. It is a book about faith and love. Coelho (2013b, p. 107) writes: “Love is an act of faith in another person, not an act of surrender.”

He adds (Coelho, 2013b): “Love is only a word, until someone arrives to give it meaning. Don’t give up. Remember, it’s always the last key on the key ring that opens the door.”

The book is a homage to faith and belief in the right path and values. However it has been criticised as an “echo (of) the writings of Khalil Gibran, and sometimes also Osho, the Indian mystic” (Kamrani, 2013). The novel does not have a plot as such and the narrator of the story is an unknown person, narrating a kind of life wisdom. In an interview with Reuters (2013), Coelho highlighted that he believes that there are common spiritual and human values that are not interlinked by religion, but that are rather shared by all human beings and that he therefore classifies the book as a book about accepting human contradictions (Reuters, 2013):

These values are not related to this or that religious system. However, some people in society, some religious groups try to say ‘no, my religion is the best one.’ I think every religion is heading toward the same light and that light is God. (...) At the end your life it is not what God you believe in, but how did you live your life? You may not believe in God, but you believe in love, and love goes beyond everything.

In this book, Paulo Coelho integrated his life wisdom and highlighted the importance of seeing the common shared and universal values of humankind, instead of focusing on religious and spiritual differences, which often lead to fanaticism and rigid world views (Reuters, 2013).

3.9.5 *Adultery (2014) and the Spy (2016)*

In 2014 the first English version of Coelho’s book “Adultery” was published. *Adultery* (Coelho, 2014e) describes the emic insight of a woman in her 30s who is happily married, who has two children, and is working as a successful journalist. According to her own thoughts, ideas and feelings she should be happy. However, the book describes the journalist’s inner despair, as well as her deep-rooted boredom and frustration (Coelho, 2014e, p. 2): “I haven’t the slightest interest in being happy.

I prefer to live life passionately, which is dangerous, because you never know what might happen next.”

The main character of the book meets a former boyfriend from school who has in the meantime become a famous politician. She gets involved in an affair, but is still torn between her new desire for her ex-boyfriend and her feelings of meaninglessness and depression. She finally opens up to her husband about her frustration who tries to help her to cope and overcome the feeling of loneliness and depression. In the end, she stays with her family and starts a new life by embracing each and every day as a new adventure.

“Adultery” is a novel about happiness and lost potential, but it is also about the meaningfulness of life. At the same time, the author comes back to the question of how it is to live a life dream and about love that heals (Coelho, 2014e, p. 121). Generally spoken, the story refers to the societal problems of the upper class in Switzerland with regard to mental health problems of depression, boredom and frustration, as well as loneliness and emptiness. However, in the end, the lesson is hardly new (McAlpin, 2014), namely that love and faith can help to overcome a life crisis.

The book has been criticised particularly for its incorrect descriptions of the political system in Switzerland (Ackermann, 2014), the uninteresting story, the flat and clichéd language (Morrison, 2014) and the author’s misunderstanding of the Swiss culture. Paulo Coelho reacted on Twitter and showed his anger about the attacks and reactions in Swiss and international newspapers (Ackermann, 2014).

The book “The Spy” (2016) reconstructs the life of the Mata Hari, a famous dancer and celebrated woman. Again, Coelho choses a female main character to explore her life story as a celebrity and a women who has been accused of espionage. The book was strongly criticised with regard to Coelho’s view on her life in symplistic ways and along simple divisions of the world into black and white (Bayard, 2016).

3.9.6 *Paulo Coelho’s Achievements*

Coelho’s achievements are evident. By 2012, he had sold over 140 million copies of books worldwide, published in 73 languages, and his books had been sold in more than 168 countries (Sant Jordi Asociados, 2012). He has published 22 books, 13 novels, five short stories, two adaptations, one anthology and a book of fables. Around 60 theatre adaptations of Paulo Coelho’s works exist. In 2016, Coelho had sold over 200 million books (Bayard, 2016). He is a recipient of many international awards, the latest nominated by the Albert Einstein Foundation, for being one of the 100 most visionary people in the world (Albert Einstein Foundation, 2017).

According to Sant Jordi Asociados (2012), Coelho was the writer with the highest number of social media followers and the most influential celebrity on Twitter in 2010. By 2012 he had won 110 international prizes and awards and was included in the Guinness Book of Records 2009 for most translations of the same book

(“The Alchemist”, translated into 67 languages). “The Alchemist” in 2016 has been translated into 81 languages and according to the Washington Post Coelho has sold around 350 million books worldwide (Heller, 2016).

Coelho’s success is ascribed to his unconventional idea of pirating his own work on the internet, making it public and disseminating it free of charge (Bosman, 2011). This philosophy has helped him to sell tens of millions of books, besides his unbeatable activity on Twitter and Facebook and about six million people followed him at times on Facebook, which were more than those following the pop-singer Madonna (Bosman, 2011). He saw the internet as a means to connect to his readers and to share his ideas and thoughts that he did not promote in his books. His internet presence definitely contributed to his success and bestselling numbers. Coelho commented with regard to his success (Arias, 2001):

I chose it and I’ve dreamt of it all my life. I’ve always pursued it, stumbling, often making mistakes, but I triumphed through the force of my will, and this has always been my motto. (p. 148)

However, besides Coelho’s achievements with regard to his book publications, he also founded the Paulo Coelho Institute (Coelho, 2015a, 2015b), which is a non-profit-making institution financed largely by his royalties. The aim of building up this organisation was to provide opportunities for the underprivileged in Brazilian society. The organisation educates 430 children and also cares for the elderly. Coelho implemented this social project through his success and his royalties (Coelho, 2015a, 2015b).

3.9.7 Paulo Coelho’s Political Engagement

Coelho’s political engagement increased in his 60s. In 2003, he wrote a letter to President Bush, 10 days before the invasion of Iraq, in which he criticised George W. Bush’s politics and warfare against Iraq. He published this letter in his blog in 2008 (Coelho, 2008b). In this letter, Coelho (2008b) took a stand against Bush’s war politics, against the injustice of the US and international politics concerning Iraq. He ended his letter with the following words (Coelho, 2008b):

Thank you, because without you we would not have realized our own ability to mobilize. It may serve no purpose this time, but it will be useful later on. Now that there seems no way of silencing the drums of war, I would like to borrow the words of an ancient European king to an invader: ‘May your morning be a beautiful one, with the sun shining on your soldiers’ armor, for in the afternoon I will defeat you.

So, enjoy your morning and whatever glory it may yet bring you.

Thank you for not listening to us and not taking us seriously, but understand that we hear you and will not forget your words.

Thank you, great leader George W. Bush.

Coelho clarified his concerns about the short-sightedness of Bush’s foreign affairs and politics and emphasised that 1 day he would experience the reactions to his current attitude. Coelho realised his own powerlessness in his letter, but he

believed that 1 day the mobilisation of the peacemakers would play a role with regard to Bush's actions and the war.

In 2014, Brazil was the guest country at the Frankfurt book fair (Tageblatt, 2014). The Brazilian government invited only 70 Brazilian authors to attend the book fair in October 2014. Paulo Coelho was angry about the favouritism of the Brazilian government and unhappy with the choice of invited Brazilian authors and considered not attending the book fair in protest (Deutsche Presse Agentur, 2014).

Only a few months later, in 2015, Coelho criticised swisscom, his Swiss phone company, harshly on Facebook for its service and inability to resolve his problems. He used his unbroken media power to get rid of his frustrations online and received a huge number of responses from his internet community; swisscom apologised officially online (LeNews, 2015). Paulo Coelho started using his (political) power in the media world to create images of the other, based on his experiences.

In an interview with RTL (2014) Coelho commented after being asked about his motivation to write books: „J'ecris parce que j'ai envie d'écrire, parce que c'est ma vie." Therefore, it can be expected that there are more creative works to come in the future of Paulo Coelho.

3.9.8 *At the Peak of His Career*

Paulo Coelho has 'made it'. However, he still writes new books, usually every second year. Still at the peak of his career, and after writing numerous books on self-development and spiritual journeys, Paulo Coelho (2014b) deals with his life topics of faith, fear and the question of the purpose of life, and his personal way forward. He wrote in his blog:

Many people tell me: "I often feel that I am ignored by God. Why is it so hard to establish a dialogue with the Divine?"

On one hand we know that it is important to seek God.

On the other hand, life distances us from Him/Her – because we feel ignored by the Divine, or else because we are busy with our daily life.

This makes us feel very guilty: either we feel that we are renouncing life too much because of God, or else we feel that we are renouncing God too much because of life.

This apparent double law is a fantasy: God is in life, and life is in God.

If we manage to penetrate the sacred harmony of our daily existence, we shall always be on the right road, because our daily tasks are also our divine tasks.

When you feel this, just recite in the silence of your heart a beautiful prayer by Thomas Merton:

My Lord God, I have no idea where I am going,
I do not see the road ahead of me.
I cannot know for certain where it will end.

Nor do I really know myself,
and the fact that I think I am following your will
does not mean that I am actually doing so.

But I believe that the desire to please you does in fact please you.
And I hope I have that desire in all that I am doing.

I hope that I will never do anything apart from that desire.
And I know that if I do this you will lead me by the right road,
though I may know nothing about it.

I will not fear, for you are ever with me,
and you will never leave me to face my perils alone.

3.9.9 An Overview on Paulo Coelho's Life and Creative Works

The following section provides an overview of Paulo Coelho's life and his creative works from 1947 to 2017. This overview does not claim completeness with regard to the listings of his creative works and important life events, but provides a concise overview of his life and most of his well-known creative work from birth to his 70th birthday.

Paulo Coelho's Early Childhood (1947–1953) – From Birth to Five Years

1947: Born on 24 August 1947 in Rio de Janeiro from the parents Lygia Araripe Coelho de Souza and Pedro Queima Coelho de Souza.

1951: He grows up in a security estate, cared for mainly by his mother, who is a housewife, and attends kindergarten from the age of four and a half years.

Childhood and Schooldays (1953–1961) – From Six to Fourteen Years

1954: Coelho attends a Christian school, "Our Lady Victorious School", from the age of 6 years old.

1955: He soon develops a strong interest in reading and creative writing and is not particularly interested in school.

1956: He participates in and wins his first writing competition.

1959: He starts keeping a diary, makes tape-recordings and produces his first self-portrait.

The Teenage Years (1962–1966) – From Fourteen to Nineteen Years

1962: Coelho develops the idea of being "an atheist" and becoming a writer.

1962: He attends the Jesuit school St Ignatius and struggles with his belief in God.

1962: Coelho's parents move into a new security estate in Gaviá and Coelho is devastated; however, he soon establishes the literary club, Rota 15.

1963: Coelho's grandfather dies and Coelho writes his first theatre play, "The ugly boy", as well as a booklet of poetry and wins the top prize in the Academia Literária Santo Inácio with the poem, "Thirteen-year-old woman".

1964: Coelho changes schools to Andrews College and enjoys the openness and creative clubs at the school. He joins the theatre and the film clubs and

political discussions. He also joins “Paissandu generation”, a club of intellectuals and left-wing activists in Rio.

1965: Coelho’s parents take him to a mental hospital for the first time, where he stays for 28 days.

1966: Coelho is taken to a mental hospital for the second time and the doctor applies electroshock therapy. He stays for more than 3 months.

The Twenties (1967–1976) – From Twenty to Twenty-Nine Years

1967: He is taken to mental hospital for the third and last time.

1968: Coelho produces his first play on stage, sponsored by his girlfriend Fabiola.

1970: Coelho turns to drugs and to the occult and produces more theatre plays.

1971: Coelho marries his first wife, Gisa.

1972: Occupied with the occult, Coelho forms a pact with the devil.

1973: He meets Raum Seixas, starts writing lyrics and songtexts and holds theatre workshops at the university.

1973: Coelho publishes a book: “Theatre in education”.

1974: Together with his wife, Gisa, Coelho is kidnapped and tortured. After their release the relationship breaks up.

The Thirties (1977–1986) – From Thirty to Thirty-Nine Years

1977: Coelho marries his second wife, Cissa, and gets divorced in 1979.

1979: Coelho finds his way back to Christianity and during the same year meets his life partner, Cristina.

1982: Cristina and Coelho visit Dachau and Coelho experiences the “birth of the writer”.

1982: In Amsterdam he meets Jean and decides to become part of RAM and to accept Jean as his master.

1982: Cristina and Coelho open their first enterprise and promote their work together.

1983: Coelho walks the Road to Santiago and becomes a Master of RAM at the age of 36 years.

The Forties (1987–1996) – From Forty to Forty-Nine Years

1987: Coelho publishes “The pilgrimage”.

1988: “The alchemist” is published.

1988: Coelho and Cristina spend 40 days in the Mojave Desert in California.

1989: Coelho walks the Road to Rome.

1990: He publishes “Brida”.

1991: “The supreme gift” is published.

1992: “The Valkyries” is published.

1993: Coelho’s mother dies of complications with Alzheimer’s disease.

1994: The book “By the river Piedro I sat down and wept” is published (first book of the trilogy: – published in English translation as Coelho 1996).

1995: “The fifth mountain” is published (second book of trilogy) and the terms “Coelhomania” and “Coelhisme” are coined.

The Fifties (1997–2006) – From Fifty to Fifty-Nine Years

- 1998: “Veronica decides to die” is published.
- 1999: The text collection “The wanderer” is published.
- 2000: “The devil and Miss Prym” (third book of trilogy) is published and Coelho attends the world economic forum in Davos.
- 2001: On the second try, Coelho receives a lifelong seat in the Brazilian Academy of Letters and Juan Arias publishes an exclusive interview with Paulo Coelho.
- 2003: Coelho publishes “Eleven minutes” and “Warrior of the light” in the same year. He also writes a letter of peace to US President George W. Bush.
- 2004: “The zahir” is published. Cristina and Coelho buy an old mill in France where they spend their time during summer.
- 2006: Coelho publishes “The witch of Portobello” and “Like a flowing river”.

The Sixties (2007–2016/2017) – From Sixty to Sixty-Nine

- 2007: Around his sixtieth birthday, Coelho had sold over 100 million copies of his books, translated into 66 languages in 160 countries.
- 2008: “The winner stands alone” is published.
- 2009: Morais publishes the first biography on Paulo Coelho and his life up to his sixtieth birthday.
- 2010: The first video documentary on Paulo Coelho is published. He is the most influential celebrity on Twitter during this year.
- 2011: Paulo Coelho publishes the book “Aleph”
- 2012: “The manuscript found in Accra” is published. By 2012, Coelho had sold over 140 million copies of books worldwide, published in 73 languages, and his books had been sold in more than 168 countries. He had published 22 books, 13 novels, five short stories, two adaptations, one anthology and one book of fables. Around 60 theatre adaptations of Paulo Coelho’s works exist. In addition, Coelho is the writer with the highest number of social media followers. By 2012 he had won 110 international prizes and awards and was included in the Guinness Book of Records 2009 for most translations of the same book.
- 2014: “Adultery” is published and Paulo Coelho is still at the peak of his career as a writer. He lives part of the year in Geneva, Switzerland, his country of choice.
- 2016: The book “The Spy” on Mata Hari is published one year before his 70th birthday.
- 2017: Paulo Coelho is nominated as one of the 100 most visionary thinkers of our times by the Albert Einstein foundation.

3.10 Chapter Summary

This chapter explores and presents the major events in the life of Paulo Coelho according to first- and third-person documents used, as explained in Sect. 6.8.2. This chapter presents the life of Paulo Coelho and the publication of this creative

works – which are often linked to or even fundamentally based on autobiographical experiences – in a chronological manner. It shows how Paulo Coelho followed his dream to become a writer and how he became one of the most popular and writers in the world selling most books.

Following the theoretical discussions presented in Chaps. 4 and 5, as well as the research methodology in Chap. 6, the findings of Paulo Coelho’s holistic wellness and his faith development are presented in Chaps. 7 and 8. In the findings section, Paulo Coelho’s biography will be analysed, using the two theories and the information described above. However, the findings will focus on two selected creative works of Paulo Coelho, which will be analysed using the theories described: “The pilgrimage”, as the first autobiographical manuscript of Paulo Coelho and as the first publication which was widely distributed and “Aleph”, one of his recent books that is strongly autobiographical and is described as one of his most personal books.

The theories applied in this study on Paulo Coelho are introduced in the following chapters.

Chapter 4

The Holistic Wellness Model

The ability to be in the present moment is a major component of mental wellness.

Abraham Maslow in Zubko 2004, p. 247

4.1 Chapter Preview

This theoretical chapter introduces the HWM that has been applied successfully in psychobiographical research before to (re)construct the lives of extraordinary individuals (see Sect. 4.7). The chapter provides the reader with basic insights into the definitions of wellness and related constructs and presents the HWM and its development. As one part of the wellness model, the wheel of wellness (WOW) is introduced. It includes the six life tasks: spirituality, self-direction, work and leisure, friendship and love. In the following section, the concept of life forces and global events is described. Finally, the concept of the indivisible self (IS-Wel) is presented, the importance and implications of the HWM in the context of psychobiographical research is explored and its critics and limitations are addressed.

4.2 Introduction

Over the past decades, research on health, wellbeing and wellness has increased (Mayer, 2011). At the same time the importance of positive psychology concepts has been emphasised (Mayer & Van Zyl, 2013; Seligman, 2011). Various wellness models that exist in this positive psychology paradigm are based on different theoretical perspectives, referring to human experiences, the mind, body, spirit, and community (Moe, Perera-Diltz, & Rodriguez, 2012). One of the central concepts in the positive psychology movement is the neo-Adlerian HWM (Myers & Sweeney, 2008; Myers, Sweeney, & Witmer, 2000; Sweeney & Witmer, 1991; Witmer & Sweeney, 1992). This wellness model has been successfully applied in psychobiographical research (Burnell, 2013; Fouché & Van Niekerk, 2010; Fouché, Burnell, & van Niekerk, 2015) and has therefore been chosen to reconstruct the lives of extraordinary individuals in a positive psychology frame.

In this study, this wellness model has been chosen to reconstruct the life of Paulo Coelho in Sects. 7.3, 7.4 and 7.5 to emphasise his holistic life approach in terms of integrating body, mind and spirit, as well as overall life tasks, such as spirituality, self-direction, work and leisure, friendship and love (Myers, Sweeney, & Witmer, 2001) by interlinking them with external influences, such as life forces and global impacts. It has been chosen as an integrative model, using a holistic focus that is committed to multidimensionality and a synergetic approach. In focusing on a preliminary view on Coelho's life, in terms of collected first- and third-person documents, it is assumed that Coelho's life can be best explored through a holistic and integrative perspective. This theoretical perspective is congruent with psychobiographical research that aims at studying the person as a holistic being. At the same time, the HWM includes various life tasks and life forces that are of interest for the analysis of Coelho's life. The model has been used in psychobiographical research before and proven suitable and valuable (see Chap. 6).

Before the model is introduced, the term "wellness" is defined.

4.3 Defining Wellness

Wellness is a central construct in the positive psychology movement (Roscoe, 2009) that has primarily been introduced from the 1950s onwards by changing the focus of psychology to a more positive psychological approach (Strümpfer, 2006). In the South African context, the number of positive psychology studies has increased since the 1970s (Coetzee & Viviers, 2007) and many research projects have been conducted in the context of salutogenesis (Mayer, 2011) and fortigenesis (Strümpfer, 1995, 2006). Wissing and van Eeden (1997) emphasised that with regard to the positive psychology framework, different constructs should be studied empirically, including characteristics, development and enhancement of well-being and wellness. In this study, wellness is viewed as a continuous movement towards optimal functioning, which is connected to self-responsibility and motivation in positive psychology (Roscoe, 2009).

Wellness, as a positive psychology construct, has been studied by psychologists, such as Alfred Adler, Carl Jung, Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow. In these psychological approaches, wellness has been addressed in terms of wholeness and holistic approaches to the individual, his/her wellness and well-being (Sweeney, 2009). According to Myers (2009), the holistic approach refers to the integration of physical, psychological and spiritual aspects and thus to the integration of body, mind and spirit, which is assumed to be the base of wellness.

Since the concept of wellness has been researched and studied from multidisciplinary backgrounds, several definitions of wellness exist. Fouché (1999) highlights that the definitions of wellness vary from reductionistic to holistic viewpoints. However, most of the wellness models refer to the holistic and salutogenetic paradigm shift, which is part of positive psychology, and is defined as an "alternative to the traditional, illness-based medicine model for treatment of mental and physical

disorders” (Myers et al., 2000, p. 251). Wellness has since become a central construct in positive psychology as a discipline and wellness models have been broadly used for psychological assessments (Myers, 2009).

With regard to the interdisciplinary history of the development of wellness as a construct, various models of wellness have been developed in the past with different foci and dimensions of wellness (Myers, 1992; Nosek et al., 1994). Crose, Nicholas, Gobbe and Frank (1992) emphasised the aspects of intellectual, emotional, physical, social, occupational and spiritual wellness in their wellness model. Hettler (1984, p. 14) defined wellness as “an active process through which people become aware of, and make choices toward a more successful existence”. Therefore, wellness is defined as the deliberate and purposive choice of the individual to lead a successful and healthy life. Hettler (1984) emphasised in his six-dimension model that the physical, social, emotional, intellectual, occupational and spiritual dimensions contribute to general wellness and the subjective experience and responsibility to a feeling of wellness in the individual. Other authors, for example Cowen (1991), highlight that not only the individual responsibility is in focus, but that aspects such as the environment (e.g. educational system, the society), and the available resources, such as the family, play a role in subjective wellness, too. Moreover, Adams, Bezner and Steinhart (1997) and Renger et al. (2000) in their wellness models combined psychological and environmental wellness. Fouché (1999), however, identified seven dimensions of wellness as core components, namely social, emotional, physical, intellectual, spiritual, occupational and environmental wellness. Myers et al. (2000) developed their model of wellness as a multidimensional, synergetic wellness construct with a holistic and integrative focus by taking previously mentioned wellness constructs into account. In accordance with the definition of wellness by Hettler (1984), Myers et al. (2000) define wellness as a:

way of life orientation toward optimal health and well-being in which body, mind, and spirit are integrated by the individual to live more fully within the human and natural community. Ideally, it is the optimum state of health and well-being that each individual is capable of achieving. (p. 252)

Thereby, spirituality is conceived as the foundation of wellness, which is a subjective, integrated and individual construct and viewed as the central point of individual health.

In the following section, the wellness model is presented and discussed in depth.

4.4 Introducing the Holistic Wellness Model

This wellness model is based on the principles of holism, referring to the Adlerian theory. According to Moe, Perera-Diltz and Rodriguez (2012, p. 2), Adler’s theoretical approach includes “(a) an innate striving for superiority or mastery and (b) a social interest in the development of other’s well-being”. In this approach, individuals are viewed as whole beings who belong to a dynamic social context, such as the

nation, society, family or friends. The individual requires a sense of purpose in life and a movement towards achieving aims and goals (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956). Based on the work of Witmer and Young (1996), Adler defined work, love and friendship or community as three important aspects for individuals to recognise and integrate into themselves to achieve optimal well-being.

In the HWM, the five life tasks of neo-Adlerian individual psychology are used as an organising principle (Myers, 2009) and build the components of wellness (Myers, 2009). The model's psychological foundation is based on different fields. According to Hattie, Myers and Sweeney (2004), the model is interdisciplinary, but based in psychology, such as personality, social, developmental, clinical and health psychology. It also includes aspects of theology, anthropology, education, sociology, medicine and education (Hermon & Hazlor, 1999).

Holistic wellness is based on life tasks, including spirituality, self-direction, work (occupation) and leisure, friendship and love (Myers et al., 2000). These life tasks are based on the Adlerian concepts (1927) of social interest and lifestyle. They refer to the sense of community and human fellowship (social interest) and the individual's complex beliefs and philosophic assumptions, which are connected to the general approach to life (lifestyle). According to Adler (1927), the optimal development of the individual is based on a constructive lifestyle.

In their early model, Sweeney and Witmer (1991) and Witmer and Sweeney (1992) promote five life tasks. Sweeney (2009) highlights that according to Adler, three tasks are of main importance to the development of an individual: work, friendship and love. Two more tasks, namely self-regulation and spirituality, were included by Mosak and Dreikurs (2000). In 2000, the HWM was modified, the life task leisure was integrated and the task self-regulation was renamed self-direction (Myers et al., 2000). Twelve defined sub-tasks for the life-task self-direction were included (five more than in the original model).

In the model, the life tasks are viewed as being dynamically interlinked with external influences (named life forces), including family, religion, education, community, government, media, business/industry. The links were extended to global events, such as disease, war, pollution, economic exploitation and/or poverty (Sweeney & Witmer, 1991; Witmer & Sweeney, 1992). The theoretical approach will be explained in depth in the following section.

4.5 The Holistic Wellness Model

Witmer and Sweeney (1992) developed their theory of holistic wellness based on the WOW (Myers et al., 2001; Sweeney & Witmer, 1991; Witmer & Sweeney, 1992), which is on the one hand a developmental model that is based on counselling and on the other hand a theoretical model that is based on reviews of cross-disciplinary studies (Myers & Sweeney, 2007).

Across the years, the WOW theory has been developed and extended and in this study the latest version is used (Myers et al., 2000). Besides including the high-level

functioning domains of spirituality, self-direction, work, occupation and leisure, friendship and love as basic life tasks (Myers et al., 2000), the WOW is profoundly based on spirituality as the foundation of wellness (Moe et al., 2012). Spirituality is depicted as the centre and the most important characteristic of wellness (Myers & Sweeney, 2007). The centre of spirituality is defined as purpose, meaning, sense of connection and optimism that individuals experience referring to their own life (Sweeney & Witmer, 1991). According to Myers and Sweeney (2007), spirituality integrates a sense of meaning in life, as well as religious or spiritual beliefs and practices. Around the centre of spirituality and self-direction, the model includes 12 sub-tasks of self-direction that integrate sense of worth, sense of control, realistic beliefs, emotional awareness and coping, problem-solving and creativity, sense of humour, exercise, nutrition, self-care, stress management, gender identity, and cultural identity (Myers & Sweeney, 2007), as shown in Fig. 4.1. The function of these sub-life-tasks is to direct the self, while dealing with the other three life tasks of work and leisure, friendship and love.

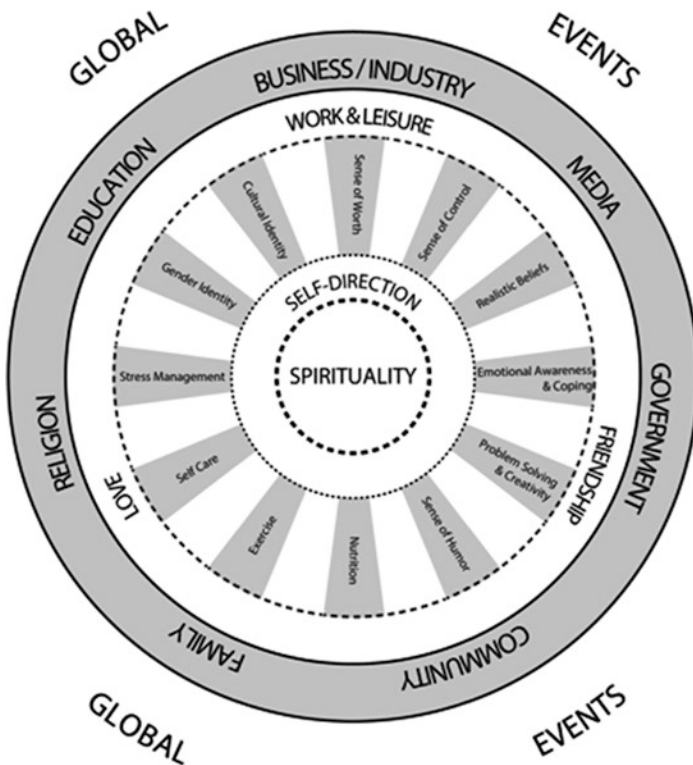


Fig. 4.1 The wheel of wellness (Source: Myers et al., 2000, p. 253)

The WOW includes surrounding life forces, such as media, government, family, religion, education, community, business and industry, which have an impact on the life and wellness of individuals as external sources. The authors apply a systemic worldview, emphasising that the components are interactive and inter-dependent. Changes in one or the other area might have an impact on and contribute to changes in others (Myers & Sweeney, 2007). Myers et al. (2000) in addition highlight that changing life tasks usually result in influencing subsequent life tasks and their development, which are salient at different developmental periods of life. The life tasks and life forces are explained and defined in the following section.

4.5.1 Life Tasks

The five life tasks, the life forces and the global events - as presented in the WOW – will be described in depth. The WOW builds the foundation of investigating Paulo Coelho’s holistic wellness from his birth in 1947 to 2017, the year in which he turns 70 years old and the study is written.

4.5.1.1 Spirituality

Spirituality encompasses life-enhancing benefits, including human dignity, human rights and reverence for life (Witmer & Sweeney, 1992). If spirituality is developed well, it has a positive impact on other dimensions in the wellness model (Myers & Sweeney, 2008). At the same time, spirituality includes purposiveness in life, hope or optimism, the anticipation of future events and the guidance of other human beings towards decision-making and social interactions (Nortjé, Fouché, & Gogo, 2013).

Spirituality is defined by Witmer and Sweeney (1992, p. 141) as “certain life-enhancing beliefs about human dignity, human rights, and reverence for life.” Witmer and Sweeney distinguish spirituality from religion and do not see these two concepts as necessarily connected. This might be due to the fact that religiosity is rather defined as an institutionalised concept, while spirituality is not (Mayer, 2012). Myers et al. (2000, p. 9) later define spirituality as the “awareness of a being or force that transcends the material aspects of life and gives a deep sense of wholeness or connectedness to the universe”. Spirituality in itself can be a strong health resource (Larson & Larson, 2003; Mayer, 2011; Mayer & Krause, 2013; Temane & Wissing, 2006), which is interlinked with the construction of meaningfulness across the life span (Mayer & Viviers, 2014b).

According to Fouché (1999), spirituality is multidimensional and multi-layered, while using a general approach. Spirituality is a subjective experience that connects the individual with the self, others and the entire universe (Krishnakumar & Neck,

2002). The experience of the present moment is a key element of spiritual development (Maslow, 1979). It provides the individual with a deep sense of wholeness, inclusiveness and connectedness and connects the individual to a higher power (Koch, 1998). It is part of the life-long process of identity formation and contributes to experiencing wholeness (Furqon & Mustofa, 2014). Duignan and Bhindi (1997) see in spirituality an attempt of the individual to comprehend the connectedness of work, relationships with others and life beyond the self. Moving beyond the self provides an opportunity for a search for meaning and belonging (Hill et al., 2000). Spirituality and its development can be addressed by religion, other ideologies and practices (Roehlkepartain, Kind, Wagener, & Benson, 2006). Generally spoken, it is interconnectedness (Mitroff & Denton, 1999) and a way of life (Dantley, 2005), which is expressed through creativity, laughter, freedom, humour and effectiveness, as well as an attitude of “being” rather than “having” (Labuschagne, 2013). With regard to their HWM, Myers, Luecht, and Sweeney (2004) refer to the spirituality concept of Mosak and Dreikurs (1967, 2000). Mosak and Dreikurs (2000) define spirituality in terms of five dimensions:

1. The description of God – responding to the question: Do I believe in God and if yes, how do I communicate with God and how do I build up a relationship?
2. The choice of practice of religion – responding to the question: How do I practise spirituality and how does spirituality fit into the concepts and practices of religion?
3. The conceptualisation of humankind’s place in the universe – responding to the question: How do I see humankind and its relation to God and the universe?
4. Consideration of the nature of immortality – responding to the question of what the soul is and if and how it might live on after death, as well as how humans try to overcome mortality.
5. Contemplation of the presence and nature of the meaning of life – responding to the question of how meaning in life is created.

The definition of Mosak and Dreikurs (2000) is based on the Adlerian definition of spirituality. This preference is based on the early works of Mosak (1995) and Mosak and Maniaci (1999) who in their early scientific research worked with Adlerian concepts and the assumption that God is an idea of humankind and not necessarily a reality (Adler, 1992). This assumption is based on Adler’s constructivist approach to spirituality, which is reflected in the five dimensions of Mosak and Dreikurs (2000). Adler highlights (1938) that individuals value the idea of a social feeling, which is seen as the ideal imagined state in which individuals would like to find themselves (Adler, 1938). This aim of the positive social feeling as imagined state is also reflected in the five dimensions of Mosak and Dreikurs (2000). Myers et al. (2000) expand the model and present the other life-tasks as related to spirituality.

4.5.1.2 Self-Direction

Focusing on self-direction, an individual is able to direct, control and manage the self in ways that are self-enhancing within the boundaries and defined norms of the social group or society (Witmer & Sweeney, 1992). Self-direction includes 12 sub-life-tasks and is defined as the way a person “regulates, disciplines, and directs the self in daily activities and in pursuit of long-range goals” (Myers et al., 2000, p. 353).

The coping self is composed of various elements that regulate humans’ responses to life, events and situations to transcend negative affects (Myers & Sweeney, 2004). The significance of the concept of self-regulation was identified by Bandura (2005) and is associated with the acquisition of knowledge, skills, the achievement of potential and the level of self-development. Individuals who score low on self-regulation usually hardly achieve progress in self-development. However, self-regulation can be taught through authentic opportunities to develop and practise it (Gross, Cuddihy, & Michaud-Tomson, 2004). Ryan, Kuhl and Deci (1997) point out that inner resources play an important role in the development of individuals, their behavioural self-regulation and other personality development processes. In an article published 3 years later, Ryan and Deci (2000) stated in their theory on self-determination that competence, autonomy and relatedness, being defined as inner psychological needs, can either enhance or undermine intrinsic motivation, self-regulation and well-being. If the three inner psychological needs are fulfilled, they seem to enhance intrinsic motivation, self-regulation and well-being. If they stay unfulfilled, they seem to reduce them.

According to Myers and Sweeney (2008), self-regulation includes physical fitness and health habits, a sense of humour, creativity, problem-solving, spontaneity, realistic beliefs, a sense of control, intellectual stimulation, emotional responsiveness and a sense of worth. Based on self-regulation, Myers and Sweeney defined the 12 sub-life-tasks of self-direction. These 12 sub-tasks support the regulation and direction of the self, while responding to the life tasks of work and leisure, friendship and love (Sweeney, 2009).

The 12 sub-life-tasks of self-direction, which are used in this study are (Myers, & Sweeney, 2008): (a) sense of worth, (b) sense of control, (c) realistic beliefs, (d) emotional awareness and coping, (e) problem-solving and creativity, (f) sense of humour, (g) nutrition, (h) exercise, (i) self-care, (j) stress management, (k) gender identity, and (l) cultural identity.

These sub-life-tasks will be described and defined in the following section.

(a) Sense of worth

According to Sweeney and Witmer (1991), sense of worth is strongly related to sense of control, which both refer to the concept of self-esteem. Self-worth affects personal growth and behaviour (Witmer & Sweeney, 1992) and includes acceptance of the self in terms of perfection and imperfection, strengths and weaknesses (Myers et al., 2000). Self-worth has been defined as a “salient intrapersonal characteristic that can significantly affect a child’s potential to be resilient, suggesting that self-

worth may be the most important trait in resilient adolescents” (Davey, Eaker, & Walters, 2003, p. 350). In terms of wellness, strong self-worth is connected to positive connotations and well-being, while low self-worth is interlinked with ill health, perceived negative feelings and poor coping (Witmer & Sweeney, 1992). Research further emphasises that individuals with high self-worth see themselves in a positive way and have positive feelings about themselves and their ability to take control and influence their social environment. High self-worth is moreover connected to the belief that challenges can be tackled and overcome (Davey et al., 2003, p. 350).

(b) Sense of control

Sense of control is related to positive constructs, such as belief in the possibility of certain outcomes, competences, mastery, confidence and comprehension (Sweeney & Witmer, 1991). In the psychological literature “sense of control” is also referred to as “locus of control” (originally coined by Rotter, 1966), which refers, according to Zimbardo (1985, p. 275), to the “belief about whether the outcome[s] of our actions are contingent on what we do (internal control orientation) or on events outside our personal control (external control orientation).” Myers et al. (2000, p. 254) emphasise that sense of control is positively related to wellness and effective coping, improved physical health and self-esteem. It is therefore important for the holistic wellness of an individual.

(c) Realistic beliefs

The dimension of realistic beliefs is related to the ability to perceive reality as it is at the moment, to adjust beliefs regarding perfection and acceptance and the ability to revise negative and destructive self-dialogue (Myers et al., 2000). It has been argued that matching subjective and objective realities – so that the individual is able to respond to life events and challenges in a realistic and appropriate way – contributes to improved health and well-being (Myers et al., 2000). A discrepancy between the individual’s subjective reality and an objective reality perception may lead to inadequate observations and expectations and consequently to a decrease in wellness (Myers et al., 2000). Myers et al. (2000, p. 254) point out: “Healthy people are able to process information accurately and perceive reality as it is rather than as they wish it to be. People who have realistic beliefs are able to accept themselves as imperfect.”

(d) Emotional awareness and coping

Myers et al. (2000) emphasise that wellness is related to how an individual is able to recognise and respond to emotions experienced and expressed by the person and others. Individuals who can express and decode emotions appropriately in others might feel well, while individuals who are unable to experience and express emotions and feelings might be restricted in terms of wellness and well-being (Myers et al., 2000). Myers et al. (2000, p. 254) highlight that healthy functioning that relates to well-being is connected to “rich, varied and frequent expressions and responses to people and events within one’s daily experience”, which generally relates to recognition of and the ability to respond to emotions. Emotions and the

ability to be aware of emotions in oneself and others are strongly connected with concepts of cognition and intuition and the ability to behave appropriately (in terms of optimal behaviour for the individual in his/her social context) in a situation (Mayer & Viviers, 2014a).

(e) Problem-solving and creativity

Research shows that active problem-solving refers to positive health and well-being (Myers et al., 2000). Both concepts, problem-solving and creativity, are part of active intellectual stimulation, which is connected to the concept of quality of life (Myers et al., 2000).

The problem-solving ability is part of cognition as well as mental, emotional and motivational processes that form part of the concepts of manageability and meaningfulness of a person (Mayer & Viviers, 2014b). Polya (1980, p. 1), coming from a mathematical background, states that problem-solving is defined as “a way where no way is known, off-hand ... out of a difficulty ... around an obstacle.” Davidson and Sternberg (2003, p. 15) highlight that problem-solving in psychology is based on the “development of a highly specialized knowledge” that can lead to new rules in thinking and applications to resolve problems. Thereby, problem-solving is based on a problem-solving process, which includes “problem recognition and identification, problem definition and problem representation” (Davidson & Sternberg, 2003, p. 3). D’Zurilla, Nezu and Maydeu-Olivares (2004, p. 12) define problem-solving as “the self-directed cognitive-behavioral process by which an individual, couple, or group attempts to identify or discover effective solutions for specific problems, encountered in everyday living”. Myers et al. (2000, p. 254) define problem-solving relatively vaguely and broadly, based on the work of Montague (1981). Montague (1981 in Myers et al., 2000, p. 254) emphasises that “all thinking involves problem solving.” Furthermore, he suggests that the need to think soundly is innate and composed of several traits, including the need to know, the need to learn, the need to organise, curiosity and a sense of wonder.

Problem-solving is strongly connected to creativity, particularly when focusing on challenging problems that need creative approaches to conduct problem-solving (Guilford, 1977). Effective problem-solving also correlates with an increase in mental health and well-being (Eskin, 2013).

According to Witmer and Sweeney (1992), creativity is a universal concept and Mayer & Viviers (2014b) points out that creativity and intuition are closely related concepts that are often inspired by the unconscious and might therefore lead to consciously unexpected outcomes. Creativity refers to creating and developing new ideas and concepts (Myers et al., 2000, p. 254), which are often ascribed to unconscious processes of the mind or even magic and magical thinking (Mayer & Viviers, 2014a). Witmer and Sweeney (1992) highlight that creativity is also connected to other concepts, such as imagination and problem-solving, originality, inventiveness and expressiveness. The authors (Myers et al., 2000, p. 254) define creativity as a “multidimensional phenomenon involving the ability to develop new or different concepts, ideas, structures, or products” and has a positive impact on mental health.

(f) Sense of humour

Humour is an important resource in terms of health and well-being (Witmer & Sweeney, 1992). A healthy sense of humour is viewed as being thoughtful, spontaneous and even philosophical (Sweeney & Witmer, 1991) while not taking life – including social status and the importance as an individual – too seriously (Sweeney & Witmer, 1991). Humour that is experienced in a positive way has an impact on reaching goals and working through tasks (Myers & Sweeney, 2008). Humour is defined as “a cognitive and emotional process, includes both recognition and appreciation of humorous stimuli and creation of humorous stimuli” (Solomon, 1996 in Myers et al., 2000, p. 254). Humour is associated with positive mental health.

(g) Nutrition

Health and well-being are connected to healthy nutrition (Antonovsky, 1979) and research has found that positive and healthy nutrition contributes to a positive feeling of well-being (Mayer, 2011). Myers et al. (2000) have also found a relationship between poor nutrition and a decline in physical, psychological and emotional health. Witmer and Sweeney (1992) highlight that nutrition affects health, as well as performance at work and mood.

(h) Exercise

Exercise is associated with well-being and positive health (Mayer, 2011) and the interlinkages of physical exercise and psychological well-being have been studied and promoted (Sweeney, 2009). However, Sweeney also points out that particularly nutrition and exercise have been strongly promoted and overemphasised as health-related concepts while others have been neglected. Mayer (2011) emphasises that spiritual concepts and holistic approaches are often underestimated or even neglected.

(i) Self-care

Self-care is an important dimension in self-direction and according to Myers et al. (2000) and Myers and Sweeney (2008) it is related to (a) engaging in protecting and safe behaviour, which keeps individuals away from injury and death, (b) regular medical and dental precautional check-ups to maintain health, and (c) the avoidance of both ingestible as well as environmental toxic and harmful substances. Self-care activities influence well-being and longevity positively (Myers et al., 2000).

(j) Stress management

The consequences of stress have been well documented during the past years (Myers et al., 2000). Antonovsky (1979) mentioned that human beings have to cope with immense stressors on a daily basis. He asked the question, “What keeps people healthy?” Myers et al. (2000) responded that stress management methods, such as meditation, relaxation, visualisation, biofeedback, as well as learning skills such as communication, assertiveness, and problem-solving can support the management of stress and strengthen wellness in individuals. Recent studies have shown that stress-

ful interactions can be overcome through certain conflict management strategies, which are influenced by the cultural, social and professional background of a person (Mayer, 2015a, 2015b; Surtee, & May, 2015).

(k) Gender identity

Gender identity is a dimension in the HWM that influences self-direction and acts as a kind of filter with regard to the experience of others, social contacts and life experiences (Sweeney, 2009). Gender identity is viewed as the perception of the individual regarding his/her gender (masculine, feminine) (Myers et al., 2000). A healthy relationship to gender exists when a person feels supported in his/her gender, gender role and gender identity. Mayer and Van Zyl (2013) have found that mental health and gender awareness are related and Myers et al. (2000) highlight that gender role identity is strongly interlinked with gender role expectations and socio-cultural values and norms. Mayer and Van Zyl (2013) further show that female leaders with a strong sense of coherence define gender as positive or neutral in a male-dominated work environment, while female leaders with a weak sense of coherence seem to experience gender as affecting them negatively (Mayer & Van Zyl, 2013). Health and well-being are influenced by gender and culture (Mayer & Barnard, 2015).

(l) Cultural identity

The construction of identities plays a major role with regard to concepts of difference, sameness, conflict, values, culture and race (Mayer, 2005). Culture and gender determine the self-image of an individual (Sweeney, 2009). Recent research emphasises that culture, cultural identity and race constructs are related to mental health and well-being in a highly complex way (Mayer & Viviers, 2014a, 2014b). In the research study, these constructs are seen as potential mental and physical health resources that can support individuals in remaining healthy or increasing health, based on the (positive) awareness of these constructs and their role in the life of individuals, attitudes to spirituality and religion and certain spiritual practices, such as praying or meditation (Mayer & Viviers, 2014a). In another study, the authors show that culture, identity, race, language, religion and spirituality had an impact on an individual person's life, with changes occurring during an 11-year research process (Mayer & Viviers, 2014b). In accordance with events in the life of the individual, such as professional changes, decision-making, or the impact of the constructs described above, cultural identity varies in its impact on mental health and well-being in a very individualistic way. It always relates to the identity parts on which the person focuses with regard to the life phase he is in (e.g. at some time, the individual defines himself as Christian, then as Jewish, then as spiritual, then as belonging to a certain congregation) and the feelings that are bound to this feeling of belonging.

In the HWM, culture is broadly defined to include race, acculturation and appreciation of cultural aspects (Myers et al., 2000). A positively defined cultural identity is reflected in positive well-being, an inner locus of control and independence (Myers et al., 2000). Cultural identity is strongly connected to how individu-

als construct meaning in life (Sweeney, 2009) and at work, which is again related to how healthy and well an individual feels (Mayer et al., 2015).

4.5.1.3 Work and Leisure

Work and leisure are defined as an “opportunity for pleasurable experiences that are intrinsically satisfying and provide a sense of accomplishment” (Myers et al. 2000, p. 256). Work is a primary life task and offers a context in which human beings locate their adult lives (Astin, 1984). Work includes activities of individuals that are meaningful to the individual and/or others and are defined as sustaining the individual and others (Mayer et al., 2015). It provides economic, psychological and social benefits to the individual and social well-being of humans. In the context of Witmer and Sweeney’s theoretical frame, work includes activities such as home-making, volunteer work and childrearing, as well as paid work (Witmer & Sweeney, 1992). Work is related to its purposefulness, such as economic and psychological support, as well as social benefits (Witmer & Sweeney, 1992). The inability to fulfil this life task might be health-threatening (Sweeney & Witmer, 1991) and individuals who are unable to “work” might struggle psychologically and economically (Witmer & Sweeney, 1992).

This life-task of work includes the life task of leisure, which is related to leisure-time activities, such as physical activities, creative work or social engagements, which all have a positive effect on emotional well-being and wellness (Witmer & Sweeney, 1992; Myers & Sweeney, 2008). Leisure time is important with regard to well-being and self-esteem (Myers et al., 2000). Leisure time reduces stress and contributes to well-being (Myers et al., 2000). It helps one to respond to life’s challenges (Sweeney, 2009).

4.5.1.4 Friendship

The life task of friendship is related to all social interactions, as well as social connectedness, which is experienced on an individual, communal or collective level (Myers et al., 2000, p. 256). The definition of friendship does not include a “marital, sexual or familial commitment” (Nortjé et al., 2013, p. 50), but the fact that human beings are viewed as social beings who are able to and need to connect to others in order to feel well and healthy. This fact has also been pointed out in the self-determination theory of Ryan and Deci (2000, p. 65), highlighting that social and contextual conditions support intrinsic motivation and that social contact and contextual conditions are interpreted as basic psychological needs and a support in “one’s feelings of competence, autonomy, and relatedness”. Sweeney and Witmer (1991) define friendship as providing self-disclosure, risk-taking and responsibilities. In the absence or failure of friendship, an individual may be more prone to illness, a shorter life expectancy and less satisfaction in life (Witmer & Sweeney, 1992). In contrast, a fulfilled social life with positive interactions can contribute to

wellness. Positive connections have been established between friendship and general well-being, positive and healthy behaviour (Myers et al., 2000). Friendship is furthermore interlinked with empathy and altruism (Witmer & Sweeney, 1992). Support systems, positive human interaction and constructive communication have a positive effect on the subjective experience of individual health and well-being (Mayer, 2011).

Friendship and love relationships differ in degree, nature of sharing, cooperation, intensity and intimacy within the relationship. However, the two dimensions can include similar elements, such as respect, interest in and accommodation of friends (Sweeney & Witmer, 1991).

4.5.1.5 Love

In contrast to the life task of friendship, the life task of love refers to relationships that are built on intimate and cooperative aspects, long-term commitment and self-disclosure. This life-task includes sexual relations (Witmer & Sweeney, 1992). Love is a committed, lasting, intimate relationship with another person. Myers et al. (2000) define the characteristics of healthy love relationships as the following: (a) the ability to be intimate, trusting, and self-disclosing with another person; (b) the ability to receive as well as express affection with significant others; (c) the capacity to experience or convey non-possessive caring that respects the uniqueness of another; (d) the presence of enduring, stable intimate relationships in one's life; (e) concern for the nurturance and growth of others; and (f) satisfaction with one's sexual life or the perception that one's needs for physical touch and closeness are being met, or both. (p. 257).

The six characteristics highlight that in healthy love relationships a balanced give and take of trust, affection, respect, caring, intimacy, nurturance, growth and sexual satisfaction needs to be provided. If this is not the case, health and wellness might be retrenched (Mayer, 2015a, 2015b). Love contributes to wellness and is defined as one of the most important aspects of social support (Myers et al., 2000). Love as a life-task incorporates a family or a family-like support system, which refers to values of shared cooperation and problem-solving, clear roles, commitment to the family and effective communication (Witmer & Sweeney, 1992). Healthy family relationships are based on appreciation, shared interest and values, social connectedness and spending time together (Myers et al., 2000). Argyle and Furnham (1983) highlight that relationships with family, partners, children and friends contribute strongly to the sense of satisfaction and well-being in a person's life.

In this section, the five life-tasks as well as their sub-tasks were described. In the following, the life forces integrated in the HWM will be described and outlined.

4.5.2 Life Forces

Sweeney and Witmer (1991) and Witmer and Sweeney (1992) emphasise that managing the five life-tasks is connected to the external life forces. Witmer and Sweeney (1992, p. 537) define life forces as “major societal institutions that impinge on the health and well-being of each individual”. Life forces, as societal institutions, include for Myers et al. (2000) the family, religion, education, community, media, government, and business and industry and are explained below.

4.5.2.1 Family

Families form a basic life force. In their publication the authors cite research of Stinnett and DeFrain (1985) showing that strong families are committed to each other’s well-being and happiness, express mutual appreciation, have good communication skills, spend time together, care about their spirituality and spiritual well-being and display effective coping skills (Witmer & Sweeney, 1992). In a more recent study, DeFrain and Asay (2007) highlight that families across cultures and around the world seem to be quite similar in terms of what is defined as a strong family: they are characterised by showing appreciation and affection, commitment, positive communication, enjoyable times together, spiritual well-being and the ability to manage stress and crisis effectively. Strong families are associated as a resilient institution in which individuals grow and support one another and thereby increase health and well-being (DeFrain & Asay, 2007).

Armstrong, Birnie-Lefcovitch, and Ungar (2005) emphasise that social support and the feeling of belonging have a significant impact on family wellness, as well as the quality of parenting and child resilience. Prilleltensky and Nelson (2000) recommend changing policies and strategies to prioritise psychological and social family interventions. Myers (2003) has developed a counselling approach that aims at enhancing wellness in families, creating strength-based, healthy families. Studies suggest that family support and professional interventions contribute to an increase in family well-being through changes in family and parent-child relationships (Fernandez, 2004).

4.5.2.2 Religion

Religion, as a life force, can be a source of well-being by contributing to social harmony and meaning in life, to hope and inner peace, as well as to certain values (Witmer & Sweeney, 1992). The world religions acknowledge a higher being or higher power and have reverence for human life. However, across generations, the younger generation does not necessarily follow the beliefs and religion of their parents, grandparents, family members or ancestors. In post-modern democratic and multicultural societies, religion’s role is highly diverse and socio-culturally

constructed (Mayer, 2013) and there is an ongoing discourse about the influence of religion on health and well-being (Mayer, 2012). In addition, the differentiation of the influence of religion and spirituality on well-being and wellness is challenging. However, it is common sense that strong meaningfulness in life, which can derive from religion as well as from spiritual belief systems, contributes positively to health and well-being (Mayer, 2011, 2012).

4.5.2.3 Education

Witmer and Sweeney (1992) highlight that education influences health, well-being and wellness by affecting life-style decisions. Cohen (2006) points out that education needs to include academic learning, as well as the development of emotional, social and ethical competences to contribute to overall health and well-being. Only a holistic educational approach, which addresses socio-emotional skills, knowledge and dispositions, provides a foundation for participation and improved life quality, which increases health and well-being (Cohen, 2006). Educational environments that foster participation, meaningfulness, manageability and comprehensibility increase a sense of coherence and thereby mental health and well-being in learners and educators (Mayer & Boness, 2011b).

4.5.2.4 Community

Witmer and Sweeney (1992) refer to community as a major life force that influences health and well-being through social institutions. The individual needs to balance connectedness and independence while belonging to a community to experience the fulfilment of individual and community needs. Cropper et al. (2007) emphasise, for example, that governmental and policy interventions to improve health are not enough: the increase of wellness within communities needs not only a top-down, but also a bottom-up approach, which includes the inclusion of communities' ideas and preferences. Antonovsky (1996, p. 12) points out that the community, such as the organisational, the gender, or the regional community, has an influence on health and well-being. The community has an impact on the well-being and wellness of the individual through its structural and strategic communal approaches, but also through its values and norms. The question is what the community can do to foster comprehensibility, manageability and meaningfulness as resources that contribute to health and well-being and a strong sense of coherence.

4.5.2.5 Media

Particularly during the past decades, the media have gained influence on individuals and societies. Witmer and Sweeney (1992) highlight that the media might influence the individual in terms of needs, beliefs, priorities, values and norms, as well as

attitudes and desires. In addition, the media might influence public policies. The influence of the media on the individual and the society can relate positively and negatively to health and well-being through access to positive and negative events (Sweeney & Witmer, 1991): The media, for example, contribute to ill-health if they marginalise ethnic or cultural groups (Nairn, Pega, McCreanor, Rankine, & Barnes, 2006). The media contribute positively to health and well-being when they use, for example, interactive technology tools, thus providing a sense of control to the individual (Street, Gold, & Manning, 1997). Particularly social media devices are increasingly used for health promotion and education and can increase health and well-being if applied carefully (Korda & Itani, 2013). The media can, however, have a negative impact on health and well-being when individuals use them extensively. The extensive use of media might increase obesity, aggressive behaviour, substance use or eating disorders and thus affect health and well-being negatively (Strasburger, Jordan, & Donnerstein, 2012).

4.5.2.6 Government

Government, governmental practices and policies have a positive or negative impact on wellness: Witmer and Sweeney (1992) highlight that health-oriented policies can contribute positively to the wellness of individuals and groups. At the same time, governments are seen as being responsible for reducing risks to health and well-being and promoting a healthy life style for individuals and groups in society (WHO, 2002). Governments are requested to recognise the holistic approach of welfare programmes to address psychological and material needs, as well as community-based approaches, and to promote coping skills in education and rehabilitation (Wilkinson & Marmot, 2003).

4.5.2.7 Business or Industry

Work environments have a significant effect on the health, well-being and wellness of individuals (Mayer, 2011). Organisations, businesses or industry, can influence the health and wellness of employees by creating healthy work environments that empower individuals and foster them. Healthy workplaces promote health on different levels, including physical, mental, social, psychological and spiritual health (Mayer & Boness, 2011a). Healthy work environments usually have spill-over effects in society and individuals and increase self-worth, energy levels and happiness. Employees who feel well usually increase productivity, effectiveness and a sense of coherence (Mayer, 2011) and have an increased ability to deal with challenges (Mayer & Boness, 2013).

The life forces affect the life tasks, as described above, and are simultaneously influenced by the global events that are discussed in the following section.

4.5.3 *Global Events*

With regard to the WOW, life tasks and life forces are connected to global events that relate to global environmental issues, such as pollution, overpopulation, economic exploitation, wars, diseases, violation of human rights, unemployment, competition for limited resources or poverty (Sweeney, 1998). Sweeney (1998, p. 84) argues that all human beings are part of the “ecology of living in a ‘global village’ on the Planet Earth”. Because of mass media, rapid transportation and instant communication methods, individuals and societies cannot ignore global events, particularly not if human beings strive for a lifestyle of wellness and prevention (Sweeney, 1998, p. 84). The author assumes that global events and cosmic consciousness are related and that they both influence the health, well-being and wellness of the individual.

Global events generally affect the life and life quality of humans, the global context and the existing environment in which humans live (Sweeney & Witmer, 1991). Almost 20 years after having referred to the influence of global events for the first time, Sweeney (2009) emphasises that the global influence on an individual’s wellness might increase dramatically through the increasing influence of the global network, media and the internet. The global awareness and connection might increase the impact on the individual’s wellness, self-esteem and perception of wellness in the context of global events (Myers, Willse, & Villalba, 2011). It also relates to life career courses (Smith, Myers, & Hensley, 2002). However, Nortjé et al. (2013) highlight that life tasks and life forces within the HWM relate not only to human, but also to natural global events. Moe et al. (2012) emphasise that both global human-made events, such as the 2008 crash of the global finance markets, and global weather events, such as drought, storms, or floods related to climate change, lead to changes in wellness and well-being.

While being aware of the impacts of global events on individuals, it is at the same time assumed that human being can adapt to challenging situations and experience and understand these as “fruitful endeavour”, which is understood as the phenomenon of resilience (Davey et al., 2003, p. 348). In this way, individuals can overcome global impact challenges by using their individual adaptation and coping strategies.

The components of the WOW, the life-tasks, life forces and global events will be referred to with regard to the findings in Chap. 7.

4.6 The Indivisible Self

On the base of an empirical study conducted by Hattie et al. in 2004, Myers and Sweeney (2005a, 2005b) developed the IS-Wel, an evidence-based model of wellness (Myers & Sweeney, 2007). This evidence-based model of wellness emerged from a factor analysis that was conducted on the WOW. The IS-Wel is based on the

assumption that the individual is a unity, an indivisible self that is holistic in nature and more than the sum of its parts (Schiffkopf, 1982).

In this model, the self is the core of wellness and connected to the five second-order factors of the self, including the creative, coping, social, essential and physical ones. These five second-order factors of the self include the original 17 components as clearly defined third-order factors. Besides the second-order factors, the model of the IS-Wel also includes a high-order factor, which is wellness (Hattie et al., 2004; Myers, 2009; Myers & Sweeney, 2005b). In accordance with the factor structure, the IS-Wel model was developed. It is based on a number of exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses. The data used for the analysis derived from the Wellness Evaluation of Lifestyle (WEL) Inventory (Myers & Sweeney, 2004, 2005a, 2005b), which is a particular assessment instrument that was developed to assess life tasks and sub-tasks as first described by Sweeney and Witmer (1991). The WEL-S is a 120-item questionnaire that uses a five-point Likert scale and has been tested several times statistically (Myers & Sweeney, 2004, 2005a, 2005b).

The IS-Wel was developed with the factor structure described above. It contains the same elements of the HWM as does the WOW. However, the theoretical categories of life tasks and life forces are not grouped. The elements are grouped into the second-order factors, representing the five selves that are part of the self and that build the self as a whole person (Myers, 2009; Myers & Sweeney, 2005a, 2005b). All of the elements of self, the creative, the coping, the social, the essential and the physical parts of self, contain the third-order factors, which were originally the 17 tasks of the HWM. In this model they are defined in different interrelationships: The essential self includes spirituality, self-care, gender identity and cultural identity, the creative self integrates thinking, emotions, control, positive humour and work, the coping self contains realistic beliefs, stress management, self-worth and leisure, the social self refers to friendship and love and the physical self is based on exercise and nutrition (Myers & Sweeney, 2004). One year later, Myers and Sweeney (2005a, 2005b) explained that the 17 tasks include the five life tasks and the 12 sub-tasks of self-direction.

The IS-Wel is affected by the local, the global, the institutional and the chronometrical contexts and in turn affects them. According to Myers and Sweeney (2005a), the local (safety) includes family, neighbourhood and community and the institutional (policies and law) integrates education, religion, government and business/industry. The global (world events) consists of politics, culture, global events, environment, media and community), while the chronometrical (life span) is built upon the perpetual, positive and purposeful. These four contexts were not based on empirical research studies, but on theoretical literature reviews only (Myers & Sweeney, 2005b).

Research on the HWM is conducted across disciplines and cultures and it can be defined as a conceptual model that is used in qualitative and in quantitative research. It has been argued already since the 1990s that health research needs qualitative studies (Jensen & Allen, 1994; Mayer, 2011; Mayer & Boness, 2011a, 2011b), also with regard to holistic wellness concepts (Berrios & Lucca, 2006). Nel (2013), who

has used the HWM in a qualitative way, argues that it is important and useful in qualitative research, particularly using the WOW.

In this study, the HWM and the WOW are used in an analysis of the life of Paulo Coelho within a psychobiographical framework. The next section therefore refers to the HWM in psychobiographical research.

4.7 The Value of the Holistic Wellness Model in Psychobiographical Research

The HWM has been used in psychobiographical research before, for example in Fouché's analysis of the South African statesman, Jan Christiaan Smuts, in the study of Nel (2013) on the South African politician and anti-apartheid activist, Helen Suzman, as well as in the study on Bram Fischer, the South African anti-apartheid activist and lawyer, by Swart (2010). The model has also been used by Burnell (2013) in a study on Beyers Naudé and particularly with regard to spiritual wellness of Beyers Naudé, the anti-apartheid theologian, in an article by Fouché, Burnell and van Niekerk (2015).

It has been indicated that more qualitative research in the positive psychology frame on health and well-being is needed (Coetzee & Viviers, 2007; Mayer & Van Zyl, 2013) to increase the focus on the impact of positive psychology concepts on the health and well-being of individuals in specific socio-cultural contexts. Positive psychology constructs emphasise the optimal functioning of an individual and through the framework of the positive psychology construct of the HWM, the positive traits of a person, which might relate to spirituality, ethics, charisma, creativity and wisdom, can be studied (Burnell, 2013). It has been emphasised that particularly with regard to health research, more longitudinal studies are needed that focus on the longitudinal development of health in an individual (Coetzee & Viviers, 2007; Mayer & Viviers, 2014a, 2014b). This study focuses on the longitudinal development of Paulo Coelho's life from a positive psychology psychobiographical perspective. It contributes to extending and promoting qualitative studies in health, well-being and wellness from a positive psychology perspective that is based on a psychobiographical research approach.

The HWM is valuable for psychobiographical research, because of the assumption that the strength of psychobiographical research is based on investigating and developing psychological theory (Fouché & Van Niekerk, 2010) and thus contributing to the reconsideration and re-evaluation of health concepts. Applying positive health concepts in psychobiographic research therefor counteracts the historically common practice in research rather to focus on concepts of disease, illness, sickness or mental psychopathology (Luthans, 2013). In addition, this study follows the call of Nel (2013) to change the focus of psychobiographical research from pathology towards psychological health and to respond to the idea of Elms (1994) to move from a rather narrow theoretical background in psychobiographical research towards

a broader view regarding its theoretical foundation. Nel (2013) also highlights that particularly psychobiographical subjects have often been extraordinary historical figures and that they might therefore provide an optimal opportunity for the study of wellness. In this study, the researcher assumes that psychobiographers and readers of this psychobiography can develop new ideas on specifically Paulo Coelho, who developed from a rather sickly child into a healthy and successful individual, and generally gather insight into holistic wellness development across the life span.

Swart (2010) emphasised in his study on Bram Fisher that the HWM helped to address the challenge of reductionism in psychobiographical work. Fouché (1999) has also emphasised that the HWM is of value with regard to the multidimensional framework of the model, its systemic nature, the eugraphic approach, the developmental conceptualisation and its developmental orientation. The eugraphic approach is defined as an approach in which the researcher focuses on the process of an individual developing and remaining psychologically healthy (Fouché & Van Niekerk, 2005a) and has been highlighted as an important approach in previous psychobiographical studies, such as those by Booysen (2012), Burnell (2013), Chéze (2009) and Uys (2010). Nel (2013) found in her study on Helen Suzman that she displayed a high degree of holistic wellness across her whole life span. Nel (2013, p. 339) points out that the study on holistic wellness contributes to creating “a platform for the informal testing of these psychological approaches by assessing the applicability and relevance of psychosocial development and holistic wellness, respectively, on a single life.” The use of the HWM in combination with a second theoretical framework and model contributes to a complex understanding of the subject’s life and is therefore defined as being highly valuable for the understanding of the life of the individual researched in psychobiography (Nel, 2013). Burnell (2013) points out that the HWM has also been successfully used by Gogo (2011) in research on Brenda Fassie. Burnell (2013) herself uses the HWM in her psychobiography in combination with the FDT, which contributes to deep understanding of the aspect of spirituality and health in a person’s life.

Fouché (1999) has shown in his work on Smuts that he had a relatively high level of holistic wellness, but also experienced periods of lower levels of wellness. He showed that the levels of wellness varied in time and in wellness dimensions. Fouché highlights the value of using the HWM in psychobiographic research with regard to its positive definition of health, its systemic nature and approach to health and wellness, its developmental organisation, its clear and structured conceptualisation and its multidimensionality.

In this section, the value of the HWM in psychobiographical studies was explored. In the subsequent section, critical views on the model are addressed and discussed in more depth.

4.8 Criticism of the Holistic Wellness Model in Psychobiographical Research

Like any other concepts, concepts of positive psychology in general, wellness as well as the HWM, have been criticised extensively (Fouché, 1999). However, critics target the holistic wellness movement as such and might have misunderstood the model as belonging to the biopsychosocial and life-style movements (Fouché, 1999). These movements have been criticised, according to the author, in terms of reductionism, the neglect of socio-historical, cultural and economic factors that they do not seem to address, as well as the rather shallow explanation of coping and stress management. The debate about these movements seems to be ongoing (Fouché, 1999; Mayer, 2011).

In parallel, Fouché (1999) mentions the limitations with regard to the use of the HWM in psychobiographical research, such as the lack of wellness indicators regarding cultural background, gender or developmental stages and the lack of an exploratory framework of holistic wellness development. In addition, the author criticises the lack of critical stages for the development of wellness, as well as the failure to address the influence of the immediate ecological environment.

Nel (2013), in her work on Helen Suzman, described the criticism of the biopsychosocial movements more extensively, which is not repeated here, since this study focuses on the HWM within the positive psychology paradigm.

Savolaine and Granello (2002) point out that most wellness models do not include and integrate the general construct of meaning, which should be investigated further. This might also be a limitation of the HWM, since meaningfulness is only explored as a sub-task to spirituality.

Other authors (Gold & Mansager, 2000; Mosak & Dreikurs, 2000) have criticised the labelling of the life tasks of spirituality and self-direction as life tasks and their inclusion into the HWM. Mansager (2000) and Mansager et al. (2002) support this criticism by pointing out that spirituality is the foundation of life tasks rather than a life task itself. Other authors (e.g. Hawks, 2013), however, define spirituality as a subcategory of social and emotional health rather than as a foundation of a holistic health concept. Therefore, the critics do not turn against the concept of the HWM or against spirituality, but rather criticise the location of spirituality in the concept.

Finally, Myers and Sweeney (2008) highlight that the values in the HWM tend to be universal, referring to previous concepts of Adler (1956) and Maslow (1970). In a later publication, Myers et al. (2000) acknowledge the impact of cultural identity on holistic wellness. They emphasise that culture plays an important role when it comes to terms, concepts and subjective experience of health and well-being. In other research cultural identity has also been pointed out as highly influential in mental health and well-being (Mayer & Geldenhuys, 2014). The HWM might therefore not necessarily be culturally adequate and individuals from other cultures might not agree with this US and Westernised approach and concept of holistic wellness. Research studies are needed to explore holistic wellness across cultures

and the applicability of the role of spirituality in concepts of health and wellness in specific cultural contexts (Mayer & Viviers, 2014a).

4.9 Chapter Summary

In this chapter, the concept of wellness and the framework of the HWM as a theoretical model to explore wellness in the context of psychobiographical research are discussed. Basic concepts are defined and the HWM is described. The model is discussed in terms of the WOW, its conceptual life tasks and the life forces and global events affecting wellness. The IS-Wel is presented and the use of the HWM in psychobiography is explored. Finally, the potential value and critics of the model are addressed and its limitations are recognised.

The findings from the application of the HWM to the life of Paulo Coelho will be discussed in Chap. 7 with regard to the life of Coelho and in Chap. 8 with regard to selected creative works. The following chapter focuses on the second theory applied: The FDT described by Fowler (1981).

Chapter 5

Stages of Faith Development

And, when you want something, all the universe conspires in helping you to achieve it.

Paulo Coelho, 2002b, 22

5.1 Chapter Preview

The chapter focuses on FDT and James Fowler's theoretical perspective on the stages of faith development across the life span. This theory is examined as one of the psychological theories applied in the psychobiography on Paulo Coelho. Fowler's theory on "stages of faith development" is firstly introduced and the term/concept of faith is defined. The FDT is explored in more depth and Fowler's seven aspects of influencing the stages of human faith development are presented. The theory is discussed in general, with regard to its current state and with regard to writing and psychobiographical research. Critical responses to FDT are outlined and a chapter summary is given.

5.2 Introduction

The development of religious and spiritual faith has been of interest in theology, as well as in the social sciences, such as psychology, sociology, history and anthropology. Across disciplines, James Fowler's FDT has been the most influential framework relevant to religious and spiritual development during the past decades (Coyle, 2011).

Fowler's work originated in 1968 and was first published in an elaborated form in 1981 in "Stages of faith" (Fowler, 1981). The theory has since attracted attention across disciplines. It inspired empirical research in the US and beyond (Streib, 2005) and stimulated critical responses, which led to an interdisciplinary scientific discourse on faith and its development in human beings. Heywood (2008, p. 263) emphasises that FDT has been cited as "a psychologically based theory of human religious development within the broader framework of a theological anthropol-

ogy”. Originally, it was developed to “map” faith development to provide new ideas to pastoral and educational practices (Coyle, 2011) and was primarily developed in the context of practice, aiming at identifying psychological structures of the human being and knowing (Fowler, 2001, p. 159). FDT was viewed as a “framework for understanding the evolution of how human beings conceptualize God, or a Higher Being, and on how the Higher Being impacts on core values, beliefs and meanings in the life of individuals and in their relationships with others” (Fowler & Dell, 2004, p. 17).

Fowler’s theory is based in the scientific tradition of structural stage theories of development. According to Fowler (1986), the stage theory claims to identify and to explicate fundamental underlying structures that shape the development of an individual throughout his/her lifetime. These underlying structures are assumed to be universal and independent of culture. Fowler (1986, p. 27) highlights that development is based on sequential and invariant stages, which are viewed as “deep structural operations of knowing and valuing which underlie, ground, and organize the thematic content” of an individual’s faith.

Fowler’s FDT has inspired a huge number of theoretical and empirical research studies that focus either on the theory as such or its application in religious education, pastoral care and church work (Streib, 2003). The empirical studies on FDT use mainly the faith development instrument as described in the manual (Moseley, Jarvis, & Fowler, 1986, 1993) in its classical form, in a variation of the instrument or in a scale-type form (Streib, 2005).¹

The FDT has been used in life history research, claiming to focus on the narrative structure of the life history, including the “socio-historical conditions and their impact on the narrative structure of self-understanding” and appreciating life-historical aspects of the individual being researched (Streib, 2005, p. 111).

5.3 Defining Faith

Fowler (1974) defines faith based on the concept of faith promoted by the theologian-ethicist H. Richard Niebuhr (1960), the theologian-philosopher Paul Tillich and Wilfred Cantwell Smith, who was a scholar of comparative religion.

Niebuhr (1960) regards faith as a universal process that develops in human beings to find meaning in their lives. The meaning is created by applying trust and loyalty in selected attractive centres of value. These value centres are seen as representing their reality and are therefore experienced as sustaining, reliable and dependable. According to Nelson (1992, pp. 63–64), Fowler refers to faith in a broad and generic way, as the “human faith” in which every individual “believes”. Accordingly, Fowler (1986, p. 16) defines faith as a “generic human phenomenon – a way of leaning into or meeting life, whether traditionally religious, or Christian, or not”. Fowler therefore defines faith as independent of cultural and religious presuppositions and

¹The manual (Moseley et al., 1986, 1993) will be explained in Sect. 5.8.1.

rather as dependent on the aspect that “we all make meaning in our world, regardless of our belief system” (Elifson & Stone, 1985, p. 27). According to Elifson and Stone (1985, p. 27), “Meaning-making is dependent on the developmental stage” and is an orientation of the person, his/her purpose and goal, hopes and strivings, thoughts and actions.

The “opposite of faith is not doubt, but nihilism ... and despair about the possibility of even negative meaning” (Fowler, 1981, p. 31). According to Fowler and Keen (1978, p. 1), “anyone not about to kill himself lives by faith”. The authors highlight that the heart of an individual always rests somewhere. The place of rest does not necessarily have to be religion or religious belief, but faith in the following sense (Fowler, 1980):

Faith has to do with the making, maintenance, and transformation of human meaning. It is a mode of knowing and being. In faith, we shape our lives in relation to more or less comprehensive convictions or assumptions about reality. Faith composes a felt sense of the world as having character, pattern and unity. (p. 53)

One of the main contributions of FDT is according to Fowler (2004, p. 417) the idea that faith is defined in a functional and structural form so that it “can be inclusive of the dynamics of faith in many traditions”. Fowler (2004, p. 417) further highlights that the “structuring power” of the “substantive contents of faith make tremendous impacts on the perceptions, motives, visions, and actions of believers” and that his theory supports the matching of competences of each stage, “and the operations of mind and emotion that characterise them with ways of teaching and with the symbols, practices, and contents of faith at different levels of reflexive inquiry and complexity.”

Fowler emphasises that God may play a role in the creation of faith, while highlighting God’s impact on creating the natural laws of human development (Fowler, 1984, pp. 73–75). However, Fowler is not convinced that faith is fundamentally a gift of God’s grace and completely separate from being a human achievement. In contrast, theologians highlight that faith is definitely a gift of God’s grace (Osmer, 1992, p. 141).

Fowler and Keen (1978, p. 24), define the individual’s faith as spirituality as having a core disposition that informs a person’s behaviour and see it as “a way of moving into and giving form and coherence to life.” Faith is therefore strongly connected to “making, maintenance, and transformation of human meaning” (Fowler, 1986, p. 15), which is necessary to deal with the burden of meaning-making (Fowler, 1981, p. 33). Fowler and Keen (1978, p. 25) see faith as “the composing or interpreting of an ultimate environment and as a way-of-being-in-relation to it.” Faith affects how individuals lean into something and how they see their experiences in life. Fowler emphasises that faith is a kind of activity that could even be verbalised as “faithing”, which

must be seen as a central aspect of a person’s life orientation ... It plays a central role in shaping the responses a person will make in and against the force-field of his or her life. Faith, then, is a core element in one’s character or personality. (p. 16)

According to this understanding of faith, Fowler defines the concept in a constructivist way, as meaning-making. Therefore, Fowler highlights the changes across a lifetime in the form, structure and content of faith (Fowler, 1981). These changes are understood as a “conversion” (1981, p. 281), as well as a “recentering of our passion” (Fowler, 1984, p. 140).

Interestingly, Fowler (1986) states that although the content of the faith of an individual might change, the structure usually stays the same. The belief and reality a person changes to will still be referred to in the same way. However, Fowler also states (1986, p. 37) that faith develops in human beings when they grow older and continue to believe in the same things, but believe in them in a different way.

With regard to the definition of faith, Fowler and Dell (2004) refer to Smith’s (1979, p. 11) definition of faith, which “involves an alignment of the heart or will, a commitment of loyalty and trust.” Therefore, Fowler (1981) concludes that faith is a resting of the heart in trust and loyalty to a reality of being or power. Faith is seen as “... an active mode of being and committing, a way of moving into and giving shape to our experiences of life ... faith is always relational; there is always another in faith” (Fowler, 1981, p. 16). He therefore emphasises the social component of faith as well as the aspect of self.

5.4 The Birth of the Faith Development Theory of James Fowler

Faith development studies started with the work of the Harvard professor, Lawrence Kohlberg, in the late 1960s. He researched Jean Piaget’s theory of cognitive development in the context of moral development (Fowler, 2004, p. 409). Fowler became interested in Kohlberg’s work and soon discussed faith development with his students. He said (Fowler, 2004, p. 409) that one of his important experiences was talking to three Jesuit students who were attending his courses in the early 1970s. The encounter with these students had an impact on his spiritual belief and practices: Fowler recognised that at that point in time, his faith was rather cognitively oriented and “that my deeper needs for prayer and spirituality might not be met. They introduced me to the Spiritual Exercise of St. Ignatius” (Fowler, 2004, p. 409). Fowler attended a guided retreat in the Ignatian tradition and gained new experiences, which included not only cognitive, but also emotional development potential.

Originally, Fowler developed his FDT from a multi-perspective paradigm and created a theoretical matrix to structure aspects of faith. It was through listening to individual’s stories on spirituality that Fowler gained interest in developing his empirically based developmental theory (Fowler, 1992, 2004). According to Fowler (2004, p. 412), FDT is characterised by a “phenomenological account of what faith does, with a conceptual model of what faith is”. Faith provides human beings with orientation in life, a life purpose, the creation of life and “its origins, its ordering, its enormity, its hospitality to life in its myriad forms and expressions, and its mystery” (Fowler, 2004, p. 412). The development of the theory and the faith development

stages “sought to extend the structural developmental traditions in the research of Piaget, Kohlberg, and others” (Fowler, 2004, p. 412). Fowler (1984) saw his personal motivation founded in the question of what theorists taught referring to maturity, destiny and wholeness. The foundational theories of Piaget, Kohlberg, Erikson and Levinson are not discussed in this study in depth.² However, it needs to be highlighted that Piaget’s and Kohlberg’s structural development theories contributed to Fowler’s theory in terms of “the broad epistemological focus of the theories, as well as the structure of knowing provided by these theories” (Burnell, 2013, p. 125). These two aspects of the structural development theories influenced the finding and the description of the structural features of faith “to make comparisons possible across a wide range of content differences” (Burnell, 2013, p. 125). The faith theory integrated the concepts and descriptions of cognitive and moral reasoning while integrating those with the newly established modes of knowing and valuing (Fowler, 1981). The psychosocial developmental theories of Erikson and Levinson, however, contributed to Fowler’s FDT in a subtle and pervasive way and became “part of the interpretative mind-set” that affected the development of the FDT (Fowler, 1981, p. 110). According to Coyle (2011), Fowler incorporated perspectives on ‘form of logic’ or cognitive development (drawn from Piaget); the development of the capacity to take the perspectives of others; the development of moral judgment/reasoning (from Kohlberg); the recognition of others as belonging to one’s faith community; the selection of authorities for meaning-making; ‘form of world coherence’ or the development of approaches for ‘unifying meanings’ (from Erikson’s and Levinson’s lifespan developmental theories); the understanding of symbols and of stages of self (from Kegan).

In the beginning, Fowler (1981) developed seven dimensions of faith development, which were later extended to eight dimensions (Moseley et al., 1993). Although the theory was criticised strongly, modified and qualified in several respects, its central features and assumptions remained the same.

5.5 Basic Assumptions in Faith Development Theory

The theoretical framework of faith development is based on certain stages a person goes through in life and can be seen as “faith-as-a-process”. Fowler (1981) believes that the stages usually develop according to the life circumstances and that they are influenced by the life context and the life experiences of an individual (Fowler, 1981). At the same time, Fowler assumes that the faith development stages are universal in terms of referring “to the way in which all human beings make meaning in life” (Hughes, 1997, p. 1). Gollnick (2005), for example, addresses the evolving relationship of spirituality and religion and the consequences for understanding

²For a presentation and discussion of these foundational theories and their influences with regard to Fowler’s faith development theory, see the work of Barbara Burnell (2013, 121–133).

personality development and the way in which personality development and sense-making are (unconsciously) affected by religion and spirituality.

Fowler and Dell (2004) highlight that the FDT is a

framework for understanding the evolution of how human beings conceptualize God, or a Higher Being, and how the influence of the Higher Being has an impact on core values, beliefs, and meanings in their personal lives and in their relationships with others. (p.17)

Fowler (2004) emphasises that faith

seems to have a broadly recognizable pattern of development. This unfolding pattern can be characterized in terms of developing emotional, cognitive, and moral interpretations and responses. Our ways of imagining and committing in faith correlate significantly with our ways of knowing and valuing more generally. (p. 405)

According to Dell (2000), faith needs to be understood as fundamental to social relations, the making of personal and cultural meanings and personal identity. According to Dell and Fowler (2004), it is a centring process, integral to as well as underlying the formation of meanings, beliefs and values of a person. Fowler (1987, p. 55) states: “The emergence of awareness, of reflective consciousness and eventually of various kinds of self-reflectiveness, comes in humans as a gradual and difficult sequence of developmental construction.”

Fowler (1987) identified four assumptions that are substantial to the FDT:

- (a) Human beings are “genetically potentiated for partnership with God” (Fowler, 1987, p. 54).
- (b) Potentiation does not necessarily transfer into the realisation of the partnership of God.
- (c) The partnership with God develops through the interaction of the creator and human beings.
- (d) Interaction and dependence upon God and the environment are based on a non-conscious matter.

Fowler developed the faith development stages based on data that were generated from lengthy structured interviews with individuals of different ages, religions, life experiences and meanings attributed to these experiences (Streib, 2005). Fowler and Dell (2004) highlight that FDT aims at giving coherence to people’s lives, links individuals to trust and loyalty to others, creates a sense of relatedness to a larger frame of reference and is seen as an effective coping strategy to deal with daily challenges. It is questioned whether the development theory of Fowler offers a neutral description of how people develop throughout their life or of how they should develop (Astley, 2009, p. 4). However, it is stipulated that:

- (a) Faith is seen as something we believe in, such as an object of worship, acknowledged influential power, a life-directing narrative or myth of who we are and should be, and of what ‘life is all about’.
- (b) The theory concentrates on faith as a form, rather than on faith as a content (the “how” of faith).
- (c) Faith develops and should be called “faithing” (Astley, 2009, pp. 2–3).

5.6 Influencing Constructive Dimensions of Faith Development Theory

Before the stages of human faith development are introduced in Sect. 5.7, seven influencing constructive dimensions will be presented. These dimensions are viewed as influencing the development of the faith development stages (Elifson & Stone, 1985, pp. 27–31).

(a) Form and growth of logic

The form of logic describes the thinking of the person towards an object, as described by Piaget in terms of sensorimotor, preoperational, concrete operational and formal operational development stages. Fowler, who extended Piaget's stages of development, added two more stages with regard to adult development: a dialectical form of reasoning, in which ideas and things fit into categories, and a dialogical form of reasoning, in which ideas and things can be viewed as fitting simultaneously into more than one category (Elifson & Stone, 1985, p. 28). The form and growth of logic according to the different stages affect faith development in individuals.

(b) Social perspective-taking

Based on Selman's work, Fowler highlights that a person moves from a rather egotistical and "me-centred" perspective to a more dispassionate perspective in which the person becomes able to know what another person feels or knows and how he/she perceives the world (Elifson & Stone, 1985, p. 28). The social perspective has an impact on faith development and its stages.

(c) Form and development of moral judgement/reasoning

Based on Kohlberg's work, Fowler highlights that moral judgement is characterised by the question, "What is the nature of the claims that others have on me, and how are these claims to be weighted?" (Elifson & Stone, 1985, p. 28), including patterns of moral reasoning and moral justification. Deeper understanding of the judgements a person makes in life affects the way in which an individual develops in terms of faith.

Fowler (2004) added four more constructive dimensions to these three dimensions:

(d) Bounds of social awareness

This aspect is referred to as describing the mode of group identity, the membership of a person in social groups, the inclusiveness of the social worlds and group definitions. Fowler emphasises the development of individuals from valuing their immediate family to valuing others within and without the boundaries of immediate familial, racial, social or religious communities (Elifson & Stone, 1985, p. 30). This dimension also includes the ability to construct the perspective of others.

(e) Locus of authority

The locus of authority deals with the way individuals deal with authority. It describes their movement from dependence on an external, unquestioned view of authority to the understanding that authorities are not always “correct” and that “correctness” is rather an issue of differences of authorities. The aim with regard to locus of authority is therefore to gain a position in which there is external evidence while maintaining consistency of personal experience (Elifson & Stone, 1985, p. 30). The view on authorities influences the phases of stage development, as explained in Sect. 5.7.

(f) World coherence

There is a movement from experiencing and perceiving a rather simple and unrelated series of episodes in the world to experiencing the world and its events as related and continuous in terms of richness, diversity, oppositions and unity (Elifson & Stone, 1985, p. 30). The world view is seen as changing from an episodic to a narrative, then symbolic and conceptual world view. This aspect shows that individuals move from a view of events as random and disconnected towards a perception of coherence and meaning in events, which finally leads to a complex form of world coherence. An individual becomes part of all that he/she has met in his/her life before (Elifson & Stone, 1985, p. 30). Fowler (2004, p. 413) concludes that a form of world coherence includes the ability to reconstruct “a coherent and meaningful account of the world” and that this has an impact on faith development.

(g) Symbolic function

The final dimension highlights how symbols are understood and used, symbols being experienced as emotionally and/or conceptually powerful. Through experiences, symbols evoke emotional and cognitive responses and the richness of the symbols is seen in the interplay of affective and cognitive domains for self and others (Elifson & Stone, 1985, p. 31).

These seven constructive dimensions build a basis for the stages of faith development, which are explained in the following section.

5.7 Fowlers’ Stages of Faith Development Theory

The faith development stages are divided into a pre-stage (Stage 0), three lower stages of development (Stages 1–3), which usually occur from childhood up to adulthood, and three higher stages of development (Stages 4–6), which are usually experienced in adulthood or might even never be attained (Ashdown & Gibbons, 2012). Although all stages are worth developing and build onto one another, Fowler (1981, p. 101) highlights that the later stages are more comprehensive and adequate than earlier stages of development (Fowler, 1981, p. 101) and the last stage is described as a philosophical and theological tradition and commitment (Astley, 2009, p. 5) rather than a practical development stage.

Each stage level allows for the development of greater self-knowledge, as well as greater intimacy with others and God (Fowler, 1981, 1987). While developing through these stages, human beings develop a “disposition of faith” (Fowler, 1987, p. 56), which involves both cognitive and emotional aspects of the self.

5.7.1 Stage 0 – Primal Faith

The first stage is Stage 0 and is called “undifferentiated faith” or “primal faith” in the age between birth and 3 years. During this life phase the development of the child is huge in many developmental areas, such as brain development, as well as physical development. In this phase, many factors play together, leading to development in terms of maturation, psychosocial experiences, the role of religious and cultural symbols, meanings and practices. Fowler highlights (1987, p. 58): “As we move into the world, faith begins with a kind of prelanguage disposition of trust and loyalty toward the environment into which we emerge.” A baby builds up trust and relationships, as well as loyalty, with the primary care-givers (Fowler, 1981; 1996; Stroud, 2004).

At the age of 1 year, a child attains object performance, meaning that the child realises that objects continue to exist even when out of immediate sight (Dell & Duncan, 1998).

The most important aspect is the relationship to the parent and/or caregiver to create trust, bonds and meaningful commitments (Fowler & Dell, 2004). According to the authors, this is the phase in which the child learns to make healthy attachments in other relationships (Fowler & Dell, 2004) and builds trust (Erikson, 1963). By forming healthy relationships on a constant basis, the child is able to develop a sense of separation, which is reflected in a separate identity from the care-giver. This is important for forming a healthy self-image (Fowler, 1984, 1987).

5.7.2 Stage 1 – Intuitive-Projective Stage

Stage one occurs between the ages of four and seven and is labelled “intuitive-protective faith”. Fowler and Dell (2004) point out that in this phase, gross and fine motor skills develop, as well as the cognition that is linked to the central and peripheral nervous systems. The play of children in this age group moves from parallel play to associative play. During this stage, thoughts are rather egocentric and fantasy and reality are not distinguished (Elifson & Stone, 1985, p. 31). However, the aspects of autonomy, shame and doubt, as well as self-control and willpower, become more relevant (Dell & Duncan, 1998). Fowler and Dell highlight that the child’s meaning-making is mainly based on emotional and perceptual ordering of experiences, as well as on imaginative understanding, which is influenced by a reality that is understood as mysterious. This stage of faith develops with language

development from the age of 2 years old and proceeds through the age of six to 7 years (Fowler, 1981, 1984, 1987). In addition, topics such as power and powerlessness become relevant and faith is “drawn to symbols and images of visible power and size” (Fowler & Dell, 2004, p. 23). According to the authors, faith is mainly constructed through symbols and images during this phase of development and the child gets an idea of good and evil. At this stage, emotional and imaginal orientations and values are implemented and Croucher (2010) refers to this stage as the magical world stage. Fowler (1976) points out that during this stage long-lasting orientations of good and evil in terms of emotions and images are built. Stories and pictures of good and evil are created and deep feelings of terror, guilt, compassion and companionship are possibly aligned with religious symbols. Croucher highlights that the world of meaning of a child is formed through stories and symbols at this stage; wonder and understanding of God are central at this age. Fowler (1984) emphasises that particularly the symbols enrich the base of meaning and children experience identification as well as aspiration through symbols. During this stage, faith changes and grows dynamically. At the same time, children can form lasting emotional and imaginal orientations and connotations to faith, owing to the strength of symbolism and imagination (Fowler, 1981, 1987).

The child experiences a growing need to know what is real and what only seems to be real towards the end of this stage and the transition towards the next faith stage depends on the emergence of concrete and operational thinking (Fowler, 1981, 1986).

5.7.3 Stage 2 – Mythic-Literal Stage

The second stage is defined as “mythic-literal faith”, which is developed from approximately seven to 11/12 years. During this phase, thinking skills increase and “enable the ordering of experiences” (Hughes, 1997, p. 1).

Time and space concepts develop and narratives are enjoyed; individuals do not differentiate their own self from these narrations (Elifson & Stone, 1985, p. 31). The world view becomes more linear, more predictable and more orderly and Fowler and Dell (2004) highlight that a feeling for linearity and predictability is developed. Fowler (1981) points out that the children’s experiences are not as dependent on feelings and fantasy as during previous stages. During the phase of mythic-literal faith development, the child develops forms of logical thinking, as well as the ability of conscious interpretation and meaning in life (Piaget, 1976). Levine (1990) emphasises that during this age, children develop their self-esteem, self-awareness, their identity, they explore their limits and autonomy and their individuality while negotiating their conformity, as well as abilities to deal with emotions, needs and attention.

Narrative and narrations become highly important during this stage of faith development (Stroud, 2004) and the child depends less on feeling and fantasy (Fowler, 1984). However, stories are highly important for the child and the need to

understand the world through narration and stories through the perspective of self and others grows (Fowler, 1981). The child understand the stories on a concrete level, but the deeper meaning is not yet understood consciously (Straughn, 2010). However, the child gains an idea of the perspective of the self and others and experiences differences in perspectives between the self and others (Croucher, 2003; Fowler, 1981, 1987). Fowler points out that the child, who can now empathise with the perspectives of others, also learns to include the perspective of God. Usually, during this stage, the child defers to the perspective of others (Fowler, 1981).

With regard to faith and God, children at this age construct God in personalised terms, with highly differentiated internal emotions and interpersonal sensitivities. They recognise “the cosmic pattern of God’s rule” (Fowler & Dell, 2004, p. 21) and develop concepts of fairness and morality. The child believes that “goodness is rewarded and badness is punished” (Fowler & Dell, 2004, p. 22). However, the concepts and symbols are mainly literal and concrete. Faith during this stage relies on the stories, rules and implicit values of the family and/or community (Dykstra, 1986; Fowler, 1984). Because of this strong connection of faith to the family and the community, the self of the child, as well as the sense of identity, is based on the sense of the family and community to which he/she belongs.

Fowler and Dell (2004, p. 22) have coined the term “11-year-old atheists” who temporarily or permanently give up their belief in God because of the recognition that bad things also happen to good people. Children usually develop emotional and interpersonal skills and interrelatedness during this stage because of their ability to differentiate and distinguish between people and groups they belong to or do not belong to and objects and identification with the self and others become important during this stage (Fowler, 1981, 1984, 1987).

The child experiences the need to develop when stories are contrasting or even clash. These contrasting and contradictory experiences lead to reflection on stories and narratives to find deeper meaning. In view of the cognitive development highlighted by Piaget (Fowler, 1986), reflection becomes possible.

5.7.4 Stage 3 – Synthetic-Conventional Stage

Stage 3 is named “synthetic-conventional faith” and occurs from 11 or 12 years to the age of 17 to 18. However, this stage can potentially last into middle age and possibly late adulthood. According to Hughes (1997, p. 1), self-awareness that increases the significance of building up interpersonal relationships grows significantly. During this time, meaning is primarily created through relationships and roles. Fowler and Dell (2004) point out that this phase brings about cognitive functioning and interpersonal perspective-taking in which abstract thinking progresses and reasoning increases. Abstract thinking becomes more important than before at this stage and has an impact on the importance and definition of faith and hypothetical considerations (Fowler, 1981). The social perspective increases in importance and the individual extends his/her experience beyond the family (Fowler, 1981).

Perspectives of teachers, peers, religious communities or other communities in general are taken into account (Fowler, 1987).

Hughes (1997, p. 1) highlights that “The desire to go with the crowd, to conform is strong.” The individual cannot yet differentiate him/herself from the relationship to others and depends on the views of others (Elifson & Stone, 1985, p. 31). There is a lack of third-person perspective, so that the adolescent might be over-dependent on the responses and mirroring of others. This may lead to a sudden awareness of inferiority (Fowler, 1981). According to Fowler, the concept “synthetic” leads to the integration of stories, values and beliefs into a “supporting and orienting unity” (Fowler, 1987, p. 60).

In terms of belief, God is represented with personal qualities of acceptance, love, support, understanding and loyalty and the young adolescents develop beliefs, values and a personality through their relationships (Fowler & Dell, 2004). This development is often characterised by contradictions, which need to be negotiated intrapersonally, and identity and ideologies are built up. According to Fowler and Dell, young people often experience a split between emotions and cognition and a split with God might be experienced. Even during this stage the person has not developed a third-party perspective and individuals might get stuck in over-dependence on the mirroring of others and their evaluations of the individual. This is particularly true in the context of evaluations, perspectives, responses and expectations of teachers, parents, peer groups and the social and/or religious community around the individual (Burnell, 2013, p. 142). Croucher (2010) defines this stage as the faith community stage and Fowler (1981) refers to it as “ultimacy”.

Fowler (1981) highlights that many individuals may not move past Stage 3 in adulthood and might remain in this stage (Fowler, 1984). Burnell (2013, p. 142) emphasises that Stage 3 is a “conformist stage that is accurately attuned to the expectations and judgement of significant others. If this stage does persist into adulthood, it indicates that something has hampered development past this stage.” This hampering could refer to stunted cognitive development or discouragement of religious formation of beliefs and values (Fowler, 1981).

The following stages, Stages 4 to 6, are typically encountered in adolescence. It needs to be kept in mind that individuals in the higher stages are relatively rare and the transition from one stage to the next is not inevitable or assumed. Fowler (1981) emphasises that the transition from Stage 3 to the next is based on contradictions and/or clashes between valued authority sources, changes in sanctioned leadership or policies and practices, experiences that induce critical reflection on self and others, values, judgements and opinions (Fowler, 1981).

5.7.5 Stage 4 – Individuative–Reflexive Stage

In the early twenties, thirties or forties, the next stage is developed, which is called “individuative-reflexive faith”. The transition to this fourth stage may be long and difficult (Hughes, 1997, p. 1). Burnell (2013, p. 144) highlights that the transition

usually occurs in the thirties and forties and usually coincides with the “development of what Fowler referred to as an executive ego, which means that individual authority is relocated within the self” (Fowler, 1984, 1987).

This stage is influenced by two main developments (Fowler & Dell, 2004): On the one hand the development of the ability to reflect on and evaluate personal values, beliefs, commitments, relationships etc. in a critical way, on the other hand through the development of a self-identity that is based on self-worth that allows independent judgement in relation to other individuals, institutions and the world view in general. Individualism is developed, authorities are questioned and interpersonal and intrapersonal boundaries are clarified (Fowler, 1984). This stage develops when value concepts and belief systems are questioned. Croucher (2010) refers to this stage as the rational construct stage.

During this phase, previously unconscious beliefs and commitments are more consciously adopted. Individuality emerges and is defined less by one's relationships than before. Astley (1991, p. 28) highlights that during this stage the “danger of the conceited autonomy and pretended independence” grows owing to a growing consciousness of being able to choose one's belief and value system. An orientation towards the self therefore occurs within the individual and social relationships are evaluated. The individual's role within his/her social role is assessed (Fowler, 1981). Fowler (1986) emphasises that during this stage, the individual regains his/her authority, which is relocated in the self, interrupting the external influence of others as an authority. Burnell (2013) highlights that individuals develop a greater awareness of their own ideology and their nurturing external factors. In Coelho's (2002b) words: individuals become aware of their own values and wishes that are then reflected in the universe.

In addition, this developmental stage is mainly characterised by a growing coherence and tidiness of faith. Personal beliefs are assessed, objectified and clarified (Burnell, 2013). According to Elifson and Stone (1985, p. 31), meaning is derived more from within than from external sources and the personal life philosophy becomes important. Straughn (2010) points out that the individual clarifies his/her boundaries and develops personal identities with more depth and accuracy. This process can have a disruptive impact on the individual and his/her relationships (Fowler, 1981). However, during this process, a third-person perspective develops, awareness about self and others increases, particularly with regard to beliefs and ideologies of the self as well as others (Fowler, 1987). With the development of the third-person perspective, individuals develop their ability to evaluate the views, ideologies and expectations of the self, as well as of others (Fowler, 1987) and are able to understand others' views and ideologies in the same way as their own (Fowler, 1981). With this third-person perspective and the possibility to understand more than the own perspective, critical and conflictive aspects can be mindfully considered in the evaluation process (Fowler, 1987). During this stage, the individual experiences tension with regard to (1) individuality vs. group membership, (2) subjectivity and the power of emotions vs. objectivity and critical reflection, (3) self-fulfilment and self-actualisation vs. service to and for others as primary concern and

(4) the question of commitment to the relative vs. the struggle with the possibility of an absolute.

Fowler (1981) emphasises that at the end of this stage, traditional beliefs do not need to be rejected or retained, but should rather be integrated and held with self-awareness and intentional choice. However, the difficulty during this stage seems to be the challenge of letting go of the authority of others and the fear of losing relationships to others when they are transforming. Fowler highlights that individuals also fear to be abandoned by their original community while at the same time being insecure about their new values, beliefs and perceptions. This process can last several years (Fowler, 1981). Fowler (1987) comments that it might happen that the individual does not proceed with the different processes within this stage of faith development and that the process of going through this stage might not be completed. In this case, an individual might find him/herself stagnating between Stage 3 and Stage 4 (Fowler, 1987).

Fowler (1986) states that an individual might move to the next stage when he/she experiences the need to move on with the images of the self and others. Is this the case, the individual might feel the need to transform on a deeper level with regard to energies that are explored within the deeper self on a deeper level. Individuals might also feel that the explanations and meanings that they have created during this stage are not intense and deep enough and they might feel the need to move to the next stage, which seems to explore a deeper, multi-layered truth (Fowler, 1981).

5.7.6 Stage 5 – Paradoxical-Conjunctive Stage

The “conjunctive faith” (Coyle, 2011) stage is described in the following section. Hughes (1997, p. 1) calls this stage “balanced faith” or “inclusive faith” and highlights that it is developed when the Piagetian development of logical thought is said to give way to relational and contextual reasoning. This stage rarely occurs before the age of 30 years. Rather, this stage is usually developed in midlife or beyond, if it is developed at all (Fowler, 1987).

During this stage, usually the coherence and tidiness of Stage 4 dissolves and Stage 5 is mainly characterised by a ‘new openness to others and an ability to keep in tension the paradoxes and polarities of faith and life’ (Hughes, 1997, p. 1). According to Fowler (2001), this stage involves dialogical and dialectical ways of thinking. It is an integrative stage that reunifies what has been separated before (Fowler, 1981). Elifson and Stone (1985, p. 31) mention that symbols integrate multiple conceptual and affective meanings, creating an experienced richness and depth. Fowler and Dell (2004) see this phase as characterised by the reflexive adult thinking and experiencing that the truth can be multiple in itself and can also be viewed from multiple perspectives. Fowler (1984) mentions that during this stage, opposites and contradictions are reconciled while the individual can stand the pressures and tensions. The individual encounters contradictions and reunifies the contradic-

tions and paradoxes within him/herself without leaning towards the one or the other side (Fowler, 1981).

During this stage, individuals develop an interest in various cultural and religious traditions and integrate new insights into their own beliefs and traditions. The own cultural and social boundaries are overcome (Straughn, 2010).

The individual deals with paradoxes on different levels and learns how to deal with conscious and unconscious complexities, increased awareness of dependence and independence and the development of solidarity towards friends and strangers (Fowler, 1981). Fowler (1987) emphasises that this is the stage in which the desire increases to explore and find new ways to define the relationship to the self and to God. The individual is consequently not bound anymore to the social or religious group or the self, but rather refers to the interconnectedness and interrelatedness and complexities of the world and things in the world and above (Fowler, 2001). Straughn (2010) highlights that the boundaries of the previous stages are overcome in this stage and Fowler (1986) adds that opposites are unified.

At this stage, the individual is aware that the unconscious is highly influential and that the conscious power of the individual, the group and society is limited (Fowler, 1987). These individuals are able to see the limitations in themselves and their own belief systems and can recognise symbols and meanings beyond their own faith traditions (Fowler, 1981).

At this stage, the individual is still able to connect to the former belief while striving to change and transform. However, Burnell (2013, p. 147) points out that these individuals may feel “stuck between the two opposites. As these individuals long for transformation, their loyalties or commitments to persons or institutions may keep them stuck.” Fowler (1981) states that individuals might be torn apart by the vision of a transformed world and the experience of the reality that the real world has not yet been transformed. This experience might lead to feelings of loneliness, depression, frustration and homelessness (Fowler, 1984). However, the individual in this stage might reach out for loyalty across communities, increasing openness and acceptance of transitions and communities, reference to a symbolic and mythical reality, humble awareness, understanding of a multi-layered complexity and the strength to see and uphold opposite tensions (Fowler, 1984).

According to Fowler, an individual moves to the next and final stage when he/she experiences discomfort and longs for a transformation (Fowler, 1986).

5.7.7 Stage 6 – Universalising Faith

Finally, Stage 6 is defined as “universalising faith”, which usually only occurs in later life, if at all. It is a very mature stage, hardly reached (Croucher, 2010) and is rather a teleological extension of the theory than an empirically grounded phenomenon (Elifson & Stone, 1985, p. 31).

During this stage, the self is relinquished and abandoned, and a person is seen as a whole, regardless of social class, nationality, gender, age, political ideology, race

and religion (Fowler & Dell, 2004). Fowler (1984) highlights that this stage occurs across cultures, but is expressed in various ways. Polar tensions are embraced and transformed (Fowler, 1984).

A person turns to love for each and every person, altruistic values, such as helping others and “giving one’s self even through self-sacrifice” (Hughes, 1997, p. 2). The individual identifies with the “whole of others” and loyalty becomes a “principle of being”. Relatively few individuals claim this stage of vision and faith-related action, as seen in Mahatma Ghandi, Martin Luther King Jr. and Mother Theresa of Calcutta (Elifson & Stone, 1985, p. 31). Fowler (1987) also names former US president Jimmy Carter, Archbishop Desmond Tutu and Sister Helen Prejean as individuals who are examples of having reached this stage of faith development. Croucher (2010) refers to this stage as the stage of selfless service.

At this stage, evil is opposed non-violently and with unconditional love. This is shown in actions that emanate from God’s love and justice (Fowler & Dell, 2004, p. 32), for example in the life of the antiapartheid theologian Beyers Naudé (Fouché, Burnell, Van Niekerk, & Nortjé 2016). God becomes a new quality for individuals who reach this stage. Faith and belief in God become grounded principles of being and individuals identify with these principles while developing deep feelings of knowledge, respect and value towards others (Fowler, 1987). At the same time, God’s goodness and humanity are seen as one in peace. Burnell (2013, p. 149) emphasises that this stage is marked by the “decentration of the self” and the ability to see the world from various perspectives.

Furthermore, the individual refers to “decentration of values and valuation” at this stage (Burnell, 2013, p. 149), which in the end emphasises the worth of God, the creator. These individuals can connect to others across faith developmental stages and various religions and faith traditions (Fowler, 1987). Both Dykstra (1986) and Croucher (2010) highlight that individuals who reach this stage of faith development may be seen as charismatic leaders, such as Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Abraham Heshel (Burnell, 2013) or Beyers Naudé (Fouché et al. 2016).

In this section, the stages of faith development were discussed.

5.7.8 Summarising Remarks on the Stages of Faith Development

Fowler (1981, 1987) considered that in FDT, stages needed to be seen as invariant, sequential, discreet and hierarchical. Usually, an individual moves through the stages without skipping any and a transition towards the next stage is described as a transition into a higher sphere of development. The movement from one stage to the other is connected to specific cognitive development, particularly during childhood

and the teenage years (Fowler, 1984). Cognitive development is needed to move through the stages, particularly with regard to the growing complexity and the increasing tensions that might occur during certain stages, as described earlier.

The following section refers to faith development in the context of the vocation of an individual.

5.8 Faith Development and Vocation in Life

In Fowler's (1984) FDT, the concept of vocation in life is emphasised; vocation is viewed as shaping all the aspects of life while responding to God's call. Vocation in life is connected to the faith development stages (Fowler, 1987) and includes various aspects of an individual's life, such as relationships, work, leisure, resources, public and private life (Fowler, 1984). It develops from young adulthood to middle and late adulthood (Fowler, 1987), as explained in the following:

1. During young adulthood, the individual aims at clarifying and defining personal identity while searching and identifying his/her vocation in life.
2. During middle adulthood, which might be defined as between 28 and 40 years, individuals struggle with deepening and questioning life's vocation, while searching for it with regard to the calling of God (Fowler, 1984).
3. According to Fowler (1987), individuals only realise in the years after 40 what is important in their lives. Fowler (1984) sees a strong connection between finding one's vocation in life and dealing with vocational callings during this period of life.

Fowler (1987) strongly connects well-being to the idea that an individual has found his/her vocation in life. If this is not the case, Fowler (1984) emphasises that this could lead to ill health, burn-out phenomena and a crisis during mid-life. He highlights (Fowler, 1984) that during this period of life, the crisis of not having found or adhered to an individual's vocation in life might, however, lead to a deepening of spiritual development, spiritual depth and transcendence.

Fowler (1984) points out that a vocation is interlinked with the call for an individual to be bound to a particular vocation in life. Through the vocation in life, an individual creates a relationship with God that is at the same time connected to the development of faith. Faith development incorporates the development of a vocation in life and adherence to a calling in life. Fowler distinguishes vocations created in life from the three main relationships with God. The possible relationships with God through defining vocation in life are the following:

5.8.1 God's Creation and Caring for Others and the Environment

In this relationship with God, an individual participates in maintaining and extending care for the environment and the creation of God. Fowler (1987) emphasises that this may involve active parenting, involvement in care and education, community work and care for mental and physical well-being in the living context. The finding of vocation in life and the development of faith are interconnected.

5.8.2 God's Governance and His Justice and Lawfulness Within Societies (Fowler, 1987)

This category of having a relationship with God and the work of governance highlights the importance of promoting justice and faithfulness by involving organisations and structures in a local and global context (Fowler, 1984). Examples of promoting a relationship with God and governance include the fight for a just distribution of resources in the world, service for the common good, peaceful conflict resolution and avoidance of chaos and violence (Fowler, 1987).

5.8.3 God's Liberation from Socio-economic and Political Ideologies and Boundaries (Fowler, 1987)

This category includes involvement with God and the liberating and redemptive work in the world. This work relates to political, societal, economic and social aspects in societies in which individuals and groups are misused or dehumanised to enrich and benefit others, for example the elite (Fowler, 1987). According to Burnell (2013), this work is connected to solidarity with the oppressed and rejected, withdrawal from supporting forces that suppress others, as well as liberation from ego-centric motives of using power, purpose, significance and security in order to participate in liberation movements.

In late adulthood, the individual should be able to look at life and be sure about having lived his/her calling and vocation. Individuals who feel that they have lived their calling usually feel fulfilled, energetic and can balance their own needs with the needs of others (Fowler, 1984). Adults in late adulthood who have lived their calling and vocation usually encourage others who struggle with their vocation and support them while feeling fulfilled and blessed by God's support in their lives (Fowler, 1984).

In this section faith, vocation in life and their connection were presented. The following section focuses on empirical research and FDT.

5.9 Empirical Research in Faith Development Theory

Empirical research procedures for FDT have been published in the *Manual of Faith Development Research* (Moseley et al., 1986, 1993). The empirical foundation for the theory of faith development was initially based upon 359 interviews conducted from 1972 to 1981, primarily in the US and Canada, with interviewees of whom almost 98% were of white origin (Fowler, 1981, pp. 313–314). The interviewees were 62 years and older and mainly belonged to the Christian, Jewish and Orthodox faith (Fowler, 1981, pp. 313–314). Research on FDT is currently highly heterogeneous. However, most research studies use the faith development interview structure suggested by the manual as one of the first approaches to FDT (Mosely et al., 1986; 1993). The manual explains the theoretical foundations of faith development, describes how to conduct a faith development interview and how a faith development interview is coded (including coding criteria) (Mosely et al., 1986; 1993). In this “classical” procedure of faith development research, the research attention is on the “structure” of FDT, while marginalising content, emotion and life history. Streib (2005, p. 104) emphasises the fact that the structural evaluation is the key to FDT. Fowler (1982), however, includes a variety of factors, such as life history and event markers; the contents of faith, dynamics of the unconscious or the regiocultural force field are not evaluated explicitly. This “classical” approach has not been used in this study, because it is not compatible with the psychobiographical approach.

Streib (2005) has reviewed 53 articles and empirical studies that have used FDT, focusing mainly on quantitative research methods that are applied in faith development research. He argues for an inclusion of content-analytical and narrative-analytical procedures into faith development research and suggests a coherent methodological procedure for future research in FDT. According to Streib (2005, p. 100), FDT has experienced “widespread dissemination from the very beginning and creative evolution of both theoretical and research methods”. Focusing on empirical research on FDT, Streib located around 100 dissertations, of which 90 focus on FDT only, and 10 – empirical mainly, but also theoretical – focus on its application.

The majority of the empirical studies use the faith development interview according to the manual (1986; 1993) (Streib, 2005). Streib highlights that six proposals for faith development scale construction have been developed in terms of quantitative faith development measurements (e.g. Barnes, Doyle, & Johnson, 1989; Clore, 1997; Green & Hoffman, 1989; Hiebert, 1993; Leak, 2003; Swenson, Fuller, & Clements, 1993). Selected proposals of faith development research have suggested using the quantitative measure more freely and actively (Hoffman, 1994; Rose, 1991). Faith development research has also been discussed in other empirical research frameworks, such as the qualitative research approach (Joung, 2007), contextual influence analysis (Barker, 2005), grounded theory (Bolen, 1994), thematic analysis (Watt, 1997), the phenomenological hermeneutical approach (Pender, 2000) and content analysis (Cowden, 1992).

The research on FDT contributes to a broad conceptual understanding, to developmental theory, guiding instruction and education and greater social understanding (Fowler, 2004). By studying the development of faith, understanding of the concept of faith improves and the impact of faith in the life of a person is explored. By understanding the development of faith, the theoretical development can provide guidelines on how to educate individuals and groups of various ages and cognitive development at certain stages of life and faith (Fowler, 2004). At the same time, the research on FDT serves the general elaboration of developmental theories and contributes to a greater understanding of social, theological and religious contexts (Fowler, 2001).

In this research on Paulo Coelho, no faith development interviews are analysed, as is usually done in faith development research. Coelho's mental and emotional processes are analysed in the psychobiographical frame, following an "interpretative research approach" (Streib, 2005, p. 101), using content analysis, as explained in Sect. 6.9. This study thus contributes to the more recently used empirical research approaches used in FDT.

5.10 Faith Development Theory in Psychobiography and Writing

With regard to FDT in writing and psychobiographical research, only a few authors (e.g. Elifson & Stone, 1985) could be found who have dealt with the topic of FDT and writing and it has been pointed out that FDT and writing related to "the individual's attained view of world coherence is the writer's ability to adapt to various modes of discourse (narration, exposition, argumentation, etc.) to express various ideas" (Elifson & Stone, 1985, p. 32).

In this context, the authors (Elifson & Stone, 1985) highlight that any writer who is not clear about his/her own and personal base of moral decision-making, competing claims and a conceptual system with its paradoxical truth might be restricted in his/her writing ability and should therefore focus on faith development.

The FDT has been used in previous psychobiographical research projects, such as a study on John Wesley (Fowler, 2001), as well as the study of the life of Mother Theresa (Stroud, 2004), the study on Beyers Naudé (Burnell, 2013; Fouché et al., 2016) and studies on Anne Hutchinson, Ludwig Wittgenstein, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Blaise Pascal and Malcom X (Fowler & Lovin, 1979).

Van Genechten (2009), who has written a psychobiography study on Helen Keller by using Levinson's life structure theory, highlights in her recommendations (Van Genechten, 2009, p. 87) that the use of James Fowler's FDT could provide new insights into the life of Helen Keller and could reveal further dimensions of her development. Collins (2013) emphasises that in the psychobiography on Jesus, the stages of faith development analysis could provide deeper insights and new perspectives into Jesus and his life. Other studies have dealt with faith in the context of

psychobiographical analysis (e.g. Kramer, 2002) and Runyan (2006) has pointed out that faith is crucial for phenomenologists who dedicate themselves to psychobiographical research.

As presented, some psychobiographical studies suggest using Fowler's FDT as a useful model for a psychobiographical researcher; however, only a few studies could be found that applied FDT in psychobiographical research. Even fewer could be found that referred to FDT in the lives of writers and authors. This adds to the statement of Streib (2005) in Sect. 5.7 that Fowler's FDT has mainly been used in quantitative studies and that there is an urgent need to apply it in qualitative studies, such as psychobiographies, to contribute to theory development and a deeper "Verstehen", as described in Sect. 6.3. Stroud (2004) adds to this argument by emphasising that the FDT should be used even more across psychobiographical studies to contribute to new longitudinal insights on the development of faith in individuals.

This study refers to these suggestions and uses Fowler's FDT to achieve deeper insights and new scientific findings of faith in the life and creative works of Paulo Coelho.

5.11 Critical Responses to Faith Development Theory

The FDT of Fowler has been criticised extensively (Astley & Francis, 1992; Dykstra & Parks, 1986; Fowler, Nipkow, & Schweitzer, 1991; Streib, 2001c). Selected critical aspects will be addressed in the following section. For a broader overview on critics, see the work of Heywood (2008).

Many theologians and other researchers have strongly criticised the understanding and definition of faith (Coyle, 2005; Hughes, 1997). Coyle (2011) emphasises that Fowler's definition of faith appears to be the strongest point of criticism. Dykstra (1986, p. 56), for example, criticises Fowler's definition of faith as being too broad and too unspecific in theological terms, while Hughes criticises the complexity of his presentations of faith development, which draw on interdisciplinary perspectives. However, Hughes sees the main problem in Fowler's definition of faith as "meaning-making" (Hughes, 1997, p. 1). Hughes criticises Fowler's (1980, p. 53) concept and idea that faith "has to do with the making, maintenance, and transformation of human meaning" and accordingly Fowler's concept of faith is related to "human thinking, rational capacities, personal relationships, social awareness and moral judging" (Hughes, 1997, p. 1). According to Hughes (1997, p. 2), Fowler (1981) is more concerned about the "how" of faith than "the object of faith" in terms of what (or whom) to believe in. Hughes (1997, p. 2) states that it is critical that Fowler defines Christian faith as a sub-set of the general phenomenon of faith and that his concept differs from a Christian perspective with regard to the possibilities of conversion. At the same time, in Christian faith there is a "supernatural element that makes its origin and growth distinctive", while in Fowler's theory on human development, the supernatural aspect is hardly reflected (Hughes, 1997,

p. 2). The main criticism from a theological perspective is therefore that particularly in an orthodox Christian understanding, faith is understood as a “human response to God’s grace as a gift from God” (Coyle, 2011). However, Fowler’s (1992) idea of focusing on the human dimension of faith should not deny or replace these kinds of understanding of faith and should rather be seen as additional insights into understanding of the ultimate reality.

Other critical work is to be found in the context of psychology of religion and religious development, primarily criticising the structural logic of development (Reich, 2005, 2008). Reich (2008), for example, highlights that more inclusive and comprehensible models of faith development need to be developed that should not over-emphasise cognition and cognitive development and should include emotional and psychodynamic dimensions as processes of transition and transformation. McDargh (2001) also points out that emotion-focused psycho-dynamic processes need to be addressed to find out why some people do not move beyond certain stages of faith development.

In this context, the gendered bias as well as its cultural specificity has been criticised (Coyle, 2011, p. 288). Elifson and Stone (1985) mention that particular differences in growth are based on culture, on social background, and on gender and are not adequately reflected in developmental theory. Ashdown and Gibbons (2012) highlight that the FDT that has been developed in North America has not been systematically tested cross-culturally. Since Fowler (1981) presents his theory, which explains humans’ faith development regardless of religion, culture, ethnicity or nationality, although the empirical data have only been gathered in North America, the topic of culture still needs to be addressed with regard to FDT (Ashdown & Gibbons, 2012). By comparing participants from Guatemala and the US the authors show that participants with a lower level of collectivism among individuals predict higher levels of faith development. This finding is not surprising, since the faith development model describes the transition from lower to higher stages requiring the formation of a kind of personal or individual faith (Ashdown & Gibbons, 2012).

Barker (2005) shows in her work on contextual influences on FDT that identity development and the contextual frame are highly important in developing faith in terms of developing a spiritual ‘me’ besides developing a social and a material ‘me’ in her sample of religiously diverse adults in England.

Fowler’s theory is influenced by his own socio-cultural and religious background (Baxter, 2006), highlighting that the development of the stages of faith is affected by the cultural environment (Fowler, 2001). Besides the influence of Fowler’s individual, religious and socio-cultural background, De Laurentis (1985) states that the faith theory only refers to monotheistic frames of reference, particularly since the theory is based on a US-Canadian sample. Participants referred to their personal and individual concepts of beliefs, faith-building narratives and stories, while being interviewed in English. It can be assumed that participants from other cultures and religious groups, using a different mother tongue, might not refer to the same terms and value concepts described by Fowler (1981). However, Garland (2002), in Ashdown and Gibbons (2012), highlights that in related research, people described faith similarly by using terms such as trust and loyalty. Recent research therefore

suggests that faith development is culturally bound and needs a culture-sensitive approach (Farc, 1999; Ashdown & Gibbons, 2012).

Slee (2004) highlights that – since women usually score lower than men in faith development interviews and proceed to the later stages of faith development at later ages than men – the FDT does not account for gender-specific needs and distinctive patterns of women. Harris (1989) has from a feminist perspective argued that the stages of faith development are to be viewed as fluid, dynamic, non-hierarchical and influenced by emotion, cognition, imagination and relationships.

Several authors have fundamentally criticised the development of stage development models based on structural development theories (Cartwright, 2001; Nelson, 2002; Streib, 2005). Sternberg (2001a, 2001b) has pointed out that development – including faith development – might not proceed in an invariant or coherent series of stages. Cartwright emphasised, however, that in development processes there might be domain-specific progress that might not be reflected or captured in the developmental models.

Another point of criticism is that Fowler does not pay much attention to the processes of transition periods in his model (Hamrick, 1988; Rizzuto, 2001) and that hardly any longitudinal work has been done on FDT (Smith, 2003). Other authors, such as Nelson (2002), refer to the fact that regression needs to be seen as part of stage transition and that regression needs to be included in Fowler's faith development model as a part of development and transition. Streib (2001a, 2001b) highlights in at least two of his papers on faith development that there needs to be awareness that faith development stages can include the replication of earlier stages. In a later paper, he (Streib, 2003) points out that the development of faith might not be limited only to a certain path of development, but might even occur in multiple ways of development, using various development paths.

In parallel to the content-based and theoretically oriented criticisms, the FDT has been criticised as well for its insubstantial methodological empirical foundation (Nelson & Aleshire, 1986), as well as for its inflexibility to accommodate postmodern sensibilities (Coyle, 2011). Although Fowler (1996, 2001, 2004) refers to postmodernism in the context of theology, he does not deal with postmodernist approaches to faith and theology on a deeper and systematic level with regard to his own theoretical approaches (Coyle, 2011): Fowler postulates, for example, that postmodern approaches have to cope with definitions that are not understood as absolute explanations (Fowler, 1981) At the same time, he rejects in his early work relativist views that religious “claims and experiences have no necessary validity beyond the limits of communities that hold them” (Coyle, 2011, p. 19). In later publications, Fowler discusses that moral and spiritual demands of postmodern life need to be met by leadership “that, in the power of God's Spirit, draws us toward a global faith and ethics”, which from his Christian perspective is a desirable goal (Fowler, 2004, pp. 420–421). However, this perspective, as the base for FDT, could be questioned at the same time in terms of the compatibility of a Christian faith for the development of faith theory (Baxter, 2006).

5.12 Chapter Summary

The developmental approach of FDT across the life span makes the theory of James Fowler an interesting and significant one in psychobiographical works on extraordinary individuals. In this chapter the key terms and concepts of Fowler's FDT were presented and discussed. It was emphasised that his approach can be used in the analysis of a single case study and an individual life study approach and is therefore useful for this study, which focuses on the development of faith in Paulo Coelho. This theory is applied to Coelho's life in Sect. 7.6. Chapter 6 will provide insight into the research methodology used in this study.

Chapter 6

Research Design and Methodology

Creativity requires the courage to let go of certainties.

Erich Fromm, 1956

6.1 Chapter Preview

In this chapter, the research methodology used is introduced and presented. The chapter starts by describing the research design and research methodology, followed by the research paradigm, which is defined in the field of hermeneutics in psychobiographical case study research. Selected quality criteria of qualitative case study research and markers of good psychobiographical research are defined and presented in relation to this study. Furthermore, the research process in psychobiography followed in this study is explained. The hermeneutical circle, in terms of pre-assumptions, redefinition of assumptions and finally conclusions, is presented in the data collection and analysis process. The data collection process is presented, including the sampling procedure and the selection of first- and third-person documents, and the theories selected and applied are introduced. Moreover, the process of data analysis and interpretation is introduced, referring primarily to content and narrative analysis – combining and integrating these two approaches – and the data presentation and reporting style are described. Finally, the ethical considerations and implications of this study are discussed and the methodological limitations are outlined. In the end, a chapter summary is provided.

6.2 Research Design and Methodology

The study uses an explanatory and descriptive psychobiographical case study design (Elms, 2007) that is qualitative in nature. The research relies on the key principles of qualitative research methodology (Fourie, 1996), which include (a) understanding the subject of research, (b) seeing the researcher as a main research instrument, (c) focusing on interpretation, (d) on subjectivity, (e) and on the process of research,

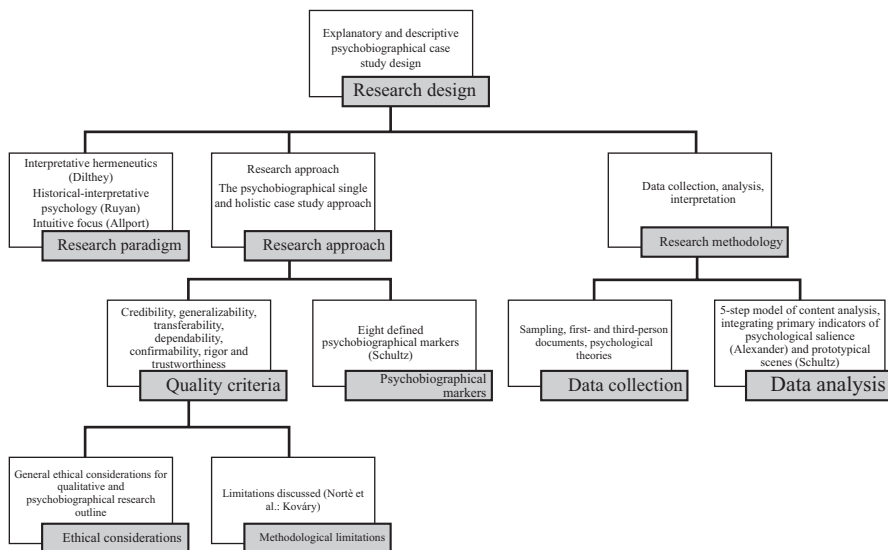


Fig. 6.1 Overview research design and methodology (Source: Researcher’s own construction)

(f) being flexible in the process of conducting research and finally (g) pointing out the contextualisation of the research study.

The research is based on a psychobiographical study of a single case, the individual Paulo Coelho, from birth to 2017. The case study method is viewed in the broader philosophical frame and research design of hermeneutics, which is introduced in the following section. Figure 6.1 provides an overview on the research design and methodology, which will be outlined and described below.

6.3 The Research Paradigm of Hermeneutics in Psychobiography

In methodological and philosophical terms the study is contextualised in the hermeneutic tradition of Dilthey (1996; 2003), as well as in the “intuitive method” of Allport (1961) (see Sect. 6.4), which is based on “modern hermeneutics” and on Runyan’s (2005a, 2005b) concept of historical interpretative psychology. Why this research paradigm is chosen for this psychobiographical study is explained below.

The hermeneutic tradition of Dilthey (2002) is followed for several reasons, as explained in the following sub-chapters and with regard to its close interlinkages

with the theories used in the study (Chaps. 2 and 4), such as personality psychology (in terms of psychobiography) and the HWM within the positive psychology frame.

Other hermeneutical philosophers, such as Martin Heidegger, Hans-Georg Gadamer, Paul Ricoeur or Emmanuel Levinas, are not addressed in this study because their focus of interest, philosophy and study could not be identified as matching as well as Dilthey's hermeneutics with regard to this psychobiography and the theories applied (e.g. Heidegger applied Husserl's phenomenological ideas to hermeneutics; he did not focus as much on reflection as Dilthey). Gadamer, as a scholar of Heidegger, used a linguist approach focusing on embedding interactions and conversations. His approach as a pioneer dealing with philosophical approaches to the nature of human understanding is not followed in this study, because of his focus on dialogues and language use, prejudices and a strongly narrative perspective, which does not seem appropriate for this psychobiographical study in terms of the hermeneutical paradigm used. Finally, Paul Ricoeur's hermeneutical understanding is not used in this study, because of his focus on language and symbols from a linguistic perspective (although his interest in identity constructions and the exploration of meaning might relate to this study). Because of the limitations of this study, the different hermeneutical approaches will not be discussed further, however it is emphasised that Dilthey's approach was the one that influenced the *Geisteswissenschaften* outstandingly and that used a broad hermeneutical approach which builds a broad hermeneutical and philosophical base for this study.

Focusing on the history of research methodology in the context of psychobiographic research, biographical writings are strongly connected to the development of hermeneutics (Dilthey, 1996, 2002). Dilthey's approach of modern hermeneutics was the pioneering work to focus on the uniqueness and the wholeness of the individual while emphasising a descriptive and analytic psychology (Kováry, 2011) in personality research. Dilthey, as the founder of modern hermeneutics, emphasised that biography is an important part of psychology and essential for exploring the psyche of an individual. He thereby contributed to an inclusive understanding of biographical work in personality psychology, of which psychobiography is part. Hermeneutics, as a methodological paradigm, therefore interweaves with the theoretical framework of personality psychology as reflected in this psychobiographical case study (see Chap. 2).

Dilthey's theory has been chosen as the research paradigm since he is the founder of modern hermeneutics, a pioneer in the exploration of the lives of "heroes" in terms of their social status, their friendships and their love (Maxwell, 2009, p. 182). Dilthey's (2002) approach to unique individuals and the exploration based on status, friendship and love interlinks particularly well with the HWM used in this study (see Chap. 4) and therefore with the positive psychology theoretical framework (see Chaps. 2 and 4). The HWM also uses life tasks and life forces, which are represented in Dilthey's hermeneutics regarding biographies, focusing on status, friendship and love as outstanding aspects in the lives of "heros" (Maxwell, 2009, p. 182).

Dilthey has also been chosen based on his view that biography is an important part of descriptive and analytical psychology and the exploration of the psyche of an individual. Schultz (2005a) highlights that Dilthey's impact on research was very important in terms of his human science psychology and the value Dilthey ascribed to exploring the individual person. However, Dilthey not only emphasised individual wholeness, but the anchoring of the individual in the socio-cultural context and highlighted that a researcher needs to put him/herself in the place of the author and experience his/her circumstances and the situations in which he/she produced a text (Lock & Strong, 2010, p. 56).

Dilthey's assumption seems appropriate for this research study, since according to Bulhof (1982), Dilthey's hermeneutical understanding is based on the assumption that both the reality of an individual and the creative works of the individual are comparable to a literary text that can be interpreted. Reality becomes an important source of meaning in an individual's life and is always a product and creation of the subject, which can never be an independent observer, but rather a part of the reality construction process. Reality is therefore constructed through the individual and the other, which Dilthey calls the "Du" (English "thou").

The interpretation of the world, of the reality, as well as of the history of a country or a life is always the product of the observer and the observed (Bateson, 1987) and can therefore differ in perception and interpretation according to the different periods of time, the cultural context and the applied paradigms of meaning (see Sect. 6.11). The human lived experience is to be viewed as being at the nexus of psyche in terms of mind and polis (the socio-cultural context), the cultural world. This means that the "Erlebnis" (English "the experience" and conceptualised as the lived experience of a life) is formed of the individual and personal psyche, the mind, and the polis, the socio-cultural and historical context (Dilthey, 1996). These two aspects form the primary dialectic of identity: Dilthey points out that biography as well as autobiography are the most suitable methods for understanding the "Erlebnis", the lived experience, of an individual or a group and thereby parts of his/her identity. This assumption is also important in this study and it provides a thorough basis for the methodological analysis in this research.

Dilthey emphasises that to understand a person's life, the cultural, historic and temporal conditions and contexts need to be understood. In hermeneutics, the reader tries to understand the actor's own and emic perspective by including the socio-cultural contexts that surround the actions when interpreting the text (Gummesson, 2000, p. 175). A biography might then be seen as a historical case study, since it is based on the lived experience of an individual within a certain tempo-historical context as well as in the context of the interpretation of the interpreter (Owensby, 1994). In these terms, Runyan's (2005a), concept of historical-interpretative psychology builds a base for this study in connection with Dilthey: Paulo Coelho's life is viewed in a historical and interpretative context and in this way Runyan's concept of historical-interpretative psychology is part of the methodology of hermeneutics of this research study.

Hermeneutics define human subjectivity as being part of the research and the research processes (Dilthey, 2002). However, the hermeneutic interpretation of a life – of a text – requires an active, sophisticated subjectivity to comprehend subjective experiences and their expressions in life objectively. “Verstehen” (English “understanding”), according to Dilthey, happens when a researcher applies a self-reflective attitude to achieve adequate interpretations of the text of lived experiences and their expressions (Ratner, 2002). This self-reflective attitude is applied in this study. It can be summarised that Dilthey’s understanding of hermeneutics integrates the main aim of interpreting ideas, purposes and other mental states expressed in the world of human action (Babbie & Mouton, 2006; Dilthey, 1976).

Gorden Allport was highly interested in the philosophical concept and interpretative hermeneutical understanding and exploration of “Verstehen”. Allport highlighted, as Dilthey did, that a holistic view of the person requires the recognition and interference of the context of the subject and his/her impact on the mind, which elaborates the content of research into wholes and is perceived intuitively (Allport, 1929). The study of human beings and human nature needs an explorative technique and an intuitive focus, which emphasises the unities of the subject researched (Allport, 1929). Allport promoted the study of human lives in personality psychology, interpreting the individual in a holistic sense and within his/her socio-cultural context. This psychobiography uses basically the intuition of the researcher in the sense of Allport to explore, explain and understand the person as a whole in his/her context. The intuitive method works with the researcher’s intuition in terms of the exploration of the subject of research and is interlinked with Dilthey’s understanding of subjectivity in research.

According to Hermans (1988), Allport used a nomothetic approach to research to identify general laws and principles to explain the human phenomenon, which stood against the usual psychological case study research that aims to consider phenomena with regard to the individuality and uniqueness of the individual. According to McLeod (2007), idiographic refers to the study in psychology regarding what makes an individual unique, while the nomothetic approach aims at identifying general laws and principles. Allport later changed the term ideographic to morphogenic to reflect the individual in the context of the whole (Hermans, 1988).

In summary, Dilthey’s (2002) hermeneutical approach has been chosen as the methodological research paradigm for this study because it was a pioneering work, emphasising a holistic approach towards the exploration of the wholeness and uniqueness of an individual by using descriptive and analytic psychology, relating well to the theoretical context and the psychobiographical case study approach. Dilthey’s view on the individual corresponds with the view of the HWM of the individual, as explored above. Moreover, Dilthey’s hermeneutics allow one to see the individual and his/her creative works as explorable while the subjectivity of the research is valued and the researcher’s impact on the research, by using a self-reflective attitude, is acknowledged. Finally, Dilthey’s approach to hermeneutics provides the researcher with a socio-historical and individual approach, binding various influences in an individual’s life together. Dilthey’s assumptions are for these reasons defined as building a suitable research paradigm for this research

study in the context of aspects of Runyan's historical-interpretative psychology and Allport's intuitive focus.

6.4 The Research Approach: Psychobiography as a Case Study Method

In the research paradigm of hermeneutics, the research approach is defined as a psychobiographical case study method. Many of the psychobiographies of the late twentieth century use idiographic (defined as the "unit of analysis being a single case" or event according to Fouché and Van Niekerk (2010, p. 496) within a holistic context (Carlson, 1988)),¹ hermeneutic perspectives, life story analysis and case study approaches. Currently, psychobiography falls into the hermeneutic traditions in which the author of a text is seen as a "real phenomenon who can be explored and interpreted psychologically" (Kováry, 2011, p. 765). Psychobiography is viewed as a "method of idiographic approach in personality psychology" that originally sought the analysis and understanding of "the dynamic and developmental determinants of artistic creativity" (Kováry, 2011, p. 764). The idiographic approach is strongly connected to the concept of idio-dynamics, which focuses on the life history and life events in cultural contexts (Duncan, 2002).

The case study was originally used in psychology to explore in-depth questions regarding a phenomenon in terms of why and how (Yin, 2009). According to Biggs (2007, p. 10), case studies are used to "study psychological phenomena within the natural context that utilises qualitative tools and techniques for data collection and analysis." Psychobiography usually employs a single in-depth case study design (Denzin, 1989; Fouché, 1999; Smith, 1994) to describe an individual in depth in the context of a selected psychological theory and socio-cultural historic context. These case studies are described as psychobiographically informed biographies (Biggs, 2007). They are person-centred, focusing on the uniqueness of a person and providing a holistic description of a selected individual (Carlson, 1988; Gronn, 1993; Stroud, 2004). Influential models of personal psychology, such as the models of Maslow, Piaget, Erikson, Freud, Murray and Allport, have mainly used single cases of individuals to build their well-recognised models (Schultz, 2005d).

According to the basic morphogenic approach of psychobiographical research, the case study is designed to distinguish it from nomothetic approaches, which are essentially normative and comparative (Perry, 2012). Complying with psychobiography as idiographic research (Green, 2006), Howe (1997) states that psychobiography is primarily defined through the vast amount of biographical data used in psychological research to analyse extraordinary individuals, their original thinking,

¹According to Kováry (2011), Dilthey influenced Allport strongly to become the pioneer of idiographic approaches in personality psychology and Murray became a scholar emphasising the idiographic, in-depth approaches at Harvard, focusing in research on a single individual from a longitudinal perspective.

creativity, productivity and growth. Psychobiographical research is morphogenic and qualitative, since psychobiographies focus on the individualised patterns and processes of a person as a “whole”, an entire unit, rather than to analyse specific fragmented parts and aspects of a personality (Elms, 1994). Behavioural patterns and processes of an individual’s human development over a life continuum can be traced through psychobiographical case study research to provide a view on the whole person (Fouché & Van Niekerk, 2005a).

This study is based on a single and holistic case study approach that is concerned with the analysis of a single unit of analysis (Yin, 2009) and can be usefully employed in psychobiographical research. The single, holistic case study offers the opportunity to study a unique phenomenon in depth, to test a well-formulated theory while aiming to explore, understand and explain the complexities of a social phenomenon (Yin, 2009). Areflection on the theoretical and methodological approaches on the basis of the findings of this study will be provided in Sect. 9.6.

It needs to be mentioned that case study research has been criticised as a research approach for being based on a small amount of data or single cases (Babbie & Mouton, 2006), not being generalisable and rather generating hypotheses than testing them (Hagg & Hedlund, 1978). However, this criticism is not relevant with regard to this study, since this psychobiographical study does not aim at producing generalisable results in quantitative terms, but rather aims at creating an in-depth understanding, according to Dilthey (1996, 2002). The creation of such an in-depth understanding is aligned with the qualitative quality criteria for judging qualitative studies and the markers of (good) psychobiographical research as described in the following chapters.

6.5 Quality Criteria in Qualitative Case Study Research

To develop coherent qualitative case study research, qualitative research criteria are defined (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Braud & Anderson, 1998; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Gummesson, 2000; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Sinkovics, Penz, & Ghauri, 2008; Van der Riet & Durrheim, 2008). These criteria interconnect the elements of the research design, which contributes to the research framework (Van der Riet & Durrheim, 2008).

Criteria for qualitative research studies have been discussed extensively (Patton, 2002; Van der Riet & Durrheim, 2008; Yin, 2009) to make qualitative research meaningful, valid, reliable, confirmable, credible and accurate. Sinkovics et al., (2008) emphasise that for qualitative studies, the quality criteria are blurred and that some researchers even argue that qualitative research needs its own defined criteria. It has been argued that criteria and paradigms for quantitative studies, such as reliability and validity, need to be adjusted in non-positivist paradigms (Kvale, 1996; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Mayer, 2011; Van der Riet & Durrheim, 2008). Sinkovics et al. (2008) argue that qualitative quality criteria should include trustworthiness, credibility, dependability, transferability and confirmability. Van der Riet and

Table 6.1 Quality criteria

Traditional criteria	Alternative criteria
Internal validity	Credibility
External validity	Generalisability/transferability
Reliability	Dependability
Objectivity	Confirmability

Source: Adapted from van der Riet and Durrheim (2008, p. 89)

Durrheim translate the traditional quantitative quality criteria into alternative criteria for judging qualitative data, as shown in Table 6.1.

Patton (2002) explains that research quality is strongly interlinked with the researcher's methodological skill of competence, experience and dedication and is therefore biased according to the researcher's skills. The qualitative quality criteria defined by van der Riet and Durheim (2008) are used in the context of the researcher's ability and skills in this study to discuss and define qualitative quality criteria in the context of psychobiographical research. However, besides these quality criteria named by van der Riet and Durheim, rigour, creativity and subjectivity also play a role in this psychobiographical study and will therefore be discussed as well. By setting these qualitative quality criteria and by referring to the particular quality criteria of psychobiographic research (see Sects. 6.5 and 6.6), the defined quality criteria function as a guiding framework, which is unique to qualitative research and particularly this study. Therefore, this study falls into the "quasi-foundationalists" classification of Denzin (2009, pp. 141–142) who sees this approach – to build up unique qualitative research criteria for qualitative research – as one approach to deal with quality in qualitative research.

6.5.1 *Credibility and Subjectivity*

Bradley (1993, p. 436) has defined credibility as an "adequate representation of the constructions of the social world under study". Credibility is highly valued in qualitative studies and refers to the causal conclusions and generalisations that can be drawn from the data and the study (Van der Riet & Durrheim, 2008). In qualitative studies, the concept of credibility refers to findings that convince the reader and present believable results (Van der Riet & Durrheim, 2008). According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), credibility can only be reached through extensive engagement and an increased understanding of the research topic. Yin (2009) defines the data quality based on the chain of evidence, as well as on the use of multiple sources of evidence. The research quality is also supported by careful handling of the data (Doerr, 2004), particularly in the context of triangulation of research methods, research data and theories applied (Patton, 2002). Triangulation is viewed as the capturing and

respecting of multiple perspectives, which is important for the quality of research (Patton, 2002, p. 546).

Patton (2002) emphasises that credibility is, particularly from an integrated constructivist perspective, strongly connected to subjectivity. It is built up during the research process through the construction of the overall research design, the presentation of the researcher, the researched and the context explained and understood (Poggenpoel, 1998), all of which are bound to the subjectivity of the researcher and the researched. The importance of subjectivity in this research is also discussed with regard to the research design and the research paradigm (see Sects. 6.2 and 6.3) and to the research process in content analysis (Sect. 6.9.1.5). Concerning the construction of credibility and subjectivity, the researcher uses self-reflection with regard to the researcher's bias in Sect. 2.7 at the beginning of the study and in Sect. 9.9, at the end of the study, for transparency reasons regarding the research process.

6.5.2 Generalisability and Transferability

Generalisability and transferability are the concepts that are defined as external validity in qualitative terms. Generalisability is viewed as “the extent to which it is possible to generalise from the data and context of the research study to broader populations and settings” (Van der Riet & Durrheim, 2008, p. 91). Generalisability in this study is seen as “less urgent” (Gummesson, 2000, p. 91), since a person's life is explored by applying selected theories without wanting to generalise the findings to other studies or individuals. However, in terms of generalisability for this study, the concept of theoretical generalisation is applicable, in which the study data and findings support the understanding, development and interpretation of existing theories by using the study's data (Lewis & Ritchie, 2003, p. 267, see Chap. 9).

Transferability is connected to generalisability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Transferability refers to the possibility to transfer data into other contexts, environments, settings or persons to then generalise the findings in terms of other individuals, settings or groups (Golafshani, 2003). The researcher ensures transferability through rich descriptions of contexts and settings (Blanchard & Horan, 1998). By providing rich descriptions, other researchers are enabled to decide and judge about the findings' transferability to other contexts and other research settings (Guba & Lincoln, 1985), while preserving the meanings and interpretations from this study (Leininger, 1994). Dawson (2009), as well as Lewis and Ritchie (2003), highlight that transferability (described by Lewis and Ritchie as inferential generalisation, is provided by using thick descriptions (Geertz, 1987) throughout the findings' descriptions. Graneheim and Lundman (2004) support the idea of thick descriptions and inferential generalisation by highlighting that a rich presentation of data can lead to transferability (inferential generalisation).

In this research the concepts of theoretical generalisation and transferability are used by providing thick descriptions and rich findings and through internal, case study-relevant generalisations.

6.5.3 Dependability

Dependability has often been referred to as reliability in quantitative terms (Best & Kahn, 1993; Flick, 2006; Graneheim & Lundman, 2004; Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Patton (2002, p. 546) identifies dependability as a systematic process that is followed systematically throughout the research study. It is furthermore defined as the “degree to which the reader can be convinced that the findings did indeed occur as the researcher says they did” (Van der Riet & Durrheim, 2008, p. 93). Other researchers highlight that dependability refers to the stability of the data (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004). It refers to the “internal process” that is followed throughout changing conditions and phenomena (Bradley, 1993, p. 437).

Dependability is based on the descriptions of the research findings and contexts, the research process and the research design, as in this study. However, it is also assured through a high degree of reflexivity, since it is well interlinked with the actions of the researcher and the researched.

6.5.4 Confirmability

Confirmability in qualitative studies is often interconnected with the concepts of neutrality and objectivity (Riege, 2003). Confirmability implies that other researchers, using the same procedures in the same setting, would note similar contents, keywords, patterns and conclusions (Mayer, 2011). Confirmability is therefore closely linked with dependability. According to Tobin and Begley (2004), confirmability includes the accuracy and neutrality of the data.

Confirmability is usually reached by checking the internal coherence of the research product (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) and through a rigorous research process and a logical structure of the research study. It can be established through the reporting style of the research findings, through focus on the evaluation and analysis process, the explicit methods of data analysis description, and the possibility to confirm the findings of research through other researchers (Poggenpoel, 1998).

In this study, confirmability is established through internal coherence and the transparent description of the research study and the findings.

6.5.5 Rigour, Creativity and Trustworthiness

The concept of rigour in qualitative research refers to a structured and disciplined approach to data collection and interpretation and is strongly connected to the debate on creativity and trustworthiness. Rigour establishes integrity and competence in qualitative research through research processes (Aroni et al., 1999).

It relates to the concepts of reliability, internal, external and construct validity (Yin, 2009).

Whittemore, Chase, and Mandle (2001) emphasise that in research, there is tension between rigour and creativity. Papers on rigour, creativity and subjectivity in research methodology have been discussed extensively (e.g. Johnson, 1999; Long, 2014). It has been argued that rigour in qualitative research might have a negative impact on creativity in qualitative research, particularly because creativity includes artfulness, flexibility and sensitivity to make meaning (Sandelowski, 1993). The quality of qualitative research is not only building up to a systematic scientific method, but also the process of research, which includes the intuitive (Allport, 1929, 1961) and creative meaning-making (Whittemore et al., 2001). Qualitative research is seen as an artistic endeavour (Sandelowski, 1993). Whittemore et al. (2001, p. 526) argue that “creativity must be preserved in qualitative research, but not at the expense of the quality of the science.” Kováry (2011) emphasises that psychobiography needs to include artistic creativity in its methodological approach (Kováry, 2011, p. 764), although it might need courage to be creative, as highlighted in the quote by Fromm (1956). Therefore, this study refers to the suggestion of Patton (2002) that qualitative research needs to include creativity, as well as rigorous and explicit analysis. The researcher therefore tries to combine a rigorous and a creative approach to research, guided by intuition on the one hand and a rigorous and explicit analysis of data on the other hand.

With regard to psychobiographic studies, it has been pointed out that rigour improves trustworthiness (Chèze, 2009). Trustworthiness is contextualised as a systematically congruent study in the context chosen, a rather unbiased approach (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), and is viewed as integrating the concepts of transferability, credibility and dependability (Perry, 2012). Trustworthiness refers to the worthiness of the data and the attention that is paid to the data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). According to Elo et al. (2014), trustworthiness is one of the quality criteria used most often in qualitative content analysis and builds on the term and concept of Lincoln and Guba, which relate to credibility, dependability, confirmability and transferability. According to these authors (Elo et al., 2014, p. 2), trustworthiness is reached through “reporting the process of content analysis accurately”. It depends strongly on the availability of “rich, appropriate, and well-saturated data” (Elo et al., 2014, p. 8), which can be assured through a clearly described and conducted data collection, analysis and reporting style.

In this study, the researcher aims at balancing rigour and creativity and refers to the concept of trustworthiness by addressing credibility, dependability, confirmability and transferability and a clearly described research paradigm, approach and process.

After selected concepts of quality criteria have been presented, which are applied in this study, the markers of (good) psychobiographical research are presented in the following section.

6.6 Markers of Psychobiographical Research

In the context of quality criteria for psychobiographical research, Schultz (2005d, p. 6) has developed criteria in the context of psychobiographies to understand “the truth” from the data as far as possible. These criteria integrate logical soundness, comprehensiveness, surviving the test of attempted falsification, consistency with the full range of relevant evidence, support from above and its credibility being comparable to that of other interpretations. Various markers of “good” and “bad” psychobiographical research have been developed and discussed, such as in Schultz (2005d, 7), described in Table 6.2.

According to Schultz (2005d, p. 7), cogency is defined as a “basic interpretive persuasiveness” which leaves the reader feeling ineffably “won over”. The concept of cogent psychobiographical works is supposed to be “comprehensive” and illustrative to provide the reader with new answers to newly posted questions. The conclusions in psychobiography should “follow naturally from an array of data”, and the interpretations of psychobiographic aspects in the life of a person should be “illuminating more aspects of an act in question” to gain cogency instead of failing to account for central detail.

Furthermore, the sources of a psychobiographic study should vary (data convergence) and the interpretation of the data combined with cogent interpretations should lead to a so-called “incoherent coherence” while striving for “elucidation”, which is “psychobiography’s most salutary aim” (“sudden coherence”, Schultz, 2005d, p. 7).

According to Schultz (2005d, p. 8) the psychobiography should be logically consistent and without self-contradictions (“logical soundness”), as any research should be. To be logically sound, the data collected should represent the most “available evidence” (Schultz, 2005d, p. 8). and the explored information should be combined with general knowledge of human functioning (“consistency”) and aim at withstanding “attempts at falsification” (“viability”) and thereby stand scrutiny.

Schultz (2005d, p. 8) only refers to these “good psychobiography markers” in a very brief way, which is reflected in the brief descriptions of the markers. No other work with regard to the theoretical definitions of these “good psychobiographical

Table 6.2 Good and bad psychobiography markers

Good psychobiography markers	Bad psychobiography markers
Cogency	Pathography
Narrative structure	Single cues
Comprehensiveness	Reconstruction
Data convergence	Reductionism
Sudden coherence	Poor theory choice
Logical soundness	Poor narrative structure
Consistency	–
Viability	–

Source: Schultz (2005d, p. 7)

markers” could be found. Schultz (2005d, p. 8) concludes at the end of defining these markers that “Life is about understanding other people. Psychobiography is no different.”

The study attempts to address the briefly presented “good psychobiographical markers” (Schulz, 2005d, p. 7) to ensure the quality of the study. Besides following the briefly defined markers, the study follows a defined research process in psychobiography, which will be presented in the following section.

6.7 The Research Process in Psychobiography

The research process is important in psychobiographical research, as it is in any other qualitative study. Elms (2007) describes the process of a psychobiography as (a) Choosing the subject of research; (b) Formulating tentative hypotheses, (c) A data collection process including various forms of data collection, (d) Revision of the hypothesis, (e) Focused data collection (including similarities and/or contradictions), (f) Application of an itinerary analysis² – creating a hermeneutical circle (Dilthey, 1996), (g) Formulating conclusions, and (h) Further iterative research.

This research process, suggested by Elms (2007), is followed in this psychobiography on Paulo Coelho. The researcher uses various ways of data collection, analysis, interpretation and reporting, as explained in Sects. 6.8, 6.9, and 6.10. However, the research process is not followed in a purely chronological order, as described by Elms, but rather combined with the process of data collection, analysis, interpretation and reporting, in a circular and flexible order, as described in the following section.

6.8 Data Collection

The first step in the data collection process in psychobiographical research is the decision on the choice of the subject, which is then followed by other steps that are explained and presented below.

6.8.1 *Sampling: The Choice of the Subject of Research*

Purposive sampling is a form of (Oliver, 2006):

non-probability sampling in which decisions concerning the individuals to be included in the sample are taken by the researcher, based upon a variety of criteria which may include specialist knowledge of the research issue, or capacity and willingness to participate in the research (pp. 245–246).

²Itinerary analysis is understood as an analysis which refers to the context of time, place and meaning (Puig & Morell, 1996) in an itinerative, but not always in a chronological way (Sects. 6.8, 6.9, and 6.10).

The subject of this research is Paulo Coelho, a Brazilian writer who was born in 1947 in Rio de Janeiro. He was chosen as the subject of research through purposive sampling, for a number of reasons that are outlined below.

Paulo Coelho is of particular interest to the researcher for a number of reasons emphasised in Sects. 1.9 and 2.7. However, other reasons can be provided with regard to the choice of the sample.

This research offers the opportunity not only to understand Paulo Coelho's life, but particularly to try to understand his wellness and the positive resources that support him in retaining or re-establishing his wellness throughout his life and at various stages of life. The research also offers the opportunity to understand Paulo Coelho's development of (stages of) faith, seeing faith as one of the outstanding positive resources in his life. The research provides the researcher with time to focus on an in-depth, new perspective on Paulo Coelho's life, which describes, interprets and reconstructs it.

No research could be found that aims at explaining Paulo Coelho's life as a whole from a psychobiographical perspective by using formal psychological theories and a stringent, systematic and consequent psychobiographical research methodology approach.

A broad variety of material has been published by Paulo Coelho himself as first-person documents. Other individuals have also focused on Paulo Coelho from different perspectives. The material published includes first- and third-person documents and is presented in Chap. 3. Both, the first-person documents and the third-person documents analysed allowed for an in-depth psychobiographical study to be conducted on the life of Paulo Coelho. No study using first- and third-person documents on his life could be found, aimed at reconstructing his life psychobiographically, from a theoretical positive psychology and from a methodologically hermeneutical perspective.

Finally, Paulo Coelho is an exceptional figure and writer. This study offers a new view on the subject from both a wellness and a spiritual and faith perspective. It allows for new interpretations of the life of the world's most sold and promoted author and aims at discovering new insights in his wellness, faith and success.

In parallel to these rather objective and scientific reasons to choose Paulo Coelho as a subject of research, a number of aspects influenced the researcher's decision to study this subject. These aspects are described in detail in Sect. 2.7, always keeping in mind the importance of understanding the individual, his life and the findings of this study through the construction of the relationship of the researcher and the researched (Mayer, 2011).

In the following section, the first- and third-person documents used in the analysis will be presented.

6.8.2 *First- and Third-Person Documents in Psychobiographical Research*

In single case study research, it is important to use multiple sources of evidence, to use a formal assembly of evidence and to establish a chain of evidence by interlinking the research assumptions and questions with the data collected and the conclusions drawn (Yin, 2009).

The data collection process in this psychobiographical case study research is based on the distinction of Allport (1961), who differentiates between first-person documents and third-person documents.

According to Allport (1961), first-person documents include personal documents, such as autobiographies and autobiographical works, scripts or essays, diaries, letters, open questionnaires, interview scripts and statements, as well as literary products.

Third-person documents include, according to Allport (1961), case studies, biographies and life stories.

In this study, the following first-person documents are used:

1. Autobiographical essays and scripts (as, for example, published in Coelho, 2006, 2007), on the internet or in journals and newspapers)
2. Autobiographically based literature and novels written by Paulo Coelho
3. Interview scripts and statements (e.g. from newspapers, journals, internet sources)
4. Film documentaries, e.g. his personal documentary on his life (Coelho, 2011)
5. Personal written, oral and video statements from Paulo Coelho on the internet (from Paulo Coelho's personal website and other internet sources, such as Youtube)
6. Selected literary products (novels, published short stories, books, films). For the analysis of his literary and creative works, two autobiographical novels are chosen as first-person documents for analysis.
 - (a) Firstly, "The pilgrimage" is chosen for in-depth analysis, as it is Paulo Coelho's first autobiographical novel that has been recognised internationally.
 - (b) Secondly, the novel "Aleph" has been chosen for in-depth analysis as one of his recent novels, one that is regarded as one of his most personal manuscripts (Purwandoyo & Kurnia, 2013), and latest autobiographical account.

With regard to third-person documents, the following are used in the data collection process:

1. A biography written on Paulo Coelho (Morais, 2009)
2. A biographic book on Paulo Coelho that is mainly based on an interview process with the author (Arias, 2001)
3. Case studies on the author and his literary work published by third persons in journals, newspapers or on the internet (e.g. Mihály, 2012; Purwandoyo & Kurnia, 2013; Yuliani, 2009).

Obviously, written data are often biased according to the subjective processes of the author (Yin, 2009). Therefore, various selected data and methodological approaches are used to minimise author-bias as far as possible.

6.8.3 Psychological Theories Applied in This Research

The theoretical frameworks chosen for this study include the broad theoretical contexts of the study in terms of personality psychology and positive psychology and the choice of the HWM of Witmer and Sweeney (1992) and Myers, Sweeney and Witmer (2000); discussed in Chap. 4, as well as the FDT of Fowler (1981), discussed in Chap. 5.³

The researcher has an interest in health research with particular focus on salutogenesis, mental health and well-being, as evidenced in former research projects and publications (Mayer, 2011; Mayer & Boness, 2013; Mayer & Krause, 2012). She has explored the question of what keeps leaders and individuals in management positions healthy. However, she has not yet explored how outstanding and world-famous individuals, such as Paulo Coelho, keep well and healthy.

The researcher has a particular interest in spirituality in the context of mental health and well-being, as shown in various recent publications (e.g. Mayer & Viviers, 2014a, 2014b). With regard to previous research, the researcher assumes that spirituality and faith have a strong impact on mental health and well-being. Paulo Coelho is of particular interest to the researcher, since he has published extensively on the topic of spirituality in daily life interactions. The researcher expects to find that Coelho follows a spiritual path that gives him strength to master his life as a celebrity and writer. At the same time, the interest in Coelho's spirituality is driven by the researcher's interest in developing faith and spirituality and applying these concepts in daily interactions. The researcher is therefore positively biased with regard to the topics of mental health and holistic wellness, as well as with regard to spirituality and faith development, which are consciously addressed through a self-reflexive attitude, as emphasised by Dilthey (see Sect. 6.3).

Related to the above and for the reason of the self-development and self-actualisation of the researcher, the researcher has chosen theories within her field of interests which she has not worked with and applied in research before, but have been proven in earlier psychobiographical studies and can be applied to the first- and third-person documents of the subject researched.

³The choice of psychological theories applied in this research is presented in Sect. 1.4 and is addressed in Sect. 6.8.3 as a sub-chapter of Sect. 6.8 on data collection. The choice of theoretical application is presented in this methodological section to give the reader an idea about the possible author bias with regard to the choice of theories in terms of data collection, analysis and interpretation and is therefore viewed as part of the methodological discussion of data collection.

These two concepts of wellness and spirituality (here in terms of faith) seem to be interrelated (Mayer & Geldenhuys, 2014) and should therefore be explored in depth with regard to a psychobiographical study on an outstanding and extraordinary individual.

The first step of content analysis (see Sect. 6.9) has revealed that the first- and third-person documents on Paulo Coelho refer to the topics of mental health and well-being, as well as to the life theme of faith and Coelho's intra-psychological development. Therefore, it seems that the analysis of the life in terms of wellness and faith – which obviously seem to be interlinked as well – is a good choice to be explored in depth in the psychobiographical study context.

The HWM (Myers et al., 2001; Sweeney & Witmer, 1991; Witmer & Sweeney, 1992) is based on a holistic approach to wellness and includes life tasks, life forces and global events that integrate spirituality, self-direction, work and leisure, friendship and love (Myers et al., 2000) – all tasks that play a role in the life of Paulo Coelho and in the documents analysed. These tasks have an influence on the life of the subject, his wellness, faith, success and achievements, which should not be underestimated – particularly with regard to the writer's productivity, creativity and his international success.

Furthermore, faith and its development have played an important role in the life and development of Paulo Coelho as a person and as a writer. It is a theme that occurs throughout his life and many of his creative works. Therefore, the theory of faith development seems to be one of the most interesting theories to be used for analysis in this study, as shown in the findings in Sects. 7.6, 8.3.2, and 8.4.2.

Finally, both of the theories seem to be interlinked and wellness and faith (in terms of spirituality) might influence each other mutually (Mayer & Geldenhuys, 2014; Mayer & Viviers, 2014a, 2014b). The combination of these two theories aims at gaining deeper information on the interrelation of mental health and faith from a qualitative psychological approach, which needs further investigation, as described in recent research (Mayer & Geldenhuys, 2014; Mayer & Viviers, 2014a, 2014b).

After the description of the sampling process, the first- and third-person documents and the application of psychological theories in the methodological context, the following sub-chapters refer to the data analysis and interpretation in this psychological research, integrating content analysis and the analysis of primary indicators and prototypical scenes.

6.9 Data Analysis and Interpretation

McAdams highlights that researchers should use concepts of personality psychology, as a broader frame of psychobiographical studies (see Chap. 1), as well as structural models of identity and life stories and apply them to the analysis in psychobiographical research (McAdams 1988, 2005; McAdams & Pals, 2007).

The basic assumption is that each and every individual creates continuity and purpose through a narrative life story. At the same time, the author of a text, such as an autobiography and/or a creative work, is seen as a real phenomenon and not as “a function of the text (as in discourse analysis)” (Kováry, 2011, p. 765). McAdams (2005) emphasises that by analysing the narratives and creations of life stories, the identity of an individual is analysed as well as (re)created. However, this identity is not necessarily unified and holistic, but might consist of different stories, narrative components and ambiguous issues and tensions that are based on opposing themes (Singer & Salovey, 2014, p. 233). In this study the themes, issues and ambiguities are analysed through content analysis in first- and third-person documents, as explained in the following section.

6.9.1 Content Analysis in First and Third-Person Data

According to Patton (2002, p. 453), “any qualitative data reduction and sense-making effort that takes a volume of qualitative material and attempts to identify core consistencies and meanings” is defined as content analysis. In this study, content analysis is used to reduce the text while applying a subjective sense-making effort. At the same time, content analysis is used as a subjective process of interpretation through a systemic classification procedure that uses themes, categories and codes (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005) to analyse the content. Content analysis is used in the process of data analysis to identify “key issues” in psychobiographical research (Collis & Hussey, 2003). These “key issues” in psychobiographical research are also called “primary indicators” (Alexander) or “prototypical scenes” (Schultz), which will be used in this process of content analysis (see Sect. 6.9.1.2).

Content analysis is a subjective process between the researcher as the analyser of the texts and the researched and the texts themselves (Mayer, 2011). Yin (2009) emphasises that content analysis is conducted through inter-individual and intra-individual verification processes. These processes aim at adhering to particular processes of analysis and regulations verifying the findings through intrapersonal and interpersonal re-evaluation processes (Terre Blanche et al., 2006). Content analysis has been used in health research in positive psychology frameworks (Mayer, 2011), but also in faith research, focusing on the faith development stages (Cowden, 1992).

According to Streib (2005, p. 102) content analysis can use either pre-defined categories or alternatively inductive-analytical procedures. The psychobiography uses both pre-defined categories and predominantly inductive-analytical procedures, which were developed out of the reading of and familiarising with the first- and third-person documents.

The pre-defined categories used in this study are provided in the two theories applied. The HWM uses pre-defined categories such as life tasks, life forces and global events. The faith development stages theory refers to pre-defined stages of faith that have been used for analysis. However, this study also uses pre-defined categories in terms of methodological categorisations, as in Alexander’s primary

indicators of psychological salience and Schultz’s prototypical scenes in the narrations analysed.

In parallel with the application of pre-defined categories used for analysis, the researcher was open for inductive-analytical procedures. By reading through the vast amount of data on and from Paulo Coelho, at the content analysis stage of familiarisation and immersion (see Sect. 6.9.1.1), the researcher inductively developed the idea of focusing on health and faith development as major life themes in Coelho’s life and creative work. As described by Braun and Clarke (2006, pp. 77–82) with regard to thematic analysis, the inductive-analytic process serves the idea to identify patterns, themes or stories from the texts analysed that display a “keyness” for the research question posed. These inductive-analytical procedures at the beginning of the study partly led to the decision to focus on wellness (HWM) and on faith (FDT) (see Sects. 1.9 and 2.7).

Based on the first inductive-analytical approaches to define the theories applied, the study also used deductive approaches and pre-defined categories by analysing the first- and third-person documents in accordance with the theories applied. The use of inductive as well as deductive approaches within a study has previously been described as an “abductive research approach” (Mayer, 2011).

The data analysis is conducted through the following five-step process of content analysis suggested by Terre Blanche et al. (2006, pp. 322–326)⁴: (a) Step 1: Familiarisation and immersion; (b) Step 2: Inducing themes; (c) Step 3: Coding; (d) Step 4: Elaboration; and (e) Step 5: Interpretation and checking. The process is explained in terms of this research. These five steps will be explained more extensively below.

6.9.1.1 Step 1: Familiarisation and Immersion

The researcher immersed herself in the first- and third-person documents on the subject by means of repeated reading thereof, making notes, drawing diagrams and mindmaps, referring to the “key issues” defined in Sect. 6.9. During this phase, the researcher got first impressions of the texts, formulated assumptions of important key issues – including Alexander’s primary indicators of psychological salience and Schultz’s prototypical scenes – and decided which first- and third-person documents to include in the study. During this step 1, first assumptions – which Elms (2007) in the description of the research process names tentative hypotheses (see Sect. 6.7) – about the subject are defined. These tentative hypotheses (or pre-assumptions) with regard to Paulo Coelho are as follows:

⁴The process of content analysis represents a methodological way to analyse the data in accordance with the research process of Elms (2007), described in Sect. 6.7. As referred to in the model of content analysis in Sects. 6.9 and 6.10, the research process of Elms and the steps of content analysis have been combined, as described in the chapters, by defining the subject of research, defining and redefining assumptions, applying an itinerary analysis etc.

Pre-assumption/tentative hypothesis 1:

1. Paulo Coelho was driven by his dream to become a writer. He overcame many hindrances on his way and met his life partner, Cristina, who supported him in overcoming the challenges. His resilience to overcome depression, frustrations, critics and times of crisis is related to strong mental health, which is reflected in specific life tasks and described in the holistic wellness model.

Pre-assumption/tentative hypothesis 2:

2. Coelho's concept of faith developed over time. After several deep faith crises, he established a strong faith that grew in strength throughout his lifetime and that tended more and more to turn away from an individualised faith to a faith including "the other".

After having defined the two broad assumptions, step 1 in content analysis is finalised and the themes are induced.

6.9.1.2 Step 2: Inducing Themes

In step 1, underlying themes of wellness and faith were inductively analysed from the data set. In step 2, two applicable theories were used (Chaps. 4 and 5) and pre-defined theoretical categories, such as life tasks, life forces, global events and stages of phase development, were applied to analyse the data in depth. Methodologically pre-defined categories (including Alexander's indicators of psychological salience and Schultz's prototypical scenes) were used to analyse and reduce the data's complexity and to find optimal complexity to present the findings of the data. While the themes were induced, the researcher, however, applied an open mind with regard to other urgently occurring themes that were "naturally" underlying the documents and data (Terre Blanche et al., 2006, p. 323). The researcher's openness to the data was used as a principle (as highlighted by Kohlbacher, 2006) to be able even to reconstruct new categories from the text if necessary.

The pre-defined categories used in terms of data analysis models in psychobiography, such as Alexander's indicators of psychological salience and Schultz's prototypical scenes, are explained in the following section.

Categories of Primary Indicators of Psychological Salience (Alexander) and Prototypical Scenes (Schultz)

Kováry (2011, p. 759) has pointed out that there are different ways of analysing the data in psychobiography. According to Irving Alexander and Todd Schultz (in Kováry, 2011), Table 6.3 supports organising psychobiographical material:

When using these models, one of the key questions is to determine which data hold the key responses to explore and understand a person's life and which are motivational components of the biographic and autobiographic development. Schultz

Table 6.3 Data analysis models

Irving Alexander: Primary indicators of psychological saliency	William Todd Schultz: Keys to identifying “prototypical scenes”
Frequency (frequently occurring aspects)	Vividness, specificity, emotional
Primacy (highly outstanding aspects)	Intensity
Emphasis	Interpenetration
Isolation	Developmental crisis
Uniqueness	Family conflict
Incompletion	Thrownness (getting into a scene that places the subject in a situation that violates the status quo)
Error, distortion, omission	
Negotiation	

Source: Adapted from Kováry (2011, p. 759)

(2005b) defines key aspects that lead the way to comprehend the entire person as “prototypical scenes”, including outstanding conflicts and motives that are inter-linked with the other concepts mentioned.

The study at hand uses the “primary indicators” (Alexander, 1988, 1990) and keys to identifying prototypical scenes (Schultz, 2005a) described below to explore the data on and from Paulo Coelho on wellness and faith through content analysis.

Alexander (1988, 1990) emphasises that data analysis needs to use means-end structures and sequences to analyse the content and to gain deeper understanding of outstanding events, situations, relationships and conflicts. By using the following “indicators of salience”, the data are extracted, prioritised and then analysed. This method is used to reduce the data and to draw information directly from the data by giving the data a voice to speak. This approach is of particular interest with regard to autobiographical texts written by the author himself to draw conscious and unconscious information from the (auto)biographical data set. This method, which was developed by Alexander (1988, 1990), is used in this study to extract relevant information from the data and analyse the prioritised data in more depth, particularly to gain in-depth information and insights into the selected individual’s life (Table 6.4).

In parallel to the use of Alexander’s primary indicators of psychological salience, the keys to identifying “prototypical scenes” of Schultz (2005a, 2005b, 2005c, 2005d, 2005e) are applied. According to Schultz (2005b, p. 49), “some prototypical scenes can be identified through the use of pointers similar to those outlined by Alexander” (1988; 1990). Prototypical scenes are “unique, emphasised by their subjects, marked by isolation or incompleteness, and so on” (Schultz, 2005b, p. 49) (Table 6.5).

In this study, the indicators of psychological salience and the prototypical scenes are identified in the above-mentioned first- and third-person documents. By using these models of Alexander and Schultz models, the psychobiographer asks the data questions and certain life events are judged to be “central, constellating, defining,

Table 6.4 Alexander's indicators of psychological saliency

Irving Alexander: Primary indicators of psychological saliency	Description of primary indicators of psychological saliency
Frequency	The topic of frequency is a primary indicator of psychological saliency in terms of the importance of a topic. In the data, the frequency of words used, topics referred to, repeated communication, events, patterns, thoughts or symbolic aspects is important (Schultz, 2005b, p. 44), since particularly repetitions in texts and data might reveal conscious, but also unconscious schemas (Alexander, 1988).
Primacy	Schultz (2005b, p. 44) highlights: "what comes first in a text occasionally tells us more than anything else, or tells us something uniquely significant." Elms (1994) refers to the assumption that particularly first experiences in life, first memories and introductions need to be attended to and analysed because of their outstanding meaning. Alexander (1990) sees the opening and the primacy as mainly important and influencing, because the first is often associated with the most important. Alexander (1988) refers to the first as the foundation on which the structures are built.
Emphasis	Schultz (2005b, p. 44) refers to the importance of emphasis in the data set –data may be over-, under- or miss-emphasised. Generally, information that is emphasised in the data does have a key psychological saliency that needs to be recognised. Elms (1994) stresses that the emphasis of the person who is analysed needs to be respected and taken into account. However, Alexander (1988) highlights that there might be various reasons for emphasising certain aspects. The author explains that overemphasis might be seen as commonplace, while underemphasis might relate to the question why a subject has hardly been addressed or been overlooked. Miss-emphasis might not be credibly linked to implied meaning (Alexander, 1988).
Isolation	Schultz (2005b, p. 44) defines isolation as "the so-called 'come again?' criterion, at issue when material jarringly stand out from surrounding text, and thus seems not to fit at all" the "come again?" criterion is initially referred to by Elms (1994). Usually isolated aspects stand out in a text from their context. Schultz (2005b, p. 44) connects such an isolated aspect to the "web of unconscious ideas for which it stands". Accordingly, these aspects can bring unconscious information into play, which might relate to the context in which they are isolated or not. Alexander (1988) highlights that the isolated aspect becomes important and powerful through its position and placement in the context.
Uniqueness	Uniqueness refers to data or information that is individually mentioned. Such information is therefore unique and draws the attention by its outstandingness (Schultz, 2005b, p. 44). Uniqueness refers to a single and outstanding incident, which might be expressed in a unique way that the subject does not usually use (Alexander, 1988). Unique events might also be related to unexpected outcomes of a situation described (Alexander, 1988), which need in-depth analysis and investigation (Alexander, 1990).

(continued)

Table 6.4 (continued)

Irving Alexander: Primary indicators of psychological saliency	Description of primary indicators of psychological saliency
Incompletion	Schultz (2005b, p. 44) defines incompletion in terms of the author starting to describe a certain situation or telling a story, but neglecting to finish it. Instead of finishing it, the author might go into detail of the story without describing the end. This behaviour is interpreted as avoidance to reach a conclusion (Schultz, 2005b, p. 44). Alexander (1988) refers to incompletion more in general: As an unfinished subject that might point to the subject’s failure. Alexander highlights that if a person ends a sequence before its closure, or uses distractions, or lacks explanatory means-ends relationships, the psychobiographer needs to recognise the importance of this incompletion for deeper analysis in terms of psychological salience.
Error, distortion, omission	Alexander (1988) bases his assumption that errors and distortions are important psychological indicators of salience on Freud’s assumption that errors and distortion indicate importance, certain underlying motives, which might be recognised through these errors only. Schultz (2005b, p. 44) refers to: “the act of getting, say, a memory wrong, or distorting what really happened, or else omitting certain relevant facts altogether.” according to Elms (1994), the psychobiographer should usually ask more questions about what is missing than about what is included in the text or descriptions. Alexander points out that often feelings and emotions are omitted from the author’s text while events are usually described in depth and affect descriptions are omitted.
Negation	Negation refers to “strenuous disavowal especially in the absence of any positive assertion to the contrary, a kind of ‘Gertrude rule’, in the sense of ‘protesting too much’” about any given psychological or biographical fact (Schultz, 2005b, p. 44). Elms (1994) highlights that psychobiographers need to pay at least as much as attention to what a person says he/she is, as to what he/she says he/she is not. Alexander (1988, p. 272) points out that negation is driven by “the cover of unlikelihood or impossibility.” it should therefore be further analysed to explore the underlying, defined, “exact nature” of the importance of negation (Alexander, 1990, p. 17).

Source: Adapted from Schultz (2005b), Elms (1994) and Alexander (1988, 1990)

nuclear” (Schultz, 2005b, p. 43). The two models of Alexander (1988, 1990) and Schultz (2005b) are viewed as models that are applied scientifically and artistically in this study on Paulo Coelho – serving in the process of categorisation – particularly since Schultz (2005b, p. 50) highlights that “psychobiography, after all, is more art than science.” The models described are used to generate meaning and new psychobiographical hypotheses, as well as to confirm pre-existing interpretations (e.g. with regard to holistic wellness and faith development).

Examples are provided of indicators of psychological salience and prototypical scenes in the life of Paulo Coelho in the following sub-chapters. This study uses particular “primary indicators” (Alexander, 1988, 1990) and keys to identify prototypical scenes (Schultz, 2005a) to extract specific life data through primary and

Table 6.5 Schultz's prototypical scenes

William Todd Schultz: Keys to identifying "prototypical scenes"	Description of key of prototypical scenes
Vividness, specificity, emotional intensity	Such scenes are never "lukewarm" emotionally. The focus is intense, colour emphasised, dialogue recounted with precision, characters carefully positioned.
Interpenetration	Such scenes permeate or leak into a number of different contexts or activities or creative products (stories, poems, novels, memoirs).
Developmental crisis	Such scenes entail a "decisive encounter" between a person and a particular sort of conflict, for instance identity vs. role confusion or initiative vs. guilt.
Family conflict	Such scenes more specifically focus on conflict in the family, between, say, a daughter and father or two brothers or a son and mother.
Thrownness	Such scenes place the subject in a situation that violates the status quo. Something anomalous or surprising transpires, producing a feeling of disequilibrium. The normally taken-for-granted suddenly cannot be; old ways of making sense do not suffice. Repetitive story-telling thus allows one to extract meaning from the event, to decrease its unfamiliarity, the anxiety it provokes.

Source: Adapted from Schultz (2005b, p. 50)

third-person data analysis, which led to the construction of Chap. 3. These two concepts build the basis of analysing and categorising important life events and reconstructing this selected life information through the holistic wellness model and the FDT in Chaps. 7 and 8 and providing conclusions in Chap. 9.

Examples of Alexander's Primary Indicators of Psychological Saliency in Paulo Coelho's Life

With regard to the life of Paulo Coelho, specific examples of each primary indicator of psychological salience can be provided. These are indicated in Table 6.6 below.

After having provided examples of primary indicators of psychological salience, the prototypical scenes are introduced by providing examples from the documents. They provide further categories of analysis.

Examples of Schultz's Prototypical Scenes of Paulo Coelho's Life

Table 6.7 provides examples of prototypical scenes in the life of Paulo Coelho.

In summary, Alexander's and Schultz's categories and the two theories (holistic wellness and faith development) were used as predefined categories to analyse and reduce the data in first- and third-party documents. After the categories had been analysed, codes were created.

Table 6.6 Examples of Alexander’s indicators of psycho-salience in Paulo Coelho’s life

<p>Irving Alexander: Primary indicators of psychological salience</p>	<p>Examples of primary indicators of psychological saliency in Paulo Coelho’s life</p>
<p>Frequency</p>	<p>In the data, the frequency of words used, topics referred to, repeated communication, events, patterns, thoughts or symbolic aspects is important (Schultz, 2005b, p. 44), since particularly repetitions in texts and data might reveal conscious, but also unconscious schemas (Alexander, 1988).</p> <p>Throughout Coelho’s life the topic of recognising the personal and individual life dream and the personal legend is of great importance in terms of frequency (Alexander, 1988; Schultz, 2005b, p. 44). His dream of becoming a writer developed during his childhood on an unconscious level and became conscious during his teenage years. Coelho followed his dream to be a writer until 2017.</p> <p>Another frequent topic throughout Coelho’s life is his spiritual development with regard to the topic of faith, belief, magic and god. He redefines these issues in many of his books, as well as on a personal basis. Coelho’s life started with a prayer to a Christian saint and prayers to saints and to god are frequent topics throughout his life.</p> <p>Finally, emotional imbalances, ranging from happiness and euphoria to the deepest frustration, depression and loneliness, are patterns that can be traced throughout Paulo Coelho’s life.</p> <p>With Coelho’s choice of Cristina as a life partner, he also re-established a woman with a strong Christian belief (as his mother was) in his life, who supported him throughout his life.</p>
<p>Primacy</p>	<p>The life of Paulo Coelho as described in his biography by Morais (2009) started with a difficult birth and the initial assumption that he had been born dead. However, as if through a miracle Coelho survived and was – As his mother thought – Saved by St Joseph. The belief in miracles, in connections to the saints and belief in the saints’ influence on his life remained with him throughout his career. His childhood prayers, which are described as one of his first actions in his first 3 years, were still of great importance to Coelho in 2010 (Coelho, 2010b). He, however, also used a sleepy guardian angel as an excuse for his naughtiness (Morais, 2009).</p> <p>The topic of life and death, belief in miracles and the connection to the saints and god are primary topics throughout Coelho’s life. He lives up to all the extremes, thinks about suicide during his teenage years, sells himself to the devil and finally returns to the kingdom of god through Cristina and by becoming a master of RAM.</p>

(continued)

Table 6.6 (continued)

Irving Alexander: Primary indicators of psychological saliency	Examples of primary indicators of psychological saliency in Paulo Coelho's life
Emphasis	The most strongly emphasised topic is the finding and following of his personal legend and dream.
	Another example of a highly emphasised topic is religion and spirituality throughout the data.
	The relationship with Coelho's parents and sister and the meaning of his core family in his life is clearly underemphasised (Alexander, 1988) throughout the data. The meaning of the death of his mother and the fact that he did not attend her funeral are not referred to and no information can be found about Coelho and his relationship to his father, who was still alive in 2005. After that date, no information or references from primary or third data could be found on his father. Although Coelho highlights that he has forgiven his parents, the relationship between him and his parents seems to have remained tense and restrained.
Isolation	No miss-emphasis (Schultz 2005b, p. 44) was discovered in the data.
	In the interview Arias (2001) conducted with Paulo Coelho, Arias comments once that it is almost unbelievable that Coelho, who had many girlfriends and relationships in his life, does not have any children. Coelho reacts very reluctantly, does not provide any explanation and does not comment further on the topic. This seems to be an isolated incident, since Coelho usually comments eloquent and quickly without any hesitation. Arias (2001) refers to the question of children relatively early in the interview. It is placed in a prime position, isolated in the text without any other reference to family or family life (Alexander, 1988).
Uniqueness	<p>One incident throughout Coelho's life seems to be unique (Schultz, 2005b, p. 44) and outstanding from the texts. Only in the biography, Morais (2009) refers to the incident of Gisa's pregnancy and Coelho's influence on Gisa to abort the child. This led to Gisa's suicide attempt that was supported and even encouraged by Coelho who told her to deal with the angel of death which she had called. This incident is outstanding and the only one of its kind that is described. It shows that Coelho is not prepared to care for someone else for whom he has to take responsibility. The incident can serve as a "web of unconscious ideas for which it stands" which is the topic of the need of Coelho to develop himself throughout his life in a highly individualised way without seeing or accepting "the other" in his life. The strong self-referral in Coelho's life that misses out on social reference and development towards the other is an underdeveloped issue in his life and keeps him from reaching stage 6 (universalising faith) in the stage development theory.</p> <p>Through this incident, Coelho also neglected his personal development by becoming a father. This incident can be seen in the context that Coelho always had problems with accepting his father and might therefore, besides other reasons, reject taking on the role of a father himself. Maybe this rejection of the pregnancy is also an unconscious repetition of the rejection of Coelho by his father that he constantly felt during the first decades of his life.</p>

(continued)

Table 6.6 (continued)

Irving Alexander: Primary indicators of psychological saliency	Examples of primary indicators of psychological saliency in Paulo Coelho's life
Incompletion	<p>No examples could be found of stories or information that does not describe the end. This behaviour is interpreted as avoidance to reach a conclusion (Schultz, 2005b, p. 44), but it is not found in the data.</p> <p>Alexander (1988) refers to incompletion more in general: As an unfinished subject that might point to the subject's failure. As an example, the descriptions of school change could be used. In the beginning Morais (2009) describes the schools Coelho attended in some detail with reference to their high quality and standard. However, the last school, where Coelho eventually passed his final examination, is hardly described, probably since this is one of the worst schools in Brazil where Coelho's father rather paid for him to pass the final examinations than that Coelho achieved it himself. Coelho later never refers to his school life. This might be due to the fact that he himself interpreted his school and studying career as a failure, without ever declaring it openly.</p>
Error, distortion, omission	<p>During the analysis of primary and third-person data, private information on Paulo Coelho was hard to find (omission). At the beginning of his fifties, most often the information provided deals with his books and success, but not with his personal insights or his personal and self-development throughout his fifties and sixties. Hardly any information is provided on his friendships, his family relations and his new and latest developments.</p> <p>Information is also lacking on his social, political and economic engagement. The researcher or reader struggles to find new insights into Coelho's life or ideas. Most often the available information about Paulo Coelho is found in the stories in his autobiographical books. However, hardly any personal information can be found: Why did he move to France? Why did he choose Geneva as his city of choice? What does he think of contemporary political topics? How does he relate to his own health and well-being? How does he see his faith development? How did he reconcile with his parents? What are his future plans? How does he feel about not having children? What are his plans for the last years of his life? What made him successful? Which events were most critical on his way to success? What did his parents and sister think about his success? How are his success and the relationship to Cristina interrelated?</p> <p>Information on Paulo Coelho seems to repeat itself throughout the past two decades and many important themes and aspects seem to have been omitted.</p> <p>Errors and distortions could not be found in the data analysed.</p>

(continued)

Table 6.6 (continued)

Irving Alexander: Primary indicators of psychological saliency	Examples of primary indicators of psychological saliency in Paulo Coelho's life
Negation	Negation refers to "strenuous disavowal especially in the absence of any positive assertion to the contrary", a kind of "Gertrude rule", in the sense of "protesting too much" about any given psychological or biographical fact (Schultz, 2005b, p. 44). Elms (1994) highlights that psychobiographers need to pay at least as much as attention to what a person says he/she is, as to what he/she says he/she is not. Alexander (1988, p. 272) points out that negation is driven by "the cover of unlikelihood or impossibility". It should therefore be analysed further to explore the underlying, defined, "exact nature" of the importance of negation (Alexander, 1990, p. 17).
	No data on negation could be found.

Source: Adapted from Schultz (2005b), Elms (1994) and Alexander (1988, 1990)

6.9.1.3 Step 3: Coding

Words, phrases, lines, sentences or paragraphs pertaining to the themes and categories were coded. Coding, as a main technique in content analysis, is defined as the process of examining qualitative raw data in the form of words, phrases, sentences and paragraphs that are assigned (Strauss, 1987; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). According to Terre Blanche et al. (2006), the coding process includes the analysis of first- and third-person documents, which are relevant to one or to both themes and to one or more categories. In this context, coding according to the themes and categories defined is used, which allows one to work through the documents with predefined themes and categories. Codes were constructed through inductive analysis. Examples of codes in this study for holistic wellness (with regard to different life tasks and life forces) are, for example, depression, happiness, drugs, wife. For faith development, codes are, for example, God, relationship, dream, vocation, parents or calling.

The coding process is interrelated with the categorisation process in step 2 of this model of content analysis.

6.9.1.4 Step 4: Elaboration

In the elaboration phase, the themes, categories and codes are elaborated for reconstruction purposes, according to the theoretical background information, the aims, purpose and subject of the study. This phase allows themes to be explored in more depth by exploring similarities as well as differences across the texts and data analysed, leading to new insights, uniformities and patterns, which develop and recur across a person's life span in terms of actions, perspectives, memories or thoughts. Potential new categories can also be developed in this phase in the context of the

Table 6.7 Examples of Schultz’s prototypical scenes in Paulo Coelho’s life

<p>William Todd Schultz: Keys to identifying “prototypical scenes”</p>	<p>Examples of prototypical scenes in the life of Paulo Coelho</p>
<p>Vividness, specificity, emotional intensity</p>	<p>Such scenes are never “lukewarm” emotionally. The focus is intense, colour emphasised, dialogue recounted with precision, characters carefully positioned.</p> <p>An example of such a scene is the description of Coelho’s experiences in the school retreat from St Ignatius in 1962. He decided to attend the retreat because of his tremendous feeling of guilt and panic attacks that were caused by his sexual desires, which made him fear to suffer in hell for eternity. During the retreat he felt encouraged and he went for his “first encounter with god” (Morais, 2009, p. 55). Coelho became familiar with the mysterious rituals of religion, which at times left him feeling curious, encouraged, certain about his belief and – in the next moment – doubtful (Morais, 2009, pp. 58–59). His faith and belief were strong in one moment and shaken in the next. Coelho started hating the priests in his school and the duties that he had to fulfil in the name of god (Morais, 2009, p. 74) while fearing the punishment of god for his thoughts. This scene is extremely vividly described, with special emotional intensity.</p>
<p>Interpenetration</p>	<p>Such scenes permeate or leak into a number of different contexts or activities or creative products (stories, poems, novels, memoirs).</p> <p>The situations in which Coelho doubted his belief and reflected critically on his values and faith, as well as on his relationship with god, recurred when his grandfather died in 1963. Coelho experienced more of these extreme feelings in the context of faith, for example when being introduced to the devil at the beginning of the 1970s, during key situations with saints (Nhá Chica situation) or during his spiritual travels and rituals.</p>
<p>Developmental crisis</p>	<p>Such scenes entail a “decisive encounter” between a person and a particular sort of conflict, for instance identity vs. role confusion or initiative vs. guilt.</p> <p>Through encouragement and doubt felt during the St Ignatius retreat in 1962, Coelho experienced an intrapersonal conflict within himself and in his relationship to god. He felt torn apart through identity and role confusions, as well as through his initiative to meet god and his feelings of guilt stemming from his sexual desires. He felt that he was a crisis.</p> <p>Another example of such a crisis occurred when he was trying to become a “king of kingdom” Coelho felt a deep crisis of faith, a stagnation of his spiritual development and dissatisfaction with his spiritual growth (Purwandoyo & Kurnia, 2013).</p>

(continued)

Table 6.7 (continued)

William Todd Schultz: Keys to identifying “prototypical scenes”	Examples of prototypical scenes in the life of Paulo Coelho
Family conflict	<p>Such scenes focus more specifically on conflict within the family, between, say, a daughter and father or two brothers or a son and mother.</p> <p>The intrapersonal conflict during the retreat at St Ignatius also reflected an intra-family conflict with his parents, because Coelho might have expected that his sexual desires would clash with the strong belief and faith of his mother. This conflict actually escalated when the mother took him to a mental hospital because of her concerns about his sexuality and his refusal to undergo circumcision (Morais, 2009, p. 97). Since his parents had even read Coelho’s diary, about his sleepless nights, his anxiety and his plan to kill himself, they were sure that their son was insane. This was the beginning of three mental hospital encounters in 1965. He was described as insane and finally reached the boundaries of sanity and insanity after his third mental hospital encounter. Coelho’s clashes with his parents and their actions of taking him to a mental hospital created a huge and enduring family conflict from which the entire family was suffering. However, this suffering was not explicitly described in the data, but referred to in an autobiographic book 30 years after the incident.</p>
Thrownness	<p>Such scenes place the subject in a situation that violates the status quo. Something anomalous or surprising transpires, producing a feeling of disequilibrium. The normally taken-for-granted suddenly cannot be; old ways of making sense do not suffice. Repetitive story-telling thus allows one to extract meaning from the event, to decrease its unfamiliarity and the anxiety it provokes.</p> <p>The three hospital encounters were such events that violated Coelho’s status quo on levels of professional work, with regard to friends and acquaintances. They were very unfamiliar to Coelho himself, as well as to his parents and family. However, in the context and after having been released, Coelho made sense of the situation in a new way and explained to his friends that he had had an extraordinary experience. At the same time, the description of this surprising incident, of a young man suddenly ending up in a mental hospital because of his parents and differences in their world views, maybe provoke anxiety in the reader and even in the author. However, Coelho has hardly talked about these incidents in interviews or in text to explain his feelings.</p>

Source: Adapted from Schultz (2005b, p. 50)

two themes, holistic wellness and faith and/or beyond. The process includes coding, elaborating and recoding until no further new insights are gained.

During step 4, the pre-assumptions and tentative hypotheses are re-defined, as shown in Sect. 6.9.1.4.1.

Revision of Preliminary Assumptions/Tentative Hypotheses:

After the data collection and while analysing the data in depth (Elms, 2007), the assumptions that were defined in step 1 in content analysis (Terre Blanche et al., 2006) were redefined:

Redefinition of assumption 1:

1. Paulo Coelho had to have a strong holistic wellness and a positive concept of health and well-being to overcome the crises during his birth, childhood, youth and beyond, including overcoming the three times he spent in mental hospitals, as well as the torture he experienced. A person who manages these experiences and overcomes these in-depth crises, as well as his many depressive episodes, needs strong well-being and mental health to emerge from these circumstances to become such an extraordinary person, a world-famous author, the most widely read one of contemporary times.

Redefinition of assumption 2:

2. The subject Paulo Coelho has a strong concept of faith, which helps him to tackle and overcome intra-psychological and inter-psychological challenges. His faith is not static, but developed throughout his life, growing stronger.

After the redefinition, even more focused data are collected and analysed in more depth. A hermeneutical interpretation is followed through an itinerary analysis using content analysis to define, redefine and reconstruct the assumptions in the context of the subjects, the theories and methods applied. Finally, data are presented and reported and conclusions are formulated according to the assumptions defined and redefined (Chap. 9). At this point, the individual should be understood in his life, work, actions, feelings and thoughts. The individual parts are thus only comprehensible through their relationship to the whole (Dilthey, 1976, p. 254). This process of re-evaluating pre-assumptions and assumptions in the context of theories, methodologies, the researcher and her personal development during the research is called a hermeneutical circle (Dilthey, 1976, p. 259). At the end of the hermeneutical circle there is no objective standpoint, but rather a subjective meaningful interpretation of the issue of research. This means that the conclusions of this study, completing the hermeneutical circle, will be followed by further iterative studies. These studies might include future studies on the subject conducted by another researcher or using other theories and methodologies to explore the subject further (Kováry, 2011, p. 763).

In this study, the elaboration is shown in Chaps. 7, 8 and 9, in which the data are reconstructed and reported.

6.9.1.5 Step 5: Interpretation and Checking

The final step of the model leads to explaining, elaborating, re-arranging and reflecting newly developed and reconstructed themes, categories and codes in qualitative style. The data are checked against the researcher's bias and his/her subjectivity within the data analysis process. The intra- and inter-individual verification process (Yin, 2009) is applied to underline the quality criteria of the study. According to Elms (1994, 2007), there is no standardised process of elaborating and interpreting psychobiographical data. Accordingly, this process is not predetermined. The form of the elaboration and interpretation rather seems to vary according to the subject researched and the investigator (Kováry, 2011).

Throughout the process of content analysis, the researcher aimed at developing a coherent synthesis of the data, which is presented in the findings (Chaps. 7 and 8).

The analysed data are interpreted in the context of the subject as well as in the context of the researcher (her experiences as a researcher, her socio-cultural background, knowledge and skills, as described by Best and Kahn, 1993) and taking into account social, historical and temporal aspects, as is usual in hermeneutical research processes (see Chap. 7). The entire process of data and content analysis as described according to Terre Blanche et al. (2006) is viewed within the hermeneutical tradition as an act of hermeneutic interpretation and a reconstruction – in this case across cultures (see Sect. 9.6.1.2).

Data Presentation and Reporting

The reporting and writing style of the data presentation and reporting is seen in the context of the statement of Richardson and St. Pierre (2000, p. 967) that “writing *is* thinking, writing *is* analysis, writing *is* indeed a seductive and tangled method of discovery.”

The findings are reported in a qualitative, psychobiographically adequate reporting style, using a “narrative structure” and following naturally the array of data (Schultz, 2005d, p. 7). The presentation and reporting of data aims at illuminating selected analysed aspects of the act in question to gain cogency instead of failing to account for central detail (Schultz, 2005d, p. 7), as described above (Sect. 6.6). The presentation of the data therefore refers to the markers of good psychobiography while contextualising the data with regard to the whole life of the subject researched, the aims, purpose and focus of the study and the theoretical background. By presenting and reporting the data and findings in this manner, the researcher aims at contributing to a new and insightful understanding of Paulo Coelho as an outstanding person and world-famous writer.

6.10 Ethical Considerations

As ethical considerations must be applied in any psychological research study (Kitchener & Anderson, 2011), ethical considerations play a significant role in psychobiographical work and analysis (Elms, 1994). Elms, as well as Runyan (1982), points out that methodological quality (as discussed in Sects. 6.5 and 6.6) and ethical considerations are connected and go together in psychobiographical research. Ponterotto (2014) emphasises that ethical considerations always need to be discussed in the context of psychobiographical quality criteria, citing Haverkamp (2005) that a trustworthy research relationship can only be established by applying ethical practices to research. In this study, ethical considerations and practices are viewed as being strongly interlinked with quality criteria. This study includes incorporated ethical guidelines that ensure the quality of the data (Sects. 6.5 and 6.6) and the ethics of this research.

According to Beaucamp and Childress (2001), ethical principles include informed consent, confidentiality and anonymity, as well as autonomy and respect for the researched. The researcher needs to address these ethical issues during the process of research because personal, intimate details from the life of a selected person are documented, rewritten and employed as well as set, analysed and (re-) interpreted in a specific context and web of theories and applied research methodologies.

According to Ponterotto (2013a, 2013b), ethical considerations and practices need to be understood from a multidisciplinary perspective in psychobiographical research.

Ethical guidelines for research in psychobiographies have been established by Elms (1994). These primarily include the respectful treatment of intimate details of the life of an individual. Particularly in psychobiographic case study research, the first ethical issue seems to be the decision on the choice of the subject and the question of whether the study will focus on a person who is alive or deceased (Elms, 1994).

In this study, a living person has been chosen as subject of research. Since in psychobiographic research the individual studied is known by name, respect for the individual is highly important and is addressed in this research. When using autobiographical research, such as first-person documents, non-maleficence (Schurink, 1998) is strongly considered. Kováry (2011) emphasises that data in psychobiography need to be treated respectfully, since data revelation can lead to embarrassing results for the subject, particularly when the subject is still alive. Ponterotto (2014) emphasises that living figures studied demand the highest ethical care and suggests that the living person studied should be contacted and that informed consent and study participation should be requested. However, Ponterotto also highlights that it might be difficult to get into contact with the extraordinary subject of research. If informed consent or participation cannot be gained from the subject of research, the process of attempts to contact the subject should be described. With regard to this research study, the researcher tried to contact the individual studied through email,

telephone and internet resources. However, it was not possible to get into direct contact with the person studied and research participation and informed consent could not be gained.

In this study on Paulo Coelho, the following ethical considerations have been applied without being in direct contact with the individual studied:

Firstly, the research is based on literature and material that has previously been published and can be found in the public domain, such as interviews with Paulo Coelho (Arias, 2001) or his biography (Morais, 2007). Both of these publications were published with consent and in tight cooperation with the writer and it is assumed that information gained from these sources has been published with informed consent and in agreement with Paulo Coelho.

Secondly, this study draws information from first-person documents and creative works that have been published in the form of autobiographical texts or philosophical literature by Paulo Coelho himself and that is therefore accessible to the public. It uses primarily texts and documents published by Paulo Coelho himself and these publications are understood as being open to discussion in third-person documents, such as in this research study.

However, it is expected that, during the course of studying Paulo Coelho's life, previously unknown or unrecognised personal information – which according to Ponterotto (2014) is common in psychobiographical research – may be discovered. These previously unknown data are reported, as suggested by Ponterotto, by weighing up the accuracy of the study as well as the advancement of knowledge on the person against the personal rights of the person studied and by filtering and editing the newly found information carefully. According to Ponterotto, the psychographer is seen as an “ethical decision maker” who needs to trust his inner moral compass. This implies that the inner ability to make a decision about inclusion and/or exclusion of moments with an “ethical dimension” (Haverkamp, 2005, p. 148) lies in the hand of the researcher and is part of the reflexive attitude displayed in hermeneutics (see Sect. 6.3).

Thirdly, the first- and third-party documents used in this study, which are taken from the public domain, are treated carefully and respectfully, with dignity and empathy, to provide complex insight into the individual's life without harming the individual studied. Since the researcher sees herself as a “guest in a private space of the world”, as Willig (2001, p. 79) calls any qualitative researcher, she attempts to keep to the ethical boundaries, good manners as a qualitative researcher and a strict code of ethics throughout the study.

During the entire study, fourthly, the researcher aims for an ethical setting, as well as for ethical conduct of the study. This is particularly important with regard to the fact that this study is conducted across gender (a female researcher and a male subject of research), across cultures (a German researcher living in South Africa and a Brazilian writer living temporarily in France and Switzerland) and across age (a researcher born in 1975 and a subject born in 1948). The researcher attempts to respect ethical principles across these boundaries and tries to adhere to them empathetically from her perspective, as well as from the anticipated perspective of the subject researched.

Fifthly, Kováry (2011) points out that psychobiographical studies should mainly be written on deceased individuals to maintain respect for studied subjects (Kováry, 2011) and to pay respect to the hermeneutical assumption that temporal distance has a strong impact on the hermeneutical understanding and interpretation of findings. In this study, the temporal closeness of the study between the researcher and the living subject of research is not seen as a threat to ethical considerations and quality principles applied, but rather as providing an advantage in methodological hermeneutical understanding and interpretation of the subject in view of the temporal closeness of the researcher and the researched.

Finally, it is assumed that this study will be highly valuable to other researchers, but also to individuals interested in Paulo Coelho's life. Basically, the study's contribution and value are therefore judged to outweigh the ethical risks and dangers that could be associated with it (Elms, 1994; Wassenaar, 2006).

After having discussed and addressed the ethical considerations and practices of this study, the limitations are finally outlined at the end of the chapter.

6.11 Methodological Limitations

Like any research study, this psychobiographical research study is subject to methodological limitations (Anderson, 1981; Schultz, 2005a, 2005b, 2005c, 2005d, 2005e).

Nortjé et al. (2013) have outlined preliminary limitations in research studies, such as (a) the researcher's bias towards the subject; (b) the psychopathological reductionism of the personality under study; (c) cross-cultural differences between research and subject; (d) the analysis of an absent subject; (e) validity, reliability and trustworthiness considerations; and (f) considerations regarding criticism of psychobiography as being elitist.

These preliminary methodological limitations are partly relevant for this study: It is assumed that the researcher is biased towards the subject of research to the extent that the researcher is influenced by her own ideas, ways of structuring and understanding data, her own values and ways of interpreting the world. The researcher's bias is reflected in Sects. 1.9, 6.11, and 9.9.

Since the study does refer to the theoretical frame of constructs of positive psychology, the psychopathological reductionism of the subject of study is addressed. Therefore, the study is not limited by psychopathological views, but rather by the perspectives of positive psychology and their construct. It is underlying reductionism in this way that each and every study reduces an individual to the focus, the theoretical and methodological frame chosen and is reductionist in this regard.

The researcher assumes that her cultural, gender, educational and language background might have an impact on the study and might limit the data collection process, the analysis or interpretation in one way or another. It might be that cross-cultural misunderstanding or incomprehension might influence the data,

particularly since the researcher does not speak Portuguese and did not refer to documents written on Paulo Coelho in Portuguese and Spanish.

It also needs to be emphasised that this study focuses on an “absent subject” and that, although attempted, the subject of research could not be contacted. It is assumed that direct contact in the form of an interview might have contributed to less limited findings and would have opened even more in-depth perspectives.

The study is furthermore limited to the defined quality criteria connected to the defined ethical considerations. It is limited to the selected qualitative quality criteria and does not respond to common quantitative quality criteria, such as validity and reliability. These quality criteria and ethical considerations and practices are, even having gone through ethical clearance, very much connected to the researcher’s point of view and her quality and ethical decision-making, which are viewed as bound to the researcher.

Finally, according to Nortjé et al. (2013), but also emphasised by other psychobiographical researchers (Runyan, 1988a; Schultz, 2005a; Simonton, 1994) the study is limited and criticised with regard to psychobiographies being elitist and considering mainly prominent and privileged subjects of research. The study is an elitist study, which focuses only on a famous, prominent celebrity read by large numbers of readers around the world. Therefore, there is a strong limitation with regard to the sampling in this study. It is limited to studying holistic wellness and health within the defined methodological paradigm and is limited to all of those predefined factors.

Besides the common methodological limitations emphasised by Nortjé et al. (2013), the study is also limited to the fact that it focuses on a living individual (Kováry, 2011; Schultz, 2005a) whose life is analysed and interpreted from birth to the year 2017. It does not take the entire life span of the subject of research into account, but only 70 years of the life. At the same time, the study is limited by the temporal closeness bias and the fact that the individual is still alive, which might affect (consciously and/or unconsciously) the ethical decision-making processes with regard to uncovered themes, categories and topics and how these are reported. The temporal closeness might limit the interpretation of documents, as well as reporting on the findings.

With regard to the data and documents analysed, the data collection is limited to documents that are open in the public domain. This limitation is related to the one that no direct and personal contact could be established with the individual studied.

6.12 Chapter Summary

This chapter presented the research design that is defined as an explanatory and descriptive case study design. The research paradigm uses Dilthey’s hermeneutical understanding and the hermeneutical circle in combination with Runyan’s historical-interpretative psychology and Allport’s idea of intuitive focus.

Special attention was paid to the research approach that is defined as a psychobiographical single and holistic case study approach, the quality criteria and the markers of good psychobiographical research, according to Schultz, which are applied in this study.

The research process was explained in terms of data collection, as well as inductive and deductive (abductive) data analysis processes, interpretation and reporting of data. The five-step model of content analysis was explained and examples of psychobiographical methodological analysis and interpretations of text in terms of Alexander's primary indicators of psychological salience and Schultz's prototypical scenes were provided. Finally, the chapter referred to ethical considerations and methodological limitations of the study.

This chapter provides the basis for understanding the following chapter, which presents the findings of this research regarding holistic wellness and faith development in Paulo Coelho's life.

Chapter 7

Research Findings and Discussion on Paulo Coelho's Life

No matter what he does, every person on earth plays a central role in the history of the world. And normally he doesn't know it.

Paulo Coelho, 2002b, p. 167

7.1 Chapter Preview

In this chapter, the life of Paulo Coelho (Chap. 3) is reconstructed through content analysis (Sect. 6.9) based on the theoretical approaches of the HWM (Sects. 3, 4 and 5) and the FDT (Sect. 6). An integration of findings with regard to both theories is provided (Sect. 7) and a conclusion is given (Sect. 8).

7.2 Conceptual Outline of Presentation of Findings

The researcher follows a hermeneutic and interpretative research approach, as discussed in Sect. 6.3. In this chapter, the biographical data with regard to Paulo Coelho are analysed within the framework of the theoretical psychological approaches and the methodological research applied.¹ The biographical data are analysed as explained in the theoretical (Chaps. 4 and 5) and methodological chapters of this study (Sect. 6.9). This chapter contains the findings on Paulo Coelho's life related to the HWM (Chap. 4) and the FDT (Chap. 5).

Firstly, the life of Paulo Coelho will be represented in terms of the HWM, by analysing the five life tasks, life forces and global events over the life span. The theory used is a comprehensive theory on holistic wellness and therefore encompasses various components influencing the wellness of Paulo Coelho.

Secondly, the FDT is used to analyse Paulo Coelho's life to present findings on his faith development throughout his life span. The findings are discussed according to the stages of faith development, as identified by Fowler (1981; 1996).

¹The findings were analysed through the methodological approaches explained in Chap. 6. Thus far the pre-assumptions played a role in the analysis processes by providing the focus for the analysis process and the interpretation of the data.

Although the psychobiography strives for completeness and holism, the findings are excerpts from Coelho's life story, which are embedded in the particular socio-historical background of the subject analysed and are included based on the perspectives of the researcher.

7.3 Life Tasks, Forces and Global Events in Coelho's Life

Five life tasks, life forces and global events play a role in the HWM and will be presented in terms of the life of Paulo Coelho. The definitions of the concepts have been provided in Chap. 4.

Life tasks, life forces and global events will be analysed and integrated in the framework of the five life tasks during the different stages of Paulo Coelho's life. Findings for each of the life tasks across the life span summarised in tables are provided to provide overviews on the findings of the data analysis.

7.3.1 Life Task 1: Spirituality

Spirituality is viewed as encompassing life-enhancing benefits (Witmer & Sweeney, 1992) in Sect. 4.5.1.1 and is used to analyse the dimension of spirituality across Paulo Coelho's life span. The concept will be referred to if the data on Paulo Coelho allow it.

7.3.1.1 Paulo Coelho's Early Childhood (1947–1953)

Focusing on spirituality in Coelho's first years, his description of the period and his communication with God (a) were strongly influenced by his parents' belief and the fact that he had been brought back to life by his mother's prayers and a nun (Morais, 2009). Coelho started to pray to God when he was 3 years old and he believed in guardian angels taking care of him and the absence of the guardian angel being responsible for him being naughty (Morais, 2009, p. 39). His communication with God was regular and intense.

The choice of practice of religion (b) was strongly influenced by Coelho's family: He grew up in a Catholic home, with his mother being rooted in a strong Catholic belief (Coelho, 2006, p. 11) and both parents being devout Catholics (Morais, 2009). This parental religious influence had an impact on Coelho particularly during his childhood, and endured for his entire life in terms of prayer and his special connection to St Joseph (Table 7.1).

Table 7.1 Life task spirituality in Coelho's early childhood

Life span	Life task spirituality with sub-categories				
	(a) Description and communication with God	(b) Practice of religion	(c) Conceptualisation of humankind's place	(d) Nature of immortality	(e) Contemplation of nature of meaning of life
1. Coelho's early childhood (1947–1953)	x	x			

Source: Researcher's own construction

In the data, no information is available about his early childhood years in terms of c) the conceptualisation of humankind's place in the universe; d) a consideration of the nature of immortality; e) or the contemplation of the presence and nature of the meaning of life. However, it can be assumed that through the parents' strong Catholic belief, Coelho learnt that life is a gift of God that needs to be lived according to God's will.

During this period of Coelho's life, the following life forces played a significant role in his life:

Family Coelho grew up in a very close family context in a middle-class security estate, in a very safe environment. The data do not provide any information on how the family communicated internally; however, according to the parents' religious background, communication about religion and spirituality were important topics. Coelho's family was strongly associated with the concept of a resilient institution (DeFrain & Asay, 2007).

Religion Coelho's early family life was based on the Catholic religion, which provided his mother and him with hope, meaning, social well-being and harmony. Religion in the family defined a way of acknowledging a higher being and Coelho took on the parents' religion and regular prayers during his early years (Morais, 2009).

Education The first four and a half years, Coelho was educated at home by his mother, who was a housewife. He learnt social, emotional and ethical behaviour at home. Not much is known about this time from Coelho's perspective; however, the accessible information provides an impression of a safe and caring environment (Morais, 2009). At the age of four and a half Coelho left the parental home for the first time in his life to join the formal educational pre-school system for 2 years before entering school (Morais, 2009).

Community Coelho spent his first years in a middle-class area of Rio near Botafogo beach in a security complex, being part of the community of the complex, which consisted of members of the extended family and neighbours. Besides his family,

the members of the security state might have influenced Coelho's spirituality; however no information is provided in the data.

No information could be found on how the media, the government and business or industry affected Coelho's life at this stage.

Furthermore, no direct information about the influence of global events on Coelho from birth to 5 years has been found. It can only be said that his parents successfully tried to protect Coelho from influences from outside the security estate. Therefore, Coelho was not subjected to experiencing poverty, violence, overpopulation or disease, unemployment, violation of human rights or competition for limited resources (Sweeney, 1998).

7.3.1.2 Childhood and Schooldays (1953–1961)

In terms of spirituality and the b.) practice of religion, Coelho's parents enrolled him at a religiously oriented primary school where he experienced hard work and respect for one's fellows (Morais, 2009, p. 41). This school prepared him for one of the most established secondary schools in Rio, a Jesuit school in which he was enrolled from 1958, after having failed the entry examinations twice (Morais, 2009). The school was strict about religion, spirituality and religious practices and was for Coelho a place of religion from 1953 to 1961.

In the literature, no information about his childhood years and schooldays could be found in terms of a) description and communication with God c) the conceptualisation of humankind's place in the universe; d.) a consideration of the nature of immortality; e) or the contemplation of the presence and nature for the meaning of life. However, it can be assumed that Coelho was strongly influenced by his parents and particularly his mother's belief and practice, as well as through the primary and secondary schools' ethic and religious values, which indirectly and directly, though not described, induced Coelho to accept a religious understanding of meaning in life ((e) the contemplation of the presence and nature of the meaning of life) (Table 7.2).

During these years, Coelho was influenced by various life forces:

Family To punish him for his low school marks, his parents sent Coelho to a school retreat for educational (and religious) purposes, which he hated. His parents were strict, but also worried about Coelho's state of health due to his asthma attacks. Coelho enjoyed staying with his aunt and uncle in Araruama during holidays at the beach, where he seemed to experience more freedom than at home.

Religion Hardly any information is given in the data on religion during this life period; however, it can be assumed that the parental and educational religious influence continued having an effect. In the Jesuit secondary school, religious practice and communication with God were the foundation of the education and predominant.

Table 7.2 Life task spirituality in Coelho's childhood and school days

Life span	Life task spirituality with sub-categories				
	(a) Description and communication with God	(b) Practice of religion	(c) Conceptualisation of humankind's place	(d) Nature of immortality	(e) Contemplation of nature of meaning of life
Periods in Paulo Coelho's development					
2. Childhood and schooldays (1953–1961)		x			x

Source: Researcher's own construction

Education Coelho failed the entry examinations at the Jesuit school twice, but developed a passion for reading, particularly novels and adventure stories, and he started writing a diary. He started to record his thoughts and emotions on tape and discovered ways to explore himself in other than the religious world.

Community Coelho was well integrated in the community of the estate where he lived with his parents and his sister. He became the best storyteller in the estate (Morais, 2009), built up a secret organisation with his friends and extended family members and was known for playing tricks in the community (Morais, 2009). Although he was physically weak and suffered from respiratory problems during these years, Coelho had many friends who admired his broad knowledge and his ability to tell stories. It appeared that the community did not play a direct role in his religious development, but rather a balancing role to provide Coelho with some freedom of religion.

Media Coelho loved to read books, which were his main subjects of media interaction (Morais, 2009).

No information has been found on the impact of the government and the business or industry on Coelho's life in terms of spirituality during this life period.

No direct information is available about the influence of global impacts on Coelho's spirituality from the age of 6 to 12 years. However, it can be assumed that he was more influenced by the world outside the estate than before, although this might rather be described as a local influence than a global influence in his life.

7.3.1.3 The Teenage Years (1962–1966)

Referring to spirituality and religion, the teenage years brought about a strong change in Coelho's life. In an interview with Arias (2001, p. 33) he described his years at St Ignatius as a "horror of religion" – a.) in terms of the description and communication of God – which drove him to distancing himself from belief, becoming "an atheist" (Arias, 2001, p. 13), struggling for the first time to believe in God (Morais, 2009). His religious doubts finally took over in 1963 when his grandfather died of a sudden heart attack – Coelho deteriorated even more in his school career

(Morais, 2009, p. 73). He was terrified by the idea of losing his faith; however, he could not do anything to halt this process (Morais, 2009, p. 73). His communication with God was mainly defined by feelings of guilt and fear of punishment and he primarily saw God as a punishing father.

His (b) practice of religion was consequently ambitious: he prayed and hated God at the same time and was frustrated about his loss of faith (Morais, 2009, p. 74). According to Arias (2001), during his teenage years Coelho distanced himself from his childhood belief and became an atheist, anti-religious and anti-christ (Arias, 2001). His (b.) choice of practice of religion changed drastically in comparison to his childhood. However, he still practised religion at school and during the retreats, but also struggled with the practice of religion during a school retreat in 1962 because he experienced a clash of religion and sexual desires: He suffered because of his sexual desires, gained new confidence and familiarised himself with mysterious rituals of religion through his "first encounter with God" (Morais, 2009, pp. 58–59). However, his belief was unstable: In one moment he felt encouraged and faithful, in the other he hated the priests and the religion, fearing punishment for his thoughts (Morais, 2009, p. 74). He became insecure about the (c) conceptualisation of humankind's place in the universe and his relation to God and the universe. These unbalanced feelings about his place in the world shook Coelho's world view and life and he experienced a pool of emotions, such as confidence, guilt and shame, which changed constantly.

In terms of the question of how Coelho considered the (d) nature of immortality and how he tried to overcome mortality, his dream of becoming a writer plays a significant role. Through becoming a writer, he felt alive (Morais, 2009, p. 90) and it can be assumed that he unconsciously felt immortal and close to God through writing. Coelho recognised his desire to become a writer and he (e) reflected on the presence and nature of the meaning of his life. His books, the reading, acting in the theatre and artistic expression became meaningful in his life, particularly after his school change to a more liberal and less religious school, and he developed the dream to become a writer (Coelho, 2006, p. 11). In 1964 he became consciously aware of his vocation and meaning in life (Morais, 2009, p. 79): becoming a writer and living life to the full, doing what he had liked to do (Arias, 2001, p. 37), making everything possible (Arias, 2001, p. 164) and being happy (Coelho, 2006, p. 122). However, the life's dream was not only an individualised dream, but also connected to the "dream" as emphasised in the Bible in the Old Testament (Coelho, 2006, p. 22). This leads to the interpretation of a strong religious influence from his childhood days, which placed his dream in a biblical and religiously meaningful context.

All five spiritual components were addressed in this life period, which showed a high degree of spirituality (Table 7.3).

Life forces that influenced him were the following:

Family Coelho was still close to his mother; however, this closeness was shaken by her taking him for an appointment with a nerve doctor for the first time in 1963 (Morais, 2009). During the same period, Coelho felt the loss of his beloved grand-

Table 7.3 Life task spirituality in Coelho's teenage years

Life span	Life task spirituality with sub-categories				
	(a) Description and communication with God	(b) Practice of religion	(c) Conceptualisation of humankind's place	(d) Nature of immortality	(e) Contemplation of nature of meaning of life
Periods in Paulo Coelho's development					
3. The teenage years (1962–1966)	x	x	x	x	x

Source: Researcher's own construction

father, which became a key issue with regard to the loss and deterioration of his faith and belief in God (Morais, 2009, p. 73). He felt rejected by his parents (Morais, 2009) and since he did not manage his school career well, his father found him a badly paid job at the docks after school as punishment (Morais, 2009, p. 77). His father punished him even more after he had almost killed a boy on the streets, driving a car he was not allowed to drive (Morais, 2009, p. 90).

Because of Coelho's opposition to his parents, they took him to a mental hospital for the first time in 1965 for 28 days, where he was classified as schizophrenic (Morais, 2009, p. 101). Another break with his parents occurred when Coelho was taken to the asylum for a second time in 1966 for about 3 months. He suffered from enthusiasm, panic attacks and depression after electroconvulsive therapy. He felt that he was not insane, but was being punished for following his dream (Morais, 2009, p. 134). His parents only allowed him to come home after he had fled from the hospital and had disappeared for over a week (Arias, 2001). He was then taken on and supported by his maternal grandfather who allowed him to stay in his small apartment in the city centre (Morais, 2009). However, he only stayed there for a few months before moving back into his parents' house (Morais, 2009, p. 143). The break with his parents also brought about a break in belief in Coelho's parents' religion and spirituality.

Religion During his teenage years, Coelho was torn apart by his belief in God as a punishing father and his loss of faith and hatred towards the priests in his Jesuit school. He distanced himself from his childhood belief and became an atheist (Arias, 2001). At the age of 19, he was anti-religious, anti-Catholic and had abandoned the faith of his parents, only keeping a remnant of his childhood faith (Arias, 2001). During his teenage years, Coelho experienced depression, joy, loneliness, a feeling of humiliation, as well as emotional dependence on the doctor who put him through electroshock therapy (Morais, 2009). He led the opposite of an emotionally balanced life.

Education Since Coelho got very low marks at school, his parents sent him to Andrews College, which was co-educational and more liberal (Morais, 2009). The punishment meted out by his father made Coelho more indifferent towards school and he failed another school year, this time at Andrews College (Morais, 2009).

Coelho decided to go to theatre plays and became interested in books that increased his understanding of himself and society (Morais, 2009, p. 71). In 1963, he wrote his first play about a young boy who commits suicide, feeling rejected by his parents and society (Morais, 2009, p. 76), followed by a second one in the same year.

Coelho was moved to a fifth-rate college in 1965, where he was later able to finish his schooling (Morais, 2009). During all this time, he enjoyed acting in the theatre and became involved in his first theatre play for adults in 1966 (Morais, 2009).

Community Coelho extended his community memberships and started to act in the theatre. A major event during his teenage years was the move from his security complex to Gávia, where he had many friends and where he was in a leadership position (Morais, 2009). His contact with his friends was reduced by his father, who grounded him at home. However, Coelho founded a literary club called Rota 15 in 1963, got his first girlfriend in 1965 and fell into a depression after the failure of this relationship.

In 1965 Coelho became part of a club of intellectuals and left-wingers and found a job as a reporter for a small newspaper, which brought him closer to his new friends and girlfriends.

Media Coelho used his books as “recreational reading” and thus increased his well-being through reading as a major health resource.

Business/Industry After Coelho had worked at the docks as punishment, he moved on to become a reporter and enjoyed writing (Morais, 2009).

No information was found on the impact of the government on Coelho's life at this stage. It seems as if he was occupied with himself, his books, his dreams, feelings and emotions, his struggle with his faith, his parents and his despair about how to fulfil his life's dream of becoming a writer. No direct information about the influence of global impacts on Coelho during his teenage years is available. He seemed to have lived in his own world (Morais, 2009) of his books and novels, his theatre plays, his emotional ups and downs and his girlfriends.

7.3.1.4 The Twenties (1967–1976)

In 1970, Coelho was drawn into the topics of the occult, witchcraft and satanism and he became convinced that no coincidences occur in life. He felt that he was “a magician preparing for his dawn” (Morais, 2009, p. 181). In terms of the description of God (a), Satan became his God and he got involved in black magic (Arias, 2001).

Coelho became obsessed with a satanistic sect and his (b) practice of religion was based on the occult, satanic rituals and black magic. He introduced Gisa and Raul to his practices, started writing occult texts for Raul's songs and turned the theatre course at university into a black magic workshop in 1973 (Morais, 2009, p. 214). Coelho joined the sect in 1974, recognised the presence of evil in his life, decided to make a pact with the devil (Morais, 2009, p. 221) and promised the devil

Table 7.4 Life task spirituality in Coelho's twenties

Life span	Life task spirituality with sub-categories				
	(a) Description and communication with God	(b) Practice of religion	(c) Conceptualisation of humankind's place	(d) Nature of immortality	(e) Contemplation of nature of meaning of life
Periods in Paulo Coelho's development					
4. The twenties (1967–1976)	x	x		x	x

Source: Researcher's own construction

his soul – considering the nature of immortality (d) – if the devil would support him in realising his dream. Not even an hour later, Coelho cancelled his pact with the devil to overcome the dark temptations (Morais, 2009, p. 222). He left the occult sect after 2 years when he experienced a “black cloud” phenomenon in his apartment (Arias, 2001, p. 118). He panicked and finally returned to his childhood religious belief (Arias, 2001, p. 119). After his split from the sect, in May 1975, he paid for a mass of thanksgiving to be celebrated at the church of St Joseph (Morais, 2009, p. 276) and thereby turned from satanism to his Christian belief by (b) practising his religion.

During his twenties, Coelho experienced his e) meaning in his life only while dreaming of becoming a famous writer, while developing the idea of preparing to become a magician (Morais, 2009) (Table 7.4).

Except for the c.) conceptualisation of humankind's place, the literature addresses all five components of spirituality in the life of Paulo Coelho in his twenties.

Impacting life forces:

Family His parents took Coelho to the mental hospital one last time. His family still had a strong influence on his life, but his spiritual development seemed to be fairly independent of their religious beliefs. After Coelho had been on a trip to the US, his grandfather died (1971). He travelled to Europe with his grandmother in 1973 and escaped his parents' influence in his life. Coelho got into two relatively short marriages with Gisa, who joined him in occult practices, and Cissa, who was less involved in religious practices.

Religion During his twenties, Coelho was drawn into the occult, witchcraft and satanism with the aim to influence his success as a writer through occult practices (Morais, 2009, p. 197). He conducted witchcraft rituals (Morais, 2009, p. 214). In 1975, he returned to God and organised a huge celebration for St Joseph (Morais, 2009, p. 276). Coelho's religious behaviour was strongly influenced by ritualistic practices and a turn from Satan to God.

Education In response to his parents' wish, Coelho started studying law at the university, but soon left. He started to write his first own play for the stage (Peter Pan) and became a member of the Brazilian Society of Theatre and Writers in 1968. He took theatre courses (Morais, 2009, p. 197), became a self-made lyricist for music

productions and later an executive at Philips. The world of the theatre, lyrics, writing and working at Philips was developed as an alternative draft to his religious upbringing, providing him with new world views and a freedom that he had not experienced in his religious practices and with meaning in life.

Community Coelho became part of the Brazilian Society of Theatre Writers in 1968, had “strange friends”, many girlfriends and married twice during his twenties. Gisa, his first wife, and his friend and partner Raul (Morais, 2009) shared Coelho's interest in the occult.

Media Coelho continued reading books and his theatre productions brought him more recognition than his writing (Morais, 2009, p. 173). He produced his first play, wrote texts for Rauls' songs and published his first book in 1973.

Government Coelho ran away from the oppressing dictatorship in Brazil by traveling with his grandparents to the US for 6 weeks – a gift from his mother. In 1974 he and his wife, Gisa, were kidnapped by a paramilitary group, tortured and jailed for several days (Coelho, 2006, p. 103). No information was found on how these experiences influenced his belief and faith.

Business/Industry Besides his theatre play productions and his unsuccessful writing, Coelho met Raul Seixas and they start cooperating in music production, Coelho writing as lyricist and Raul acting as song producer (Morais, 2009). In 1972 Coelho worked for a magazine and went on a trip to Europe together with his grandmother. He published his first book in 1973, became rich in 1974 through his lyrics for Rauls' songs and became a Philips executive.

No explicit information about the influence of global impacts on Coelho during this life period is available. However, his life was influenced by the dictatorship in Brazil and by paramilitary groups kidnapping and torturing him and his wife. No contextual information has been provided about the direct influence of the Brazilian dictatorship in Brazil. However, Coelho was influenced by his global travels to the US and Europe with his family members and with Raul. These were not collective global events that had an influence on him, but rather his individualised experiences in the global context.

7.3.1.5 The Thirties (1977–1986)

During this period of this life, Coelho experienced many changes in terms of his spirituality and his spiritual belief after meeting Nhá Chica in 1987. This incident changed his faith and he returned to spirituality and belief in the saints (Coelho, 2006, p. 135). He felt that it was Nhá Chica who helped build his writing career and decided to honour her (Coelho, 2006, p. 136). As in St Joseph, Coelho believed in Nhá Chica, a holy person. Coelho a) described and communicated with God through the saints. He also communicated with God through recognising his belief in “signs of God” being sent to him. During this decade, Coelho b) practised his religion through rituals he performed, as described in “The pilgrimage” (Coelho, 1987), and through becoming a magus.

In 1982 Coelho felt that this was the year of the “birth of the writer” while visiting Dachau. He listened to the church bells, realised his meaning in life (Arias, 2001, 141), was introduced by a Christian sign of a “calling” to (a) communicate with (a) and praying to God, (b) performing practices of religion in a church. Following this incident, Coelho met J., who became his master of RAM (Morais, 2009, p. 321). RAM reveals the feminine side of the personality of a person (Arias, 2001, p. 93) and is based on discipline, personal effort and ritual, which Coelho practised with the guidance of J. in terms of compassion, meditation, the roots of life and the earth (Arias, 2001, p. 95). He practised his religion (b) by performing energy rituals in Oslo, re-energising the spiritual (Morais, 2009, p. 323). Back in Brazil, Coelho received ordeals from his master and was initiated into more RAM practices (Morais, 2009). In 1986, Coelho failed the last ritual of RAM to become a master and was sent on a spiritual journey to walk the Road to Santiago (practice of religion (b)). Soon afterwards, he received a “sign from God”, to start writing (Morais, 2009), which is seen as a way of symbolic communication between Coelho and God ((a) communication with God).

During the 1980s Coelho described himself repeatedly as a magus (Arias, 2001) and thereby defined his relation to creation and the creator in a certain way. He felt that humanity turns towards spirituality (Arias, 2001, p. 7) and that the (c) conceptualisation of humankind's place in the universe is increasingly defined by spirituality.

During his thirties, Coelho explored new ways of spirituality and was aware of bodily death as described in “The pilgrimage” (Coelho, 1987). He (d) considered the nature of (im)mortality, by defining life as mortal and the soul as immortal.

On his journey to Santiago, Coelho felt that the search for the unknown was a search for the infinite (Arias, 2001, p. 19) and part of constructing (e) meaning in life. For the first time, the concept of the “warrior of light” appeared: Coelho felt that the warrior of light was a new spiritual adventurer, an enthusiast (Arias, 2001, p. 21) who finds meaning in life through living his/her dream, spiritual awakening, inspiration and changing things for the better (Arias, 2001, p. 20; Coelho, 1987). In 1987 and 1988 Coelho experienced the breakthrough of becoming an internationally known author. He thereby started to fulfil his meaning in life to be a writer (Table 7.5).

Impacting life forces:

Family In 1977 Coelho and Cissa, his second wife, moved to London, got divorced in 1979 and Coelho met Cristina Oiticica, his major partner in life. Cristina supported him in his Christian belief and faith.

Religion He returned to spirituality in 1978 (Coelho, 2006) with the help of Cristina to overcome the satanic attachment, to return to Christianity through her strong Christian belief (Arias, 2001, p. 91). In 1982 he became a member of RAM and in 1986 failed at the last moment to become a master. During his thirties, Coelho encountered special incidents with the French Saint Theresa, whom he experienced as an omen in his life (Arias, 2001, p. 8). Coelho was drawn into the practices of the “old Catholic belief” and the saints.

Table 7.5 Life task spirituality in Coelho's thirties

Life span	Life task spirituality with sub-categories				
	(a) Description and communication with God	(b) Practice of religion	(c) Conceptualisation of humankind's place	(d) Nature of immortality	(e) Contemplation of nature of meaning of life
Periods in Paulo Coelho's development					
5. The thirties (1977–1986)	x	x	x	x	x

Source: Researcher's own construction

Education Cristina and Coelho travelled through Europe (mainly London and Madrid) in 1981 and 1982, followed by Vienna, Budapest, Prague, Romania and Bonn (Morais, 2009). They opened their minds to new experiences, which had an impact on their spiritual development and the definition of meaning in life. However, they did not educate themselves further in terms of formal education.

Community Coelho became a member of the RAM community, he communicated increasingly with God and practised religious rituals.

Media Coelho was invited to be interviewed by the media (TV) and published his first successful book on the Road to Santiago, which described his communication with God, his magical experiences, the practising of rituals and changes in the meaning in life.

Business/Industry In 1978 Coelho became a lyricist for all important Brazilian song writers, changed from Philips to CBS in 1979, started his new artistic career with Cristina in 1981 and was increasingly invited to take part in TV shows.

No information on the influence of the government in this period is available. During the thirties, Coelho was influenced by global events in terms of his journeys through various countries and his new experiences, which led to new insights in higher forces and the meaning of life. Coelho was aware of global events, owing to his strong interest in politics, culture and countries. While visiting Europe, he was impressed by the history of the Second World War. Morais (2009) and Arias (2001) both emphasise that Coelho's career as a writer started with the awareness of church bells in Dachau: The fate of the suffering people during the war, the story of the perpetrators and victims touched him in historical perspective (Morais, 2009).

7.3.1.6 The Forties (1987–1996)

While on a trip to Egypt, Coelho (Morais, 2009, p. 357) experienced an apparition in the desert of a lady who carried a clay pot on her shoulder. This experience inspired him to write the book "The alchemist", which later became the bestseller of his life (Morais, 2009). Coelho (a) connected to God through magical experiences, apparitions and signs. This seemed to be a way of (a) communicating with

God and building a relationship with him. Another way of being in contact with God was for Coelho the “follow your dream” approach (Morais, 2009). During his journey through Europe and while walking the Road to Rome, Coelho met his guardian angel with whom he communicated about the success of his books (Morais, 2009). In 1989, he also experienced other apparitions during his stay in the desert together with Cristina while (b) practising his religion.

Travelling on the Road to Rome, Coelho conducted spiritual and b.) religious RAM practices, and experienced the “ritual of fire”. Coelho was convinced that his success as a writer was a “divine gift” (Morais, 2009, p. 376). He viewed himself in c.) relation to God and his place in the universe as a receptor of God's gift. Coelho returned to Christianity and the Catholic belief, saying, because “it is in my cultural roots, in my blood. For me it was a personal and free choice” (Arias, 2001, p. 13). Coelho returned to Christianity and defined spirituality as a practice of love (Coelho, 1996, p. viii). Life, for Coelho, became a magical experience and a miracle in itself (Coelho, 1996, p. 8) and he felt meaningfulness in life (e). Coelho described his move away from the powerful, patriarchal and fearful God of the church towards a spiritual God that loves (Coelho, 1996, p. 99). This move was part of his life's journey.

In “The alchemist” (1988), Coelho defined his faith and its expression in the hero's journey and the spiritual quest. He found out about the true nature of being, while seeing humankind as improving the world for the better (Kremenik, 1996). God is expressed through nature (Coelho, 2002b, p. 10). “The alchemist” (Coelho, 1988) presented Coelho's journey from his strict Jesuit education towards a spiritual and more optimistic approach to God and his personal faith, leading through cultural hybridisation, magical realism and language to express humans' needs and longing (new c) conceptualisation of humankind's place).

In 1990, Coelho developed spiritually by publishing the book “Brida” (Coelho, 1990), which described the experiences with RAM and the feminine side of his personality and faith. Brida carried Coelho's wish to become a magician, a master in the Wicca tradition (Coelho, 1990, p. 10). Coelho expressed his interest in the sun and moon tradition of RAM and his way of accepting the bridge between the visible and the invisible (Coelho, 1990, p. 201).

As described in the book “The Valkyries” (Coelho, 1992), Coelho experienced the courage of the adventurer, the journey, the struggle, the hope and the desperation of a human being while referring to Christianity, spiritual concepts and magical rituals and the belief in guardian angels. In 1994, issues of doubt and encouragement regarding God recurred – being a familiar feeling from his teenage years (Morais, 2009). His struggle regarding his faith is mirrored in the book “The Valkyries” (Coelho, 1992), in which he describes being torn apart between hatred and love of God. Guided by these feelings was his (a) communication with God and the (b) religious practices conducted.

During his trip to Europe in 1989 Coelho was lost in the Pyrenees and imagined how it would be if someone should find his corpse during the next summer on the mountainside (Coelho, 2006, p. 103). He was conscious and aware of death and the d.) mortality of his body, which led him to the strengthening of the “carpe diem”

Table 7.6 Life task spirituality in Coelho's forties

Life span	Life task spirituality with sub-categories				
	(a) Description and communication with God	(b) Practice of religion	(c) Conceptualisation of humankind's place	(d) Nature of immortality	(e) Contemplation of nature of meaning of life
6. The forties (1987–1996)	x	x	x	x	x

Source: Researcher's own construction

concept (Arias, 2001, p. 60) and the idea of living life to the full (Coelho, 2003a). Coelho saw alchemy as the soul of the world and as part of Jung's collective unconscious through which a person connects to everything (Arias, 2001, p. 148). He also expressed his belief in reincarnation and felt that rebirth was a means to move forward in the human's spiritual journey (Coelho, 1990, p. 37), which indicated a strong reflection of the (c) conceptualisation of humankind's place in the world, as well as the (e) contemplation of the presence and nature of the meaning of the life.

During this life period Coelho's (e) meaning of life was influenced by his dream of being a writer more than before and this became a catalyst for the thoughts of others (Arias, 2001, p. 22). Coelho (2002b, p. 30) highlighted that the meaning of life was about exploring the personal legend and the realisation of one's destiny, a person's only obligation. Accordingly, love was defined as living the meaning of life while following the heart's desire, which is supported by the universe (Coelho, 2002b, pp. 23–24). Life was seen as a possibility to become a warrior of the good fight (Coelho, 1990, p. 240), consciously connecting the body and the soul (Coelho, 1990, p. 224): Life became an opportunity for spiritual fulfilment and the search for the other parts of the soul that had been met and lost in a former life (Coelho, 1990, p. 37). By those internal monologues of Coelho, he showed his interest in the (c.) conceptualisation of humankind's place in the world, (d) the nature of immortality through the soul's connection to the universe and the (e) contemplation of meaning in life by referring to reincarnation and a spiritual journey across lives (Table 7.6).

Impacting life forces:

Family Coelho lived and worked with his life partner, Cristina. They promoted their artistic work together and marketed themselves (Morais, 2009). Coelho's mother died of Alzheimer's disease in 1993. However, Coelho was in Canada and did not attend her funeral. The impact of his mother's death on Coelho and his faith and spirituality is not described in the data. However, Cristina's and his strong Christian belief are thought to have had positive impacts on their career.

Religion Coelho experienced apparitions during his spiritual journeys; he believed in and doubted God. He consulted the I-Ching, a Chinese oracle. His spiritual approaches included components of different religions and belief systems, while he returned to Christianity, Christian symbolism and magic, believing that "God speaks all languages", referring to boundary-spanning religious practices and sharing communal experiences of adoration and prayer (Morais, 2009).

Education Coelho educated himself through reading, media and his travels around the world.

Community Cristina and his friends helped him to develop leaflets on “The alchemist” (1988) (Morais, 2009) and promoted his works.

Media Coelho published his first successful book, “The pilgrimage” (Coelho, 1987), followed by “The alchemist” (Coelho, 1988). The time of his forties was characterised by self-promotion (Morais, 2009): He employed an agent to promote him in Brazil (Morais, 2009), used his image as a magus as a marketing strategy to promote himself as a “rainmaker” and was promoted on TV and in newspapers (Morais, 2009).

Government Although his first book was on the bestseller lists in Brazil, Coelho was not nominated for a prize by the Brazilian Ministry of Education. He was disappointed by the government and considered stopping to writing (Morais, 2009, p. 357). However, his concept of meaning in life and his newly gained spiritual self-belief supported him in overcoming his doubts.

Business/Industry After returning from a trip in 1989, Coelho saw his book on the bestseller list in Brazil. However, he was disappointed that the book was not nominated for the award of a prize. He considered stopping to write (Morais, 2009, p. 357), but then focused on his marketing strategies. His agent, Monica, moved to Spain to promote Coelho's work in Europe. He became successful in various countries; however, the Brazilian press stayed highly critical (Morais, 2009). In 1995, Coelho moved from Edition Rocco to Editoria Objectiva (Morais, 2009), created his personal website and promoted his new book by holding a party with 600 invited guests (Morais, 2009). His strong business approach is backed up by his strong belief and his religious and spiritual rituals and practices.

During Coelho's forties, no global influences described in the literature had a particular influence on him. He was mainly influenced by his travels, his personal, intra-psychological experiences, which he described in his books, and his global marketing strategies.

7.3.1.7 The Fifties (1997–2006)

In 2001, Coelho emphasised in the interview with Arias (2001, p. 123) a new (a) description of God: He believed in a demon, a fallen angel, the left hand of God, and a demon that was “the product of the collective unconscious which personifies it”.

In the text collection, “The wanderer”, Coelho (2007) dealt with various life topics, from spirituality, the relationship to God, belief and faith, to life and death. He included syncretism and mixed doctrines with different perspectives from Christianity, Judaism, Taoism and Islam to bring spirituality and transcendence into the life of the readers (Lätzel, 2007). Coelho dealt with the leitmotif of spirituality and individuality, the question of the individual relationship with God and the individual responsibility of the individual to be successful in life while being supported by God throughout the individual's efforts (Lätzel, 2007). In the interview with

Arias (2001, p. 24) Coelho saw God as an experience of faith. It is an individual and personal experience. Coelho (2007, p. 117) concluded in his text "Gott gibt es zweimal" (English "God exists twice") that God can be viewed as a God that exists in terms of what the teachers (here Jesuits) teach and in terms of a God that each and every person experiences, who talks to individuals ((a) description and communication with God). He referred to his childhood God and the loss of his "childhood faith" (Arias, 2001, p. 106) and also to the personal, individually created God, who appeared mystic. Coelho created his personal God by reciting mantras, practising yoga, meditating and including Indian cosmogony and Oriental spirituality into his life (Arias, 2001, p. 108). Through the various experiences he became an initiate to the spiritual quest (Arias, 2001, p. 108) and recognised the sacredness of the Pyrenees mountains as a sign of God (Coelho, 2005). In "The witch of Portobello", (Coelho, 2007), Coelho explored the feminine side of divinity and the Great Mother (Coelho, 2007, p. 335) and integrated various religious approaches, as well as feminine approaches to witchcraft by describing and practising religious and spiritual practices (b). He described God (a), practised rituals (b) and conceptualised humankind's place (c) in the universe.

Coelho started to pray every evening at 6 o' clock when the sun set and again at midnight (Arias, 2001, p. xvii). He believed in spiritual rituals while not seeing himself as a spiritual person writing about spiritual topics (Husband, 2008). During his fifties, Coelho waited for the sign of a white feather to indicate the "impending birth of a new book" (Arias, 2001, p. xix). He explored the concept of the individualised God, the "colour of the consciousness of each human being", spiritual freedom and diversity and the opposite of fundamentalism (Arias, 2001, pp. 80–81) and thereby conceptualised humankind's place in the world and in the context of God (c).

In terms of how Coelho (b) practised religion, he stated (Coelho, 2007, p. 61): "There is faith without prayer, but there is no prayer without faith." Coelho (2007, p. 105) viewed prayer as a way to create a tighter spiritual relationship with God, while learning discipline and building the personal will. To experience God, a person needs to slow down, to stop, to move out of oneself and to see the universe. Then, a person can experience the wordless love that surrounds each and every human, leading to deep feelings (Coelho, 2007, p. 89). Still in his fifties, Coelho believed in the concept of magic and aimed at developing his magical gifts and powers in terms of white magic (Arias, 2001, p. 104), and travelling through Russia (Coelho, 2011), as part of building his (b) religious practices.

At this time, he promoted the idea that humankind is at a particular crossroad, moving into the new millennium by turning to spirituality (Arias, 2001, p. 7) and fighting the good fight. He c.) conceptualised humankind and its relation to God in terms of God being an integrative and almighty power based in a person's soul (Coelho, 2007, p. 17).

God is furthermore described (a) as a reflection of the actions of the individual, being masculine and feminine, combining intuition with logic and logic with mystery and the desire for the imaginary (Arias, 2001, pp. 96–97). In addition, Coelho described in "About writing" the closeness to God attained through writing a diary, a letter or notes while listening to the soul (Coelho, 2007, pp. 51–52). Coelho reck-

Table 7.7 Life task spirituality in Coelho's fifties

Life span	Life task spirituality with sub-categoriess				
	(a) Description and communication with God	(b) Practice of religion	(c) Conceptualisation of humankind's place	(d) Nature of immortality	(e) Contemplation of nature of meaning of life
7. The fifties (1997–2006)	x	x	x	x	x

Source: Researcher's own construction

oned that a writer needs fantasy, transgression, the courage to break the rules of conventional wisdom and the reconciliation of rigour and compassion (Arias, 2001, p. 166). He thereby referred to (e) the contemplation of the presence through soul-based actions and meaning in life. He further inquired about the relationship of humankind and God in his book "The devil and Miss Prym" (Coelho, 2002a), in which he posed the question of whether humankind is essentially good or bad and he inquired about the c.) conceptualisation of humankind's place in the world.

In the autobiographical book "Veronica decides to die" (Coelho, 1998b), Coelho responded predominantly to the question of the soul and the d.) concept of (im) mortality while dealing with the question of suicide, life and death and the value of life (Coelho, 2000). Coelho discovered life as a miracle (Yunus, 2014) and described the realisation of death and its impact on life (Coelho, 1998a, p. 220) through overcoming personal limitations (Coelho, 2007, p. 93) through passion (Coelho, 2007, p. 99), another quality of God ((a) description and communication of God.)

In the same book, Coelho connected to the question of (e) meaning in life by describing the differences in values and life purposes of Veronica and her parents (Coelho, 1998b). Personal growth was an important topic for Coelho (2007, p. 102), which was reached through finding one's standing in the world while growing from within through love ((c) conceptualisation of humankind's place) (Coelho, 2007, p. 119). The spiritual way is an unknown way, which lets individuals experience life with enthusiasm without feeling themselves to be different or privileged (Arias, 2001, p. 21). For Coelho (2007, p. 58), life's purpose is to live the individual and personal fate and to fulfil the mission that is determined ((e) meaning in life). To fulfil this mission, an individual needs to reach out for his/her own potential, thereby, (e) contemplating the presence and nature of meaning in life (Table 7.7).

Impacting life forces:

Family In the book "Veronica decides to die", Coelho (1998b) described in an autobiographical attempt his (verbally) violent relationship with his father and the relationship with his parents. He thereby worked through his own life story and the experience of being admitted to an asylum. He also referred to the difficulties he and his parents had to forgive one another for what had happened. However, he reported that he did not feel bitter about his parents' actions, as a result of which the entire family suffered (Arias, 2001, p. 43). His parents seemed to be a strong factor in Coelho's urge to develop personally and spiritually. Coelho's experience of madness was strongly connected to his parents, their world view and their assumptions

of acceptability and norms and therefore the impact of human misunderstanding (Coelho, 1998b, p. 25). Coelho tried to deal with unfulfilled needs and social family bonds through his autobiographical story (Budiadi, 2009).

Religion During this stage of his life, Coelho referred to God, took on various spiritual practices and promoted love as God's way. Besides undergoing spiritual and religious rituals on a daily basis, Coelho included the I-Ching in decision-making (Morais, 2009, p. 421).

Education In "The *zahir*" (Coelho, 2005), Coelho referred to the concept of resilience as a means to overcoming trauma and defeat and reach happiness. He educated himself through travelling and encounters with individuals belonging to high society and thereby shaped his own values, belief and faith.

Community During this period in his life, Coelho explored concepts of sanity and insanity, as well as in- and outgroup phenomena in society, which are defined by social and cultural norms (2000, pp. 30–31). He was invited to the world economic fair, as well as to a white tie party in Buckingham Palace (Morais, 2009), and became part of the global upper class.

Media From 1998 onwards several scientific studies were written on Paulo Coelho's books in Brazil and internationally (Martin, 2012; Mertel, 2000). Arias (2001) published excerpts from a personal interview with Coelho. Coelho was in the media, receiving many awards and achievements for his creative works (Morais, 2009, p. 408). He travelled to promote his books from 1998 to 2000 (Morais, 2009). While becoming famous, Coelho kept his faith and practised his religious rituals (b).

Business/Industry Coelho proceeded to write books that became bestsellers and acted in the theatre. A DVD on his life was published (Young, 2009). He was conscious of his individual responsibility, ethical commitment, own conscience, faith and the spiritual path, because only individual responsibility led to a spiritual path that needed no masters or captains (Arias, 2001, p. 79). He made decisions by intuition (Coelho, 2007, p. 107) and finally became a member of the Brazilian Academy of Letters (Morais, 2009).

No information on the influence of the government in this period is given in the literature. From 2001 onwards Coelho became increasingly involved in international high society and global events, met with politicians and was invited to the economic forum in Davos (Morais, 2009). From this point onwards, Coelho reached people across social, economic and cultural social strata regardless of sex, race and age (Morais, 2009). He also saw the importance of writers' impact and statements on international and global political events.

7.3.1.8 The Sixties (2007–2016)

Being a warrior of light, Coelho b.) practised several rituals during his sixth decade of life: He prayed every day at 6 o'clock (Coelho, 2010b, 27:00 min.), he waited for a white feather to appear as a sign to write a new book (Coelho, 2010b, 27:35 min.),

he travelled since he believes that a writer needs to travel (Coelho, 2010b, 30:40 min.), he walked to clean his soul and body (Coelho, 2010b, 31:30 min.). He lived the mystery of the Catholic Church and enjoyed the ritual of mass and magic. Even in 2010 he still saw himself as a magician (Coelho, 2010b, Bonus 11:55 min.).

In terms of the question of (c) humankind's place in the universe, Coelho warned that humankind might lose its place in relation to God by running after money, fame and power (Coelho, 2008a) while forgetting about spirituality and a person's individual dream. He reflected on materialism and the manipulation of original dreams by societal values (Coelho, 2008a) and referred to his original questions about God and the rightness of the Catholic orthodox belief system (Coelho, 2008a, p. 5) or contact with satanism (Coelho, 2008a, p. 332). Coelho's question, (a) how can God be described and how does a person relate to God, recurred during this life phase, as during his entire life span. Again, the question of how good and/or how evil a person is recurred and the response was kept open (Coelho, 2008a, p. 374). In "The winner stands alone" (Coelho, 2008a), he again referred to this question, which had already been dealt with in "The devil and Miss Prym" (Coelho, 2000).

In "Aleph" (Coelho, 2011) Coelho went through several stages, such as exploration, actuality and mutuality, adaptation, virtue and centrality, crisis and despair in terms of the clash of spiritual and religious values, and ego integration, meaning the integration of religious and spiritual values – of spiritual development before achieving a whole and healthy spiritual identity. He thereby aimed at (c) conceptualising humankind's place in the universe.

In "Aleph", Coelho (2011) referred to the mythical space, the sacred and the profane (Mihály, 2012). He was in a deep crisis of faith, a stagnation of his spiritual development and dissatisfaction with his spiritual growth (Purwandoyo & Kurnia, 2013). He felt that his spiritual development, as a major force in adult identity formation, needed to develop in terms of awareness of the self and others, engaging in connectedness with the divine, nature and humanity while defining new relationships with God, the community of believers and nature (Furqon & Mustofa, 2014), as a part of (e) contemplating the presence and the nature of meaning in life. Coelho's spiritual journey was based on the question of meaningfulness and the exploration of meaning of his spirituality by conducting identifications, exploration and experiments through magical and religious traditions to discover his personal spiritual path and identity (Furqon & Mustofa, 2014). The rituals provided by the RAM helped Coelho to feel a sense of belonging (Furqon & Mustofa, 2014). To clear his thoughts and to live through the process and crisis of his own faith, Coelho convinced his Russian publisher to take him on a promotion tour through Russia and Northern Eurasia.

In "Manuscript found in Accra" (2013a), Coelho explained that faith was an act of love for another person. Marani (2013) highlighted that Coelho managed to include several approaches to faith and belief in his book, referring to Khalil Gibran and even Osho, besides Christianity and the common spiritual and human values, which are not necessarily linked by religion. However, Coelho (2014b) was clear about the fact the God is in life and life is in God ((a) description and communication with God). Coelho explained in his documentary (Coelho, 2010b) that he writes

Table 7.8 Life task spirituality in Coelho's sixties

Life span	Life task spirituality with sub-categories				
	(a) Description and communication with God	(b) Practice of religion	(c) Conceptualisation of humankind's place	(d) Nature of immortality	(e) Contemplation of nature of meaning of life
8. The sixties (2007–2016)	x	x	x	x	x

Source: Researcher's own construction

from his soul – an immortal place deep inside him – which has helped him to understand himself better. He declared life as a journey (Coelho, 2010b, 3:43 min.) and was aware of the (d) (im)mortality of his soul, as well as of his soul: “There is darkness in my soul and ... I am learning how to live with it.” (Coelho, 2010b, 12:40 min.).

Coelho highlighted that each and every person needed to find out why and what a person lived for (Coelho, 2010b, 39:01 min.) and referred repeatedly to the search for the (e) contemplation of the presence and the nature of meaning in life. Coelho not only referred to an individual's meaning of life, but also to the collective and societal contribution (Coelho, 2010b, 10:40 min.). In “Aleph” (Coelho, 2011) the autobiographical account dealt with spiritual renewal and growth, with the importance of reconnecting with people, and with the meaningfulness of life that is established through reincarnation – creating meaning of life across lives (Purwandoyo & Kurnia, 2013). Coelho (2014e) related this meaningfulness to a passionate life approach (Table 7.8).

Impacting life forces:

Family Coelho lived in a very close relationship with Cristina and celebrated his sixtieth birthday with only her in France. Cristina was the most important person in his family.

Religion He celebrated his birthday twice: once on his birthday, once on St Joseph's day to honour this saint. His belief in saints was still highly important, as the RAM practices and Catholic mysticism were. He believed in common spiritual and human values that connect human beings across the world. He held onto the concept of being a magician and was connected to the divine through various rituals and nature.

Education Coelho educated himself in terms of personal growth, through reading, travelling, connecting and talking with people.

Community Coelho realised that he was surrounded by a huge internet community, by a huge fan club and that friends surrounded him, although he had never seen their faces (Coelho, 2014a). He realised the importance of his readership and a new social dimension.

Media Coelho used the new media and became one of the writers with the biggest internet followers and fan club on Twitter and Facebook in the world. He used the

media to promote his ideas and thoughts, his books and opinions on local or global events. In the preface to the book, "The winner stands alone" (Coelho, 2008a), Coelho criticised the societal trend of manipulation – which happens a lot through the media – and highlighted that people are manipulated by society to live their dreams.

Government In 2014, Brazil was the "guest of honour" on the Frankfurt book fair. The Brazilian government invited only 70 Brazilian authors to attend the book fair in October 2014. Coelho was angry about the favouritism of the government and unhappy with the choice of invited Brazilian authors (Deutsche Presse Agentur, 2014). He also commented on the German Bundestag (Tageblatt, 2014).

Business/Industry By 2014, Coelho's books were published in over 80 languages and "The alchemist" had been sold over 30 million times (Lühmann, 2014).

Global Events Coelho supported the political campaign of Hillary Clinton (Morais, 2009) in the US and wrote his book, "The winner stands alone" (Coelho, 2008a). In 2010 Coelho (2010b, 19:25 min.) saw his responsibility as a world-famous writer as commenting on what he observed in the world, on wars, and highlighted artists' and writers' responsibility to build bridges across cultures (Coelho, 2010b, 21:15 min.). Besides his political global activism, Coelho was a pioneer in violating authors' rights by putting his book texts online free of charge (Coelho, 2010b, 32:29 min.). He called his website Pirate Coelho and became a global pioneer in providing free access to online data and literature. At the Frankfurt book fair he fought for the rights of talented Brazilian writers to be recognised by the Brazilian government (Deutsche Presse Agentur, 2014).

7.3.1.9 Conclusion on the Life Task Spirituality

This conclusion provides an overview of the sub-categories of spirituality in the life of Paulo Coelho (Table 7.9).

During Coelho's childhood, he was mainly influenced by his parents' strong religious belief, communication with God and above all religious practice. During his teenage years, the question of meaningfulness became relevant and the question of immortality was faced in the context of becoming a writer. In terms of religion, Coelho became an atheist.

During his twenties, Coelho turned to Satan, who became his new God. He communicated with the devil and only at the end of the decade returned to his Christian faith. During this decade, occult and religious practices played a significant role in his life, while five out of six components of spirituality were addressed and showed a broadening of his individual spiritual approach to life.

During Coelho's thirties, his spirituality was mainly influenced by his new ways of communicating with God through Cristina, but also through the guidance of his master, J., and newly acquired RAM practices. Besides the strong focus on changes in communication with God, the data highlights the many different religious prac-

Table 7.9 Overview of life task spirituality with all sub-categories

Life span	Life task spirituality with sub-categories				
Periods in Paulo Coelho's development	(a) Description and communication with God	(b) Practice of religion	(c) Conceptualisation of humankind's place	(d) Nature of immortality	(e) Contemplation of nature of meaning of life
1. Coelho's early childhood (1947-1953)	x	x			
2. Childhood and schooldays (1953-1961)		x			x
3. The teenage years (1962-1966)	x	x	x	x	x
4. The twenties (1967-1976)	x	x		x	x
5. The thirties (1977-1986)	x	x	x	x	x
6. The forties (1987-1996)	x	x	x	x	x
7. The fifties (1997-2006)	x	x	x	x	x
8. The sixties (2007-2016)	x	x	x	x	x

Source: Researcher's own construction

tices Coelho learnt and fulfilled during this period. Both, communication and practices, were strongly influenced by the RAM practices, an old Catholic order.

Even during his forties, Coelho communicated with God mainly through the described magical experiences, such as apparitions and symbolic signs. Life, for Coelho, became a magical experience within itself and a miracle. The main change during this decade in terms of spirituality was the move away from the powerful, patriarchal and fearful God towards the spiritual God that loves. Coelho began to see the nature of God as having a male and a feminine side, but was still tortured by feelings of doubt. A new meaning was explored by the concept of reincarnation and the assumption that meaning in life is created across many lives. During this decade, Coelho integrated various cultural and spiritual approaches in his personal belief system, including work with the oracle, the seeing of apparitions and communication with God through saints.

During his fifties, Coelho differentiated between the God he got to know from the Jesuits, who was patriarchal, and the individualised, created God with whom he communicated. Coelho explored the feminine side of religion and the integration of various religious approaches in his concept of spirituality. In this decade he wrote and communicated about God and explored spirituality in depth more than in any other decade before. Coelho explored the various descriptions and ways of communication with God, he practised his religious rituals and explored humankind's place in the universe even more deeply. The personal question of the presence of meaning in life was explored in more detail in his writings and during his life-time.

During his sixties, Coelho deepened his approaches to spirituality by referring on deeper levels to the (e) contemplation of the presence and the nature of meaning in life, humankind's place and the description of and communication with God. Meaning in life seemed to be most important and this concept was extended by collective meaningfulness, which expanded individual meaningfulness in life explored in the decade before. The concept was deepened as well through the view of meaningfulness not only in one life, but across various lives and the concept or reincarnation. He emphasised his collective responsibility in terms of being a world-famous writer. Table 7.10 summarises the findings.

It can be concluded that particularly during the last two decades Coelho's intensity in dealing with components of spirituality, as presented by Mosak and Dreikurs (2000), increased. Particularly his thirties, forties, fifties and sixties were highly charged with spiritual development. The life forces presented and discussed supported him in this regard.

7.3.2 Life Task 2: Self-Direction

Self-direction is defined as described in Sect. 4.5.1.2. Findings regarding to self-direction in each of the identified life periods of Paulo Coelho will be described and discussed in this section.

Table 7.10 Life task spirituality

	Components of holistic wellness expressed through the life tasks
	Global events
Historical periods in the development of Paulo Coelho	Life forces (business/industry, media, government, community, family, religion, education)
	1. Spirituality
1. Coelho's early childhood (1947–1953)	Spirituality according to Mosak and Dreikurs (2000)
	a.) Description and communication with God (1) ^a
	b.) Practice of religion (1)
	Impacting life forces:
	Family
	Religion
	Education
	Community
	No information on impact of global events
2. Childhood and schooldays (1953–1961)	Spirituality according to Mosak and Dreikurs (2000)
	b.) Practice of religion (1)
	e.) Meaning in life (1)
	Impacting life forces:
	Family
	Religion
	Education
	Community
	Media
	No information on impact of global events
3. The teenage years (1962–1966)	Spirituality according to Mosak and Dreikurs (2000)
	a.) Description and communication with God (1)
	b.) Practice of religion (1)
	c.) Conceptualisation of humankind's place (1)
	d.) Nature of immortality (1)
	e.) Contemplation of the presence and nature of the meaning of his life (2)
	Impacting life forces:
	Family
	Religion
	Education
	Community
	Media
	Business/industry
No information on impact of global events	

(continued)

Table 7.10 (continued)

Historical periods in the development of Paulo Coelho	Components of holistic wellness expressed through the life tasks	
	Global events	
	Life forces (business/industry, media, government, community, family, religion, education)	
4. The twenties (1967–1976)	1. Spirituality	
	Spirituality according to Mosak and Dreikurs (2000)	
	a.) Description and communication with God (1)	
	b.) Practice of religion (2)	
	d.) Nature of immortality (1)	
	e.) Contemplation of the presence and nature of the meaning of his life (1)	
	Impacting life forces:	
	Family	
	Religion	
	Education	
	Community	
	Media	
	Government	
	Business/industry	
	Not much information on the impact of global events is provided on Coelho's life. However, more information on Coelho's global experience is given in terms of the impact of his global travels (US and Europe) on him personally.	
	5. The thirties (1977–1986)	Spirituality according to Mosak and Dreikurs (2000)
		a.) Description and communication with God (3)
b.) Practice of religion (4)		
c.) Conceptualisation of humankind's place (1)		
d.) Nature of immortality (1)		
e.) Contemplation of the presence and nature of the meaning of his life (1)		
Impacting life forces:		
Family		
Religion		
Education		
Community		
Media		
Government		
Business/industry		
The historical global event of the Second World War touched Coelho and his travels in various countries in terms of his global experiences.		

(continued)

Table 7.10 (continued)

	Components of holistic wellness expressed through the life tasks
	Global events
Historical periods in the development of Paulo Coelho	Life forces (business/industry, media, government, community, family, religion, education)
	1. Spirituality
6. The forties (1987–1996)	Spirituality according to Mosak and Dreikurs (2000)
	a.) Description and communication with God (3)
	b.) Practice of religion (3)
	c.) Conceptualisation of humankind's place (3)
	d.) Nature of immortality (2)
	e.) Contemplation of the presence and nature of the meaning of his life (3)
	Impacting life forces:
	Family
	Religion
	Education
	Community
	Media
	Business/industry
	No global experiences and events are described that had an impact on Coelho, except his personal journeys and experiences.
7. The fifties (1997–2006)	Spirituality according to Mosak and Dreikurs (2000)
	a.) Description and communication with God (4)
	b.) Practice of religion (3)
	c.) Conceptualisation of humankind's place (4)
	d.) Nature of immortality (1)
	e.) Contemplation of the presence and nature of the meaning of his life (2)
	Impacting life forces:
	Family
	Religion
	Education
	Community
	Media
	Business/industry
	From 2001 onwards Coelho became increasingly involved in international high society, met with politicians and was invited to the economic forum in Davos. He felt his responsibility as a writer to contribute to global peace and give his opinions on world movements and global events.

(continued)

Table 7.10 (continued)

	Components of holistic wellness expressed through the life tasks
	Global events
Historical periods in the development of Paulo Coelho	Life forces (business/industry, media, government, community, family, religion, education)
	1. Spirituality
8. The sixties (2007–2016)	Spirituality according to Mosak and Dreikurs (2000)
	a.) Description and communication with God (2)
	b.) Practice of religion (1)
	c.) Conceptualisation of humankind’s place (2)
	d.) Nature of immortality (1)
	e.) Contemplation of the presence and nature of the meaning of his life (2)
	Impacting life forces:
	Family
	Religion
	Education
	Community
	Media
	Government
	Business/industry
	Coelho got more involved in global events, such as political campaigns, bridging gaps across cultures, religions and spiritual values, promoted global piracy of his texts and the rights of talented writers in Brazil. He felt that he had a global responsibility, being a world-famous writer, to reach out to global events and affairs.

Source: Researcher’s own construction

^aThe numbers in brackets behind the life tasks provide the frequency with which this concept was emphasised in the particular period of life

7.3.2.1 Paulo Coelho’s Early Childhood (1947–1953)

With regard to self-direction, findings during the period of early childhood are very limited. During this stage of his life, self-direction towards long-term goals was not as important as in later phases of Coelho’s life.

In his early childhood, Coelho displayed certain abilities, such as (e) problem-solving and creativity, as well as a strong (f) sense of humour: When he was caught by his mother being naughty, he responded that the batteries of his guardian angel had run out and that this was why he was being naughty (Morais, 2009, p. 39). This response of a 3-year-old indicates a creative way of resolving his problem of being caught out, even using his sense of humour (Table 7.11).

No information could be found on the other ten dimensions, namely: (a) sense of worth, (b) sense of control, (c) realistic beliefs, (d) emotional awareness and coping, (g) nutrition, (h) exercise, (i) self-care, (j) stress management, (k) gender identity, and (l) cultural identity (Myers & Sweeney, 2008).

Table 7.11 Self-direction in early childhood

Life span	Life task self-direction with sub-categories											
Periods in life	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(g)	(h)	(i)	(j)	(k)	(l)
1. Year 1–6	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e) x	(f) x	(g)	(h)	(i)	(j)	(k)	(l)

Source: Researcher’s own construction

Life forces that had a significant impact in terms of self-direction in this period of his life were the following:

Family Coelho gained a sense of worth through his parents’ love and care. However, he must have experienced a loss of control during his complicated birth, which he and his mother hardly survived (Morais, 2009). Through his parents, Coelho learnt a sense of control in terms of safety, rules, regulations and restrictions. In parallel, being with his mother for the first 4 years of his life must have had a positive impact on his self-worth and might have influenced his emotional awareness and coping.

Religion Coelho learnt early in his life that the life that had been given to him was in the hands of St Joseph who had saved him during his birth, as well as in the hands of God, to whom he prayed when he was only 3 years old.

Education Coelho visited middle and upper class educational institutions, which influenced his development in terms of cultural identity and gender identity.

Community Coelho learnt that within his gated community he lived in a safe and controllable environment (Morais, 2009). He only learnt that there was a world beyond the security complex when he started attending kindergarten at the age of four. At this age, Coelho must have experienced a change in belief in realities. A feeling of belonging to a community within a security complex must have contributed to the development of a strong cultural identity, since he could now compare his estate world and the world outside.

No information on the life tasks of education, government or business/industry could be found in the data. There were also no data to be found on global events.

7.3.2.2 Childhood and Schooldays (1953–1961)

As with regard to early childhood, data on self-direction during this period of his childhood and schooldays are limited. During this time of his life, Coelho went to a primary school that was supposed to lead him later on to one of the best and traditional schools in Rio (Morais, 2009). In this school he learnt the concept of (a) self-worth by respecting himself and others, as well as the concept of working hard (Morais, 2009), which can be viewed in the light of learning the concept of (b) self-control. By becoming the best storyteller in the security estate, Coelho demonstrated his e) problem-solving and creativity. It did not take long for him to become the leader of a “secret organisation” together with his friends and extended family members. During this time, Coelho established his gender identity (being the leader

of a group of boys), as well as cultural identity (being the leader of a certain kind of boy within the middle class security complex).

Coelho participated in his first writing competition, but lacked the confidence to vote for his own entry. However, he gained confidence and (a) self-worth when he became the winner of the competition (Morais, 2009). Since Coelho failed the entry examinations for the established boy's school St Ignatius, he was sent to a camp to (h) exercise on a daily basis – which he hated – and enjoyed the advantage of private school lessons. However, during the time at the camp he must have experienced (b) a sense of control in terms of working hard and reaching goals. Nevertheless, he failed (Morais, 2009) the entry examinations again and experienced a (a) lack of self-worth and (b) lack of control due to his failure. Only after having studied for a whole year was he accepted at St Ignatius after passing the entry examinations. However, since his career was not flourishing and his marks were very low, he must have experienced (a) lack of self-worth and (b) lack of control during most of his schooldays. Only the reading of books and novels, as well as adventure stories (Morais, 2009), must have helped him to stimulate his (e) problem-solving and creative capacities, as well as his (f) sense of humour. He shaped his (c) realistic beliefs through his books – which might not always have been realistic during his childhood. The reading helped him to create (e) emotional awareness and coping and became a source of (j) managing stress. The knowledge he gained from his books (Morais, 2009, p. 42) helped him to compensate for his physical weaknesses and his respiratory problems, strengthen his (a) self-worth and his worth in the eyes of his friends who were physically much stronger (Morais, 2009, p. 51). From the age of 12 years onwards, Coelho started to write a diary and recorded himself on a tape recorder (Morais, 2009). He described himself, spoke about himself, his emotions, actions and his personality in a sensitive way (Morais, 2009). This development showed components of self-direction with regard to (a) self-worth – through the writing of the diary and the recordings he recognised his worth as a person. The writing also made it possible for him to develop his (d) emotional awareness and coping, particularly since he talked about his emotions. He discussed daily issues and actions in his diary and in his recordings and used the writing as a (e) problem-solving approach, as well as an act of creative self-expression. Another sub-task that features in Coelho's life is – (i) self-care. According to his diary, Coelho just cared about himself and used it as a (j) stress management tool. He explored and externalised his emotions. Coelho was aware of his identity in terms of gender; he wrote about his first girlfriend (Morais, 2009, p. 53) and thereby related to his (k) gender identity. His cultural identity developed in terms of his (l) cultural background from a religious middle class family as well as with regard to the religious upper class schools he attended.

The data during this period do not relate to the sub-tasks of (g) nutrition. They do not relate either to the impact of global events on Paulo Coelho's life during this period (Table 7.12).

Life forces that had a significant impact in terms of self-direction in this period of his life were the following:

Table 7.12 Self-direction in childhood and schooldays

Life span	Life task self-direction with sub-categories											
Periods in life	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(g)	(h)	(i)	(j)	(k)	(l)
2. Year 6–12	(a) x	(b) x	(c) x	(d) x	(e) x	(f) x	(g)	(h) x	(i) x	(j)	(k) x	(l) x

Source: Researcher's own construction

Family With regard to self-direction, Coelho was in very good and tight contact with his parents who supported him and kept him safe in the security estate. He was also in very close friendship with his extended family members, such as Paulo Araripe, who contributed positively to his self-worth. However, his sense of worth was decreased by his failure at school. His parents also punished him for failing his entry examination to the secondary school and he had to attend a preparation camp, which seemed to have created a split between him and his parents that must have influenced his sense of worth and his sense of control.

Religion Coelho attended religious schools and was brought up with the values of these religious traditions, such as hard work and respecting others (Morais, 2009). Through the religion taught in school and at home, he must have developed a sense of worth and a sense of control, problem-solving abilities, for example through praying, self-care and stress management options.

Education Coelho did very well during his first 2 years in primary school, but then preferred reading books and telling stories and his marks dropped. Coelho won the first writing competition he entered in primary school, although he lacked self-confidence and self-worth regarding his writing abilities (Morais, 2009). He was surprised when he won the competition; however, the winning contributed to building his self-worth. When he applied for admission to the new secondary school, Coelho failed the entry test. His struggle to be successful in school and to adhere to his parents' wishes must have affected Coelho's self-worth and sense of control, as well as his emotions and his coping.

Community In his security complex Coelho experienced a sense of community, particularly with his friends from the secret organisation. Being a leader of a self-created organisation, he built his sense of worth and expressed his creative impulses. By being responsible for playing tricks in the community (Morais, 2009), Coelho expressed his sense of humour, which contributed to his self-direction. He created a sense of worth by being accepted as the best storyteller in the estate (Morais, 2009). He was accepted by his friends in the community, not because of his physical appearance, but because of his broad knowledge and his ability to write, which must have had a positive impact on his notion of self-worth, his sense of control, his emotional well-being and his creativity. Through his ability to write and tell stories, as well as his broad knowledge, Coelho must have been able to manage the stress at school and with his parents. Through his friendships and dating his first girlfriends at the age of 12, Coelho started to develop his gender and cultural identity.

Media Coelho was only interested in reading novels and adventure stories. The reading provided him with self-worth and a sense of control; it gave space for his creativity and helped him to cope with the stress at school and at home. Reading was a space where Coelho cared about himself and nobody else.

No information on the life tasks of government and business/industry could be found in the data. There were also no data to be found on global events.

7.3.2.3 The Teenage Years (1962–1966)

The teenage years were for Coelho a struggle between following his parents' wishes and his own desires. This struggle had an impact on his (a) sense of worth, (b) sense of control, (c) realistic beliefs, but also on (d) emotional awareness and coping, (e) problem-solving and creativity, (f) sense of humour, (i) self-care, (j) stress management, (k) gender identity, and (l) cultural identity (Myers & Sweeney, 2008).

Coelho struggled to be accepted at the school his parents wanted him to attend and also had problems to manage the science stream instead of attending the arts stream, his a) sense of worth as well as b.) his sense of control decreased in terms of his school achievement. Both of these dimensions of the life task self-direction were affected negatively by his mother trying to discourage him from becoming a writer (Morais, 2009). However, Coelho was dedicated and harboured a strong belief that the success of a writer was bound to his effort and his dedication. Already at this stage, Coelho followed his c.) realistic belief, although his parents always discouraged him and explained to him that his belief and desire to become a successful writer was not realistic. Coelho (2006) stood his ground with regard to keeping his idea to become a writer and gained a little sense of self-control from holding onto his belief against all odds. He also displayed his (e) problem-solving abilities and creativity, as well as his f.) sense of humour when writing down his ideas on what and who a writer was (Coelho, 2006, p. 11). Probably Coelho's (a) self-worth was also affected by the fact that his mother took him to a nerve specialist for a check-up to find out what was wrong with him and why he did not succeed in school.

Furthermore, Coelho was emotionally shaken by his insecurity about his faith and belief in God, by feelings of hate and guilt for the priests at school. He experienced a great (b) loss of sense control about his belief from his childhood days and experienced various emotions and stress with regard to losing his faith. However, he became (d) emotionally aware and finally coped with the experiences.

On another level his (a) self-worth was challenged when his family moved to Gávia and he lost his unchallenged leadership position in the estate, which he had enjoyed. In the new home, Coelho was restricted from going out by his father and he could only manage his new life in Gávia through reading "recreational books" (Morais, 2009, p. 61) which helped him to manage his (d) emotions and coping and which created a (e) problem-solving base and a space for creativity. One year later, he wrote his first theatre play, which contributed to the development of his self-direction in terms of (a) self-worth, (b) self-control, (c) his realistic beliefs, (d) his emotions and coping with the situation, (e) solving his problems and be creative, as

well as his (f) sense of humour. While reading and writing he cared about himself (i), he managed his stress (j) and he developed his gender and cultural identity (k, l).

In addition, the creation of the literary club Rota 15, the writing of his first poetry pieces and his poems, which he submitted to poem competitions, contributed to strengthening his self-direction through the above-mentioned tasks. However, he experienced loss of self-direction, including self-worth (a) development and self-control (b), after having been disrespected by a newspaper editor (Morais, 2009) and it took a while for him to regain belief in his vocation in life: to become a writer.

During the same period, his self-worth and control were challenged by the fact that he had to change to a new school in 1964. His self-belief was challenged, but it did not take long for him to feel happy about the school change. Although he still had to study in the science stream, the school was more liberal and he joined various groups in the school. He had space to display his creativity (e), but he still did not reach the school goals and his father punished him by sending him to work at the docks (Morais, 2009). His self-direction was significantly influenced by failing another school year at Andrews College and by not being accepted as an applicant by the American Field Service. Coelho interpreted the blame and embarrassment about failing in school and at the service as "being too intellectual for America" and thus created a new sense of self-worth (a) and belief, which positioned him as an intellectual, leading to (c) unrealistic beliefs.

Another very significant event was the loss of his girlfriend, Marciá. After she had left him, Paulo sank into a deep depression and the visit that was supposed to help him overcome the loss ended in the disaster in which he almost killed a young boy while driving a car. Coelho's self-direction was strongly affected by these incidents and he only survived the punishments by holding onto his dream of becoming a writer, which increased his self-direction and particularly his feelings of self-worth (a), self-control (b), coping (d), problem-solving and creativity (e) and stress-management (j). A new world opened to Coelho, which supported his self-directive life task when he got to know the club of intellectuals, "Paissandu generation", and started to work at a small newspaper.

During his teenage years Coelho's parents sent him to a mental hospital twice, which had a seriously negative impact on his life task of self-direction, his self-worth (a), and his self-control (b), which had been taken away from him to a large extent. He was not sure about the reality of his beliefs (c), and how he coped with the situation. During the hospitalisation he felt suicidal (Morais, 2009), he could not care about himself and his identity was shaken. After the first hospitalisation he had to leave school and regained his self-direction mainly by taking part in his first theatre play and joining the world of creativity (e) and theatre acting, following his theatrical vocation.

During his second admission to the mental hospital Coelho stuck to his (c) realistic belief that he was not insane (Morais, 2009), but only punished by his parents for following his dream. However, he felt strongly restricted during the time in hospital with regard to self-direction and his (a) self-worth and (b) sense of control were affected strongly by the captivity and the electroshocks applied to him. The electroshock therapy had a strong influence on Coelho's gender and cultural identity (k, l) and even when he was back at home after the second time in hospital, Coelho

Table 7.13 Self-direction in teenage years

Life span	Life task self-direction with sub-categories											
Periods in life	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(g)	(h)	(i)	(j)	(k)	(l)
3. Year 13–19	(a) x	(b) x	(c) x	(d) x	(e) x	(f) x	(g)	(h)	(i) x	(j) x	(k) x	(l) x

Source: Researcher’s own construction

felt that he had lost his (c) realistic belief – he felt he was really insane. It was his grandfather who helped him to overcome the apathetic state (Arias, 2001) and a new theatre production helped him to regain his self-direction in terms of (d) coping and (e) creativity, (a) self-worth and (b) self-control. However, after the success of the play, Coelho was back in depression and developed “Stockholm syndrome” (Morais, 2009) that brought about emotional ties to the doctor who had applied electroshock therapy. This again led to another level of loss of self-direction.

The data on this period do not reveal information on the sub-tasks of (g) nutrition and (h) exercise.

They do not relate to the impact of global events on Paulo Coelho’s life during this period (Table 7.13).

During Coelho’s teenage years, the following life forces were important:

Family The family had a huge influence on Coelho’s self-direction during his teenage years. They opposed his wish to become a writer and created loss of self-worth and self-control by directing him into a certain school and the science stream, all of it the opposite of what Coelho desired. His family became less important when he found new friends, got a job at a small newspaper and joined a club of intellectuals. His parents had a very strong and partly negative influence on Coelho by sending him to a mental hospital twice. However, his grandfather tried to help him to gain independence from his parents and self-direction by offering him the use of his apartment in downtown Rio.

Religion During his teenage years, Coelho started to struggle with his religion and his faith. Key issues were the death of his grandfather and his feelings of loneliness and guilt. His faith turned from very strong to very weak in a short time and although he had mainly given up his childhood faith during his teenage years, there was still a little left (Morais, 2009).

Education Coelho’s educational path was not self-directed and filled with events, which might have decreased his self-worth and his sense of control. Most of his educational career during his teenage years was planned and created by his parents’ wishes, which did not contribute to his self-direction, but rather seemed to be opposed to it. He started to hate the faith and religion created by the priests at school while fearing the punishment of God. The move to Andrews College was a good move for Coelho and was enhanced by new school life components. However, he did not satisfy the academic standards at the school and finally gained his matric at a school at which his parents literally bought it for him (Morais, 2009).

Community With the move to the new house, Coelho lost his community at the security estate in which he had grown up, which had contributed positively to his

self-direction. However, he built up a new community, the literary club, Rota 15, he soon felt at home in the new school, Andrews College, and he joined a theatre group called Taca, political discussions, film study groups and a drama group. At the age of 17, he worked at a small newspaper and found new friends at the club of intellectuals, which drove him further away from school. The community of the theatre actors and the intellectuals became very important to him, since they shared common values and interests.

Media Coelho started to become interested in theatre plays and read as many books as he could to gain a higher degree of self-understanding and comprehension of societal issues. These media supported Coelho in maintaining a sense of worth, a sense of control, understand the world better and increase realistic beliefs, find coping strategies within himself and others and solve his problems with his parents and the school. He used the media as a creative space, to live his creativity and to engage in his sense of humour, to manage his stress with his parents and the school, as well as the struggle with his faith, and to develop a male and cultural identity.

No information on the life tasks of government and business/industry could be found in the data. There were also no data to be found on global events.

7.3.2.4 The Twenties (1967–1976)

The decade of the twenties started with melancholy, depression and rage and Coelho was d.) emotionally very aware, but could not cope with his feelings. He was taken back to the mental hospital, which had a negative impact on his (a) sense of worth, (b) sense of control, (c) his realistic beliefs, (d) emotional awareness and coping, (e) problem-solving and creativity, (f) sense of humour, (i) self-care, (j) stress management, (k) gender identity and (l) cultural identity (Myers & Sweeney, 2008).

However, this time Coelho decided that this would be his last stay in the hospital and he regained (b) self-control and self-direction in general through the idea of one day publishing a book about his experiences in the mental hospital. After a few more emotional disruptions, Coelho decided to face his madness and grow up, to be (d) emotionally aware and coping and to (e) resolve the problem. He aimed at (j) managing his stress again through theatre acting; however, his aim of being self-directed had not been fulfilled yet, because he wanted to become a famous writer.

In the 1970s Coelho felt more (b) self-controlled than ever before, because he was not under the control of his parents anymore. Witchcraft provided him with a feeling of (b) self-control and of being able to influence his success as a writer. His success in the theatre play and shortly afterwards in the music industry as a lyricist and executive, increased his self-direction in terms of (s) sense of self-worth, (b) sense of self-control, (c) his realistic beliefs, (d) emotions and coping with them, (d) problem-solving and creativity. He took increased care of himself through his success and income ((i) self-care), overcame his disturbing experiences of the kidnapping and managed his j.) stress levels. During his twenties, Coelho married twice (Morais, 2009) and developed his gender and cultural identity (k, l) through the relationships (Table 7.14).

Table 7.14 Self-direction in twenties

Life span	Life task self-direction with sub-categories											
Periods in life	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(g)	(h)	(i)	(j)	(k)	(l)
4. Year 20–29	(a) x	(b) x	(c) x	(d) x	(e) x	(f) x	(g)	(h)	(i) x	(j) x	(k) x	(l) x

Source: Researcher's own construction

During his twenties, all the life forces had an impact on the life of Paulo Coelho:

Family Coelho felt freed from the control of his parents, was self-sustained through his theatre acting, took drugs and went on a trip to the US with his grandparents. When his grandfather died in 1971, Coelho was devastated, because he felt a deeper relationship to him than with his father. In 1972 he left for a trip to Europe with his mother and grandmother.

Religion Coelho was introduced to the occult, in which he believed. It gave him strength, (a) a sense of self-worth, (b) self-control and provided a (d) coping strategy and a way to (j) manage stress and (i) care about himself. He made a pact with the devil at the age of 25 (Morais, 2009). He joined a satanic sect and only when he experienced the introductory ritual, and felt the (b) loss of self-control, he experienced his childish religious beliefs again, left the sect and turned to the Lord. At the end of this decade, Coelho celebrated Thanksgiving in the church St Joseph and honoured the patron of his birth (Morais, 2009).

Education Coelho started studying law according to his father's wish, but withdrew after 1 year.

Community Coelho earned money through his theatre acting and became a member of the Brazilian academy of writers (Morais, 2009). He was adopted into the community of satanism and witchcraft and became obsessed with it. He married Gisa, his first wife, in 1971 and met Raul Seixtas, became part of the music industry and combined his musical career with the occult. He divorced Gisa and married Cissa in 1976. This second marriage lasted for about 1 year.

Media Coelho was successful with his song texts and published his first own book on theatre in education.

Government: Coelho went on a trip to the US to flee from the suppressing Brazilian dictatorship. Later in 1974 he was kidnapped by a paramilitary group and tortured together with his wife, Gisa, who divorced him shortly after the incident. This incident affected him for a long time and he suffered emotionally, experienced panic attacks, (a), problems with sense of worth and (b) sense of control and was (d) emotionally very aware of his negative feelings.

Business/Industry Coelho was influenced during this decade by the newspaper industry, by the theatre industry, by the publishing industry as well as by the music industry, which was one of the biggest influences in terms of business and industry. In 1974 he was hired as a consultant in the music industry and was financially

successful. For a few years, Coelho worked in a double career as a lyricist and as an executive at Philips, which influenced his growing (a) self-worth, (b) self-control, and (c) increase in emotional awareness and coping mechanism.

The data during this period do not reveal information on the sub-tasks of (g) nutrition and (h) exercise.

They also do not relate to the impact of global events on Paulo Coelho's life during this period.

7.3.2.5 The Thirties (1977–1986)

The 12 dimension of the life task are: (a) sense of worth, (b) sense of control, (c) realistic beliefs, (d) emotional awareness and coping, (e) problem-solving and creativity, (f) sense of humour, (g) nutrition, (h) exercise, (i) self-care, (j) stress management, (k) gender identity, and (l) cultural identity (Myers & Sweeney, 2008).

During his thirties, Coelho experienced a newly formed (a) sense of worth founded on multiple changes in his life: he moved to London with his second wife, Cissa, and only 1 year later, in 1978, became a famous writer for all important Brazilian singers (Morais, 2009). On a spiritual note, Coelho made contact with Nhá Chica (Coelho, 2006) and he believed that this saint had saved him from a deadly accident. He was confident that he was supported by Nhá Chica and promised her that if he was successful as a writer he would return to her place to thank her. His (a) sense of worth increased again after he met Cristina in 1979; she became his lifelong partner. Cristina believed strongly and she was a passionate Christian. She helped Coelho overcome his satanic belief and he experienced a strong revitalisation of his belief (Arias, 2001). Through the new strength of Christian belief, Coelho's (a) self-worth increased.

It appears as if Coelho's (b) sense of control increased as well while he was attending TV shows and travelling. Through his relationship with Cristina and their common goals to promote their artistic work, Coelho gained a (a) sense of worth, (b) sense of control, (c) realistic beliefs about himself, his future and his success, as well as (d) emotional awareness and coping skills. Cristina seemed to become an immediate highly stabilising factor through their relationship and common interests.

Coelho experienced a key situation while visiting the concentration camp in Dachau (Arias, 2001): He was self-assured, self-confident and (c) experienced a strong realistic belief in becoming a writer (Arias, 2001). He was highly (d) aware of his emotions and his abilities to cope with his desire to become a writer and with his feelings of confidence. However, he kept struggling with deep-rooted fears, feelings of solitude and torture (Arias, 2001). He did not lead an emotionally stable life, but experienced the strongest feelings of confidence and strongest doubts and the change between these emotional states, of which he was well aware (d).

Coelho experienced another key situation in 1982 in Amsterdam (Arias, 2001) when he got to know Jean, who from then onwards became his spiritual master. Coelho started a tremendous journal on his personal spiritual path and was guided

by Jean, who was a master of RAM practices, an old Christian mystic belief. The RAM practices (e) functioned well for Coelho as part of increasing his (a) sense of self-worth, his (b) sense of self-control, as well as his (d) problem-solving and creativity. Through the RAM practices Coelho learnt (i) self-care and (j) practices to improve his stress management skills. However, the RAM practices also had an impact on a different level: they affected his (k) gender identity, particularly through the fact that the RAM practices are known as the “feminine way”, aiming at revealing the feminine side of Coelho's personality, as well as of his idea of God (Arias, 2001). He therefore transformed his (k) gender identity towards the inclusion of the feminine side of God and humankind. He failed in the last and final ritual to become a master of RAM in 1986 and was sent by his master on a spiritual journey to Spain to walk the Road to Santiago. Coelho was devastated by the failure, but carried on and finally became a master of RAM, which lifted his (a) sense of worth and his (b) sense of control. The realisation that he was not yet an established writer drew Coelho into depression until he found a pigeon feather, which he interpreted as a sign of God to start writing. He immersed himself in (e) a phase of problem-solving and creativity and wrote his bestseller, “The pilgrimage” (1987), which contributed to creating his identity as an established writer in terms of his (k) gender and (l) cultural identity. Coelho increased his (a) sense of worth, and (b) sense of control, and he applied his (c) realistic beliefs to becoming a successful writer. From the start of his success as a writer, Coelho increased his (i) self-care and turned his success into the (c) belief that spirituality was the future path for humanity. He was able to use his (e) problem-solving and creativity and promoted his personal spiritual journey together with mysticism around his personal and cultural identity (l) as a magus. He turned into a master, a warrior of light, a new spiritual adventurer, and an enthusiast (Arias, 2001), a seeker of spirituality and the infinite (Arias, 2001) and thereby set free his ability to (e) resolve problems and become increasingly creative, be spiritual (i) self-caring, and (j) to manage his stress and (d) emotional awareness.

The data during this period do not reveal information on the sub-tasks of (f) sense of humour, (g) nutrition and (h) exercise.

They also do not relate to the impact of global events on Paulo Coelho's life during this period (Table 7.15).

Impacting life forces:

Family Coelho separated from his second wife. Cissa, and shortly afterwards got into a lifelong partnership with Cristina. In 1980 he celebrated and blessed his partnership with Cristina in agreement with his parents. However, the couple did not get married officially.

Religion Coelho moved away from his satanic belief and was reintroduced to Christianity through Cristina, his lifelong partner, who followed a strong Christian belief (Arias, 2001; Morais, 2009). During this time, Coelho returned to the belief in saints to whom he talked (such as Nhá Chita, the infant Jesus of Prague, St Theresa) and to whom he made promises in case he ever became a famous writer. This showed that his ties with the Catholic interpretation of saints – as protectors

Table 7.15 Self-direction in thirties

Life span	Life task self-direction with sub-categories											
Periods in life	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(g)	(h)	(i)	(j)	(k)	(l)
5. Year 30–39	(a) x	(b) x	(c) x	(d) x	(e) x	(f)	(g)	(h)	(i) x	(j) x	(k) x	(l) x

Source: Researcher’s own construction

and caregivers – were strongly rooted in his belief. In 1982 he became a student of Jean, a master of RAM practices. His new religious and spiritual faith gave Coelho strength on his spiritual path. However, at the last minute, after 4 years of practice, he failed to become a master of RAM practices in 1986 (Morais, 2009). He was sent on another long, spiritual journey, a spiritual pilgrimage on the Road to Santiago de Compostela, which became his key to spiritual awakening. He introduced himself as a magus publicly in TV shows and interviews (Morais, 2009). His spiritual awakening was connected to his awakening as a writer, his creative potential, his abilities of stress management and self-care. This process became the foundation of his self-worth, as well as of his sense of control and spiritual awakening.

Community After having left the community of the satanists, Coelho was reintroduced to Christianity by Cristina. From 1982 onwards he was introduced to RAM practices and became a disciple of a RAM master, called Jean. RAM became his primary community of belonging.

Media In 1978 Coelho was invited to TV interviews. In 1982, he published his first book, wrote poems and anthologies and gave interviews.

In terms of impacting life forces, Coelho’s family of origin did not seem to play a role in his life anymore, except for the blessing of his relationship with Cristina. However, Cristina became Coelho’s contemporary family with strong family ties. The life forces of education, government, business and industry did not play a role, according to the data used during this period of his life.

7.3.2.6 The Forties (1987–1996)

Coelho and Cristina employed Monica as a promoter of their work in Brazil in 1987 and also promoted themselves through leaflets (Morais, 2009). Coelho was (e) very creative and employed creative methods of promotion, which helped him to be invited to TV shows and gain publicity. Besides these promotion campaigns Coelho used his image as a “magician” to catch people’s interest (Morais, 2009). The combination of self-promotion, professional promotion by his agent and the building of his image as a spiritual master and magician brought him the publicity and interest he wanted and instantly built up his (k) cultural identity as a Brazilian writer and mystic. These promotion strategies showed a high degree of self-direction, particularly with regard to Coelho’s ability to (e) resolve problems and show creativity. The success of the promotion also had an impact on his (a) self-worth and his personal growth, as well as on his (b) sense of control. Coelho became more self-assured and

his realistic beliefs of becoming a famous writer, in combination with his (e) problem-solving skills and his creative ways of employing creative marketing strategies, helped him to (j) manage his stress of the previous years about not having become a famous writer yet. Some promotion packages, such as the “mystery travel project”, showed Coelho’s (e) problem-solving and creativity in promotion strategies. Although this project failed, Coelho was not discouraged and continued promoting himself. This attitude showed a high degree of (i) self-care. Finally, it was the promotion of him as a magus and a rain-maker that brought him a lot of publicity (Morais, 2009). This was connected to his growing (a) sense of worth, (b) sense of control, (c) development of realistic beliefs about him becoming a famous writer, (d) ability to work with his emotions and his coping strategies. However, these promoting strategies also showed a (f) sense of humour: He was prepared to challenge the world with his c) personal realistic beliefs and did not take himself too seriously. His ability to (i) care about himself and for his own needs, to (j) manage the stress of establishing a professional career as a writer and of overcoming his failures of the past decades helped him during his forties to promote himself.

The publication of “The pilgrimage” in 1987 served Coelho as a highly successful start to becoming a writer. In the book he describes in an autobiographical way his travelling experiences on the Road to Santiago, his experiences, his feelings and thoughts and particularly his personal spiritual development throughout the trip (Coelho, 2003a). This autobiographical stance shows Coelho’s personal growth during the trip in terms of a growing (a) sense of worth, (b) sense of control, (c) new, as well as realistic beliefs, (d) emotional awareness and coping in terms of intuition and new positive thinking strategies (Coelho, 2003a), (e) problem-solving and creativity, and (f) sense of humour. It gives a new idea of the person Paulo Coelho who uses the journey as a physical, mental and spiritual (h) exercise during which he just applies (i) self-care and learns to (j) manage his personal stress in a new way. He also describes his transformation in terms of his (k) gender and (l) cultural identity. A comprehensive analysis of “The pilgrimage” will be provided in Sect. 8.3.

Shortly afterwards, on a trip to Cairo, Coelho saw an apparition in the Egyptian desert and was inspired to write the book, “The alchemist” (Morais, 2009). Coelho’s (a) self-worth increased, as he saw himself as a writer and as a catalyst for the experiences of others (Arias, 2001). His self-worth was again boosted by his book, “The pilgrimage”, being on the bestselling lists in Brazil. However, he experienced huge disappointment when his work was not awarded the prize of the Ministry of Education and he considered stopping to write (Morais, 2009). Coelho’s ups and downs and reactions to failure and disappointment were highly emotional and showed lack of stability concerning his (a) self-worth, as well as with regard to his (b) sense of control. It seems as if, when he experienced disappointment and failure, Coelho lost his (c) strength of realistic belief, not necessarily his (d) emotional awareness, but his ability to cope with challenges. He did not manage failure well (j) in terms of stress management. However, Coelho recovered from his disappointment and referred to new (d) strategies of coping by consulting the I-Ching on how to sell his new book. He used an (e) exotic problem-solving approach, which was at the same time highly creative by consulting the I-Ching. At the same time, consult-

ing the oracle was connected to high insecurity and thereby to lack of (a) self-worth and (b) sense of self-control, because Coelho gave all of the control into the hands of the oracle. However, it made it possible for him to (j) manage his stress and sell the book in 1988. With the experiences of his first success as a writer, Coelho gained (a) self-worth and self-confidence, focused on a strong market strategy and developed marketing ideas that were based on his (c) re-established realistic beliefs of becoming a world-famous author, (d) his emotional awareness and coping, (e) and his problem-solving abilities and creativity. All of these dimensions of the life task of self-direction made Coelho move to a new publisher in 1989. This strategic move, together with the movement of his agent, Monica, to Spain to promote Coelho's work in Europe, placed his creative work on bestselling lists in various countries and he became a successful internationally recognised writer.

During 1988 and 1989, Coelho went on two important trips that were suggested by his master, Jean. He spent 40 days in the Mojave Desert in California for meditation practices and exercises of St Ignatius Loyola (Morais, 2009), which led to writing the book, "The Valkyries". In 1989 Coelho travelled the Road to Rome and met a woman at a "ritual of fire" who inspired him to write the book "Brida".

The trips in both 1988 and 1989 installed new (a) self-worth in Coelho, as well as (b) self-control, (c) realistic beliefs, (d) new emotional awareness and coping strategies, (e) problem-solving skills and creativity. Coelho increased all of these dimensions of self-direction through his travels and through his inspiration to write books based on his personal experiences of his trips and journeys, which are all based on spiritual contemplation and exercises. Coelho used his books to recreate himself as a person with (k) gender and (j) cultural identities. He mentioned that he himself is all the characters in his books (Arias, 2001).

However, the core themes of his books changed. In "The pilgrimage": Coelho wrote about his dream and the fulfilment of his dream (Coelho, 2003a), while in "The alchemist" he dealt with the familiarisation of a person with his "personal legend" which dealt with the realisation of a person's destiny and obligation (Coelho, 2002b, p. 30). In "The alchemist", Coelho (2002b, pp. 23–24) described his innovative and powerful new belief that became a (c) realistic belief that "Whoever you are, or whatever it is that you do, when you want something, all the universe conspires in helping you to achieve it." He believed that the universe was the reflection of the desires of a person and that one main task in life was to move on in life while being brave. For Coelho, being brave meant the experience of the strength to go forward despite being fearful (Coelho, 2014d). This statement showed the positive approach Coelho aimed to take in life, which falls directly into the positive psychology paradigm and fortigenesis, as the theory of strength. In "The alchemist", Coelho (Coelho, 2002b, p. 10) described his new understanding of God in connection with nature, and the development and personal growth (from a pessimistic to an optimistic person (Yulisni, 2009) that was reflected in the dimension of increasing (a) self-worth and (d) emotional awareness and coping. In "The alchemist", Coelho (Hart, 2004) described his cultural hybridity, the magical realism and the magical language while addressing human needs and longing. In terms of self-direction this showed emphasis on developing a new (l) cultural identity that is

based on a high (a) sense of worth, (b) sense of control, (c) realistic beliefs, (d) emotional awareness and coping, (e) problem-solving and creativity, (i) self-care, and (j) stress management. After the success of "Brida" (Coelho, 1990), Coelho ascribed his success as an author to having "a divine gift" (Morais, 2009). This shows his newly gained (a) self-worth and (c) realistic belief in himself and his spiritual connection to God.

The book "Brida" (Coelho, 1990) referred to the RAM practices and Coelho's experiences of the feminine side of his personality, which referred to self-direction in exploring the dimension of (k) gender identity as well as (l) cultural identity. Brida is "the woman I was looking for inside me" Coelho admitted to Arias (2001, p. 93). The feminine side of (k) gender identity is for Coelho connected to the exploration of intuition, dreams and the feminine soul (Arias, 2001). In "Brida", Coelho explored the gender aspect within himself and aimed at personal growth in terms of a gender-balanced identity. However, the book on Brida is also a book about the growth of Coelho in terms of his (c) realistic beliefs in the sun and moon tradition and belief in the visible and invisible world. These new experiences and recognitions contributed to high (a) self-worth, a (b) increased sense of control, (d) innovative emotional awareness from a feminine perspective and new coping strategies in terms of using intuition, as well as belief in the invisible and its connection to the visible, which is part of a creative process and a new approach in problem-solving (e) and stress management (j). In "Brida", the importance of spiritual (h) exercises and spiritual guidance that aim at increasing (d) (emotional) awareness was highlighted. During the time of writing "Brida", Coelho (1990) was connected to topics of love, freedom, finding God "through the heart", happiness, intuition, the moon tradition and the search for dreams, all of which he ascribes to the feminine side of his identity ((l) gender identity). In "Brida" (Coelho, 1990) balanced the feminine (moon tradition and intuition) and the masculine (sun tradition and knowledge) to come to a balanced gender identity. He described God as part of nature and cosmic resonance and integrated the female and male concepts of God. In parallel, he spoke of the importance of meaningfulness in life, of finding each person's talent and of implementing it in God's garden, which related directly to (a) sense of worth and the need for (i) self-care, as well as to the way in which to create identities ((k), (l) gender and cultural identities).

After the release of "Brida", Coelho (1992) wrote a book about his autobiographical experiences in the Californian desert and his personal destructive behavioural pattern to destroy the things he loves. The meditative trip into the desert that was described in "The Valkyries" (1992) aimed at terminating Coelho's destructive behaviour and releasing a new way of (d) emotional awareness and coping strategies, as well as (e) problem-solving and creativity. Besides these new approaches to coping and problem-solving of recurring behaviour patterns, the book also dealt with the construction of new gender identities, referring to the female warriors in Northern Europe during the Viking Age. The book attended to the question of self-direction in the way that it described the (auto)biographical approach of Coelho of being an adventurer, a traveller between hope and desperation (Coelho, 1992), but always in contact with the Christian spiritual tradition and aiming at fulfilling life's

dreams. This dream was the manifestation of the glory of God and a sign of an individual to fight for the good and take responsibility. The dedication to God, as well as the decision to take on the responsibility of a human individual, strongly related to the dimension of working with (a) his self-worth, as well as with the concept of (b) self-control. Dedication to God as well as dedication to the individual require both and can bring growth to the individual.

The year 1994, with the publication of "By the river Piedro I sat down and wept" (Coelho, 1996), brought world fame to Coelho, built on his (a) sense of worth and confirmed strongly that his beliefs were realistic (c) to become a world-famous writer. He built up a new (l) cultural identity relating to the assumption that "God speaks all languages" (Coelho, 1996). Coelho promoted the idea that spiritual practices contribute to a communal experience of adoration, love and prayer with others and thereby to (i) self-care and (j) application of stress management. At the same time, it was a book about inner conflicts, about a struggle with change and spiritual development and – again – with the feminine side of spiritual experiences. These topics related to the work with (d) emotional awareness and coping of Coelho during transition periods and while coping with inner conflicts, as well as with the revision of the construction of (k) gender and (l) cultural identities.

The dimension of (b) self-control was an important part of Coelho's teachings in the book about Pilar, because love is strongly connected and implies a loss of self-control (Coelho, 1996), which might be experienced as a problem and might be feared, because love turned the world upside down and took a person into the unknown (Coelho, 1996, p. 47, p. 49). Through that, Coelho (1996) talked about the importance of trusting in God and the unknown, being (d) emotionally aware and intuitive to understand the path to follow the dream and to live in the present moment, to live life and love and experience emotionally the joy of love and the suffering connected to it (Coelho, 1996). Therefore, balanced (k) gender and (l) cultural identities are needed and a person needs to be prepared to "give up control" ((b) sense of control) to develop. The book described the process of moving away from an image of the controlling and fearful God towards moving along God's path that is accommodating and welcoming (Coelho, 1996).

Finally, Coelho published his book, "The fifth mountain" (Coelho, 1995), re-emphasising the importance of taking the path of one's dreams. The book dealt with the aspect of failure and wrong decisions. Coelho emphasised a salutogenetic and positive psychology paradigm and highlighted that "It is not difficult to rebuild a life." (Coelho, 1998a, p. 180). In the book, Coelho (1998a) emphasised the positive psychology paradigm that praised focusing on achievements, accomplishments and the support of God, which is related to the construction of (a) strong self-worth, (i) self-care and (j) stress management.

Something that bothered Coelho throughout the decade of his forties was that, although he had been accepted as an international and world-famous author, and even that the word "Coelhomania" had been coined (Morais, 2009), his critics in Brazil remained strongly vocal. He was ridiculed and excluded by the Brazilian writers' association, which affected his sense of (a) self-worth, since he wanted to be accepted in his home country.

Table 7.16 Self-direction in forties

Life span	Life task self-direction with sub-categories											
Periods in life	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(g)	(h)	(i)	(j)	(k)	(l)
6. Year 40–49	(a) x	(b) x	(c) x	(d) x	(e) x	(f)	(g)	(h) x	(i) x	(j) x	(k) x	(l) x

Source: Researcher's own construction

The entire decade of Coelho's forties was a decade of strong self-direction, with a strong increase in (a) self-worth and (b) sense of control with regard to his career as a writer. However, it was also blessed with the experience that Coelho's beliefs were realistic (c) and the implementation of these realistic beliefs. Furthermore, the decade was characterised by growing (d) emotional awareness and coping strategies, as well as by (e) a variety of different problem-solving approaches and a high degree of creativity. It was also affected by mental and spiritual (h) and meditative exercises rather than physical exercises. Coelho improved his (i) self-care across the decade throughout different journeys, as well as by improving his (j) stress management. During his forties, Coelho revised his (k) gender and (l) cultural identity in terms of balancing the male and feminine components in his identity, while constructing his cultural identity as a multi-complex and multi-cultural and spiritual identity.

The data during this period do not reveal information on the sub-tasks of (f) sense of humour, (g) nutrition and (h) physical exercise (only exercise in terms of the mental or spiritual). They do not relate either to the impact of global events on Paulo Coelho's life during this period, but show that his entire life, particularly his forties and his career as an author, was strongly affected by his travels to France, Spain, Rome, the US and Egypt (Table 7.16).

Impacting life forces:

Family Coelho's main reference person was his partner, Cristina. They spent their private time together and promoted their work as a writer and an artist. During this decade his mother passed away, but Coelho did not attend her funeral because he was travelling. In 2005, Coelho's father was still alive and followed his career.

Religion Coelho used his writings during the decade to clarify his own position with regard to religion. He described in his books the move from the belief in a strict, patriarchal, masculine God to the belief that God was passionate, accommodating, had an integrated masculine and a feminine side and was part of nature or expressed himself in natural beauty. The RAM practices became part of Coelho's life and helped him through spiritual exercises and practices to transform negative experiences into positive perceptions. His faith supported him throughout his failure and through managing criticism of his books.

Community Hardly any data on the community could be found for this decade. At first, friends helped him to promote his work. Later during his forties, Coelho obviously became part of the community of international writers. However, he was not accepted by the community of Brazilian writers for a long time.

Media Coelho used the media, particularly TV shows, but also interviews and his books to promote himself and his creative work.

Government The government did not play a role in the life of Coelho. Only at the beginning of his career as an author, after his first success in the bestselling lists, Coelho was disappointed when the Ministry of Education did not award him a prize for his bestselling work.

Business/Industry After Coelho had successfully worked as a text writer for musicians in his thirties, as well as a consultant for the music industry, he became successful in the publishing industry as an author. He changed publishers twice during the decade and expanded the publishing of his books all over the world with the help of his agent, Monica. He became an international author and a global bestseller.

The life force of education does not play an important role in this decade of Coelho's life. Global impacts defining the life of Coelho are not described in the data.

7.3.2.7 The Fifties (1997–2006)

At the beginning of his fifties, Paulo Coelho started the jet set life and won many awards and achievements (Morais, 2009), which all enhanced his (a) sense of worth. He travelled non-stop for 2 years to promote his books across the world and put strong effort into (e) problem-solving and creativity to become even more successful.

In 1998 Coelho (1998b) published his book, "Veronica decides to die", which deals with his mental hospital experiences and the trauma from the electroshock therapy, the punishments of his father and the relationship with his parents (Morais, 2009). The publication showed that Coelho was at that stage able to look at what he had experienced during his teenage years, highlighting his (a) sense of worth and ability to control his sense and emotions regarding his traumatic experiences ((b) sense of control). He repeated in several interviews (Arias, 2001) that he did not feel any bitterness towards his parents, which represents a (e) positive problem-solving approach, as well as his ability to accept his own experiences creatively. Furthermore, his forgiveness towards his parents shows that Coelho is emotionally aware (d), that he has found coping strategies to deal with the situation, (j) manages his stress and trauma, looks at himself and cares about himself (i). However, Coelho recognised the suffering of his parents through the trauma (Arias, 2001). He highlighted that he was Veronica, the main character in the book (Morais, 2009). By choosing a female, Slovenian main character for the book, Coelho expanded his (k) gender and (l) cultural identity by putting himself into the shoes of a female character, as well as a character with a different nationality and mother tongue. He thereby anticipated building his own personality and identity across gender, culture and nationalities. On another level, Veronica, the main character of the book, also explored a new way of living, freed from all limitations and boundaries she experienced before, since she expected to die in a few days. Coelho thereby built up a new (l) cultural identity

driven by the concept and life-orientation of “*carpe diem*”, a life freed from social norms. Coelho (2000) questioned the (c) “realistic beliefs” of society and questioned its social values and norms, by exploring views on sanity and insanity from various viewpoints and thereby expanded the values and norms of constructing his own (l) cultural identity within the framework of health, well-being and (mental) ill-health. In this book, Coelho moved beyond the daily and normed feelings and emotions that people allow themselves to feel. His main character – including himself – explored a new and deepened (d) emotional awareness and coping within the few days before her expected death. He described the solution to the dilemma of the expected death, the fear of death and the feeling of not having lived one's life: (e) problem-solving and creativity were established in the main character; she lived her dreams and her life fully without considering social norms and values. She experienced full freedom in her life by deconstructing socio-cultural norms and boundaries (Coelho, 2000; Young, 2009; Yunus, 2014) and by building her own (l) cultural identity based on her personal needs, desires and dreams. At the same time, the book questioned the “norm” of a society or culture (Coelho, 1998b) and the reconstruction of (c) realistic beliefs and provided advice on (i) self-care and (j) stress management. Coelho compared the world and realities between sanity and insanity as experiences in a foreign country. On a deeper level, the book also reflected the relationship of Coelho with his own parents (Coelho, 1998b, p. 25), and thus considered his (l) cultural identity in terms of his origin in Brazilian society. He also dealt with the problem of (d) emotional awareness and coping in terms of emotional misunderstandings and failure to cope with the differences between Veronika/Coelho and her/his parents. However, at the end of the book, the main character finds her personal (d) emotional awareness and coping strategy and is able to return to society freed from her social restrictions and family bonds. In Veronika, Coelho described his personal journey into mental health, well-being and resilience.

In the text collection, “The wanderer” (Coelho, 2007), Coelho constructed a new (l) cultural identity and represented it in terms of a multi-layered, syncretistic and mixed doctrine perspective (Lätzel, 2007), which crossed religious, cultural and national boundaries and reconstructed the leitmotif of spirituality and individualism. Coelho's belief in the individual relationship with God and the responsibility of the individual to be successful in life and being supported in God contained a strong (i) self-care concept that strengthened the individual in the spiritual context. Thereby, Coelho concluded during his fifties that God has a masculine and a feminine face (Coelho, 2007) and is a reflection of the individual's action. Coelho referred to a balanced (k) gender identity, as well as a strong belief in the (a) sense of self-worth and the (b) sense of self-control within the individual. The strength that derived from the new definition of God and the relationship with humans led to a positive and strong (i) self-care component and the ability of the individual to manage stress (j). For Coelho, writing was an expression of God – as personal faith in God is – (Coelho, 2007) which is bound to (e) problem-solving and creativity, as well as to (d) high emotional awareness in terms of compassion (Arias, 2001). According to Coelho, prayer was a way to connect to God, to express personal faith into God, to (e) resolve problems and to (j) manage stress and (i) care about oneself.

For him (Coelho, 2007, p. 117), “God exists twice” and he described his journey of self-direction from a belief in the God of the Jesuits, which is based on teachings, to the personal God that one experiences in everyday life through mindful and meditating exercises, such as reciting mantras, practising yoga, meditating and including various components of (Oriental) spirituality (Arias, 2001). This shows how important (h) spiritual (prayer, meditation) and physical (yoga) exercises were for Coelho and how he built a new (l) cultural identity based on his spiritual quest (Arias, 2001). Personal growth, one's position in the world and the experience of love are major life topics for Coelho and were all connected to his (a) sense of self-worth, as well as to the development of a unique (l) cultural identity.

At the same time, Coelho (Arias, 2001, p. xix) kept believing in magical signs and thus in (e) creative problem-solving solutions and decision-making. He only started writing a book when he found a white feather. This approach was connected to his belief in the universe and in God's way (Coelho, 2007). With this assumption of God being a guide through challenging times, Coelho gave up the (b) sense of control, put it into God's hands and trusted in God's strength, as well as in God's creativity. This belief in God made it possible for Coelho to give up his (b) sense of control, to engage with his emotions of passion, love and happiness – all being positive psychology constructs – and to deepen his (d) emotional awareness.

Many of Coelho's stories during his fifties touched on the emotion of fear that needs to be overcome (Coelho, 2007). Coelho's deep analysis of fear as one of the strongest emotions in his life that had a great impact reflected an attempt to cope with his fears to become emotionally aware (d). His struggle (Coelho, 2007) with fear and with overcoming it, turning it into courage, showed his deep need and search for conscious emotional awareness, which he gained through writing. He actively addressed the fear and other emotions (Coelho, 2007), which helped him to manage his stress (j) and to transform the fear into courage. Coelho referred to the transformative force of words, for example in the short story “Luck”, in which he highlighted that positive memories and positive words are an optimal way of dealing with problems and finding solutions (e) and are a comfortable coping strategy (d). In this context, Coelho highlighted that joking and the use of humour (Coelho, 2007) are optimal coping strategies. This is one of the rare occasions on which Coelho mentioned a (f) sense of humour as an important dimension in self-direction and particularly in positive psychology-oriented self-direction.

Other recurring topics in Coelho's texts and stories were the individual responsibility of decision-making, ethical behaviour and acceptance of the light and the shadow within a person (Coelho, 2007). All of these individually related issues needed to be understood in the context of (i) self-care. Coelho learnt to care about himself, about his development and his impact on his own life and the lives of others.

During his fifties, Coelho was challenged particularly by one failure. At his first application for a seat in the Brazilian Academy of Letters he was not accepted. This had a strong impact on his (a) sense of self-worth, because he was not accepted by his fellow Brazilian writers, as well as on his (b) sense of control, since he could not influence the decision made by his colleagues. He only corresponded about the

Table 7.17 Self-direction in fifties

Life span	Life task self-direction with sub-categories											
Periods in life	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(g)	(h)	(i)	(j)	(k)	(l)
7. Year 50–59	(a) x	(b) x	(c) x	(d) x	(e) x	(f) x	(g)	(h) x	(i) x	(j) x	(k) x	(l) x

Source: Researcher's own construction

application with his I-Ching (Morais, 2009) when he reapplied a short time after his first failed application. To manage his (j) stress about the failure of application, Coelho travelled to France and consulted his I-Ching. Although he struggled to accept the first failure emotionally, he finally managed to reapply to the Academy for a seat and was eventually accepted in 2001 for a lifelong seat in the Brazilian Academy of Letters. At the time, Coelho was already a global player in international high society (Morais, 2009). Being accepted into international high society contributed positively to his (a) sense of self-worth and the building of a strong (k) identity. He was the successful writer he always wanted to be; however, he still struggled with the critical attitude towards him in Brazil.

After having touched on the topic of light and shadow and the struggle for integrity in his book, "The devil and Miss Prym" (2002a), Coelho wrote the bestseller, "Eleven minutes" (2003c), which dealt with the topic of love and lust and how these emotions touched the soul. He focused on the positive side of (d) emotional awareness and coping and the influence of a single individual to change direction – to be self-directed – through desperation and/or enthusiasm for life. The book is about mastering a life crisis (Coelho, 2003a), how to be resilient and about finding the true inner light and everlasting love. Coelho referred to the dimensions of self-direction of (a) sense of worth, as well as the development of (c) realistic beliefs, (d) emotional awareness and coping, as well as (e) problem-solving and creativity. However, the book, and particularly the development of the antagonist, is concerned with self-care (i), about developing attitudes and skills to look after one another.

It can be concluded that in his fifties Coelho worked strongly on his self-direction in terms of taking a stand with regard to his (c) realistic beliefs and the questioning of the norms and values of society. Furthermore, he worked a lot on his (d) emotional awareness and coping with regard to his past and managed to resolve the problems of his teenage years in a constructive process of (e) problem-solving and creativity, (i) self-care, (j) and stress management, while constructing, strengthening and empowering his balanced (k) gender identity and multi-layered (l) cultural identity (Table 7.17).

Impacting life forces:

Family When he reached his fifties, Coelho's mother had already passed away, while his father followed his success. Coelho broke the pact with his parents never to speak about his mental hospital encounters and published "Veronica decides to die", which is the autobiographical story of those encounters. This step shows that he moved beyond the self-restricting loyalty to his parents.

Religion With regard to religion, Coelho underwent a strong transition. He asked the question, "Where lives God?" and redefined his concepts of God while at the same time accepting his strong Christian belief from his childhood. He recreated and reconstructed his belief while being inclusive and bringing together his Christian childhood God, magic and magical thinking, the concept of him being a magus and his idea that the source of spirituality and religion across various belief systems is the same: God can be found in nature and within individuals and souls. While reconstructing his belief and his image of God through expansion, Coelho developed a new (a) sense of worth, an improved (b) sense of control, new (c) realistic beliefs, (d) emotional awareness and coping, ways to deal with the problems of the past through (e) problem-solving and creativity, and he redefined his (I) cultural identity.

Education During this time, Coelho did not educate himself in a formal way, but in informal ways, such as travelling, meeting new people and experiencing new things. He rather started to educate others through his books and his readings and thereby improved his (a) sense of worth, (b) sense of control, and his new (c) realistic beliefs. Through writing and educating others he developed a deeper sense of (d) emotional awareness and coping and found new ways of resolving his problems from the past through creative means ((e) problem-solving and creativity).

Community Coelho belonged to the international jet set society (Morais, 2009) and became one of the most famous authors in the world. He belonged to global high society (Morais, 2009). His (a) sense of self-worth was strengthened.

Media He got publicity through media, TV shows, newspaper articles and the promotion of his books, which provided him with a new (a) sense of worth and a new image of a (I) cultural identity.

Government The impact of the government is hardly described during this time of his life. The main topic with regard to Brazilian society was that Coelho was rejected once before being accepted as a member of the Brazilian society of writers, the Brazilian Academy of Letters.

Business/Industry Coelho promoted his publications as a global business.

7.3.2.8 The Sixties (2007–2016)

Coelho celebrated his sixtieth birthday on St Joseph's day and showed his passion and gratitude for this saint who had saved his life. This celebration also reflected a (a) sense of worth and a (c) realistic belief in Coelho's personal strength, his connection to St Joseph and his life. By making his gratitude public, Coelho showed (d) emotional awareness and coping and he emphasised his (i) self-care. On his birthday, Coelho felt lonely, celebrating his birthday with Cristina only. However, he found soon out about his fan club celebrating for him on the internet (Coelho, 2014a) and he felt a strong (a) sense of worth. However, Coelho understood that

fame left him with a feeling of loneliness (Coelho, 2014a) and he thus gained new (d) emotional awareness and ability to cope with loneliness and friendship.

With his publication of the book, "The winner stands alone" (Coelho, 2008a), Coelho showed the readers part of his life of being a famous global person. The book dealt with identity (l) and the question of following one's dreams, referring to the (a) sense of worth and (i) self-care: Coelho described the situation that society and the powerful manipulate dreams and ideas about the dreams while making people long for fame and materialism. A feeling of self-worth (a.) and self-care (i) can protect a person in this manipulative power struggle for values that are produced by the powerful (Coelho, 2008a).

Writing helped Coelho (2010b) to improve his self-understanding and thereby his (a) self-worth, his (b.) self-control as well as his (k) gender and (l) cultural identity. He described himself (Coelho, 2010b) as successful, as open and devoted, having created his cultural identity (l.) and his (a) self-worth, since the age of 40, when his success started and he followed his dreams. He called his work "nature work" and a miracle of creation (Coelho, 2010b) to form his (l) cultural identity.

Looking back at his life in his documentary (2010b), Coelho described his childhood and youth: his (a) sense of worth mainly developed from the insight that he wrote poems, reflected on his life and found himself through writing. It seems as if his entire (a) sense of worth was bound to his ability to write. Particularly during his youth and during the time at university, Coelho became quite self-directed and (b) developed a sense of control over his own life. He (e) found creative solutions to survive after having stopped studying law and learnt how to care for himself (i), to care about his own needs. To stay healthy he used several rituals, such as travelling, walking and praying, which were (h) exercises for him (Coelho, 2010b). Coelho commented that he learnt how to live with his shadow sides – a sign of growth – and increased his (a) sense of worth, (b) sense of control, (c) realistic beliefs, (d) emotional awareness and coping, (e) problem-solving and creativity, (i) self-care and (j) stress management.

In the book "Aleph", Coelho (2011) dealt with the sacred space and the "point where everything becomes one thing only" (Bosman, 2011). He (2011) expanded his former views on the world and included new realistic beliefs (c) on the world, its interconnectedness and the interlinkages of past and present lives. The book "Aleph" (Coelho, 2011) tells the autobiographical story of Coelho's journey on the Trans-Siberian Railway, which was classified as his most personal book up to that date (Purwandoyo & Kurnia, 2013). Coelho found himself in a deep spiritual crisis (Purwandoyo & Kurnia, 2013) and required advice from his master, J. (Coelho, 2011). Coelho (2011) felt that he needed to develop further in terms of his awareness of self and others and (d) engage in a deeper relationship with the divine and the community of believers and nature (Furqon & Mustofa, 2014). The rituals of RAM strengthened his (l) cultural identity, his (e) problem-solving and creativity, his (a) sense of worth, (b) sense of control, (c) realistic beliefs, (d) emotional awareness and coping, by clearing his mind and his soul through finding his magical and spiritual path, his identity and belonging (Furqon & Mustofa, 2014). His personal need for development in connection with the practices of RAM helped Coelho to

develop the above-mentioned dimensions in self-direction. In "Aleph" (Coelho, 2011), Coelho developed a new (c) realistic belief about the universe as well as about the experiences from a past incarnation through the eyes of a young woman called Hilal (Mihály, 2012). In this autobiographic novel, Coelho experienced the courage to tackle the challenges of life in the context of a theosophy (Sari, 2013) and thereby referred to the dimensions of self-direction in terms of an increased (a) sense of worth and (b) sense of control through tackling challenges, as well as developed (c) realistic beliefs, (d) an increase in emotional awareness – as also highlighted by Purwandoyo and Kurnia (2013) – and coping, together with new (e) problem-solving possibilities and creativity. The authors also highlighted these components and referred to Coelho's self-direction relating to (i) self-care and (d) awareness in terms of the subconscious drivers of actions in the life of a person. Coelho opened up about his personal experiences and conscious awareness of reincarnation and the ability to remember several incarnations and a life he lived about 400 years before. By describing these experiences in the book, Coelho increased his and the reader's (c) realistic belief and (d) awareness and described how these experiences had helped him to cope with certain issues in his life (Weiss, 1992). He (j) managed stress in this incarnation, as well as unhappiness and trauma. However, the book's critics highlighted (Teutsch, 2012) that Coelho only self-reviewed himself – which is an expression for overall (i) self-care, which might already be understood as a kind of unhealthy self-care that does not include (d) emotional awareness and coping with others, but just the author himself.

His next book ("Manuscript found in Acra" (Coelho, 2012, 2013a)) again referred to the topic of overcoming fear and loneliness – referring to (b) sense of control, as well as to the topic of God and his relation to the universe, (c) realistic beliefs – getting to know oneself, (i) self-care and (d) emotional awareness and coping. For Coelho (Reuters, 2013), the book is about accepting human contradictions and consequently about clarifying (c) realistic beliefs, as well as about (e) problem-solving and creativity in terms of overcoming religious egocentrism and moving beyond religion by relating to common human values and living a life of love. This concept of universal human values that help to overcome religious preferences built a new (l) cultural identity for Paulo Coelho. He developed a kind of universal (a) sense of worth of the human's independence of religion, culture or anything else. Therefore, this book is about overcoming fanaticism and rigid world views (Reuters, 2013) and about expanding (c) realistic beliefs and using (e) problem-solving approaches and creativity.

In his recent book (Coelho, 2014e), the author reflected on the concept of life and the misperception of the idea that life should be full of happiness. The author rather promoted the idea that life should be lived to the full (Coelho, 2014e), which is dangerous because surprises can occur and the (b) sense of control is decreased. The story reflected on societal values, feelings of emptiness and boredom that can only be overcome by a strong faith and love (McAlpin, 2014). By referring to these issues, Coelho provided self-direction in terms of (e) individual problem-solving and creativity, which were based in the strength of love and faith. Both these concepts referred to and strengthened the (a) sense of worth of the individual, the ability to (i) care about the self and adequate ways of (j) stress management.

Table 7.18 Self-direction in sixties

Life span	Life task self-direction with sub-categories											
Periods in life	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(g)	(h)	(i)	(j)	(k)	(l)
8. Year 60–69	(a) x	(b) x	(c) x	(d) x	(e) x	(f)	(g)	(h) x	(i) x	(j) x	(k) x	(l) x

Source: Researcher's own construction

Coelho commented on his success and ascribed it to the “force of my will” (Arias, 2001, p. 148), which made him proud and gave him a (a) sense of worth. This sense of worth was connected to his belief that the daily tasks of a person are at the same time divine tasks (Coelho, 2014b).

In 2014, Coelho's love of writing seemed to be unbroken (RTL, 2014) and he commented that writing was his passion. In terms of self-direction, this comment was an expression of the (a) sense of worth that Coelho had developed throughout his life, as well as an expression of (b) feeling a sense of control through writing. Coelho's unstoppable ability to write books is a highly creative expression, (e) which has supported him in dealing with himself and self-reflecting. His books gave him self-direction and built his (k) gender and (l) cultural identity when he became a bestselling global player (Table 7.18).

Impacting life forces:

Family In his sixties, the most important person in his life was his life partner, Cristina, with whom he celebrated his sixtieth birthday (Morais, 2009).

Religion Coelho (2008) dealt with the question of God and the rightness of Catholic orthodox belief. He referred to spiritualism and the Catholic brotherhood he is in (Coelho, 2010b) and developed the idea that a person needs to focus on the small things in life, which are miraculous (Coelho, 2010b). In his sixties, Coelho saw himself as a Catholic, he lived the mystery of the Catholic Church and enjoyed the rituals of mass and magic (Coelho, 2010b).

Education There are no descriptions about education in terms of formal education during this decade. However, Coelho implicitly described his learning processes in “Aleph” (Coelho, 2011).

Community: He had a close relationship with Cristina, but he also felt part of the global internet community (Coelho, 2014a). In 2008 Coelho supported the political campaign of Hillary Clinton (Morais, 2009) and was associated with the global political elite. Besides the international and political community, Coelho connected to the community of believers and nature (Coelho, 2011; Furqon & Mustofa, 2014) and belonged to the community of RAM (Furqon & Mustofa, 2014).

Media One of the media resources Paulo Coelho used most was the internet and he felt proud of being a writer with a fan club (Coelho, 2014a). He used Twitter, as well as his personal blog and website, to communicate with his readers. His success has been ascribed particularly to his self-piracy (Coelho, 2010b), as well as to his influence as a celebrity on Twitter (Sant Jordi Asociados, 2012).

Table 7.19 Overall life task self-direction with sub-categories

Life span	Life task self-direction with sub-categories											
Periods in life	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(g)	(h)	(i)	(j)	(k)	(l)
1. Year 1–6	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e) x	(f) x	(g)	(h)	(i)	(j)	(k)	(l)
2. Year 6–12	(a) x	(b) x	(c) x	(d) x	(e) x	(f) x	(g)	(h) x	(i) x	(j) x	(k) x	(l) x
3. Year 13–19	(a) x	(b) x	(c) x	(d) x	(e) x	(f) x	(g)	(h)	(i) x	(j) x	(k) x	(l) x
4. Year 20–29	(a) x	(b) x	(c) x	(d) x	(e) x	(f) x	(g)	(h)	(i) x	(j) x	(k) x	(l) x
5. Year 30–39	(a) x	(b) x	(c) x	(d) x	(e) x	(f)	(g)	(h)	(i) x	(j) x	(k) x	(l) x
6. Year 40–49	(a) x	(b) x	(c) x	(d) x	(e) x	(f)	(g)	(h) x	(i) x	(j) x	(k) x	(l) x

Source: Researcher's own construction

Government Hardly any references could be found that deal with Coelho's relationship to the government. However, in the context of the book fair in Germany, Coelho stated that he was unhappy about the Brazilian government's choice of certain authors it invited to the book fair in Frankfurt (Deutsche Presse Agentur, 2014). Coelho considered boycotting the book fair because the Brazilian government practised favouritism (Deutsche Presse Agentur, 2014).

Business/Industry As part of his business with Cristina, Coelho promoted his publications, using particularly the new media.

7.3.2.9 Conclusion on the Life Task Self-Direction

Table 7.19 provides an overview of the distribution of the sub-categories of self-direction throughout Paulo Coelho's life.

During his (early) childhood and schooldays, Coelho grew up in a very caring and safe environment that contributed to building his self-worth. However, his failure in primary school and his parents' punishments must have contributed to a decrease in self-worth and self-control. However, Coelho made up for this loss through his success with winning friends and attention through writing and storytelling and through diving into new worlds through reading.

The struggle between his parents' wishes and his own desires led Coelho to a lack of self-direction, with a decrease in almost all 12 components of self-direction (from (a) self-worth to (l) cultural identity). However, he regained self-direction mainly through his dream of becoming a writer, through his friends, his theatre acting success, his job at the newspaper and his grandparents. Coelho's teenage years were an up and down in terms of self-direction, particularly with regard to self-worth and self-control issues, but also to exploring realistic beliefs and findings space to be creative.

During his twenties, Coelho regained self-direction by gaining particularly a stronger feeling of self-control, but also by becoming more emotionally aware (d), resolving his problems and becoming creative (e). He used the occult and satanism to strengthen his self-direction, but also his first successes with Raul, his two marriages and his holding on to his dream of being a writer supported him in staying self-directed until he finally managed to return to Christianity.

Coelho regained self-worth and self-control particularly through the strong belief of his life partner, Cristina, and experienced two key situations in Dachau and Amsterdam through which he gained self-direction and realised the necessary steps to become a writer and to become a member of RAM during his thirties. Through RAM and the success of his first book, Coelho gained particularly self-worth and self-control, which influenced his emotional awareness and coping positively.

During his forties, Coelho managed to strengthen his self-direction again, by promoting himself with the support of Cristina. He also saw an apparition and was motivated to proceed on his path as a writer. During this decade, his self-worth increased strongly, as well as his sense of control, which helped him to pursue his self-direction of becoming a writer, and developed spiritually by using problem-solving and creative approaches. However, also in this decade, Coelho was challenged by reacting to failure and setbacks. This decade is mainly blessed in terms of strong self-development regarding sense of worth, sense of control and the establishment of emotional awareness and coping. However, Coelho also worked hard at changing his perception of cultural and gender identity. Generally spoken, Coelho's self-direction increased in all 12 components through his success as a writer and through the deepening of his spiritual development.

At the beginning of his fifties, Coelho reconsidered his relationship with his parents and worked through different life themes using a problem-solving and creative approach and aiming at becoming emotionally aware about traumatic issues in his life. He reconsidered his cultural identity by reflecting on critical social and cultural issues in his books. It can be concluded that in his fifties Paulo Coelho worked hard on his self-direction in terms of taking a stand on his (c) realistic beliefs and questioning the norms and values of society. Furthermore, he worked hard on his (d) emotional awareness and coping with regard to his past and managed to resolve the problems of his teenage years into a constructive process of (e) problem-solving and creativity, (i) self-care (j) and stress management, while constructing, strengthening and empowering his balanced (k) gender identity and multi-layered (l) cultural identity.

For Coelho's sixties, it can be concluded that he worked hard on his self-direction in terms of reconciling mainly with his (a) sense of worth, but also with his (b) sense of control, taking a stand with regard to his (c) realistic beliefs in terms of God, the universe, the universal values of humans and the norms and values of societies. Through his various book publications, in terms of the dimension of self-direction Coelho referred to exploring his (d) emotional awareness and improving his coping with past and negative experiences. Particularly in faith and love, Coelho gained access to (e) problem-solving and creativity, which at the same time referred to various ways of (i) self-care, (j) and stress management, while reconstructing his (k) gender and (l) cultural identity. Table 7.20 summarises the findings.

Table 7.20 Life task self-direction

Historical periods in the development of Paulo Coelho	Components of holistic wellness expressed through the life tasks
	Global events
	Life forces (business/industry, media, government, community, family, religion, education)
2. Self-direction	
1. Coelho's early childhood (1947–1953)	The dimensions of this life task effective in this life phase are (Myers & Sweeney, 2008):
	e.) Problem-solving and creativity (1)
	f.) Sense of humour (1)
	Impacting life forces:
	Family
	Religion
	Education
	Community
	Global events are not referred to in the data.
	2. Childhood and schooldays (1953–1961)
(a) Sense of worth (4)	
(b) Sense of control (2)	
(c) Realistic beliefs (1)	
(d) Emotional awareness and coping (2)	
(e) Problem-solving and creativity (3)	
(f) Sense of humour (1)	
(h) Exercise (1)	
(i) Self-care (1)	
(j) Stress management (2)	
(k) Gender identity (1)	
(l) Cultural identity (1)	
Impacting life forces:	
Family	
Religion	
Education	
Community	
Media	
Global events are not referred to.	

(continued)

Table 7.20 (continued)

Historical periods in the development of Paulo Coelho	Components of holistic wellness expressed through the life tasks
	Global events
	Life forces (business/industry, media, government, community, family, religion, education)
3. The teenage years (1962–1966)	2. Self-direction
	The dimensions of this life task effective in this life phase are (Myers & Sweeney, 2008):
	(a) Sense of worth (11)
	(b) Sense of control (10)
	(c) Realistic beliefs (7)
	(d) Emotional awareness and coping (6)
	(e) Problem-solving and creativity (7)
	(f) Sense of humour (3)
	(i) Self-care (2)
	(j) Stress management (3)
	(k) Gender identity (2)
	(l) Cultural identity (2)
	Impacting life forces:
	Family
	Religion
	Education
	Community
	Media
	Government
	Business/industry
Global events are not referred to.	
4. The twenties (1967–1976)	The dimensions of this life task effective in this life phase are (Myers & Sweeney, 2008):
	(a) Sense of worth (2)
	(b) Sense of control (5)
	(c) Realistic beliefs (2)
	(d) Emotional awareness and coping (3)
	(e) Problem-solving and creativity (3)
	(f) Sense of humour (1)
	(i) Self-care (2)
	(j) Stress management (3)
	(k) Gender identity (1)
	(l) Cultural identity (1)
	Impacting life forces:
	Family
	Religion
	Education
	Community
	Media
	Government
	Business/industry
	Global events are not referred to.

(continued)

Table 7.20 (continued)

Historical periods in the development of Paulo Coelho	Components of holistic wellness expressed through the life tasks
	Global events
	Life forces (business/industry, media, government, community, family, religion, education)
	2. Self-direction
5. The thirties (1977–1986)	The dimensions of this life task effective in this life phase are (Myers & Sweeney, 2008):
	(a) Sense of worth (7)
	(b) Sense of control (5)
	(c) Realistic beliefs (4)
	(d) Emotional awareness and coping (5)
	(e) Problem-solving and creativity (4)
	(i) Self-care (3)
	(j) Stress management (2)
	(k) Gender identity (2)
	(l) Cultural identity (2)
	Impacting life forces:
	Family
	Religion
	Community
	Media
	Global events are not referred to.
	6. The forties (1987–1996)
(a) Sense of worth (15)	
(b) Sense of control (11)	
(c) Realistic beliefs (10)	
(d) Emotional awareness and coping (13)	
(e) Problem-solving and creativity (11)	
(h) Exercise (only mental and spiritual, not physical) (2)	
(i) Self-care (4)	
(j) Stress management (6)	
(k) Gender identity (8)	
(l) Cultural identity (8)	
Impacting life forces:	
Family	
Religion	
Community	
Media	
Government	
Business/industry	
Global events: No global events affect Coelho's life except his global travels in connection with the RAM practices, which have a strong impact on his life's development and on his career as an author.	

(continued)

Table 7.20 (continued)

Historical periods in the development of Paulo Coelho	Components of holistic wellness expressed through the life tasks
	Global events
	Life forces (business/industry, media, government, community, family, religion, education)
	2. Self-direction
7. The fifties (1997–2006)	The dimensions of this life task effective in this life phase are (Myers & Sweeney, 2008):
	(a) Sense of worth (6)
	(b) Sense of control (5)
	(c) Realistic beliefs (3)
	(d) Emotional awareness and coping (9)
	(e) Problem-solving and creativity (7)
	(f) Sense of humour (1)
	(h) Exercise (1)
	(i) Self-care (8)
	(j) Stress management (6)
	(k) Gender identity (2)
	(l) Cultural identity (7)
	Impacting life forces:
	Family
	Religion
	Education
	Community
	Media
	Government
Business/industry	
Global events: Coelho belongs to international high society and is involved in the global jet set. This life style influences his life and he is involved with international politicians and comments on international happenings, since he feels that this is one of the responsibilities of a writer.	
8. The sixties (2007–2016)	The dimensions of this life task effective in this life phase are (Myers & Sweeney, 2008):
	(a) Sense of worth (15)
	(b) Sense of control (8)
	(c) Realistic beliefs (10)
	(d) Emotional awareness and coping (9)
	(e) Problem-solving and creativity (8)
	(h) Exercise (1)
	(i) Self-care (8)

(continued)

Table 7.20 (continued)

Historical periods in the development of Paulo Coelho	Components of holistic wellness expressed through the life tasks
	Global events
	Life forces (business/industry, media, government, community, family, religion, education)
	2. Self-direction
	(j) Stress management (3)
	(k) Gender identity (2)
	(l) Cultural identity (7)
	Impacting life forces:
	Family
	Religion
	Education
	Community
	Media
	Government
	Business/industry
	Global events: Coelho belongs to international high society and is involved in global political promotions. He takes a stand with regard to the Frankfurt book fair in 2014 and comments on global and universal human conditions and values, which should help to overcome interreligious and intercultural conflict. He also refers repeatedly to the value of love and faith as universal concepts to overcome fanaticism and rigid religious belief systems.

Source: Researcher's own construction

7.3.3 *Life Task 3: Work and Leisure*

Work and leisure are defined for this chapter as described in Sect. 4.5.1.3. In this section, the findings pertaining to the life task of work and pleasure in each life phase throughout Coelho's lifespan are emphasised and discussed.

7.3.3.1 **Paulo Coelho's Early Childhood (1947–1953)**

During Coelho's first 5 years of life, he was mainly occupied with leisure-time activities. The data do not provide any ideas on work activities during his first years of life at home in the security complex, as well as in kindergarten. Having a mother who was a housewife, Coelho, however, must have seen her as a homemaker and a

child rearer, while he saw his father going to work outside the home, working as an engineer.

Impacting life forces with regard to work and leisure during the first 5 years of Coelho's life are the following:

Family Coelho spent his first years at home with his mother, indulging in leisure-time activities at home and in kindergarten. He was not yet introduced to the concept of work himself, but realised that his mother worked at home while his father worked as an engineer outside the home.

No information on religion, education, community, media, government and business/industry is provided with regard to the life task work and leisure. The impact of global events is not addressed during this life's period.

7.3.3.2 Childhood and Schooldays (1953–1961)

At the age of six, Coelho enrolled at primary school, where he learnt "hard work and respect for others" and got to know about the concept of work in comparison to leisure (Morais, 2009). He enjoyed the first 2 years at school, working hard, but then was caught up in leisure-time activities, particularly in reading. At the age of 9 years he entered his writing in his first writing competition.

He worked hard to pass the entry examinations at the Jesuit boys' school, St Ignatius, failed twice and was finally accepted. At the age of 12 years, Coelho started writing in his diary and recorded his feelings and actions on tape during his leisure time (Morais, 2009).

Impacting life forces:

Family In school, Coelho was introduced to the concept of working hard. His parents made sure that he worked hard to be accepted at entry level at St Ignatius.

Religion It can be assumed that religion in terms of work and leisure-time was important in this period of Coelho's life; at home, his parents lived according to a strong Catholic belief during his leisure time. At school he was also introduced to interlinking religion and work.

Education He worked hard for the first 2 years in school, but then became more interested in reading instead of school work.

Community Coelho spent his leisure time with his friends and extended family members in a "secret organisation" of which he was the leader.

Media He spent his leisure time mainly in reading books.

No information on the life forces of the government and business/industry is provided with regard to the life task of work and leisure. No information on the impacts of global events is provided for this period of his life and this particular life task.

7.3.3.3 The Teenage Years (1962–1966)

During his teenage years, Coelho went to a traditional Jesuit school where he learnt discipline and worked in the context of religion (Arias, 2001). However, at this stage he developed the idea of becoming a professional writer (Arias, 2001), not only a leisure-time writer.

During his teenage years, Coelho built model aeroplanes and rockets as a hobby, collected stamps, had friendships with girls and struggled with his belief in God (Morais, 2009). However, according to Morais (2009), the hobbies disappeared quickly and only the idea of becoming a writer established itself as an *idée fixe* (Morais, 2009, p. 62). In terms of leisure-time activities (Myers & Sweeney, 2008; Witmer & Sweeney, 1992) the creative work of writing, as well as social engagement with friends and girls, was of major importance to Coelho. Both seemed to have a positive effect on his emotional well-being and wellness. During 1963, Coelho was advised by his mother to become a writer during his leisure time, while becoming an engineer as a profession. Coelho reacted to his mother's advice very clearly: "No, mother, I just want to be a writer. Not an Engineer who writes books" (Coelho, 2006, p. 11). Coelho wanted the writing to become his main work, which was supposed to serve economic, psychological and social purposes (Myers, Sweeney, & Witmer, 2000) and to provide benefits to the well-being of the self and others. For Coelho, writing was a work and an activity he was paid for (Witmer & Sweeney, 1992).

In 1963, after his mother had taken Coelho to a nerve specialist for the first time, he developed an interest in theatre plays, while reading as many books as he could in his leisure time to increase his self-understanding (Morais, 2009). He doubted his faith and hated the duties he had to fulfil in the name of the school and God (Morais, 2009). Morais (2009) says that Coelho held a leadership position in his estate where he spent most of his leisure time until he moved to Gávia. After the move, his preferred activities during his spare time were sleeping and "recreational reading" (Morais, 2009, p. 61). The reading helped him to recover from school stress and during his school holidays, in his leisure time, he wrote his first theatre play in 1963 (Morais, 2009). Shortly afterwards, he founded Rota 15, a literary club, as another leisure-time activity and published his first booklet of poetry (Morais, 2009). During the same year, Coelho won a top prize from the Academia Literária Santo Inácio (Morais, 2009), which indicated the first steps to fulfil his dream of becoming a professional writer. He was supported by his father, who bought him his first typewriter (Morais, 2009).

Although he was enrolled in the science stream of St Andrews, Coelho was interested in political discussions, film study groups and an amateur drama group and became part of Taca, a theatre group. These optional activities were offered at school and he spent his leisure time engaging himself in creative work and social engagement in these groups (Morais, 2009). During this time, his leisure activities were not restricted to reading and writing poems, but also included theatre plays and he was highly motivated socially.

Because of his low school marks, Coelho's father found him a job at the docks in Rio de Janeiro where he then worked for a very low income (Morais, 2009). It was a punishment meted out by his father, but the job did not motivate Coelho at all – he became even more indifferent and failed the school year, while his desire to write increased. Being a writer was “my chosen profession” (Morais, 2009, p. 78).

For Coelho, his relationship with Márcia was so important that he was not even upset when the poems he submitted to a poetry competition of the Instituto Nacional do Mate failed to win a prize (Morais, 2009, p. 83). His leisure time with Márcia was more important than his writing career. However, the relationship did not last long and Coelho was prepared to work for his success to become a recognised writer (Coelho, 2006); he filled his leisure time with buying newspapers, checking on book reviews, sending articles to relevant people and talking about his ambitions to become a writer. He made field contacts for publishing his work, contacted magazines and radio stations to find out the addresses of famous writers, went to book signings, organised productions of plays that he had written and tried to get in touch with the new generation of writers (Morais, 2009, pp. 91–92). His leisure time was well organised around writing and becoming a professional writer. In 1967, Coelho joined the “Paissandu generation”, a club of left-wing intellectuals and activists in Rio, which he visited in his leisure time. At the same time he found a new job as a cub reporter, worked in an afternoon office and wrote articles for the *Diário de Notícias*. He concentrated less on his school work and more on spending his leisure time with his friends (Morais, 2009). This trend increased after his first stay in the asylum (Morais, 2009). He finally finished his school career in science at a fifth-grade school in Rio and invited his entire family to his first theatre production of *Pinnocchio* when he was 18 years old (Morais, 2009, p. 109), having spent his entire leisure time on producing this event. Besides the theatre production, Coelho became a womaniser and spent a huge amount of his leisure time with women, acting in theatre plays and partying (Morais, 2009). After his second stay in the asylum, Coelho (Morais, 2009) focused on producing his first play for adults.

Impacting life forces:

Family Coelho's mother tried to convince him to make writing a leisure activity while working professionally in the engineering field (Morais, 2009). His father supported his writing activities by buying him a typewriter. However, both parents wanted Coelho to become a scientist and make writing a hobby, using Coelho's uncle as an idol. However, Coelho just wanted to become a writer by profession, even after twice being hospitalised in an asylum.

Religion Coelho struggled with his faith and with his religion during his teenage years.

Education Coelho was not interested in his schoolwork at all and moved from St Ignatius, the Jesuit school, to St Andrews, a co-educational and more liberal school. However, he did not succeed there either and finally finished school at a lowly rated school.

Community During his teenage years, Coelho was part of different communities, such as the Rota 15 literary club, the theatre writers' club, a left-wing political club, as well as different school clubs, such as filmmaking and theatre play, at the St Andrews school.

Media Coelho acted in his first children's theatre production, followed by his first co-production and role in an adult play.

Government Coelho joined a political left-wing club and did not support the Brazilian dictatorship.

Business/Industry Coelho was more involved in the role of theatre actor and co-produced one adult play in which he also acted.

While Coelho was a leader in his estate, he later withdrew from social interaction and spent time reading and preparing for his writing career. He was taken to mental hospital twice and afterwards developed an increased interest in theatre plays and acting. With the move to St Andrews, Coelho became more sociable. He worked in various jobs, but dreamt of becoming a professional writer. He used his teenage years to develop his writing abilities increased his social engagement and joined different artistic, writers and political groups. Towards the end of his teenage years, indistinct boundaries were established between work and leisure activities and his leisure activities of reading, writing, acting in theatre productions and producing plays developed from leisure activities into professional work activities.

No information on the impacts of global events is available for this period of life and this particular life task of work and leisure.

7.3.3.4 The Twenties (1967–1976)

After his third stay at the mental hospital, in his twenties, Coelho wrote his first theatre play in 1968. This first adult theatre production was sponsored by his girlfriend, Fabiola, and acting and theatre productions became his favourite work. He became successful, earned an income through his activities and soon became a member of the Brazilian Society of Theatre Writers. While working as an actor and writing plays, he prepared to become a famous writer (Morais, 2009).

In Coelho's twenties, his leisure activities were mainly influenced by taking drugs and from 1973 also by his interest in the occult, witchcraft and satanism (Arias, 2001), while his work and professional career developed in the theatre and in the production of plays (Morais, 2009). Coelho failed repeatedly in writing competitions and was highly frustrated (Morais, 2009, p. 180). However, he continued to write down notes and ideas for books, plays and essays (Morais, 2009, p. 201). He started working for a magazine in 1972.

In 1973 Coelho's work career increased drastically. He published his first book and became successful at writing the texts for Raul Seixtas's songs. He earned large amounts of money through the success of Raul's music in that year. In 1974, his success with Raul increased, he was financially successful, received various job

offers and decided to become a consultant. He became a dual professional, a lyricist on the one hand and a Philips consultant on the other hand.

Impacting life forces:

Family After his third stay in the asylum, Coelho experienced new freedom and his parents lost control over him. He travelled with his grandparents to the US and was deeply affected by the death of his grandfather, with whom he had a deeper connection than with his father. Coelho married Gisa in 1971 and visited Europe with his grandmother in 1972. He divorced Gisa in 1974 and was married to Cissa from 1976 to 1979.

Religion Coelho's faith was based on the occult, witchcraft and satanism and he turned to "prince of the darkness" at the age of 25 (Morais, 2009, 221). However, he left the satanists after 2 years (Arias, 2001) and returned to his childhood religious beliefs (Arias, 2001, 119).

Education Coelho did not undergo further formal education, but worked in various fields of interest and jobs and thus increased his education, for example by being a lyricist and a consultant.

Community Coelho was a member of several groups and socialised with "strange friends" whom only his grandfather accepted (Morais, 2009, p. 198). He joined a satanistic sect as a leisure activity and spent time with his new friend and colleague, Raul Seixtas.

Media Coelho published his first book and became famous through the work with Raul Seixtas, for whom he wrote song texts. The media started recognising Coelho.

Government While on a trip to the US with his grandparents, Coelho realised the pressures of the Brazilian dictatorship. In 1974, Coelho and Gisa, his wife, were kidnapped and tortured by a paramilitary group, but released after a few days.

Business/Industry Coelho published his first book and became famous through the work with Seixtas. Through his success with Raul, Coelho received various job offers and started working as a consultant for Philips and as a lyricist (Morais, 2009), running a dual career.

Global events are not referred to in the data with regard to this life period and the life task of work and leisure, but Coelho was politically strongly influenced by the Brazilian dictatorship in the paramilitary activities in his country, which were recognised internationally.

7.3.3.5 The Thirties (1977–1986)

In 1977 Coelho took a year off for leisure time in London and had his breakthrough as a lyricist in 1978. He wrote song texts for all the important Brazilian songwriters. As a consultant he moved on from Philips to CBS in 1979.

In 1980 Cristina and Coelho started their work career and promoted their artistic work together, Cristina as a painter and Coelho as a writer. The new career was

punctuated with travels through some European countries (Madrid and London) in 1981 and further ones in 1982.

The birth of the professional writer happened for Coelho during 1982 when he heard his calling at the concentration camp in Dachau (Arias, 2001). He met his master, J. from the RAM tradition, soon afterwards in Amsterdam and started his spiritual journey; he became a member of the RAM, an old mysterious Catholic religious order (Morais, 2009).

After several years, Coelho became a master of the RAM practices. He spent leisure time developing himself spiritually. At the same time, he started writing a book in 1982 and promoted his work together with Cristina. In 1986 Coelho became a master of RAM and published his first successful book, "The pilgrimage" (Coelho, 1987). His leisure activities in the spiritual realm contributed well to his work-related career and the two started to feed into each other.

His leisure activities and spiritual journey were integrated into his writings and his work as a writer. Work and leisure consisted for Coelho of travelling, developing spiritually and establishing himself as a writer through TV shows and interviews. He used the concept of "I am a magus" to promote his work identity as a writer (Arias, 2001, p. 7). His personal spiritual journey and development became part of many of his books and contributed to his success as a writer (Arias, 2001).

Impacting life forces:

Family Coelho divorced Cissa in 1979 and met Cristina. They celebrated the blessing of their partnership in 1980 with their parents. Cristina became a major force in Coelho's professional and spiritual development.

Religion Cristina helped Coelho to overcome satanism completely and he revitalised his Christian belief. His newly gained faith, his spiritual development and his life decision to go on a spiritual journey built the basis for his professional development as a writer.

Education Coelho educated himself through becoming a student of the RAM practices and advanced to the level of master within a few years. The order educated Coelho spiritually in terms of discipline, a new self-awareness and RAM practices and exercises.

Community He belonged to the RAM order, first as a student, later as a master. This membership provided him with new ideas on spirituality and new contacts.

Media Coelho promoted his work together with his life partner, Cristina, from 1981 onwards through leaflets and TV shows. In 1987 he started to integrate his promotion with his leisure-time activities as a magus and as a writer.

Business/Industry Coelho became a successful lyricist and consultant for CBS. He was financially well off, which allowed him to travel and practise his spiritual development and RAM exercises during his leisure time. He wrote his first successful book as a professional writer in 1987 and promoted it (Coelho, 1987). In the book, Coelho integrated his leisure-time experiences in terms of his personal spiritual development and used these as an integrated part of his professional work as a

writer. From this point in time, leisure activities (which included travelling, spiritual rituals and development) were hardly to be distinguished from Coelho's work as a professional writer, since his book was based on his leisure-time spiritual experiences.

No information on the life forces of the government is provided with regard to the life task of work and leisure. No information on the impacts of global events is provided for this period of life and this particular life task.

7.3.3.6 The Forties (1987–1996)

According to Morais (2009), Coelho's life was characterised by promoting his own creative work, together with Cristina. This promotion campaign resulted in TV shows, publicity and the relocation of his agent, Monica, to Spain to promote his work in Europe. The journey to become a magus and his experience and ability "to make it rain" moved Coelho towards new publicity and journal articles (Morais, 2009). This shows that his pleasurable experiences provided him with a sense of accomplishment, as work and leisure are defined according to Myers et al. (2000). His work as a writer thus provided Coelho with economic, psychological and social purposes from the life decade of his forties onwards, while his leisure time – which was defined as physical activities, creative work and social engagements, including the process of writing – had a positive effect on his emotional well-being and wellness (Myers & Sweeney, 2008; Witmer & Sweeney, 1992). Being an author and writing books, novels and short stories combined professional work and leisure time. Coelho's spiritual journey and his personal development in the RAM tradition formed part of his leisure time. Being connected to physical activity, creative work and social engagement had a positive impact on his overall well-being and became the foundation for his development as a writer with an autobiographical approach.

It can be argued that the spiritual journey of walking the Road to Santiago de Compostela was a leisure activity combining a physical activity with the creative act of self-development and a social engagement with the RAM tradition and Coelho's guide, Petrus (Coelho, 2003a). At the same time, walking the Road, Coelho trained his meditation skills (physical activity), his intuition and exploration of the subconscious mind – which was a creative work – and was connected to his (inner) messenger as well as the magical side of his life (Arias, 2001), which became part of his work.

Coelho's second book, "The alchemist" (Coelho, 1988), was inspired by a journey to Egypt (Arias, 2001) and was a milestone in his career as a professional writer. His leisure activities, such as travel, again became the foundation of his work as an author. He worked hard at becoming a professional and recognised writer, not least by developing a strong market strategy together with Cristina (Morais, 2009). Coelho changed publishers in 1989, to promote his work more efficiently, and sent his agent, Monica, to Europe (Arias, 2001; Morais, 2009). As Coelho showed an integrative approach in combining work and leisure, he also showed an integrative approach in combining his view on the image of the Jesuit God and God as a natural life experience (Coelho, 2002b, p. 10).

Based on his journey to Rome, Coelho wrote the book “Brida” (Coelho, 1990) in just 2 weeks. His work as an author was, once again, based on his travelling experiences, his leisure activities, the experiences of the RAM practices and his magical and spiritual path. At the same time, “Brida” touched on many of Coelho’s life topics and was a reflection of his spiritual, personal and professional identity (development) (Coelho, 1990). The following book project was the book “The Valkyries” (Coelho, 1992), which is based on a travel experience to the Californian desert with Cristina. Again, Coelho was sent on this spiritual journey by J. and turned his experiences into a creative work, an autobiographical book (Coelho, 1992).

The book, “By the river Piedro I sat down and wept” (Coelho, 1996), was not based on Coelho’s travel experiences, but was rather a fictional story about a young woman who reconnected with her childhood love who had advanced to being a recognised spiritual public speaker. It was a book on a spiritual experience, but this time it rather dealt with an inner spiritual experience of Coelho that developed from childhood to 1994 from a strict religious belief towards a spiritual concept of the world (Coelho, 1996). In this book, the main character turned his mission into his professional work and leisure and work activities were integrated.

In 1995 Coelho changed publishers, invited 600 VIPs to a party in France and created a personal website (Morais, 2009). He again combined his work and his leisure time through professional strategic moves, celebrating with people while networking. He created his internet identity, which was part of his leisure-time activities, as he declared a few years later. He highlighted that he loved to use the world wide web during his leisure time, enjoyed reading on the internet and updating his web activities (Coelho, 2014b). For Coelho, his work became a life that was called “Coelhomania” or “Coelhisme” (Morais, 2009) as a movement in 1995.

It can be concluded that Coelho, particularly from the decade of his forties onwards, did not distinguish between his work as a professional writer and his personal (spiritual) development, which happened during his leisure activities. The strength in his work might be found in Coelho’s ability to combine his leisure and personal spiritual journey with his work and to turn his experiences as a human being into trustworthy and empathetic creative work.

Impacting life forces:

Family Cristina formed part of Coelho’s success as a writer. However, she was partly also involved in his spiritual experiences and in his journeys (e.g. the journey to walk the Road to Santiago, as well as the journey in the Californian desert).

Religion Coelho’s religion became the base of his work and leisure activities, since many of his creative works as an author were based on the discussion or exploration of spiritual insights and his personal struggle with spirituality and different spiritual concepts he experienced and learnt in his life. His leisure time included mainly his personal spiritual development and spiritual journeys, while his work consisted of writing these experiences down.

Education Coelho was educated through his master, J., in terms of his personal spiritual development and life approach. The educational aspects were based on

experienced-based learning, which integrated life, personal experiences and his professional work as a writer.

Community Coelho was part of the community of RAM and on his journey met individuals across religious traditions and beliefs. He took the first steps to become a part of the VIP community (through invitations etc.).

Media Because of his spiritual approach to life and his marketing strategy, the media showed strong interest in Coelho. He used the media (TV, articles, and later the internet) to promote his creative works, his books and ideas. The media created the term and concept of “Coelhomania” or “Coelhisme” (Morais, 2009) and promoted Coelhisme as a “life-style” approach.

Business/Industry Coelho changed publishers twice during this decade. He sent his agent, Monica, to Spain, he promoted himself together with his wife and used the internet to promote his ideas, his books and to communicate with his readers. Coelho promoted his work as an integrated concept with his spiritual belief and practices, declaring himself a magician, a disciple and a master of the RAM tradition.

No information is provided in the literature on the influence of the government on the life task of work and leisure. No information on the impact of global events is provided for this period of life and this particular life task of work and leisure.

7.3.3.7 The Fifties (1997–2006)

Work-related, Coelho started leading the international jet set life in his fifties (Morais, 2009) and won several awards and achievements for his creative works (Morais, 2009). Through travelling, Coelho promoted his books from 1998 to 2000. In the book “Veronica decides to die” (Coelho, 1998b), Coelho reflected on the meaningfulness of life and work and saw himself as a catalyst of the experiences of the reader (Arias, 2001). He wrote about humanity and spirituality (Arias, 2001), which formed part of his psychological and social purpose (Myers et al., 2000). This seemed intrinsically satisfying and provided a sense of accomplishment, as work and leisure should do, according to Myers et al. (2000). The main character in the book decided to do whatever she wanted to do, and started to cope with her unfulfilled needs, since she thought that after a suicide attempt she had only 5 days to live (Coelho, 1998b).

In a text collection book (“The wanderer” Coelho, 2007), Coelho dealt with the topics of belief and faith, life experiences, self-reflection and challenges, the fulfilment of a life's dream and the meaning of life (Coelho, 2007). All of these life-oriented topics cross the borders of work and leisure activities and the way in which individuals refer to these activities. Coelho concluded that God lived everywhere. Leisure activities, such as writing a diary, a letter or notes, can lead to being close to God (Coelho, 2007), which can be interpreted as “creative work” and “social engagement”, which both have a positive effect on emotional well-being and well-being (Myers & Sweeney, 2008; Witmer & Sweeney, 1992). The actions of the

individual are mirrored in God's actions (Arias, 2001, pp. 96–97), no matter whether they are lived and categorised as work or leisure. Coelho showed in his books that he believed in a God who did not differentiate between work and leisure. At the same time, he saw God as an experience of faith that was individual and personal (Coelho, 2007) and was expressed and (re)constructed through prayers (Coelho, 2007). Prayers were part of leisure activities and helped Coelho to experience God by slowing down.

Through these kinds of leisure-time activities, emotional well-being and wellness can be established, as emphasised by Myers et al. (2000). Leisure includes leisure activities such as physical activities, creative work and social engagements, which all have a positive effect on emotional well-being and wellness. However, God can be created by any individual through reciting mantras, practicing yoga, meditating and including Indian cosmogony and Oriental spirituality into his life (Arias, 2001, p. 108), which must happen repeatedly, but can be part of work, as well as part of leisure. Coelho not only wrote about spirituality, he also integrated practical rituals in his life. He prayed every evening at 6 o' clock when the sun set and again at midnight (Arias, 2001, p. xvii). He believed in spiritual rituals that filled his daily practice (Husband, 2008), defining these activities as pleasurable experiences that were intrinsically satisfying, providing accomplishment and well-being, inheriting purposes and benefits for oneself and others (Myers et al., 2000), as work and leisure should.

Coelho focused on staying aware (Coelho, 2007, p. 134) while working and enjoying leisure time. With regard to work, he highlighted the right inner attitude that is needed to balance work, leisure and time to rest (Arias, 2001) to be successful and enjoy the time. For Coelho, work was connected to decision-making, to commitment and conscience, responsibility, time management and intuition.

Coelho became a global player in 2000, attended the global economic forum and met Bill Clinton. His political engagement and action became part of his work and carried a strong purpose and the responsibility of being a writer. According to his publications (Coelho, 2000, 2003a, 2003b, 2003c, 2005, 2006, 2009), he was highly creative and productive during these years and emphasised that the attitude of the warrior of light should express itself in work and leisure.

In the book "The zahir" (Coelho, 2005), Coelho referred to leisure time with his life partner, Cristina, referring to walking through the spiritual mountainside of the Pyrenees that included the experience of sacred moments and physical activities. In 2006 he visited Buckingham Palace, travelled for 4 months to fulfil his RAM practices and practised RAM over many years through praying, abstaining from sex, walking barefoot and without a shirt through bushes, looking at a tree for 5 min every day and undergoing fasting rituals and processes, as well as undertaking a trip to Russia. All of these spiritual activities can be defined as leisure activities that contributed to his inner process of becoming a person and to his professional process of becoming a writer.

In the book "The witch of Portobello" (Coelho, 2007), Coelho described several creative methods, such as dance, music or painting that all lead to God when conducted with passion (Coelho, 2007). Many spiritual rituals formed part of his life,

his work and his leisure time, as did the connection to the internet, archery, walks in nature and meditation, to experience the joy of movement and the balance of the body (Coelho, 2006). Coelho defined work as a supportive source in life that supports individuals, as long as it supports the individual to think about his/her actions and the meaning of life (Coelho, 2006). Therefore, work, for Coelho, needed to fulfil psychological and social purposes, while being a challenge, particularly when the expectations of others are involved (Coelho, 2006). To relax, Coelho needed particularly quiet time and to listen to his soul (Coelho, 2006).

Impacting life forces:

Family During his fifties, the family did not play an outstanding part in Coelho's life. It was mainly Cristina with whom he shared his work and leisure time. Cristina influenced his leisure-time activities, as well as his work as an author, as highlighted in his dedication in "The zahir" (Coelho, 2005).

Religion Religion was present in this life's decade during work and leisure, since Coelho embraced religious, magical and spiritual rituals that helped him believe in God. He enjoyed several leisure activities, always with the aim to self-reflect and to connect to God, which he defined as a higher power that integrates various religions (Coelho, 2005). This life energy of God should be expressed and felt in leisure time and work.

Education Coelho was educated by his master, J, in the RAM practices, but did not undergo any other kind of formal education.

Community Coelho belonged to the international jet set community, attended the Davos forum and was invited to Buckingham Palace (Morais, 2009). The impact of the community and his experiences in it contributed to his work and writings.

Media Coelho fever spread across all social strata, mainly influenced by the internet promotion (Morais, 2009).

Business/Industry Coelho promoted himself during this decade by attending international events, promoting his work actively and travelling (Morais, 2009).

No information on the life force of the influence of the government is provided with regard to the life task of work and leisure. No information on the impact of global events is provided for this period of his life and this particular life task, except that Coelho attended selected global events, such as the world economic forum in Davos, international prize-giving events or a function at Buckingham Palace, which all formed part of his leisure and work experiences.

7.3.3.8 The Sixties (2007–2016)

In his sixties, Coelho supported the political campaign of Hillary Clinton in 2008, which influenced the book "The winner stands alone" (Coelho, 2008a). In this book, he criticised the promoted and manipulative values of society, which aimed at fame, money and conformity (Coelho, 2008a).

Coelho emphasised the importance of having a goal in life (Coelho, 2010b); however, on the way to reach the goal, one must enjoy pleasure (Coelho, 2010b), as defined by Myers et al. (2000), and miracles in life (Coelho, 2010b), thus interconnecting work and leisure to feel alive. Coelho's rituals of leisure (and work) are again described as praying, meditation, finding a feather, travelling and walking like the "old Greeks" (Coelho, 2010b).

During the decade of the sixties, he published "Aleph" (Coelho, 2011), again a book based on travel experiences. Purwandoyo and Kurnia (2013) point out that the literary work of Paulo Coelho is "the reflection of the human being". It integrates leisure time and work into one. In his sixties, Coelho is at the peak of his career, continuing to write books and being productive as an author. The topic of leisure and work time is hardly mentioned during this decade. It appears as if Coelho has integrated leisure and work completely into one.

Impacting life forces:

Family Regarding work and leisure, Cristina was his most important family member. She developed an artwork according to his belief in "the warrior of light" and they promoted their work together (Coelho, 2010b).

Religion The rituals of RAM provided Coelho with a sense of belonging and faith (Furqon & Mustofa, 2014) and were integrated components of his work and leisure time.

Education Hardly any information was provided on education in this decade; however, the role of the RAM practices still seemed to be present in leisure and work for Coelho, although they were hardly talked about.

Community Coelho succeeded during this decade in becoming an established part of the international celebrity community (on the internet and in real life).

Media He promoted his books, particularly on the internet, and was successful by spreading his work on the internet free of charge (self-piracy) (Bosman, 2011). This formed a major part of his work and leisure-time activities.

Government Coelho took an official stand against the favouritism of the Brazilian government, which he saw as a responsibility and the work of a well-known writer.

Business/Industry During this decade Coelho published three important books and was vividly engaged in the publishing industry and business.

No information on the impact of global events is provided for this period of life and this particular life task of work and leisure.

7.3.3.9 Conclusion on the Life Task Work and Leisure

Work and leisure were important life tasks for Coelho throughout his life (see for an overview Table 7.21). During his early childhood he must have realised that his mother's role was to work at home and with the children, while his father's role was

to work outside the house as an engineer. He experienced the concept of working hard when he started school. During his teenage years, Coelho developed leisure-time activities and worked in different positions. However, he was determined to become a professional writer as his main work engagement and did not accept the idea of writing in his leisure time.

During his twenties, Coelho became a lyricist and a consultant for a company. In his leisure time he indulged his interest in the occult, satanism and drugs. The concept of work and leisure was clearly established; however, Coelho still wanted to become a writer as his main work.

In Coelho's next decade, his spiritual development and his life decision to go on a spiritual journey during his leisure time built the basis for his professional development as a writer. His work as a writer was integrated with his spiritual development during leisure time. From this point in time, leisure activities (which included travelling, spiritual rituals and development) were hardly to be distinguished from Coelho's work as a professional writer, since his books were based on his leisure-time spiritual experiences.

His work as a writer provided Coelho with economic, psychological and social purposes from the life decade of his forties onwards, while his leisure time, which is defined as being occupied by physical activities, creative work and social engagements, including the process of writing, had a positive effect on emotional well-being and wellness. It can be concluded that Coelho, particularly from the decade of his forties onwards, did not distinguish between his work as a professional writer and his personal (spiritual) development, which happened during his leisure-time activities. Work and leisure activities became highly integrated concepts.

During his fifties, Coelho highlighted that work and leisure were both highly important to him and that they could contribute to the well-being and health of a person. However, work was only meaningful when it created time to think about oneself and recognise meaningfulness in life. Work and leisure remained integrated concepts during this decade of Coelho's life, as during the forties and sixties.

During his sixties, the topics of work and leisure time did not seem to be highly important to Coelho. It might be assumed that he had integrated both concepts in a healthy way.

Reflecting on the entire life in terms of work and leisure, it can be concluded that Coelho learnt the concepts of work and leisure early in his life and lived accordingly during his twenties. Only from his thirties onwards did he integrate work and leisure as one concept that contributed to his development as a spiritual master as well as a writer.

7.3.4 Life Task 4: Friendship

The life task of friendship is related to all social interactions as well as social connectedness, which is experienced on an individual level or on a communal or collective level, as further described in Sect. 4.5.1.4. In the following, the findings are presented.

Table 7.21 Life task, work and leisure

Historical periods in the development of Paulo Coelho	Components of holistic wellness expressed through the life tasks
	Global events
	Life forces (business/industry, media, government, community, family, religion, education)
	3. Work & leisure
1. Coelho's early childhood (1947–1953)	With regard to work and leisure, the following information is provided: Coelho experiences leisure-time activities at home and in kindergarten
	Impacting life forces: Family
	Global events are not referred to in the data.
	2. Childhood and schooldays (1953–1961)
2. Childhood and schooldays (1953–1961)	With regard to work and leisure, the following information is provided: Coelho is introduced to the concept of hard work in primary school. Work is very much connected to the schools he attends. He needs to work hard in a school camp to finally pass the entry level examinations for St Ignatius on the third attempt.
	During leisure time he enjoyed reading, writing for competitions and later writing a diary and recording biographical aspects on a tape recorder.
	Impacting life forces: Family
	Religion
	Education
	Community
	Media
	Global events are not referred to in the data.
	3. The teenage years (1962–1966)
	With regard to work and leisure, the following information is provided: Coelho changes schools twice and finally finishes the science stream at a fifth-grade school in Rio.
Besides the school, he earns money through jobs at the dock, as well as for a local newspaper.	
He is clear about wanting to become a professional writer and not to be a leisure-time writer while being a professional engineer.	
Coelho increases his acting for a local theatre group and starts producing his own plays for children and adults	
In his leisure time, Coelho becomes a member of artistic, literary and political clubs and increases his social engagement.	
His leisure time is filled with various activities; important ones are his reading and writing engagements, as well as diverse activities to build up a network and get an idea of how to become a famous writer.	
Although Coelho's actual work was his school work, his leisure time activities increasingly seemed to become his work during his teenage years.	
There seemed to be indistinct boundaries between work and leisure activities and his leisure activities of reading, writing, acting and producing theatre plays developed from leisure activities into professional work activities.	

(continued)

Table 7.21 (continued)

Historical periods in the development of Paulo Coelho	Components of holistic wellness expressed through the life tasks
	Global events
	Life forces (business/industry, media, government, community, family, religion, education)
	3. Work & leisure
	Impacting life forces:
	Family
	Religion
	Education
	Community
	Media
	Government
	Business/industry
	Global events are not referred to in the data.
	4. The twenties (1967–1976)
During his twenties, Coelho worked as an actor and a theatre producer. With Fabiola as a sponsor, he produced his first theatre play.	
He met Raul in 1972 and started writing song texts for him. They became successful together and earned a high income.	
In 1976 Coelho was fully absorbed and involved in his dual career as a lyricist for Raul and a consultant for Philips.	
At the beginning of his twenties, Coelho spent his leisure time by taking drugs, preparing for his writing career through networking and from 1973 onwards spent increasing time with the occult, witchcraft and satanism, which he left soon after his initiation ritual, which caused panic attacks. During the time of his dual career from 1974 onwards Coelho used most of his leisure time to write song texts for Raul and work as a consultant for Philips.	
Impacting life forces:	
Family	
Religion	
Education	
Community	
Media	
Government	
Business/industry	
Global events are not referred to in the data, but Coelho was strongly affected by the Brazilian dictatorship and the paramilitary activities in his country, which were recognised internationally.	

(continued)

Table 7.21 (continued)

Historical periods in the development of Paulo Coelho	Components of holistic wellness expressed through the life tasks
	Global events
	Life forces (business/industry, media, government, community, family, religion, education)
	3. Work & leisure
5. The thirties (1977–1986)	With regard to work and leisure, the following information is provided:
	In terms of the life task work, Coelho became a successful lyricist for all successful Brazilian songwriters in 1978.
	He also moved his career as a consultant from Philips to CBS in 1979.
	In 1980 Coelho started promoting his creative work together with his life partner, Cristina, who promoted her art works as well.
	Coelho’s leisure time was spent in travelling.
	From 1982 his leisure time was filled with his spiritual development as a member of the RAM order, of which he became a master in 1986. The basis for his professional career was his spiritual journey and development.
	His first success as a professional writer – which started in 1987 with the book “The pilgrimage” (Coelho, 1987) – was strongly connected to his spiritual journey, since it was an autobiographical reflection on his travels to Santiago de Compostela.
	From this point onwards, Coelho’s work and leisure-time activities are hardly to be distinguished, since they are highly integrated through the fact that many of his books include or are even based on his personal, autobiographical experiences in his leisure time.
	Impacting life forces:
	Family
	Religion
	Education
	Community
	Media
	Business/industry
	No information on the impact of global events is provided for this period of life and this particular life task of work and leisure.
6. The forties (1987–1996)	With regard to the life task work and leisure, the following information is provided:
	For Coelho, becoming a writer was viewed as his work, as well as being a leisure activity – creative work – from his forties onwards.
	In this decade many of Coelho’s books are based on his experiences of travelling and his spiritual development in the context of the order of RAM, which shows the combination of work and leisure in his books.
	“Coelhomania” or “Coelhisme” is an expression of the concept of Coelho as a “life-style” (Morais, 2009), which shows the integration of work and leisure time into one.
	Impacting life forces:
	Family
	Religion
	Education
	Community
	Media
	Business/industry
No information on the impact of global events is provided for this period of life and this particular life task of work and leisure.	

(continued)

Table 7.21 (continued)

Historical periods in the development of Paulo Coelho	Components of holistic wellness expressed through the life tasks	
	Global events	
	Life forces (business/industry, media, government, community, family, religion, education)	
	3. Work & leisure	
7. The fifties (1997–2006)	With regard to the life task work and leisure, the following information is provided:	
	In his fifties, Coelho belonged to the international jetset life and attended international events.	
	He had already won many awards and gained many achievements for his work as an author.	
	Coelho felt that spirituality and humanity were the base for work and leisure time and contributed to fulfilling economic, psychological and special purposes.	
	Coelho’s leisure time was filled with spiritual activities and rituals (walking, praying, meditating, archery etc.), which increased his connection to God, his creativity and intuition and influenced his work as an author directly.	
	Work and leisure time were two connected concepts that were inter-related and affected his health and well-being.	
	Impacting life forces:	
	Family	
	Religion	
	Education	
	Community	
	Media	
	Business/industry	
	No information on the impact of global events is provided for this period of life and this particular life task of work and leisure, except that Coelho attended selected global events, such as the world economic forum at Davos, international prize-giving events or a function at Buckingham palace.	
	8. The sixties (2007–2016)	With regard to the life task work and leisure, the following information is provided:
		In this decade, Coelho has published three important books and is still highly active as a writer.
His leisure time is still filled with the activities described already in the earlier decades, including meditation, archery and walking.		
Coelho shows social and political engagement on an international level.		
Impacting life forces:		
Family		
Religion		
Education		
Community		
Media		
Government		
Business/industry		
No information on the impact of global events is provided for this period of life and this particular life task of work and leisure, except the stand of the Brazilian government and his social and political engagement at the Frankfurt book fair.		

Source: Researcher’s own construction

7.3.4.1 Paulo Coelho's Early Childhood (1947–1953)

Findings indicate no information on friendship during his early childhood. However, it can be assumed that Coelho spent time mainly in the security complex where he lived (Morais, 2009) with his mother, extended family and friends from the security estate. The influence of friendship during this period was not very strong and it is assumed that family relationships were more important. However, Coelho must have been socially connected, particularly with the community in the security complex. No information about friendship in the kindergarten is provided.

The life force that interacts most significantly with Coelho during this period is the following:

Community Since Coelho spent his first 6 years in the security complex, it can be assumed that he was mostly socially connected with the community of the estate.

No information on any of the other life forces, such as family, religion, education, media, government and business and industry, and their impact on the life task of friendship is provided. The data do not reveal any kind of influence of global events during this period.

7.3.4.2 Childhood and Schooldays (1953–1961)

From the age of 6 years onwards, Coelho made friends in the security estate and became the leader of a “secret organisation” (Morais, 2009) that consisted of (male) friends (and extended family members).

Morais (2009) highlighted that Coelho was not physically accepted by his friends, because of his physical weaknesses as well as his ill-health and respiratory problems. He was only accepted because of his outstanding knowledge gained from books and novels. He was a storyteller in the estate and gained friends through his knowledge, the ability to tell stories and his leadership of a secret organisation (Morais, 2009). He found his first girlfriend at the age of 12 (Morais, 2009, p. 53). The findings do not provide information on Coelho's friendships at school.

Impacting life forces with regard to friendship are as follows:

Family Coelho established friendships in the estate, partly among his extended family members. However, in the definition of Nortjé, Nortjé et al. (2013), friendship does not include a “material, sexual or familial commitment” (Nortjé et al., 2013, p. 50), but rather social connections, positive human interaction and support systems. However, Coelho described individuals of his extended family as friends, because they were a social connection and a support system that provided him with positive human interaction.

Community Coelho made most of his friends in the security estate (Morais, 2009) and was mainly connected socially within the community. His support from friends on the estate was of importance (Morais, 2009).

No information on any of the other life forces, such as religion, education, media, government and business and industry, and their impact on the life task of friendship is provided. The data also do not reveal any kind of influence of global events during this period.

7.3.4.3 The Teenage Years (1962–1966)

During his teenage years, Coelho had many girlfriends and felt very connected to them (Morais, 2009). He started going to theatre plays, developed an interest in socio-political topics and felt a sense of belonging to the theatre community (Morais, 2009).

In 1962 Coelho was shocked by his parents' move to Gávia and he lost his friends from the estate, where he had been an unchallenged leader. However, in 1963, Coelho, being 17 years old, founded a literary club called Rota 15 at Gávia and attracted others interested in literature. However, the data on Coelho hardly speak about any friends, let alone close friends, during his teenage years.

After the change to St Andrews College in 1964, Coelho joined some discussion groups at school, but in the literature, his friends are hardly mentioned. Only in 1965 he befriended Maria, his first girlfriend. However, the relationship did not last long (Morais, 2009). After the split, Coelho spent some time with his uncle in Araruama. While he was there he drove a car without a licence, with some friends as passengers (Morais, 2009, p. 90), and ended up almost killing a young boy. However, these friends are not described as close friends with whom he shared a supportive and close relationship.

A turn and an opening into a new world happened when Coelho met Joel Macedo who introduced him to "Paissandu generation", a club of intellectuals and left-wing activists in Rio. The people from this club became his friends with whom he enjoyed his new freedom (Morais, 2009).

At the age of 18, Coelho became a womaniser (Morais, 2009) and spent a lot of time drinking and meeting his friends, who are not described more closely. Especially the second time he was admitted to an asylum, Coelho felt lonely, depressed and fearful (Morais, 2009). Having fled from the mental hospital, he spent a week together with Renata, one of his girlfriends (Morais, 2009). However, she was not described as a close friend.

After his second stay at the hospital, Coelho developed a phenomenon called "Stockholm syndrome", which made him develop a strong closeness to the doctor who gave him electroshock therapy. However, this relationship with the doctor cannot be seen as a friendship, but rather a relationship based on traumatic experiences. Coelho felt very close to the doctor and even consulted him years later when he had problems with his girlfriends (Morais, 2009).

Shortly after he had moved to his grandparents' house, he felt too lonely and returned to his parents' home (Morais, 2009). This move back to his parents can be interpreted as a lack of friendship and support in Coelho's life.

Morais (2009) described in his biography that during Coelho's stays in the mental hospital only a few friends visited him. The visits and visitors were not many and decreased over the three stays in the asylum.

In conclusion, Coelho seemed to only have a few friends during his teenage years who shared his interest in literature, socio-political matters and the theatre. Girlfriends seemed to play a much bigger role during this time of his life than other friendships. The girlfriends supported him and were the main focus of his socio-political human connection.

Impacting life forces:

Family During his teenage life, Coelho's parents were not happy with his development and with his friends, whom they classified as drug addicts and homosexuals (Morais, 2009). They tried to influence Coelho, but they lost control over his movements and developments during his teenage years.

Education The data hardly refer to Coelho's school friends or friends he met at educational institutions. His friends were mainly drawn from his interests groups, such as the literary group and the group of left-wing intellectuals, which shows Coelho's social maladjustment in society.

Community His time in Rota 15 and later in "Paissandu generation" brought Coelho into contact with friends who had the same ideas and shared the same worldview. In the theatre and socio-political discussion groups he also met friends with the same ideas and interests.

No information is available on whether or how religion, the media, the government, business or industry influenced his friends and friendships.

No impact of global events is referred to in the data.

7.3.4.4 The Twenties (1967–1976)

In 1968, Coelho's girlfriend, Fabiola, helped him financially to produce his first play on stage. However, he then met Vera Richter and she became his girlfriend in 1969. In his biography there are only a few references to friends and friendship during his twenties. These descriptions mainly deal with Coelho's girlfriends and their relationships. However, it was highlighted (Morais, 2009) that his grandfather was the only one in the family who accepted his "strange friends" from the theatre, who were not described closely, but who seemed to belong to the theatre world.

In the 1970s, Coelho got involved in the occult, connected with satanists and became part of their sect. The satanists are not described as close friends of Coelho. The only friend mentioned (besides his wife) is Raul Seixas, who became an ally in terms of work (music and song production), as satanist and as a close friend (Morais, 2009). They travelled together to New York in 1974, shared an interest in the occult and were successful in music and text production. Raul supported Coelho; the two interacted positively, shared similar interests and were successful.

Impacting life forces:

Family Only his grandfather who died (1971) during this decade of Coelho's life accepted his "strange friends" from the theatre scene (Morais, 2009) and was therefore particularly close to him.

Religion He joined the satanists with their interest in the occult and interacted with them. During the same decade, Coelho left the group and returned to his childhood belief. He shared his interest in the occult with his close friend, Raul Seixas.

Community Coelho was mainly engaged in the society of the satanists. However, they were not described as friends or in terms of friendship, but rather as acquaintances.

Media Coelho became a member of the Brazilian Society of Writers. However, friendships that derived from this group were not described. This society was rather described as highly critical of Coelho.

Business/Industry Coelho became good friend with Raul Seixas, with whom he produced songs, Coelho as a lyricist and songtext writer. Raul became a colleague and good friend, the only one during this decade. Friendship seemed to be connected to Coelho's interests, which he shared with a few close friends.

No information is available on the influence of education and the government during his twenties.

No impact of global events is referred to in the data.

7.3.4.5 The Thirties (1977–1986)

During his thirties, Coelho's main relationship was with Cissa, followed by the relationship with Cristina, whom he met in 1979 and who became his life partner. They travelled together and started to promote their common artistic career. Friends and friendships are hardly mentioned in the literature. His relationship was with Cristina who brought him back to his Christian belief.

A second highly important contact became J., his master of the RAM tradition and Coelho's personal master. J. did not become a friend as such, but he became one of Coelho's most important social contacts throughout his entire life. J. connected Coelho to the RAM and its practices on an individual and collective level. RAM became the most important social group connection and collective membership in Coelho's life. During his thirties, Coelho met various people through the RAM tradition and they played an important role in his life and became protagonists in his books. However, they are not described as friends, but rather as acquaintances.

In 1982, Coelho published a book on vampirism, but the only chapter that was published under his name was originally written by his "friend and colleague", Tony Buddha (Morais, 2009, pp. 336–337). Coelho used the work of this friend and published it under his own name, which made Tony Buddha very angry (Morais, 2009). However, Coelho did not feel any remorse, which can be interpreted as rather minimal interest in this friendship. He preferred making a career and being successful to respecting the friendship.

In 1986, Coelho took Tony Buddha on a trip to Spain. However, he invited him as a “slave” to work for him without payment during the time in Madrid (Morais, 2009). Although Coelho offered terrible working conditions to his former friend, he accepted. Coelho untreated him without any empathy and when Tony found out that he had been trapped into slavery working conditions, Coelho felt no regret at all.

Impacting life forces:

Family Cristina changed Coelho's life and brought him back to Christianity (Morais, 2009). It is assumed that Coelho's friendships also changed while he was with Cristina. She also supported him in the decision to join the RAM.

Religion Coelho's newly established connection to J., to the RAM membership and practices, played an important role in his social contacts and his positive interactions and support systems. He was supported by J., the messenger of the RAM, who became one of Coelho's most influential contacts and social group connections. J. is only described as a master, but it might be that Coelho also started seeing him as a friend.

Community Coelho became part of the RAM and the RAM practices, first as a member, later on as a master. The impact of the RAM community on Coelho's life is one of the most important.

No information is available about the influence of education, the media, the government and the business and industry in Coelho's thirties. No impact of global events is referred to in the data with regard to friendship.

In conclusion, Raul Seixas and J., his master of the RAM practices, were close to Coelho. Seixas's friendship with him was professionally based, while J's friendship was spiritually anchored. The “friendship” with Tony Buddha seemed to have been an unbalanced, hierarchical relationship. The relationship between Coelho and Tony cannot be described as positive, but rather as social interaction in which one person had to act according to the power and dominance of the other. During this decade, as in Coelho's twenties, friends and friendships only seemed to be of importance to him if they contributed to his personal professional and spiritual development.

7.3.4.6 The Forties (1987–1996)

At the beginning of the forties, Coelho experienced his first breakthrough as a writer and the entire decade was dedicated to travelling and the promotion of his work (Morais, 2009). Coelho employed Monica as his agent, who soon promoted his work across Europe and who became one of his most important friends from this decade onwards. Again, it was a friendship that was connected to his work, the promotion of his work, his personal interests and professional success.

Cristina and Coelho did also have friends in Rio who helped them to hand out leaflets about their work; the friendship was again connected to Coelho's professional career.

Another project Coelho started in his forties was the “mystery travel project”. The data highlighted that he planned to promote this project with a friend (Morais, 2009). However, neither the friend nor the friendship was described in detail.

During his forties Coelho used his friendships to promote his work, such as Jean and Monica.

In the book, “The pilgrimage” (Coelho, 1987), Coelho also described the relationship to his guide, Petrus, which developed during their shared walk on the Road to Santiago. Petrus was described as an advisor, as a (spiritual) guide and in the end even as a friend with whom he interacted. The concept of friendship in the book is, again, connected to the concept of developing personally through friends.

After the success of Coelho's first book, he went on a journey with Cristina's mother and a friend, called Claudia. They visited Egypt and Coelho developed the idea for the book, “The alchemist” (Coelho, 1988). However, the friendship with Claudia was hardly described in the literature (Morais, 2009) and no further information on it was provided.

In 1989 Coelho travelled on the Road to Rome. He spent a week travelling with his agent and friend, Monica. At this time, the friendship with Monica had developed into a strong, mutual connection (Morais, 2009). While Coelho travelled on the Road to Rome, his friend and former counterpart, Raul Seixas, died on 21 August 1989 (Morais, 2009). Coelho was shocked and very sad about the sudden death of his close friend. However, no further information is available on Coelho's friendship and Raul's death.

Coelho published several more books during this decade. However, the topic of friendship did not seem to play an important role in his life. The main topics in his life and books are spirituality, love and his career.

Impacting life forces:

Family Cristina promoted their work together with Coelho and their friends, particularly in this decade. Coelho's relationship to Cristina seemed to be the most important one in his life and more important than any other friendships.

Religion During his forties, Coelho followed the RAM practices and did the tasks assigned by his master, J., which guided him into many different places and made him meet many interesting people who inspired him and who became main characters in his books (such as the young woman at the “ritual of fire” in “Brida” (Coelho, 1990)) (Morais, 2009).

Community Coelho was in contact with J., who became his personal advisor and spiritual guide, as well as a kind of friend. Also Petrus, the guide who walked the Road to Santiago with him, seemed to be a kind of friend. Both of them belonged to the RAM community, which had a strong impact on Coelho as a community with its set values and practices.

Business/Industry Business and industry had a strong influence on his friendships and several of Coelho's friends, as described above, were connected to the industry and to his career, such as Monica and Raul.

No information is available on the influence of education, the media or the government and their influences on the friendship and friends of Coelho in his forties. No impact of global events is referred to in the data with regard to friendship.

7.3.4.7 The Fifties (1997–2006)

This decade is one of international fame and the international jet set life. Coelho described extensively his idea of humanity moving into a new millennium, turning to spirituality (Arias, 2001), and his idea of new approaches to God (Coelho, 2007). According to available data, this decade of Coelho's life dealt particularly with (philosophical) and ontological questions, touching on the concepts of humanity, responsibility, fear, luck and the perception of God, rather than with relationships. Friendships are hardly described and Coelho's reflections and interests seemed rather focused on the development of his personal awareness and spirituality than on his social contacts.

During his fifties, Coelho travelled, he fulfilled new tasks assigned by his master, J., and aimed at becoming part of the Brazilian Academy of Writers. He met other international celebrities and was invited to Buckingham Palace. As in "Like a flowing river", Coelho focused on self-reflection and on integrating conceptual ideas into his life, while friendships and friends seemed to be neglected or not of high importance to him. His books, as autobiographical constructs, as well as his biographical excerpts and data, referred to self-reflection and deeper spiritual development rather than to interpersonal relationships and friendships (Coelho, 2006). Therefore, for the decade of Coelho's fifties, hardly any relationships and friendships were described in the data analysed.

Impacting life forces:

Religion The data do not provide explicit insights into the influence of religion on Coelho's friends and friendships; however, it can be assumed that Coelho was still in contact with his master, J., and with other members of RAM who might be described as spiritual (religious) friends.

Community Coelho now belonged to the international jet set community. However, the data do not provide rich information on friendships in this community. Data show that Coelho was, for example, interviewed by Christina Lamb, the Sunday Times journalist, who became one of the main characters in "The Zahir" (Coelho, 2005, published in English version), which had an impact on his professional life. After becoming part of the Brazilian Academy of Letters, Coelho might have made new friends, but friendships are not described in the literature. This is also the case for Coelho's life in France. In 2004, Coelho and Cristina bought an old mill in Saint-Martin in France and became part of a small village community. However, no data are available on contacts and friendships established in their new living contexts.

No information is available on the influence of the family, education, the media, the government, business and the industry and their influences on friendship and

friends for Paulo Coelho during his fifties. No impact of global events is referred to in the data with regard to friendship.

7.3.4.8 The Sixties (2007–2016)

Coelho's sixth decade started with his sixtieth birthday and with his reflection on friendship and friends. Coelho celebrated this day with Cristina in France (Morais, 2009) and in his blog he reflected on his experiences of loneliness and solitude on the evening of 23 August (Coelho, 2014a). He emphasised his choice to celebrate his birthday with Cristina only, but then he felt lonesome. His friend and agent, Monica, was the first to call him shortly after midnight (Coelho, 2014a) and he received many messages and birthday greetings during the night, which made him go to bed happy. Coelho reflected on the fact that many people whom he had not known personally made wonderful contributions to his birthday on the internet. Coelho realised the presence of his fan club with its president, Márcia Nascimento, whom he had once met. He realised: "no matter how famous you may be, you will always have the feeling that you are alone" (Coelho, 2014a). He concluded: "The other is that no matter how unknown you may be, friends will always surround you, even if you have never seen their faces."

With these statements, Coelho described his inner feelings of loneliness and redefined his concept of friendship from face-to-face contact friends to "unknown friends" (Coelho, 2014a). Coelho thereby described the foundation of human connections and their importance, particularly when friends are not present, and the concept of love and building this connection. Coelho described a friend as a field where one sows love and harvests with gratitude (Coelho, 2014a). This field becomes one's "home" and one's "table" (Coelho, 2014a).

Coelho (2014a) emphasised that a person can see friendship best during the absence of friendship; the meaning of friendship is based on sharing the good, the sorrow and the "enjoyment of life in all its fullness" (Coelho, 2014a).

His sixtieth birthday was a key experience in terms of Coelho's conscious awareness of friendships: it started with a deep reflection on friendship, its redefinition, the experience of the absence of friends and loneliness. This was the first time Coelho's acknowledged his need for friendship and his loneliness. This loneliness seems paradoxical to the fact that by 2010 approximately 500 million readers had read his books (Coelho, 2010b, 1:10 min.). The discrepancy of being famous and having fans and the need for close friends is expressed. The topic of friendship is addressed in "Aleph" (Coelho, 2011), emphasising the reconnection with people (across different lifetimes), travel and spiritual renewal and growth (Purwandoyo & Kurnia, 2013) in the form of an autobiographical account. "Aleph" becomes an autobiographical expression of the need to reconnect with friends and explains why during Paulo Coelho's life, relationships were hardly in focus or considered. Only through travelling and personal self-renewal could the main character aim at redemption, at the reconquering of his "kingdom" (Coelho, 2011, p. 11) – something that Coelho aimed for during his entire life. While it is a book about friend-

ship, it is also a book about sexism and femininity and it has been criticised for lacking empathy (Teutsch, 2012). By 2011, Coelho had over six million followers on Facebook and was still following his dream, writing for himself (Coelho, 2010b), wanting to be loved (Coelho, 2010b, 20:02 min.), without strong emphasis on the other, on friendship or friends.

Impacting life forces:

Family Coelho was close to Cristina and she reflected with him on his sixtieth birthday on why he had chosen loneliness and solitude for this birthday, instead of friends and friendships.

Religion In his book, "Aleph", Coelho referred to reincarnation and the experience of friendship and redemption across lifetimes, which provides a deeper insight into his relationships and challenges across lifetimes.

Community Coelho described his new ideas on friendship in the context of his readers and internet followers: He felt friendship with his fans and internet community and experienced the fact that friendship means experiencing both happiness and sorrow. Coelho felt strongly connected to and supported by his online community and experienced positive social human interaction and social connections.

No information is available on the influence of education, the media, the government or business/industry and their influences on friendship and friends for Paulo Coelho during his sixties.

No impact of global events is referred to in the data with regard to friendship.

7.3.4.9 Conclusion on the Life Task Friendship

A conclusion regarding the life task friendship is provided and Table 7.22 provides an overview across Coelho's life decades and the life task friendship.

No information is available on Coelho's friendships during early childhood. It is assumed that he had friends in the security estate and made friends at school later. He founded a secret organisation in the estate. As a teenager, Coelho had many girlfriends and found other friends in Rota 15. Most of his friendships were built on common interests, such as literature, writing, the theatre or politics. However, none of these friendships was described in detail or as close friendships.

In his twenties, his most important friend and colleague was Raul Seixas, with whom Coelho shared various interests and at a point even a successful career as song producer and text writer.

During his thirties, Coelho had one particular friend, Tony Buddha, whom he treated unfairly and disrespectfully. Coelho was mainly driven by self-interest and self-care, but not by an empathetic relationship with his friend. He met J., his master of the RAM practices, who connected him to RAM and helped and supported him to become a master in the RAM tradition. From this decade on, J. was highly important to Coelho, for his spiritual development and his career as a writer.

Table 7.22 Life task friendship

Historical periods in the development of Paulo Coelho	Components of holistic wellness expressed through the life tasks
	Global events
	Life forces (business/industry, media, government, community, family, religion, education)
	4. Friendship
1. Coelho’s early childhood (1947–1953)	Regarding friendship, hardly any information is available on Coelho during this period of his life. It is expected that most of his friendships and social connectedness would have been established in the security estate community during his first six years of life.
	Impacting life forces:
	Community
	No impact of global events is referred to in the data.
2. Childhood and schooldays (1953–1961)	From the age of 6 years onwards, Coelho found friends in the security estate and became the leader of a “secret organisation” built up of (male) friends (and extended family members). He had his first experiences with girls at the age of 12. No information about friendships at schools or at a camp he attended is provided in the data.
	Most of Coelho’s friendships derived from the interest groups that he joined, such as the theatre group, the literary club or the intellectual and political discussion group. He did not seem to have many friends at school. Altogether, girlfriends seemed to play a much bigger role in his teenage life than other friends.
	Impacting life forces:
	Family
	Community
	No impact of global events is referred to in the data.
3. The teenage years (1962–1966)	Most of Coelho’s friendships derived from the interest groups that he joined, such as the theatre group, the literary club or the intellectual and political discussion group. He did not seem to have many friends at school. Altogether, girlfriends seemed to play a much bigger role in Coelho’s teenage life than other friends.
	Impacting life forces:
	Family
	Education
	Community
	No impact of global events is referred to in the data.

(continued)

Table 7.22 (continued)

Historical periods in the development of Paulo Coelho	Components of holistic wellness expressed through the life tasks
	Global events
	Life forces (business/industry, media, government, community, family, religion, education)
4. The twenties (1967–1976)	4. Friendship
	During his twenties, Coelho's main colleague and friend seems to have been Raul Seixas with whom he worked, travelled, was successful and shared ideas on success and the occult. Raul supported him and the two experienced positive human interaction, sharing similar interests and both aiming at becoming successful.
	Impacting life forces:
	Family
	Religion
	Community
	Media
	Business/industry
	No impact of global events is referred to in the data.
	5. The thirties (1977–1986)
Coelho met J., his master of RAM practices, who connected him to RAM and helped and supported him to become a master in the RAM tradition. From the decade of his thirties, J. was highly important for Coelho and his spiritual development and at the same time for his career as a writer and author.	
Impacting life forces:	
Family	
Religion	
Community	
No impact of global events is referred to in the data.	
6. The forties (1987–1996)	Friendships and friends of Coelho are only mentioned in two instances: either with regard to being important team players in his career or with regard to the promotion of his career as a writer or in the context of RAM (J. and Petrus). However, the social interactions and contacts with RAM followers are not described as friendships.
	Impacting life forces:
	Family
	Religion
	Community
	Business/industry
	No impact of global events is referred to in the data with regard to friendship.

(continued)

Table 7.22 (continued)

Historical periods in the development of Paulo Coelho	Components of holistic wellness expressed through the life tasks
	Global events
	Life forces (business/industry, media, government, community, family, religion, education)
	4. Friendship
7. The fifties (1997–2006)	<p>Friendship and friends did not seem to play a role in the decade of Coelho's fifties. He rather seemed to have been self-centred in terms of his career, his travelling, his personal development and the relationships that were connected to his writing, his inspirational ideas and his books. He belonged to different communities and was in contact with them and it can be assumed that friendships developed with people belonging to those communities, but the data do not reveal particular insights into these relationships or friendships.</p> <p>Impacting life forces:</p> <p>Religion</p> <p>Community</p> <p>No impact of global events is referred to in the data with regard to friendship.</p>
8. The sixties (2007–2016)	<p>On his sixtieth birthday, the issues of friendship and friends became relevant for Coelho. He felt lonely and only then discovered that he had many friends in the world who were fans of his books and who connected to him through the internet. He redefined friendship in terms of having friends that are not always known to a person, but who represent human interaction in the name of humanity. Friendship includes the sharing of happiness and sorrow and does not necessarily mean social connection to a person who is present, but could also be an overall deep connection to humans who are unknown to a person and who might appear in a person's life at any point.</p> <p>Impacting life forces:</p> <p>Family</p> <p>Religion</p> <p>Community</p> <p>No impact of global events is referred to in the data with regard to friendship.</p>

Source: Researcher's own construction

The main friendships that influenced Coelho during his forties were the connection and friendship with his master, J., who guided him spiritually. However, Coelho also developed a friendship with his guide, Petrus, described in his first successful book. This friendship was connected to Coelho's spiritual development. Coelho's friendship with his agent, Monica, who supported him throughout his career, also became more important. Finally, the death of his friend Raul shocked Coelho and left him sad. All the friendships of Coelho described during this decade were connected in one way or another to his professional career.

Hardly any information is available on Coelho's personal relationships and friendships in his fifties. However, it can be assumed that he developed friendships in his new communities (RAM, Academy of Brazilian Writers and the small village he moved into in France). Friendships are not the main focus during this decade.

The sixties indicated a change in Coelho's life with regard to friendship. The decade began with deep reflections on friends and friendships and Coelho's feelings of loneliness and solitude. This reflection indicated a change in focus from the ego to the other and provided a new view of Coelho on his relationships. However, even during this decade his main focus remained in the domain of self-reflection and ego-centredness. This attitude of Coelho might be explained through the book "Aleph" and the challenging autobiographical accounts on relationships throughout former lifetimes of Paulo Coelho.

7.3.5 Life Task 5: Love

Love is a committed, lasting, intimate relationship with another person, as defined in Sect. 4.5.1.5. Findings pertaining to the life task of love in each historical period throughout Paulo Coelho's lifespan are explored and discussed in this section.

7.3.5.1 Paulo Coelho's Early Childhood (1947–1953)

During the first years of his life, Coelho found himself in a committed, lasting, intimate and stable relationship with his mother. Being a housewife and child rearer, she cared for him at home in the estate (Morais, 2009). Hardly any concrete information is available on the relationship with his mother or any other person at this stage of Coelho's life. However, it can be assumed that he experienced the d) presence of his mother as maintaining an enduring, stable and loving relationship with him. All the other components of healthy love relationships defined by Myers et al. (2000) do not apply during this period of Coelho's life (Table 7.23).

With regard to the impact of life forces, the following life forces had an influence on Coelho's life during this period with regard to the life task love:

Impacting life forces:

Family Coelho's mother was the person Paulo trusted most. They were in a stable, caring and enduring relationship. Since his father was often absent owing to work, it is assumed that Coelho's relationship with his mother was closer than the one with his father.

No information on any other life forces regarding the life task love is available. The data also do not reveal any kind of influence of global events during this period.

7.3.5.2 Childhood and Schooldays (1953–1961)

Findings indicate that, as a schoolchild, Coelho did experience some close relationships with his friends and extended family members in the security estate. With regard to the life task love, however, a) enduring, trusting, close relationships during

Table 7.23 Love in early childhood

Life span	Life task love with sub-categories					
Periods in Paulo Coelho’s development	a) The ability to be intimate, trusting, and self-disclosing with another person	b) The ability to receive as well as express affection with significant others	c) The capacity to experience or convey non-possessive caring that respects the uniqueness of another	d) The presence of enduring, stable intimate relationships in one’s life	e) Concern for the nurturance and growth of others	(f) Satisfaction with one’s sexual life or the perception that one’s needs for physical touch and closeness are being met, or both
1. Year 1–6				x		

Source: Researcher’s own construction

this life phase seemed to be mainly connected to Coelho’s parents and extended family members and friends with whom he built a “secret organisation” (Morais, 2009).

The available data do not reveal any love relationship of Coelho that goes beyond the relationship with his parents and extended family members from the “secret organisation”, which provided him with the opportunity to experience a) the ability to be intimate, trusting, and self-disclosing with his parents and extended family members and selected friends in the estate. He also experienced d) the presence of enduring, stable intimate relationships in his life through his parents’ care. Particularly the family relationship with his mother – as the main child carer (Morais, 2009) – was very stable, enduring and intimate during this period of his life. The relationship with his father was not as close because of his father’s work as an engineer (Morais, 2009), but it also seemed to be loving and protecting.

Coelho’s parents enrolled him in a Jesuit school when he was 6 years old. The main values at the primary school were hard work and respect for one’s fellows (Morais, 2009, p. 41), not the experience of love and care. In the educational institution Coelho did not experience the c) capacity to experience or convey non-possessive caring that respects the uniqueness of another, but rather strict discipline in the name of God.

In this context, Coelho also experienced his developing sexual feelings as “perverse”, describing his actions as a “perverse side of his personality” rather than being more generous and gentle with himself (Morais, 2009, p. 52). He showed that he was not f.) satisfied with his sexual life or the perception that one’s needs for physical touch and closeness are being met, or both. However, Coelho experienced the c) capacity to experience or convey non-possessive caring that respects the uniqueness of another from his uncle and his aunt in Araruama where he spent time during his holidays.

Table 7.24 Love in childhood and schooldays

Life span	Life task love with sub-categories					
Periods in Paulo Coelho's development	a) The ability to be intimate, trusting, and self-disclosing with another person	(b) The ability to receive as well as express affection with significant others	c) The capacity to experience or convey non-possessive caring that respects the uniqueness of another	d) The presence of enduring, stable intimate relationships in one's life	e) Concern for the nurturance and growth of others	(f) Satisfaction with one's sexual life or the perception that one's needs for physical touch and closeness are being met, or both
2. Year 6–12	X fulfilled	–	X unfulfilled	X fulfilled	–	X unfulfilled

Source: Researcher's own construction

Only at the age of 12 did Coelho note in his diary his first romantic love, his first girlfriend. However, no findings are revealed in the data that refer to the depth of a) intimacy and trust in this relationship, b) the mutual expression of affection, c.) the caring aspect, d.) the presence of enduring, stable relationships, d.) concern for the nurturance and growth of others; and f.) the satisfaction with one's sexual life or physical needs (Table 7.24).

The life forces affecting Coelho's life during this period are the following:

Family Coelho experienced his most loving and enduring, stable relationships with his parents, extended family members and during the holidays with his uncle and his aunt in Araruama.

Education Coelho experienced school as hard work and a very disciplined environment in the Jesuit tradition. The Jesuits did not teach him compassionate love and care.

Community He also experienced stable and enduring relationships with his extended family members and friends from the secret organisation during his time in the estate. At the age of 12, he fell in love with his first girlfriend, but hardly any detailed information is revealed about this love and its intensity and how this relationship influenced him.

No significant information on any of the other life forces, such as religion, media, government and business and industry, regarding the life task of love is available. The data also do not reveal any kind of influence of global events during this period.

7.3.5.3 The Teenage Years (1962–1966)

Findings indicate that the teenager Coelho loved girls and writing and struggled to believe in God (Morais, 2009). With regard to the life task love, however, a) enduring, trusting, close relationships during this life phase seemed to be mainly connected to Coelho's parents and extended family members and friends with whom he built a "secret organisation" (Morais, 2009).

Morais (2009) explained that Coelho had a very close and loving relationship with his grandfather Cazuza, who died unexpectedly of a heart attack. This death became a key issue for Coelho and his relationship with God. However, the very close and affectionate relationship between Coelho and his grandfather before his death contributed to Coelho experiencing b) the ability to receive as well as express affection with significant others. He felt very emotionally touched and suffered from depression after the death of his grandfather (Morais, 2009), having loved him deeply.

At the beginning of 1965 Coelho fell deeply in love for the first time and started a relationship with Márcia, who was a neighbour and a member of Rota 15. Coelho felt peaceful and content with the relationship (Morais, 2009, p. 83) and fell into a deep depression when Márcia left him in response to pressure from her parents who were unhappy with their relationship. In his first love relationship, Coelho showed the a) the ability to be intimate, trusting, and self-disclosing with another person, in this case Márcia. He showed her his feelings and was able to b) receive as well as express affection with her, who became a significant other in his life. The description of this first and relatively short relationship does reveal that Coelho was able to feel strongly for Márcia; however, it does not reveal his c) capacity to experience or convey non-possessive caring that respects the uniqueness of another, nor d) the presence of enduring, stable intimate relationships in one's life; e) concern for the nurturance and growth of others; and f) satisfaction with one's sexual life or the perception that one's needs for physical touch and closeness are being met, or both.

Because of the car accident that Coelho caused after Márcia left him, his father punished him and in this period parental love is hardly described while the strictness and religiosity of his parents are emphasised. In 1962 his mother took Coelho to a psychiatrist for the first time and in 1965 his father punished him several times for misconduct. During his teenage years, his parents were described as restrictive and as not understanding Coelho's dream of becoming a writer. At the time Coelho did not experience c) the capacity to experience or convey non-possessive caring that respects the uniqueness of another, but rather the opposite. His parents did not respect his "otherness", but rather tried to change him, his ideas and dreams and the goals in his life to suit their understanding of what Coelho should achieve, prefer and do.

At the age of 18, Coelho became a "womaniser", going out with Márcia, Renata Sorrah and Fabíola Fracarolli at the same time (Morais, 2009, pp. 110–111). This description of Coelho's relationship with women points to non-enduring connections. Coelho went out with various girlfriends at the same time, which could be a sign of the opposite of the a) the ability to be intimate, trusting and self-disclosing

with another person. It might be assumed that Coelho was involved with the different women on the surface level, but not deeply in love. He felt free (Morais, 2009) to be in these relationships at the same time. No information is available on the degree to which (b) he was able to receive and express affection, (c) he could experience or convey non-possessive caring that respects the uniqueness of another, (e) concern for the nurturance and growth of others, and (f) satisfaction with his sexual life.

After Coelho's escape after his second hospital encounter, he spent a week wandering around with Renata (Morais, 2009), which shows that the two must have had (a) an intimate, trusting, and self-disclosing relationship in which Renata supported him.

During his teenage years and particularly after his second stay in the mental hospital, Coelho's maternal grandfather, Tuca, offered Coelho the use of his apartment in the commercial centre of Rio (Morais, 2009) and Coelho accepted this offer. The offer of moving into this house shows a love-driven action by his maternal grandfather who loved Coelho and who was the only person in the family who seemed to understand and accept Coelho and his friends (Arias, 2001; Morais, 2009). This particular relationship with his maternal grandfather, whom Coelho described as being closer to him than his father (Morais, 2009), shows Coelho's (a) ability to be intimate, trusting, and self-disclosing with another person; and (c) the experience and conveying of non-possessive caring that respects the uniqueness of another. Coelho respected his maternal grandfather and felt respected by him in his uniqueness as a grandson. The relationship with his maternal grandfather showed Coelho's ability to maintain (d) a present enduring, stable intimate relationship in his life, even in his family context during his teenage years (Table 7.25).

The data do not provide concrete and direct responses to the question of Coelho having (e) concern for the nurturance and growth of others and (f) his satisfaction with his sexual life during his teenage years. However, it seems as if Coelho rather cared about himself than being concerned about the nurturance and growth of others.

Impacting life forces:

Family Coelho's parents, his paternal grandfather and later his maternal grandfather influenced him and his experience of love within the family. While his parents acted restrictively and worried about Coelho's development, the grandfathers on the paternal and maternal side seemed to have been close to Coelho and to have loved and supported him in an intimate and affectionate way. During his holidays in Ararua, Coelho was loved and supported by his uncle and aunt. However, not much about his relationship with all the family members has been revealed on a deeper level.

Education Coelho changed schools during his teenage years. However, this did not seem to have an obvious impact on his love life.

Table 7.25 Love in teenage years

Life span	Life task love with sub-categories					
Periods in Paulo Coelho's development	a) The ability to be intimate, trusting, and self-disclosing with another person	b) The ability to receive as well as express affection with significant others	c) The capacity to experience or convey non-possessive caring that respects the uniqueness of another	d) The presence of enduring, stable intimate relationships in one's life	e) Concern for the nurturance and growth of others	(f) Satisfaction with one's sexual life or the perception that one's needs for physical touch and closeness are being met, or both
3. Year 13–19	X fulfilled	X fulfilled	X fulfilled X unfulfilled	X fulfilled	X unfulfilled	–

Source: Researcher's own construction

Community He enjoyed his membership of Rotá, where he met Márcia, his first girlfriend. Love for her and love of literature were connected through their common interest. Even during his other relationships from the age of 18 onwards, he shared common interests in terms of reading, writing, literature or the theatre and his love seemed to be connected to these common interests.

No significant information on the other life forces, such as religion, media, government and business and industry regarding the life task of love is available. The data also do not reveal any kind of influence of global events on love during this period.

7.3.5.4 The Twenties (1967–1976)

During his twenties, Coelho's parents took him to a mental hospital for the third time and later supported him to attend group therapy sessions, as advised by one of the doctors who came to see him after he had destroyed everything in his room (Morais, 2009). The trial of the parents to help their son showed deep love and (d) the presence of their enduring, stable relationship in his life, although it might not have improved Coelho's (a) ability to be intimate, trusting, and self-disclosing with his parents, but rather had the opposite effect on him. It might be assumed that during this phase Coelho could not improve his ability to trust and self-disclose himself in the context of his relationship with his parents.

Coelho was, in 1968, still with his girlfriend, Fabiola, who sponsored his first own theatre play production (Morais, 2009). During this relationship and with

regard to Fabiola's effort, Coelho experienced the a) the ability to be intimate, trusting, and self-disclosing with Fabiola; as well as (c) the capacity to experience or convey non-possessive caring that respects the uniqueness of another. With Fabiola, Coelho experienced (d) the presence of an enduring, stable intimate relationship in his life for approximately 3 years. Fabiola believed in Coelho and was prepared to support him in his wish and professional career by sponsoring his theatre production.

In 1969 Coelho met Vera Prnjatovic Richter, who was 11 years older than him and who saw him on stage, acting in a play. They were a couple for a year and split up when Coelho was drawn into drugs and the occult in 1970. Shortly after this, Coelho fell in love with Christina, to whom he wrote 44 letters during his journey to the US. However, even this relationship did not last long. His love life was intensive, but rather unstable and (d) the presence of enduring, stable intimate relationships in one's life and his (e) concern for the nurturance and growth of others were rather low.

At the end of 1971, Coelho met Gisa, whom he married only a few weeks after they had met. She fell pregnant shortly after their marriage, which drove Coelho into a deep crisis, and he convinced her to abort the baby, from which she never recovered. She attempted suicide and Coelho encouraged her to go ahead (Morais, 2009). She survived and became part of the satanic rituals. In 1974, Coelho bought an apartment in Rua Voluntarios da Patria in Botafogo with Gisa (Morais, 2009). Shortly afterwards they were kidnapped by a paramilitary group in Rio de Janeiro (Coelho, 2006, p. 103). Gisa suffered from paranoia, was very disappointed about Coelho's behaviour during the days of hostage and left him soon afterwards. She was particularly shocked about the fact that Coelho was too scared to respond to her pleas to give her a sign during their captivity. However, Coelho was so scared of being killed himself that he did not dare respond to her plea while they were held hostage.

During his twenties, Coelho fell in love with several women, had girlfriends and got married. However, the data do not mention love as such. To a certain degree, Coelho showed that he was able to be a) intimate, trusting, and self-disclosing with another person and to show the ability to maintain d) enduring, stable intimate relationships in his life.

The descriptions of the relationships do not show Coelho's (b) ability to receive as well as express affection with significant others. Coelho seemed rather self-concerned and struggled with his own emotions and affection. This is the case particularly in the context of Gisa's pregnancy and his personal crisis about accepting the pregnancy and his child. He convinced her to abort the child and supported her suicide attempt (Morais, 2009). These facts support the assumption that Coelho did not express his affection for Gisa in an empathetic and affectionate way, but rather by following a kind of paradoxical and reason-led approach. Coelho did not have (c) the capacity to experience or convey non-possessive caring that respects the uniqueness of another; or be (e) concerned for the nurturance and growth of others, particularly his girlfriends and his first wife, Gisa. Hardly any information is available

Table 7.26 Love in the twenties

Life span	Life task love with sub-categories					
Periods in Paulo Coelho's development	a) The ability to be intimate, trusting, and self-disclosing with another person	b) The ability to receive as well as express affection with significant others	c) The capacity to experience or convey non-possessive caring that respects the uniqueness of another	d) The presence of enduring, stable intimate relationships in one's life	e) Concern for the nurturance and growth of others	(f) Satisfaction with one's sexual life or the perception that one's needs for physical touch and closeness are being met, or both
4. Year 20–29	X fulfilled		X fulfilled	X fulfilled		–
	X unfulfilled	X unfulfilled	X unfulfilled	X unfulfilled	X unfulfilled	

Source: Researcher's own construction

about his f) satisfaction with his sexual life or the perception that his needs for physical touch and closeness were being met, or both.

In the context of the extreme situation of kidnapping, Coelho cared only about his own survival, without responding to his wife. He did not have (c) the capacity to experience or convey non-possessive caring that respected the uniqueness of Gisa. With regard to the abortion, the suicide attempt and the kidnapping, Coelho did not nurture Gisa, but himself, and did not show any (e) concern for the nurturance and growth of others (Table 7.26).

In conclusion, the data reveal that Coelho seemed to be more concerned with his love for himself than with his love for another person. However, he was able to receive love from his girlfriends and his wife, but did not seem to be very caring for others, respecting the uniqueness of others or being concerned with the nurturing and growth of another.

During his twenties, Coelho's life and life task of love were affected by the following life forces:

Family Coelho's parents influenced his concept of love and tried to support and help him by sending him to hospital a third time. He stayed at their house and his parents tried to show their enduring love for him through their actions, although their actions might have been counterproductive. In 1971 Coelho married his first wife, Gisa. Their relationship was characterised by crisis. Love between the two is hardly described; however, it can be assumed that Gisa experienced a strong break in their relationship when he convinced her to abort their baby and when he supported her decision to commit suicide after she had failed in her first attempt. Coelho married his second wife, Cissa, in 1976.

Community Coelho became a womaniser during this time and connected to women who shared his interest in theatre (Fabiola and Vera) and later his interest in satanism and the occult (Gisa) and his idea to buy a house (Gisa).

No significant information on the other life forces, such as religion, education, media, government and business and industry regarding the life task of love is available.

The data also do not reveal any kind of influence of global events on love during this period. However, the Brazilian dictatorship and the paramilitaries in Brazil's national forces had a strong influence on Coelho's relationship with and love for Gisa, since they were kidnapped together and she could not accept his behaviour while they were in captivity and tortured together.

7.3.5.5 The Thirties (1977–1986)

In his thirties, Coelho married Cissa; they moved to London and divorced a year later. It can be assumed that the relationship with Cissa was (a) intimate, trusting and self-disclosing; however, (d) it was only relatively stable and enduring, particularly since Morais (2009) highlights that Cissa already wanted a divorce after not even a year of marriage.

In Cristina, Coelho met his life partner. They did not marry, but celebrated their relationship and received the blessing of their parents in 1980. He fell in love and she became the most important woman in his life. With Cristina, Coelho experienced a strong change with regard to his final turn away from satanism and the revitalisation of Christianity in himself (Morais, 2009). The couple worked together on their common careers as artists and travelled (Morais, 2009). With Cristina, Coelho experienced a) the ability to be intimate, trusting, and self-disclosing with another person. He showed her his true face, his doubts, his wishes and desires and she supported him to develop on spiritual and career levels. He experienced (b) the ability to receive as well as express affection with Cristina over a long and enduring time. He cared for her, as she cared for him (c). With Cristina, Coelho experienced the longest and most enduring intimate relationship with a woman of his life. He also experienced a non-possessive relationship with her, particularly since Cristina gave Coelho the freedom to travel and experience his spiritual development. They gave each other the freedom of creativity and personal development. In 1986, Cristina supported him in regaining the sword after his failure to become a master of RAM. She supported him and was affectionate (b). She cared for him in a (c) non-possessive way. Coelho, – the data may be biased – seemed mainly interested in his own nurturance and growth, not so much in the growth and nurturing of Cristina. According to the interview with Arias (2001) and the biography of Morais (2009), Coelho was nurtured by Cristina on various levels, spiritually and career-related. However, no indication is given that Coelho cared for Cristina and nurtured her growth as an artist, woman or person. It rather appeared that she invested in his growth more than in her own growth. This might be reflected in the fact that Coelho established an outstanding artistic career while Cristina did not reach his level of fame.

Table 7.27 Love in the thirties

Life span	Life task love with sub-categories					
Periods in Paulo Coelho's development	a) The ability to be intimate, trusting, and self-disclosing with another person	b) The ability to receive as well as express affection with significant others	c) The capacity to experience or convey non-possessive caring that respects the uniqueness of another	d) The presence of enduring, stable intimate relationships in one's life	e) Concern for the nurturance and growth of others	(f) Satisfaction with one's sexual life or the perception that one's needs for physical touch and closeness are being met, or both
5. Year 30–39	X fulfilled	X fulfilled	X fulfilled	X fulfilled	X unfulfilled	–

Source: Researcher's own construction

No indication is available that during this decade Coelho was (e) concerned about the nurturance and growth of others; not even with regard to Cristina. The data do not provide any information on Coelho's (f) satisfaction with his sexual life or the perception that his needs for physical touch and closeness were being met, or both (Table 7.27).

Impacting life forces:

Family Coelho was married to Cissa and divorced in 1979. He met Cristina during the same year and knew that she was the woman of his life. Their parents accepted the relationship and Cristina became the love of Coelho's life.

Business/Industry Coelho and Cristina started their own business, promoting their own artistic work. They combined a love and professional relationship founded in their common aim to present their art to the world. It might be assumed that their common interest in the arts, business and success contributed to and stabilised their love.

In conclusion, this decade is very important in terms of love. Coelho met Cristina, the love of his life (Arias, 2001; Moraes, 2009), and established an enduring, intimate relationship with her. However, the growth and nurturing aspect seemed to be imbalanced and Cristina seemed to nurture Coelho more than he nurtured her.

No significant information on any of the other life forces, such as religion, education, community, media and government regarding the life task of love is available. The data do not reveal any kind of influence of global events on love during this period.

7.3.5.6 The Forties (1987–1996)

During his forties, an intimate relationship developed between Coelho and Cristina; they employed Monica as their agent to promote the work of both of them internationally (Morais, 2009). Cristina supported Coelho in writing his books and in going to Spain to regain his sword. She provided him with faith and helped him to regain his Christian belief (Morais, 2009). She supported him and cared for him non-possessively during difficult times of depression and doubt (Morais, 2009).

In 1988, Coelho and Cristina spent 40 days together in the Californian Mojave Desert, practising the spiritual St Ignatius Loyola exercises. This shows that Coelho (a) was able to be intimate, trusting and disclosing himself to Cristina during the journey into the Californian desert. At the same time, they provided each other with a kind of (c) non-possessive caring that respected the uniqueness of the other.

In his forties Coelho was highly influenced by spiritual self-development, the promotion of his books and the “living of his dream”. Cristina played a supportive role and provided him with the (d) presence of an enduring, stable, intimate relationship in his life that helped him to live his personal dream. This impression, however, might be biased since both his biography and the interview with Arias (2001) focused rather on his career and on his development in becoming a writer than on his relationship with Cristina.

Coelho's creative works at this time dealt more with his spiritual development and the exploration of his own intra-psychological identity parts (Coelho, 1990, 2006). In the book, “Brida”, Coelho highlighted, for example: “In some way, Brida is that woman I was looking for inside myself” (Arias, 2001, p. 93) – he did not write about Cristina, but rather focused on parts of his internal identity and his internal feminine side.

“Brida” (Coelho, 1990) is a book about love and passion on an abstract level, while in “The Valkyries” (Coelho, 1992) dealt with the “curse” of destroying one's dreams and everything a man loves (Coelho, 1992). Coelho described his own destructive behaviour that he introduced on an unconscious level: He destroyed unconsciously what he loved at the same time (Coelho, 1992). His master, J., therefore sent him to the desert to reflect on this behaviour. The book, “The Valkyries” was written after his experiences with Cristina in the desert (Coelho, 1992) and provides a reflection on spirituality and life.

In these two creative works, Coelho described explicitly b) the ability to receive as well as express affection with significant others in terms of his protagonist who reflected himself and was part of himself (Coelho, 1990). Coelho has stated that “I am all the characters in my books” (Arias, 2001, p. 172). This means that he – as his protagonists – has (a) the ability to be intimate, trusting, and self-disclosing with another person, as well as (b) the ability to receive as well as express affection with significant others, as he describes the feelings and actions of the protagonists in his books.

In “By the river Piedro ...” (Coelho, 1996) one main topic is love that is connected to giving up control (Coelho, 1996, p. 37). The book is about the challenge to live the dream of love without giving up. However, Coelho talked about an

abstract love that incorporated the thoughts and actions of the individual and the collective (Coelho, 1996). It referred to childhood love, a revitalisation of this love and the suffering connected to it. "By the river..." is Coelho's (1996) first book emphasising the "good fight": to love, to trust and to give up control (Coelho, 1996, p. 51). In this book, Coelho self-reflected on love and on his own (a) (in) ability to be intimate, trusting and self-disclosing with another person. He (Coelho, 2006, p. 78) defined love as the major source of life when re-evaluating the life lived. The feeling of love provided a person's life with perfection and the energy to proceed in life if this person integrated his/her soul and body – if a person has not experienced love, he/she is imperfect (Coelho, 2006, p. 132). As this shows in an abstract way, love for Coelho consisted of (a) the ability to be intimate, trusting, and self-disclosing with another person; the (b) expression of affection and the trust that is needed to express feelings in the presence of someone else, (c) the capacity to experience or convey non-possessive caring that respects the uniqueness of another, (d) the presence of an enduring, stable, intimate relationship in a person's life and how to deal with it and (e) concern for the nurturance and growth of others.

"The fifth mountain" (Coelho, 1995) dealt with faith and persecution, the love between a young widow, her son, and Elijah, a prophet. Elijah is soon torn apart by his growing love for the widow and her son and his urgent need to return to Israel to remove the king from his throne (Coelho, 1998a). The widow dies and Elijah promises her to look after her son until he can follow his own path (Coelho, 1998a, p. 175). Together with the son, Elijah rebuilds the destroyed city with all the love and endeavour Elijah had for her. Coelho connected through his creative work to the (c) non-possessive caring and respect for the uniqueness of someone else, in this case Elijah, the widow and her son. However, with this story, Coelho also connected to (e) concern for the nurturance and growth of the other, particularly in the scene when the widow risks her life to hide Elijah in her house and later when Elijah promises the dying widow to look after her son.

In general, the topic of love became a major issue in Coelho's creative work during this decade. Coelho shared his ability to be intimate only with Cristina and experienced emotions and non-possessive caring and the uniqueness of the other. The relationship with Cristina emphasised Coelho's ability to maintain a (d) an enduring, stable and intimate relationship. Coelho referred to the topic of love, the (b) reception and expression of affection, and (e) concern for the nurturance and growth of others. He hardly spoke of (f) satisfaction with his sexual life or the perception that his needs for physical touch and closeness were being met, or both, as in the previous decades. However, in several of his books, Coelho referred to sexual satisfaction and experiences, as well as to the need for physical touch and closeness (e.g. Coelho, 1990, 1996, 1998a) (Table 7.28).

In describing his forties, the data hardly refer to love; however, love became a topic in the creative works.

Family Cristina had an outstanding effect on Coelho's life during this decade. They experienced a common spiritual development and Cristina was a stable and intimate partner during this decade. It is assumed that the relationship with her influenced the

Table 7.28 Love in the forties

Life span	Life task love with sub-categories					
Periods in Paulo Coelho’s development	a) The ability to be intimate, trusting, and self-disclosing with another person	b) The ability to receive as well as express affection with significant others	c) The capacity to experience or convey non-possessive caring that respects the uniqueness of another	d) The presence of enduring, stable intimate relationships in one’s life	e) Concern for the nurturance and growth of others	(f) Satisfaction with one’s sexual life or the perception that one’s needs for physical touch and closeness are being met, or both
6. Year 40–49	X fulfilled	X fulfilled	X fulfilled	X fulfilled	X fulfilled	–

Source: Researcher’s own construction

life task of love, Coelho’s personal intra-psychological development with regard to love and being loved and reflection on the topic in his creative works.

Business/Industry Coelho’s books referred to love in this decade regarding abstract concepts and selected components of love, as mentioned by Myers et al. (2000). It is assumed that Coelho used the writing to explore love deeper within himself through self-reflecting processes.

No significant information on any of the other life forces, such as religion, education, community, media and government and business and industry regarding the life task of love is available. The data do not reveal any kind of influence of global events on love during this period.

7.3.5.7 The Fifties (1997–2006)

During the fifth decade of Coelho’s life, selected data refer to the topic of love.

Coelho wrote “Veronica decides to die” (Coelho, 2000), the book about his experiences in the asylum, although he had promised his parents not to talk about them. Coelho worked through this traumatic experience with his parents and thereby experienced (a) the ability to be intimate, trusting, and self-disclosing with them, particularly before the death of his mother in 1998 (Arias, 2001). Coelho understood that all the family members had suffered through this experience of the asylum (Arias, 2001) and redefined it at this late stage as an act of love.

In this decade, Coelho experienced love with his parents: he had talked with them about his experiences in adolescence and his parents asked him for forgiveness (Arias, 2001). Although he had experienced a strong possessive style of parental caring, he (c) experienced a non-possessive way of caring from them that respected his uniqueness and his ability to write. Coelho’s parents showed the presence of an

(d) enduring, stable, intimate relationship at this stage; they supported him, respected him and his career and success in a non-possessive way.

With regard to the publication of books, Coelho wrote "The wanderer", a collection of texts, many on spirituality and the meaning of life in the context of God (Coelho, 2007). In this collection, he described his idea that love was mirrored in God's actions, which were an echo of the actions of the individual (Coelho, 2007).

Coelho published the book "Eleven minutes" (Coelho, 2003c) in 2003. It dealt with love and how to "touch the soul" – through love or lust? The topic is revealed through the description of a Brazilian prostitute who falls in love and concludes that love will always make one suffer.

In this creative work, Coelho explored the tension created by the (a) the ability to be intimate, trusting, and self-disclosing with another person; the tension to receive as well as to (b) express affection with another and (c) the capacity to experience or convey non-possessive caring that respects the uniqueness of another. In this book, Coelho explored on a deep intra-psychological level the opposite of the experience of d) the presence of enduring, stable intimate relationships in the protagonist's life. He thereby explored the tensions between and within these states of love, which lacked the (d) presence of an enduring, stable intimate relationship on the one hand and did not emphasise (e) concern for the nurturance and growth of others, but as in the previous decade the self-reflexive state and self-care in a lust or love relationship. For the first time, Coelho touched openly on the topic of love and lust and on the question of (f) satisfaction with a person's sexual life or the perception that the need for is being met, or both.

"The zahir" (Coelho, 2005) was dedicated to Cristina, referring to the spiritual and sacred moments they shared on the mountainside. It was the first book that included a dedication to Cristina and showed Coelho's abilities to be (a) intimate and self-disclosing with regard to his relationships. It also showed (b) the ability to receive and express affection with Cristina. Although the data do not give information on the relationship between Coelho and Cristina during his fifties, the dedication showed (d) the presence of enduring, stable intimate relationships in Coelho's life and (c) the capacity to experience or convey non-possessive caring that respects the uniqueness of another.

Another creative work, "The zahir" (Coelho, 2005) dealt with the topic of possessive love, the opposite of the healthy characteristic of love according to Myers et al. (2000), and was founded on the experience of (c) non-possessive caring, the obsession of love and how it affected a persons' feelings and attitudes (Calderon, 2009) (Table 7.29).

Coelho addressed the topic of love in his books and on an abstract, philosophical level, wrapped in intra-psychological reflections. However, hardly any information on his practical approach to love or detailed information on love in his life is available.

Impacting life forces:

Family During this decade, reflection on and re-evaluation of the relationship with and love for his parents and Coelho's time in the asylum were important.

Table 7.29 Love in the fifties

Life span	Life task love with sub-categories					
Periods in Paulo Coelho’s development	a) The ability to be intimate, trusting, and self-disclosing with another person	b) The ability to receive as well as express affection with significant others	c) The capacity to experience or convey non-possessive caring that respects the uniqueness of another	d) The presence of enduring, stable intimate relationships in one’s life	e) Concern for the nurturance and growth of others	(f) Satisfaction with one’s sexual life or the perception that one’s needs for physical touch and closeness are being met, or both
7. Year 50–59	X fulfilled	X fulfilled	X fulfilled X unfulfilled	X fulfilled	X fulfilled	–

Source: Researcher’s own construction

Coelho wrote a bestseller about the relationship with his parents, madness and sanity. He reconciled with his past in terms of parental love and declared his love for Cristina publicly (Coelho, 2005), thereby emphasising her importance in his life (Morais, 2009).

Business/Industry Coelho discussed love on an abstract level in his books (e.g. Coelho, 2006, 2010) and reflected selected components of love, as mentioned by Myers et al. (2000). Through writing, he explored love on a deeper, self-reflexive level while gaining success as a writer through love and passion.

No significant information on any of the other life forces, such as religion, education, community, media and government regarding the life task of love is available. The data do not reveal any kind of influence of global events during this period on love.

In conclusion, the characteristics of love emphasised by Myers et al. (2000) are expressed during this decade with regard to Coelho’s parents (Arias, 2001) and to Cristina (Coelho, 2005; Morais, 2009). He explained the unfulfilled need of compassionate love during earlier years with regard to his parents, reflected the fulfilled love with Cristina and touched on the tension of fulfilled and unfulfilled love components in “Eleven minutes” (Coelho, 2003c) and “The zahir” (Coelho, 2005).

7.3.5.8 The Sixties (2007–2016)

Coelho spent his sixtieth birthday only with Cristina in the grotto of Lourdes in France near the mill they had bought. He felt unhappy and lonely and shared his thoughts with her (Coelho, 2014a). This expressed his a) intimate, trusting, and self-disclosing relationship and his (b) affection for her. On his sixtieth birthday and

during his sixtieth decade, Coelho maintained an d) enduring, stable and intimate relationship with Cristina.

Coelho published "The winner stands alone" (Coelho, 2008a), in which a husband follows his ex-wife and kills others in the name of love. Coelho (2008) asked the basic question whether it would be "acceptable to destroy a universe in the name of a greater love" (Coelho, 2008a, p. 47). Love is described as (c) possessive love, not as non-possessive caring that respects the uniqueness of another and the book deals with the consequences of possessive love and its justification.

In another creative work, "Manuscript found in Accra" (Coelho, 2012, 2013a), Coelho touched on love in the context of faith. Coelho (2013a, p. 107) wrote: "Love is an act of faith in another person, not an act of surrender" and added (Coelho, 2013b): "Love is only a word, until someone arrives to give it meaning. Don't give up. Remember, it's always the last key on the key ring that opens the door." Love is constructed in the context of the other and described as an "act of faith in another person", which forms the basis of (a) the ability to be intimate, trusting, and self-disclosing with another person. However, if love is an act of faith in another person, it forms the basis for the (b) the ability to receive as well as express affection with significant others and for (c) the capacity to experience or convey non-possessive caring that respects the uniqueness of another. Love is then the foundation for the development of (d) the presence of enduring, stable intimate relationships in a person's life, as well as of e) concern for the nurturance and growth of others. Coelho referred explicitly to love in the context of faith, as well as in the social context, in the context of "the other". In the interview with Reuters (2013), Coelho highlighted that a person may not necessarily believe in God, but may believe in love – and "love goes beyond everything" (Reuters, 2013).

Coelho (2014e) returned to love in his most recent book, "Adultery" (Coelho, 2014e), and connected love to happiness, the meaningfulness of life, life's dream, healing and passion. He came up with the conclusion that faith and love can help to overcome life crises, which was strongly criticised by literary critics as not being a new insight (McAlpin, 2014). Coelho viewed love as the positive and constructive components defined by Myers et al. (2000), referring to the (a) ability to be intimate, trusting, and self-disclosing with another person; (b) the ability to receive as well as express affection with significant others; (c) the capacity to experience or convey non-possessive caring that respects the uniqueness of another; (d) the presence of enduring, stable intimate relationships in one's life; and (e) concern for the nurturance and growth of others.

In his video documentary, Coelho (2010b) emphasised that his main dream in his life was to become a writer and to be read, keeping the underlining key sentence: "Love me, it's me" in – mind (Coelho, 2010b, 20:02 min.). Through being a writer, Coelho longed for (c) the experience of non-possessive caring and respect, which he might have missed during his teenage years. His audience and readership fulfilled his unstoppable longing for love, acknowledgement and recognition in this decade (Table 7.30).

Impacting life forces:

Table 7.30 Love in the sixties

Life span	Life task love with sub-categories					
Periods in Paulo Coelho’s development	a) The ability to be intimate, trusting, and self-disclosing with another person	b) The ability to receive as well as express affection with significant others	c) The capacity to experience or convey non-possessive caring that respects the uniqueness of another	d) The presence of enduring, stable intimate relationships in one’s life	e) Concern for the nurturance and growth of others	(f) Satisfaction with one’s sexual life or the perception that one’s needs for physical touch and closeness are being met, or both
8. Year 60–69	X fulfilled	X fulfilled	X fulfilled	X fulfilled X unfulfilled	X fulfilled	–

Source: Researcher’s own construction

Family Coelho was in a deep love relationship with Cristina and celebrated his sixtieth birthday with her in France. However, the relationship with Cristina seemed to be less often mentioned in the data than during the decades before. This might be due to the fact that his biography ends with his sixtieth birthday and a bias focusing on his career as a writer. However, the documentary shows Coelho’s and Cristina’s common work and her being at his side.

Business/Industry Coelho’s writings refer to love (Coelho, 2008a, 2013a, 2013b, 2013c) and the reflection on selected components of love, as also mentioned by Myers et al. (2000), becomes a core issue during this decade. He defines love as an overall resource that contributes to healing and to the overcoming of life crises.

No significant information on any of the other life forces, such as religion, education, community, media and government and love is available. The data do not reveal any kind of influence of global events during this period on love.

In conclusion, the characteristics of love emphasised by Myers et al. (2000) are expressed during this life decade with regard to Cristina (Morais, 2009). However, Coelho refers to fulfilled and non-fulfilled love components in his books and writings, as well as in his documentary. In “Adultery” (Coelho, 2014b) he emphasised all the important components of love as described by Myers et al. Coelho played with the topic by exploring it throughout his creative works during this decade.

7.3.5.9 Conclusion on the Life Task Love

This sub-chapter provides a summary and overview on the life task love across Coelho’s life span (see Table 7.31).

During Coelho’s early and later childhood and schooldays, he seemed to have an enduring, stable and loving relationship with his mother. However, hardly any

Table 7.31 Overview: love and sub-categories

Life span	Life task love with sub-categories					
Periods in Paulo Coelho's development	a) The ability to be intimate, trusting, and self-disclosing with another person	b) The ability to receive as well as express affection with significant others	c) The capacity to experience or convey non-possessive caring that respects the uniqueness of another	d) The presence of enduring, stable intimate relationships in one's life	e) Concern for the nurturance and growth of others	(f) Satisfaction with one's sexual life or the perception that one's needs for physical touch and closeness are being met, or both
1. Year 1–6	–	–	–	X fulfilled	–	–
2. Year 6–12	X fulfilled	–		X fulfilled	–	
			X unfulfilled			X unfulfilled
3. Year 13–19	X fulfilled	X fulfilled	X fulfilled	X fulfilled	X unfulfilled	–
			X unfulfilled			
4. Year 20–29	X fulfilled		X fulfilled	X fulfilled		–
	X unfulfilled	X unfulfilled	X unfulfilled	X unfulfilled	X unfulfilled	
5. Year 30–39	X fulfilled	X fulfilled	X fulfilled	X fulfilled		–
					X unfulfilled	
6. Year 40–49	X fulfilled	X fulfilled	X fulfilled	X fulfilled	X fulfilled	–
7. Year 50–59	X fulfilled	X fulfilled	X fulfilled	X fulfilled	X fulfilled	–
			X unfulfilled			
8. Year 60–69	X fulfilled	X fulfilled	X fulfilled	X fulfilled	X fulfilled	–
				X unfulfilled		

Source: Researcher's own construction

explicit data on the love are provided in the literature. During his schooldays, Coelho experienced enduring relationships with friends and extended family members within the estate. This sound basis of love must have provided him with feelings of safety and protection during the first years of his life that he regained after having met Cristina.

During his teenage years, love was connected to Coelho's girlfriends, but also to his grandfather to whom he expressed affection and from whom he received caring and nurturing. Coelho's parents cared for him, but did not respect his uniqueness.

During his twenties, the data revealed Coelho's strong self-love, his ability to receive love from his girlfriends and wife. However, he seemed to be unable to provide loving care for them, respect their uniqueness and care for their nurturing and growth.

In the following decade, Coelho met Cristina and again it seemed that Cristina nurtured Coelho strongly while his nurturing with regard to her life remained undescribed.

Love became a significant issue during his forties. Coelho described the challenges and critical aspects of love through self-reflection, while living the love of his life with Cristina.

Coelho explored the topic of love in even more depth in his fifties. He re-evaluated the relationship with his parents, expressed his love for Cristina publicly and filled his books with love and passion, which had an impact on his success in business and industry. Care for others and respect for the uniqueness of others, emphasised by Myers et al. (2000), became more important and Coelho discussed issues of fulfilled and unfulfilled components of love.

During his sixth decade, Coelho maintained a stable and intimate relationship with Cristina and explored love in the context of faith and the consequences of destructive love. Love became an act of faith in another person. In "Adultery", Coelho referred to all components of love as mentioned by Myers et al. (2000): (a) the ability to be intimate, trusting, and self-disclosing with another person; (b) the ability to receive as well as express affection with significant others; (c) the capacity to experience or convey non-possessive caring that respects the uniqueness of another; (d) the presence of enduring, stable, intimate relationships in one's life; and e) concern for the nurturance and growth of others.

Coelho aimed for enduring and stable, non-possessive love of the other throughout his life, which increased and was defined as in Myers et al. (2000) during his sixties. Coelho's love increased in consciousness and importance across his life decades and was defined by himself as the most important issue in life. A strong change from the focus of self-love towards love of others is reflected in the data. Table 7.32 provides an overview on the components of the HWM in terms of the life task love and its components in Coelho's life.

Table 7.32 Life task love

	Components of holistic wellness expressed through the life tasks
	Global events
Historical periods in the development of Paulo Coelho	Life forces (business/industry, media, government, community, family, religion, education)
	5. Love
1. Coelho's early childhood (1947–1953)	Myers et al. (2000) define healthy and loving relationships according to the following characteristic, which are referred to during this phase of Coelho's life:
	d) The presence of enduring, stable intimate relationships in one's life
	The following components are not referred to:
	a) The ability to be intimate, trusting, and self-disclosing with another person;
	b) The ability to receive as well as express affection with significant others;
	c) The capacity to experience or convey non-possessive caring that respects the uniqueness of another;
	e) Concern for the nurturance and growth of others; and
	f) Satisfaction with one's sexual life or the perception that one's needs for physical touch and closeness are being met, or both.
	Impacting life forces:
	Family
	No impact of global events is referred to in the data.
2. Childhood and schooldays (1953–1961)	Myers et al. (2000) define healthy and loving relationships according to the following characteristics that are referred to during this phase of Coelho's life:
	a) The ability to be intimate, trusting, and self-disclosing with another person; and
	d) The presence of enduring, stable intimate relationships in one's life.
	The following two characteristics that are referred to during this phase of Coelho's life and that were completely unfulfilled are:
	a) The capacity to experience or convey non-possessive caring that respects the uniqueness of another, and
	b.) Satisfaction with his sexual life or the perception that one's needs for physical touch and closeness are being met, or both.
	The following components are not referred to:
	a) The ability to receive as well as express affection with significant others and
	b) Concern for the nurturance and growth of others.
	Impacting life forces:
	Family
	Education
	Community
	No impact of global events is referred to in the data.

(continued)

Table 7.32 (continued)

	Components of holistic wellness expressed through the life tasks
	Global events
Historical periods in the development of Paulo Coelho	Life forces (business/industry, media, government, community, family, religion, education)
	5. Love
3. The teenage years (1962–1966)	Myers et al. (2000) define healthy and loving relationships according to the following characteristics that are referred to during this phase of Coelho’s life:
	a) The ability to be intimate, trusting, and self-disclosing with another person
	b) The ability to receive as well as express affection with significant others;
	c) The capacity to experience or convey non-possessive caring that respects the uniqueness of another; and
	d) The presence of enduring, stable intimate relationships in one’s life.
	The following two characteristics that are referred to during this phase of Coelho’s life and that remained completely unfulfilled are:
	a) Capacity to experience or convey non-possessive caring that respects the uniqueness of another; and
	b) Concern for the nurturance and growth of others.
	The following components are not addressed:
	a) The ability to receive as well as express affection with significant others;
	b.) Experiencing or conveying non-possessive caring that respects the uniqueness of another;
	c) Concern for the nurturance and growth of others; and
	df) Satisfaction with one’s sexual life or the perception that one’s needs for physical touch and closeness are being met, or both.
	Impacting life forces:
	Family
Education	
Community	
	No impact of global events is referred to in the data.

(continued)

Table 7.32 (continued)

Historical periods in the development of Paulo Coelho	Components of holistic wellness expressed through the life tasks
	Global events
	Life forces (business/industry, media, government, community, family, religion, education)
4. The twenties (1967–1976)	5. Love
	Myers et al. (2000) define healthy and loving relationships according to the following characteristics that are referred to during this phase of Coelho’s life:
	a) The ability to be intimate, trusting, and self-disclosing with another person
	b) The capacity to experience or convey non-possessive caring that respects the uniqueness of another; and
	c) The presence of enduring, stable intimate relationships in one’s life.
	The following characteristics that are referred to during this phase of Coelho’s life and that remained completely unfulfilled are:
	a) The ability to be intimate, trusting, and self – disclosing with another person;
	b) The ability to receive as well as express affection with significant others;
	c) The capacity to experience or convey non-possessive caring that respects the uniqueness of another;
	d) The presence of enduring, stable intimate relationships in one’s life; and
	e) Concern for the nurturance and growth of others.
	The following component is not referred to:
	a) Satisfaction with one’s sexual life or the perception that one’s needs for physical touch and closeness are being met, or both.
	Impacting life forces:
	Family
	Community
	No impact of global events is referred to in the data. However, the Brazilian dictatorship, as well as the paramilitaries affected Coelho and Gisa’s relationship and in the end caused Gisa to leave Coelho.

(continued)

Table 7.32 (continued)

Historical periods in the development of Paulo Coelho	Components of holistic wellness expressed through the life tasks
	Global events
	Life forces (business/industry, media, government, community, family, religion, education)
	5. Love
5. The thirties (1977–1986)	Myers et al. (2000) define healthy and loving relationships according to the following characteristics that are referred to during this phase of Coelho's life:
	a) The ability to be intimate, trusting, and self-disclosing with another person;
	b) The ability to receive as well as express affection with significant others;
	c) The capacity to experience or convey non-possessive caring that respects the uniqueness of another; and
	d) The presence of enduring, stable intimate relationships in one's life.
	The following characteristic that is referred to during this phase of Coelho's life and that remained completely unfulfilled is:
	a) Concern for the nurturance and growth of others.
	The following component is not referred to:
	a) Satisfaction with one's sexual life or the perception that one's needs for physical touch and closeness are being met, or both.
	Impacting life forces:
	Family
	Business/industry
	No impact of global events is referred to in the data.
	6. The forties (1987–1996)
a) The ability to be intimate, trusting, and self-disclosing with another person (in life and in books);	
b) The ability to receive as well as express affection with significant others (in his books and life);	
c) The capacity to experience or convey non-possessive caring that respects the uniqueness of another (in books);	
d) The presence of enduring, stable intimate relationships in one's life (in books and life) and;	
e) concern for the nurturance and growth of others (in selected protagonists of the books, but not in life) (in books and life)	
The following component is not referred to:	
a) Satisfaction with one's sexual life or the perception that one's needs for physical touch and closeness are being met, or both.	
Impacting life forces:	
Family	
Business/industry.	
No impact of global events is referred to in the data touching on the life task of love.	

(continued)

Table 7.32 (continued)

Historical periods in the development of Paulo Coelho	Components of holistic wellness expressed through the life tasks
	Global events
	Life forces (business/industry, media, government, community, family, religion, education)
7. The fifties (1997–2006)	5. Love
	Myers et al. (2000) define healthy and loving relationships according to the following characteristics that are referred to during this phase of Coelho's life:
	a) The ability to be intimate, trusting, and self-disclosing with another person;
	b) The ability to receive as well as express affection with significant others (in "The zahir", 2005, as dedication to Cristina);
	c) The capacity to experience or convey non-possessive caring that respects the uniqueness of another;
	d) The presence of enduring, stable intimate relationships in one's life;
	e) Concern for the nurturance and growth of others (in selected protagonists of the books, but not in life); and
	f) Satisfaction with one's sexual life or the perception that one's needs for physical touch and closeness are being met, or both (in selected protagonists of the books, but not in life) (only in the books Coelho, 2003a, 2003b, 2003c).
	The book, "Eleven minutes" (Coelho, 2003c), touches on the tension of the characteristics a) – f) and how the main protagonist feels while experiencing the tension of these components when there is a longing for fulfilment and actual non-fulfilment.
	The book "Like a flowing river" (Coelho, 2006, 2010) deals with love as an abstract concept that, however, touches on a), c) and e).
	The following characteristic that is referred to during this phase of Coelho's life and that remained completely unfulfilled is:
	a) The capacity to experience or convey non-possessive caring that respects the uniqueness of another ("The zahir" (2005) describes the unhealthy way of possessive love).
	Impacting life forces:
	Family
	Business/industry.
	No impact of global events is referred to in the data touching on the life task of love.

Table 7.32 (continued)

Historical periods in the development of Paulo Coelho	Components of holistic wellness expressed through the life tasks
	Global events
8. The sixties (2007–2016)	Life forces (business/industry, media, government, community, family, religion, education)
	5. Love
	Myers et al. (2000) define healthy and loving relationships according to the following characteristics that are referred to during this phase of Coelho’s life:
	a) The ability to be intimate, trusting, and self-disclosing with another person (described in life);
	b) The ability to receive as well as express affection with significant others (described in life);
	c) The capacity to experience or convey non-possessive caring that respects the uniqueness of another
	d) The presence of enduring, stable intimate relationships in one’s life (described in life); and
	e) Concern for the nurturance and growth of others.
	Besides the descriptions of selected components’ characteristics in his life, several of the components of a)-e) are described in Coelho’s books that were published in his sixties (f) is not described).
	The following characteristic that is referred to during this phase of Coelho’s life and that remained completely unfulfilled is:
	a) The capacity to experience or convey non-possessive caring that respects the uniqueness of another (in the book by Coelho (2008), “The winner stands alone”).
	The following component is not referred to:
	a) Satisfaction with one’s sexual life or the perception that one’s needs for physical touch and closeness are being met, or both.
	Impacting life forces:
Family	
Business/industry	
No impact of global events is referred to in the data.	

Source: Researcher’s own construction

7.4 Integration and Conclusions of the Findings on Holistic Wellness

The analysis of the data in terms of the HWM in the life of Paulo Coelho shows that all the life tasks play a role in his life. According to the findings, the life task spirituality is strongly important and develops throughout the decades while increasing in intensity and direction and deepening in terms of self-reflection.

The life task of self-direction is strong and interconnected with Coelho’s desire to develop spiritually. Coelho’s self-worth, as an important component of self-direction, is strongly connected to both concepts and develops throughout his life.

His self-worth changes dynamically according to Coelho's experiences, his professional success, his relationships and the relationship with his parents.

While work and leisure are separate components from his school life onwards, Coelho integrates his concept of work and leisure. In the first decades his professional and personal spiritual development are rather divided and Coelho follows his professional career in terms of work and his spiritual development as a leisure activity. From the age of 40, he increasingly integrates work and leisure through writing and his spiritual development. These two very important aspects of his life become integrated and interrelated.

The life task that seems to be least important in Coelho's life within the HWM is friendship. Most of his friendships referred to in the literature and data are friendships based on the desire to develop his professional or spiritual career. Coelho had only a few close friends during childhood and later in life and it seems as if he used them to further his self-interests. Friendship only gained meaning in Coelho's sixties.

Finally, the life task of love is one of the main concerns in Coelho's life. While he experienced durable love in his childhood, he had relatively instable relationships until he met his big love, Cristina. With her, he has lived the love of his life. Coelho's books express an increase in interest in love from the fourth to the sixth decade in which he finally evaluates love as the most important factor of meaningfulness in life.

The life force of family is very important for Coelho to the age of 30, although his parents' love is described as challenging and non-compassionate. However, his grandparents, aunt and uncle are described as loving and supportive. With Coelho's first marriage, the parental influence and love lost importance for him.

In parallel to the life force family, religion plays an extremely important role for Coelho throughout his life. While religion is strongly defined through his parents' religious belief during childhood, Coelho finally developed a strong personal, integrative and holistic religious belief.

With regard to the life force education, Coelho struggled with the formal educational system until the end of his school and university career. He rather related to informal education through travelling, reading and writing throughout his life and preferred self-directed and informal learning strategies through the media (books, internet, talks or self-reflection).

The communities Coelho belonged to changed throughout his life and contributed strongly to his wellness. During childhood he was supported by the estate. Later he became part of the theatre community, political discussion groups and writers' associations. Belonging to art, literary and political communities changed him while forming a very important part of his life. From his forties onwards, the international community of celebrities became more relevant and increased his political influence.

For Coelho, the most important media are books. He enjoys reading, writing and using books as media. However, at a stage in his life, he also emphasised film and internet, from the 1990s, as important media in his life. The media are an important life force for Coelho and the source to connect with his readers and to open new

worlds to him, which would make him redefine other life tasks, such as friendship. Media are also interlinked with the life force of business and industry and gain more relevance from the age of forty.

The impact of the government does not seem to be an important life force in Coelho's life and only affects him in his twenties, during the time of the Brazilian dictatorship and his kidnapping by a paramilitary group, and once again in his sixties when he accuses the Brazilian government of favouritism for sending selected Brazilian authors to the Frankfurt book fair. Government is experienced only in terms of its negative impact on Coelho; positive influences are not mentioned.

Finally, the global influences on Coelho's life are hardly described and seem not to be of major importance regarding his holistic wellness, his personal, professional and spiritual development. They only seem to have an influence from the 1990s onwards in terms of the new information technology and its influence on Coelho's life. Only in his fifties did Coelho start to comment publicly on global political interactions, such as the invasion of the US in Iraq or the terror attacks in France in 2015. However, his personal movements and decisions did not seem to be influenced primarily by global actions and events.

In conclusion, Paulo Coelho's life generally reflects most of the life tasks described in the HWM, several of the life forces, but hardly any influence of global happenings. The model, as a multidimensional, synergetic, holistic and integrative wellness construct (Myers et al., 2000), was applied to analyse Coelho's life. His holistic wellness improved towards optimal mental health and well-being across his life span on the levels of body, mind and spirit, as described by Myers et al.

Coelho developed towards increasing optimal health through the intensification of life tasks and forces. He strived for increased and integrated spirituality – which seems to be of major importance – clear and well-defined self-direction, a combined concept of work and leisure and a deep, enduring and non-possessive love. Only the life task of friendship was hardly developed and only increased in importance at the age of 60.

Findings show that the positive development of holistic spirituality from the time he became a member of RAM in general had a positive impact on Coelho's holistic wellness and other life tasks and forces.

Finally, it can be emphasised that holistic wellness seems to be high in Coelho's life. He overcame physical obstacles of weakness and sickness in childhood and experienced holistic wellness stability during his life.

7.5 Sub-Chapter Summary on the Holistic Wellness Model

In this chapter the research findings on the holistic wellness of Coelho and a conceptual outline of the discussion was presented, followed by an interpretative analysis and discussion of holistic wellness over the lifespan of the writer. The findings were presented and discussed according to the life tasks of spirituality, self-direction, work, friendship and love, as well as with respect to the interaction of the life tasks

with the life forces and global events in the various historical periods. A conclusion on the findings after each life task served as a summary. An integration of the findings related to life tasks, life forces and global events concludes the chapter. In the following chapter the findings related to Coelho's faith development are presented.

7.6 The Stages of Faith Development Throughout Coelho's Life

The FDT (Fowler, 1981, 1987, 1996), as described in Chap. 5, is used to present the findings of faith development in Coelho's life, presenting its stages, allowing for greater self-knowledge and intimacy while providing insight in the writers life.

7.6.1 Stage 0 – Primal Faith

The first faith development stage of primal faith usually occurs in early childhood and infancy. In the life of Paulo Coelho, this stage occurred in the early childhood years (1947–1953).

7.6.1.1 Paulo Coelho's Early Childhood (1947–1953)

While data on Coelho's infancy and his early development are rare, it has been emphasised that Coelho grew up with a mother with a strong Catholic belief looking after him and his sister (Coelho, 2006, p. 11). Coelho's father was a very logically thinking and reasonable engineer with a clear vision and world view (Coelho, 2006, p. 11). Both parents were devout Christians and Catholics and because Coelho survived his birth, his mother dedicated his life to St Joseph (Morais, 2009). In these terms, Coelho's life was laid into the hands of St Joseph.

During the primal faith stage, the child develops his/her brain, physical functioning and mental development. Coelho's development in the early years is described as normal with regard to speech, teeth and movement (Morais, 2009, p. 38). The data show that the parents' strong Catholic belief affected Coelho's early development: He prayed to God for himself and his family and believed in a "non-working guardian angel" as a justification strategy for his "bad behaviour" (Morais, 2009, p. 39). As described in Fowler's theory (1981), Coelho was influenced strongly by his parents and his family in terms of religious and cultural symbols, meanings and practices.

According to Fowler, the child builds up trust and loyalty with his primary caregivers (Fowler, 1981, 1996; Stroud, 2004), which seemed to be the case in Coelho's relationship with his mother. He stayed with his family in a security complex in Botafago, in a middle-class area of Rio. In this very safe environment Coelho devel-

oped trust and loyalty towards his parents. Hardly any information is available on Coelho's early childhood years, his faith development and the development of the relationship with his mother. However, it is assumed that he learnt to make healthy relationship attachments (Fowler & Dell, 2004), particularly with his mother as the main child carer. He built trust (Erikson, 1963) through the safe environment and her constant care, which helped him to develop a sense of identity. This sense of identity led to the fundamental ability to develop a sense of separation (Fowler, 1984, 1987) and recognise the self as a separate identity from the care-giver. It is assumed that the constant care and the trustful relationship with his mother led to this sense of separation in Coelho's identity development.

7.6.2 Stage 1 – Intuitive-Projective Stage

Stage one occurs between the ages of 4–7 years and is labelled “intuitive-protective faith”. In Coelho's life, it fell into the life period of childhood and schooldays (1953–1961). During this stage, Coelho entered kindergarten at four and a half years and entered school in 1954 (Morais, 2009).

7.6.2.1 Childhood and Schooldays (1953–1961)

The next stage of faith develops along with language development from the age of 2 years and proceeds through the age of 6–7 years (Fowler, 1981, 1984, 1987). During this time, gross and fine motor skills develop, as well as the cognition that is linked to the central and peripheral nervous systems (Fowler & Dell, 2004). The play of children in this age group moves from parallel play to associative play.

Coelho spent a lot of this time with his friends and extended family members in the Botafogo security complex where they were protected, playing associative games in a safe and secure environment (Morais, 2009). Coelho was separated from the world “outside of the estate”, which was defined as unsafe and unprotective in Coelho's mind through the fears of his parents. On a deeper level, this classification into the “good” and safe world (estate) and the “evil” and unsafe world (outside the estate) is found to be a reflection of the images and pictures of “good and evil” (Fowler, 1981) created in this developmental stage of the faith theory.

During this phase, the child develops an idea of good and evil through symbols (Fowler & Dell, 2004). It is described as a magical world stage (Croucher, 2010). Coelho and his secret organisation were responsible for playing tricks in the estate – which were not in compliance with the community rules and regulations (Morais, 2009). Since they “specialised in sabotage” (Morais, 2009, p. 41), they were very aware of the concepts of good and evil and included the “evil” through symbolic acts of sabotage of the “good”. Through these symbolic acts, the friends built up a strong companionship, as emphasised by Fowler (1981). The evil acts became part of their collective self-image. Fowler mentioned that these self-images and acts

could lead to feelings of terror, guilt or compassion; however, in this case it rather seemed as if the friends strived for a holistic and inclusive world within the security complex, balancing the good and the evil in their environment.

Fowler (1976) emphasises that during this period, long-lasting orientations to good and evil are coined and stories and pictures of good and evil are created. The data do not show explicit in-depth stories and images of good and evil in Coelho's development; however, later in his life and creative works, Coelho wrote about the struggles of the good and the evil within communities (Coelho, 2002a). Coelho loved to read and write his own stories (Morais, 2009). He preferred novels and adventure stories; however, no information is available on whether these stories referred to the concepts of good and evil.

During this faith development stage, faith is "drawn to symbols and images of visible power and size" (Fowler & Dell, 2004, p. 23). The 6-year-old Coelho had already built up a "secret organisation", that specialised in "sabotage" (Morais, 2009, p. 41) and was responsible for "odd things that were happening in the community" (Morais, 2009, p. 40). As mentioned by Fowler and Dell (2004, p. 23), topics of power and powerlessness became relevant in his life: he and his friends tested their boundaries and their power in their environment. They "sabotaged" and thereby included the unsafe, unprotective and maybe "evil" outside world into their security complex to make it complete. This sabotaging act might stand as a rather unconsciously used symbol for the importance of the inclusion of the "shadow side" of society and of the self. As assumed in the FDT, Coelho's first interaction referring to good and evil therefore occurred between the ages of four and seven.

Fowler (1976) points out that during this stage long-lasting orientations for good and evil in terms of emotions and images are built. This orientation was important during this time of his life, as well as in his fifties when he reflected good and evil in his books, such as in "The Devil and Miss Prym" (Coelho, 2000) or in the text collection "Warrior of light" (Coelho, 2003a). The main question is, what will win in the human context: good or evil? Coelho refers in his sixties to the same question in "The winner stands alone" (Coelho, 2008a), by talking about the destruction of a universe in the name of love and the greater good.

In the text collection book, the warrior of light stands for the good, the light side. However, Coelho is aware of the "evil", the "shadow", and highlights that good and evil need to be integrated.

It is assumed that deeper knowledge of the importance of integrating good and evil through self-awareness and self-reflection, as well as through action, was already expressed in the acts of "sabotage" in the security estate that laid the foundation for his later orientation: light and shadow were encountered in a safe and protective environment, to balance the imbalances of systems (the safe and good estate and the unsafe and evil outside world) in which one part was neglected, separated or excluded particularly through his father's wish to have his children grow up in the security estate only.

Coelho's play with his friends in the estate was characterised by the questioning and testing of issues of autonomy, self-control and willpower, as described for this stage by Dell and Duncan (1998), not as much by shame and doubt. Fowler and Dell

(2004) highlight that the child's meaning-making is mainly based on emotional and perceptual ordering of experiences, as well as on imaginative understanding, which is influenced by a reality that is understood as mysterious. This assumption might once more be an indication of the previous assumption that Coelho and his secret organisation aimed imaginatively for the integration of societal aspects into the life of the estate's community.

Coelho's stories, pictures and self-images, including questions on good and evil, were recorded in his diary when he was about 12 years old (Morais, 2009, p. 51). On Coelho's tape-recordings, he described his actions as the "perverse side of his personality" rather than his generous and sensitive side (Morais, 2009, p. 52). This perverse side reflects evil, contradicting God.

Croucher emphasises that the understanding of God is central at the intuitive-projective stage. However, during this time of Coelho's life, understanding of God was not raised as a main question. It is nevertheless assumed that because of his Christian parents and school (Morais, 2009), God was strongly contextualised with symbols, images and meanings, as emphasised in the FDT (Fowler, 1981, 1987), although the importance of symbols of God at this stage is not described in detail.

During this stage, children tend to experience a need to understand what is real and what is not real and the transition towards the next faith stage depends on the emergence of concrete and operational thinking (Fowler, 1981, 1986). The data do not provide any information on the questions of reality in Coelho and the emergence of concrete and operational thinking at this time. His love of stories and story-telling (Morais, 2009), might indicate that Coelho liked to live in different worlds, constructing "real" and "unreal" realities. No data are provided on how far Coelho realised the realities as real and/or unreal and therefore, no information can be provided on the change towards more concrete and operation thinking.

7.6.3 Stage 2 – Mythic-Literal Stage

The second stage is defined as "mythic-literal faith", which is developed at the age from approximately 7–11/12 years. During this phase, thinking skills increase and "enable the ordering of experiences" (Hughes, 1997, p. 1). With regard to Coelho's life, this mythic-literal stage fell into the childhood and schooldays (1953–1961) phase when he was 6–14 years old. However, several of the developments in the mythic-literal stage can only be recognised during Coelho's teenage years and in the life period from 1962 to 1966, from 14 to 19 years.

7.6.3.1 Childhood and Schooldays (1953–1961)

According to Elifson and Stone (1985, p. 1), time and space concepts develop and narratives are enjoyed while individuals do not differentiate their own self from these narrations. At the age of eight, Coelho started enjoying reading and he became

the best storyteller in the estate while not achieving success in school (Morais, 2009). Narrative and narrations become highly important during this stage of faith development (Stroud, 2004) and help the individual to understand the world through narrative. The child depends less on feeling and fantasy (Fowler, 1984) and starts to understand the world through the perspective of the self and others (Fowler, 1981). It can be assumed that Coelho started to understand the world more through reading and through the perception of stories and narrations written by others. However, he wrote his own stories and won his first school writing competition (Morais, 2009, p. 43). He created his own worlds and stories and invited his readers into new realities already at this age. Straughn (2010) emphasises that children at this age understand stories on a concrete level; however, they lack understanding at a deeper conscious level. Through stories, reading and writing Coelho seemed to improve his self-understanding and the change towards multiple perspectives, as described by Croucher (2003) and Fowler (1981, 1987). The data do not show a development of Coelho in which he learnt to include the perspective of God while seeing the perspective of others.

At the age of 12, the stories and self-narrations developed a new meaning for Coelho through tape-recording and writing. These tapes served to record emotions, describe actions and critically self-reflect (Morais, 2009). He interpreted his thoughts, feelings and actions on a conscious level, as described by Piaget (1976). No information is presented on how Coelho started to interpret the meaning in life at this age.

Fowler and Dell (2004) highlight that the world view becomes more lineal, more predictable and orderly and Fowler (1981) points out that children's experiences are not as dependent on feelings and fantasy as during the stages before. Coelho's development cannot be determined from the information gained from the data.

Coelho developed his self-esteem, his self-awareness and his identity, as described by Levine (1990). Being the best storyteller in the estate, a very good reader and prize winner helped Coelho to explore his self-awareness, his limits, emotions, needs and his autonomy on a conscious level. Data show that Coelho was skinny, physically weak and sickly, with respiratory problems. His reading and writing talent contributed to gaining attention and to impressing his friends (Morais, 2009). He gained parental attention through his letters about his feelings and thoughts (Morais, 2009). In the context of Levine's research these family letters might be interpreted as Coelho's exploration of his autonomy and his limits within the family.

With regard to faith and God, children at this age construct God in personalised terms with highly differentiated internal emotions and interpersonal sensitivities. No information is provided in the data on Coelho's development between 7 and 14 years of age, but it is assumed that through his Catholic upbringing Coelho recognised that „goodness is rewarded and badness is punished (Fowler & Dell, 2004, p. 22), which goes together with the usual development of children's beliefs (Fowler & Dell, 2004). The concepts and definitions of goodness and badness are based on the stories, rules and implicit values of the family and the community (Dykstra, 1986; Fowler, 1984), while the creation of identity is shaped by the family and community and their beliefs (Fowler, 1984).

The concept of “11-year-old atheists” (Fowler & Dell, 2004, p. 22), who temporarily or permanently give up their belief in God when they recognise that bad things also happen to good people, is not reflected in the data on Coelho during this time. However, he must have experienced the need to develop in response to clashing and contrasting stories and narrations. Morais (2009) described that Coelho had recorded his ideas, feelings and thoughts on tapes and had scribbled them onto paper and afterwards hidden them in secret places (Morais, 2009, p. 51). This might be based on the idea that Coelho reflected his thoughts and ideas within the family context and came to the conclusion (Fowler, 1986) that his ideas did not conform with the family values and norms.

7.6.3.2 The Teenage Years (1962–1966)

During the mythic-literal stage, Fowler and Dell (2004, p. 22) coined the term of “11-year-old atheists”, as explained above. Coelho only started to turn away from religious dogma at the age of 14 and became an atheist (Arias, 2001, p. 13) while attending a Jesuit school, which gave him a “horror of religion”, from which he distanced himself (Arias, 2001). The distance from religion created for Coelho a distance from his family values and norms (Dykstra, 1986; Fowler, 1984), such as fairness and morality. He overcame his through his strong connection to the faith of the family, which is typical in the mythic-literal stage.

Data show, however, that Coelho was still caught up in this belief during his teenage years. When his grandfather Cazuza died unexpectedly of a heart attack, Coelho started questioning God and his faith even more and death became a key issue in his belief and religious doubts (Morais, 2009). He felt unfairly punished by God, which is typical during the mythic-literal stage (Fowler & Dell, 2004, p. 22).

The recurring issues of religious doubt and encouragement tore Coelho apart: on the one hand he accepted that God ignored his requests and hated him, on the other hand he feared God's punishment deriving from this hatred (Morais, 2009). This feeling of a religious split is reflected in Coelho school-hopping during his teenage years, as well as in his stories, which contrast and clash with his environment or describe this experienced clash (Fowler, 1981, 1984, 1987). In 1963, Coelho wrote his first play, “The ugly boy”, which is about a young boy who feels rejected by his parents and society and in the end commits suicide (Morais, 2009, p. 76). This story showed Coelho's ability to differentiate between people and groups, his non-belonging and non-identification with the self and others, as typical for this stage of faith development (Fowler, 1981).

Coelho wanted to become a writer and developed a narration on the concept of how a writer is, highlighting eight points, such as wearing glasses, writing poems to women or understanding his generation. He matched himself with his created concept (Coelho, 2006, pp. 11–14) and established a new narration by creating a new self-image at the age of 16. Through this writer's image he moved away from the feelings and fantasies of a child towards a more realistic picture of a writer, which started to become his writer's identity.

7.6.4 Stage 3 – Synthetic-Conventional Stage

Stage three is named “synthetic-conventional faith” and occurs from 11 or 12 years to the age of 17–18. However, this stage could potentially last into middle age and possibly into late adulthood.

In the case of Paulo Coelho's life, this synthetic-conventional stage stretched over two periods in his life, the teenage years (1962–1966) and the twenties (1967–1976).

7.6.4.1 The Teenage Years (1962–1966)

During Coelho's teenage years, his self-awareness increased through interpersonal relationship-building, as described by Hughes (1997, p. 1). Coelho joined a theatre group to increase his knowledge of himself, literature and society, as well as his awareness and consciousness (Morais, 2009). He founded the literary club to connect with others who shared his interests (Morais, 2009). Through his interests in theatre and literature and the school change to Andrew's College – which offered new possibilities in terms of joining political discussions, film study groups and an amateur drama group (Morais, 2009) – Coelho found himself in new roles and functions, as described by Fowler and Dell (2004). Through these memberships, Coelho experienced an increase in abstract thinking processes, inspiration, reasoning and exchange of ideas with others (Morais, 2009). The new activities opened his world view beyond the family and provided new insights and perspectives on topics that moved him personally.

In 1965 Coelho fell in love for the first time and experienced new aspects of himself in terms of feelings, interest and the other, which brought about new self-knowledge and awareness on a deeper level.

At the age of 17, Coelho met Joel Macedo, who took him to the “Paissandu generation”, the intellectuals' and left-wing activists' club in Rio. Coelho enjoyed his participation (Morais, 2009) and the intellectual discussions and the club satisfied his need to “go with the crowd, to confirm” his ideas and insights. According to Hughes (1997, p. 1), this is a strong need during this stage of faith development. Coelho thought independently, increasing self-knowledge, abstract thinking and reasoning, self-confirmation and the feeling of belonging, which is described as a typical characteristic of this stage (Elifson & Stone, 1985, p. 31).

After his first stay in hospital, Coelho managed to reframe his stay as an extraordinary experience and boasted to his friends that he had been through an experience that none of them had been through. The experience brought new impressions of the life of a madman (Morais, 2009) and helped Coelho to integrate his mental hospital stories, his personal values and beliefs into a “supporting and orienting unity” of his different identity parts (Fowler, 1987, p. 60). Furthermore, he integrated his interests in writing, the founding of Rota 15, the theatre and drama clubs, as well as membership of the club of intellectuals to strengthen his self-reflection and self-

awareness (Hughes, 1997, p. 1). In the context of these social groups he experienced belonging, responding to his longing for connection and confirmation. The group members accepted his stories as an authentic and outstanding experience and respected him.

Fowler (1981) highlights that many individuals may not move past this third stage in adulthood (Fowler, 1984). Burnell (2013, p. 142), emphasises that this is a “conformist stage that is accurately attuned to the expectations and judgement of significant others.” However, Coelho was never committed deeply to a conformist stage during his teenage years. He tried to establish conformity through his selected group memberships, but at the same time, he deconstructed the conformity that had been established. This is proven by the following: At St Andrews, he enrolled for the science stream to conform with his father's wish to become an engineer, while spending most of his time with drama and literature, his personal interests. He found a job at a local newspaper, but was dismissed soon after because of the publication of a particular article (Morais, 2009). He actively engaged successfully in interest groups, but convinced his parents that he was a “madman” (Morais, 2009). This shows that Coelho conformed only to a certain extent to specific selected societal groups and values. It is assumed that he rather aimed at disconformity with mainstream society than at conformity. Croucher (2010) defines this stage as the faith community stage, while Fowler (1981) relates to it as “ultimacy”. For Coelho, it was a faith community stage in the way that he established his interests in literature, arts and politics in the context of group memberships, which proved his conformance and belonging. His focus on these memberships and discussion groups might have supported him in overcoming his struggle with his belief in God on a different level, which was expressed in being an “atheist” (Arias, 2001, p. 13), feelings of being left alone and punished by God (Morais, 2009) and feelings that religion was horrific (Arias, 2001). As described by Fowler and Dell (2004), the development of belief during this stage is often characterised by contradictions that are negotiated intrapersonally. Coelho experienced a split with God, as well as a split between his emotions and his cognition, which is viewed as typical during this stage (Fowler & Dell, 2004). This split was evident, for example, during the Jesuit retreat that Coelho attended in 1962. On the one hand, he felt encouraged in his belief owing to his “first encounter with God”. On the other hand, he felt guilty and anxious about his sexual desires and the expected punishment by God (Morais, 2009). Coelho became familiar with mysterious rituals during his time at the Jesuit school, which at times left him encouraged and at other times doubtful (Morais, 2009, p. 59). These experiences show aspects of Stage 2, the mythical-literal development stage (see Sect. 5.7.3), and Stage 3, the synthetic-conventional stage.

7.6.4.2 The Twenties (1967–1976)

During his twenties, Coelho spent one last time in the mental hospital, then attended group therapy and decided to stand on his own two feet (Arias, 2001, p. 41). This decision was based on an act of self-awareness, as described by Hughes (1997,

p. 1), but also on the doctor sharing his interpersonal perspective with Coelho (Fowler & Dell, 2004) on Coelho's state of being.

In 1969, Coelho wrote his first play, which was received well and financed by his girlfriend, Fabiola. Coelho joined the Brazilian Society of Writers during 1968 and conformity with artists and writers gained importance. He did not "go with the crowd", as Hughes (1997, p. 1) suggests, but wanted to belong to the writers and artists in Brazilian society. Coelho met girlfriends, such as Fabiola, Vera, Cristina, and in 1971 his first wife, Gisa, who all supported his interest in writing and the arts. Gisa even shared his interest in the occult. His girlfriends and his first wife were highly important to Coelho, responding to and mirroring his actions and confirming his belonging. They shared his social and religious communities and were a sign of connection, membership and belonging, as emphasised by Burnell (2013, p. 142). However, Coelho's second wife, Cissa, whom he married in 1976, did not fit into this scheme of girlfriends. She did not share most of Coelho's interests, except the travelling (Morais, 2009), and the relationship did not last long.

The concept of the faith community stage (Croucher, 2010) is expressed in the relationship between Gisa, Coelho and Raul Seixas and their common interest in the occult (Morais, 2009, p. 222). Coelho turned to the devil, which marks an opposition to Fowler and Dell's (2004) assumption that God is at this stage of faith development represented by personal qualities of acceptance, love, support, understanding and loyalty. For Coelho, God did not exist at this stage. However, after he experienced an introductory ritual into the satanic sect, he panicked and returned to his "childish religious beliefs", to the Lord (Arias, 2001, pp. 119–120). The turn to the devil was an outstanding experience in Coelho's life and is not described as such in the stages of faith development. However, as described as typical by Fowler and Dell (2004), Coelho developed his faith – satanic belief – strongly through group membership. Coelho emphasised that the demon was on the one hand a fallen angel and on the other hand "the product of the collective unconscious which personifies it" (Arias, 2001, p. 123). By referring to this concept, he showed the split between religious and scientific assumptions and his way out of his satanic belief: He returned to the Lord (Arias, 2001) through various emotional states, intrapersonal negotiations and identity-building processes and mended the previously experienced split with God (see Sect. 3.4). In his decision to return to God, Coelho seemed to be highly independent in his thoughts and actions and less concerned with conforming to societal values and norms and interpersonal relationships.

Coelho's and Gisa's outstanding experience of the kidnapping, their survival and their separation underlined Coelho's decision to return to God and celebrate Thanksgiving in the church St Joseph – Coelho's protector (Morais, 2009, p. 276). He celebrated the new start of his belief.

Coelho's development during his teenage years and his twenties was noteworthy with regard to his non-conformity regarding the expectations of his parents and teachers, societal norms and values and his peer groups. During these two periods in his life, he refused to conform – as throughout his life – and was relatively independent regarding the expectations and judgements of significant others. This development of Coelho might therefore not go beyond the descriptions of Burnell (2013),

but does not comply totally with the faith development of Stage 3 (Burnell, 2013; Fowler, 1981, 1987).

In summary, Stage 3 is the final stage of development for many individuals in terms of faith development (Fowler, 1981, 1984). It is the “conformist stage” in which individuals attune to the expectations and judgements of significant others (Burnell, 2013, p. 142). However, Coelho did not attune to the expectations of others during this stage, but rather preferred a self-reflexive development and intrapersonal readjustment. Coelho developed strongly in terms of cognition and faith through turning to the occult and finally returning to the Lord. The rejection of the occult and Satan in Coelho's life led to the readjustment of his beliefs and values (Fowler, 1981), which included his childhood beliefs and his general return to the Christian belief.

According to Fowler (1981), Stages 4 to 6 are usually encountered in adolescence. Individuals reaching these stages are relatively rare and the transition from one stage to the next is not inevitable or assumed (Fowler, 1981). The stage transition (Stage 3–4) is based on contradictions and/or clashes between valued sources of authority, changes in sanctioned leadership or policies and practices, experiences that induce critical reflection on the self and others, values, judgements and opinions (Fowler, 1981). Focusing on Stage 3 and the analysis of Coelho's life, it emerges that he was highly self-aware and self-reflexive with regard to his values. He reflected on societal, political and individual thoughts, feelings, actions and behaviour critically, as well as mindfully. The findings indicate that the transition from his twenties into his thirties and beyond represented the transition from Stage 3, the synthetic-conventional faith, to the individuate-reflexive faith, Stage 4.

7.6.5 Stage 4 – Individuative–Reflexive Stage

The individuative-reflexive stage usually includes the development of the executive ego and integrates the relocation of individual authority within the self (Fowler, 1984, 1987). Hughes (1997, p. 1) points out that the transition can be enduring and challenging. Referring to Coelho's life, individuative-reflexive faith spans the decades of his thirties (1977–1986) and forties (1987–1996).

7.6.5.1 The Thirties (1977–1986)

The period of his thirties in Coelho's life hardly featured any aspects of synthetic-conventional faith. He turned increasingly to the stage of individuative-reflexive faith during his twenties already. This stage is influenced by two main developments (Fowler & Dell, 2004), which include the critical development of reflection and evaluation of personal values, beliefs, commitments and relationships and the development of self-identity that is based on self-worth – not on external authorities – which allows independent judgement in relation to the self and others (Fowler, 1984).

During an incident in 1978, after Coelho had visited the birthplace of Nhá Chica in Brazil, he was involved in a car accident, but was unhurt. He believed that the saint, Nhá Chica, had saved his life and she became the patron for his career as a writer (Coelho, 2006). Through this experience, Coelho reflected on his relationships with the saint and evaluated his personal value of writing. He developed self-worthiness and self-identity, experienced life as meaningful and was saved by a saint for the second time (Coelho, 2006).

Just one year later, in 1979, Coelho separated from Cissa, questioning the relationship, its worth and values. He became aware of his unhappiness and drew his own consequences. Croucher (2010) mentions this stage as the rational construct stage, in which previously unconscious beliefs and commitments become more consciously adopted.

The relationship with Cristina helped him to reinstall his faith and belief in God (Morais, 2009). The relationship marked the revitalisation of Christian belief for Coelho. His religious and spiritual consciousness grew, he travelled with Cristina and made promises to the infant Jesus of Prague in Prague to return to him in case of success. This time, Coelho related personally to Jesus, independent of any authority, church or conviction. He re-evaluated his relationship to God and Jesus. Coelho, as Fowler (1986) describes as typical for this stage, regained his self-authority with regard to God and the saints. As emphasised by Burnell (2013), Coelho also increased his awareness of his own ideology and the nurturing external factors and signs of his newly won belief, such as Cristina, Nhá Chica and Jesus.

Shortly after his outstanding experiences in Dachau, Coelho met his master, J., and decided to join the RAM, a traditional Catholic order. Coelho complied with the rules and regulations and became a member, later on a master of RAM (Arias, 2001), following his inner spiritual journey (Morais, 2009). Through the next 5 years, Coelho practised RAM rituals and exercises and grew in coherence. His faith integrated new aspects and became more coherent so that he became a master of RAM in 1986 (Morais, 2009).

During the following years, Coelho described himself in public as a magus. He spent several years on the assessment and clarification of his faith, which is typical at this stage (Burnell, 2013). This led him to "read the hidden language of things in pursuit of the personal destiny" (Arias, 2001, p. xv). Coelho recognised the "omen" in each day and saw humanity stretching towards spirituality (Arias, 2001). He created his own life philosophy, as described by Elifson and Stone (1985, p. 31), by exploring his inner faith, without relying on external resources. Coelho clarified his personal (faith) boundaries, which is according to Straughn (2010) typical at this stage. In addition, he recognised the presence of the French Saint Theresa as an omen in his life (Arias, 2001, p. 8) and readjusted his faith again towards the influence of saints in Catholic belief.

With the development of his own philosophy, Coelho developed personally, with more depth, started to trust himself more and awakened his dream of becoming a writer by writing about his pilgrimage (Coelho, 1987). Spiritual self-development as a writer went hand in hand with this. His philosophy was based on spirituality, the search for the unknown and infinite and belief, an attempt at becoming a warrior of light, a spiritual adventurer and an enthusiast (Arias, 2001).

During this phase of his life, Coelho integrated his traditional Catholic and Christian belief with his newly learnt RAM practices through an act of intentional choice and self-awareness, which is an important step in the process of faith development during the individuating-reflexive Stage 4 (Fowler, 1981).

Coelho did not experience the challenge of the authority of others, neither did he fear the loss of his relationships through transformation. This might be due to the strong support of Cristina, who was a strong believer herself. Morais (2009) and Arias (2001) both emphasise that Coelho experienced doubts, depressions and strong negative emotions after his failure to become a master of RAM, but also shortly after his pilgrimage (a 3-month depression) and before the creation of "The Pilgrimage" (Coelho, 1987). This depressive state was a sign of his insecurity regarding his way forward, the integration of his new values, beliefs and perceptions (Fowler, 1981).

As Fowler (1981) highlights, the process of Stage 4 took Coelho several years; during his thirties, Coelho did not develop the third perspective strongly, which includes an evaluation of the views and ideologies of others as much as personal philosophy. During this stage, Coelho was more focused on his personal and self-development than on evaluating the expectations of others, which is usual and typical at this stage (Fowler, 1987).

During this stage, Stroud (2004, p. 201) highlights the individual tensions with regard to (1) individuality vs. group membership, (2) subjectivity and the power of emotions vs. objectivity and critical reflection, (3) self-fulfilment and self-actualisation vs. service to and for others as primary concern and (4) the question of commitment to the relative vs. the struggle with the possibility of an absolute. However, Coelho did not experience these tensions in his thirties – or at least they are not described in the data. It rather seemed that he enjoyed living his (1) individuality and that group memberships were not his main concern. He also integrated his (2) subjectivity of emotions with his objectivity to critical reflection. With regard to (3) self-fulfilment and self-actualisation, Coelho's concern for self-fulfilment and self-actualisation were more important than service to others and dominated his life.

He felt strong and independent through the strong and enduring relationship with Cristina and his first professional success in the music industry. Finally, Coelho balanced his commitment to the relative on the one hand and his struggle for the possibility of the absolute – particularly with regard to his faith development.

The development of Coelho's individuating-reflexive stage was not finalised during his thirties; he grew further during his forties, as explained next.

7.6.5.2 The Forties (1987–1996)

During his forties, Coelho empowered the process of developing the executive self and the relocation of the authority within himself, as described by Fowler (1984, 1987) and Burnell (2013). After starting to reflect on and evaluate his personal values and to build up his personal life philosophy, he developed his self-identity. This is all part of the primary faith development process (Fowler, 1984). Coelho

established his new belief and his life philosophy in the external world through his writing and his books, "The pilgrimage" (Coelho, 1987) and "The alchemist" (Coelho, 1988).

However, Coelho's spiritual journey did not stop at this point. His master, J., sent him on another journey, this time to travel the "Road to Rome" (Coelho, 2006) and experience more extraordinary spiritual awakening (Morais, 2009). Through the new experiences, Coelho's belief was strengthened and he developed an even stronger self-identity. His boundaries clarified (Fowler, 1984) and he adopted his previously more unconscious belief and commitments consciously through the writing of his books (e.g. "Brida" (Coelho, 1990)). It seemed as if Coelho regained and relocated his authority within himself (Fowler, 1986) and he became aware of the nurturing of external factors influencing his greater awareness and his own philosophy and ideology (Morais, 2009). He even expanded his spiritual ideas and his life philosophy within his books (Coelho, 1990) and developed new ideas. He "increased his third perspective (Fowler, 1987) and became more aware of the evaluation of his own views and ideologies and expectations, as well as the beliefs of others. This was mainly shown in Coelho's books, which used the protagonists to re-evaluate beliefs, values, commitments and relationships, such as in "Brida" (Coelho, 1990), in which he re-evaluated the feminine side of God and within himself (Arias, 2001; Coelho, 1990). This shows that Coelho's spiritual development was strongly connected to his self-development and to the transformation of his identity. This is also true of the book "The Valkyries" (Coelho, 1992), in which he reflected on his experiences during his and Cristina's trip to the Californian desert (Morais, 2009). As in "Brida", Coelho (1992) refined his belief, his ideas and values through the writing of "The Valkyries" and combined it with ideas from Greek history (Davidson, 1990). The book, again, showed Coelho's search for the redefinition and the reintegration of various concepts of himself and others (even from different times and cultures) to understand and critically evaluate spirituality and the self within life. The third perspective became more important during his forties than it had been during his thirties. However, again, the struggles described by Stroud (2004) can hardly be recognised as struggles in Coelho's life during his forties and in the stage of individuation-reflexive faith. They were more present issues, but Coelho did not seem to struggle with them.

In "By the river Piedra I sat down and wept" (Coelho, 1994, 1996), Coelho reintegrated his Catholic childhood belief and the symbols of Catholicism. He combined both with a reflection on rituals and magical themes and reflected on discovering the depth of the spiritual gifts of one of the protagonists in the book. The social dimension and the relationships to others became more important and the book dealt with the social impact of belief and spirituality on others. Coelho (1996, p. ix) expressed it as: "The more we love, the closer we come to spiritual experience." Two protagonists, for example, conduct a dialogue about human searches for love and spirituality. With this book, Coelho re-evaluated his concept of love on different levels and reflected his own spiritual movements during his life. He thereby brought his own unconscious movements and developments into consciousness by describing his protagonists: Pilar described her movement away from her strict

religious belief that had been part of her life and her childhood. But this had passed. Pilar still said prayers, but in a rather “automatic” way, without knowing whether she still believed in them (Coelho, 1996, p. 54). At the same time, Pillar's friend talked about the “other”, the individuals and the society that generally teaches that a person has to live for building up financial means and not for the mystery of life (Coelho, 1996, p. 56). He advocated living in the moment and thereby opening oneself to the divine energy, while following the dream and soul's desire, to experience the beginning of the performance of miracles (Coelho, 1996, p. 57). The development of Coelho's spiritual journey, as well as the social dimension, the third perspective (Fowler, 1987), became important to him.

Coelho's last book published during his forties was “The fifth mountain” (Coelho, 1995). It deals with the historical and religious narration of Elijah and his struggle between religious and spiritual beliefs (Coelho, 1998a). This book was another attempt of Coelho to create awareness and consciousness of the spiritual, the religious developments within himself and selected socio-cultural and historical contexts. It is a book about Coelho's life and his striving for his own faith and the acceptance of his fate. It is about fulfilling spiritual duties and responsibility on the one hand and overcoming doubts on the other hand. It is also about trust and the guidance of God, which reflects the individualisation of the belief and faith in God, independent of authorities and external sources (Fowler, 1981). The book described part of Coelho's individuative-reflexive process of faith development (and spirituality) by using a socio-historical description of the development from polytheism to monotheism (Coelho, 1998a).

The transition towards the next stage, Stage 5, the paradoxical-conjunctive stage, is introduced when a person experiences the need to grow in terms of his/her images of self and others. This usually happens when an individual feels the need to transform on a deeper level with regard to the energies explored within the deeper self. Individuals might also feel that their explanations and meanings, which they have created during this stage, are not intense and deep enough and they might feel the need to move to the next stage, which seems to explore a deeper truth that is more complex and multi-layered (Fowler, 1981).

Coelho felt the need to develop on a deeper level during his fifties. This was when he moved away from the individuative-reflexive Stage 4 towards the paradoxical-conjunctive Stage 5.

7.6.6 Stage 5 – Paradoxical-Conjunctive Stage

The “conjunctive faith” (Coyle, 2011) reflects the Piagetian development of logical thought and gives way to relational and contextual reasoning (Hughes, 1997). This stage usually develops in midlife or beyond, if at all (Fowler, 1987). In the life of Paulo Coelho, the transition towards conjunctive faith already started during his forties (1987–1996), but grew in his fifties (1997–2006) and sixties (2007–2016).

7.6.6.1 The Forties (1987–1996)

The transition to conjunctive faith (Coyle, 2011) started with “By the river Pedro I sat down and wept” (1994) and “The fifth mountain” (1995), with which Coelho aimed at unifying individual and societal contradictions and paradoxes. However, his truth is not yet viewed as multiple – it is rather seen as one-dimensional.

In “The fifth mountain” (Coelho, 1998a), the concept of monotheism and the development towards this concept were described and emphasised as true and right. This book did not yet include the balancing of the different perspectives and the acceptance of multi-layered concepts (Fowler, 1981). However, it reflected Coelho's individuative-reflexive state of mind: He had developed a deep interest in various cultural and religious traditions and integrated these into his faith philosophy and his spiritual narrations, books and stories, as is usual for Stage 5, the paradoxical-conjunctive stage (Straughn, 2010). Reflection on these various historical, cultural and religious aspects in books and writings is interpreted as an intrapersonal opening to the multi-layered insights of Coelho into various traditions and as a transitional step towards Stage 5.

7.6.6.2 The Fifties (1997–2006)

Stage 5 is characterised by a “new openness to others and an ability to keep in tension the paradoxes and polarities of faith and life” (Hughes, 1997, p. 1). This openness in Coelho is described by Arias (2001) who emphasises him to be a man of extremes, who is straightforward, passionate and accustomed to “the good fight”, insecurity (Arias, 2001) and openness to new ideas and concepts.

Elifson and Stone (1985, p. 31) mention that during Stage 5 symbols integrate multiple conceptual and affective meanings, creating an experienced richness and depth. Coelho integrated these multiple meanings, for example, in “Veronica decides to die” (Coelho, 2000). In this story, he combined autobiographical experiences from his times in the mental hospital with fictitious characteristics (Coelho, 2000). He integrated his life experiences into fantastic elements and thereby reconciled with his own life history and the conflicts with his parents. With this book, Coelho managed to introduce himself into reflexive adult thinking and explored his mental hospital experiences from various and multiple perspectives. By reflecting on his personal experiences with his parents' and the hospital's authority and his desire to live his dream, Coelho reconciled opposites and contradictions (Fowler & Dell, 2004), referring to the electroshock experiences and his relationships in the mental hospital. He reunified the contradictions of the “Stockholm syndrome”, which he experienced throughout his young adult life and his split feelings towards his parents, without leaning towards one or the other side, which is mentioned as usual for this stage (Fowler, 1981). Although Coelho had promised his parents not to talk about the mental hospital experiences, he opened up about his experiences publicly after his mother's death and thereby became a catalyst of the experiences of the reader (Arias, 2001). Coelho highlighted in various interviews that he did not

feel bitter towards his parents and that he had forgiven them for the suffering (Arias, 2001, p. 43). He reframed the experience as a real, deeply rooted learning curve and grew through it. Coelho (2010) reconsidered the socio-cultural concepts of madness and insanity, life and death, love and hatred. The book's protagonist, Veronica, who is Coelho, developed a new understanding of these concepts and experienced them on a deeper level. Both Veronica and Coelho dealt through the writing with conscious and unconscious complexities, increased awareness of dependence (e.g. on the parents and the doctors) and independence (running away from the hospital and the decision for life and not for a suicidal death), as well as the topics of identity, the individual and society (Yunus, 2014). In summary, the reader learns how important it is to be aware of the miracle of life, to enjoy life every day to the full and to embrace challenges and tackle them without fear (Coelho, 2000).

During Stage 5, individuals are able to see their personal limitations and their belief systems and can recognise symbols and meanings beyond their own faith traditions (Fowler, 1981). Through the protagonist Veronica, Coelho (2000) reflected individual and societal limitations and reflected that life is particularly enjoyable when a person frees her/himself from familial and societal restrictions and family bonds. Veronika expresses Coelho's success story to "return" to life and mental sanity and resilience after his traumatic experience in the mental hospital.

Coelho (2007) explores spirituality, mental health issues and a person's life fulfilment in "The wanderer". Spirituality and the relationship with God is addressed as a key issue and syncretism and mixed doctrines with different perspectives are taken from Christianity, Judaism, Taoism and Islam to bring spirituality and transcendence into the life of the readers (Lätzel, 2007). Coelho's ability to reconcile religious and spiritual traditions was criticised by practitioners of pastoral care and practical psychology, since it dealt with the leitmotif of spirituality and individuality, the question of the individual relationship with God, the individual's responsibility for success in life and God's support.

In Stage 5, the desire increases to explore and find new ways to define the relationship to the self and to God (Fowler, 1987). The individual is not bound to the social or religious group or the self, but rather refers to the interconnectedness, the interrelatedness and the complexities of the world, things within the world and beyond (Fowler, 2001). Coelho (2007) integrated various religious attempts to define and include God as a higher force in the life of humans. He ignored the differences of religious insights while highlighting the communalities across religious and spiritual concepts founded in his Christian belief, which he defined as his chosen belief system (Arias, 2001), after having processed his experiences of being an "atheist" (Sect. 3.4), a "satanist" (Sect. 3.5), and after having returned to Christianity (Sect. 3.6). During his fifties, Coelho was able to mindfully recognise his individual and spiritual limitations and recognised the symbols and meanings beyond his own faith traditions (Fowler, 1981). He reconnected to his childhood belief while striving for change and transformation. He did not get stuck between his religion and new opposing concepts, which is emphasised as typical for this stage (Burnell, 2013), but rather integrated these concepts directly. This ability might be based on the fact that Coelho had experienced various extremes and lived through different

belief systems earlier in his life. After having lived through them, he was able to integrate them without any problems.

Coelho (2007) defined God as part of the person's soul, consisting of a feminine and a masculine side, combining intuition, logic, mystery and imagination (Arias, 2001). Coelho integrated and unified concepts that are classified as opposites (e.g. the different religious traditions), which is typical at this stage (Fowler, 1986), to overcome previous boundaries and limitations (Straughn, 2010).

Coelho integrated opposing images of God: "Gott gibt es zweimal" (English "God exists twice") – God is what the Jesuit priests teach (and what made him lose his "childhood faith" (Arias, 2001, p. 106)) and God is a daily life experience within each and every individual (as is taught in mysticism). He created God by reciting mantras, practising yoga, meditating and including Indian cosmogony and Oriental spirituality into his life (Arias, 2001, p. 108). Through multiple experiences he became an initiate to the spiritual quest and self-transformed (Arias, 2001, p. 108).

In "The wanderer" (Coelho, 2007), Coelho explored the concepts of God, the soul and life's purpose in multi-layered ways and defined God from different perspectives as a universal God, the God of love, an individualised God, God in nature or God as part of a person's soul (Coelho, 2007).

Founded in his Christian belief, he integrated magical and mystic thoughts (Arias, 2001), practised I-Ching (Morais, 2009) and believed in the oracle of the mystic cosmic ways (Anthony & Moog, 2002).

At this stage, individuals are often frustrated by the vision of a transformed world that stays untransformed in the real world and loneliness and hopelessness increase (Fowler, 1984). Since Coelho discovered that "Coelho fever" had spread across social, economic and cultural classes regardless of sex, race, culture or age (Morais, 2009), he realised his impact on masses of individuals and saw his influence on the world's transformation across cultures and religions, based on his open inter-religious and spiritual visions and mindset (Straughn, 2010). Through his integrative attitude he overcame his own cultural and social boundaries, as is usual during Stage 5 (Straughn, 2010). As described as typical by Fowler (1984), Coelho increased his loyalty across communities, through openness and acceptance of various transitions, references to a symbolic and mythical reality, a humble awareness, understanding of multi-layered complexity and the strength to see and uphold opposite tensions (Fowler, 1984). At this stage Coelho (2007) defined God as faith, which is the foundation for creativity, writing and an intercultural and interreligious dialogue and exchange.

Concepts of spirituality, faith and love were explored in several of his books, such as "The wanderer" (Coelho, 2007), "Eleven minutes" (Coelho, 2003c), "The warrior of the light" (Coelho, 2003a) and "The zahir" (Coelho, 2005, published in English version). At the same time, Coelho recognised the boundaries of certain socio-cultural and socio-historical concepts in his books, for example in "Veronika decides to die" (Coelho, 2000) and "The witch of Portobello" (Coelho, 2006). He described rituals to overcome the normal conscious state, to connect to God and to use meditation practices and religious rituals as tools to respond to the spiritual quest (Coelho, 2006, 2007) by exploring new boundaries. In "The witch of Portobello" (Coelho,

2007) he introduced the witch as a person who does not comply with societal norms, a person that integrates faith in terms of Stages 4 and 5 (Fowler, 1981).

During his fifth decade, Coelho lived in various contexts, such as Brazil, France and Switzerland (Morais, 2009; Coelho, 2010b). He expanded his national boundaries, learnt to speak French and English fluently (Coelho, 2010b) and changed cultural, gender and age-related perspectives while putting himself into the shoes of his characters in his texts.

In "Like a flowing river" (Coelho, 2010) Coelho wrote about new limitations and boundaries such as the use of new technologies, the internet, nature and archery, which he took up as a challenge. Coelho (2006) was fascinated by the new, by things that connected people through thoughts and actions that increased self-awareness, self-worth, positivity, meaningfulness in life and the worldview "Sic transit gloria mundi" – all earthly glory is transient (Coelho, 2006, p. 159). This concept unified all differences into one quest to understand what is the unconscious and underlying meaning and purpose of life. He once more described the challenges to overcome his own limitations and boundaries through sitting still, being quiet and listening to inner voices. In 2006 Coelho emphasised how he addressed his own and personal challenges to experience the most important things in life, which one found not on the surface of actions, but rather in silence and deep thoughts (Coelho, 2006).

7.6.6.3 The Sixties (2007–2016)

During his sixties, Coelho moved forward in strengthening the accomplishments and achievements of Stage 5, the "paradoxical-conjunctive stage". He celebrated his birthday in solitude with Cristina and St Joseph's day in public (Morais, 2009). He showed his ability to integrate his Catholic belief with other religious rituals and unified various spiritual traditions (Fowler, 1981).

Coelho published constantly during this decade, from „The winner stands alone (Coelho, 2008a), "My life" (video documentary, Coelho, 2010b), "Aleph" (Coelho, 2011), "Manuscript found in Accra" (Coelho, 2012) to "Adultery" (Coelho, 2014b). "The winner stands alone" (Coelho, 2008a) dealt with multiple perspectives on the concept of love, celebrities and the intra-psychological contradiction of a person who destroyed lives in the name of a greater love (Coelho, 2008a). The book inherited a societal critique in terms of the manipulation of the individual by society and a plea for the individual to overcome personal and societal limitations and live one's dream, which is one main insight into this stage (Fowler, 2001). Chhajed (2012) emphasises that the book examined deeper moral and spiritual questions on the obsession of society with power, fame, celebrity and an "insatiable need for stardom". It referred to the interconnectedness and interrelatedness of the complexities of the world, things within the world and above (Fowler, 2001).

The individual deals with paradoxes on different levels and learns how to deal with conscious and unconscious complexities (Fowler, 1981). Coelho used his writing process as a surprise, as a natural work and as a miracle of creation (Coelho, 2010b), which was foundational for exploring the conscious and the unconscious complexities of the world.

Life was worth living for Coelho when “you focus on the small things in life” and when a person “sees everything is one thing” (Coelho, 2010b, 42:00 min.), then the person understood the “miracle of life” (Coelho, 2010b, 43:00 min.). Coelho increased his awareness of things, and the recognition of the dependence and independence of relationships (Fowler, 1981). He (Coelho, 2010b, p. 19, p. 25) realised his responsibility as a world-famous writer to comment on what he observed in the world, such as wars. He highlighted that artists and writers have the responsibility to build bridges across cultures: “We only had the cultural bridge. We have to take care of it. When it breaks, there is no way to communicate with other cultures” (Coelho, 2010b, 21:15 min.). Fowler (1981, 1984) mentions that during this stage, opposites and contradictions are reconciled while the individual can stand the pressures and tensions. Coelho reunified and balanced the contradictions and paradoxes within himself, he built bridges without judging, which is emphasised as important for this stage (Fowler, 1981), while living according to Christian principles (Arias, 2001).

At this stage, the individual is aware that the unconsciousness is highly influential and that the conscious power of the individual, the group and society is limited (Fowler, 1987). For Coelho (2010b, 12:40 min.), the only way forward was to learn to live with the light and the shadow and to accept it, to grow consciously and to create awareness.

In “Aleph” (Coelho, 2011), he referred to the mystical space of aleph (Mihály, 2012), which he experienced while travelling on the Trans-Siberian Railway. The book was categorised as a reconstructed biography, semi-fictionalised with autobiographical elements. Coelho emphasised that he had reached a feeling of a deep crisis of faith, a stagnation of his spiritual development and dissatisfaction with his spiritual growth (Purwandoyo & Kurnia, 2013). This discomfort is usually the point – as described by Fowler (1981, 1986) – to transform from Stage 5 to Stage 6 in faith development.

Coelho (2011) felt discomfort with his spiritual development, which is a major force in adult identity formation. He needed to increase his awareness of the self and others, engaging with connectedness with the divine, nature and humanity and defining new relationships with God, the community of believers and nature (Furqon & Mustofa, 2014). Coelho's spiritual journey was based on the question of meaningfulness and the exploration of the meaning of his spirituality by conducting identifications, exploration, experiments through magical and religious traditions to discover his personal spiritual path and his new identity (Furqon & Mustofa, 2014). In “Aleph” (2011), Coelho's story gained a new quality: It included the idea of reincarnation and karma and its consequences within this lifetime. Sari (2013) highlights that the book connects existentialism with Coelho's biography. Purwandoyo and Kurnia (2013), focus on the underlying aspects, highlighting that Coelho's journey is rather a “reflection on how a human is naturally driven by their own subconscious towards things”. The subconscious topics addressed through a new quality are based on redemption, forgiveness, reconnecting with people, travel, spiritual renewal and growth. Furqon and Mustofa (2014) conclude that Coelho moves through various stages (based on Erikson), such as exploration, actuality and mutu-

ality, adaptation, virtue and centrality, crisis and despair in terms of the clash of spiritual and religious values, and ego integration (religious and spiritual values), and a healthy and holistic spiritual identity development, as described as integration by Fowler (1981, 1987).

Coelho released his book “Manuscript found in Accra” (Coelho, 2012), which contained his life philosophy and integrated the ability to see the limitations of the personal belief system, while recognising concepts, symbols and meanings beyond his own faith traditions (Fowler, 1981). The book included a kind of “universal wisdom” that integrated the philosophies of Khalil Gibran, Osho and Indian mysticism (Kamrani, 2013). Coelho reintegrated various spiritual concepts in the context of accepting the human condition:

These values are not related to this or that religious system. However, some people in society, some religious groups try to say ‘no, my religion is the best one.’ I think every religion is heading toward the same light and that light is God. (...) At the end your life it is not what God you believe in, but how did you live your life? You may not believe in God, but you believe in love, and love goes beyond everything (Reuters, 2013).

Finally, the book, “Adultery” (Coelho, 2014b) was, once more, a societal critique on Western societies and the phenomenon of boredom, frustration and depression, moving away from spirituality, but rather describing hopelessness and frustrations, which can be overcome by faith and transformation (McAlpin, 2014).

In Coelho's recent blogs (2014b) he wrote about his spiritual journey and the recognition that “God is in life, and life is in God” (Coelho, 2014b). With this recognition, the sacred harmony of the daily experiences were defined as divine tasks that showed humble awareness as well as an understanding of a multi-layered complexity and the strength to see and uphold opposite tensions (Fowler, 1984).

According to Fowler, an individual moves to the next and final stage when he/she experiences discomfort and longs for a transformation (Fowler, 1986).

7.6.7 Stage 6 – Universalising Faith

Stage 6 is a very mature stage, hardly ever reached (Croucher, 2010). It is rather a teleological extension of the theory than an empirically grounded phenomenon (Elifson & Stone, 1985, p. 31). In the case of Paulo Coelho's life, “universalising faith” was reached with regard to selected aspects during Coelho's sixties (2007–2016).

7.6.7.1 The Sixties (2007–2016)

At Stage 6, a person turns to love towards each and every person, altruistic values and self-sacrifice (Hughes, 1997, p. 2). Coelho turned to love in his sixties, writing about it as a greater concept in “The winner stands alone” (Coelho, 2008a) and referring to “love as an act of faith in another person” in “Manuscript found in

Accra” (Coelho, 2013a). Coelho (2013a, 2013b) increased his awareness and grew with the new consciousness about love and its importance in human beings, as well as in his own life: “Love is only a word, until someone arrives to give it meaning. Don't give up. Remember, it's always the last key on the key ring that opens the door.”

The data analysis does not show that Coelho is viewed as a whole person, regardless of social class, nationality, gender, age, political ideology, race and religion, as is usually the case, according to Fowler and Dell (2004), during Stage 6. Coelho is still defined as a Brazilian writer.

Furthermore, at this stage, the individual identifies with the “whole of others”. Loyalty becomes a “principle of being” and relatively few individuals claim this stage of vision and faith-related action, such as Mahatma Ghandi, Martin Luther King Jr. and Mother Theresa of Calcutta (Elifson & Stone, 1985, p. 31). In these terms, Coelho did not reach Stage 6. He was rather driven by political ideologies, as shown, for example, in his reaction to the Brazilian government's decision to invite selected Brazilian writers to the Frankfurt book fair (Deutsche Presse Agentur, 2014). Coelho threatened not to attend the book fair, instead of reacting with greater love and understanding for the other, as required at Stage 6 of the FDT (Fowler, 1981). His reaction was judgemental and politically motivated, but his creative works of the period include an increase of greater, unconditional love, spirituality, faith and belief. The creative works, however, do not show that God and love became a grounded principle in Coelho's daily life itself. Burnell (2013, p. 149) emphasises that Stage 6 is marked by the “decentration of the self” and the ability to see the world from various perspectives (Burnell, 2013, p. 149), which Coelho did not show in terms of the Frankfurt book fair situation. His reaction did not emanate from God's love and justice (Fowler & Dell, 2004, p. 32); he rather showed his solidarity and his anger about the injustice of the selection processes regarding the writer's invitations.

Focusing on the writing itself, it is based on the love of writing (RTL, 2014), but it is not a selfless act and service – it is rather a measure to reconstruct the self in the world and to make an impact on world transitions, guiding them in a certain direction.

To conclude, Coelho started in his sixties to turn towards Stage 6; however, it does not seem to be adjustable to his ideas of justice and injustice and his personal message to the world to live an individualised dream and contribute to good. His message does not contain selfless social service to the world, which is required at stage 6.

7.6.8 Summary of Findings of Stages of Faith Development

Fowler (1981, 1984, 1987) considered that the stages of faith development are invariant, sequential, discreet and hierarchical, as explained before.

Table 7.33 Findings on stages of faith development in the life of Paulo Coelho

Historical periods in the development of Paulo Coelho	Stages of faith development in the life of Paulo Coelho						
	Faith development stages in the life of Paulo Coelho						
	1. Stage 0	2. Stage 1	3. Stage 2	4. Stage 3	5. Stage 4	6. Stage 5	7. Stage 6
1. Coelho's early childhood (1947–1953)	x						
2. Childhood and schooldays (1953–1961)		x	x				
3. The teenage years (1962–1966)			x	x			
4. The twenties (1967–1976)				x			
5. The thirties (1977–1986)					x		
6. The forties (1987–1996)					x	x	
7. The fifties (1997–2006)						x	
8. The sixties (2007–2016)						x	(x)

Source: Researcher's own construction

Coelho has moved through the stages chronologically. The data show that Coelho's development (see Table 7.33) moved from Stage 0 in early childhood (1947–1953), through Stage 1 in childhood and during his schooldays (1953–1961) and Stage 2 in his teenage years (1962–1966). Stage 3 stretched into Coelho's life from his teenage years (1962–1966) to his twenties (1967–1976), while Stage 4 occurred during his thirties (1977–1986) and forties (1987–1996). Finally, Coelho experienced Stage 5 during his fifties (1997–2006) and sixties (2007–2016). A little information is provided indicating Coelho's movement towards Stage 6 during his sixties (2007–2016). However, he has not completely reached this stage, particularly when compared with others, such as Mother Theresa or Nelson Mandela who lived their lives in the service of others.

Generally, Coelho appears to be a rather self-related and independent individual who has hardly felt restricted by social groups, socio-cultural values and norms from his teenage years onwards. During his life, he has always strived to move beyond socio-cultural boundaries, limitations and restrictions to fulfil his life's dreams. However, the perceived potential limitations have not been without emotional impact. Throughout the different life periods, Coelho experienced highly positive and motivational feelings to develop spiritually and to be a famous and successful writer. At the same time, he also experienced strong depression, frustration, fear and loneliness, which were related to his dream's fulfilment, to his spiritual quest and to his acceptance of his light and shadow sides. His unbalanced feelings and his emotional restlessness have contributed to the desire to develop himself spiritually and grow personally through the faith development stages while fulfilling his vocation and life's dream.

7.6.9 *Vocation in Paulo Coelho's Life*

In Fowler's (1984) FDT, the concept of vocation in an individual's life is focused, whereby vocation is viewed as shaping all the aspects of life while responding to God's call. One's vocation in life is connected to the faith development stages (Fowler, 1987) and includes various aspects of one's life, such as relationships, work, leisure, resources, public and private life (Fowler, 1984). It develops from young adulthood to middle and finally to late adulthood (Fowler, 1987).

7.6.9.1 **Paulo Coelho's Vocation During His Young Adulthood**

During young adulthood, the individual aims at clarifying and defining the personal identity while searching and identifying his/her vocation in life. Coelho developed his love for stories and his ability and joy to write during childhood (1954) and won a writing competition in primary school (Morais, 2009). At the age of 12 he diarised his first self-portrait (Morais, 2009). These behavioural patterns and actions already show that on an unconscious level he identified his vocation in life as being a writer.

Coelho was 15 years old when he developed the *idée fixe* to become a writer (Morais, 2009, p. 62). He was dedicated and explained to his mother: "No, mother, I just want to be a writer. Not an Engineer who writes books" (Coelho, 2006, p. 11). In 1963, he won a top prize in the Academia Literária Santo Inácio. He consciously aimed at becoming a famous writer and when he experienced backlashes, he managed to activate his resources to be resilient and decided to "fight to realize his dream" (Morais, 2009, p.79).

During phases of depression, the only thing that kept Coelho alive and striving was his dream of becoming a writer and he did not stop reflecting on the "problem of establishing myself as a recognized writer" (Morais, 2009, p. 90). He wanted to live his life to the full, wanted to do everything that he liked (Arias, 2001, p. 37). He held onto his dream, even when encountering criticism, negative feedback and ignorance (Coelho, 2006, p. 84). His happiness was based on his dream (Coelho, 2006, p. 84) to live the original life design (Coelho, 2006, p. 122).

At this stage of his life, Coelho did not connect his life's dream with a spiritual perspective; it was rather ego-related, taking into account only his individual happiness and self-development. Following his dream, he described to work hard (Coelho, 2006, p. 22) and he felt that he was being punished for following his dream by being taken to the mental hospital – he did not feel insane (Morais, 2009, p. 134).

In conclusion, Coelho realised his joy and desire to write very early and was consciously aware at the age of 15 that he wanted to become a writer. He felt it was a personal need to become a writer and part of his life design, his personal dream that longed for fulfilment, his vocation in life and calling by God.

7.6.9.2 Paulo Coelho's Vocation During His Middle Adulthood

During middle adulthood, which is defined as between 28 and 40 years, individuals struggle with deepening and questioning their lives' vocation while seeking it with regard to the calling of God (Fowler, 1984).

During his twenties and thirties, Coelho kept his dream of becoming a writer alive while being successful in theatre production. His dream kept him alive, while he started using drugs. In 1971 he started writing lyrics for Raul Seixas's songs. However, by the time he turned 25 in 1973, he was highly frustrated because he was not yet a famous writer. That was the year when he made a pact with the devil. He decided to promise the devil his soul if the devil should help him to realise his dreams. Not even an hour later, Coelho cancelled his pact and tried to overcome the dark temptations (Morais, 2009, p. 222). He did not see his vocation as a divine gift and vocation, but rather as an individual vocation that he tried to fulfil by all means. It was only during his thirties that Coelho returned to his belief in God, in the saints and in his Christian faith (Coelho, 2006; Morais, 2009). Over the years, he asked several saints (Nhá Chica, Jesus of Prague, St Joseph) for help to fulfil his dream and his vocation in life to become a famous and well-read writer.

The year 1982 was the year of the "birth of the writer", when Coelho visited the concentration camp, Dachau (Arias, 2001, p. 141). He saw an apparition and heard a voice that soon disappeared again (Arias, 2001, p. 141). This key situation happened shortly after he made promises to the infant Jesus of Prague, in Prague, to return to him if he should become a writer. However, he was repeatedly tortured by fear, solitude and depression. During the same year, Coelho joined RAM, submitted pieces to a poetry competition and compiled anthologies, gave interviews and released a book on vampirism, including a chapter that had incorrectly been published under his name, but had been written by his friend and colleague, Tony Buddha (Morais, 2009, pp. 336–337).

His greater writing output and the following of his dream were accompanied by his spiritual development according to the RAM practices (Morais, 2009). After his pilgrimage in Spain, Coelho experienced a strong depressive phase that lasted for 3 months. After that, he found a feather and interpreted it as a sign of God to start writing and he wrote his first bestseller shortly afterwards (Morais, 2009).

In summary, Coelho held onto his vocation, his personal dream of becoming a famous writer. He doubted and feared his vocation, went on a long spiritual journey and interpreted the finding of the feather as a sign of God. His personal dream and vocation finally became an explicit call and vocation called for by the divine, which had in the beginning been only a personal legend, as described by Fowler (1987) as a usual process in middle age.

7.6.9.3 Paulo Coelho Vocation's During His Later Adulthood

According to Fowler (1987), the individual only realises during the forties and beyond what is important in his/her life. Fowler (1984) sees a strong connection between finding one's vocation in life and dealing with vocational callings during this period of life.

For Coelho, his successful career started at the age of 40. In his second bestselling book, *"The alchemist"* (Coelho, 2002b), Coelho realised that each and every person has to fulfil his/her personal legend. He wrote: "Because there is a force that wants you to realize your Personal Legend; it whets your appetite with a taste of success." The book described the realisation of an individual's destiny as a person's only obligation. Coelho emphasised that this personal legend and obligation were connected to a "force" and "the universe" that conspired to help a person to fulfil his dream or vocation in life. During the following years, Coelho's success was strongly connected to his spiritual journeys, to his personal spiritual quest and development through the RAM practices. It was, however, only in 1990 that Coelho emphasised openly and publicly that "my success is a 'divine gift'" (Morais, 2009, p. 376).

In *"Brida"* (Coelho, 1990), Coelho described the "new" God that he found in nature, cosmic resonances, in happiness and love. He described God as female and as male and highlighted that every person was born with a special gift that needed to be searched for and then applied in "God's garden" to make life meaningful (Coelho, 1990, p. 57). The special gift, life's purpose and vocation, requires fulfilment and a strong belief in the vocational calling by God (1990).

In his fifth decade, Coelho promoted the idea of the "good fight" (Arias, 2001) and the "warrior of light" (Coelho, 2003a). Coelho (2007) reflected deeply on the question of which path to take in life to fulfil the individual life's dream. The "warrior of light" is challenged to fight for his ideas, sometimes without understanding what he is fighting for (Coelho, 2003a, 2006, p. 152). He is passionate and excited about success and distinguishes between eternal and worldly aims, while he prays to be wide awake (Coelho, 2006, pp. 153–155), to listen to his intuition and to fulfil the tasks he has been given by God.

In *"The witch of Portobello"* (Coelho, 2006), Coelho pointed out the natural approach to God: Believing in mother earth meant accepting the miracles and the magical reality that are right in our lives and the freedom to "choose where our steps will go" (Coelho, 2007, pp. 280–281). God became a key, the greater energy, the undoubted, "belief that you can" and "thoughts that make you grow" (Coelho, 2007, pp. 180–181). God and the individual faith and belief were reunified and the vocation and calling of God was understood as an individual and a spiritual calling at once. Coelho (2007, pp. 346) understood God as a verb, as an action. That meant that the vocation and the calling by God was part of the action, the writing itself and thus a natural and cosmic integration of a personal calling and a divine gift.

In conclusion, Coelho's development was strongly connected to spirituality and his relationship and definition of God. According to Fowler (1987), the individual, at the age of 40, knows his/her priorities and focuses on his/her vocation in life (Fowler, 1984). From his teenage years Coelho consciously knew his vocation and

dream in life, which he realised from the age of 40 and beyond. He established a new relationship with God and the cosmos by integrating part of different religions, his personal faith and spiritual assumptions and rituals. His intercultural and inter-religious approach to spirituality reached out to readers of various groups. While his major purpose in life was to become a successful writer, his second major purpose was his spiritual development and the spreading of his spiritual, holistic and integrative approach to life.

7.6.9.4 Vocation and the Relationship with God

Fowler (1987) emphasises the strong interconnection between well-being and vocation in life. For Coelho, well-being is strongly interlinked with the fulfilment of his dream, his vocation and his spiritual development. Coelho experienced mental well-being and emotional heights, such as happiness, encouragement and strength, but also emotional downs in terms of frustration, depression, fear, anger and concerns about sanity and insanity (Arias, 2001; Morais, 2009, see Chap. 3). With the publication of "The pilgrimage" (Coelho, 1987) Coelho stabilised, but still experienced emotional extremes later in his life, such as loneliness and depression (Coelho, 2014a), fears and self-doubts (Coelho, 2007). However, he always managed to overcome these emotional challenges by developing himself further.

Fowler (1984) highlights that during this period of life, the crisis of not having found or adhered to an individual's vocation in life might lead to a deepening of spiritual development, spiritual depth and transcendence. This seemed to be the case in Coelho's spiritual development. In the search to fulfil his life's dream and vocation, Coelho developed spiritually, put a lot of effort into reaching spiritual depth and transcendence – firstly through being an atheist, secondly through the occult, thirdly by following the RAM practices and fourthly by applying his universal spirituality, which integrates RAM, Christianity, magic, as well as components from various religions and belief systems, as explained above.

Referring to vocation in life, Fowler (1984) points out that – when referring to the call of life's vocation – an individual enters a relationship with God, thereby adhering to three main aspects (see Sect. 5.8), which are (1) environmental care; (2) governance of justice and lawfulness; and (3) liberation from ideologies and boundaries. These relationships will next be reflected in the context of Coelho's life.

(a) *Vocation, God and environmental care*

God's creation and caring for others and for the environment are important from a spiritual perspective. In his relationship with God, an individual participates in maintaining and extending care for the environment and for the creation of God, as described before.

During young adulthood, Coelho learnt at home and in school to care for and respect others. He prayed to God for the health of the family (Morais, 2009) and learnt to respect God's creation. However, no information is available on any

engagement in the creation of God or care for the environment or others. However, Coelho cared for others by establishing Rota 15, creating a literary club.

By middle adulthood, Coelho had married twice and finally met Cristina. His first wife fell pregnant and he convinced her to abort the child and not to get involved in active parenting (Morais, 2009). He refrained from caring for God's creation, cared about his independence, fell into a deep crisis and rejected becoming a father.

In late adulthood Coelho enjoyed walks with Cristina in nature, meditation and building up a relationship with God. He was not involved in social or community services to celebrate the relationship with God and environmental care.

(b) *Vocation, God and just and lawful governance*

God's governance and his justice and lawfulness in societies (Fowler, 1987) are addressed in the relationship between the individual and God, as addressed in Sect. 5.8.

In young and middle adulthood, Coelho was hardly involved in organisations and structures in local and global contexts that aimed at introducing justice in society.

During 2003, shortly before the US invasion of Iraq, Coelho (2008b) sent a letter to President Bush to "thank" him for his ignorance and his warfare against Saddam Hussein (Coelho, 2008b). Coelho took a political stand for international justice and mobilisation of human beings against the US invasion and actions for world peace and became an UN messenger of peace.

To increase justice, Coelho during late adulthood founded the "Paulo Coelho Institute" (Coelho, 2015b), which is a non-profit organisation financed largely by his royalties. The aim of building up this organisation was to provide opportunities for the underprivileged in Brazilian society; it provides education to 430 children and cares for the elderly. Coelho feels a personal responsibility for the planet, the political, social, moral situation and for the unemployed (Coelho, 2013b).

In 2014 Coelho also interfered with the Brazilian government's decision to select writers for the Frankfurt book fair. He was annoyed by the favouritism of the Brazilian government and threatened not to attend the event (Coelho, 2014b). Justice became an issue for Coelho.

(c) *Vocation, God and liberation from ideologies and boundaries*

This category includes involvement with God and liberating and redemptive work in the world, as explained in Sect. 5.8.

In young adulthood, Coelho and his friends in the security estate built up a secret organisation (Morais, 2009) to liberate themselves from the inhabitants and the values and norms of the middle class and to show solidarity with "saboteurs" outside the complex, representing the "shadow" of self and society.

No information is available on Coelho and his relationship to God's liberation from socio-economic and political ideologies and boundaries (Fowler, 1987). This was the period in Coelho's life in which he turned to the occult and away from a relationship with God (Morais, 2009). He thereby moved beyond his Christian boundaries, turning against his Christian background, rejecting a partnership or positive relationship with God.

In late adulthood, Coelho self-pirated his creative works on the internet, thus liberating himself from publishers' contracts, and defined new boundaries in terms of socio-economic, religious and cultural boundaries by distributing his work. The self-pirating was probably a combination of an act of social welfare by distributing his creative works and his messages and of marketing his texts and increasing his fame.

7.6.10 Faith Development and Vocation in Coelho's Life as a Writer

This study contributes findings to a few previous studies that have used FDT (see Chap. 5). As Elifson and Stone (1985) highlight, a writer needs to be clear about his/her personal base of moral decision-making, competing claims and a conceptual system with its paradoxical truth. This is true of Paulo Coelho's life and his career as a writer as well. Only by developing spiritually, by transforming himself and his values, his relationship with God and the world, Coelho managed to write his books and at the same time reflect on his own development. The writing was a tool for him to develop spiritually and as a person.

In the case of Coelho, the development of faith, spirituality and the process of becoming a writer were strongly interlinked. The search for spirituality during his young adulthood prepared him to become a writer in middle adulthood and to develop spiritually during his middle and late adulthood.

As Van Genechten (2009) found in the study on Helen Keller, Fowler's theory provided deeper insights and new perspectives on the life of Paulo Coelho as well. This study provides in-depth qualitative insights by using FDT (Fowler, 1981) and aims at developing the theory further through in-depth analysis and longitudinal insights, since it has formerly been used in quantitative studies with a focus on one-time measurements (see Chap. 5).

With regard to Paulo Coelho's vocation, it can be concluded that he managed to live his dream and his vocation to a high extent, as shown in Table 7.34.

Coelho unconsciously strived to become a writer already during his childhood and schooldays. Consciously, he decided to become a writer during his teenage years and overcame many obstacles and challenges, such as expectations that he would become an engineer, restrictions at school, a different career path, drugs, the occult and emotional imbalances. At the end of his thirties and beginning of his forties, Coelho started reconnecting his personal dream and personal legend to God. The dream of writing became his "divine gift" and he connected his life's dream to God's calling. The dream started to include a vocational dimension from the forties onwards and it transformed from a personal dream to a calling from God, from a rather self-related and individualised dream to recognition of the calling of God, as described by Fowler (1981). In late adulthood, Coelho even developed a vocation that expressed a strong relationship to God (see Table 7.34). This relationship with

Table 7.34 Relationship with God across young, middle and late adulthood

	Vocation, God and environment	Vocation, God and lawful governance	Vocation, God and liberation from ideologies and boundaries
Young adulthood	Respect others and God's creation	No involvement in organisations or structures to promote justice	Coelho builds up a "secret organisation" to "sabotage" and shows solidarity with the world outside the security estate
Middle adulthood	Coelho refrains from the concept of supporting God's creation through abortion	No involvement in organisations or structures to promote justice	No information is available. However, during this life period, Coelho turns to the occult and away from a relationship with God
Late adulthood	He enjoys walks in nature to care for his and Cristina's well-being	Coelho writes a letter to Bush shortly before the US invasion of Iraq to create awareness about the injustice of this warfare.	Coelho distributes his publications online free of charge and self-pirates his work to make it accessible to people across boundaries.
		Founding of the organisation to promote education for disadvantaged children in Brazil.	He also comments on political issues
Conclusion	Coelho's environmental engagement and relationship with God is rather restricted and not his main focus	Only in late adulthood does Coelho engage in lawful governance in terms of a political stand in favour of the disadvantaged and establishes an educational organisation	Only in late adulthood does Coelho get involved in and comments on political issues and frees himself from publishing boundaries to make his books accessible (social engagement or marketing strategy?)

Source: Researcher's own construction

God showed only a slight relationship to God and the environment. Coelho rather built up his relationship with God through lawful governance (founding of the Paulo Coelho Institute) and liberation from ideologies and boundaries (self-pirating his work). However, these relationships to God were rather secondary. Coelho's relationship with God was expressed particularly through self-expression and creative works, not as much in other forms of social engagement. The creative work can be understood as a possibility to spread and share the word of God through an intercultural and interreligious lens.

7.7 Integration and Conclusions on Findings in Faith Development Theory

The findings show that Coelho followed the faith development stages described by Fowler (1981) in a chronological and typical way. The only two aspects that were outstanding in Coelho's life with regard to the FDT were the following: Firstly, he did not feel restricted to norms and values of mainstream society and therefore did not restrict his development through social group norms or feelings of non-belonging. Secondly, Coelho turned away from God completely (as described in Fowler's stages (1984) as an "11-year-old-atheist"). However, Coelho did not return to God after his atheistic phase, but rather preferred to turn to the occult and the devil. This kind of extreme development towards evil is not included at any stage of the faith development stages. Coelho's interest in Satan can therefore be interpreted as an extreme and atypical development with regard to the FDT.

Coelho has not reached Stage 6 of the faith development stage fully yet. This assumption is based on the fact that Coelho's relationship to God was defined through his self-expression as a writer and the communication of his personal spiritual development. His relationship to God did not seem to be lived and experienced as much in terms of social engagement or social expression in which the social context and "the other" became more important than the self – as is described for Stage 6 of the faith development stages. This self-relatedness kept Coelho from achieving Stage 6 of the faith development stages completely, but helped him to achieve his dream of becoming a writer. He only realised in late adulthood that following his dream was following the call of God. This intrapersonal shift from self-relatedness to God-relatedness showed an important change on an intra-psychological level. However, it was not transformed immediately into new ways of social interaction. Only in late adulthood did Coelho redefine his vocation by including more social interactions through his engagement and relationship with God regarding governance, which included his letter to Bush (Coelho, 2008b) and the foundation of the Paulo Coelho Institute (Coelho, 2015b).

However, Coelho's relationship with God in the context of the environment and overcoming socio-political boundaries and limitations was hardly developed, but might still be developed further later in his life.

7.8 Sub-Chapter Summary on Faith Development Theory

In this sub-chapter, the research findings on the faith development stages of Paulo Coelho were presented. A conceptual outline of the discussion was offered at the beginning of Chap. 7, followed by the presentation of the findings of the HWM and the findings regarding faith development over the lifespan of Coelho. The findings were discussed according to the FDT as identified by Fowler (1981, 1996). A summary of the findings conclude the chapter.

7.9 Chapter Summary

This chapter presented the findings on the HWM and the FDT in the life of Paulo Coelho and provides an idea of Coelho's central roles in his world and the history of this world, as emphasised in the quote at the beginning of this chapter (Coelho, 2002b). The life of the writer was reconstructed accordingly and findings provided new ideas, perspectives and information on the researched.

The following chapter will present the findings on holistic wellness and FDT in two selected, autobiographical creative works of Paulo Coelho.

Chapter 8

Holistic Wellness and Faith Development in Selected Creative Works of Paulo Coelho

If you come here, you will find a hidden treasure.

Paulo Coelho, 2002b, p. 14

8.1 Chapter Preview

In this chapter, two selected creative works of Paulo Coelho are analysed in the context of the HWM and the FDT and a “hidden treasure” is lifted (Coelho, 2002b, p. 14).

8.2 Conceptual Outline of the Presentation of Findings on Selected Creative Works

In this chapter “The pilgrimage” (Coelho, 1987) and “Aleph” (Coelho, 2011) are selected for analysis.¹ Only selected examples of autobiographical accounts with regard to holistic wellness and faith will be analysed, based on Alexander’s primary indicators of psychological saliency (Alexander, 1988, 1990) and Schultz’s prototypical scenes (Schultz, 2005b), because of the length restrictions of this study. Both creative works are analysed through content analysis and an attempt is made to reconstruct similarities, differences and insights into transformations of Coelho across the years. Both works are understood as direct autobiographical expressions of Coelho’s thoughts, feelings and experiences in terms of holistic wellness and faith development.

¹An overview of Paulo Coelho’s creative works is provided in Sect. 3.9.9 and most of his creative works are set in the context of Coelho’s life throughout Chap. 3. In Chap. 7, Coelho’s creative works are used for content analysis in the context of his life and work (referring to Chap. 3) to show developments and changes in thoughts, ideas, assumptions and feelings. The life as well as the integration of the creative works are part of the analysis and interpretation in Chap. 7, referring to the analysis of the HWM and FDT throughout Coelho’s life.

These two works have been selected for three main reasons:

1. Both books are based on autobiographical experiences and accounts and have been described as strongly autobiographical (see Chap. 3).
2. “The pilgrimage” (Coelho, 1987) is Coelho’s first successful book about his autobiographical experience of travelling the Road to Santiago. The book is a description of his spiritual self-development and experiences in the context of becoming a master of RAM. It is expected that these experiences described in the book would include indications to Coelho’s holistic wellness and his faith development at the beginning of his career.
3. “Aleph” (Coelho, 2011) is described as one of Coelho’s strongest autobiographical books and has therefore been chosen for analysis. It was published 24 years after the first publication of “The pilgrimage” (1987) and is therefore expected to provide insights into Coelho’s development throughout the years in terms of holistic wellness and faith development.

In the following section, “The Pilgrimage” (1987) will firstly be analysed, followed by “Aleph”, (2011), according to the theoretical framework of the study (Chaps. 4, 5 and 7).

8.3 Introduction to “The Pilgrimage” (1987)

“The pilgrimage” is Coelho’s first successful book, in which the author documents his personal experiences of the pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela “on a contemporary quest for ancient wisdom” (Coelho, 2003b, Cover). The work consists of a prologue followed by 15 chapters that integrate ten descriptions of spiritual exercises and one description of a ritual. The book closes with an epilogue.

The prologue introduces the reader to the sacred practices of RAM and refers to the situation in which Coelho, as a member of RAM, is invited to a ceremony to become a master. During this ceremony, the master usually receives a sword as a symbol of initiation. However, during this situation on 2 January 1986, on one of the peaks in the Serra do Mar in Brazil, Coelho accepts the offer of the sword and thereby fails the ritual – he should have rejected it. His master tells him that he has to walk the Road to Santiago to retrieve his sword.

Chapter 1 – The Arrival – deals with the author’s arrival in Spain together with his wife. They split up after the arrival: Cristina takes the sword to a secret place where Coelho has to retrieve it on his way to Santiago, Coelho drives to Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port to start his journey.

Chapter 2 – Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port – introduces the author and the reader to the little village Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port. Coelho gets in touch with his contact person, is sent to a certain place to meet his guide, Petrus, and meets instead a gypsy. His interaction with this stranger – who tells him he could find his sword for him while

Coelho could return home – is commented on: “We had met with the devil” (Coelho, 2003b, p. 22). Coelho’s journey with Petrus starts with the walk on the Road to Santiago, where Coelho has to practise his first exercise.

Exercise 1 – The seed exercise – is a bodily exercise in which a person has to sit on the earth and silently stretch out to heaven while standing up. The exercise ends with a scream to release the bodily tension of the stretch. Coelho is advised to repeat this exercise during the following week every evening at the same time for 7 days.

Chapter 3 – The creator and the created – describes Coelho and Petrus’s journey through the Pyrenees. The two protagonists speak about the journey, about abandoning work at home, about travelling and goal setting and the way towards the goal. Coelho and Petrus meet a monk and Coelho realises that he has walked in circles in the Pyrenees for 7 days, because he did not pay attention to the journey, being occupied with his objective.

Exercise 2 – The speed exercise – is concerned with extracting the secrets from seeing what individuals see every day and thereby breaking through daily routines. In the speed exercise, a person has to walk for 20 min at half the speed a person usually walks while focusing on details of people and surroundings. Coelho has to repeat this exercise for 7 days.

Chapter 4 – Cruelty – relates to the basic question of faith and how to see God. Coelho and Petrus discuss the concept of God and the good fight in the name of a person’s life dream (Coelho, 2003b, p. 50). When thinking of the good fight and the realisation of a person’s dream, destructive thoughts need to be overcome.

Exercise 3 – The cruelty exercise – deals with overcoming destructive and depressive thoughts: Every time a thought comes to mind that makes Coelho feel bad about himself, he has to dig the nail of his index finger into the cuticle until the thought disappears.

Chapter 5 – The messenger – introduces a view of the devil as a fallen angel (Coelho, 2003b, p. 64), interconnecting the person with his subconsciousness. Petrus explains the concept of the messenger and how to deal with him: “If I had to use a metaphor, I would say that your angel is your armor, and your messenger is your sword.” (Coelho, 2003b, p. 65). Through a ritual, Petrus teaches Coelho how to get into contact with his messenger, the subconsciousness (Ritual 1 – The messenger ritual, Coelho, 2003b, pp. 66–67). The chapter ends with a description of Coelho having learnt the messenger’s name, which is important for communication.

Chapter 6 – Love – refers to the practical application of the RAM practices in daily life. Coelho again meets with the devil in the shape of a dog that is cursed by evil spirits (Chapter 6, Coelho, 2003b, p. 77). Coelho exorcises a woman’s demon by using the “gift of tongues” (Coelho, 2003b, p. 83), understanding and speaking the dog’s language. He is finally filled with love: “An immense love for everything and everybody had invaded my being” (Coelho, 2003b, p. 79). Explanations by Petrus of love, agape, RAM practices and intuition follow (Coelho, 2005, p. 82) in Exercise 4 – The arousal of intuition (The water exercise). For at least seven days,

for 10 min every day, Coelho has to make a puddle of water, make designs in the water and look at them. This exercise aims at evoking Coelho's intuition.

In Chapter 7 – Marriage – Coelho recognises the struggle for the truth in people's conversations and Petrus and Coelho reflect on the concepts of love: "eros, philos, or agape?" The concept of love is explored with regard to "Eros, the feeling of love that exists between two people" (Coelho, 2003b, p. 95), "philos, the love in form of friendship" (Coelho, 2003b, p. 98) and "agape", which combines eros and philos (Coelho, 2003b, p. 98).

Chapter 8 – Enthusiasm – refers again to love, the good fight and agape, which Coelho and Petrus explore through a personal talk. Agape is experienced through enthusiasm, through trance, ecstasy and a connection to God (Coelho, 2003b, p. 106).

Exercise 5 – The blue sphere exercise – connects to life, to the feeling of being alive, to the connection with the saints and the light appearing through communion with the saints to experience agape (Coelho, 2003b, p. 110).

In Chapter 9 – Death – Coelho meets with the dog again. He has a vision of a nun who strengthens him to deal with the dog (Coelho, 2003b, p. 118). Coelho learns to fight the demon that had already appeared in the gypsy. He is told to give the demon a place, otherwise he would return to Coelho for the rest of his life because of obsession (Coelho, 2003b, pp. 118–119). Coelho learns about his sense of mastery, his confidence and his faith in the nun (Coelho, 2003b, p. 120), as well as the "love that consumes" (Coelho, 2003b, p. 124).

Exercise 6 – The buried alive exercise – is about imagining the details of one's own burial and Coelho exercises this RAM practice during a night alone in the field. He has a vision of his death, and decides to "drink from the fountain of life" (Coelho, 2003b, p. 131).

In the following Chapter 10 – Personal vices – Petrus prays for Coelho and his ability to use his sword in a good way.

Chapter 11 – Conquest – starts with a sign Petrus perceives. They follow the sign to a dangerous mountain, which they climb. The mountain symbolises challenges while managing the climbing reflects resilience (Coelho, 2003b, p. 143). In the context of the mountain climb, the issue of faith is introduced, as well as problem-solving and the simplicity of life (Coelho, 2003b, p. 145).

Exercise 7 – The RAM breathing exercise – integrates the inner sensations and the outer world, connecting the person with peace, harmony and love, thus strengthening the person to reconnect to the environment in a confident and faithful way.

In Chapter 12 – Madness – Coelho learns about the positive energies of trees and nature, as well as about ideas and their alterations (Coelho, 2003b, p. 153). The chapter relates to life changes, to the force of agape and one's satisfaction in life through allowing the "Creative Imagination to do its work" in the life of a person (Coelho, 2003b, p. 158). Petrus teaches Coelho about the effect of decisions.

Exercise 8 – The shadows exercise. During this exercise a person has to study his shadow and the shadows of everything around him, then focus on a problem and find the wrong solutions. Finally, the person should focus on the correct solutions, letting creativity take over. After the exercise, Coelho meets the dog for the third time, fights with him and wins the final battle because of his faith and his experience of agape (Coelho, 2003b, p. 167).

Chapter 13 – Command and obedience – deals with Coelho’s injury and recovery from the dog’s bite. He experiences that the enemy needs to become part of agape to be integrated, to become whole.

Exercise 9 – The listening exercise – deals with the focus on sound. If the sound is separated, a person learns to hear the “voices of people from your past, present and future” (Coelho, 2003b, p. 177). This exercises supports decision-making and advice about the surroundings.

Chapter 14 – The tradition – deals with the process of learning and teaching and with mastery as one important lesson to learn in life.

Petrus teaches Coelho Exercise 10 – The dance exercise – Through remembering childhood songs, a person is led into a dance while singing along. Coelho learns that dance offers an “almost-perfect means of communication with the Infinite Intelligence” (Coelho, 2003b, p. 193). He integrates religious approaches and reunites the “main monotheistic religions of the time: Christian, Jewish, and Islamic” (Coelho, 2003b, p. 195). He remembers that “the house of the Lord has many mansions” (Coelho, 2003b, p. 195). After this recognition and created awareness, Coelho and Petrus separate and Coelho moves on to the last step on his journey, to find his sword.

In Chapter 15 – El cebrero – Coelho reviews his learning experiences throughout the journey and applies them. On page 214 (Coelho, 2003b), Coelho describes how a “faith, an unshakable certainty, took control of” him. He starts to talk to his surroundings on his Road to Santiago and he feels the presence of his master. He concludes: “by teaching myself, I had transformed myself into a Master” (Coelho, 2003b, p. 214). Through his trained intuition, through a voice from within, through remembering Petrus and prayer, Coelho finally finds his sword on the Road to Santiago, his master holding it in his hand.

The epilogue: Santiago de Compostela provides a conclusion to Coelho; resting in Santiago de Compostela, he realises: “I guess it is true that people always arrive at the right moment at the place where someone awaits them” (Coelho, 2003b, p. 226).

After having provided an overview on the contents of “The pilgrimage” (2003b), the contents will be related to Alexander’s indicators of psychological salience.

8.3.1 Alexander’s Indicators of Psychological Salience in “The Pilgrimage”

Examples of Alexander’s (1988, 1990) indicators of psychological salience are used to analyse and interpret key aspects of “The pilgrimage” (2003b), while the autobiographical work is understood as a direct expression of the individual researched. The examples are presented in Table 8.1.²

²This exemplified analysis using Alexander’s indicators and later on Schultz’s prototypical scenes is part of the analysis and interpretation of the data on Paulo Coelho and “The pilgrimage”.

Table 8.1 Selected indicators by Alexander of psychological saliency in “The Pilgrimage” (1987)

Irving Alexander: Primary indicators of psychological saliency	Description of primary indicators of psychological saliency
Frequency	<p>In the creative work, “The pilgrimage”, Coelho’s meeting with the dog is a frequent topic that recurs four times. The dog is introduced in Chapter 6 (Coelho, 2003b, p. 77), Coelho fights with another dog (Chapter 9, Coelho, 2003b, p. 117), he triumphs over the dog in Chapter 12 (Coelho, 2003b, p. 162) and at the end of the book remembers his meeting with a dog while seeing a dog and fantasising about the dog in Chapter 15 (Coelho, 2003b, p. 209). The symbol (Schultz, 2005b, p. 44) of the dog is a frequently repeated topic in the work, which stands for the inner demon of Coelho: In the beginning it is an unconscious topic (Coelho, 2003b, p. 77) from Coelho’s perspective. It is revealed by Petrus, his guide, as a conscious topic (Alexander, 1988). The dog becomes a conscious topic that Coelho has to deal with – it represents his shadow side. First, Coelho frees a village from the curse, which then wanders in the form of a dog behind himself. In a dramatic fight he triumphs over the dog, although he is injured. Finally, in Chapter 15 he meets a shepherd for the last time and realises by the intervention of a little girl that he should not fantasise. The dog then represents a normal dog – the shadow aspects have been integrated and do not need an externalised symbol anymore.</p>
Primacy	<p>The prologue of this book includes Coelho’s referral to his key experience of being denied the sword by his master during an initiation celebration and ritual. He fails to receive the sword because of a lesson that he did not understand. This is the initial situation and the introduction to the mystical world of RAM and magic. Through the prologue, the entire story is set: The student of RAM has to go on a personal journey to find his sword.</p> <p>This prologue is highly significant (Schultz, 2005b, p. 44), since it sets the scene and establishes the meaningfulness of the entire journey. The prologue in itself is already mystic and provides the foundation for the spiritual quest. The prologue becomes one of the most important pieces (as emphasised by Alexander, 1990; Elms, 1994) of the story, because it lays the foundation for the journey and from the beginning the reader understands the key situation as one of great importance to the narrator.</p>
Emphasis	<p>At the beginning of the book, Coelho emphasises (Schultz, 2005b, p. 44) that he misses home, his work and his friends and that he only wants to find the sword as soon as possible (Coelho, 2003b, pp. 20–21). These are repeated thoughts. These thoughts recur at the beginning of his journey (Coelho, 2003b, p. 31) with Petrus and finally disappear completely. The issue is only re-emphasised in the epilogue (Coelho, 2003b, p. 225). This fading emphasis (Elms, 1994) might be an indication of the strong emphasis of Coelho’s world and reality in Brazil and its importance, which loses in importance for Coelho owing to the intrapersonal developments and the journey on the Road to Santiago as a journey into the inner self.</p> <p>Another emphasis is based on the practical examples and the rituals Coelho has to exercise during his journey, which are described from the beginning to the end of the book. They are described as exercises the reader can practise her/himself. However, Coelho’s internal and intra-psychological experiences with the exercises are not necessarily described completely and might be underemphasised (as described by Alexander, 1988). His spiritual development, which is besides other experiences based on practising the rituals is, however, integrated in the story and his personal development of the journey itself.</p>

(continued)

Table 8.1 (continued)

Irving Alexander: Primary indicators of psychological saliency	Description of primary indicators of psychological saliency
Isolation	An isolated incident that stands out from the text (Schultz, 2005a, p. 44) is Chapter 10, which only describes a prayer of Petrus. This prayer stands out from the rest of the narration, as isolated events do, according to Elms (1994). It implicitly describes the strong belief and the tradition in which the journey is founded. At the same time, the prayer spans “the web of unconscious ideas for which it stands” (Schultz, 2005b, p. 44) and provides a spiritual frame for the entire journey, which stands in the tradition of RAM and spirituality in Chapter 10. The prayer is also outstanding with regard to its position (as highlighted by Alexander, 1988), being placed before Chapter 11 – “Conquest”, in which Petrus and Coelho climb the mountainside. It also provides the spiritual frame for Coelho’s fight with the dog/the shadow side in Chapter 12. Coelho’s victory over the dog is framed by Petrus’s spiritual guidance, his own faith, experiences and belief that he can climb the mountain and manage the challenges of life and death.
Uniqueness	A unique experience for Coelho is described at the end of the narration: He realises – still searching for his sword – that he is now (without being guided by Petrus) his master himself, being able to communicate with the universe (Coelho, 2003b, p. 214). He meets a lamb (Coelho, 2003b, p. 221), recognises it as being a sign towards his sword, follows the lamb and – as through magic – meets his master holding his sword in his hands (Coelho, 2003b, p. 223). The unique and outstanding aspects (Schultz, 2005b, p. 44) here are the guidance of Coelho through an animal and his ability to read the signs of the Road himself, which finally guides him to his sword. This incident of the lamb showing him the way and communicating with him deeply is a uniquely described situation and therefore outstanding (Alexander, 1988).
Incompletion	<p>In a footnote, Coelho explains that he does not describe his entire experience with the messenger ritual (Coelho, 2003b, p. 71) so as not to influence readers in their own experiences with the ritual and because experiences with the ritual are highly subjective.</p> <p>Coelho also indicates in another footnote in Chapter 14 – The tradition – that he does not describe the entire ritual that is performed to establish a reunion and respect for the ancients, because of its very long incarnation and because it can only be understood by members of RAM who “know the Road of the Tradition” (Coelho, 2003b, p. 198). Coelho thus highlights the in-group of the RAM, distinguishes the common reader of the books from this in-group and re-emphasises the importance of being a member of RAM. Coelho’s descriptions of experiences with rituals and the description of the ritual itself remain partly incomplete. These incompletions also reinvent secrecy and the emphasis of the power of internal knowledge and are therefore of importance (as mentioned by Alexander, 1988; Schultz, 2005b).</p>
Error, distortion, omission	As described under “incompletion”, Coelho omits certain selected aspects of his experiences with the messenger ritual (Coelho, 2003b, p. 71), as well as a long description of one of the exercises (Coelho, 2003b, p. 198).

(continued)

Table 8.1 (continued)

Irving Alexander: Primary indicators of psychological saliency	Description of primary indicators of psychological saliency
	<p>Errors and distortions could not be found in the data, since the story contains subjective descriptions, which cannot be compared with other data to detect errors or distortions.</p> <p>However, other data that are omitted comprise a description (Schultz, 2005b) of what happened in the meantime to his wife, Cristina, and to the master. No information is provided about them in terms of what happened to them while Coelho walked the Road to Santiago. The narrative is strongly self-centred and does not include descriptions of parallel narrative threads.</p>
Negation	<p>The story leaves questions open; for example, how Coelho manages to walk the Road to Santiago and spend so much time on his personal and spiritual development without being able to work and earn money. In the book, it is emphasised that the Road to Santiago is a common road, open to everybody. However, not everybody is able to afford the journey to walk the Road to Santiago and not everybody is able to take time to walk it without working in the meantime.</p> <p>Furthermore, neither the RAM tradition nor to become a member of the tradition is explained in the book. It is kept secret and contributes to the mysticism of the book and to the created mysticism of Coelho's life. The creation of mysticism around Coelho and his life by himself is part of his life narration and highly important. Negations here become a particular pattern of life, as highlighted by Alexander (1990), Elms (1994) and Schultz (2005b).</p>

Source: Adapted from Schultz (2005b), Elms (1994) and Alexander (1988, 1990)

The examples of Alexander's indicators of psychological salience (1988, 1990) provide deeper insight into the autobiographical story and development on the Road to Santiago. In the following section, Schultz's prototypical scenes analysis is used to identify pointers, outlined similarly to the ones outlined by Alexander (1988, 1990).

8.3.2 Schultz's Prototypical Scenes in "The Pilgrimage"

The prototypical scenes are "unique, emphasised by their subjects, marked by isolation or incompleteness, and so on" (Schultz, 2005b, p. 49). The prototypical scenes identified in the creative work are used for the analysis of these creative works throughout this chapter. Table 8.2 provides examples of prototypical scenes identified.

The exploration of the prototypical scenes (Schultz, 2005b, p. 49; Table 8.2) builds the base for the HWM and the FDT presented in the following section.

Table 8.2 Examples of Schultz’s prototypical scenes in “The Pilgrimage”

William Todd Schultz: Keys to identifying “prototypical scenes”	Description of key of prototypical scenes
Vividness, specificity, emotional intensity	<p>One vividly described scene is Coelho’s first meeting with the messenger (Coelho, 2003b, pp. 69–71). It is a specific situation that is described with emotional intensity.</p> <p>Another vividly and lengthily described scene with emotional impact is Coelho’s night alone on the Road to Santiago, visionalising his own death while practising the “buried alive exercise” (Coelho, 2003b, pp. 125–131). The description of the scene leads to Coelho’s decision to live life to the full (Coelho, 2003b, p. 131).</p>
Interpenetration	<p>Through the encounter with the boy in Chapter 5 – The messenger–Coelho experiences a vision that is interpenetratedly described within the description of the interaction between one of the boys and Coelho. Coelho (2003b, pp. 60–61) describes the changing of the landscape and the boy’s appearance before returning to the core situation of the interaction with the boys.</p>
Developmental crisis	<p>The book contains several descriptions of developmental crises in terms of identity. One such scene is the scene in which Petrus and Coelho meet boys playing ball in Chapter 5 – The messenger – (Coelho, 2003b, p. 59). Coelho and Petrus create a conflict with one of the boys, keeping his ball, getting into a power struggle. Petrus concludes for Coelho at the end of the situation (Coelho, 2003b, p. 61): “It allowed you to win over the personal devil.” The boys externalise Coelho’s personal devil and give him the chance to learn about his personal devil, bringing him to consciousness. Coelho, who was quite unaware of his personal devil, lives through a personal crisis, realising his narrowness of perspective and view. The identity crisis is indicated by the description of his dizziness (Coelho, 2003b, p. 62), which stands for his disorientation through the new and unfamiliar learning process and is followed by conscious learning about spiritual forces to reintegrate the new experiences on a conscious level with Petrus’s help (Coelho, 2003b, p. 63). Coelho experiences a “decisive encounter” (Schultz, 2005b, p. 50) and decides to develop his identity further on a spiritual basis.</p>
Family conflict	<p>Chapter 1 – Arrival – describes Coelho and Cristina arriving in Spain. Out of fear and anxiety, Coelho starts creating conflict with Cristina, who accompanies Coelho to take his sword to a certain place where he needs to find it after he has walked the Road to Santiago. However, Cristina recognises his intention to create conflict out of fear and anxiety of the unknown and the possibility of failing again. She moves ahead and dissolves the conflictual situation with a gesture and a kiss (Coelho, 2003b, pp. 10–11).</p>

(continued)

Table 8.2 (continued)

William Todd Schultz: Keys to identifying “prototypical scenes”	Description of key of prototypical scenes
Thrownness	In the chapter Love, Coelho is put into a situation that violates his status quo. The reader knows that – as a member of RAM – has already walked a long spiritual way. However, in this chapter he meets with the dog at the woman’s house for the first time and loses control over himself completely. He does not react in the previously described common ways for him to react to situations, such as questioning, conscious reflection and mindfulness, but rather through a hypnotic trance state in which he starts speaking with the “gift of tongues” (Coelho, 2003b, p. 83). After the exorcism, Coelho cries hysterically before being overwhelmed by a deep feeling of love and happiness, which is combined with an in-depth understanding of the situation and the dog (Coelho, 2003b, p. 79). This situation in which Coelho loses control over himself, his speaking and his emotions is an outstanding situation, which produces a feeling of disequilibrium; old ways of understanding do not apply anymore (as described by Alexander, 1988).

Source: Adapted from Schultz (2005b, p. 50)

8.3.3 Holistic Wellness in “The Pilgrimage”

“The pilgrimage” (2003b) is analysed in terms of the HWM, life tasks, life forces and global events. Because of the limitations of this study, only selected aspects of life tasks, life forces and global events are provided, as emphasised in Sects. 8.3.1 and 8.3.2, and no claim to completeness of analysis is asserted.

8.3.3.1 Life Tasks in “The Pilgrimage”

Firstly, life tasks of “The pilgrimage” (2003b) are analysed and reflected on in the context of autobiographical writing.

Spirituality

The five dimensions of spirituality defined by Mosak and Dreikurs (2000) will be used to analyse excerpts of the book, “The pilgrimage”, with regard to the life task spirituality.

The book describes autobiographically a spiritual journey of the protagonist and writer. The book refers to all five dimensions of spirituality referred to in Sect. 4.5.1.1.

The book offers (a) a description of God – responding to the question: Do I believe in God and if yes, how do I communicate with God and how do I build up a relationship? God is described as a powerful force and Coelho recaps in the chapter

“Tradition”, almost at the end of the journey, what Petrus had taught him: “the house of the Lord has many mansions” (Coelho, 2003b, p. 195). Coelho refers to the old knowledge of the Knight Templars who had tried to put an end to religious conflict by unifying Christians, Muslims and Jews. Coelho experiences God in different ways and through different approaches. God is experienced through the power of the exercises, through nature and through celebrating life (Coelho, 2003b, pp. 214–215), but also through “agape” (Coelho, 2003b, p. 178) and listening to inner voices.

Coelho describes his new experiences about (b) the choice of practice of religion – responding to the question: How do I practise spirituality and how does spirituality fit into the concepts and practices of religion? He walks the Road to Santiago to learn about the RAM practices and the practice of religion (spirituality is a central point and a focus of the narrative). Petrus provides Coelho with new insights and the author describes the narrative between the two protagonists as a learning curve. The RAM practices are described by Petrus as “so simple, that people like you who are used to making life too complicated, ascribe little value to them” (Coelho, 2003b, p. 24). Coelho practices the RAM principles and the exercises are explained to the reader for self-development. The exercises develop the individual self by applying new foci on a subject, through new experiences of imagination, silence or listening and placing the focus on the impact of the higher force. All the practices and their success are fundamentally based on the concept of love (agape), their practical application in life and the assumption that the path of the practices can be followed by anyone (Coelho, 2003b, p. 25). That is an outstanding new experience in the eyes of Coelho. The exercises aim at a healthy approach to life and “will free you from the burdens that you have created in your life” (Coelho, 2003b, p. 26). Spirituality is practised on an individual basis and puts the individual experiences with oneself and the higher force first. However, it can also be experienced in group rituals or exercises, such as in initiation rituals (see Coelho, 2003b, p. 187).

In this creative work, spirituality is more obviously connected to the concept of God than to others and God is defined as an outstanding life force in the chapter “Personal vices” (Coelho, 2003b, p. 133). Petrus refers to God through a personal communication. Again, in the RAM traditional ritual, the high priest, as well as the disciples, relates to the concept of God (Coelho, 2003b, pp. 202–203). This shows that the concept of spirituality is not an exclusive one. It relates to meditative exercises reconnecting the individual with the higher power through collective rituals. However, Coelho calls the power that strengthens him the power in his personal faith. This is shown, for example, in the situation where Coelho sees the dog, becomes fearful of its powerful forces and sees an apparition of a nun that strengthens him and fills him with faith (Death, Coelho, 2003b):

A figure stopped for an instant and then came directly towards us. It crossed my line of sight as I stared at the dog, and this person said something that I could not understand in a feminine voice. Its presence was good – friendly and positive. (p. 117)

Coelho is convinced that the nun helped him; however, Petrus explains that it was just his faith that created the fantasy of this positive force (Coelho, 2003b, p. 118). Through the description, the power is anchored in the individual’s faith and not in external forces.

Petrus refers directly to the question of (c) the conceptualisation of humankind's place in the universe – responding to the question: How do I see humankind and its relation to God and the universe? (Coelho, 2003b, pp. 92–93). He explains that the “truth and the life are in your heart”, which can be interpreted as an individual only being able to find God within him/herself. If this is the case, the individual can reflect the collective faith and place “the individual and humankind in the center of life”. Petrus emphasises (Coelho, 2003b):

There is no religion that is capable of bringing all of the stars together, because if this were to happen, the universe would become a gigantic, empty space and would lose its reason for existence. Every star – and every person – has their own space and their own special characteristics. (p. 93)

Through this statement, Petrus accepts individuality within religions and religious practice, which is constructed through an individual's faith and its redefinition within the individual and the collective. Petrus, who can be interpreted not only as Coelho's guide, but also as an inner voice that connects to the soul of the individual and the collective unconsciousness, thereby highlights that religious practice is highly subjective, dynamic and bound by the individual's ability to understand the world.

In “The pilgrimage” (d) the nature of immortality – responding to the question what the soul is and if and how it might live on after death as well as how humans try to overcome mortality – is addressed.

Coelho (2003b) refers to the topic of immortality extensively in Chapter 9 – Death – by describing his fear of death. Petrus responds that “we do not see that death is only another manifestation of agape” (Coelho, 2002b, p. 124). While Coelho describes the negative and scaring face of death, Petrus highlights its transformative force, the love that it involves and its positive aspects (Coelho, 2003b, p. 124). Through the buried alive exercise, Coelho realises the transformative force of death and that “there was a life after death, but it had never occurred to me to wonder how the transition was made” (Coelho, 2003b, p. 125). Through this experience he becomes aware of his desire to live his life to the full. Death, at the same time, gains presence and gentleness for Coelho: It becomes a part of life, a transition into “other worlds” (Coelho, 2003b, p. 131) and the experience of this exercise becomes a symbol for the rebirthing process. Death becomes a connecting force in the name of agape and he recognises the immortality of the soul. The description of the exercise provides a plot in the entire narration. It is a turning point in which immortality is recognised consciously and the writer accesses a new dimension of spirituality and spiritual transformation through agape and God.

This key situation and plot lead directly to (e) the contemplation of the presence and nature of the meaning of life – responding to the question of how meaning in life is created. In the prologue, meaningfulness is created through becoming a master of RAM, holding the sword as a symbol (Coelho, 2003b, p. 1). For Coelho, meaningfulness is at first also created through his work and through friendships in Brazil (Coelho, 2003b, p. 20). On the journey, the meaningfulness transforms and his aim to find the sword gains the highest meaningfulness. After the first week of

the journey, the aim to find the sword becomes less meaningful and the process of self-development and the experiences on the journey gain the highest meaningfulness.

Coelho realises that meaning in life is created through the presence and gentleness of death, through the limitations of life (as in Ring & Valarino, 1998). The meaningfulness is based on the ability to “to drink from the fountain of life” (Coelho, 2003b, p. 131), through the daily life experience of existence and human experience, which include managing obstacles, overcoming fears and boundaries, personal development and the creation of faith (Coelho, 2003b, p. 126).

Self-Direction

In the following section, examples and interpretations of the life task self-direction (Myers & Sweeney, 2008) are provided, by including the 12 sub-dimensions of self-direction (Myers & Sweeney, 2008).

(a) *Sense of worth*

At the beginning of the journey, Coelho is hardly self-confident, doubting his decision to walk the Road to Santiago and insecure about his expectations of his walk (Coelho, 2003b, p. 10). Based on his failure to gain the sword, Coelho must have experienced a break in self-worth since the incident. However, at the end of his trip, after having regained his sword, Coelho concludes: “The chapel was completely lit when I came to its doors. Yes, I was worthy of entering, because I had a sword and I knew what to do with it” (Coelho, 2003b, p. 222). He repeats two pages later: “I was worthy of my sword, because I knew what to do with it.” (Coelho, 2003b, p. 224). Through the journey, Coelho reinstalled his self-worth through meeting his aim and through an increase in knowledge, as well as through his self-development towards becoming a master of RAM and being accepted in the community of masters. This re-installation of self-worth through the experiences on the journey and the lessons learnt led Coelho to an increase in wellness.

(b) *Sense of control*

During the pilgrimage, Coelho learns to obey and trust his guide, Petrus, by trusting his intentions and giving up control. In Chapter 13 – Command and obedience – Coelho’s obedience is set a test when he is requested to lift a huge wooden cross upon his back with his hands and arms wrapped in bandages after the fight with the dog (Coelho, 2003b, p. 179). Coelho obeys, giving up his self-control, trusting Petrus to guide him competently to find his sword (Coelho, 2003b, p. 18). Giving up the sense of control to a guide Coelho has never met before requires high trust and faith in the order of RAM, but also in the other person. The loss of self-control is finally experienced as relaxing, particularly since Coelho becomes aware that the individual sense of control is an illusion and that trust outlasts a sense of control.

Coelho gives himself and the journey trustfully into the hands of his guide (and God) and therefore gains control over his emotions, his ability to relax and trust, which contributes to his wellness.

(c) *Realistic beliefs*

The journey is not only a journey on the Road to Santiago; it is a journey that guides Coelho inside himself. It leads to reflection on and rethinking of Coelho's beliefs and he tests and rethinks his assumptions during discussions with Petrus, but also while experiencing the exercises. He becomes aware, for example, of the fact that everybody can walk the Road to Santiago, even the common people (Coelho, 2003b, p. 25). The narration makes the reader aware that Coelho had implicitly believed that the Road could only be walked by outstanding individuals. Coelho learns about the "true path of wisdom" (Coelho, 2003b, p. 25) through the exercises and thereby changes his realistic belief in magic, in approaching the world through agape, the practical application of RAM in his life and the fact that the path (of RAM and the Road) can be followed by anyone. Throughout the book, Coelho refers to the changes in his own and personal belief and finally understands on an intellectual, as well as emotional, level his own changes of realistic belief and creates a new belief: "And when I think about it, I guess it is true that people always arrive at the right moment at the place where someone awaits them" (Coelho, 2003b, p. 226). This trust in the course of life, in God and in the new belief contributes to Coelho's holistic wellness.

(d) *Emotional awareness and coping*

Through the various exercises and the ritual, Coelho becomes emotionally aware and strengthens his ability to cope with situations. After having gone through the first exercise, Coelho experiences sensations and emotions with which he has to deal on an intrapersonal level (Coelho, 2003b, p. 28). On the seventh day of performing the exercise, Coelho reaches a kind of ecstasy and a state of complete happiness (Coelho, 2003b, pp. 33–34) which indicates his intensified emotional awareness. Furthermore, Coelho learns how to cope with negative thoughts and thus becomes more aware of the emotional impact of thoughts and words (Coelho, 2003b, p. 45; Chapter 4, Cruelty). Both aspects, the ecstasy of happiness and the transformation of negative into positive thoughts, contribute to Coelho's wellness, to a holistic approach to a healthy walk of life on an emotional, spiritual and psychological level.

(e) *Problem-solving and creativity*

In the beginning, Coelho follows his guide, trusting him. However, after 6 days he experiences that he has walked in circles for the past 6 days because of a shifted focus on the aim instead of on the process of the walk. The lessons of mindfulness and self-responsibility are learnt and Petrus explains the importance of problem-solving: "You are so concerned about finding your sword that you forgot the most important thing: you have to get there" (Coelho, 2002b, p. 35). Problem-solving for Petrus is based on mindful attention to the present moment, dealing with the prob-

lem of the moment (managing the way), to resolve the problem of the aim (the finding of the sword) later. For the solving of the problem, the ability to read the signs on the way towards the aim is needed. However, problem-solving has another important incorporated aspect: The change of perspective, a change in speed and the attitude to the task. Problematic routines are addressed through this change of perspective (Coelho, 2003b, p. 38). Change therefore does not need to happen on the outside to resolve a problem, but can also happen on the inside of a person (intrapersonally) to resolve problems. Coelho (2003b, pp. 38–39) highlights that problem-solving is strongly related to an inner attitude (Coelho, 2003b, pp. 38–39) and (self)awareness. Coelho actively applies a problem-solving attitude after he has been left alone on the Road to Santiago. Creatively, fully mindful, aware and changing towards Petrus’s perception, Coelho manages the final part of the journey to find his sword with an active problem-solving attitude. Problem-solving guides him towards self-mastery and towards a strong intuition: The problem of finding his sword is resolved by self-guidance based on listening to “inner voices in the fog” (Coelho, 2003b, p. 217) and the interpretation of a sign on the way (“guided by a lamb”). (Coelho, 2003b, p. 221). The change of his inner perspective and the decoding of outside signs lead Coelho to find his way and resolve the problem.

(f) *Sense of humour*

Sense of humour is not referred to in the book. In his narration, Coelho does not use humour in descriptions. The autobiographical work is written in a rather serious way without using humorous descriptions or other means of rhetoric that are viewed as an expression of humour, such as irony, sarcasm or cynicism.

(g) *Nutrition*

Nutrition is not described as a focus of Coelho on the journey. Coelho only describes the impact on some occasions with regard to Petrus and Coelho drinking wine, as part of the tradition of the region (Coelho, 2003b, p. 45). Only in a few instances Coelho describes aspects of nutrition, such as the dinner with Petrus (Coelho, 2003b, p. 188). After being bitten by the dog, he is given “bitter tea” to heal his wounds (Coelho, 2003b, pp. 169–170). Finally, Coelho describes that they order the “speciality of the house” during the “last supper” on their last evening together (Coelho, 2003b, p. 188). Although nutrition is not explicitly emphasised as a source of wellness, the topic of nutrition is connected to the cultural traditions of the road, healing, feeling well and the celebration of farewell. Implicitly, nutrition is emphasised as important to contextualise wellness; however, it is not the focus of the creative work.

(h) *Exercise*

The walk on the Road to Santiago is an exercise for Coelho that is given to him by his master, J. Based on this exercise, the Road to Santiago introduces more exercises for Coelho, assigned to him by his guide, Petrus. The walk, as well as the exercises and the ritual on the way, are exercises that touch the spiritual, the emotional and the physical level. The last initiation exercise held by the disciples of

RAM plays a key role and provides one of the plots of the narration: It shows Coelho's development in terms of coping strategies and his experiences on the Road to Santiago (e.g. Coelho, 2003b, p. 159, The shadow exercise). The description of the final exercise with RAM disciples refers to concepts of transformation, emotional awareness and positive emotions, which have positive connotations and are described in the context of the exercise (Coelho, 2003b, p. 29). With reference to the different exercises, the descriptions of positive change on spiritual, bodily and emotional levels are given fully, such as during the seed exercise (Coelho, 2003b, pp. 33–34), leading to the plot of transformation towards a greater holistic wellness during the final exercise. The exercises therefore play a key role in the transformation towards holistic wellness for Coelho on the Road to Santiago.

(i) *Self-care*

The journey on the Road to Santiago is an expression of a strong attempt at self-care by Coelho. It is a journey of self-development, self-awareness and self-recovery (from the failure of gaining the sword during the celebration in Brazil) and through this strong self-care, Coelho regains self-worth, which is one strongly important aspect of self-care (Coelho, 2003b, p. 224). The self-care focus during the weeks of walking leads to a new self-worth, to feelings of achievement, recovery and healing, and contributes to Coelho's holistic wellness.

(j) *Stress management*

The narration shows a development in stress management in Coelho. In the beginning, Coelho stresses about his journey and expresses his fears by creating conflict with his Cristina (Coelho, 2003b, p. 10). He displays different coping strategies regarding stress on the way to Santiago, such as asking questions (Coelho, 2003b, p. 23) (cognitive stress management), refusing his master or climbing a mountain and taking on the challenge (Coelho, 2003b, p. 139) (stress management through certain behaviour patterns). At the end of the journey, when Coelho walks on his own, he is challenged and stressed by the "thick fog" and feels that the "fog has to stop" (Coelho, 2003b, p. 217). He then hesitates, realises that he has no influence on the fog and decides to take on the challenge, accepts his stress, trusts himself, is self-confident and moves fearlessly into the fog. He manages his stress through a change in perspective, through following his intuition, trusting himself, being self-confident and feeling increased wellness while taking on the challenge to walk on without sight. This situation shows that Coelho has improved his stress management during his walk and has consequently reached increased wellness.

(k) *Gender identity*

The narration does not refer to the concept of gender identity.

(l) *Cultural identity* (Myers & Sweeney, 2008).

Coelho refers to his (national) cultural Brazilian identity during the farewell ceremony with Petrus (Coelho, 2003b, p. 192). Coelho emphasises his cultural and religious identity through RAM, being initiated into the master's circle in the RAM

tradition. With this initiation his cultural identity changes: By regaining his sword, he has created a new cultural identity, the one of the mastery of RAM (Coelho, 2003b, p. 217). The road to Santiago means for Coelho not only a spiritual transformation, but also a reconstruction of his cultural and religious identity as a RAM master. This new cultural identity, which incorporates all the experiences and transformations lived through on the road to Santiago, contributes to his increase in wellness.

Work and Leisure

For Coelho, work is highly important when he starts the journey. Although his wife promises him that she will take care of the work at home (Coelho, 2003b, p. 10), Coelho cannot let go of it and when the Gypsy at the beginning of the story tells him he could find the sword for him (Coelho, 2003b, p. 20), he would like to make a deal with him and attend to his work at home, reunifying with his friends. Even in Chapter. 3 – The creator and the created – Coelho is worried about work at home that he does not attend to. Petrus emphasises (Coelho, 2003b, p. 33): “I am very glad to be here. Because the work I did not finish is not important and the work I will be able to do after I am back will be so much better.” The present moment gains in importance and during the journey becomes more important than the work at home. The walk becomes a leisure-time activity that gives Coelho new energy for his work at home. Leisure time – filled with the long walk – becomes the source of creativity, physical activity, social engagement, as defined by Myers & Sweeney (2008), and shows a positive effect on emotional wellness (Myers & Sweeney, 2008).

This creative work contains only a few references to work and leisure and it is not the main topic of the book. The underlying issue is clear, however, that alternating work and leisure is important. Petrus comments at a marriage ceremony (Coelho, 2003b):

They look like working people. Hunger and need have required them to work together. They learned the practices you are learning without ever having heard of RAM. They find the power of love in the work they do. (p. 98)

Petrus connects work to love and highlights work as a learning experience, as long as it is filled with love. Work then becomes a source of passion, commitment, spiritual learning and practices when it is done with love – it becomes intrinsically satisfying, as explained by Myers, Sweeney, and Witmer (2000).

In the epilogue, Coelho provides the outlook and closes the circle of thoughts: After the journey he looks forward to going back to work (Coelho, 2003b, p. 225). He is re-energised and the way in which he refers to the concept of work is not filled with a feeling of heaviness and responsibility, but rather with a feeling of lightness and joy, passion and love. The importance of the balance of leisure and work is clearly stated in this book. On a meta-level of argumentation, it can be said that the leisure time and walk was the preparation for his work and his first successful publication, “The pilgrimage”, which was most probably written with passion and love.

Friendship

In “The pilgrimage”, Coelho only mentions his friends at home in Brazil once; they are on his mind at the beginning of the journey (Coelho, 2003b, p. 20). Friendship is not a directly addressed important issue; however, it is a topic that is expressed in the relationship between Coelho and Petrus. Petrus is introduced as Coelho’s guide and as his master (e.g. Coelho, 2003b, p. 197). However, during the journey a kind of friendship develops between them. Two nights before their shared journey ends, Petrus is sad and serious, guiding Coelho through the breathing exercise (Coelho, 2003b, p. 188). Coelho and the reader realise that the journey is coming to an end, it is the time of farewell and time to reflect on and recite the start and the process until the end (Coelho, 2003b, p. 189). Coelho concludes:

I was hearing the most unexpected farewell in my life. The person with whom I had had the most intense bond was saying good-bye right there in a midjourney – in an oily-smelling train yard, with me forced to keep my eyes closed (p. 192).

He continues: “Petrus was still sitting on the locomotive. I did not want to say anything, because I am Brazilian and also emotional” (Coelho, 2003b, p. 192). The emotional attachment shows the friendship that has developed, the strong bond between the two men, the social connectedness that was built, the openness and trust that were created.

Once again, Coelho recognises the sadness in the eyes of Petrus during the final ritual of the tradition (Coelho, 2003b, p. 197) that re-emphasises the friendship, based on their common journey and development experiences. This work shows the deep friendship of Coelho, his ability to connect to others, to build up a friendship.

Love

The topic of love is an important concept that is used in three different ways, while the theory of Myers et al. (2000) reduces love to an individual relationship with another person. In the creative work, love is described in terms of eros, philos and agape. Eros is defined as the love that exists between two people (Coelho, 2003b, p. 95). Petrus explains that “Philos is love in the form of friendship. It’s what I feel towards you and others. When the flame of eros stops burning, it is philos that keeps a couple together. (...) Agape is the total love. It is the love that consumes people who experience it” (Coelho, 2003b, p. 98). Agape combines eros and philos.

In terms of love, Myers et al. (2000, p. 257) define characteristics of healthy love relationships as: “(a) the ability to be intimate, trusting, and self-disclosing with another person.” Both, Coelho and Petrus build a relationship during the journey in which they trust each other. Coelho accepts Petrus as his master and obeys him, as the tradition requires. To obey someone blindly needs trust and an intimate relationship. After the first exercise, Coelho wants to share his experiences with Petrus (Coelho, 2003b, p. 28), which can be interpreted as a sign of trust and intimacy that reflects a deeper love.

During the journey, Coelho loves: He expresses affection towards the end of the journey for his environment, the landscape (Coelho, 2003b, p. 214) and human beings. He (b) receives affection and expresses affection (Myers et al., 2000). In Chapter 1 – Arrival – Coelho describes his strong feelings of love for his wife and the world and accepts loving them in the form of a long and affectionate kiss (Coelho, 2003b, p. 11).

Other aspects, such as (c) the capacity to experience or convey non-possessive caring that respects the uniqueness of another; (d) the presence of enduring, stable, intimate relationships in one’s life (e) concern for the nurturance and growth of others; and (f) satisfaction with one’s sexual life or the perception that one’s needs for physical touch and closeness are being met, or both” are hardly referred to (Myers et al., 2000). Coelho does not show non-possessive caring for another person (however, he is not required to do so during the journey). He only seems to care about Petrus by respecting him in his uniqueness (c). This is shown in the chapter El cebrero (Coelho, 2003b, p. 205), when Coelho reflects nostalgically on his experiences with Petrus.

With regard to the (d) presence of an enduring, stable intimate relationship, the relationship with Cristina (Chap. 1) is emphasised at the beginning of the book. However, the relationship appears to be a stable one that is shown through the support of Cristina for Coelho. Satisfaction with Coelho’s sexual life (f), is not referred to in the book.

8.3.3.2 Life Forces

This section includes examples of the life forces referred to in “The pilgrimage” (Coelho, 2003b).

Family

The topic of family is mentioned in the prologue and in Chap. 1, Arrival, when Cristina is introduced as Coelho’s wife, supporting him on his spiritual journey (Coelho, 2003b, p. 10). Her influence on Coelho is immense, strong, positive and supportive and family becomes a very strong resource for Coelho at the beginning of his journey in terms of wellness and with regard to his development as a writer and a master of RAM.

Religion

Religion is the most important life force described in the book (Coelho, 2003b). The journey is based on Coelho’s desire to become a master of RAM, an old Catholic order. Religion (in terms of spirituality) becomes a dominating concept that keeps him alive and well and initiates his Christian pilgrimage. Coelho reconnects to God and the environment and learns that a person’s religion needs to reunify various religious traditions and spiritual concepts. Religion, spirituality, magic and their

experience and practice in terms of exercises, rituals and prayer are tools of religion that teach him to progress in his development, obey the masters (Coelho, 2003b, p. 169), hear inner voices (Coelho, 2003b, p. 218) and experience the miracle of transformation and multiple perspectives (Coelho, 2003b, p. 221). Throughout the journey, religion builds the base of the development and it becomes the major life force throughout the text.

Education

Coelho understands education in terms of informal education, religious education in terms of RAM practices, life experiences, the guidance of Petrus, self-mastery, the conduct of exercises and ritual. He does not speak of education in terms of formal education. The most important learning is based on self-mastery, trust and intuition (Coelho, 2003b, p. 217). Through these experiences, Coelho feels confident, unified with the environment and in deep harmony with himself and others. This is education for Coelho and in this way, this kind of holistic education contributes to his wellness.

Community

The reason for the journey described is Coelho's membership of RAM, the community he belongs to, which is highly important to him. This community brings Petrus and Coelho together and ensures that Coelho learns and progresses. The membership of the RAM community is based on a common faith and attitude, common rituals and exercises and belief in magic, as well as positive forces and signs that are expressed, for example, in the appearance of the monk (Coelho, 2003b, p. 41) or the nun (Coelho, 2003b, p. 118). The membership of RAM is a positive one that has a positive influence on Coelho's wellness, as long as he feels part of the group and as long as he can cope with the challenges connected to the membership. During the time of failure that is described at the beginning of the creative work, the membership seems to be a burden to Coelho, but through the walk and the reintegration he is strengthened in his role as a master of RAM

Media

The life force of the media is not referred to in the book "The pilgrimage" (2003b).

Government

The life force of the government is not referred to in the book "The pilgrimage" (2003b).

Business or Industry

The life force of business and industry is only referred to in “The pilgrimage” (2003b) with regard to Coelho’s struggle with not being able to attend to his work at the beginning of the journey (Coelho, 2003b, p. 20) and the dialogue with Petrus about business (Coelho, 2003b, p. 31). Although business and industry are generally important to Coelho, during the journey he experiences freedom from this life force, which seems to be healthy in that he seems to need a break from business and industry to engage into it again fully after the journey. Work, business and industry only have a positive impact on his wellness when they are attended to with agape (Coelho, 2003b, p. 98).

8.3.3.3 Global Events

“The pilgrimage” (2003b) refers to an inner journey of the writer and does not reflect global events.

8.3.3.4 Conclusion on Holistic Wellness in “The Pilgrimage”

Generally, life tasks and life forces play an important role in Coelho’s holistic wellness. On the journey of RAM, Coelho engages strongly with the life task of spirituality through walking, self-reflection, connection to God, exercises, rituals, spiritual practices, contact with the soul, life-death experiences and understanding the meaningfulness in life. Examples show that self-direction – moving from being a disciple to a master of RAM – self-worth, emotional awareness and coping, problem-solving and creativity through conversations and exercises, and the acceptance of loss of self-control also increase during the journey.

The life task work and leisure shows a shift in importance; though work is important in the beginning, it gets another quality of importance in the end. Leisure time balances work experiences and is seen as an important time to recreate, self-prepare and feel well.

Generally, friendships are hardly addressed during the journey. However, the development of the deep friendship between Coelho and Petrus is described. This friendship contributes to Coelho’s wellness.

Finally, love and the ability to distinguish between different forms of love is part of the learning curve for Coelho. He experiences the new love not only on a cognitive, but also on an affective and behavioural level as the “love that consumes”.

The journey leads to growth in holistic wellness, increasing Coelho’s strength, providing him with clarity, healing, commitment and belonging, as well as posing physical, emotional, psychological and spiritual challenges that he manages well.

With regard to the life forces, the family, particularly his wife, who supports him fully, is the initiator of his decision to walk the Road to Santiago. However, the most important life force identified on the journey is Coelho’s religion, which is con-

nected to spirituality. Life forces such as (informal) education, in terms of emotional learning and the integration of new spiritual insights, are also important and increase his holistic wellness. The impact of global events is not addressed.

The journey on the Road to Santiago is an account of the development of holistic wellness in the life of Paulo Coelho with special regard to improving the life tasks of spirituality and love, supported by the life forces of religion and family.

8.3.4 Fowler's Stages of Faith Development in "The Pilgrimage"

In the autobiographical narration of "The pilgrimage" (Coelho, 2003b), Coelho describes his personal faith development while walking the Road to Santiago. As with regard to the analysis of the narration in terms of the HWM described in Sects. 8.3.3 to 8.3.3.4, only excerpts of narrations on stages of faith development are analysed, based on the methodology described in Chap. 6.

8.3.4.1 Stage 0 – Primal Faith

Usually, Stage 0 – primal faith – occurs at the age of one year (Fowler, 1981; Stroud, 2004). In "The pilgrimage" (2003b), Coelho is in his late thirties; however, he re-experiences Stage 0 through the new relationship-building with Petrus: They build trust, bonds and create meaning, as usually happens in Stage 0 (Fowler & Dell, 2004). The relationship between Coelho and Petrus appears to be healthy, with a clear structure and dialogue structures of Coelho posing questions and Petrus answering, providing advice and guidance (Coelho, 2003b, p. 24), requiring obedience (Coelho, 2003b, p. 169). Petrus, the guide, explains and reconfirms his status as the knowledgeable one on the journey, creating a healthy and trustful relationship and attachment with the learner (Erikson, 1963), based on openness and interdependence (Coelho, 2003b, pp. 192–194). The guide-guided relationship is a master-learner relationship (Coelho, 2003b, p. 197) that is interpreted as a kind of parent-child or caregiver-caretaker relationship. This relationship is built on a master-learner power imbalance; however, this imbalance is respected and not used against, but rather for each other's learning opportunity. Both men create trust and bonds, as well as meaningful commitments through their common experience and RAM membership (Coelho, 2003b, p. 192): Petrus respects Coelho and their common learning curve: "By taking on the role of guide, I was able to find my own truth."

Both protagonists see themselves as bound to each other and as being separated identities at the same time, which creates a healthy form of self-image (as described in Fowler, 1984, 1987). After Coelho has developed enough, Petrus recognises: "You must find your sword alone" (Coelho, 2003b, p. 192). He thereby respects the phase during the relationship in which Coelho, the child, grows up, becomes independent and becomes a separate identity (again).

After Coelho has had all the necessary experiences and applied his new knowledge to finally find his sword, he builds his self-worth (Coelho, 2003b, p. 213), built on a clear set of values, an aim and emotional awareness and mindfulness. In the relationship with Petrus, Coelho has relived important aspects of Stage 0, the primal faith stage. Throughout the journey, he regained the possibility to process the initial experiences of faith development once more in his life while developing a clearer self-image and after a bonding process, an identity separation process.

8.3.4.2 Stage 1 – Intuitive-Projective Stage

Stage 1 occurs between the ages of four and seven and is labelled “intuitive-protective faith”. In the pilgrimage, the stage is represented in the aspects of autonomy, shame and doubt, as well as self-control and willpower that become more relevant (as described by Dell & Duncan, 1998). Coelho mostly obeys Petrus, but struggles to give up self-control and autonomy, for example when climbing the mountain for Petrus (Coelho, 2003b, p. 144) or when carrying a cross on his back (Coelho, 2003b, pp. 178–180). Coelho re-experiences Stage 1, living through issues of power and powerlessness. He realises: “I either had to obey Petrus or I had to forget my sword. (...) So I decided to obey him” (Coelho, 2003b, p. 180). Only after having experienced what it means to obey, is Coelho strengthened and he regains power in the end. The issue of power is reflected along the journey and described, for example, in the eye contact between the dog and Coelho (2003b, pp. 77–78), which symbolises the fight of good and evil, light and shadow.

In his narration, Coelho plays with symbols and images of visible power and size (Fowler & Dell, 2004, p. 23), such as the recurring image of the dog or the cross he carries. However, the most important symbols are the sword and the journey itself: the sword symbolising the “good fight”, the journey symbolising life. The symbolism highlighted by Fowler and Dell (2004) as an important part of faith development in Stage 1 is strongly reconstructed in the narration, particularly with regard to the antagonists of good and evil. The messenger is introduced as a symbolic supporter of each individual, a messenger between good and evil, reunifying God and the devil whom Petrus calls a “fallen angel, too, but he is a free, rebellious force. I prefer to call him the messenger, because he is the main link between you and the world” (Coelho, 2003b, p. 64).

This faith stage is the magical world stage (Croucher, 2010), which is strongly reflected in the creative work through, for example, magic as represented in the dog that hypnotises Coelho (2003b, p. 77), or the shepherd and the sheep described as mystical figures (Coelho, 2003b, p. 137). Coelho chases away the dog by developing faith in himself, speaking an unknown language that is a symbol to an unknown world, beyond consciousness (Coelho, 2003b, pp. 78–79). Coelho describes his magical ability to shatter glasses with the force of the mind or make objects move by themselves (Coelho, 2003b, p. 179). He is fascinated by the concept of magic and the mystic realm, which is shown in his reflections on astral displacement, suggestions or overcoming the force of gravity (Coelho, 2003b, p. 179).

The use of symbolism, imagination and the blurring lines between magic and reality are repetitively constructed in the narration and used until the end, in which the lamb (chosen as a biblical symbol) conveys the mystic message (Coelho, 2003b, p. 226). The symbols represent Coelho's intuitive access between consciousness and the subconscious, his outer and inner self. They are part of Coelho's images of faith. As is usual for this stage, the person experiences a growing need to distinguish between reality and fiction (Fowler, 1981, 1986). Coelho seems to struggle with this differentiation in the book while leaving the reader unsure about the fictitious and real part of the autobiographical account.

During the journey Coelho's need to create a new reality develops and twice he is unsure about what is real and what is fictitious: did he really see a nun passing by while looking into the dog's eyes and feel positive support? Petrus breaks the magical moment by explaining that the nun was just a "normal" nun (Coelho, 2003b, pp. 117–118). The perception of realities blurs: Which perception is real, which is unreal?

On another occasion, Coelho is guided by a little girl into a church where he meets a dog and feels immediately pulled back into the fight with the dog. Coelho creates tension and the little girl resolves the situation by sending the dog away (Coelho, 2003b, p. 209).

Both of these incidents show that a person creates the situation and its impact by him/herself. What is inside becomes reality on the outside – the intrapersonal attitude is reflected by the environment and thereby manifests as reality. The reader learns that reality is constructed through the person and that there is a need to distinguish between fantasies and realities, representing concrete and operational thinking processes, as indicated by Fowler (1981, 1986).

8.3.4.3 Stage 2 – Mythic-Literal Stage

The second stage is defined as "mythic-literal faith", which is developed between seven to 11/12 years, focusing on time and space concepts. Coelho shows a clear distinction between his own and Petrus's narrations, as emphasised by Elifson and Stone (1985, p. 31). Petrus advises Coelho, for example: "Don't start creating fantasies in a world that is already extraordinary" (Coelho, 2003b, p. 118). Petrus highlights the importance of the perception of the present moment that should be perceived and not interpreted by creating stories and fantasies. Coelho develops a linear, predictable and orderly way of presenting his experiences during his journey (as described as typical by Fowler and Dell (2004)), creating meaningfulness in life (Piaget, 1976) through initiation into the master league by finding the sword (Coelho, 2003b, p. 1) and enjoying life to the full (Coelho, 2003b, p. 131).

Children develop their self-esteem and self-awareness, their identity, they explore their limits and autonomy and their individuality while negotiating their conformity, as well as abilities to deal with emotions, needs and attention (Levine, 1990). Coelho explores all of these aspects: He builds self-esteem and self-awareness, redefines his identity, the limits and the autonomy (e.g. Coelho, 2003b, p. 178). During these

situations, Coelho reflects on conformity, emotions (fear when challenges occur), his needs (e.g. creation of belonging through finding the sword) and attention (e.g. asking himself why he has to fulfil this task) (Coelho, 2003b, p. 178).

Coelho learns from Petrus the change in perspective and the importance of self-reflection, focusing on the ability to contact the messenger (Coelho, 2003b, p. 64). This learning, as described by Fowler (1981) and Stroud (2004), is typical for this stage. The child usually learns the perspective of God (Fowler, 1981) and Coelho learns the new perspective on God (and the devil) through Petrus (Coelho, 2003b, p. 64).

Faith during this stage relies on the stories, rules and implicit values of the family and/or community (Dykstra, 1986; Fowler, 1984). In the case of this creative work, the community is RAM to whose values, rules and regulations both of the men belong (Coelho, 2003b, p. 187). RAM is the frame of reference and community for Petrus and Coelho. As emphasised by Fowler (1984), the self and the sense of identity are based on the sense of the family/community to which both men belong. Their identities are based on their loyalty to RAM, as shown during the ceremony (Coelho, 2003b, p. 198).

The typically occurring “11-year-old atheists” phase (Fowler & Dell, 2004, p. 22), is not experienced by Coelho. Coelho identifies with his faith without any doubt. This might be due to the fact that he has lived through several crises already during his teenage years (see Sect. 3.4), so that he does not need to repeat the fatal crisis.

8.3.4.4 Stage 3 – Synthetic-Conventional Stage

“Synthetic-conventional faith” occurs from 11/12 years to 17/18 years. Coelho creates self-awareness through the relationship with Petrus who guides him through his development, for example during the speed exercise (Coelho, 2003b, pp. 36–39), as defined as typical for this stage (Hughes, 1997, p. 1). Meaning is created through new experiences, the new relationship and critical reflection on life and faith concepts that are abstractly and deeply reflected, which is highlighted by Fowler and Dell (2004) as emphasised during this phase. However, Petrus criticises Coelho’s cognitive and abstract reflection, which is not related to the emotional level of experience (Coelho, 2003b, p. 47).

Throughout the narration, RAM is the social perspective that opens up a new world for Coelho, which is – as highlighted by Fowler (1981) – opening experiences beyond the family values and perspectives. Coelho gains new social and spiritual perspectives, for example the new understanding that magic is part of the Catholic belief (Coelho, 2003b, p. 44). This new insight moves beyond the understanding of Catholicism of his parents. The RAM perspective is taken into account (Coelho, 2003b, p. 205) and explained as being a normal process during this stage (Fowler, 1987). Finally, Coelho integrates the new perspective and becomes a master (Coelho, 2003b, p. 205) and thus develops into his own “supporting and orienting unity” (Fowler, 1987, p. 60).

God is presented at this stage as an accepting, loving, supporting, understanding and loyal God (Fowler & Dell, 2004). This is expressed in “The pilgrimage” through God who is described as agape, the love that consumes and a higher force that can be reached by any individual through faith, exercises and trust (Coelho, 2003b, p. 25). With the new belief in God as a guiding and empathetic force, Coelho gains trust and improved self-understanding that contributes to his well-being and his success in finding his sword and later writing this creative work. With the transformation of the image of God, Coelho has grown and increased his self-image and his belief in his own strength and the gentle guidance of God towards his dream.

8.3.4.5 Stage 4 – Individuative–Reflexive Stage

The “individuating-reflexive faith” stage is represented in the creative work through Coelho’s reflection and critical re-evaluation of his own worldview and faith (Coelho, 2003b, p. 29 & pp. 129–131) and the construction of his new identity as a self-guided master of RAM. Both of these developments are central at this stage (Fowler & Dell, 2004). Coelho relocates his individual authority from accepting Petrus’s authority back into himself (as described in Fowler, 1984, 1987). Coelho re-evaluates his behaviour and transforms his fear into an intuitive attitude and trust in himself and God (Coelho, 2003b, p. 213) while creating a new self-worth (Coelho, 2003b, p. 220, p. 222) – as typical for this stage (Fowler, 1984). The transformation through re-evaluation guides Coelho from unconsciousness to consciousness, from the focus on the aim to the focus on the process and the present moment (Coelho, 2003b, p. 35), to the focus on his breath (Coelho, 2003b, p. 150), which is a symbol of life itself. This transformation moves Coelho from a state of doing to a state of being, from thinking to experiencing.

In the end, Coelho also realises the importance of the individual role within his social role for Petrus: without Coelho, Petrus would not have had the opportunity to be a master and guide (Coelho, 2003b, p. 190). Through his social role assessment, Coelho’s faith is strengthened, which is indicated as typical for this stage of faith development (Fowler, 1981). The same happens when Coelho realises the “human face” of Petrus (Coelho, 2003b, p. 99), which creates new understanding that having faith opens up opportunities and spiritual development. This knowledge leads to self-authority and self-assurance, as described by Fowler (1986), and helps Coelho to increase his awareness of his personal ideology (as emphasised by Burnell (2013)).

However, Coelho’s new awareness is tested on different occasions, for example during his exercise of being buried alive (Coelho, 2003b, pp. 125–127). Coelho is insecure about his new values, his faith is tested and he fears loneliness and abandonment by Petrus and RAM in case of failure, which is described as typical of this phase by Fowler (1981). Finally, Coelho overcomes his fear during the exercise until “the night held no further secrets or terrors” (Coelho, 2003b, p. 131) and thereby reconfirms that his path is the right one for him. Through these exercises and the reconfirmation of his path Coelho gains self-confidence, intuition, self-

mastery (Coelho, 2003b, p. 217) and grows in coherence and tidiness of faith, as is typical for this stage (Fowler, 1981). His self-identity is developed in more depth, through various layers of experience. It is described as multi-layered truth Coelho recognises in the realities in which he lives (Fowler, 1981, 1987). The recognition of multi-layered truth leads to the development of a third perspective – in this case the perspective that grows out of his own and Petrus’s perspective (Coelho, 2003b, p. 211): “I remembered a day long ago when Petrus had told me that we had walked several times over the same part of the Road of the Pyrenees ...”. A few pages later, Coelho starts to understand the third perspective (Coelho, 2003b):

Everything became clear and a tide of agape washed over me. I wished with all my heart that Petrus were there so that I could tell him what he had been waiting to hear from me. It was the only thing that he had wanted me to understand, the crowning accomplishment of all the hours that he had been teaching me as we walked the strange Road to Santiago: it was the secret of my sword! (p. 213)

Through the creation of the third perspective, which in this case is bound to a loving perspective, Coelho integrates different perspectives, understanding and knowledge and thereby moves closer to the perspective of God. The experience of the new perspective fills Coelho with joy and wellness, with euphoria and self-confidence, which leads to holistic wellness and the strengthening of his new faith.

8.3.4.6 Stage 5 – Paradoxical-Conjunctive Stage

Coelho opens up towards life after his death experience and decides to create new meaningfulness (Coelho, 2003b, p. 131), which is not so much bound to logical thought, but rather to relational and contextual reasoning, which is typical of the “conjunctive stage” (Coyle, 2011; Hughes, 1997). The new openness appearing usually at this stage (Hughes, 1997) is reflected in Coelho’s transformation to consciousness and self-mastery, the letting go of his former beliefs and the new powerful view on the acceptance of power (Coelho, 2003b):

I have walked so many miles to discover things I already knew, things that all of us know, but that are so hard to accept. Is there anything harder for us, my Lord, than discovering that we can achieve the power? (p.220)

Coelho unifies his various views and perspectives, he incorporates Petrus’s perspective and accepts his power, while realising that the interpretations of religion and spirituality are manifold: “In my Father’s house there are many mansions” (Coelho, 2003b, p. 191). This is a sign of integrating different aspects of belief, reunifying them, which is described as typical for this stage (Fowler, 1981). The new knowledge that Coelho accepts, respects and values as multiple, as described by Fowler and Dell (2004), is accessed through dialogical and dialectical ways of thinking and through a dialogue with God, with Petrus and with his inner voices, as presented by Fowler (2001). Coelho thereby dissolves contradictions and opposites and reconciles with the multiplicity of realities (as described in Fowler, 1984) while balancing his judgements of them. This balanced attitude to multiple perspectives is

a key issue during this stage of faith development (Fowler, 1981) and contributes to Coelho's holistic worldview and holistic wellness by providing him with new self-direction and the reunification of aspects from different world religions and the old knowledge of the Knights Templar (Coelho, 2003b, p. 195). Coelho argues for the reconciliation and reunification of contradictions and paradoxes and their acceptance (Coelho, 2003b, p. 195) and thus overcomes his own cultural, social and religious boundaries (as emphasised by Straughn (2010)). At the same time, he develops solidarity towards strangers (Fowlers, 1981), which is explicitly described during the communal ritual. The journey shows that Coelho is well placed and settled in the RAM community and able to reach out for other perspectives, new relationships and new definitions of the relationship between him and God, which is an important aspect of this faith development stage (Fowler, 1987). Through this ability, Coelho interconnects with nature and God and feels connected to the world (Fowler, 2001), which is, for example, described in the guidance of the lamb in the fog (Coelho, 2003b, p. 221) and the time management of meeting with his master in the chapel (Coelho, 2003b, p. 226). The nature, the animals, the apparitions – all turn out to be interconnected signs for Coelho on his way to guide him on time to his master in the church. As Fowler (1981) recognises, during this stage, individuals can recognise symbols and meanings beyond their own faith traditions while striving for change and transformation.

Burnell (2013, p. 147) emphasises the feeling of “being stuck”, Fowler (1996) highlights the feeling of being torn apart during this phase of faith development, which could not be proven in this narration.

8.3.4.7 Stage 6 – Universalising Faith

Coelho does not reach Stage 6 completely in his narration of the journey to Santiago (as typical for this stage, according to Croucher (2010)) and only selected aspects of the stage are addressed in the book.

Coelho does not self-sacrifice himself, as described as typical of this stage (Hughes, 1997, p. 2). However, he turns to agape, the love that consumes and connectedness with the world and beyond (Coelho, 2003b, pp. 213–214): “Now everything was different: I was my own Master, and I was learning to communicate with the universe.” The focus on Coelho is (still) on the ego, on self-development and not on selfless service towards others (Croucher, 2010). He also does not claim a vision and faith-related action, which is expected at this stage (Elifson & Stone, 1985, p. 31). However, he is able to oppose the world non-violently and partly with unconditional love (Coelho, 2003b, p. 222), revealing his self-worth and his own power. Coelho does not display any specific actions that emanate from God's love and justice (Fowler & Dell, 2004, p. 32). However, God displays a new, interconnected quality for Coelho, which he experiences within himself and in his surroundings while being able to see the world from more than one perspective. Coelho points out: “There, at one time, a miracle has happened. It was the miracle of transforming what you do into what you believe in, just like the secret of my sword and of the

strange Road to Santiago” (Coelho, 2003b, p. 221). Up until the end of the journey, Coelho’s focus is on himself; however, he recognises the stage-typical attitude of deep knowledge, respect for and valuing others (Fowler, 1987). In this creative work, Coelho’s focus is on self-development and on Stage 5, but not on the development of the selfless attitude of Stage 6. Through this work, Coelho is well settled within Stage 5 of faith development and gains a solid base for moving forward later in his life.

8.3.4.8 The Vocation in “The Pilgrimage”

In Fowler’s (1984, 1987) FDT, the concept of vocation in life is emphasised (see Sect. 5.8). In “The pilgrimage” (2003), the differentiation into young, middle and later adulthood does not apply, because it only provides an insight into a 3-month period during middle adulthood. However, the autobiography refers to selected aspects from young, middle and late adulthood.

The definition of Coelho’s identity and the creation of a vocation in life are central aspects. In “The pilgrimage” (2003), Coelho searches for his sword – a symbol of the good fight, of taking his power into his own hands to constitute and establish his vocation in life. Coelho and Petrus converse about the vocation, the personal dream, in a person’s life (Coelho, 2003b, p. 50) and Petrus teaches him to understand the life’s dream and to live it. On one occasion, Coelho explains: “...but I was living my dream” (Coelho, 2003b, p. 89), which shows the implementation of his ideas into action, reflecting again the “good fight” and that he has integrated his new values.

The struggle with vocation in life, as it usually appears in middle adulthood (Fowler, 1984), is touched on in the narration. Coelho is not fully aware of his vocation, of how to structure and recreate his new personality and of how to live his life. He realises the journey as a calling of God and part of his vocation in life. This realisation happens when he realises that he lives his dream and gains meaningfulness through it, walking the Road to Santiago (Coelho, 2003b, p. 89). Only at this point when he reaches a certain consciousness, the conscious struggle to find his vocation stops (Coelho, 2003b, p. 35). Travelling helps Coelho to consciously recreating his vocation. Coelho – as usually happens in late adulthood (Fowler, 1987) – realises through his experiences during the buried alive exercise his preferences in life: to live life to the full without, in the end, having to regret not having lived his life with passion and not having done what he wanted to do (Coelho, 2003b, p. 131).

According to Fowler (1987), individuals only realise from the age of 40 years and beyond what is important in their lives. Coelho, at the age of 36, is mature already in middle adulthood, finding his vocation, living his dream, constructing a new relationship with God. By writing “The pilgrimage” itself, as advised by Petrus (Coelho, 2003b, p. 194), Coelho enters into a new relationship with God, which includes aspects of all three ways described by Fowler (1987): Firstly, Coelho describes the beauty of God’s creation (1. God’s creation and caring for others and the environment) and sends out the message to his readers to realise the beauty of

the world, to care for it and to acknowledge the signs of God mindfully on life's journey (Coelho, 2003b, p. 205).

Secondly, Coelho reflects on God's governance and his justice and lawfulness. He reflects on the values and concept of the "good fight", right and wrong, good and evil, worthiness and unworthiness and the influence of society on following one's dream. Therefore, the concept of justice and lawfulness as a way to relate to God is described in the book. Coelho summarises that he has to live his life to the full, without regret, without being bound by social restrictions (Coelho, 2003b, p. 131), while he defines God as open, loving (in terms of *agape*) and just to everybody (Coelho, 2003b, p. 25).

Thirdly, Coelho talks about his own and God's liberation from socio-economic and political ideologies and boundaries. Coelho liberates himself from the socio-economic boundaries in Brazil (Coelho, 2003b, p. 20) and moves into a world that is less bound to political ideologies, but rather to personal development and relationships. Coelho experiences a new liberation and realises that the Road is liberating his own boundaries in his mind and the assumption that he is a special person, walking the Road to Santiago (Coelho, 2003b, p. 25). Coelho thus liberates himself from his elitist way of thinking, which is a step in the direction of Stages 5 and 6 in faith development.

In Chapter 15, Coelho feels fulfilled, having lived his calling by walking the Road, which is described by Fowler (1984) as a normal reaction to fulfilling one's life dream. He is fulfilled, energetic, balanced and feels self-confident and self-worthy for using his personal power. He is now sure about his vocation, his way forward: "Then, as soon as possible, I am going to catch a plane for Brazil, because I have a lot to do" (Coelho, 2003b, p. 225).

This creative work tells the story of finding one's vocation in life while developing one's faith and spiritual belief. It is a stepping stone in Coelho's personal faith development, revising the stages lived through and re-evaluating his previous and future development.

8.3.4.9 Conclusion on Faith Development in "The Pilgrimage"

This creative work includes many aspects of the faith development stages described by Fowler (1981, 1987). Coelho describes his personal journey of faith development. The book includes aspects of Stage 0 – Primal faith of faith development in terms of a trust-building relationship between Coelho and Petrus, which serves as the foundation for further faith developments in Coelho. Various aspects of the faith development stages from Stage 1 to the final Stage 6 are described throughout the narration.

The book begins with a description of the trust-building process between Petrus and Coelho, as a Stage 0 phenomenon, which is mainly important for the advancing faith development. It furthermore deals on different levels with the issues of autonomy, will-power and self-control, which are mainly part of the intuitive-projective Stage 2. However, another important focus is on the mythic-literal Stage 3; through-

out the book, the topic of meaningfulness in life is present, as well as the question of Coelho’s identity development, the issue of self-esteem and self-worthiness and the new understanding and reading of the world. Coelho learns on a deeper level about the RAM practices and identifies with them. The development of Stage 3 is expressed in Coelho overcoming former ideas on the Catholic Church and other aspects of his (Catholic) belief, which can be found throughout the book. Coelho develops an understanding of Petrus’s world and realities, which finally becomes his own supporting and orienting unity. The process usually described in Stage 4, the individuating-reflexive stage, is emphasised by Coelho throughout his walk. He reflects on and evaluates his personal concepts and thus develops a self-identity based on self-worth and acknowledging life. Through critical self-reflection he transforms himself into a new, conscious human being who appears coherent and self-assured. In the paradoxical-conjunctive Stage 5, Coelho reaches a new openness to experience life and death on a different level and to turn towards the transformation into self-mastery, which includes the acceptance of multiple perspectives and the unification of these perspectives into his own. He overcomes socio-cultural and religious boundaries and explores new ways towards the end of the book. Finally, he is able to recognise the complex interconnectedness and interrelatedness of the signs of God while recognising agape (Stage 6). Although the topic of life becomes more relevant, the main focus of Stage 6, selfless service of others, is not included in this narration.

Coelho describes the realisation of his calling and his vocation in life. It consists of the living of life to the full, fighting the good fight, spiritual development and the conscious recognition of his vocation and its implementation in life. Aspects of the creation of the vocation in young, middle and later adulthood are included in the narration of Coelho (2003b); however, the focus is on the development of middle adulthood, which matches Coelho’s age during the process of writing the book.

This creative work guides Coelho and the reader through the re-evaluation of his faith development while showing the development of his faith throughout the story. While Coelho doubts in the beginning of the journey, he becomes self-confident and self-assured and settled in his newly created faith, which integrates different world views and creates a multi-layered understanding of identity formation, as well as a peaceful and balanced attitude in life.

8.4 Introduction to “Aleph” (2011)

“Aleph” (2011) is an autobiographical novel written in the first person, almost 20 years after “The pilgrimage” (Coelho, 2003b) was first published. It describes the adventurous journey of the narrator from Moscow to Vladivostok. Riding on the Trans-Siberian Railway, the author travels through time and space in his mind. The protagonist is a writer, a spiritual person, a pilgrim, who seeks spiritual depth and self-development. The life of the narrator and his development are described in the

metaphor of a railway journey. The book contains 26 chapters and an author's note, which are briefly summarised in the following section.

King of My Kingdom (Coelho, 2011, p. 1)

The first chapter describes a conversation of the author with his master, J. Coelho, a well-published author, 59 years of age, feels spiritual stagnation and dissatisfaction. He is advised by his master to go on a journey to induce new processes of self-development. The questions "What should I aim for? Where should I go?" (Coelho, 2011, p. 13) indicate the direction of the author's thoughts and introduce the main story of the journey through Russia.

Chinese Bamboo (Coelho, 2011, p. 19)

Finding himself on a book-signing and promotion tour, the author comes across an article about the growth of Chinese bamboo. He recognises his own life development in the metaphor of Chinese bamboo and agrees to travel to six countries to promote his books within 5 weeks. He also asks his Russian publisher to take him on a promotion tour on the Trans-Siberian Railroad for a period of 2 months.

A Stranger's Lantern (Coelho, 2011, p. 33)

Finding himself on a promotion tour through Tunis, Coelho, together with his wife Cristina, recognises several signs that indicate that he should travel to Russia and that he needs to resolve issues from previous life experiences. Coelho and Cristina decide that he will travel without her through Russia to make the most of the journey and his own experiences.

If a Cold Wind Blows (Coelho, 2011, p. 44)

Coelho arrives in Moscow where a young woman, Hilal, is already waiting for him. She asks to go with him on the journey through Russia, because she feels that Coelho spoke directly to her when he published an article on a man who spent a night on a mountain and who had a friend who lit a fire on another mountain to support him.

Sharing Souls (Coelho, 2011, p. 50)

Coelho finds himself at a book-signing session in Moscow and is again approached by the young woman, Hilal, who wants to accompany him on his journey. She is a talented violinist, plays for him and convinces him to take her to a formal dinner with his publisher. Coelho's Russian friend advises him to take her with him on the journey.

9288 (Coelho, 2011, p. 64)

The journey on the Trans-Siberian Railway starts. Coelho is introduced to his translator, Yao, and joined by his publisher and his wife, as well as by several other individuals and Hilal. Coelho finds himself in ecstasy about his trip and feels alive.

Hilal's Eyes (Coelho, 2011, p. 74)

Coelho and Hilal meet on the train and Coelho is taken into "Aleph" – the place where everything is in the same place at the same time – through the look in Hilal's

eyes. Coelho realises that he knows Hilal from a former lifetime shortly before they reach their first stop in Ekaterinburg.

The Ipatjew House (Coelho, 2011, p. 84)

Yao and Coelho stroll through Ekaterinburg talking about love and aikido. They visit the Ipatjew House and Coelho falls into self-reflection on the situation and his master, J.

The Aleph (Coelho, 2011, p. 92)

Coelho and Yao walk back to their hotel and start begging on the street, referring to the begging pilgrimage of the Zen Buddhists. Back at the hotel, Hilal introduces Coelho to her music teachers. They explain that Hilal is one of the most talented violin players in the country and that Coelho could help her to develop her self-worth. However, Hilal is only interested in exploring “the Aleph”.

Dreamers Can Never Be Tamed (Coelho, 2011, p. 107)

Coelho talks to his wife in Brazil, who advises him to trust Hilal. The life on the train and the topics discussed are described in this chapter. They deal with the loss of sense of time, accustomisation to the new life style on the train, the Aleph, dreaming, God and the divine. During one of the stops, Coelho gives an interview and is questioned about Hilal.

Like Tears in the Rain (Coelho, 2011, p. 122)

Coelho enjoys Hilal’s violin playing and reflects on topics of time, love and learning processes. Both deal with issues of identity and the question of who they are, as well as on ways to find solutions for problems and ways to free oneself from memory by recreating oneself. Coelho ends this chapter with a story about the sacred fire and “stories to be told”.

The Chicago of Siberia (Coelho, 2011, p. 131)

Coelho and Hilal are in Novosibirks where they are taken around by a young woman, Tatiana, who had attended the book signing and party with Coelho. Hilal becomes a master of ceremony and practises a ritual at a fountain, which transforms their new relationship.

The Path of Peace (Coelho, 2011, p. 141)

This chapter describes Coelho and Yao practising aikido. During the practice of the path of peace, Coelho is occupied by sexual thoughts about Hilal. He describes the path of peace in the context of aikido and love as an energy that connects one to God and the universe.

The Ring of Fire (Coelho, 2011, p. 149)

Coelho still reflects on the path of peace when Hilal visits him. They talk about desire. The chapter further deals with Coelho’s “Ring of golden fire” exercise that leads to the exploration of previous life experience. The reader is introduced to a former life in which Coelho was a writer in the nineteenth century and to another life in Spain during which Coelho was responsible for the killing of eight women he still has to reconcile with in this life. Hilal seems to be the fifth of these women. The

chapter finally includes a letter written in Córdoba, on 11 July 1492, dealing with the Inquisition.

Believe Even When No One Else Believes in You (Coelho, 2011, p. 163)

Coelho takes Hilal to an orthodox church near their hotel where he prays and where Hilal forgives him for what he has done to her in a former incarnation. She speaks a prayer of forgiveness.

Tea Leaves (Coelho, 2011, p. 172)

Back on the train, Coelho and Yao speak about the principle of non-existence, about the shamans of Lake Baikal, love, wholeness and the different ways of reaching the Aleph. The chapter refers to the issue of identity and to the creation of identities through travelling.

The Fifth Woman (Coelho, 2011, p. 181)

Hilal spends the night embracing Coelho in his room on the train. He explains his previous life experiences and her role, as well as the need to resolve the former life problems to move on in this incarnation and develop spiritually.

Ad Extirpanda (Coelho, 2011, p. 188)

The chapter deals with a situation in a previous life in which Coelho, who was part of a Dominican order, was responsible for the torturing and burning of eight young women who were accused of being in contact with the devil. Coelho knew one of the girls very well, because he had been raised by her parents after the death of his parents. The chapter contains a detailed description of the torturing process of this one young woman and Coelho's thoughts while being a Dominican monk, not saving her and her seven friends from the death sentence.

Neutralising Energy Without Moving a Muscle (Coelho, 2011, p. 208)

Coelho finds himself in Irkutsk at a party after the book-signing session. Talks with Yao and Hilal are described and the reader is referred to Coelho's nummular eczema, which is a sign from his previous life. The key situation in this chapter, however, occurs in a restaurant after the signing party, where Coelho and his friends are attacked by a man from a neighbouring table. Yao resolves the conflict non-violently and they talk about resolving problems, love and forgiveness and about dealing with opponents and energies used in fights.

The Golden Rose (Coelho, 2011, p. 226)

The train stops at Lake Baikal. Coelho reflects on love, guilt and his path back to his kingdom. He takes Hilal for a walk through the town and talks to her about his wife who is an artist. He describes her pictures of the golden rose and the special technique to store those pictures painted in nature. The effect that nature has on these pictures is part of the artist's work. Hilal asks Coelho to discuss their love for each other and Coelho refers to his love as a love for a flowing river.

The Eagle of Baikal (Coelho, 2011, p. 236)

Yao takes Coelho and Hilal to a shaman. Although Hilal as a woman is not allowed to join the men, she insists on coming along. She stays with the shaman women while Yao and Coelho go with the male shaman to the mountain. During this night, Coelho's soul flies over Lake Baikal with the spirit of the eagle of Baikal.

Fear of Fear (Coelho, 2011, p. 252)

When Coelho returns to the hotel, Hilal threatens him with death, because she learnt from the female shaman that Coelho was responsible for her death in a former incarnation. Coelho finally explains to her what happened in their previous life and she plays the violin for him. Before Yao, Coelho and Hilal get onto the train, they take a (healing) bath in Lake Baikal.

The City (Coelho, 2011, p. 266)

This chapter starts shortly before the train arrives in Vladivostok. Coelho describes his walk through the train that seems to him like a huge city, a country, a universe – containing all the diversity possible. Coelho spends more time with Hilal, embracing her, and is carried once more into their previous life, remembering the day the eight young women were burnt.

The Telephone Call (Coelho, 2011, p. 278)

The train finally arrives in Vladivostok and it is time to say farewell. Coelho is invited to meet President Putin and to visit him in Moscow.

The Soul of Turkey (Coelho, 2011, p. 285)

Hilal threatens to commit suicide if Coelho leaves her on her own in Vladivostok. He eases the situation and takes her back to the train where they both return to the Aleph between the compartments. Coelho is able to return to his former life and he sees his final communication with the eight women, while they are being taken to the stake to be burnt. He finally understands his destiny and vocation across lifetimes.

Moscow, 1 June 2006 (Coelho, 2011, p. 297)

Yao, Coelho, a journalist friend and Hilal take the same plane to return to Moscow. The chapter is about the farewell of Coelho and Hilal before Coelho meets President Putin.

Author’s Note (Coelho, 2011, p. 299)

In the author’s note, the author refers to his previous life experiences when he executed eight women. He also refers to his further contact with Hilal after the journey on the railway and during the writing of the book. He thereby emphasises the authenticity and the autobiographical strength of the book.

8.4.1 *Alexander’s Indicators of Psychological Salience in “Aleph”*

The book, “Aleph” (Coelho, 2011) is analysed in the following section with regard to Alexander’s (1988, 1990) indicators of psychological salience (Sect. 8.4.1) and Schultz’s prototypical scenes (Sect. 8.4.2).³ Only selected examples will be referred to (see Table 8.3) owing to the limitations of this study. The information provides

³This exemplified analysis is already part of the interpretation of the data on Paulo Coelho and “Aleph”.

Table 8.3 Examples of Alexander's indicators of psychological saliency in "Aleph"

Irving Alexander: Primary indicators of psychological saliency	Description of primary indicators of psychological saliency
Frequency	<p>Several topics are frequently addressed in "Aleph" (Coelho, 2011). However, its main topic, which is referred to throughout the book, is "reincarnation". In the first chapter (Coelho, 2011, p. 7), Coelho introduces the topic of reincarnation during his talk with J. Coelho leaps back into a former life while walking through Tunis with his wife and their guide (Coelho, 2011, p. 38), talks about reincarnation in the Koran (Coelho, 2011, p. 39, p. 41) and in the Bible (Coelho, 2011, p. 42). Coelho addresses the topic of reincarnation on a theoretical level, through narrations of the book's protagonists (e.g. with J., Coelho, 2011, p. 7, p. 155) or with the accompanying travellers, such as the publisher, Yao and Hilal (Coelho, 2011, p. 121), as well as through the descriptions of leaps into former lives, which increase during his journey with Hilal (e.g. Coelho, 2011, p. 78, p. 155, p. 167, p. 188).</p> <p>In his book, Coelho describes his experience of the journey on the train while referring to former lives and his increasing understanding of those lives' issues to be resolved in the present incarnation. The topic of reincarnation is repeated in communication, in patterns of action, thoughts and symbols and thus reveals conscious and unconscious topics (Schultz, 2005b, p. 44) and the author's struggle to develop a conscious approach to unconscious issues and energy blockages in the present life. Through its repetition on various levels (self-reflection, communication, leaps into past lives), the author frequently reminds the reader of the complexity of the world and the Aleph that is omnipresent.</p> <p>Other issues that are repeated frequently are, for example, the topic of love, the relationship of Coelho with his wife Cristina who is in Brazil and the relationship to his master, J. However, these issues are not described further at this point of the study.</p>
Primacy	<p>Primacy in psychobiography has been emphasised (Alexander, 1988; Elms, 1994; Schultz 2005b) because of the assumption that what comes first in a text or life is significant. "Aleph" (Coelho, 2011, p. 1) starts with a description of Coelho's thoughts about "another ritual", "another invocation". The autobiographical narration thus relates to Coelho's former experiences with spirituality, magic rituals and invocations. He describes his questions regarding the discrepancy between the spiritual calling he experiences in the name of RAM and the contemporary world and reality shared by human beings globally. This first introduction to the book, which is called "King of my kingdom" (Coelho, 2011, p. 1) thereby introduces the two spheres with which the entire narration deals: It describes on the one hand Coelho's life and actions and his journey on the Trans-Siberian Railway and on the other hand relates to the spiritual world, the transformation into the spiritual realm. He further questions the meaning of interlinking experiences from the "remote past" and the "challenges of the present moment" (Coelho, 2011, p. 1).</p>

(continued)

Table 8.3 (continued)

<p>Irving Alexander: Primary indicators of psychological saliency</p>	<p>Description of primary indicators of psychological saliency</p>
	<p>The book’s first chapter describes Coelho’s meeting with his master, J. He explores the changes that have occurred in their relationship since they first met in 1982. Coelho, in this first chapter, describes his depression, frustration and inner conflict due to the routine he experiences in daily life. Coelho doubts his faith and he consults J. about it. J. advises Coelho to explore his previous life experiences and to travel to experience the present. J. emphasises: “You’re not here anymore. You’ve got to leave in order to return to the present” (Coelho, 2011, p. 9). The first chapter thus informs the reader that Coelho, who has reached a point of spiritual stagnation, needs to go on a new pilgrimage to recreate himself once more. The topic of spiritual development – this time in the context of reincarnation – is placed in the primacy of the narration. It provides the foundation for the entire pilgrimage to follow.</p>
<p>Emphasis</p>	<p>Schultz (2005b, 44) refers to the importance of emphasis in the data set – data be may over-, under-, or miss-emphasised. In “Aleph”, Coelho (2011) emphasises the topic of love. He thereby refers explicitly not to the love between a man and a woman, as Hilal does, but to love as he loves a river (Coelho, 2011, p. 234). This emphasis on love as an abstract concept, as a kind of natural and overall love, might even be seen as an overemphasis on the non-sexual love that Coelho feels for Hilal. At the same time, Coelho underemphasises his love that he feels as a man for a woman. A miss-emphasis (Alexander, 1988) could not be found in the data.</p>
<p>Isolation</p>	<p>In the chapter “The golden rose”, Coelho describes an outstanding aspect that is also isolated (as described by Schultz, 2005d) and Elms (1994) in the book. The author is reminded of a picture at home in his living room while looking at a river in Russia. This isolated description of the picture of the rose in the river is outstanding, because it leads to a description of Coelho and his wife, Cristina, who is an artist. He follows his string of thought and describes the detail of the technique his wife uses to store her works in nature. The picture takes the reader into an isolated description of the artistic technique of Coelho’s wife (Coelho, 2012, pp. 231–233), which he interlinks in his text with the philosophical assumption that challenges should be seen as opportunities in life: “Something that was born out of necessity has become her main creative method ” (Coelho, 2011, p. 233). This isolated description connects – as highlighted by Schultz (2005b, p. 44) – to the isolated aspects to the “web of unconscious ideas for which it stands”. In this case, the picture is connected to Russia, it is connected to the influence of nature, to the life philosophy of using a kind of creative solution for problems. On an unconscious level, this isolated incident also describes the deep love of Coelho for Cristina, his respect for her and her work, his fascination by her creative idea. The picture of the rose in the river, which hangs in Coelho’s apartment in Brazil, consciously interconnects space and time, Brazil and Russia, the year 2002 with the year Coelho travels on the railway. It integrates different places and different times in the here and now where Coelho and Hilal are while leading to the question of love. The rose as a symbol of love and the river as a symbol for the ever-changing life lead to Coelho’s expressive explanation of how he loves Hilal: “I love you like a river” (Coelho, 2011, p. 234). The isolated topic of the picture made by his wife Cristina leads to the confession of love for Hilal.</p>

(continued)

Table 8.3 (continued)

Irving Alexander: Primary indicators of psychological saliency	Description of primary indicators of psychological saliency
Uniqueness	<p>One unique event described in the book (Coelho, 2011, pp. 236–251) is Coelho and Yao’s experience with the shaman of Lake Baikal. Yao takes Coelho to the shaman to accompany him while meeting with the soul of his wife, who has passed on, through the shamanic ritual that is described. Coelho reports the ritual the shaman performs, which takes his soul flying over Lake Baikal and refills his spirit with joy and delight (Coelho, 2011, p. 249). Coelho experiences a spiritual out-of-body experience in which his spirit flies with the spirit of the eagle of Baikal; however, he does not experience consciously what the soul sees, but when his soul returns to his body he feels calmer and more peaceful (Coelho, 2011, p. 250). It is only later that Coelho explains the deeper meaning of his flight with the eagle of Baikal: “On the drive back to Irkusk, I had felt sure that I was not alone on my flight with the eagle of Baikal. Our spirits – hers and mine – had seen the same marvels” (Coelho, 2011, p. 271). The unique narration of the meeting with the shaman and the flight of Coelho’s spirit with the eagle turns out to be the flight of the personal reunification of the souls of Coelho and Hilal. This outstanding and unique experience, of whose deeper meaning the reader only knows later, builds the foundation for the next experiences of Coelho and Hilal, who can now build onto a deeper common experience of the reunification of their souls in the sky. The unique experience thereby turns into an unexpected situation (as described by Alexander (1988, 1990)), a new foundation for the relationship of Coelho and Hilal, who has through this encounter reached another level of consciousness and another spiritual realm.</p>
Incompletion	<p>Schultz (2005b, p. 44) defines incompletion in terms of the author starting to describe a certain situation or tell a story, but neglecting to finish it. In “Aleph” (Coelho, 2011), Coelho refers to his life as a writer in France in the nineteenth century. However, he gives the reader little information and only one detail. At the beginning of the book, Coelho talks to J. and says that he has discovered that he was a French writer in a previous life (Coelho, 2011, p. 7). He returns to this life, providing the reader with a short excerpt of what he, as a writer in France two centuries before, had written (Coelho, 2011, p. 271). However, throughout the story the reader is left without any other information on his life in France. This story of the French writer is – in contrast to the previous life lived in Spain in the fifteenth century – left unfinished and the reader is not given any deeper information on the life. Coelho just informs the reader that he was a writer who dealt with similar spiritual topics before. This incomplete information only gives the reader a vague idea of the complexity of Coelho’s life and introduces the idea that he took a long time to develop as a writer across more than one incarnation. The incompletion of the previous life description leaves room for secrets and mysteries, as well as surprises and wonders. The reader is taken into the mystical world of reincarnation and parapsychological life experiences. However, the influences of previous incarnations remain a secret to the reader – and maybe even a secret to Coelho himself – and create tension and a potential interest of the reader to explore more about Coelho and his previous life experiences.</p>

(continued)

Table 8.3 (continued)

Irving Alexander: Primary indicators of psychological saliency	Description of primary indicators of psychological saliency
Error, distortion, omission	Alexander (1988) bases his assumption that errors and distortions are important psychological indicators of saliency on Freud’s assumption that errors and distortion indicate importance, certain underlying motives, which might be recognised through these errors only. No errors or distortions could be found in the text.
	However, omission could be evaluated: Coelho does not speak about the RAM, he does not mention RAM at all during the entire text, although RAM is his spiritual base. At the end of the narration, no answers are given with regard to how Coelho returned home, what he told his master, J., what his conclusion on the journey finally was. No vision of the future or future developments of Coelho as a spiritual person are provided. The text only provides a rather negative idea of how the long journey on the Trans-Siberian Railway will influence the individuals once they return home, not leaving much of a long-term impact (Coelho, 2011, p. 278).
	Alexander (1988) points out that often feelings and emotions are omitted from an author’s text while events are usually described in depth. This is not correct in terms of the book “Aleph” (Coelho, 2011): The author describes his feelings and (self-)reflections in detail and in more depth than the events and situations experienced. This is, for example, the case with his departure on the railway, starting in Moscow (Coelho, 2011, p. 65).
Negation	Negation refers to „strenuous disavowal especially in the absence of any positive assertion to the contrary, a kind of “Gertrude Rule”, in the sense of ‘protesting too much’” about any given psychological or biographical fact (Schultz, 2005b, p. 44). Alexander (1988, p. 272) points out that negation is driven by “the cover of unlikelihood or impossibility”. However, in “Aleph” (Coelho, 2011), no example of a negation could be found.

Source: Adapted from Schultz (2005b), Elms (1994) and Alexander (1988, 1990)

indicators of psychological salience in the creative work of Paulo Coelho, referring to his life and his personal development between 2006 (during the journey on the Trans-Siberian Railway) and 2010 when he wrote “Aleph”. The book, as an auto-biographic, creative work, is understood as a description of an excerpt of Coelho’s life at the age of 59 (during the journey) and 63 (during the writing process).

The reported examples of Alexander’s indicators of psychological salience (1988, 1990) in “Aleph” (Coelho, 2011) provide deeper insight into the life of Coelho during his fifties and sixties. In the following section, Schultz’s (2005d) prototypical scenes analysis is used to identify autobiographical pointers that will later be interpreted.

8.4.2 *Schultz's Prototypical Scenes in "Aleph"*

Examples of prototypical scenes (Schultz, 2005b, p. 49) are provided in Table 8.4 to identify in-depth information on Coelho's journey on the Trans-Siberian Railway in 2006. This information provides an in-depth understanding of Coelho's journey and contributes to an improved, in-depth understanding of his life.

The exploration of examples of the prototypical scenes (Schultz, 2005b, p. 49; Table 8.4) supports the further in-depth analysis and interpretation of "Aleph" (Coelho, 2011) in terms of the theories.

8.4.2.1 Life Tasks in "Aleph"

The life tasks described by Myers et al. (2000) are analysed, discussed and interpreted with regard to "Aleph" (Coelho, 2011).

Spirituality

This creative work is based on the expression of spiritual self-doubts of the author and his wish for spiritual transformation to overcome stagnation and depression. Spirituality and spiritual development are, therefore, core issues of the book and refer to the five dimensions of spirituality (Mosak & Dreikurs, 2000; Sect. 4.5.1.1).

The book offers (a) a description of God – responding to the question: Do I believe in God and if yes, how do I communicate with God and how do I build up a relationship? The author, Coelho, meets his master, J. for a talk, a ritual and a prayer in his house in France. In the first chapter, J. prays, describing God's representation in the voices of the animals, the sound of trees, the water, the birds. God is felt as a supreme power and knowledge, justice and omniscience, which expresses itself in the natural aspects described above (Coelho, 2011, pp. 3–4). However, Coelho experiences a personal crisis in which he feels that he cannot connect to God anymore (Coelho, 2011, p. 4). He remembers that he got to know "God's plan" and his destiny by travelling the Road to Santiago and concludes that he had learnt his most important lessons during his travels (Coelho, 2011, p. 10).

At the beginning of his journey in Moscow, Coelho experiences God's presence for the first time since his doubts and crises: He is able to see God's presence in the "small gestures that bring us closer to God, as long as I am able to give each gesture the value it deserves." (Coelho, 2011, p. 47). Coelho then experiences a great revelation when he looks deep into Hilal's eyes. Through Hilal's eyes, he connects to the "Aleph", to God: "I am in the Aleph, the point in which everything is in the same place in the same time" (Coelho, 2011, p. 70). Through Hilal eyes (being a symbol of the soul), Coelho emphasises the place of his own soul and of all other souls (Coelho, 2011, p. 71), which represents the place of God. God's place is without time and space limitations: It is in nature, in animals, human beings, in the soul and in oneself. God is almighty and everywhere.

Table 8.4 Examples of Schultz’s prototypical scenes in “Aleph”

William Todd Schultz: Keys to identifying “prototypical scenes”	Description of key of prototypical scenes
Vividness, specificity, emotional intensity	<p>Several vivid and emotionally intense key situations are described in the text. One of these intense situations is described when Coelho participates in aikido with Yao, his translator. Coelho (2011, pp. 141–148) describes his aikido fight and his experiences of fighting with his translator. These experiences are intermingled with his thoughts about Hilal, the young woman that travels with him on the train. This chapter is positioned right in the centre of the book and indicates the plot with regard to Coelho’s inner fight for emotional awareness and for inner peace. Coelho practises aikido and remembers the “path of peace” while his thoughts distract him from the training. Emotionally intense, he describes his fight with Yao in the outside world while he at the same time switches to his fight with Hilal in his inner world (Coelho, 2011, p. 142): “Yao and I make the traditional bow, and our eyes change. We are now ready for combat. And in my imagination, she, too, bows her head as to say: ‘Yes, I am ready, hold me, grab my hair.’” This chapter indicates Coelho’s experience of the importance of the path of peace, with is reached through a non-violent approach in aikido and through love at the same time. The descriptions of this situation are emotionally laden and the characters, thoughts and actions are colourfully described.</p>
Interpenetration	<p>The book contains various interpenetrations. One example is the scene that recurs within the book: Coelho is close to Hilal and his thoughts and activities with her are interrupted through his transpersonal experiences into a former incarnation. This interpenetration occurs for the first time when Coelho looks into Hilal’s eyes (Coelho, 2011, p. 78). He looks into her eyes, is carried away by his thoughts and experiences himself in another dimension, in a previous life. The interpenetration happens again on the train. Hilal plays the violin for Coelho and he is transferred to the door that leads to the previous life. However, this time, he is not transferred into another life, but into narrations from the Bible that he recalls (Coelho, 2011, pp. 114–116). The interpenetration with regard to the exploration of different realities and lives is in some instances introduced through the “ring of fire” exercise. This exercise (Coelho, 2011, p. 154) is a ritual that interpenetrates the present reality to take Coelho into a former life reality. It symbolises the transmission from one reality to another. On other occasions, Coelho drifts into the previous life world through the embrace of Hilal (Coelho, 2011, p. 181). The transmissions into the former lives leak into different contexts, as described by Schultz (2005d), and display activity or creative products; in one instance, the interpenetration leads to a letter written in Córdoba in 1492 (Coelho, 2011, pp. 158–162).</p> <p>Another interpenetration is described when Coelho and Hilal are in the orthodox church in Novosibirsk where Coelho asks Hilal to forgive him. Closing her eyes, Hilal gets into contact with the spirit who dictates prayers and ends in a creative act of praying the “prayer of forgiveness” (Coelho, 2011, pp. 169–171).</p>

(continued)

Table 8.4 (continued)

William Todd Schultz: Keys to identifying “prototypical scenes”	Description of key of prototypical scenes
	<p>Finally, another example of an interpenetration occurs when Coelho talks about the ring of fire exercise, which he tries to do on his own (Coelho, 2011, p. 271). Coelho gets into contact with a French writer he has been in the nineteenth century in France and quotes a piece from what he wrote at that time. Again, the interpenetration between present and past lives ends in an act of creativity and a memoir.</p> <p>The frequent interpenetrations in this book force the reader to switch between times and realities and thus constructs the idea of an integrated reality that is built on past, present and future realities at the same time. Coelho reflects in his interpenetrative way on writing his idea of synchronicity (Coelho, 2011, p. 17) and his concept of time: “As I said on the train, everything that happened in the past or will happen in the future is also happening in the present” (Coelho, 2011, p. 223).</p>
Developmental crisis	<p>This autobiographical account refers to several developmental crises within the author, which are all related to his faith development, his spiritual growth and his doubts about the meaningfulness in his life and his spiritual path. Coelho emphasises in the first chapter while he talks to his master, J.: “‘I’m filled with doubt, especially about my faith,’ I say. ‘Good. It’s doubt that drives a man onward.’” (Coelho, 2011, p. 5). The doubts expressed here introduce Coelho’s inner conflict and his identity crisis, which finally leads him to his journey through Russia. He describes his crisis in the form of the Chinese bamboo, which grows underneath the earth and after 5 years shoots up to a height of 25 metres (Coelho, 2011, p. 22). Coelho feels he is in a crisis and about to shoot up into the air (which is represented through the pilgrimage). After having travelled many weeks to promote his books in several countries, he still experiences an identity crises and feels engulfed by the threat of depression (Coelho, 2011, p. 33).</p> <p>The topic of the identity crisis is re-narrated several times during the journey. Coelho finds himself in conflict about being a master of RAM, the feeling of having reached the end of his spiritual development, and the quest for meaningfulness in life, which all occur in his present life. At the same time, he feels guilty about his actions in a previous life (Coelho, 2011, p. 57, p. 229). This guilt influences his present life, first unconsciously, but later consciously.</p> <p>However, Coelho also refers to an identity crisis that is evoked by travelling and through new experiences of a journey when a person evolves who is “much more interesting and adventurous and more open to the world and to new experiences” (Coelho, 2011, p. 11). He re-emphasises the topic of identity crisis and the reconstruction of identity throughout the journey “... we are constantly destroying and rebuilding ourselves and who were are” (Coelho, 2011, p. 177) and thereby defines identity as a dynamic and constructed phenomenon.</p>

(continued)

Table 8.4 (continued)

William Todd Schultz: Keys to identifying “prototypical scenes”	Description of key of prototypical scenes
Family conflict	In “Aleph” (Coelho, 2011) Coelho does not refer to any kind of family conflict; however, he describes his personal inner conflict of feeling seduced by Hilal and being a faithful husband to his wife, Cristina, who is in Brazil. His wife gives him the freedom to travel on his own to have outstanding experiences (Coelho, 2011, p. 43). Several times, Hilal tries to seduce Coelho (e.g. Coelho, 2011, p. 260), but he comes to the conclusion that he cannot let himself be seduced by Hilal, guided by “my feelings of guilt” (Coelho, 2011, p. 229) and he realises that he and Hilal should transform their pain and desire into acts of creativity, into music and writing (Coelho, 2011, p. 260). With this decision, Coelho reduces the chances of family conflict, by making decisions in favour of his wife and his marriage. He confirms that his wife is the one he has loved for many centuries and for future lives to come and that he is faithful to her (Coelho, 2011, p. 87, p. 229, p. 233).
Thrownness	Coelho describes one situation that violates his status quo. After his book-signing session in Irkutsk, the publisher, the author, Yao and Hilal have a party with the readers. Hilal is dancing with a young man and Coelho starts commenting on her situation in front of the man. He tells him that Hilal is “free as a bird” (Coelho, 2011, p. 213), and that “she hasn’t yet met anyone who will treat her with the love and respect she deserves” (Coelho, 2011, p. 214). With this statement, Coelho shows his disrespect for Hilal’s love for him. Yao tells Coelho that he used the young man for his own purpose, that he himself was motivated by pride and that he did not care about the others in this situation, but just about himself. Coelho agrees with Yao’s criticism of his behaviour in public towards Hilal and her love and concludes for himself: “Spiritual growth doesn’t always arrive hand-in-hand with wisdom” (Coelho, 2011, p. 214). The taken-for-granted spiritually conscious behaviour of the author does not evolve in this situation. It rather describes Coelho as a human being who strives for spiritual development, but who has not arrived at gaining in-depth wisdom to treat others respectfully. The author who usually seems to be evolved in terms of his self-reflections and spiritual growth, is at this point reduced to a normal human being who is driven by human feelings. The behaviour described seems to be unfamiliar for Coelho; however, it seems familiar to the reader because he describes a very common way of interaction, which becomes extraordinary in the context described, relating to Coelho as a person.

Source: Adapted from Schultz (2005b, p. 50)

However, Coelho creates Yao, as an antagonist to Coelho’s view of God: Coelho believes in God, while Yao has lost his faith in God since he lost his beloved wife (Coelho, 2011, p. 86). Yao does not believe in God’s grace; however, he believes in soul travel and the concept of reincarnation, in which Coelho also believes.

During the interview situation, Coelho is asked, “What does God mean to you?” and he responds: “Anyone who knows God cannot describe him. Anyone who can

describe God does not know him” (Coelho, 2011, pp. 120–121). He is surprised about his wise response when he refers to the Christian belief that an image of God should not be created. He highlights that he is not on “automatic-pilot response” that would have led him to respond: “When God spoke to Moses he said: “I am”, so God is, therefore, neither the subject nor the predicate, he’s the verb, the action.” This statement shows that Coelho has a complex and multiple image of God.

In “Aleph”, (b) the choice of practice of religion – responding to the question of how one practices spirituality and how spirituality fits into the concepts and practices of religion, is addressed as follows: In chapter 1, J. and Coelho practise their religion and faith through praying (Coelho, 2011, pp. 3–4) and through conducting rituals, such as the ritual at the oak tree. However, Coelho doubts the meaningfulness of the ritual. J. explains to him that by conducting the rituals “you get in touch with something deep in your soul, in the oldest part of yourself, the part closest to the origin of everything” (Coelho, 2011, p. 7). However, Coelho’s doubts remain, and before he leaves for his journey, he goes to the chapel in Barbazan-Debat where he prays to “Our Lady”, to be guided and to recognise the signs on his way (Coelho, 2011, p. 21).

When Coelho retires to his room in the train, he describes how he places his saints on his table in his room. He always takes his saints with him and places them next to his bed, to spend his night “blessed by angels” (Coelho, 2011, pp. 70–71). Coelho strongly believes that spirituality is practised through prayer and God can only be felt when a person prays or when listening to music coming from a divine source (Coelho, 2011, p. 137).

Later, the protagonist learns about (c) the conceptualisation of humankind’s place in the universe – responding to the question, how do I see humankind and its relation to God and the universe?

Although the writer is in a personal and spiritual crisis in chapter 1, he still believes in a spiritual parallel world that exists (Coelho, 2011, p. 5). J teaches Coelho that humankind usually believes that time teaches humans to grow closer to God; however, according to J. that is not true: A person has to do something to build a close relationship with God and keep it alive (Coelho, 2011, p. 6). God is experienced in the “now”, in the present moment: “The present moment, though, is outside of time, it’s Eternity” (Coelho, 2011, p. 8). God can consequently only be kept alive by overcoming routine. According to Coelho (2011, pp. 66–67), humans relate to God in different ways, for example by through looking at a sleeping child or by travelling. Coelho communicates with God and with his soul while travelling. Humankind needs to develop in the light of God and the “soul needs to continue growing and developing in order for the world to carry one and for us all to meet once again” (Coelho, 2011, p. 95). That means that each individual’s development can help to develop the world’s soul and the relationship of the individual and humankind to God.

After having travelled on the train for some time, Coelho realises that humankind is strongly related to God and in touch with the divine energy. Humans are “creators and created, but we are all puppets in God’s hand” (Coelho, 2011, p. 131), whose focus is sometimes distracted by daily routines (Coelho, 2011, p. 123).

In the chapter “Tea leaves” (Coelho, 2011, pp. 172–180), Coelho introduces the concept of the “shaman” to whom he will soon be introduced by Yao. Shamans are seen as individuals with special powers and visions (Coelho, 2011, p. 173). Being placed between human beings and the universe, they converse with God. Their function is to interlink the human and the spiritual world and support people in connecting with the whole (Coelho, 2011, p. 173). Humankind needs translators to connect to God.

The topic of (d) a consideration of the nature of immortality – responding to the question of what the soul is and if and how it might live on after death, as well as how humans try to overcome mortality, is addressed in Chapter 1. Coelho and J. talk about reincarnation and past life experiences in which they believe. They have both undergone past life experiences and are aware that individuals have to deal with unresolved aspects of past lives during their lifetimes (Coelho, 2011, p. 7).

After having experienced the “Aleph” for the first time, Coelho and Hilal realise that they have met before, in a previous life. Both of them believe in reincarnation and see the experience of the Aleph as proof. Hilal states: “‘I knew it’, she says. ‘I knew I had met you before. I knew it the first time I saw your photograph’” (Coelho, 2011, p. 81). However, Coelho explains later that the Aleph, which is described as a divine energy, is experienced differently by human beings (Coelho, 2011, p. 104). Both Coelho and Hilal represent the concept of the immortality of the soul. This is supported by Coelho’s statement that (Coelho, 2011, pp. 126–127), death is “just a door into another dimension”. He uses the metaphor of a train that contains many carriages: People of different times and spaces are all travelling on the train, only they are in different carriages. Coelho explains that humans cross the bridges to other carriages to speak to the dead who are in other carriages, for example, in dreams or extraordinary situations (Coelho, 2011, p. 127).

Finally, the book refers to (e) the contemplation of the presence and nature of the meaning of life – responding to the question of how meaning in life is created. One example of the creation of meaning in life is found on page 14 in “Aleph”: Coelho believes that his emotional dissatisfaction is caused by God to compel him to recognise the need for change and visions (Coelho, 2011, p. 14). The meaning of life is seen in constant development potential, in change and recreation in life (Coelho, 2011, p. 14). Part of the meaning of life is therefore to learn to be humble, and to “accept that our heart knows why we are here” (Coelho, 2011, p. 21). The meaning, therefore, is based in the bond between God and the individual’s soul and it can only be understood in the second before the end of a person’s life (Coelho, 2011, p. 21). The underlying issue of every human’s life, however, is to follow the path “that has no beginning and has no end” (Coelho, 2011, p. 22), the path of eternal development. Life is about leaving the comfort zone of life and to “go in search of our kingdom” to deal with challenges, waiting, finding what a person sought or to be found by the same thing that a person sought (Coelho, 2011, p. 48). Following the path is – in other words – described as finding God in the interior and exterior world, in those two dimensions. For Coelho, the challenge is, however, to find God in other human beings, which is a major source of meaning in life (Coelho, 2011, p. 28).

Coelho asks the question himself: “What is the meaning in life?” and responds to it just a few lines later: “To live is to experience things, not to wonder about the meaning of life” (Coelho, 2011, p. 66). The meaning of life is therefore to be in the present moment, the ability to love and to experience a connection to the universal power (Coelho, 2011, pp. 232–235). However, the meaning of life is in an even broader sense related particularly to feeling that “I am alive” and to the experience of emotions and the connection of the physical, the spiritual and soul (Coelho, 2011, p. 296).

Coelho creates wellness through developing spiritually, through changing and recreating himself as a spiritual person. He feels depressed and stagnated at first and creates holistic wellness after he has reached another personal level of spiritual development.

Self-Direction

In “Aleph” the topics of the 12 sub-tasks of the life tasks of self-direction are referred to, as defined by Myers and Sweeney (2008). These are analysed and interpreted in the following section.

(a) *Sense of worth*

In “Aleph” (Coelho, 2011, p. 70), the self-worth issue is hardly referred to. However, Coelho refers to it in the discussion on dealing with enemies. He emphasises that people should not judge themselves too harshly and should rather forgive, to show wisdom and intelligence. By not being judgemental, a person can experience his/her self-worth and be gentle with self-development, which might lead to openness in new directions.

(b) *Sense of control*

At the beginning of the book, Coelho is out of control of himself and is reminded by J: “Go and experiment. It is time you got out of here. Go and re-conquer your kingdom, which has grown corrupted by routine” (Coelho, 2011, p. 9). His sense of control has been corrupted by daily routines. To re-conquer the sense of control, a person needs to stop and feel, “I am here” (Coelho, 2011, p. 9). Coelho understands that he will only be well when he regains self-control to live in the present moment. Willpower supports a person in keeping control of a situation by showing commitment and patience, not only courage to do something (Coelho, 2011, p. 24). Self-control is therefore important for holistic wellness. Coelho describes his opinion that a person is highly self-responsible and that only the individual personally can make decisions: “We are who we decide to be” (Coelho, 2011, p. 125). This is why he makes the decision to “go through the door” into a previous life (Coelho, 2011, p. 153). That is when Coelho regains complete self-control that contributes to his re-energisation and increase in holistic wellness.

(c) *Realistic beliefs*

With regard to realistic beliefs, Coelho highlights that he had always thought when he was younger that at the age of 59 “I would be close to paradise and to the absolute peace I thought I could see in the eyes of Buddhist monks” (Coelho, 2011, p. 3). However, this belief has turned out to be untrue and an unrealistic belief. In Chapter 1, the writer finds himself in a personal crisis due to his stagnation in spiritual development and he realises that he is further away from this aim than ever before (Coelho, 2011, p. 3): “the times when I emerge myself in some magical reality last only seconds.” He develops a new realistic belief that spirituality and holistic wellness requires hard work and that “spiritual growth doesn’t always arrive hand-in-hand with wisdom” (Coelho, 2011, p. 214). This is expressed in the situation with Yao and Hilal at a reader’s party, where Coelho realises his lack of wisdom and the need for constant reflection on one’s own realistic beliefs.

(d) *Emotional awareness and coping*

Coelho writes openly about his feelings and situations are described in terms of their emotional impact, such as in the beginning when Coelho describes his unhappiness and dissatisfaction in his life. This emotional imbalance builds the foundation (Coelho, 2011, pp. 1–18) for the decision to go on a journey. During the stop-over in Ekaterinburg, Coelho, for example, refers again to his feelings: “Since I left London, I have been a different person, feeling calm and happy on my journey, back to my kingdom and my soul” (Coelho, 2011, p. 85). Coelho explains that his emotional awareness even increased since his visit to the Aleph (Coelho, 2011, p. 91). The final situation in which Coelho visits the Aleph with Hilal is described, as well as a very emotional situation for Coelho in which his voice is choked with tears (Coelho, 2011, p. 296). Emotional awareness and coping are described throughout the journey, proving that emotions are highly intense in “Aleph”.

The plot of emotional awareness is reached when Coelho experiences that he not only remembers past lives, but that he is “re-living that time” (Coelho, 2011, p. 256). He describes his crying: “I am crying, because there is no other way of showing what I feel: I AM ALIVE. I am alive in every pore and every cell of my body. I am alive. I was never born and never died” (Coelho, 2011, p. 256). The direct emotional expression is connected to being alive, being in the body, the experience of interconnectedness. Even after the last common experience of Coelho and Hilal in “Aleph”, Coelho’s emotions are intense. However, he is unable to explain what he feels, but finds a metaphor of the “voice that is choked with tears” (Coelho, 2011, p. 296) to express his deep emotional experiences. Through his emotional awareness, Coelho regains holistic wellness and improves his understanding of what contributes to his wellness and what decreases it.

(e) *Problem-solving and creativity*

J. teaches Coelho that he has to travel in space and in time (Coelho, 2011, p. 11) to return to the present moment and to recreate his future (Coelho, 2011, pp. 8–9). He advises Coelho to go on a journey, find out what he has left unfinished and com-

plete the task (Coelho, 2011, p. 12). Coelho is aware that problems that occurred in previous lives and remained unresolved need to be creatively resolved in other incarnations, “in order to finish something that was left incomplete” (Coelho, 2011, p. 106). He strives for completeness, for wholeness to recreate his wellness. He knows that creative and new solutions can only be found and applied when they do not rely on previous experiences and when a person has freed him/herself from earlier memories. Only then can a person connect to the universe that integrate all the problems and all the solutions possible (Coelho, 2011, p. 126). This means that, for creative conflict resolution, a person has to connect to a greater and universal energy, to find new ways of dealing with challenges by connecting to the collective (un)consciousness that is free of space and time. This relates to the assumption that challenges a person encounters are bound to problems that the same person had in a previous life and that reappear in the current incarnation (Coelho, 2011, p. 185). The reappearance of problems from a former life are seen by mystics as part of the “wheel of time” and need to be resolved. This resolution process can sometimes take several incarnations (Coelho, 2011, p. 185). It aims at the overall objective to “separate and bring together” (Coelho, 2011, p. 186). This process of “solve et coagula” (Coelho, 2011, p. 186) is a basic principle of God and the universe, which “contracts and expands”, separates and brings together to grow and develop. In the book “Aleph” the creative resolution of problems within and across incarnations becomes the basis for development and growth of the individual and the collective.

The path of peace integrates a strategy to resolve problems creatively by connecting to the person’s energy and by calling “upon an infinite variety of responses” (Coelho, 2011, p. 149) to keep open-minded. Besides the principle of calling upon various responses, another aspect of creative resolution is “non-resistance”, which is described by Yao in the context of aikido (Coelho, 2011, p. 172). By using the principle of non-resistance, a person uses the energy of his/her opponent to turn the energy against him/herself. Through the use of the opponents’ energy, the energy of the person grows stronger without the loss of his/her own energy (Coelho, 2011, p. 172).

Coelho’s problem-solving and creativity are highly developed and support him in regaining his holistic wellness. He uses holistic approaches to resolve challenges and draws on various traditions of problem-solving approaches, such as individual, physical, spiritual and psychosocial ones, to recreate his wellness.

(f) *Sense of humour*

No examples of a sense of humour could be found in this creative work.

(g) *Nutrition*

The topic of nutrition is only touched on in the context of situational descriptions on the train or at the parties held after book-signing sessions. It is not described in the context of health, but rather as an aspect of social events and interpersonal contact.

(h) *Exercise*

The main exercise referred to in “Aleph” (Coelho, 2011) is the exercise of aikido in which Yao and Coelho share an interest. Yao contextualises the aikido exercise in conflict resolution practices: “What we aim to do is calm the spirit and get in touch with the source from which everything comes, removing any trace of malice or egoism” (Coelho, 2011, p. 72). Aikido, as a martial art, is described in different situations. It is an exercise that implicitly describes Yao’s and Coelho’s common connection. It is the exercise that leads to the “path of peace” and teaches them how to resolve conflicts peacefully. Coelho (2011, pp. 141–148) describes in one chapter, “The path of peace”, how he and Yao practise aikido and how his thoughts drift away towards fantasies about Hilal. Without the focus on the present moment in aikido, peace with the universe is difficult to reach. The exercise of aikido teaches the learner the peaceful path, harmony with the universe, self-control and the training of the heart. It is a way to connect to God and to spirituality through a physical connection. It is viewed as a training session in which the individual learns how to prepare for “challenges to be met with joy and overcome with tranquillity” (Coelho, 2011, p. 147). It is also called the principle of “non-resistance” (Coelho, 2011, p. 172; see also (e) problem-solving and creativity). The aikido exercise contributes to Coelho’s being in the present moment, his wellness and the connection of body, mind and spirituality. It therefore increases his awareness, as well as his wellness, reminding him of his focus and the path of peace in life.

Other exercises are mentioned in the book: Coelho is aware that walking and running are important exercises for him to stay healthy on a daily basis (e.g. Coelho, 2011, p. 107). The shamanic exercise described at Lake Baikal helps him to honour his art and to “share the contemplation of the mystery” (Coelho, 2011, p. 246). Here, Coelho refers to a spiritual exercise of travelling souls that reconnect with the universe, flying over Lake Baikal. Coelho is not aware of what he experiences on a conscious level; however, he knows that after his soul was taken through the exercise, his wellness improved: “When my soul returns to my body, I will be wiser and calmer” (Coelho, 2011, p. 250).

Exercises described in the book integrate spiritual, soul and physical exercises, connecting with God and others. All the exercises described contribute to Coelho’s increase in holistic wellness.

(i) *Self-care*

The journey is a journey of self-care to develop himself spiritually and personally and to find the key to inner peace and contentment. The self-care is expressed within the narration by monologues and self-reflections, by taking time out from everything else, relaxing and just caring about himself. Self-care, therefore, is an underlying topic throughout the book, which contributes to the re-establishment of Coelho’s holistic wellness.

(j) *Stress management*

As a self-care topic, stress management is another underlying topic in the book. Coelho decides to travel, to experience closeness to God, to develop and to recon-

nect to the spiritual dimension. Through travelling he manages his intrapersonal stress that is caused by his feelings of stagnation (Coelho, 2011, p. 11). Stress release is reached through new experiences, open-mindedness, new insights, a change of context, the reconnection with God and the resolution of previous conflicts. Travelling is a stress management tool for Coelho, which contributes to his overall and holistic wellness.

(k) *Gender identity*

Gender identity is not an important issue. However, Coelho is well aware of being a man, which he expresses particularly in his relationship with Hilal and his desire for her as a woman (Coelho, 2011, p. 152). However, at one point he highlights: “I am the woman I have learned to be” (Coelho, 2011, p. 133). This situation happens in Novosibirsk when Coelho goes out with Hilal and Tatiana in search of a nightclub to dance. Coelho puts himself into a gendered mindset, into the mindset of a woman to “read between the lines” and understand Hilal. He refers to the different ways of communication between men and women and the change of perspective that is needed to understand Hilal. He does not explain further why or how he learnt to be a woman; however, he might be referring to his experiences of the feminine side of his soul, which he describes in other books (Coelho, 1990). This statement, however, shows that Coelho naturally applies a “male perspective”, being a man and behaving as one. Coelho again refers to the “feminine side”, which is needed to get into contact with the “unknown” and be open to learning new things (Coelho, 2011, p. 243). He thereby shows that a balanced gender identity is needed to live life to the full and to create holistic wellness in a person.

(l) *Cultural identity*

Coelho describes (Coelho, 2011) that he always experienced a rebirth of his own identity when he travelled. Through the new experiences of his travels, such as not knowing the language, walking new streets, using a new currency, he learnt that:

you discover that your old ‘I’, along with everything you ever learned, is absolutely no use at all in the face of the new challenges, and you begin to realise that, buried deep in your unconscious mind, there is someone much more interesting and adventurous and more open to the world and to new experiences. (p. 11)

Coelho describes his idea of a constructed identity that is redefined and reborn through travelling and through external challenges that need to be addressed through change, particularly when one travels in foreign or new cultures. Besides recreating one’s identity through constant external changes, Coelho describes that he enjoys being in his home country, hearing his mother tongue, drinking acai juice and looking at Copacabana beach (Coelho, 2011, p. 19). This description of being and feeling at home forms part of Coelho’s cultural identity. Being sure of one’s cultural identity contributes to holistic wellness. That does not mean that a cultural identity is not dynamic and does not change. In Coelho’s eyes, a cultural identity is heterogeneous, consisting of multiple aspects, adapting to new situations, helping to recreate one’s self in the context of holistic wellness.

After having described the concept of self-direction in “Aleph”, the life task of work and leisure will be addressed.

Work and Leisure

In the first chapter, the author describes that his spiritual routine with which he fills parts of his daily routine “has become routine and pointless” (Coelho, 2011, p. 3). He explains that while he travelled the Road to Santiago he had found his destiny (Coelho, 2011, p. 10) which was to become a writer. He describes in “Aleph” that since he discovered his destiny, “I have done everything that my work demanded of me” (Coelho, 2011, p. 10): He travelled, he developed himself and his work professionally (Coelho, 2011, p. 90). Coelho sees travelling, therefore, as part of his work (and an opportunity to provide a sense of accomplishment, according to Myers et al. (2000) and as a part of leisure time (creative work with social engagement (Myers et al., 2000)). Generally, Coelho does not distinguish between work and leisure and rather combines the two concepts on his journeys. He travels through Russia to promote his books, develop personally and take care of himself. Work is important in terms of his meaningfulness, but not in terms of the differentiation of work and leisure. The concepts are integrated and are valuable to Coelho, as long as they increase meaningfulness and therefore holistic well-being.

Friendship

In “Aleph” (Coelho, 2011), friendship is related to all social interactions as well as social connectedness (as defined by Myers et al. (2000)), which is experienced on an individual and on a collective level.

In the beginning of the book, Coelho asks himself: “Why can I not be like my friends?” implying that his friends are different. He feels urged to develop, to explore the world and grow spirituality, while implying that his friends are different, not wanting to develop (Coelho, 2011, p. 14). This implicit description of his friends shows on the one hand Coelho’s longing to be like them – stagnated and content with themselves – and his difference on the other hand – forward-moving, never content and chased by his urge to develop.

Friendship is not an important issue in “Aleph”, although Coelho mentions that his agent, Monica, is at the same time is his “best friend” (Coelho, 2011, p. 22). She has been his agent since she was 20 and believed in Coelho’s work from the start. She was committed to fighting for the impossible and is therefore described by Coelho as a warrior (Coelho, 2011, pp. 23–24) with courage, willpower and commitment. Besides Monica, Coelho refers to the friends that he has together with his wife. They meet their friends Hervé and Véronique for dinner (Coelho, 2011, pp. 16–18). Coelho realises that his universe has become self-limited to “a few friends locally” and that he never engaged in deep human relations, living a life free from human contact during the past years (Coelho, 2011, p. 28). Friendships are not

very important to Coelho; however, he has “friends” all around the world. In Moscow, he meets his “best friend in Russia, an industrialist” during his party. Although the friendship is not described in depth, he listens to his friend’s advice to take Hilal on the trip: “If you believe in the words you write, allow the people around you to grow with you” (Coelho, 2011, p. 60). The Russian friend becomes a key player, reminding Coelho of his social responsibility, the social dimension of spiritual growth and his responsibility as a famous writer (Coelho, 2011, p. 60). The advice of his friend has an influence on the entire trip, contributing to Coelho’s authenticity as a writer and his holistic wellness.

On the one hand, friendship in the book “Aleph” is not a primary and explicit topic. On the other hand, friendship is one of the main, implicitly referred to topics: Hilal travels to Moscow to meet Coelho, holding an article in her hand in which a man lights a fire and tells his friend: “Look at the fire and think of our friendship; and that will keep you warm” (Coelho, 2011, p. 45). This story deals with the importance and impact of friendship, and the strong value of “light(ing) the fire of friendship” (Coelho, 2011, p. 46). Hilal represents friendship in “Aleph” as an important life task.

At the end of the book, Coelho mentions one more friend who is important to him: he emphasises that his publisher cannot accompany him to meet President Putin, but that he has a journalist friend who has permission to join him to meet Putin (Coelho, 2011, 297). Again, there is a friend at his side to keep him company.

In the description of previous life experiences, Coelho refers to the friendship he has felt for the woman he tortures. The parents of the women remind Coelho in his previous life of his friendship with her: “You played together and grew up together and only grew apart when you chose to enter the priesthood” (Coelho, 2011, p. 188). Although Coelho self-reflects on his friendship with her, he does not change his decision to have her burnt at the stake. He does not defend the friendship. However, a development in Coelho is described from a person who lets his friend be tortured and killed in a previous lifetime, to a more caring person in this lifetime. A value shift is shown from holding onto power (as the torturing priest) to a caring friend in this life. This shift indicates the shift from depression about his faults of the previous life towards healing through reconstructing the relationships and recreating holistic wellness in the context of social relationships.

Love

Love is important in “Aleph”, referring to a committed, lasting, intimate relationship with another person (Coelho 2011), as described by Myers et al. (2000).

Coelho describes his deep love for his wife Cristina (see also Sect. 8.4.2.2. Family, e.g. Coelho, 2011, p. 229) and empathically discusses love with Yao who suffers from his loss of his beloved wife (Coelho, 2011, p. 89). Finally, Coelho experiences love with Hilal and different viewpoints on love are explored and discussed (Coelho, 2011, p. 234). He differentiates between different forms of love,

such as the love for Jesus (Coelho, 2011, p. 222), the love he experiences as a man for a woman, the love for his wife (Coelho, 2011, p. 229) and the love he feels for Hilal: “I love you like a flowing river.” Love is present and “healthy love relationships” (Myers et al., 2000, p. 257) have a positive impact on Coelho.

In “Aleph”, Coelho shows his (a) ability to be intimate, trusting, and self-disclosing with another person, by describing his loving relationship with his wife, Cristina. Although he travels alone, he shares all the important information with her over the huge distance, which highlights their intimate relationships “since 30 years and in previous lives” (Coelho, 2011, p. 87, p. 90, p. 106). He feels her presence several times during the journey (e.g. Coelho, 2011, p. 288) and Hilal listens to his stories about her. Coelho’s relationship with her is trusting, intimate and without secrets while they are exploring life and the world together (Coelho, 2011, p. 232).

During the journey itself, Coelho develops the ability to be intimate, trusting and self-disclosing with Hilal, which leads to the plot of the story in which they return to the Aleph to live through the previous life (Coelho, 2011, pp. 293–296). The development shows an increase in trust and intimacy throughout the journey (Coelho, 2011, pp. 155–157), opening up about their feelings and Coelho’s love for his wife (Coelho, 2011, pp. 233–235).

Coelho describes in several situations (b) the ability to receive as well as express affection with significant others, such as his wife and Hilal (Coelho, 2011, pp. 231–235). He gives to and receives love from his wife, after he struggled in the first few years of their relationship (Coelho, 2011, p. 232). At the same time, Coelho expresses his love for Hilal, who asks him the favour to tell her that he loves her (Coelho, 2011, p. 233). He respects her wish and tells her in a two-page-long explanation how he loves her (Coelho, 2011):

I love you like a river that creates the right conditions for trees and bushes and flowers to flourish along its banks. (...) I love you because we are all born in the same place, at the same source, which keeps us provided with a constant supply of water. (...) I receive your love and I give you mine. Not the love of a man for a woman, not the love of a father for a child, not the love of God for his creatures, but a love with no name and no explanation, like a river that can not explain why it follows a particular course, but simply flows onwards. A love that asks for nothing and gives nothing in return; it is simply there. I will never be yours and you will never be mine; nevertheless, I can honestly say: I love you, I love you, I love you. (pp. 234–235)

Coelho expresses his love and affection for Hilal in terms of a love without a name, a kind of universal, divine and platonic love. The lengthy explanation of love shows Coelho’s affectionate and emotional expression towards Hilal, but even more towards life, nature, God and the world. The giving and the receiving of this universal love contribute to Coelho’s life and is an expression of his holistic wellness approach.

In several situations, Coelho cares about Hilal, referring to the (c) the capacity to experience or convey non-possessive caring that respects the uniqueness of another. This happens, for example, when Coelho tells the other travellers on the train to be kind to Hilal (Coelho, 2011, p. 130). However, the source of his care that respects Hilal’s uniqueness is not clear: Is this care born out of a deep empathetic care for the

other or is she and the care for her just a means to heal himself? It might be care for Hilal, but is it in any way also a means of self-care to heal himself? The same question appears during the situation in which Hilal dances with a young man at a party (Coelho, 2011, p. 214). After a confrontational talk between Coelho and this man, Yao gives Coelho feedback about his disrespectful, possessive and non-caring behaviour, which seems to hide his real, deep care for her. Coelho shows aspects of care and aspects of non-care towards Hilal and others; he still needs to develop non-possessive care.

With regard to (d) the presence of enduring, stable intimate relationships in one's life and (e) concern for the nurturance and growth of others, Coelho highlights: "Love is always stronger" (Coelho, 2011, p. 115). In the context of love, there is forgiveness, nurturance and growth. However, Coelho only starts caring for the nurturance and growth of Hilal after his Russian friend advises him to live by what he writes (Coelho, 2011, p. 60). This shows that the writer Coelho and the person Coelho carry two hearts within themselves: that which he writes and that which he lives. He rather seems to care about himself than for the nurturance and growth of others. It is unclear how this behaviour pattern affects Coelho's holistic wellness, but it can be assumed that becoming aware of this individualistic behaviour pattern does not necessarily contribute to his holistic wellness. He might feel more well if he were to live up better to his ideal to care more about others than about himself.

In "Aleph", Coelho does not write about (f) satisfaction with one's sexual life or the perception that one's needs for physical touch and closeness are being met, or both. However, he dedicates a huge part of one chapter to describing his sexual desire for Hilal and his fantasies attached to it (Coelho, 2011, pp. 142–147). He tells her that he loves and desires her (Coelho, 2011, p. 152). He thereby indirectly expresses his need for physical touch and closeness with Hilal. The only time his need for closeness is referred to explicitly is when he spends time with Hilal in bed, embracing her to practise the "ring of fire" to transcend into a previous life (Coelho, 2011, p. 181). Coelho highlights that he needs the embrace as a gesture of humanity, "which means far more as the meeting of two bodies" (Coelho, 2011, p. 181). He thereby prioritises and values the meeting of souls more than sexual interaction. The embrace relates for Coelho to closeness, "feeling home", a sign of relaxation, protection and understanding (Coelho, 2011, p. 181). The narration leaves a gap with regard to sexual satisfaction, which is left open, probably because it is supposed to be fulfilled with his wife, Cristina.

With regard to holistic wellness, many of the life tasks are emphasised and addressed in the creative work. They are described in a developing way, providing the impression that Coelho's holistic wellness increases throughout the journey.

8.4.2.2 Life Forces

The life forces playing a role in the book “Aleph” are explored in the following section.

Family

In “Aleph”, the life force of family does not play a major role. The family member that is described as a key person in Coelho’s life is his wife, Cristina, who encourages him to travel without her (Coelho, 2011, p. 43) and to trust Hilal (Coelho, 2011, p. 108). During the journey, Coelho refers to his wife’s presence throughout different lifetimes (Coelho, 2011, p. 106). Coelho admits his deep love for Cristina to Yao (Coelho, 2011, p. 87) who also describes his relationship to his wife in a metaphor: “...we were two clouds and now we are one. We were two ice cubes that the sun melted and now we are the same free-flowing water” (Coelho, 2011, p. 90). However, for the purpose of his self-development and spiritual growth, Cristina gives Coelho the freedom to undergo an individual transformation. The family life force is a huge resource in the background of Coelho’s journey, but does not play a primary role during the journey. However, it is assumed that the strong support of Cristina provides Coelho with strength, interconnectedness and wellness.

Religion

Religion is addressed in various ways throughout the book, such as during the promotion tour in Tunis, when Coelho describes his interest in the Koran and in Islam. He asks his guide, Samil (Coelho, 2011, 38): “What does Islam have to say about reincarnation?” Samil’s responses are extensive and refer to three different phrases in the Koran citing reincarnation (Coelho, 2011, p. 41). After having reflected on reincarnation in the Koran, Coelho quotes the Bible (Coelho, 2011, p. 42). By referring to the Koran and to the Bible, but also by referring to the Buddhist monks (Coelho, 2011, p. 3), Coelho provides an inter-religious frame for his narration and particularly for his belief in reincarnation. This is important, because the concept of reincarnation is one of the foundational assumptions in the book that provides basic understanding of the entire narration. The belief in reincarnation is supported by other protagonists, such as Yao, whose religious affiliation is not explicitly mentioned, but he believes in the reincarnation of souls (Coelho, 2011, p. 86), as well as by Hilal who also believes in reincarnation (Coelho, 2011, 87) and who hates churches (Coelho, 2011, 163). Coelho speaks explicitly about the cruelty of the church, the killing in God’s name, the torturing in Jesus’ name, and the suppression of female ingenuity (Coelho, 2011, p. 221), referring to his own torturing of Hilal in a previous life. Hilal only highlights, “I hate churches” (Coelho, 2011, p. 221). Coelho self-reflects on his relationship to his religion and his church (Coelho, 2011):

I belong to a religion that perpetuated horrors. That's what I am getting at, because, despite everything, I still have the love of Jesus which is far stronger than the hatred of those who declared themselves his successors (p. 222)

Coelho emphasises his conscious awareness of the cruelty of the church in the past, but highlights that he particularly loves Jesus. Coelho keeps his faith, while Hilal emphasises that she prefers music, contemplation in silence and nature, to be close to God (Coelho, 2011, p. 222).

The ritual of forgiveness (Coelho, 2011, pp.164–171) of Hilal is a central part of the relationship between Coelho and Hilal. Coelho insists that the act of forgiveness needs to be practised in a church. He, therefore chooses an orthodox church with whose rituals neither of the protagonists is familiar. In this orthodox church, Hilal “channels” a prayer of forgiveness (Coelho, 2011, pp. 169–170). The frame of the orthodox church is very important to Coelho and he insists, despite Hilal's wish, to practise the ritual in the church. Coelho explains in his author's note that this prayer has been “channelled” before (Coelho, 2011, p. 300) and that Hilal accesses universal knowledge and cosmic energy.

Coelho places himself in the Christian belief, is aware about the cruel past and copes with it through his love of Jesus and God. At the same time, he emphasises the importance of different religious traditions. Religion is an important source of holistic wellness for Coelho, empowering him, providing him with strength.

Education

Education is hardly mentioned in “Aleph” in terms of formal education. However, Coelho sees his journal as an educational journal towards self-development, healing and wellness. Coelho does not believe in the meaningfulness of studying academic themes, such as creative writing (Coelho, 2011, p. 89), but rather in activities conducted with joy and enthusiasm (Coelho, 2011, p. 89). Wellness therefore increases with living according to a person's interests, talents, dreams and vocation in life, rather than studying academically without joy.

Community

Coelho belongs to different communities in “Aleph”, such as RAM, the community of the travellers on the train, which builds up during the journey, and the community of believers who believe in reincarnation. Coelho further emphasises that he belongs to the community of his readers (Coelho, 2011):

I look out to each of my readers. I hold out my hand and I thank them for being there. My body may be travelling, but when my soul flies from city to city, I am never alone. I am all the many people I meet and who have understood my soul through my books (p. 50).

Coelho creates a new community he has not spoken of before, the community of his readers who support and understand him.

In summary, Coelho feels alone and stagnated, in the beginning of the book, with a small community of friends. Different communities build up during the book, such as the reconnection with RAM, the travellers, the believers, the readers. Belonging to these communities contributes to Coelho’s holistic wellness and his feelings of being supported, understood and connected to these communities. These communities provide Coelho with strength and contentment, the idea of development and friends.

Media

The media play a contextual role in “Aleph”: Coelho describes his book-signing sessions and how they fill him with joy, pleasure, contentment and positive energy (e.g. Coelho, 2011, p. 20). He describes the parties after the signing sessions at, for example, the ambassador’s house in Moscow (Coelho, 2011, pp. 53–57). He uses the media and attends promotions and goes on media tours, such as the train tour through Russia (e.g. Coelho, 2011, pp. 24–27). Through the media, such as interviews, Coelho has an impact on the world outside (Coelho, 2011, pp. 118–121), which provides him with self-efficacy and influence. The media life force gives Coelho entrance into high society, it contributes to his fame, his publicity, his success. The book as a medium is Coelho’s way of personal expression and provides him with self-worth and the ability to influence other individuals’ lives. Because of all these aspects, the media contribute positively to Coelho’s holistic wellness.

Government

The life force of the government is hardly referred to in “Aleph”. The one and only indication that Coelho is in contact with governmental forces is when his publisher receives a phone call from President Putin, who invites Coelho to a meeting in Moscow (Coelho, 2011, p. 278). Up to this point, Coelho is unaware of Putin’s interest in meeting him. The invitation is an honour for him; it reflects his importance in Russia, his political influence and his impact in the world of government representatives and politics.

Business or Industry

Business and industry play a contextualised role in “Aleph” (2011). Coelho describes his life, his contact with the agent, Monica, and publishers (Coelho, 2011, pp. 24–27). The business is connected to scheduled appointments with publishers, journalists, book signing, promotion tours and interviews (Coelho, 2011, pp. 24–27). Being part of the industry provides Coelho with opportunities to travel, increasing his fame and number of readers around the world (Coelho, 2011, p. 300). He changes publishers as he likes and thereby has an impact on the competitive factor

in the industry. Coelho is content with being part of the industry and its contribution to his holistic wellness is that he has influence in his work context, that he can choose his publishers and use the industry to be successful and famous. Since he knows how to play the game successfully, he feels well and happy about being part of it.

8.4.2.3 Global Events

In the book, “Aleph” (2011), global events are hardly addressed. Intra-psychological experiences and interpersonal contacts are described on Coelho’s journey through Russia. Global events have no impact on this narration.

8.4.2.4 Conclusion on Holistic Wellness in “Aleph”

“Aleph” (Coelho, 2011) is an autobiographical account of Coelho who feels that his life and spiritual development stagnated during the years from 57 to 59 years. He therefore decides to go on a spiritual journey through Russia, one of the dreams he always wanted to realise, to develop spiritually, promote his books and resolve previous life experiences.

The book refers strongly to the life tasks of spirituality and love. With regard to the five dimensions of spirituality, Coelho explains that he is in communication with God and the universe through rituals and prayer. At the age 57 to 59 Coelho finds himself in a spiritual crisis of stagnation, depression and doubt: he has lost the connection to God. Through other protagonists, such as Yao or Hilal, different images of God are created. However, Coelho concludes that God cannot be described. He sees humankind in a close and dynamic relationship with God, which can be strengthened through travelling, new experiences, overcoming routine and connecting with the whole.

The concept of reincarnation is expressed through various characters, such as Yao, Hilal or Coelho himself, and builds the foundation of the entire spiritual journey of Coelho, reconciling with his past life experiences. At the same time, Coelho relates to the question of the meaning of life, emphasising that life is to be lived fully. Spirituality is the main life task in the book, which at first has a negative impact on Coelho because of its stagnation and subsequently develops throughout the book as a source of wellness when it becomes dynamic and developing.

Regarding self-direction, the 12 subtasks are addressed, although with different intensity. Sense of control, the construction of realistic beliefs, emotional awareness and coping, as well as problem-solving and creativity, exercise and cultural identity are referred to most often. During the journey, Coelho regains his sense of control, he reconstructs his beliefs and is in search of the realistic beliefs of the past, the present and the future. Emotional intensity and awareness are strongly described and emotional plots are created on the journey to resolve his problems from the past through new and creative approaches. While travelling through Russia, Coelho also

reconstructs his cultural identity. Throughout the journey, his spiritual development, his search for new meanings in this and in former lives, to respond to the question "Who am I?" are described. He addresses these issues through self-reflection, spiritual rituals and the exercise of aikido.

The other sub-tasks of life, such as sense of worth, sense of humour, nutrition, self-care, stress management and gender identity are hardly described, but only given as contextual information.

The life task work and leisure is viewed as an integrated concept that is addressed through the journey itself, which is part of Coelho's leisure time and part of his work.

Friendships do not play a major role at the surface of the narration. However, they are important on an unconscious and hidden level: The major decisions in the book are based on friends' advice and support. Friendship is therefore an important underlying topic that influences the course of Coelho's decisions.

Finally, love is, like spirituality, a major life task in the book. From Coelho's and Hilal's perspective, love is the moving power that opens doors. Coelho describes the different forms of love, the love for his wife, the love for Hilal, the love for Jesus. With regard to the characteristics of love, Coelho is able to maintain intimate, trusting and self-disclosing relationships with his wife and with Hilal. He shows his ability to express affection and receive it, he enjoys the presence of enduring, stable and intimate relationships and transforms his sexual desires into platonic love. However, the characteristics of love with regard to non-possessive caring and respect for the uniqueness of another person, as well as the characteristic of nurturing others, are neglected. Coelho needs to be reminded by his friends to nurture others besides himself. He relates to self-love rather than to loving, nurturing and caring for others.

The most important life forces identified on the spiritual journey are the life forces of family and religion. With regard to family, Cristina is the key person. With Cristina, Coelho is in an enduring love relationship and she supports him in his spiritual development, providing him with key information and freedom to develop himself and his faith. Religion is the life force most often referred to, through which he integrates various religious concepts that connect him to God, integrating aspects from different religions, such as Islam, Buddhism and Christianity. In referring to these inter-religious views he refers to the cruelty of Christianity in the history of religion and emphasises that spirituality is an integrative force of different religions to overcome the faults and cruelty of the past.

The other life forces, such as education, community, media, government, business and industry and global events are hardly addressed and play a minor role with regard to the holistic wellness of Coelho.

In conclusion, Coelho creates his holistic wellness mainly through the life tasks of spirituality and love, while integrating the life forces of family and religion. Besides these, most of the life tasks and life forces are implicitly addressed or only in passing. Coelho describes the transformative power of spirituality and love, which contributes to his wellness on the Trans-Siberian Railway, while reconstructing his holistic wellness not only throughout this life, but across past, present and

future lives. This autobiographical narration is a milestone in Coelho's deepening spiritual development and provides personal insight into the reconstruction of holistic wellness through a journey through Russia and Coelho's lives. It is an example of an outstanding self-healing process that recreates self-efficacy, spiritual and emotional development and wellness on various levels.

8.4.3 *Fowler's Stages of Faith Development in "Aleph"*

In the following section the stages of faith development will be analytically discussed and interpreted in the context of Paulo Coelho's work, "Aleph", to support a deeper understanding of his faith development.

8.4.3.1 Stage 0 – Primal Faith

The first chapters of "Aleph" (Coelho, 2011) deal with Coelho's doubts about spirituality, religion, the meaningfulness of his life, his identity and his way forward. Coelho has lost the disposition of trust and loyalty that is usually built up during the first three years of faith development in life (Fowler, 1981; Stroud, 2004). The trust, loyalty and relationships that are usually built up with the primary caregivers need to be rebuilt in Coelho at the age of 59 years. Coelho is not fully loyal to God and his experiences with the universal and divine power and he is not loyal to J. and his order, the RAM, either. However, indirectly and through the critical views of J. (Coelho, 2011, pp. 6–9), Coelho expresses his loss of trust and loyalty to his order of faith and this situation is like at the beginning of life: Coelho becomes aware that he has to "regain his kingdom" which has gone "corrupt". He has to become "king of his kingdom" (Coelho, 2011, p. 9) again, build trust, new relationships with God and relevant others – divine and human caregivers – and remember that objects that are out of sight still continue to exist, as in early childhood (Dell & Duncan, 1998). Coelho (2011, pp. 2–4) has to relearn to connect to the universal source and to realise that invisible forces still exist (Coelho, 2011, p. 7).

The most important aspect during this stage is the relationship to the parent and/or caregiver to create trust, bonds and meaningful commitments (Fowler & Dell, 2004). J, who is Coelho's master of RAM and his "parent" and caregiver, asks Coelho to create new trust and new bonds and to make a meaningful commitment (Coelho, 2011, p. 12, p. 25). Coelho agrees to start anew and commits himself to the journey to Russia and his personal development. Through this commitment, Coelho takes the first step to rebuild trust, while being well aware that he has a separate identity (Fowler, 1981, 1987) from J. He knows that he has to develop his identity further and create a new form of healthy self-image (Fowler, 1984, 1987) to overcome stagnation and depression.

Although Coelho is 59 years old, he relives Stage 0 of the stages of faith development, gaining a new change to recreate himself, to create new, meaningful commit-

ments and to develop further spiritually and personally. It is as if he has returned to a primal faith stage.

8.4.3.2 Stage 1 – Intuitive-Projective Stage

In the chapter “King of my kingdom” (Coelho, 2011, p. 1) Coelho’s thoughts and ideas are egocentric, self-reflecting, his own, personal. These egocentric descriptions, as is usual in Stage 1, according to Elifson and Stone (1985, p. 31), are developed further in the chapters “Chinese bamboo” (Coelho, 2011, p. 19) and “A stranger’s lantern” (Coelho, 2011, p. 33), finding their plot in his wife’s decision to send him on the journey on his own (Coelho, 2011, p. 43). Coelho is given his entire autonomy to overcome his doubts (by his wife as well as by J.), which is described as important in Stage 1, and self-control and willpower become relevant issues, as is typical for this stage (Dell & Duncan, 1998). Coelho, for example, struggles to keep his self-control to refrain from a sexual relationship with Hilal (Coelho, 2011, pp. 142–148) or to keep his focus in the aikido exercise with Yao (Coelho, 2011, pp. 142–148). He loses his self-control when he shouts at Hilal in Vladivostok (Coelho, 2011, p. 286). Self-control is a continuous topic in this book and is central to Stage 1.

Furthermore, as described as important for the Stage 1, the realities and fantasies of Coelho’s world are clearly distinguished when he talks about his present and previous lives (e.g. Coelho, 2011, p. 271, pp. 272–275, p. 287) and his *déjà-vu* experience in Tunis (Coelho, 2011, p. 39). Coelho develops the idea that he has to distinguish between feelings and experiences from the past and from his present life, to unravel the causes of stagnation in spiritual development. In all cases, the reality of his present and previous lives are clearly marked and separated. However, it remains a riddle and unanswered question for the reader: are Coelho’s experiences of these different realities of present and previous lives real or are they fantasies?

Fowler and Dell (2004) highlight that the child’s meaning-making is mainly based on imaginative understanding, which is influenced by a reality that is understood as mysterious. For Coelho, the world is a mystery and he understands his reality as a mysterious and imaginative one (Coelho, 2011, pp. 38–39), as a child in Stage 1 does.

In addition, topics such as power and powerlessness become relevant and faith is “drawn to symbols and images of visible power and size” (as described by Fowler and Dell (2004, p. 23)): Coelho uses symbols of power and size that are wrapped in metaphors (e.g. “the king of my kingdom”, Coelho, 2011, p. 9) or idioms, such as “The light falls only on the stranger” or “No one is a prophet in his own land” (Coelho, 2011, p. 42) or “What can’t be cured must be endured” (Coelho, 2011, p. 51).

Croucher (2010) refers to this stage as the magical world stage and Coelho (2011, pp. 66–67) maintains this magic. He regains his magical thinking after his doubts

described in Stage 0: He defines the “Aleph” as a magical place in which all times and spaces are integrated (Coelho, 2011, pp. 78–80). This regained magical thinking is kept up throughout the book. However, at one stage he breaks the pattern of magical thinking consciously: When Hilal threatens him in his hotel room in Vladivostok and she shatters the glass with the tunes of her violin, Coelho comments: “I stay where I am and breathe a sigh of relief. There is nothing magical or special about what has just happened ...” (Coelho, 2011, p. 253). Coelho shows that he had expected magic at first, but then draws on scientific explanations to calm down.

Fowler (1976) points out that during this stage long-lasting orientations, stories about good and evil in terms of emotions and images are built and a possibility and deep feelings of terror, guilt, compassion and companionship are aligned with religious symbols. One of the strong underlying themes is Coelho’s wish to reconcile with his past, to reframe the evil into good. Orientations of good and evil in the church context are addressed through previous life flashbacks. Coelho deals with evil deeds of the past, his feelings of guilt as well as compassion and companionship with Hilal, which leads him to ask her forgiveness in Novosibirsk (Coelho, 2011, pp. 163–171). However, he is terrified by his past and plans to be reconciled with those he had harmed. It took him not only the time of Stage 2, between 4 and 7 years, to learn what is good and what is evil – it took him several lifetimes. He worked on it during his past life as a monk, but also in another past life as a writer and the present life, aiming at dissolving his guilt by breaking through the stagnation. Coelho (2011, p. 164) connects guilt and forgiveness to strong religious symbols, such as the orthodox church in which he asks Hilal to forgive him. The descriptions are colourful, emotional and symbol-laden. As emphasised by Fowler (1981, 1987) for Stage 1, Coelho lives in a world of symbols, metaphors and idioms. Descriptions of those symbols are interlinked with feelings and emotional expressions, but also with key themes of the book, such as good and evil, guilt and forgiveness.

8.4.3.3 Stage 2 – Mythic-Literal Stage

The disoriented Coelho described in the first chapters of “Aleph” commits himself to develop further and go on a trip to Russia. With this decision to go on the journey, Coelho starts regaining his position as a “king of his kingdom”, enabling himself by ordering his thoughts, perspectives and experiences, as described as typical for this stage by Hughes (1997, p. 1). By living through his new experiences, he regains self-control and meaningfulness in past and present lives.

Time and space concepts develop in Coelho, as is typical for Stage 2, and narratives are enjoyed while individuals do not differentiate their own selves from these narrations (Elifson & Stone, 1985, p. 31). Coelho is aware of time and space concepts, of present, past and future lives and he experiences himself in these different time and spatial zones. He does not differentiate himself from his past life experiences; on the contrary, he sees himself as the main character of these past life experiences without questioning his experiences of reincarnation. He feels like an

integrated part of the narration and does not – as described for Stage 2 by Elifson and Stone (1985) – differentiate himself from the past life experienced.

Fowler and Dell (2004) highlight that a feeling for linearity and predictability is developed at this stage. In the autobiographical work, Coelho, however, does not refer to the concept of linearity and predictability, he rather refers to interconnectedness, circularity, simultaneousness and synchronicity (Coelho, 2011, p. 17). He says: “I am in the Aleph, the point at which everything is in the same place at the same time” (Coelho, 2011, p. 79). By believing in the “Aleph”, he believes in parallel worlds and circular time concepts, systemic approaches to life. With regard to the faith development stages, it is difficult to say if these concepts to which Coelho refers are pre-stages of linearity or a post-modern concept of systemic reality interpretations. These concepts are not addressed in the theoretical frame of Fowler (1981), but need to be addressed in future (see Sect. 9.10.3).

During mythic-literal faith development, the child develops forms of logical thinking, as well as conscious interpretation and meaning in life (Piaget, 1976). Coelho (2011) is able to interpret the situations that occur consciously, experience these in a coherent and logical manner and refer differently to the meaning of life throughout the book. In chapter 1, Coelho returns to Stage 2, asking himself and his master, J., what the meaning in life is. Throughout the journey, Coelho recreates his own ideas of meaning in life, which entails different ideas from living life fully to experiencing life in the context of others.

Levine (1990) emphasises that children develop their self-esteem, self-awareness and identity; they explore their limits, autonomy and individuality while negotiating their conformity, as well as abilities to deal with emotions, needs and attention in Stage 2. Coelho (2011) also emphasises his self-awareness regarding the changing concepts of awareness during travelling (Coelho, 2011, 10): “I started travelling like a mad thing. The great lessons I had learned that been precisely those that my journeys had taught me.” Coelho mentions his recreation of identity through travelling and the negotiation of his individuality in the context of all the other travellers travelling with him on the train to Vladivostok. During the time on the train, Coelho on the one hand sees himself as an individual who is responsible for many of the others who are with him on the train (Coelho, 2011, pp. 75–76); on the other hand, Coelho is noteworthy as the initiator of this trip and keeps his individuality without blending into the group. Furthermore, Coelho describes how conformity is created in the group travelling together on the train. This conformity in the group develops so far that in the end the group struggles with saying farewell (Coelho, 2011, p. 278).

Narrative and narrations become highly important during this stage of faith development (Stroud, 2004). Coelho integrates different narrations in “Aleph”, such as the narrations on at least three different lives of the author (Coelho, 2011, p. 7), the narration on J. in his home in France (Coelho, 2011, pp. 2–12), his journey to Tunis (Coelho, 2011, pp. 33–43), the story of the fire of friendship on the mountain (Coelho, 2011, pp. 45–46), which is central to the relationship between Hilal and Coelho, as well as the narration of the “sacred fire” in the bush, which is about connection to God through sacred memories and stories (Coelho, 2011, pp. 129–130). As to a child, narrations and stories on faith-related issues are highly important to

Coelho and he integrates them in his autobiographical work to gain different perspectives and to provide the reader with various perspectives on the self and the other characters (Croucher, 2003; Fowler, 1981, 1987).

With regard to faith and God, children at this age construct God in personalised terms with highly differentiated internal emotions and interpersonal sensitivities. Coelho, however, has a more advanced image of God, an image that says that a person cannot even have an image of God (Coelho, 2011, p. 121): “Anyone who knows God cannot describe him. Anyone who can describe God does not know him.”

At Stage 2, children recognise “the cosmic pattern of God’s rule” (Fowler & Dell, 2004, p. 21) and develop concepts of fairness and morality. Coelho, in “Aleph”, refers to the “cosmic pattern”, to the universe and the humans who depend on God and his rule. As described in Stage 2, the child believes that “goodness is rewarded and badness is punished” (Fowler & Dell, 2004, p. 22). Coelho believes implicitly that his development stagnates because of his guilt and the evil he has done in his former life.

In chapters 1 and 2 Coelho doubts his faith, his religion and his spirituality and appears to be back at the stage of the “11-year-old atheist” (Fowler & Dell, 2004, p. 22). This role is later on taken by Yao, who has lost his faith in God, while Coelho develops himself. Coelho describes his life concepts and ideas in a simple and symbolic way: The train, the church, the violin, the journey, the ring of fire, the fire on the mountain, the bush fire, and the saints are all ancient symbols and stories referred to (Coelho, 2011, 72). They are symbols and stories that relate to Christian concepts and identity change, as described by Dykstra (1986) and Fowler (1984) at this stage. Coelho is a Christian, writer and traveller (Coelho, 2011, p. 11), and recreates himself as a new holistic and spiritual individual (Coelho, 2011, p. 43).

As the child experiences the need to develop contrasting or clashing stories that lead to reflection to find deeper meaning, Coelho constructs contrasting narrations through the different characters (who, as explained before, are all part of himself), their clashing stories, thoughts and ideas. The main character, Coelho, is led into deep reflections on his spirituality, his future, the shamans, thoughts on life and death. These reflections represent the cognitive development highlighted by Piaget (Fowler, 1986), which gains importance in Stage 2.

8.4.3.4 Stage 3 – Synthetic-Conventional Stage

Coelho becomes self-aware (as described for stage 3 by Hughes (1997, p. 1); however, he displays a self-centred and egoist attitude throughout the entire book. As described for Stage 3 (Fowler & Dell, 2004), Coelho starts to create meaning with regard to his previous life and in the context of his present spiritual development. He realises that he cannot resolve the riddle of his former life on his own; he needs Hilal to discover the meaning created through relationships and roles. However, for most of the narration he remains within his frame of self-reflection, while he uses Hilal to explore the deeper meaning of the journey and their relationship. Through Hilal Coelho is able to change perspective and he refers to his ability to reflect

interpersonally and across genders: “I become the woman I have learned to be and read between the lines” (e.g. Coelho, 2011, p. 133).

During the journey, Coelho uses Yao, his Russian publisher and Hilal as peers on the train whose perspectives – as is typical for Stage 3 (Fowler, 1987) – are taken into account. In the narration, Coelho reflects on the views of the others around him. However, he is not overly dependent on their views. He integrates these views into “synthetic” views that are integrated into the stories, values, beliefs and symbols of the story. They help to build a “supporting and orienting unity”, as is usual at this stage (Fowler, 1987, p. 60).

Furthermore, as is typical at this stage, God is represented through the personal qualities of acceptance, love, support, understanding and loyalty (Fowler & Dell, 2004). Coelho and Yao, who have contrary views of God, discuss their varying views, negotiating them intra- and interpersonally (Coelho, 2011, p. 86, p. 247), as is usual at this stage, and are externalised and represented by the different characters described. Although Coelho experiences a split of emotions and cognition with God in Chapter 1, he stabilises during the journey (Coelho, 2011, p. 86, p. 247). Yao, however, maintains this split with God throughout the journey, until the end (Coelho, 2011, p. 280).

8.4.3.5 Stage 4 – Individuative–Reflexive Stage

Coelho uses the journey to relocate his individual identity within himself (as described for the individuative-reflexive Stage 4 by Fowler (1984, 1987)), after he has spent about 2 years of contemplating his declining faith. He sets out onto the journey to regain his kingdom and to relocate his individual authority within himself (Fowler, 1984, 1987).

Coelho develops the ability to reflect on and evaluate personal values, beliefs, commitments and relationships in a critical way while creating his new identity (as highlighted by Fowler & Dell, 2004): He reflects on and re-evaluates his relationship with J and RAM, his behaviour in the past and his present life. He reflects critically on the concepts of love (Coelho, 2011, e.g. p. 127, p. 229), on guilt (Coelho, 2011, pp. 75–76), on his commitments in life (Coelho, 2011, p. 15) – believing that “anyone truly committed to life never stops walking” – as well as on Christianity (Coelho, 2011, p. 1, p. 42, p. 191) and his spiritual development from 1982 to the development in progress (Coelho, 2011, pp. 10–12, p. 27). He thus redefines his interpersonal and intrapersonal boundaries (Coelho, 2011, p. 256), explores his fear (Coelho, 2011, p. 259) and questions his value concepts and belief systems, in terms of giving and receiving (Coelho, 2011, pp. 96–97) and of being a foreigner (Coelho, 2011, p. 270), as is typical for this stage (Fowler, 1984). The previously unconscious beliefs and commitments are being consciously adopted – and this is exactly what Coelho describes in “Aleph”. He works towards a more coherent and integrated conscious understanding of the unconscious commitments and beliefs he carried over from his previous lives (Coelho, 2011, p. 7) and understands his destiny (Coelho, 2011, p. 296). He also re-evaluates his individual role within his social

role, as described for this stage (Fowler, 1981). Fowler (1986) emphasises that the individual regains his/her authority, which is relocated within the self, interrupting the external influence of others as an authority. This is also true for Coelho: He returns to his previous life to relocate his authority within himself, interrupting the influence of others (in this case the curse of the eight women burnt) (Coelho, 2011, p. 772). With the deeper understanding of the “curse” Coelho regains his authority by accepting his shadow side and his guilt (Coelho, 2011, p. 294).

As emphasised by Burnell (2013), Coelho develops a greater awareness of his ideology (in his past and present life) and becomes conscious about the nurturing external factors that are represented in his previous life by the eight women, in his present life by his wife (Coelho, 2011, p. 87), and on his journey by Hilal and Yao (Coelho, 2011, pp. 82–83).

This developmental stage is characterised by growing coherence and tidiness of faith, which Coelho regains on his journey. Personal beliefs are assessed, objectified and clarified (Burnell, 2013) through self-reflection, the connection with Hilal, his conversations and the ring of fire exercises (Coelho, 2011, p. 149). He reconstructs insights across lives and meaningfulness (Coelho, 2011, p. 293) from external sources (forgiveness of Hilal), as emphasised by Elifson and Stone (1985, p. 31).

Straughn (2010) points out that the individual clarifies his/her boundaries and develops personal identities with more depth and accuracy.

Coelho redefines his boundaries through his conversations and he tells the travelers to respect Hilal (Coelho, 2011, p. 130) and opens up his inner boundaries towards the expansion of knowledge to the Aleph during the interview (Coelho, 2011, pp. 120–121). Through Hilal and the experience of the Aleph, Coelho expands his third-person perspective, his awareness about himself and others, new beliefs and ideologies (Fowler, 1987). Coelho sees himself and Hilal in a new light and experiences rituals in the orthodox church from an intrapersonal perspective (Coelho, 2011, pp. 164–171). From this third-person perspective and the possibility to understand more than the own perspective, critical and conflicting aspects can be mindfully considered in the evaluation process (Fowler, 1987). Coelho experiences the conflicts and aims at resolving them creatively, integrating them into a coherent life (Coelho, 2011, pp. 294–296). In the end he finally understands the perspective of the eight women who were burnt and applies his new understanding mindfully.

At this stage, the individual experiences tension with regard to (1) individuality vs. group membership, (2) subjectivity and the power of emotions vs. objectivity and critical reflection, (3) self-fulfilment and self-actualisation vs. service to and for others as primary concern and (4) the question of commitment to the relative vs. the struggle with the possibility of an absolute. Coelho does not describe these tensions; he rather combines individuality and group membership, subjectivity of emotions and objective, critical thinking and commitment to the relative and the struggle with the possibility of an absolute (Coelho, 2011, pp. 280–281). Coelho is balanced towards these concepts in his faith development. With regard to (3), Coelho is also not in tension with self-fulfilment and service for others: He does not balance the two concepts, but remains self-centred, placing the focus on his destiny (Coelho, 2011, p. 296).

Finally, Coelho integrates his previous beliefs with new perspectives of previous life influences, as is typical during this stage (Fowler, 1981). He does not experience the often anticipated problems of this stage, which are related to the fear of being abandoned by his original community (Fowler, 1981), because he feels cared for by his family (wife) and by RAM (J) and does not fear abandonment. With the new development he gets closer to his communities rather than away from them.

8.4.3.6 Stage 5 – Paradoxical-Conjunctive Stage

Coelho reunifies himself with Hilal in the context of an overall love that manifests in the sentence, “I love you like a river” (Coelho, 2011, p. 261). He also reunifies with his former life experiences and builds on his life experiences across lives, working for a higher goal, to transform his life and move out of stagnation, overcoming his own perceived limits (Coelho, 2011, p. 4). Coelho thereby creates “new openness to others and an ability to keep in tension the paradoxes and polarities of faith and life” (Hughes, 1997, p. 1), reunifying what has been separated before, as a typical aspect of Stage 5 (Fowler, 1981).

Elifson and Stone (1985, p. 31) mention that symbols integrate multiple conceptual and affective meanings, creating an experienced richness and depth. Fowler and Dell (2004) see this phase as characterised by the reflexive adult thinking, who experiences that the truth can be multiple in itself and can also be viewed from multiple perspectives. Coelho integrates multiple conceptual and affective meanings through the use of integrative symbols and multiple perspectives. He invites the multiplicity of lives and life destinies (Coelho, 2011, pp. 295–296), which are expressed through the various characters in the narration.

Fowler (1984) mentions that during this stage, opposites and contradictions are reconciled while the individual can stand the pressures and tensions. Coelho stands the pressure and tension between his wife and Hilal and finds a possible solution to live with both of them (Coelho, 2011, p. 261, pp. 286–287). He is further able to balance contradictions he experiences and reunifies those within himself (Coelho, 2011, p. 261), such as the fact of the cruelty of the Christian churches and his personal love for Jesus (Coelho, 2011, p. 222), as stated by Fowler (1981).

Coelho shows his interest in various cultural and religious traditions and integrates new insights into their beliefs and traditions. His own cultural and social boundaries are overcome (Straughn, 2010) by describing aspects of Islam, Christianity, atheism and Buddhism and integrating them into his personal concept of spirituality. The individual deals with paradoxes on different levels and learns how to deal with conscious and unconscious complexities, increased awareness of dependence and independence and the development of solidarity towards friends and strangers (Fowler, 1981). Coelho shows that he has developed different ways of dealing with these complexities, such as prayer (Coelho, 2011, p. 3), aikido exercises (Coelho, 2011, pp. 142–147), spiritual practices and exercises (Coelho, 2011, p. 149), reflections (Coelho, 2011, p. 78) and conversation (Coelho, 2011, p. 77).

Fowler (1987) emphasises that this is the stage in which the desire increases to explore and recreate the relationship to the self and to God. Through the new experiences, the meeting with the shaman (Coelho, 2011, pp. 236–251) and previous life experiences, Coelho develops a new relationship with God. He is not bound to the social or religious group or the self, but rather to interconnecting and interrelating complexities of the world and beyond (Fowler, 2001; Coelho, 2011, pp. 236–251).

At this stage, the individual is aware that the unconsciousness is highly influential and limits the conscious power of the individual, the group and society (Fowler, 1987). These individuals can recognise symbols and meanings beyond their own faith traditions (Fowler, 1981). Coelho knows about the power of the unconscious and expands his conscious knowledge into the unconscious through exercises, aikido, the exploration of former lives and writing (Coelho, 2011). He still connects to his former belief system and expands it in terms of his new experiences, while reaching out for loyalty across communities, an increasing openness and acceptance of transitions and communities, referring to a symbolic and mythical reality, a humble awareness, an understanding of a multi-layered complexity and the strength to see and uphold opposite tensions (e.g. Coelho, 2011, p. 222; Fowler, 1984). Coelho integrates conscious aspects into his new consciousness.

8.4.3.7 Stage 6 – Universalising Faith

In “Aleph” and the analysis in terms of the stages of faith development according to Fowler (1981), it can be emphasised that Stage 6, “the universalising faith” (Fowler, 1981; Croucher, 2010), is not reached or addressed in the book. Coelho does not see himself as a whole person, regardless of social class, nationality, gender, age, political ideology, race and religion (Fowler & Dell, 2004). He talks about “being a foreigner” (Coelho, 2011, p. 270), which is a concept that always uses social class, cultural, racial and religious boundaries as reference frames. However, Coelho feels like an insider among the travellers on the train, connected to all the human beings in the world. Coelho generally stays within the framework of the concepts of insider and outsider.

In “Aleph”, Coelho emphasises a holistic love concept and that he loves Hilal like a river, based on an overall love. However, he does not aim at any self-sacrifice, altruistic values or the support of others. He stays within the self-centred development concept, without a deeper interest in the nurturing and development of others – he even needs his Russian friend to remind him of his social responsibility (Coelho, 2011, p. 60). No selfless service, as described as central for this stage (Croucher, 2010), can be found in the actions, thoughts or reflections of Coelho in “Aleph”. However, Coelho redevelops his faith in God as a grounded principle in life. It can nevertheless not be determined whether this principle of God turns into overall respect for and valuing of others (Fowler, 1987). Coelho has proven that he can see the world from various perspectives; however, a decentralisation of self and values, as emphasised by Burnell (2013), cannot be recognised. Stage 6 is not addressed in the book.

8.4.3.8 The Vocation in “Aleph”

As already referred to with regard to the analysis and findings of the vocation the “The pilgrimage”, the concept of vocation plays an important role in Fowler’s (1984) FDT.

In “Aleph”, Coelho refers to meaningfulness and his vocation, his destiny in life at the age of 59, which means during the time of late adulthood (Fowler, 1981). In late adulthood, the individual realises his/her priorities and vocational calling in life (Fowler, 1984). What happens for Coelho at the age of 57–59 years is a phase of (revision of) his vocational calling, meaningfulness in life and self-development, as well as conflict resolution.

The book describes Coelho’s deep-rooted doubts about his belief, his faith and the rituals performed (Chapters 1–14). Coelho feels dissatisfied and discontent and the autobiographical book shows clearly that his ability to connect to his vocation in life, to his meaningfulness and to the greater source, has a negative impact on his emotions and wellness (Coelho, 2011, p. 14). For Coelho, not the crisis of not having found his vocation in life (Fowler, 1984), but having lost it, affects his wellness on all levels of life.

Coelho interprets his crisis of emotional dissatisfaction as a challenge introduced by God for him to recognise the need for change and moving forward (Coelho, 2011, p. 14). The crisis is understood as a direct calling from God. Meaningfulness is connected to the task of attending to God’s calls and the recreation of the person throughout life, also in late adulthood. Vocational calling is defined as dynamic and changeable and not as static, not even reached in late adulthood, but always demanding the person’s attention. Coelho states that meaningfulness is in constant change and needs to be redefined constantly by the individual (Coelho, 2011, p. 14). The concept of vocation is defined as, for example, learning and re-learning to be humble, accepting the heart’s and the emotional and intuitional knowledge of the person (Coelho, 2011, p. 21), following a path without beginning and without end (Coelho, 2011, p. 22). Vocational calling and meaningfulness are further defined as seeking “the kingdom” and understanding the connectedness of everything that exists in the world (Coelho, 2011, p. 48). It refers to finding God in one’s life, within and outside the person, while recreating one’s vocation and personal path to God (Coelho, 2011, p. 28). It can be assumed that Coelho is unconsciously aware of a new calling by God and reacts with dissatisfaction and restlessness within the conscious dimension. He resists having to react to this renewed calling at the end of his fifties, while wishing rather to be like his friends – “Why can’t I be like my friends?” – who do not feel the urge to progress and to redefine themselves constantly in connection to the calling of God (Coelho, 2011, p. 14). The constant question throughout Coelho’s life and in “Aleph” is: “What is the meaning of life?” He responds: “To live is to experience things, not to wonder about the meaning of life” (Coelho, 2011, p. 66). Meaning in life is further interlinked with developing the ability to love, the feeling of being connected to the universal power (Coelho, 2011, pp. 232–235), and the recognition of the life and the soul (Coelho, 2011, p. 296).

Finally, through the journey into his previous life, Coelho receives more information about his former life and proves to himself his destiny as a writer: He is the chosen one to write about spirituality and Christianity, as emphasised by the eight women who were burnt. The meaningfulness reaches another level – the one of Coelho’s destiny as a writer – and re-establishes his professional vocation as a writer across different lifetimes and therefore as a soul vocation.

Fowler’s (1984) idea is that vocation in life is strongly connected to a calling of God in three different ways (Fowler, 1987). With regard to this classification of vocation in life and Coelho’s expression in the book “Aleph”, the following can be stated:

1. God’s creation and caring for others and the environment

Coelho hardly relates his vocation to care for the environment or for others. His Russian friend reminds him about his responsibilities to care for the well-being and development of others, such as his readers and in this case Hilal (Coelho, 2011, p. 60). Coelho does not feel an inner urge to support others in their development and states that meaningfulness can be found more easily within oneself than within others (Coelho, 2011, p. 28). It is therefore really a challenge to find meaningfulness and vocation in caring for others and for the environment, since his vocation is self centred rather than socially centred.

2. God’s governance and his justice and lawfulness within societies (Fowler, 1987)

Examples of God’s governance and his justice (Fowler, 1984) could only be found with regard to Coelho’s aim to resolve conflicts constructively, positively and peacefully, as described in the path of peace (Coelho, 2011, p.149). On an individual basis, he practises aikido (Coelho, 2011, pp. 71–72) and reads about the path of peace, the underlying philosophy of aikido (Coelho, 2011, p. 141, p. 149). Coelho aims at a peaceful and harmonic resolution of conflict, which is part of his calling in life and his relationship with God. However, in “Aleph”, no institutionalised or organised justice and lawfulness are described in which Coelho engages, although he might think about these topics on a personal level.

3. God’s liberation from socio-economic and political ideologies and boundaries (Fowler, 1987).

In “Aleph” Coelho emphasises in a conversation with Hilal that, in 2003, when he was already a very well-known author, he moved with his wife into a small hotel just to find out if he could still live according to his personal values and to find out if his values, attitudes and behaviours had changed because of becoming famous and rich. He found during this time that the important aspects of life, such as walking and talking with others, are open to anyone in the world (Coelho, 2011, p. 232). Coelho thus shows solidarity with the oppressed, withdrawing from supporting forces that suppress others, as well as egocentric motives for using power, purpose, significance and security in order to participate in liberation movements (Burnell, 2013). However, he is loyal on an individual level, not on a collective movement level. At the same time, he aims at proving to himself and to others that he is free of

egocentric motives of using his money, power and purpose to suppress others. He shows again that his vocation is connected to God’s liberation from socio-economic and political ideologies and boundaries (Coelho, 2011, P.232), by re-connecting with the simple life. It seems that Coelho would like to connect to a simpler life, but the “simple life” is hardly affordable for many people in the world (Coelho, 2011, p. 232), for example going to the movies on a daily basis. Once more, Coelho’s approach to God’s liberation is rather self-centred and self-related rather than connected to socio-economic or political motives.

According to Fowler (1984), the individual should be able to look at life and be sure about having lived his/her calling and vocation in late adulthood. In “Aleph” and relating to the life crisis at the end of Coelho’s fifties, the vocation in his life is not necessarily stable and constant, but rather in constant redefinition and awareness of new callings of God throughout late adulthood. This shows that there is an ongoing possibility to redefine, to refine and to recreate one’s vocation and meaningfulness in life when one is aware and conscious of these processes.

Fowler (1984) emphasises that individuals who feel that they have lived their calling usually feel fulfilled, energetic and balanced, and are able to refer to the needs of others (Fowler, 1984). Adults with a fulfilled vocation usually encourage others who struggle with their vocation and support them, while feeling fulfilled and blessed by God’s support in their lives (Fowler, 1984). At the end of Coelho’s journey, he feels blessed, grateful, energetic, fulfilled, alive (Coelho, 2011, p. 256) and euphoric (Coelho, 2011, p. 278). Refining his vocation in life, Coelho is filled with new strength, confidence and an increase in holistic wellness.

In this section, the vocation of Paulo Coelho in “Aleph” has been analysed, interpreted and discussed in terms of the faith development stages of Fowler (1984).

8.4.3.9 Conclusion on Faith Development in “Aleph”

At the age of 59 years, Paulo Coelho is in a spiritual crisis, in a life phase of doubt and spiritual stagnation. In “Aleph” Coelho (2011) describes his experience of his crisis and his journey on the Trans-Siberian Railway to develop himself in the spiritual realm. He has a vague idea about his problem being connected to past life experiences and new solutions needing to be found in this life. The book integrates various aspects relating to the faith development stages. In this creative work, Coelho describes his personal journey of reconquering his kingdom, of becoming king of his kingdom by recreating himself and redeveloping his faith.

The book starts with the description of Coelho’s spiritual crisis, which he trustfully discusses with his master, J. Coelho relates directly to Stage 0 – primal faith, in which a child learns to trust, to be loyal, to commit to a meaningful way of being. At the age of 59, Coelho finds himself in a situation that is similar – in terms of the faith development stages of Fowler – to that of a child who needs to develop his faith from the beginning. It takes Coelho an entire journey through Russia to regain his trust and loyalty to J. and to experience once again that the invisible still exists.

The book refers strongly to aspects highlighted by Fowler (1981, 1987) with regard to the intuitive stage: Coelho deals with different realities and the need to distinguish feelings and experiences from past and present lives. He experiences the world and life as mysterious and uses strong symbols of religions, such as churches or saints, to describe his world. These descriptions refer to typical topics of these stages, such as good and evil, guilt and forgiveness, which are found throughout the book.

The faith development that is described as typical during the mystic-literal stage is also important in “Aleph”, Coelho is conscious of his experiences, he can give them order and meaning as soon as he finds himself on his journey towards his kingdom – coming out of a phase of disorientation and loss of faith. He plays with time and space concepts, as is typical for this phase, he refers to conscious interpretations of experiences and meaning in life and describes himself in terms of individuality and community concepts. Coelho uses simple symbols that refer to his identity as a Christian and as a writer. At the same time, he mentions clashing ideas and stories that lead to paragraphs of self-reflection, which is typical for this faith development stage. However, Coelho does not use a linear worldview, but rather a circular worldview that does not fit with the development of cognition during this stage.

The process usually described in Stage 3, the synthetic-conventional stage, is emphasised by Coelho throughout the journey. He reflects on and evaluates his personal concepts, his values and his deeds of the past. However, he experiences during this stage that he cannot depend only on himself. He needs others and particularly Hilal to discover the deeper meaning created through relationships and roles. God is described in a positive way and the emotional and cognitive split that usually occurs during this stage is placed into the character of Yao. This stage of faith development is therefore strongly represented within the book “Aleph”.

In stage 4, Coelho relocates authority within himself, while seeking his kingdom. This stage is further expressed in Coelho’s deep reflection on personal topics and social issues, as well as in the development of his new identity, which he gains through travelling and recreating himself. Coelho is conscious of himself, his meaningfulness in life and his personal destiny. He clarifies his personal boundaries even more and expands his old boundaries through past life experiences.

In “Aleph”, the interconnectedness of religions are referred to – which relates to Stage 5 – and Coelho finds new ways of transformation through reunification of previously excluded aspects that were experienced as tensions. He is able to integrate multiple perceptions and ideas into one, such as the image of God or different religious approaches to meaning in life and how to lead a life, while he learns how to integrate his previously unconscious knowledge into conscious knowledge. Furthermore, he describes how he expands his boundaries, reaches out to different communities to build integrated knowledge and brings his unconsciousness into his consciousness.

Finally, Stage 6, referring to universalising faith, is not addressed in the book. Although Coelho talks about an overall love, respect for God and human beings and multiple perspectives, he is far from a selfless service perspective that takes others

rather than oneself into account. Coelho remains in the individualist, self-centred perspective and does not overcome common categories of culture, race or social class. Stage 6 is therefore hardly described in his autobiographical journey and does not seem to be relevant.

In addition, the topic of the calling of God and Coelho’s vocation in life is a central theme in “Aleph”. Through becoming aware of his feelings of dissatisfaction and spiritual doubts, Coelho realises that he needs to reconquer his kingdom once again at the age of 59 years. He realises that he has to redefine his calling, to re-establish his faith and to prove his vocation in life. “Aleph” describes a vocational crisis in late adulthood and thereby shows that the personal path in life always needs to be re-established, recreated. Coelho’s vocation includes the re-establishment of his meaningfulness in life, which he identifies as living life. Through the journey into his former life, he also proves to himself his destiny as a writer, which is not only bound to his present life, but what has been Coelho’s vocation across different lives.

With regard to the three classifications of vocation in life, Coelho cares to a certain extent about governance, justice and lawfulness in societies. He also refers to a certain extent to liberation from socio-economic and political ideologies. However, in both cases, self-relatedness is the main motivation for relating to these classifications. Coelho, at the same time, also relates to a minimal degree to the vocation that relates to God’s creation and caring for others.

It can be concluded that Coelho provides a role model for an individual in late adulthood who is aware and conscious of the dynamic concept of meaningfulness and vocations and the redefinition of his calling by God and vocation learnt in earlier years. Through the journey through Russia, Coelho refines his vocation and expands it across lifetimes. He thus frees himself from limiting aspects of his present life and provides an extended concept of re-establishing the kingdom and refining the soul’s vocation. He extends the individual’s vocation and calling towards a soul’s vocation that needs reassurance, redefinition and refinement across not only one present lifetime, but rather across many lifetimes. The constant reconnection with and reassurance of the meaningfulness and vocation across lives is dynamic and changeable on the one hand and also in a way stable on the other hand. Coelho re-establishes his intra-psychological knowledge through this journey, namely the conscious awareness that he should live his lives, feel alive and be a writer.

In conclusion, it can be highlighted that the first two chapters of the book include many of the aspects developed during Stage 0, Stage 1 and Stage 2 in the faith development model. This is particularly true of the building of trust, the use of different time and space concepts and the use of symbols, stories and narrations that reconstruct the belonging to a particular community. Indicators regarding Stages 3 to 5 can be found throughout the book “Aleph”. However, hardly any aspects could be found that indicate stage 6. Stage 6 can therefore not be found with regard to the stages of faith development in the autobiographical narration.

The concept of meaningfulness in life and vocation is extended and not only limited to the present life, but redefined as a theme that is established, recreated, redefined and refined throughout various lifetimes. The book “Aleph” thereby

extends the theory of Fowler (1981, 1984, 1987), which is limited to the idea of one single present life and which therefore upholds a limited view on the lifetime from young to late adulthood. Coelho expands these limitations with the idea of creating vocation and meaningfulness across various lifetimes.

8.5 The Development of Coelho from “The Pilgrimage” to “Aleph”

Comparing the autobiographical creative pieces of “The pilgrimage” (Coelho, 2003b) and “Aleph” (Coelho, 2011), holistic wellness and stages of faith develop over the almost 25 years. The following two sub-chapters summarise the differences and similarities in terms of the HWM (Sect. 8.5.1) and the FDT (Sect. 8.5.2) with regard to the context of Paulo Coelho’s life.

8.5.1 “The Pilgrimage” in the Context of Coelho’s Life (1982–1987)

Focusing on the creative act of writing “The pilgrimage” in the context of Paulo Coelho’s life, Coelho felt in 1982 in Dachau that it was the year of the “birth of the writer” (Arias, 2001, p. 141). Only a short time later, he met his master, J., in Amsterdam and became a member of RAM. These two key situations finally made him travel on the Road to Santiago in 1986. After a deep, month-long crisis, Coelho went on a trip into the unknown that initiated his successful career as a writer (Arias, 2001; Morais, 2009). At the beginning of “The pilgrimage” (Coelho, 2003b), Coelho describes the key situation with J who sends him on the journey. With the successful pilgrimage, Coelho becomes a magus of the RAM practices, he moves up in the hierarchy of the RAM order (Morais, 2009) and becomes a writer. However, after Coelho’s return from the pilgrimage he falls into another period of depression and only manages to write the autobiographical work 8 months after his trip. Soon after the publication of the book, Coelho starts promoting his creative work and is successful in combining writing and his spiritual career.

8.5.1.1 The Holistic Wellness Model in Coelho’s Life and “The Pilgrimage” (1982–1987)

With regard to the HWM in the life of Paulo Coelho between 1982 and 1987 in comparison with the in-depth analysis on holistic wellness in the creative work of “The pilgrimage” (Coelho, 1987), the following can be emphasised:

Table 8.5 Spirituality in life and “The Pilgrimage”

Life task	Life of Paulo Coelho (1982–1987)	“The pilgrimage” (1987)
Spirituality	New ways of communication with God from Cristina and RAM	Practices of exercises of RAM (walks, self-reflection)
	Exercises of RAM	Magical experiences
	Magical experiences, apparitions, symbolic signs	New creation of spirituality as main meaningfulness in life
	Move from the powerful and strict God to the loving God	

Source: Researcher’s own construction

Spirituality

The analysis of Coelho’s life shows that during his mid-thirties he was strongly influenced by his new ways of communicating with God, which he re-established with the support of Cristina and newly established membership of the RAM order and the strict guidance of his master, J. He exercised different religious practices, to which RAM introduced him, too.

In his forties, from 1987 onwards, Coelho communicated with God through the magical experiences that were described, such as apparitions and symbolic signs. His image of God turned from a strict and patriarchal God to a God who loves, who is in nature and who has a feminine side.

The analysis of the book “The pilgrimage” supports these findings, because Coelho learns and exercises the practices and rituals of the order of RAM. In “The pilgrimage”, Coelho describes spirituality as a major life task that he practises through walking, self-reflecting on his concept of God, exercising spiritual practices, understanding the relationship of humankind and God, understanding his own bodily death and the immortality of his soul and learning a new understanding of the meaning of life, through death and near death experiences (Ring & Valarino, 1998).

The analysis of Coelho’s life and the creative work weave into each other and support each other’s findings; both indicate that spirituality is the main life task in this time of Coelho’s life and spiritual development is one of the main life tasks contributing to holistic wellness in Coelho. Spiritual symbols, exercises and rituals support Coelho in developing himself further in life and are described creatively in the book (Table 8.5).

Self-Direction

In the book an increase in self-direction is inherent. Coelho describes his fears at the beginning of the journey, increasing self-direction through the walk with Petrus and his exercises, as well as a deeper understanding of meaningfulness. He increases the dimensions of self-worth, emotional awareness and coping, problem-solving and creativity through conversations and exercises and giving up self-control.

Table 8.6 Self-direction in life and “The Pilgrimage”

Life task	Life of Paulo Coelho (1982–1987)	“The pilgrimage” (1987)
Self-direction	Gaining self-worth, self-control, emotional awareness and coping through RAM, the birth of the writer and his self-promotion and success as a writer	On the journey, Coelho increases his self-direction through the new experiences with Petrus and his newly learnt exercises.
	Changing perceptions in cultural and gender identity	Coelho recreates his identity anew through the journey.
	Increase in 12 dimensions of self-direction through success as a writer	

Source: Researcher’s own construction

The findings of the life analysis and the analysis of the book support each other in terms of the development and increase in self-direction through RAM, his success as an author and his journey (Table 8.6).

Work and Leisure

The findings on his life show that during his thirties and forties, Coelho worked hard, building up his professional career as a writer while taking time out for developing himself spiritually during his leisure time. However, he hardly distinguished during this period in life between work and leisure time and the two seemed to melt into each other.

In Coelho’s following decade, his spiritual development and his life decision to go on the spiritual journey during his leisure time built the basis for his professional development as a writer. His work as a writer integrated with his spiritual development during leisure time. From this point in time, leisure time activities (which included travelling, spiritual rituals and development) were hardly to be distinguished from Coelho’s work as a professional writer. Particularly from his forties onwards, Coelho did not distinguish between work and leisure time. Work and leisure activities were highly integrated concepts.

In “The pilgrimage”, Coelho only refers to his work at the beginning and at the end. The concepts work and leisure do not seem to be highly significant: Coelho does not describe any work-related thoughts or tasks and the pilgrimage seems to be both at the same time: work and leisure.

The life and the book analysis show that work and leisure do not play a major role for Coelho (Table 8.7).

Friendship

During his thirties, Coelho treated his friend, Tony Buddha, extremely unfairly and disrespectfully. He was driven by mainly self-interest and self-care, not by an empathetic relationship with his friend. Only a few selected friends were important

Table 8.7 Work and leisure in life and “The Pilgrimage”

Life task	Life of Paulo Coelho (1982–1987)	“The pilgrimage” (1987)
Work and leisure	Coelho integrates his work as a writer with his spiritual development during leisure time.	Work is only mentioned at the beginning and at the end of the book
	He hardly distinguishes leisure activities (which include travelling, spiritual rituals and development) from his professional work as a writer	Concepts such as work and leisure do not seem to be of major importance
	Work and leisure are integrated concepts	Work and leisure are somehow integrated in the journey

Source: Researcher’s own construction

Table 8.8 Friendship in life and “The Pilgrimage”

Life task	Life of Paulo Coelho (1982–1987)	“The pilgrimage” (1987)
Friendship	Only a few selected friendships	Coelho develops a kind of friendship with Petrus, his guide
	Coelho treats Tony disrespectfully	Friendships with purpose
	All of his friendships described have a professional connection	
	Friendship with purpose	

Source: Researcher’s own construction

during his period of Coelho’s life, such as Tony, Monica and Raul. Friendships do not play a major role in the book; however, Coelho develops a friendship and spiritual development with Petrus that is described in the book. Coelho’s friendship with his agent, Monica, increased in importance. Finally, the death of his friend, Raul, shocked Coelho and left him sad (Table 8.8).

All the friendships of Coelho described during this decade are connected in one way or another to his professional career and there is always a purpose to friendship, but no friendship without purpose.

Love

The love of Coelho’s life is Cristina, who nurtures him strongly, while his nurturing of her is not described. With Cristina, Coelho has a non-possessive, stable and enduring relationship. In the book, love and the ability to distinguish different forms of love are part of the learning curve for Coelho, up to the point where he learns to see and experiences love, “agape” in his environment.

While love in his life is mainly referred to in terms of the love between a man and a woman (eros), the love in the book that is called agape provides him with a new experience of overall love and the connection between all human beings.

The book expands the concept of love that is described as active in Coelho’s life (eros) by the more philosophical concept of agape love. Both, the life and the book, emphasise love as a key concept and an important life task in terms of Coelho’s

Table 8.9 Love in life and “The Pilgrimage”

Life task	Life of Paulo Coelho (1982–1987)	“The pilgrimage” (1987)
Love	Coelho meets the love of his life, Cristina, who nurtures him and with whom he is in a stable and enduring, non-possessive relationship	Coelho reflects on the three forms of love
		He learns to experience agape
		Agape expands the concept of eros

Source: Researcher’s own construction

holistic wellness and it can be highlighted that love is important, although not only in the forms of eros and philos, but also, as described in the book, in the form of agape (Table 8.9).

Spirituality and love are the most important life tasks during this period and in the selected creative work, where spirituality is the outstanding issue.

With regard to the life forces and their impact on Coelho’s life and creative work “The pilgrimage”, religion and the family (wife), are the most important ones during this period. Another important life force is education, in terms of emotional learning and the integration of new spiritual insights. His life and the creative work refer to the same important life force, while there are hardly any references to global events and their influence on Coelho’s life and within the book.

In conclusion, the findings on Coelho’s life and from his selected creative work on the HWM, including life task, life forces and global events, support and partly expand one another, for example the life tasks spirituality, friendship and love.

8.5.1.2 Stages of Faith Development in Coelho’s Life and “The Pilgrimage” (1982–1987)

Focusing on the faith development during Coelho’s life and in “The pilgrimage” (Coelho, 2003b), between his thirties and forties, this sub-chapter integrates both. The data on Coelho show that during his thirties (1977–1986) and forties (1987–1996) Coelho found himself in Stage 4 of the stages of faith development (Table 8.10).

The findings show particularly the faith development in Stage 4 during the influential years of 1982 to 1987, while writing “The pilgrimage”. They also include information on faith development from Stage 0 to Stage 5 (see Sect. 8.3.4, 8.3.4.1 to 8.3.4.9), while the analysis of Coelho’s life shows that his development during his thirties and forties is mainly located in Stage 4, critically reflecting the personal evaluation of values, beliefs, spirituality, commitments and relationships (see Sect. 7.6.5.1). “The pilgrimage” reflects Stages 0 to 5 of faith development, meaningfulness in life, the question of Coelho’s identity development, self-esteem, self-worth and a new understanding and reading of the world. Coelho learns on a deeper level about the RAM practices and identifies with them. What he describes in his book

Table 8.10 Stages of faith development (30s and 40s) of Coelho and in “The Pilgrimage”

Historical periods in the development of Paulo Coelho	Stages of faith development in the life of paulo coelho						
	Faith development stages in the life of Paulo Coelho						
	1. Stage 0	2. Stage 1	3. Stage 2	4. Stage 3	5. Stage 4	6. Stage 5	7. Stage 6
The thirties (1977–1986)					x		
The forties (1987–1996)					x		
The pilgrimage (1986–1987)	x	x	x	x	x	X	

Source: Researcher’s own construction

with regard to Stage 4 of faith development is also reflected in his life at this time: He transforms common and traditional ideas critically, he re-evaluates his faith and life and emerges strengthened and self-confident from the critical process – so self-confident that he is able to write his first highly successful book after 8 months of depression and frustration. The book describes from Coelho’s personal point of view what the analysis of data on his life also emphasise: Coelho transforms faith and identity.

Focusing on the vocation in life, “The pilgrimage” falls into Coelho’s middle adulthood. The findings on his life show (see Chap. 7) that Coelho followed his dream to become a writer during this time. During his twenties and thirties he experienced some hindrances to following his dream, but still kept it alive, overcoming emotional imbalances and personal difficulties, as well as distractions in terms of drugs and the occult. Coelho started applying his personal dream in his late thirties and forties while living his personal legend, which he then saw as a “divine gift”, and he connected his life’s dream to God’s calling (a process that is described as common by Fowler (1981) in middle and late adulthood).

In “The pilgrimage”, Coelho recognises and realises his calling and his vocation in life which consist of various aspects. It includes the living of life to the full, the fighting of the good fight and his spiritual development as a person. Aspects of the creation of a vocation in life in young, middle and later adulthood are included in the book; however, the focus is the development of middle adulthood, which matches with Coelho’s age during the process of writing the book and with the findings on the formation of his calling and meaning.

In conclusion, it is assumed that the writing of “The pilgrimage” falls right into the individuating-reflexive Stage 4 of faith development. It provides a platform for Coelho to reflect on his values, his new perceptions and identity change on the one hand and supports his deep transformation into spirituality on the other hand. The book prepares Coelho for further spiritual steps in life, stabilises his new world views and self-understanding (Coelho, 2011) and focuses on the re-establishment of his destiny (Coelho, 2011, p. 296).

8.5.2 “Aleph” in the Context of Paulo Coelho’s Life (2006–2011)

During 2006, when Coelho went on a trip on the Trans-Siberian Railway, he published his new book, “The witch of Portobello” (Coelho, 2007), in which he referred to the “feminine side of divinity” (Coelho, 2007, p. 335). This book deals with the feminine identity of a young woman, Athena, and her gifts of healing, as well as with the relation to the female goddess. During this phase in his life, Coelho dealt with the exploration of the feminine side of himself and of God (Coelho, 2007). He also referred to this in “Aleph” and highlighted that he had learnt to understand the feminine way of communication (Coelho, 2011).

Coelho referred to God as a verb during that time (Coelho, 2007), as he did in “Aleph” (2011). Although he usually sees God “as a verb”, he developed a deeper understanding of God in “Aleph”: God cannot be described. In 2006, Coelho also published “Like a flowing river” (Coelho, 2010) and described his walks in nature that revitalised him and that helped him to connect to the unseen world (Coelho, 2010). He placed God into nature, seeing nature as access to the divine.

In both books, “The witch of Portobello” (Coelho, 2007) and “Like a flowing river”, (Coelho, 2010), Coelho does not describe the crisis that he mentions in “Aleph” (Coelho, 2011). The life crisis that occurred from 2004 to 2006 is also not described in his biographical work (Morais, 2009). The crisis is only described openly on the internet with regard to his sixtieth birthday and his feelings of loneliness and solitude (Coelho, 2014a).

About his experiences on the Trans-Siberian Railway, Coelho only wrote a few years later in “Aleph” in 2011.

8.5.2.1 The Holistic Wellness Model in Coelho’s Life and “Aleph” (2006–2011)

Holistic wellness is addressed in Coelho’s life from 2006 to 2011 and in “Aleph” (Coelho, 2011) and will be discussed in the following section.

Spirituality

Focusing on Coelho’s life, he differentiated during his fifties between the Jesuit God and the individualised God. Coelho explored the feminine side of religion and the integration of various religious approaches in his concept of spirituality. He explored spirituality in depth during the decade: this was reflected in “Aleph”, in which Coelho aimed at deepening his spirituality. In the book, as well as in his life descriptions, he aimed at finding new ways to communicate with God, he practised spiritual rituals on a daily basis (praying at certain times during the day) and during special events, as described in “Aleph” (e.g. the ring of fire exercise). The personal question of meaning in life was explored in his creative works and in life.

Table 8.11 Spirituality in life and “Aleph”

Life task	Life of Paulo Coelho (2006–2011)	“Aleph” (2011)
Spirituality	The concept of God is twofold: the Jesuit God and the personal God	God is the personal God who is communicated with through travelling and new experiences
	Deepening his spiritual concept	Exploring his spiritual concepts anew
	Rethinking his concept of meaningfulness in his life	Searching for a new depth in his spirituality and meaningfulness concept.

Source: Researcher’s own construction

During his sixties, and after he had published “Aleph”, Coelho deepened his approaches to spirituality by referring on deeper levels to (e) contemplation of the presence and the nature of meaning in life, humankind’s place and the description of and communication with God. Reincarnation gained importance for the first time in his life and meaningfulness was created across lives.

The importance of spirituality, spiritual meaningfulness and rituals was emphasised in his life, but also in his creative work, “Aleph”. The data analyses on his life and on “Aleph” support each other. In “Aleph”, Coelho deepened his view on the personalised God, describing him in new ways and expanding the concept of the personalised God while leaving the Jesuit God unattended (Table 8.11).

Self-Direction

At the beginning of his fifties, Coelho reconsidered his relationship with his parents and worked through his trauma. He was emotionally aware and redefined his cultural identity with regard to a strong self-direction in terms of his (c) realistic beliefs and the questioning of the norms and values of society. Furthermore, he worked on his (d) emotional awareness and coping with regard to his past and managed to resolve the problems of his teenage years in a constructive process of (e) problem-solving and creativity, (i) self-care, (j) and stress management, while constructing, strengthening and empowering his balanced (k) gender identity and multi-layered (l) cultural identity. The book, “Aleph” (Coelho, 2011), reflects the strong self-directive approach during this time of his life. In “Aleph”, the 12 dimensions are all addressed; however, the sense of control, the construction of realistic beliefs, emotional awareness and coping, as well as problem-solving and creativity, exercise and cultural identity, are referred to most often. In the book, however, he does not resolve the traumatic issues of his teenage years, but the traumatic issues of his past lives.

Throughout the journey, Coelho regains his sense of control. He reconstructs his beliefs and searches for realistic beliefs of the past, the present and the future. Emotional intensity and awareness are strongly described, emotional plots are created on the way to resolving his problems through new and creative approaches. While travelling through Russia, Coelho also reconstructs his cultural identity. Throughout the journey, his spiritual development, his search for new meanings in this and in former lives to respond to the question “Who am I?” are described. He addresses these issues through self-reflection, spiritual rituals and aikido.

Table 8.12 Self-Direction in life and “Aleph”

Life task	Life of Coelho (2006–2011)	“Aleph” (2011)
Self-direction	Self-direction is a very important issue during this phase of his life	Self-direction is a very important issue in this book
	Self-direction in terms of realistic beliefs, emotional awareness and problem-solving is mainly important	Self-direction in terms of regaining self-control, realistic belief, problem-solving and emotional awareness is mainly important
	Working on his traumatic experiences from his teenage years and torture	Working on his traumatic experiences from his past lives

Source: Researcher’s own construction

The other dimensions, such as sense of worth, sense of humour, nutrition, self-care, stress management and gender identity, are hardly described or mentioned. Through his sixties and in “Aleph”, Coelho highlighted self-direction by exploring his (d) emotional awareness and improving his coping with past and negative experiences.

It can be concluded that during the period of his life, Coelho worked hard on his self-direction by reconciling with his past in the present life (descriptions of his life) and his past in previous lives (descriptions in “Aleph”). The book thus expands knowledge on Coelho in terms of self-direction. The same dimensions of self-direction are analysed in his life and in “Aleph”, while self-control is a dimension that is prominent in the book, but not in the lifetime analysis (Table 8.12).

Work and Leisure

During his fifties, Coelho emphasises the importance of work and leisure time, which contribute to his wellness. However, work is only meaningful when it creates time to think about oneself and recognise the meaningfulness in life. Work and leisure remain integrated concepts during this decade of Coelho’s life. During his sixties, work and leisure time are hardly discussed. This is also true of “Aleph” (Coelho, 2011): Work and leisure are integrated concepts, which are hardly mentioned. The analysis of the life and “Aleph” show that work and leisure are integrated and under-represented in both and are assumed as being hardly relevant at this point in time (Table 8.13).

Friendship

Hardly any information is available on Coelho’s personal relationships and friendships during his fifties. It might be assumed that he developed friendships in his new communities (besides RAM, he joined the Academy of Brazilian Writers and he moved into a small village in France). However, the data give the impression that

Table 8.13 Work and leisure in life and “Aleph”

Life task	Life of Paulo Coelho (2006–2011)	“Aleph” (2011)
Work and leisure	Work and leisure time are integrated concepts	Work and leisure time are integrated concepts
	They are hardly talked about and therefore do not seem to be very important during this period of his life	They are hardly talked about in “Aleph” and are therefore interpreted as being hardly important in this book

Source: Researcher’s own construction

Table 8.14 Friendship in life and “Aleph”

Life task	Life of Paulo Coelho (2006–2011)	“Aleph” (2011)
Friendship	During his fifties, friendships are hardly talked about, although Coelho might have made new friends in new societal memberships	In “Aleph”, only a few selected friends of Coelho are mentioned (Monica, the Russian industrialist, the journalist)
	During his sixties, reflections on friendships become more important, but self-reflection and self-centredness remain the focus	Friendship, however, becomes a topic in “Aleph” by referring to the story of the “fire of friendship on the mountain”. However, even here friendship is a theoretical, philosophical construct, rather than a practically lived concept

Source: Researcher’s own construction

friendships are not the main focus during this decade. During his sixties reflections on friendship gain importance on a theoretical basis, but the focus remains on self-reflection and self-relatedness. “Aleph” shows that on the one hand, friendship in the descriptions of daily thoughts and activities are hardly relevant; however, the theoretical-philosophical story of the friendship regarding the fire on the mountain shows that friendship does have deep relevance for Coelho. However, even in the book, the focus remains on Coelho’s self-development, not on friendship or the development of others (Table 8.14).

Love

In his fifties and sixties, Coelho explored love in depth by re-evaluating the relationship with his parents and referring to his stable and intimate long-term relationship with Cristina, his wife. He expressed his love and passion for her and love became “an act of faith in another person”. In “Aleph”, love is defined as the power that moves people and that opens doors.

In the data on Coelho’s life, as well as in “Aleph”, Coelho displayed being able to live in a stable and intimate relationship, particularly with his wife. He also showed a kind of non-possessive love for her, but not for Hilal.

Table 8.15 Love in life and “Aleph”

Life task	Life of Coelho (2006–2011)	“Aleph” (2011)
Love	Love is expressed towards Coelho’s parents	Coelho differentiates between love for Jesus, love for Cristina and love for Hilal, as an overall love
	Love is expressed towards Cristina	He expresses love as a concept of “I love you like a river”
	Love is defined as an act of faith in another person	Love moves people and opens doors
	Cristina nurtures Coelho, but Coelho’s nurturing of his wife is hardly described	Coelho describes how Hilal loves and nurtures him, as well as Cristina; however; he does not respond by nurturing them

Source: Researcher’s own construction

In both data sets, Coelho does not show the love that nurtures others; he rather stays within the concept of describing his love for himself, of being loved and being nurtured through others. Love is bound to believing in someone else (life data) and moving someone else (“Aleph”). While in the life data Coelho mainly refers to Cristina as the love of his life, he differentiates the concept of love in “Aleph” with regard to the love for his wife, for Jesus and for nature (the love for the river, the creatures of God) (Table 8.15).

Life forces during Coelho’s fifties and sixties are mainly bound to the re-evaluation of family relationships (with his parents, and the permanent reconstruction of his family partnership with Cristina), religion and religious questions (such as redefining God and meaningfulness in life). The most important life forces identified on the spiritual journey described in “Aleph” are the life forces of family (particularly Cristina) and religion. With regard to religion, Coelho integrates various concepts of religion, highlighting that religions only provide various possibilities to connect to God. He relates to different religions, e.g. Islam, Buddhism and Christianity, as described in “Aleph”.

Global events are hardly referred to in either the data on Paulo Coelho’s life, or in “Aleph”. Only once during this decade does Coelho mention that he has a responsibility as a writer to comment on global issues.

In conclusion, the findings on the life of Coelho and on Aleph complement or expand each other by providing further details. No contradictions between findings on the life and the creative work could be evaluated: Coelho experiences and constructs his holistic wellness mainly through the life tasks of spirituality and love, while integrating the life forces of family and religion in his life data and in his creative work.

8.5.2.2 Stages of Faith Development in Coelho’s Life and “Aleph” (2006–2011)

During his fifties and sixties, Coelho found himself in Stage 5 of faith development (Sect. 7.6). During this time of his life, Coelho kept the tension of paradoxes and polarities of faith and life, was very open, a man of extremes, passionate and not

entirely sure of anything (Arias, 2001, Sect. 7.6.6.1). He recognised his limitations, the limitations of his belief systems and he was able to recognise symbols and meanings beyond his faith traditions (Fowler, 1981). At the same time, Coelho described these symbols and meanings beyond his faith in “Aleph” (Coelho, 2011) and referred to different religious traditions (Fowler, 1981). In “Aleph”, a relationship can be seen between Coelho’s development and Stage 0 to Stage 5. Coelho highlighted Stage 5 particularly by integrating different faith traditions into his spiritual belief system (Coelho, 2007; Lätzel, 2007). He connected to the former belief while striving for change and transformation. Coelho however, was not stuck between his religion and new opposing concepts, as emphasised by Burnell (2013), but rather increased his self-development. This attitude of transformation is reflected in “Aleph” (2011), integrating different concepts of God, which were often seen as opposing (Arias, 2001).

Coelho created his personal God by reciting mantras, practising yoga, meditating, and incorporating Indian cosmogony and Oriental spirituality in his life (Arias, 2001, p. 108). He became once again an initiate to the spiritual quest (Arias, 2001, p. 108) that provided him with a vision of transforming the self and the world in the context of complex realities (Morais, 2009) – this is exactly what Coelho describes in the book “Aleph” (2011): the transformation of himself towards a new understanding of integrating previous lives and the present life, different religious interpretations and the creation of a new spiritual vision. As emphasised in Sect. 7.6.6.1, Coelho lived in different contexts during his fifties, worlds and realities that were multi-layered and complex. However, Coelho managed to integrate all of these parts of his identity. He wrote about self-worth, about positivity, meaningfulness in life and about his belief of “*Sic transit gloria mundi*” – all earthly glory is transient (Coelho, 2006, p. 159). This concept unified all differences in the one quest to understand the nature of the unconscious and underlying meaning and purpose in life, as he tried to do in “Aleph”. In his sixties, Coelho again emphasised the “value of the small things in life”.

Before his journey to Russia, Coelho felt that his spiritual development, as a major force in adult identity formation, needed to develop in terms of an increase in awareness towards the self and others, engaging in connectedness with the divine, nature and humanity and defining new relationships with God, the community of believers and nature (Furqon & Mustofa, 2014). Coelho’s spiritual journey was based on the question of meaningfulness and the exploration of the meaning of his spirituality by conducting identifications, exploration and experiments through magical and religious traditions to discover his personal spiritual path and his new identity (Furqon & Mustofa, 2014). In “Aleph” (2011), Coelho’s story gained a new quality: It included the idea of reincarnation and karma and its consequences for this lifetime as a focus issue. Sari (2013) highlights that the book connects existentialism in Coelho’s biography, which needs further explanation and exploration. For Purwandoyo and Kurnia (2013), the subconscious topics addressed in “Aleph” are based on redemption, forgiveness, reconnecting with people, travel, spiritual renewal and growth. These interpretations are signs of Coelho dealing with conscious and subconscious complexities in a new quality, transforming beyond the well-known limitations and paradigms, as shown in this chapter (Table 8.16).

Table 8.16 Stages of faith development (30s and 40s) of Paulo Coelho and in “Aleph

Historical periods in the development of Paulo Coelho	Stages of faith development in the life of paulo coelho						
	Faith development stages in the life of Paulo Coelho						
	1. Stage 0	2. Stage 1	3. Stage 2	4. Stage 3	5. Stage 4	6. Stage 5	7. Stage 6
7. The fifties (1997–2006)						x	
8. The sixties (2007–2016)						x	(x)
Aleph (2006–2011)	x	x	x	x	x	x	

Source: Researcher’s own construction

With regard to his vocation in life, Coelho deepened the question of what his meaning in life was during his fifties and sixties. He integrated his ideas of God who has two faces (Coelho, 2007). The vocation in late adulthood is referred to while Coelho proceeded with the development of his image or “non-image” of God.

“Aleph” describes a vocational crisis in late adulthood and thereby shows that the personal path in life always needs to be re-established, recreated – this was exactly what Coelho felt before going on the Trans-Siberian trip. Coelho’s vocation included the re-establishment of his meaningfulness in life, which he identified as “living the life”. Through the journey into his former life in “Aleph” (Coelho, 2011), he also proved to himself his destiny as a writer, which was not only bound to his present life, but what had been his vocation across different lives.

Coelho’s relationship with God was expressed in late adulthood particularly through his self-expression and in his writings rather than in any form of social engagement. His writing can be viewed as a spreading and sharing of the word of God as an interreligious and intercultural understanding of spirituality. In “Aleph” (Coelho, 2011), Coelho’s vocation is quite closely bound to regaining his kingdom by reconnecting and deepening his relationship with God and establishing a new meaningfulness of life that is not limited to the present life, but redefined in the mirror of all lives. Coelho expanded lifetime limitation through the idea of creating vocation and meaningfulness across various lifetimes. He thus transformed his entire identity, vocation and meaningfulness in this period of his life.

8.5.3 Coelho’s Development in Terms of the Holistic Wellness Model from “The Pilgrimage” to “Aleph”

With regard to the data on Paulo Coelho’s life during his thirties and forties towards his late fifties and sixties and his creative work in 1987 (“The pilgrimage”) and in 2011 (“Aleph”), development in terms of holistic wellness can be recognised.

8.5.3.1 Development of the Life Task Spirituality

During the 1980s and in “The pilgrimage”, Coelho learnt new ways of communicating with God through his wife, Cristina, and the RAM that taught him exercises and rituals that became a relevant part of his life and the writing of “The pilgrimage”. Magical experiences and symbolic signs increased in his life, Coelho moved away from the powerful God and realised the loving God and the newly established meaningfulness in his life.

In his fifties and sixties, Coelho saw a twofold God with power and love. He could integrate two traditional concepts of God, while establishing his personal God, which he created himself through travelling and new experiences.

The concept of God developed into a more differentiated one that integrated many faces. No part of God needed to be denied or suppressed: Coelho could see many different faces of God, accept and integrate them. After approximately 20 years, Coelho deepened the spiritual concept he developed in the 1980s. He reconsidered his spiritual concepts and redefined meaningfulness: While an important aspect of meaningfulness in one’s life is the development of spirituality and the spiritual path, during Coelho’s thirties and in “The pilgrimage”, meaningfulness was consciously redeveloped as living the destiny of his life, being a writer.

The concept of meaningfulness that developed from the basics of finding a personal spiritual path towards a specific path of living his destiny as a writer was based on previous life experiences and increasing consciousness. The concept of meaningfulness across these specific life spans became more detailed, more specific and moved from general meaningfulness towards specific meaningfulness as a writer. It also deepened in terms of the complexity in which spirituality and meaningfulness are embedded. In his thirties, Coelho only referred to his spirituality and meaningfulness in his present life, whereas he provided in-depth insight into the complexity of the spirituality and the meaningfulness based on multiple lifetimes. Spirituality and meaningfulness were developed from mono-layered concepts to multi-layered concepts across time and space. An increase in the complexity of spiritual understanding and constructions of meaningfulness is found with regard to the development from “The pilgrimage” to “Aleph”.

8.5.3.2 Development of the Life Task Self-Direction

While Coelho mainly focused on sense of worth, self-control, emotional awareness and coping in terms of self-direction during his thirties, in “The pilgrimage” he described how he had established his new self-direction as a writer with the support of Petrus. Coelho further presented the way in which he recreated his identity during his journey and his self-direction as a writer was mainly developed during that time of his life.

Twenty years later, Coelho re-evaluated his self-direction as an established writer. At that time, he was world-famous and his birth as a writer lay 20 years behind him. He had grown into his profession and was focusing on recreating real-

istic beliefs, new emotional awareness, new problem-solving options. In “Aleph”, Coelho described his re-establishment as a writer, a spiritual person, regaining his self-control and his emotional awareness, coping and problem-solving. With regard to self-direction, Coelho worked on the same issues, but on a deeper, more consciousness and detailed level. He returned to his self-direction created 20 years previously and deepened and re-evaluated his concept of self-direction. Coelho had established his sense of worth during the previous 20 years: While sense of worth development was one of the major issues in the 1980s, it was hardly addressed 20 years later. Although his sense of worth was strong, he needed to refine his beliefs, his emotional awareness and problem-solving capabilities in his fifties and sixties.

8.5.3.3 Development of the Life Task Work and Leisure

In his thirties, Coelho integrated his work as a writer with his spiritual development. He used his leisure-time activities, such as the pilgrimage, as the base for his work as an author. He himself hardly differentiated between work and leisure activity and combined travelling, spiritual rituals and his spiritual development in work and leisure.

Twenty years later, work and leisure had become integrated concepts. These concepts were hardly mentioned. However, Coelho once mentioned that work was only meaningful when it provided the person with time for self-reflection. He combined work and leisure activities, such as self-reflection, into one concept.

As Coelho had highlighted already during his teenage years that his aim was to become a professional writer, he knew that he did not want to become an engineer who wrote in his leisure time. Already in his teenage years, being a writer meant to him being a writer throughout his life, as a profession, during work and during leisure time. Coelho thus strongly integrated work and leisure time, increasing the degree of integration from the 1980s onwards.

8.5.3.4 Development of the Life Task Friendship

Generally, only a few friendships are described in the data and creative works analysed and friendship does not seem to be a focus life task for Paulo Coelho throughout his life. During his thirties, friendships for Coelho were mainly professionally bound and in his biography two incidents are described between Coelho and his friend, Tony, in which he treated his friend unfairly and hardly as a friend, preferring to use him to further his own interests.

In his fifties and sixties, Coelho’s concept of friendship shifted slightly – no incidents were reported in which Coelho treated his friends as he did 20 years before. However, he remained rather self-centred and friendship became an issue on his sixtieth birthday and an underlying topic in “Aleph”.

A development of the life task friendship can be described in the sense that in his twenties, friendship was defined as serving Coelho in his personal development, while he started to recognise the value of friendship in his late fifties and in “Aleph”. However, Coelho did not describe friendship as daily interaction, but rather as a theoretical and philosophical concept (the fire of friendship on the mountain). At that stage, Coelho started to recognise this life task as an important one, although it was not as much a practical approach to his life, as it was a philosophical one.

8.5.3.5 Development of the Life Task Love

In his thirties, Coelho met the love of his life, Cristina, who nurtured him, provided him with non-possessive caring and personal freedom and got involved in a stable, enduring and intimate relationship with him. In “The pilgrimage”, Coelho reflects on love in terms of eros, philos and agape, where agape is the ultimate form of love that he aims to reach. He finally reaches agape in “The pilgrimage” when becoming one with the environment and expanding eros (love between two people) and philos (friendship love).

During his fifties and sixties, Coelho still expressed his deep love for Cristina (eros); however he also defined love as faith in another person (related to philos). In “Aleph”, Coelho strengthened his love for Cristina in terms of agape, described his love for Jesus and for Hilal also in terms of agape, which is at the same time love of God and the universe, of everything around a person. While Coelho experienced agape in “The pilgrimage” with regard to himself in nature, he was able to express agape towards other people in “Aleph”. Love, therefore, developed over the decades in Coelho by expanding and shifting from self-love to love of others.

Focusing on the different characteristics of love (Myers et al., 2000) in his thirties and in his fifties, Coelho mainly described how he received love from his wife. He hardly related to the aspect of nurturing and expressing his love for her. This is related to his gender or cultural identity concept and to his perspective in writing “The pilgrimage” and “Aleph”. In “Aleph”, Coelho focuses on the impact of Cristina’s and Hilal’s love, caring and nurturing for him, while he does not discuss his love and nurturing for Cristina in “The pilgrimage”. In “Aleph”, he explains his love to Cristina and Hilal after Hilal confronts him about the expression of his love to her.

A development in Coelho’s creative works from a self-related and one-sided perspective of love and nurturing towards a more mutual and interpersonal concept of love and nurturing is recognised in this research. In his later years Coelho developed a more holistic concept of love that was based on a mutual loving relationship.

The following table provides an overview of the development of the life tasks (Table 8.17).

Table 8.17 The development of holistic wellness from “The Pilgrimage” to “Aleph”

Life task	Life of Paulo Coelho (1982–1987)	“The pilgrimage” (1987)	Life of Paulo Coelho (2006–2011)	“Aleph” (2011)
Spirituality	New ways of communication with God from Cristina and RAM	Practices of exercises of RAM (walks, self-reflection)	The concept of God is twofold: the Jesuit God and the personal God	God is the personal God who is communicated with through travelling and new experiences
	Exercises of RAM	Magical experiences	Deepening his spiritual concept	Exploring his spiritual concepts anew
	Magical experiences, apparitions, symbolic signs	New creation of spirituality as main meaningfulness in life (spiritual path)	Reconsidering his concept of meaningfulness in his life	Searching for new depth in his spirituality and concept of meaningfulness (living his destiny as a writer consciously)
	Move from the powerful and strict God to the loving God			
Self-direction	Gaining self-worth, self-control, emotional awareness and coping through RAM, the birth of the writer and his self-promotion and success as a writer	On the journey, Coelho increases his self-direction through the new experiences with Petrus and his newly learnt exercises.	Self-direction is a very important issue during this phase of his life	Self-direction is a very important issue in this book
	Changing perceptions in cultural and gender identity	Coelho recreates his identity anew through the journey.	Self-direction in terms of realistic beliefs, emotional awareness and problem-solving is mainly important	Self-direction in terms of regaining self-control, realistic belief, problem-solving and emotional awareness is mainly important
	Increase in 12 dimensions of self-direction through success as a writer		Working on his traumatic experiences from his teenage years and torture	Working on his traumatic experiences from his past lives

(continued)

Table 8.17 (continued)

Life task	Life of Paulo Coelho (1982–1987)	“The pilgrimage” (1987)	Life of Paulo Coelho (2006–2011)	“Aleph” (2011)
Work and Leisure	Coelho integrates his work as a writer with his spiritual development during leisure time.	Work is only mentioned at the beginning and at the end of the book	Work and leisure time are integrated concepts	Work and leisure time are integrated concepts
	He hardly distinguishes leisure time activities (which included travelling, spiritual rituals and development) from the professional work as a writer	Concepts such as work and leisure time do not seem to be of major importance	They are hardly talked about and therefore do not seem to be very important during this period of his life	They are hardly talked about in “Aleph” and are therefore interpreted as being hardly important with regard to the book
	Work and leisure are integrated concepts	Work and leisure are somehow integrated in the journey		
Friendship	Only a few selected friendships	Coelho develops a kind of friendship with Petrus, his guide	During his fifties, friendships are hardly talked about although Coelho might have made new friends in new societal memberships.	In Aleph, only a few selected friends of Coelho are mentioned (Monica, the Russian industrialist, the journalist)
	Coelho treats Tony disrespectfully	Friendships with purpose	During his sixties, reflections on friendships become more important, but self-reflection and self-centredness remain the focus	Friendship becomes a topic in Aleph through reference to the “fire of friendship on the mountain” – however, even here friendship is a theoretical, philosophical construct, rather than a practically lived concept

(continued)

Table 8.17 (continued)

Life task	Life of Paulo Coelho (1982–1987)	“The pilgrimage” (1987)	Life of Paulo Coelho (2006–2011)	“Aleph” (2011)
	All of his friendships described have a professional connection		Friendship becomes an issue on his sixtieth birthday	
	Friendship with purpose			
Love	Coelho meets the love of his life, Cristina, who nurtures him and with whom he is in a stable and enduring, non-possessive relationship	Coelho reflects on the three forms of love	Love for Coelho’s parents is expressed	Coelho differentiates between love for Jesus (agape), Cristina (eros) and Hilal (agape)
		He learns to experience agape	Love for Cristina is expressed	“I love you like a river” (agape)
		Agape expands the concept of eros and philos	Love is defined as an act of faith in another person	Love moves people, opens doors
			Cristina nurtures Coelho, but Coelho nurturing his wife is hardly mentioned	Coelho describes how Cristina and Hilal love and nurture him; however he hardly mentions how he nurtures them
				Hilal questions his self-relatedness
				The inter-related concept of love becomes an issue

Source: Researcher’s own construction

8.5.3.6 The Development of Life Forces and the Impact of Global Events

The development of life forces and global events in Coelho are summarised as follows: All life forces played a role in Coelho’s thirties and forties, as well as in his fifties and sixties. However, the life forces family and religion played an outstanding role. In terms of family, Cristina had the most important impact on Coelho from his thirties to his sixties. In terms of religion, the content of the life force religion changed; in his thirties, Coelho mainly referred to RAM, the Catholic order, and its important impact on himself. During his fifties, he opened up his concept of

religion, becoming mainly integrative, referring to aspects of different (world) religions and integrating various aspects of religions into his concept of spirituality.

Hardly any development can be described with regard to global impacts on Paulo Coelho’s life. He did not describe those possible impacts anywhere. However, in his fifties he highlighted that a writer has the responsibility to comment on global events and developments. A slight development of Coelho can be interpreted as a move from a strongly self-related focus to a more inter-related focus, realising his personal opportunities to influence the world and be influenced by global events.

In conclusion, the findings show that during the 20 years, Coelho developed, integrated and deepened his holistic wellness in terms of this life tasks, life forces and his impact on global events.

8.5.4 Coelho’s Development in Terms of the Stages of Faith Development from “The Pilgrimage” to “Aleph”

Conclusions are drawn regarding the personal development of Coelho in terms of the stages of faith development from the 1980s to 2011. From the 1980s to 2011 Coelho moved from Stage 4, the individuative-reflexive stage, to Stage 5, according to the analysis of his life and the two creative works (Table 8.18).

The autobiographic works guide the writer and the reader of the two books through Stage 0 to Stage 5 of faith development, reflecting the stages of Coelho’s faith development. While the focus of faith development in “The pilgrimage” is on Stages 3 and 4, Stage 5 is only addressed briefly at the end of the book. In “Aleph”, however, the focus of stage development is Stage 5, but the book reflects on all the stages. In both books, Stage 6 is not addressed. The autobiographical accounts serve as an opportunity to reflect on his own spiritual and faith development, reliving the stages of faith development in his writings – as he experiences them in his life – which are not necessarily reflected in chronological order. While the books serve as an opportunity to reflect on the past stages of faith development, they also provide a vision of the next stages of faith development (in “The pilgrimage” Stage 5, in “Aleph” the deepening of Stage 5 and a visionary view of Stage 6).

Content-wise the development from “The pilgrimage” (Coelho’s thirties and forties) to “Aleph” (his fifties and sixties) shows that Coelho developed from the individuative-reflexive stage to the paradoxical-conjunctive stage in faith development. While he reflected his development of faith and belief in “The pilgrimage” and critically evaluated his values, commitments, beliefs and relationships, he started working with these evaluations in Stage 5. Based on the critical evaluations, he could then overcome the tensions of paradoxes and polarities and recognise and overcome the limitations of his own belief in “Aleph”. During his thirties and forties, Coelho was still self-focused, but created new perceptions and values, while recognising symbols and meaning beyond his own faith in the decades thereafter. Coelho developed and integrated a multi-layered, complex (faith) identity.

Table 8.18 Stages of faith development – from “The Pilgrimage” to “Aleph”

Historical periods in the development of Paulo Coelho	Stages of faith development in the life of Paulo Coelho						
	Faith development stages in the life of Paulo Coelho						
	1. Stage 0	2. Stage 1	3. Stage 2	4. Stage 3	5. Stage 4	6. Stage 5	7. Stage 6
The thirties (1977–1986)					x		
The forties (1987–1996)					x		
The pilgrimage (1986–1987)	x	x	x	x	x	x	
7. The fifties (1997–2006)						x	
8. The sixties (2007–2016)						x	(x)
“Aleph” (2006–2011)	x	x	x	x	x	x	

Source: Researcher’s own construction

In both cases, writing the book supported Coelho in gaining clarity and self-confidence after a personal crisis, strengthening the stage of faith he was in, re-evaluating past stages and building the foundation for further development: In “The pilgrimage”, Coelho aimed at overcoming his traditional faith, while in “Aleph” he transformed and integrated traditional and newly created beliefs (see Table 8.19).

Regarding vocation in life, Coelho moves from the “follow your dream” approach, the establishment of a connection to God, the acceptance of his “divine gift” of writing, the recognition of his life’s dreams as God’s calling and the groundbreaking spiritual developments (live life to the full and fight the good fight) towards “Aleph”. Based on the vocation created and established in “The pilgrimage”, Coelho’s vocation develops into the deepening of the question of meaning in life and the recognition of his destiny of being the writer he is. In “Aleph”, Coelho integrates God’s images, re-establishes meaningfulness in life and overcomes lifetime limitations that prepare him for his future lives and regaining his position as the king of his kingdom. While Coelho has established his kingdom in “The pilgrimage”, he has to regain it in “Aleph”.

The development from “The pilgrimage” to “Aleph” does not reflect a linear development, but rather a circular development in which Coelho deepens the stages and understanding reached in his life and through his writing. Coelho returns to his previous learning to re-establish himself, rebuild his kingdom and expand it within himself across lifetimes. The spiritual journey in “Aleph” is a deepening of a previous development and understanding, which prepares Coelho as well for his future spiritual development.

8.5.5 Narrative Peculiarities in Life and Selected Creative Works

Finally, narrative peculiarities also need attention in the context of the life narrative. Only a few selected narrative peculiarities will be referred to, to highlight underlying (conscious or unconscious) aspects of the narrations in the life and works of

Table 8.19 Overview of faith development and vocation “The Pilgrimage” to “Aleph”

Thirties and forties and “The pilgrimage” – Focus on Stage 4	Fifties and sixties – Focus on Stage 5	Development –from Stage 4 to Stage 5
Individuative-reflexive stage	Paradoxical-conjunctive stage	Critical evaluation of previous belief systems and faith leads to the integration of different perspectives and to deeper transformation processes
Reflection of development	Overcoming tensions of	
Critical evaluation of values, beliefs, commitments and relationships	paradoxes and polarities	
Focus on personal development, new perceptions and values	Recognition of limitations of own belief systems	
In “The pilgrimage”, Coelho reflects on his former stages up to Stage 5	Recognising symbols and meaning beyond faith	
Coelho overcomes his traditional beliefs and learns new beliefs on the Road	Integration of multi-layered, complex identity	
Re-evaluation of faith, birth of new self-confidence and new identity	In “Aleph”, Coelho describes different religious traditions and integrates them into his spiritual system	
	Transforming and integrating attitude	
	Integration of different views on God and present and previous lives	
	Increasing awareness and connectedness to God and others	
Vocation	Vocation	Vocation
Follow your dream approach	Deepen the question of meaning in life	From conscious recognition of the life’s dream as a calling of God (becoming king of the kingdom) to the re-establishment of the kingdom and reassurance on personal destiny
Connect to God	Destiny of being a writer	
Writing as “divine gift”	Integrating God’s images	
Life’s dream is connected to God’s calling	Re-establishment of meaningfulness in life	
Live life to the full	Becoming the king of the kingdom again	
Fight the good fight	Overcoming lifetime limitations	
Develop spiritually		

Source: Researcher’s own construction

Coelho. The focus of this work is not a narrative analysis; however, the narrative peculiarities that were noteworthy in content analysis will be presented in the following section. They contain firstly, the aspects of fiction and non-fiction in Paulo Coelho's narration; secondly, the I-narrator perspective; thirdly, subjectivity and coherence in life narration and fourthly the aspects of holistic wellness in the narrations.

8.5.5.1 Fiction or Non-fiction?

Narrative theories and methods have revitalised the exploration of the inner patterning and meaning of human lives (McAdams, 2006b). The creative works of Coelho show an inner patterning and refer to the meaning of human lives. The narrations of "The pilgrimage" and "Aleph" both refer to the concept of spirituality as the narrator's base. In both works the author interweaves autobiographical experiences of two journeys and presents them with inner thought processes, with the descriptions of his changing emotions and selected fictional aspects. Coelho leaves the reader in the dark in terms of his "real" and his "fictitious" experiences. The question remains: what is real and what is fictitious? This is a typical pattern found in Coelho's (two) books: The reader is unsure in terms of the layers of reality, fiction and non-fiction, the characters and Coelho's experience in life.

The interweaving of fiction and non-fiction is a pattern that is found in the two books that have been analysed, as well as in the way Coelho promotes himself as an author: He plays with layers and concepts of reality, keeps the secrecy of his real experiences and his fantasies and leaves the reader wondering about his "real" thoughts on reality. Coelho, thus does not disclose himself to the public; he is the character in all of his books (Chap. 3), speaks the language of his soul in his books, is always the magician and the writer at the same time.

8.5.5.2 The I-narrator

Coelho writes from a first person singular perspective, using himself as an (autobiographically oriented) I-narrator. He, thereby, provides insight into his emotions, his feelings and thoughts, as well as in his inner thoughts, explanations and judgement processes. Coelho opens himself to the reader through the I-narrator perspective. The reader can follow Coelho's inner processes and discover him/herself at the same time over the decades. Therefore, Coelho feels familiar and well-known to the reader and the reader experiences many kinds of different feelings that the I-narrator experiences. The language of description that is used is simple, easy to read and understand. At the same time, the train of thought is clear and logical, easy to follow because of descriptions of "universal laws" and general statements that can be fitted into different reference frames of different readers.

In parallel to the spiritual narrations in his creative works, Coelho has created his life story across various autobiographical works. He reconstructs himself as a spiri-

tual person throughout his career as a writer and refers to himself as a magus reading the signs of God on the one hand and belonging to a secret spiritual Catholic order on the other hand. His life and creative works are based in this interplay between mystics, Catholic faith, belief in saints and the ability to perform magic; the lines of reality and fiction in his life and work are interwoven and blurred.

The themes (McAdams, 2006b) of the spiritual path, the spiritual quest, the crisis, frustration and the new understanding of the invisible world are repetitive thematic patterns in Coelho’s narrative world. He interchanges his narrative (spiritual) identity with his identity as a writer, as a spiritual seeker and magician, as described by McAdams. Coelho consciously refers to the recreation of identity throughout his books while unconsciously repeating the pattern of the seeker, the doubtful person, the traveller, the one who does not stop questioning and self-reflecting. In the interviews, he reconstructs his wisdom, his career as a magus, as someone who can see beyond the visible world. Coelho’s life narrations always leave space for fantasies; the question of who Coelho really is remains unanswered. The question of whether the master, J., really exists remains a question, as does the question of whether Coelho is a master of the RAM and whether this secret order really exists. The reader remains in the dark. Conducting rituals in public (such as praying while signing books, or keeping silence for a moment while conducting an interview) are all behaviours that (consciously or unconsciously) are the “internalized stories people live by” (McAdams, 2006b, p. 13), which become the organising forces of the life of Coelho – the boundaries of fiction and non-fiction blur.

Coelho’s narrations on his personal spiritual journals provide his life with sense and purpose, as described by McAdams (2009). In “Aleph”, Coelho refers to his time in the 1980s when he met J. for the first time. By referring back in 2011 to 1982, Coelho creates a sense of unity within himself, a purpose that he defines in contrast to the earlier times of his life. Through reflections on the past, he takes the reader along his life path of spiritual development and the reader gets the impression that he has known Coelho for a long time, thus creating a stable spiritual or even religious identity of Coelho and a common story of the reader and the author.

8.5.5.3 Subjectivity and Coherence of Life Narration

The data show that Coelho’s narratives are subjective in nature and aim at transporting a message; they are entertaining and educating (McAdams, 2001). Messages referring to Coelho’s life narration are, for example, to live one’s dreams, as in “The pilgrimage” (Coelho, 1987), to go out and find the treasure, as in “The alchemist” (Coelho, 1988) or to explore life beyond the present life and to reflect on one’s own life constantly, as in “Aleph” (Coelho, 2011). The life narration is entertaining (Arias, 2001; Morais, 2009), telling about a difficult time at home during youth, the times in the asylum, the torturing, the girlfriends and wives, as well as the success story of becoming a world-famous author. As emphasised by Kohler Riessmann (2003), the narration of Coelho, as well as his autobiographical accounts (Coelho, 2000), reflects his past life and his experiences in certain situations (Arias, 2001;

Morais, 2009). As explained above, the narratives told do not necessarily reflect pure facts that an individual has experienced, but are rather an attempt of the individual to form a coherent story (Kohler Riessman, 2003; McAdams, 2001). Coelho refers to his past, his present and his future circumstances and connects experiences, feelings and episodes.

In “Aleph”, Coelho (2011) describes the interlinkages across various lives that he reconstructs to build a coherent life narration. He highlights in several circumstances the differences between what he thinks and what he says (e.g. in a conversation with Hilal, as well as in the interview situation on the train in “Aleph”). He thereby provides insight into his intrapersonal circumstances, as well as into the interpersonal ways in which he builds up himself and his image, reflected in others around him. This double layer of his internal and external narrations is opened to the reader and provides insight into the complexity of Paulo Coelho as a person. By allowing insights into these complex narrative processes, the narrations reveal complexity and depth in themselves and show latent structures, as well as conscious and unconscious aspects of Coelho (Streib, 2005). Streib (2005, p. 113) argues that the focus on this narrative provides access to biographical depth dimensions – as highlighted before – and might reveal traumatic and healing processes within a person. The narratives of Paulo Coelho particularly reveal his self-reflexive strategies and experiences of commitment and travel that support him in healing and developing himself.

8.5.5.4 Wellness and Well-Being in Paulo Coelho’s Narrations

It has been pointed out that life narrations that are based on autonomy, control, self-mastery, empowerment and achievement usually contribute to an increase in well-being (McAdams, Hoffman, Day, & Mansfield, 1996). This is exactly what Coelho’s life narrations and autobiographical creative works are all about: The life narration tells the story of an adolescent who knows that he wants to become a writer and remains on track, holding onto his dreams against all odds – he finally becomes a world-famous author. It also tells the story of a boy believing in a strict God, turning away from God, making a contract with the devil and finally returning to God through his wife’s spiritual belief and the invitation to join a small Catholic secret order and to become a master of this order. The life narration also tells the story of an adolescent (and man) who does not believe in formal education, but in following his heart and learning through travelling and experiences.

All of these narrations show the strong autonomy of the person, the writer and the believer. They tell a story of self-control and regained self-control, of self-mastery and empowerment despite hindrances. Finally, they tell the story of a life’s achievement. Only if one searches for deeper insights into the life of Paulo Coelho, aspects surface that show crisis, frustrations and doubts, which are usually not in the

forefront of the life narration (Chap. 7). Both creative works analysed tell the story of self-mastery, of committing oneself to a journey, to travel and to leaving the known behind to explore the unknown. Both times (Coelho, 2003a, 2011), the author/narrator evolves strengthened, energised, wiser and empowered with a new understanding of himself, others and the world. The end of the narrations are filled with positive emotions (Coelho, 2003a, 2011), descriptions of confidence and indicators of holistic wellness, such as a recreated and refreshed identity image, new faith, power, regained self-control and the knowledge and experience of having achieved an important life goal.

As indicated by McAdams (1996), individuals who make sense of their lives and who enjoy socialising and communicating, are caring about love, friendship, communication, care and togetherness, usually experience more wellness than individuals who are not. According to this assumption, Coelho’s narrations tell of the recreation of holistic wellness and faith. He is communicative about love, about communicating emotions, about togetherness with his wife and to a certain extent about friendship and caring. His books talk about his credibility, reconciliation, generative integration and differentiation (Coelho, 2003a, 2011) which according to McAdams (1996) enhance well-being. Coelho, by writing his autobiographical accounts, reinstalls holistic wellness within himself. Both books start with a crisis and both end with narrations on highly positive indicators of holistic wellness.

As referred to in Chap. 6, the hermeneutic approach is important in psychobiographical studies and emphasis on the four peculiarities of Coelho’s narrations provides insight into the meaning of his holistic wellness.

The focus on the narrations support the statement that holistic wellness and faith usually do not “proceed in a coherent and invariant series of stages” (Streib, 2005, p. 103). Individual development might rather be seen as developing within a narrative construction (Mayer, 2005) and Coelho’s narrations show that he experiences ups and downs throughout his life and autobiographical texts that all need to be addressed in a singular, new manner. A stage reached does not mean that it is reached for life, but that it needs to be re-addressed throughout the life and with each upcoming crisis again. Coelho’s narrations show exactly the same. Streib (2005, p. 103) highlights that faith might be developed through addition, regression, integration, acquisition and the various and multiple development paths of an individual that are narrated differently across time.

Coelho addresses faith in different ways during his life and in his books (see Chaps. 7 and 8) at different points in time: he adds new insights to his previous beliefs and faith, he integrates different approaches (see Coelho, 2011), and he explores different ways of faith throughout his life (e.g. the Jesuit faith, the contract with the devil, the RAM). Coelho aims at integrating his new understanding into his life history; however, he does not integrate it strongly into his socio-historical circumstances, as described by Streib (2005, p. 111). Coelho rather stays within self-description and his self-development, relatively independent of the socio-cultural and economic circumstances referred to.

8.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter analysed and discussed two selected creative works of Paulo Coelho, “The pilgrimage” (Coelho, 2003b) and “Aleph” (Coelho, 2011) in the context of the HWM and the FDT. Selected excerpts were discussed and insights into the creative works were given. The creative works are compared in terms of similarities, differences and developmental aspects. Finally, narrative peculiarities in the life and works of Paulo Coelho’s are emphasised.

Chapter 9

Revisions, Conclusions and Recommendations

When someone leaves, it's because someone else is about to arrive.

Paulo Coelho, 2005, p. 14

9.1 Chapter Preview

This final chapter of the study includes the revision of the problem statement, the purpose and the aims, as well as the preliminary assumptions. Included in this chapter are summaries and conclusions with regard to the HWM and the FDT in the life and works of Paulo Coelho. Reflections on the theoretical and methodological approaches used are given and the theories are revised, based on the findings of this study. Finally, the contribution of the study and its limitations are reported, the reflections of the researcher are outlined and recommendations on theory and practice are made.

9.2 Problem Statement and Justification for the Study Revised

In Sect. 1.7, a research need was identified to contribute to a new and complex psychological understanding of extraordinary individuals who act as outstanding universal and positive role models.

In this study, the worldfamous writer, Paulo Coelho, was identified as an extraordinary individual. According to the analysis and findings in terms of holistic wellness and faith development stages evident in his life and creative works, Paulo Coelho can function as a positive role model in terms of holistic wellness and faith development (see Sects. 9.5.1, 9.5.2, 9.5.3, and 9.5.4). As a role model who is read by hundreds of millions of readers and as one of the 100 most visionary individuals (Albert Einstein Foundation, 2017), he is assumed to have a positive impact on implementing new ideas on spirituality, holistic thoughts on health, well-being and faith, through the ways he overcame challenges during his life and recovered from threats and depression. Coelho is viewed as authentically presenting himself in his autobiographical works and thus gaining the interest of the readers in his (life) sto-

ries and experiences, which are simply written and authentically told. Coelho is an individual who has promoted holistic wellness and faith development through his life, his actions and his creative works, and is seen as a role model as defined by Leeder, Raymond, and Greenberg (2007).

This study addresses a new paradigm in psychobiographical research by approaching the life of Coelho from a positive psychology perspective, that has been called for in psychological research (Luthans, 2002; Mayer & Van Zyl, 2013), minimising psychopathological analysis, as explained in Chap. 1. Burnell (2013, p. 2) highlights the “eugraphic and holistic approach in contrast to traditional pathographic” in her study; the same can be concluded for this study: By using the HWM as well as the FDT, this study emphasises the positive aspects of the selected individual, based on the theoretical positive psychology paradigm (Seligman, 2011; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000), focusing on the positive developments of the individual rather than focusing on negative patterns of feelings, thoughts and behaviour. This study addresses the developmental potential of this person in terms of holistic wellness and faith (Chaps. 7 and 8).

At the end of the study, it can be emphasised that the study plays a part in filling the void in psychobiographical research on artists and writers (Schultz, 2005a), promoting psychobiographical research from a positive psychological perspective.

9.3 Purpose and Aims of the Research Study Revised

The purpose of this study was to uncover a selected individual’s life scientifically, creatively and artistically by exploring the uniqueness of his life and selected autobiographical and creative works. The study’s purpose was to provide new understanding and a new perspective on the writer in the context of the selected theories. The purpose was fulfilled and the life of Paulo Coelho explored in his uniqueness by applying the theories described.

As described in Chap. 4, the HWM was used to reconstruct the life of Paulo Coelho to explore his holistic wellness in terms of integrating body, mind and spirit. Spirituality as a health resource is one of the most important life tasks in the life of Coelho, while he reached Stage 5 and parts of Stage 6 with regard to the stages of faith development (see Chap. 7). It can be confirmed that holistic wellness in the context of writing – as assumed in Sect. 1.7 – was important for Paulo Coelho’s development as a healthy person, a writer and a creative individual. His faith development, as assumed in Sect. 1.7, was strongly connected to the development of himself as a writer and his creative works helped him to express his faith development transformations (Sect. 7.6).

As described in Burnell (2013) and Fouché, Burnell, van Niekerk, and Nortjé (2016), both theories could be applied to the life and creative works of Paulo Coelho and have been found applicable to psychobiographical research (see Sect. 9.6).

The aims of the study were defined in Sect. 1.8 and are revised as indicated below, following the hermeneutical circle of research of Dilthey (Sects. 6.1, 6.3, and 6.7):

The primary aim of this psychobiographical study was to explore the life of Paulo Coelho based on the HWM (Myers, Sweeney, & Witmer, 2000; Witmer & Sweeney, 1992) and the FDT (Fowler, 1981). This research described and explored the life and selected creative works of Paulo Coelho and his development across his life span in terms of holistic wellness and faith development. It provided a detailed description of the defined single case to contribute to an in-depth understanding of the writer, Paulo Coelho.

Referring to the secondary aims of the study, the following aspects can be reassessed:

The research explored the uniqueness of Paulo Coelho as an exceptional individual by exploring his life and two selected creative (autobiographical) works.

Coelho's behaviour was described psychologically (as highlighted by Elms (1994)); his achievements and failures in the context of the theoretical framework were presented (Chaps. 3, 7 and 8).

The study designed a new understanding of the person (Edwards, 1998; Fouché & Van Niekerk, 2010), Paulo Coelho, as described in Sect. 9.5.3. It allowed readers to improve their knowledge of Paulo Coelho's holistic wellness and faith, creativity and success (as emphasised in terms of psychobiographical research by Howe (1997). As defined for other psychobiographical studies, this study provides inspiration for readers to reflect on their own experiences, existence, possibilities and fortunes (Runyan, 1984). However, in this study it is not traced whether and how the reconstructed life influences the life story of readers, as is assumed by Runyan. However, the reconstruction of the life story had an impact on the life of the researcher (see Sects. 9.5.3 and 9.9).

The study aimed at referring to spirituality, faith and the soul in a non-pejorative way and at making a difference in what other studies in psychology have done before (Harman & Clark, 1994). In this study, the concepts that were addressed were studied in a deep self-reflexive manner to reflect on the possible bias of the researcher and the researched and thereby work with possible preconceived constructs and mindsets.

Finally, through an in-depth analysis of Paulo Coelho's life and selected creative works, the study aimed at developing and enhancing the theories applied through the in-depth psychobiographical study of the individual (Carlson, 1988). Reflections on the theories and possible revisions are reported in this chapter.

As emphasised in Chap. 1, this psychobiography on Paulo Coelho

- (a) firstly contributes to discussion and promotion of psychobiographical research in general as a scientific qualitative psychological approach to exploring single extraordinary lives (see Sect. 9.7), with special regard to novelists and writers;
- (b) secondly, increases in-depth knowledge and understanding, as well as a detailed scientific reconstruction of Paulo Coelho's life and selected creative work from a psychobiographical holistic wellness and faith development perspective (see Chaps. 7, 8, and 9); and
- (c) thirdly, enhances the theories applied. With regard to the third point of contribution, it is discussed whether the theories are applicable to analysing this single case or if there might be specific developments in the life of Paulo Coelho that demand specification, change or enhancement in the theoretical approaches (see Sect. 9.6).

The study finally serves as a complex example of a psychobiographical study written from a positive psychology perspective. It builds a sound foundation for the use of positive psychology based theories in psychobiography with special regard to a writer's life.

9.4 Preliminary Assumptions Revised

In Sect. 6.9.1.1, preliminary assumptions were defined, which are finally revised.

Assumption 1 Paulo Coelho was driven by his dream to become a writer. He overcame many hindrances on his way and met his life partner, Cristina, who supported him in overcoming the challenges. His resilience in overcoming depression, frustration, critics and times of crisis is related to strong mental health that is reflected in specific life tasks and life described in the HWM.

Revision of this assumption 1:

This assumption has been supported by the research. With regard to the HWM, Paulo Coelho's wellness is particularly supported by the life tasks of spirituality, self-direction and love, which seem to be strongly integrated. These life tasks, combined with the life forces of family and religion, support Paulo Coelho in maintaining and regaining his wellness. The process of writing seems to support Coelho to reflect on his values and developments and support him to stay well and even regain his wellness after depressive crises or frustrations. Thereby, wellness is created through spirituality, a spiritual connection to a higher source and through the process of writing. Paulo Coelho has the ability to reconstruct his wellness by activating resources such as certain life tasks and life forces that are in dynamic interplay. It might be assumed with regard to the findings of the study that not only wellness is needed, but that also crisis, depression and frustration, to activate the life tasks and life forces to re-establish holistic wellness. Depression and frustration function as positive challenges in the life of Paulo Coelho that activate him to revise his life, his writing, his spiritual development, self-direction and concept of love and to readjust to regain his holistic wellness or maintain it in times of strongly established wellness.

Assumption 2 Coelho’s concept of faith developed over time. After several deep faith crises, he established a strong faith that grew in strength throughout his lifetime and that tended more and more to turn away from an individualised faith to a faith that includes “the other”.

Revision of this assumption 2:

The findings show that Coelho’s faith has developed across his entire life span until 2017 and will most probably continue developing. The assumption stated above is only supported partly by the findings. Paulo Coelho does not per se have a strong concept of faith. The findings show that his concept of faith is highly dynamic, developing throughout his life according to the stages of faith development. Findings show that Coelho had to work actively on developing his faith throughout his life, overcoming doubts and reconstructing and redefining his faith concepts. Throughout the development, Coelho’s faith did not grow continuously, but experienced setbacks, crises and redefinitions that needed active reflection and redefinition. Outstanding about Coelho is that he showed strong resilience in the development of his faith, exploring his crises and coming out of them strengthened. Coelho used his creative works to develop his faith, to reconstruct and integrate various perspectives, while his faith supported him in overcoming crisis and doubt. Writing and faith development are strongly interlinked concepts, which developed their own dynamics throughout Coelho’s life. Therefore, Coelho’s faith development must be seen as an integrated dynamic development that continued to develop in circles rather than in stages.

The redefinition and revision of the preliminary pre-assumption reflect the hermeneutical circle (Dilthey, 1976, p. 259) described in Sect. 6.3. They support the development of conclusions (Sect. 9.5) and could only be redefined through understanding of the entire individual (Dilthey, 1976, p. 254). The revision of the assumptions does not reflect any objective standpoint, but a subjective meaningful interpretation of the issue of research, the life of Paulo Coelho in psychobiographical reconstruction, which is based on the idea of Dilthey’s hermeneutical circle (Chap. 6), leading to conclusions in Sect. 9.5. This study is viewed as an entry for other researchers, further research or follow-up studies on the subject studied, as explained by Kováry (2011, p. 763).

9.5 Summaries and Conclusions

The main research question of this study was:

How can the life of the writer Paulo Coelho be described in terms of the holistic wellness model and the stages of faith development?

In the following, the responses to this research question are summarised and conclusions will be drawn.

9.5.1 Paulo Coelho's Life and Creative Works in the Context of the Holistic Wellness Model

Generally, the life of Paulo Coelho reflects many aspects of holistic wellness, including all five life tasks, as well as the life forces, as summarised in the following section.

9.5.1.1 Summary of Holistic Wellness in the Life of Paulo Coelho

The analysis shows that with regard to the life tasks, spirituality, self-direction and love are strongly emphasised life tasks, while work and leisure, as well as friendship, are less emphasised life tasks throughout Paulo Coelho's life.

The importance of life tasks change, based on the experiences throughout the life span and in the context of the various creative works (see Chaps. 7 and 8).

Spirituality is a dynamic concept that is reflected in Coelho's life and in his creative works. From the 1980s onwards and from his call to become a writer, it included communication with God, strong emphasis on magical experiences and a move from a powerful and strict patriarchal God towards a loving God. Later in his fifties and sixties, Coelho deepened and reconsidered his spiritual concepts, as well as his meaningfulness in life: God had become a personal (male and female) God whom he experienced in nature and while travelling.

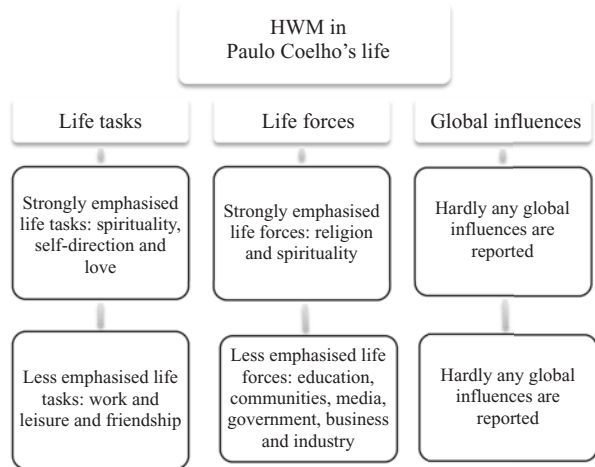
While Coelho in his thirties was still looking for self-direction and self-control as a writer, he regained self-worth through writing "The pilgrimage" and recreated his personal identity during the journey. During his fifties and sixties, self-direction was extremely important with regard to realistic beliefs, emotional awareness, problem-solving and redefining his traumatic experiences, as described in his biographies, statements and autobiographical novels, which are acknowledged in this study as important sources of analysis of information (see Chaps. 1 and 3).

Loves became very important for Coelho when he met his Cristina and during the pilgrimage. He learnt to experience the three forms of love, his definitions of love changed and he deeply explored love across his life span and described it extensively in "Aleph".

The life task of work and leisure was not discussed in any detail and both concepts were hardly differentiated as work and leisure. He used both concepts as opportunities to self-reflect and to create meaningfulness. He never spoke about work or leisure time – for Coelho the distinction was not important, since his focus was fulfilling his life's dream, no matter whether he was working or relaxing.

The concept of friendship changed during his lifetime. It is a concept that he hardly discussed and a life task Coelho silently worked on throughout his life. He hardly mentioned it. However, according to the in-depth analysis of his life and his works, Coelho viewed friendship as important and highly appreciated in his late fifties and during his sixties. A transformation from a rather practical approach to friendship to a more loving approach was indicated in the findings (Fig. 9.1).

Fig. 9.1 The holistic wellness model in Paulo Coelho's life (Source: Researcher's own construction)



The life forces that were primarily active throughout the life of Paulo Coelho were family (during his childhood and teenage years his parents, uncles, aunts and grandparents, later Cristina) and religion (first his Catholic upbringing, his satanic affiliation, the RAM practices), while the life forces of education, community, media, government, business and industry were less emphasised. Coelho experienced a strong transformation with regard to religion: He turned to a highly integrative approach during his fifties, referring to aspects of different (world) religions and integrating various aspects of religions into his concept of spirituality.

The emphasis on life tasks changed at different points in Coelho's life: spirituality gained importance from his 20 to the present, self-direction was relatively strong from childhood onwards and love was strongly emphasised from adolescence onwards. Work and leisure seemed to become integrated concepts across his lifetime, particularly from the time when he started his career as a writer. However, the first- and third-person documents rarely refer to work and leisure. Finally, the concept of friendship was only mentioned in the context of friendships around work-related issues. The life task of friendship only seemed to gain importance at the end of Coelho's fifties and during his sixties.

Spirituality, self-direction and love contributed particularly to Paulo Coelho's holistic wellness. He suffered from depression, doubt and frustration during certain periods of his life, primarily regaining his wellness through spiritual reflection, meditation, travel, rituals and exercises. He regained holistic wellness by defining clear self-direction and refining it in times of doubt and depression. Finally, his strong love for his wife and her strong love for him contributed significantly to his holistic wellness. Self-direction and love are connected to spirituality and Coelho used his creative works to reflect on these interrelationships of the concepts to reconnect and readjust his thoughts and life style throughout his life while reconstructing meaningfulness in his life.

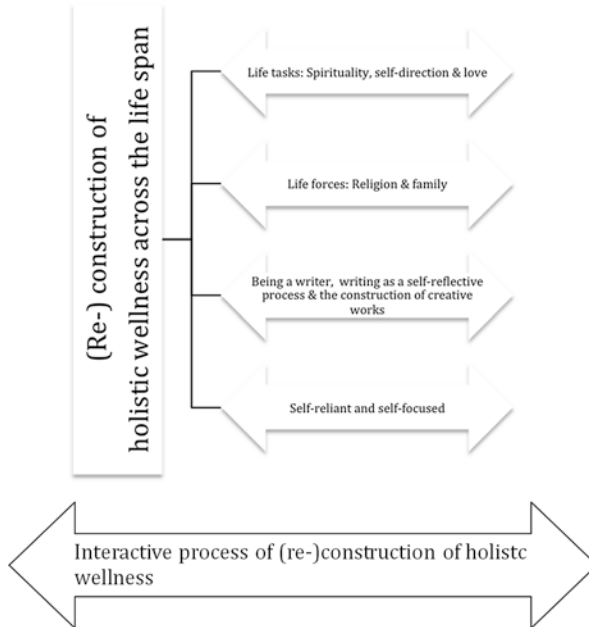


Fig. 9.2 Reconstruction of holistic wellness across the life span (Source: Researcher's own construction)

Interestingly, global influences, as well as most of the life forces, did not play a particularly important role in the life of Paulo Coelho. Global influences that had an impact on his life are hardly described and are therefore seen as influencing his life minimally.

9.5.1.2 Conclusions on Holistic Wellness in the Life of Paulo Coelho

It can be concluded that Paulo Coelho constructed and reconstructed his life strongly and dynamically with regard to holistic wellness through self-reflection, constant new challenges, new ideas, recurring questions and travels. His self-expression in his creative works supported Coelho in recognising the need to change and develop while reflecting his spiritual processes that had been conducted, as well as anticipating his visionary spiritual developments.

As shown in Chap. 8, the autobiographical accounts recreate his spiritual development and are written accounts on his personal development with regard to holistic wellness, life tasks and life forces, at the same time affecting his self-descriptions. Coelho appears to be a self-reliant, self-focused individual, mindfully focused on the present moment, in contact with himself and with a higher force. Outstandingly important are his connection to God, his actively redefined faith, relationship with God and with his wife, his spirituality and his strong self-reflection that contributes to his writing abilities (Fig. 9.2).

It is assumed that if Coelho were to explore the concept of friendship as a social dimension of his wellness, the interpersonal contact could develop his holistic wellness in more depth and it could contribute to his further development to Stage 6 and the social dimension of faith development. Coelho still has development potential in terms of holistic wellness, integrating mental, physical, emotional and spiritual aspects and in terms of faith and a shift towards a more interpersonal, social and friendship-related holistic wellness. These social shifts could contribute to developing a new layer of holistic wellness in Coelho's life towards a caring relationship with others, which could support him even more in times of crisis, depression and frustration.

After the summary and conclusion on the findings on the HWM, the focus is placed on the findings on the FDT.

9.5.2 Paulo Coelho's Life and Creative Works in the Context of Stages of Faith Development

Referring to the FDT, Paulo Coelho's life can be described as a life that is connected to faith and the development of faith throughout the lifetime. Faith played a very important role in Paulo Coelho's life. His vocation was dynamic and changed throughout his life. The findings are summarised and conclusions are drawn.

9.5.2.1 Summary of Faith Development in the Life of Paulo Coelho

The findings regarding the FDT (Fowler, 1981) in Paulo Coelho's life show in summary that Coelho developed from Stage 0 in early childhood (1947–1953) through Stage 1 during his childhood and schooldays (1953–1961) and Stage 2 in his teenage years (1962–1966). Stage 3 stretched from his teenage years (1962–1966) to his twenties (1967–1976), while Stage 4 occurred during his thirties (1977–1986) and forties (1987–1996). Finally, Coelho experienced Stage 5 during his fifties (1997–2006) and sixties (2007–2017). Paulo Coelho has not yet reached Stage 6, but the values and priorities described for Stage 6 gain in focus during his sixties, emphasising the social good of his actions while he himself remains in the self-focus and self-reliance mode.

However, two highly important aspects of Coelho's faith self-development cannot be related to the stages of faith development: Firstly, from childhood onwards Coelho was a highly self-reliant individual who did not restrict himself to social group norms, socio-cultural values and norms, as outlined by Fowler (1981). Coelho chose the social groups and/or partners who supported or accepted his values, norms and faith development without criticising him and limiting him through their judgements. He chose membership of (alternative) social groups with whose values he was in balance. He did not fight for membership of social groups of mainstream society that were not sympathetic to his individual values and norms.

Secondly, Coelho turned away from God completely during his twenties, turning to Satan. Such an extreme turn away from his original faith towards the opposite of the previous faith is not described as a usual development during Stage 3 (or any other stage) of the faith development stages. However, Coelho needed this extreme choice of evil to later return to God, creating an integrative faith and religious belief in his later adult life.

Faith developed in extremes in Paulo Coelho's life, from a strict Catholic faith to an atheistic attitude, faith in the devil, the regaining of Christian belief, commitment to and faith in RAM and its deepening as an integrative religious and faith approach. Faith is an overall topic in Paulo Coelho's life that is consciously approached, lived and deepened. The autobiographic accounts of Coelho's life describe many aspects of his faith development, his crises and his resilience.

Figure 9.3 shows that Coelho lived the stages of faith development throughout his life from Stage 0 to Stage 5, supported by the arrows indicating clock-wise movement. The findings of his autobiographical accounts, however, show that the development of faith did not move only forward in the stages described (indicated by the two anti-clockwise arrows). The stages of faith were interrupted in their development by phases of crisis, doubt, loss or questioning of faith, as described in the findings section (Chaps. 7 and 8). These phases of doubt led the subject back to reflection on previous stages of faith development that needed to be redefined, reconstructed and rethought. The analyses of both "The pilgrimage" and "Aleph" show a short revision of all the stages of faith development at a certain point of the life of Coelho. This necessary revision and recreation of the previously established stages and the living through these former stages – as a short revision of the lessons learnt – supported Coelho to define his personal standpoint in terms of his own faith development and revising it in times of crisis. This revision of faith throughout Coelho's life supported the conscious understanding and reflection of his personal (not as straight as assumed) process and provided the basis for decision-making in terms faith development, the spiritual quest and the definition of meaningfulness in life.

With regard to the development of vocation in the life of Coelho, findings show that the vocation is reflected in his creative works, as well as in his life: In "The pilgrimage", Coelho aimed at overcoming his traditional faith, in "Aleph" he transformed and integrated his beliefs. While Coelho learnt to follow his dream, as part of his vocation in the 1980s, he experienced the reclaiming of being the "king of his own kingdom" in the first two decades of the new millennium. Through defining his vocation in life, Coelho re-established his meaningfulness in life, aimed at overcoming lifetime limitations and reconnected his vocation not only to his personal dream, but also to a calling of God.

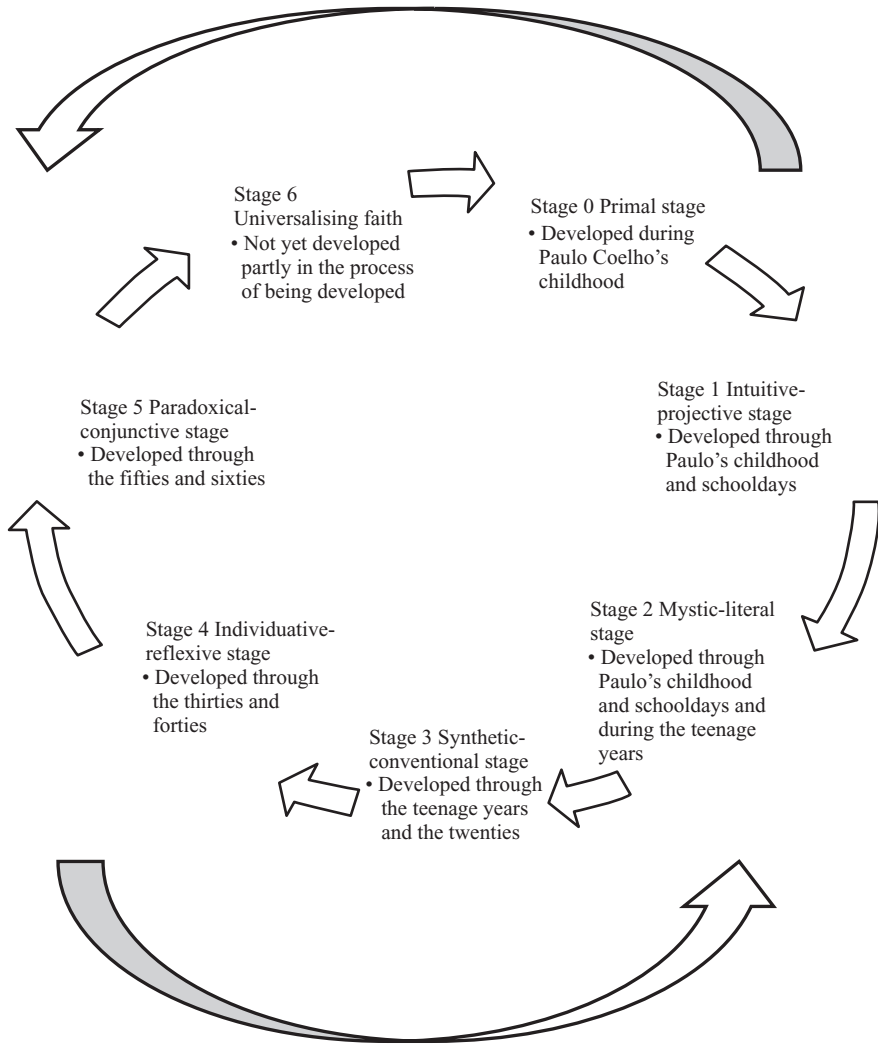


Fig. 9.3 Reconstruction of faith development across the life span (Source: Researcher's own construction)

9.5.2.2 Conclusions on Stages of Faith Development and Vocation in Life

In conclusion, the stages of faith development in Paulo Coelho's life should not only be understood as phases that move linearly forward from one stage to the next, but need to be understood as stages that had to be actively achieved and that are in dynamic interaction. That means that Coelho, having achieved a certain stage, might be pulled back to another, earlier stage through crisis and would only later, through new experiences and spiritual work, return to the formerly achieved higher stage. With regard to Coelho, faith developed not only in stages, but through circular

learning developments (as presented in the creative accounts), which can take a person back into previous stages and deepen the previous experiences before moving to higher stages. Faith development seems to be a circular rather than a linear development process. However, various faith stages were found in Coelho's life. It might be questioned whether these stages would have been developed inductively from the data set if they had not been predefined theoretical stages, having been deductively studied.

In conclusion, the findings show a highly dynamic and complex faith development. Whenever Coelho feels spiritual stagnation, he is sent on a journey or to fulfil tasks and exercises. At the same time, he sometimes feels exhausted by constantly developing his faith (Sect. 8.4). However, the constant urge of self-development is seen as an engine for his creative work and his conscious spiritual development. Not only the dream of becoming a writer is Coelho's vocation, but also his spiritual development and the distribution of his spiritual message.

Coelho uses his creative autobiographical account as an opportunity to reflect on his own personal faith development, refining the phases of faith lived through in previous times. Through the creative works, Coelho describes his faith development, his spiritual quest, the development of spirituality, spiritual practices, as well as his self-doubts. The recurring doubts, which are addressed in his autobiographical books rather than in other sources, are indicators of his need for self-development, reflection processes, adjustment and change. Whether Coelho will strive for a further development to Stage 6 in future cannot be determined in this study.

Furthermore, it is concluded that Coelho works constantly on exploring his vocation in life and its establishment in daily interactions. The defined vocation is dynamically bound to his definition of God, his personal aims and dreams, their establishment and his (re)construction of meaningfulness. Throughout his life, his vocation transforms in respect of detail, whereas his primary vocation of becoming a writer has been unconsciously established since his childhood years and consciously established from his teenage years onwards. The constant reflection on his vocation in life – the urge to redefine it, clarify it and share it with others – is an important engine for his success as a writer.

The four parts of the circle in Fig. 9.4 are imagined as dynamically and systemically interlinked while mutually influencing one another. Each aspect in itself is subject to transformation throughout the life span, as well as in Coelho's creative works.

9.5.3 The Reconstruction of Paulo Coelho's Wellness and Faith

Focusing on the life and creative works of Coelho through the lens of holistic wellness and faith development, the following is summarised (Fig. 9.5):

Fig. 9.4 Vocation in the life of Paulo Coelho
(Source: Researcher’s own construction)

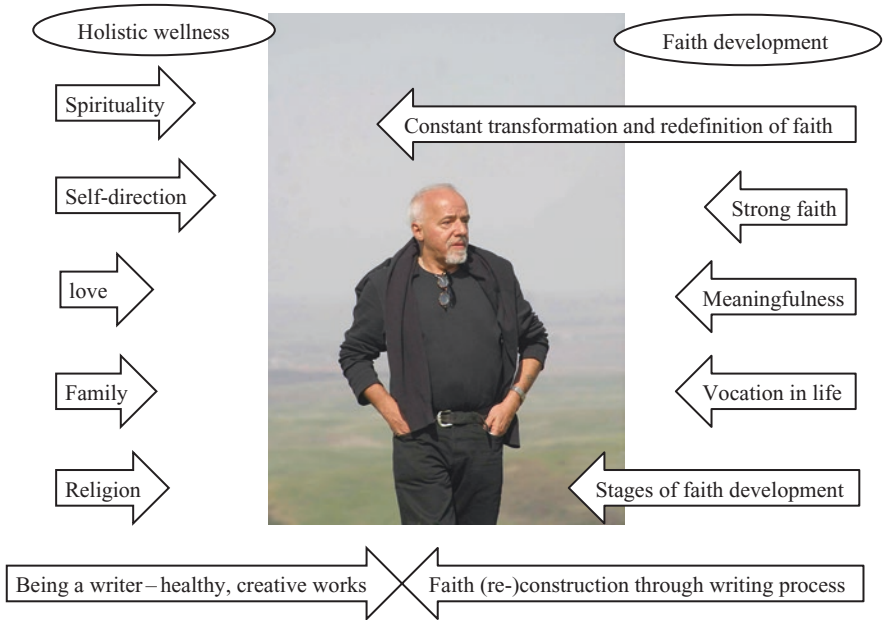
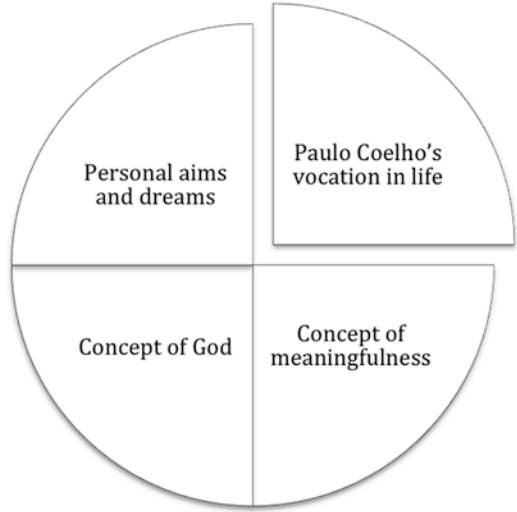


Fig. 9.5 Reconstruction of Paulo Coelho’s life: Wellness and faith (Source: Researcher’s own construction. Photo: Coelho, S.a.[a])

The life and works of Paulo Coelho are based on a strong holistic wellness and faith development throughout his life span. Coelho is a highly spiritual, self-directed individual who builds his holistic wellness on a strong concept of spirituality, love,

his family and family background and his lived religion. The fulfilment of his dream of becoming a writer – which is at the same time his vocation in life defined by a personal legend and latter a calling of God – contributes to his holistic wellness.

Coelho's holistic wellness is strongly interconnected with his powerful faith development, which has deepened throughout his life span and developed constantly. Both, the holistic wellness and the faith development, are influenced by Paulo Coelho's strong need for spirituality and the construction of meaningfulness. Becoming a writer plays a significant role in the holistic wellness and faith development of Coelho. The writing contributes to his holistic wellness, reconstructing, transforming and manifesting it in his life and vice versa. The crisis with regard to holistic wellness and faith, which are described as typical parts of his life, contributes to Coelho's need of deep and comprehensible meaningfulness and the constant need to redefine himself as a writer and spiritual being.

In the following section, holistic wellness and faith will be viewed in the context of success.

9.5.4 Holistic Wellness, Faith and Success

Coelho highlights that his success is a “divine gift” (Morais, 2009, p. 376) that is based on the passion to fulfil his dream (Coelho, 2010b). However, he states that there might be over 10,000 explanations for his success (Bosman, 2011). This study suggests that his success is based on his strong holistic wellness and faith as part of his life and his identity as a writer. Holistic wellness plays a part in Coelho's success with regard to the influence of spirituality, self-direction and love, providing Coelho with strength, creativity, intuition and perseverance and the urge for self-development. Coelho takes the reader into his spiritual world and the vision of meaningfulness, self-fulfilment and the life's dream beyond the earthly life. The connection with the reader through his life tasks is supported by his strong faith – which he combines with his human doubts and crisis, to which every reader can connect.

Readers can identify with his described developments, with his crisis of faith, his holistic spirituality that moves beyond religious doctrines. Coelho speaks authentically about his own experiences and the reader can connect to these human experiences while setting off on his/her own personal, spiritual quest.

The success of Paulo Coelho is also bound to the way Coelho presents himself to the reader: on the one hand, the topics of his books, such as faith and spirituality, stay the same and are therefore “known” and “familiar” to the reader. On the other hand, the reader can follow Coelho's development since 1986 through his crises and euphoric states of being. He incorporates the changes and transformation that each and every person knows and that each and every person hopes for and fears. By living through the development of the writer – who appears to be very human and real,

with emotions, crises, fears, strength and hope – the reader might find new ideas and ways for his/her own development. The reader follows Coelho’s development from the moment of his pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela (Coelho, 2003b) to his time in Geneva, which is described in “Adultery” (Coelho, 2014a, b).

Coelho describes himself to his readers from within; he opens up his inner world and thereby establishes a trustful relationship with his reader, showing many parts of his changing identity, of his holistic wellness and his faith and belief, which might provide the reader with strength and hope. At the same time, he remains the mysterious, the mystic magus, who is unreachable and who combines the historic mythic tradition of RAM with an overall integrative and practical life philosophy and spirituality that can be understood by anybody because of its simplicity and approachability.

Paulo Coelho’s success is bound to his movement towards holistic wellness, his faith development and the way he describes, reconstructs and promotes himself in terms of these two concepts throughout his life and within his creative works.

9.6 Reflections on Theoretical and Methodological Approaches used

The theoretical approaches used in this study are reflected in relation to the theoretical chapters presented. Firstly, the psychobiographical research is reflected, secondly the HWM is reviewed with regard to the theoretical approach and thirdly, the stages of FDT are re-evaluated. Through the reflection of the theoretical approaches, this study contributes to the discussion of the applicability of the theories applied and to the development of theoretical approaches used in psychobiographical studies.

9.6.1 Psychobiographical Research

This study falls into the category of psychobiographies, which has been described as a vibrant research area (Alexander, 1990; Kováry, 2011, Van Niekerk, 2007). As emphasised (Fouché & van Niekerk, 2010, p. 2), the study has uncovered and reconstructed the life of Paulo Coelho psychologically, providing as far as possible a holistic view of the person by describing, explaining and interpreting the gathered and selected information (as highlighted by McAdams 2006a). As referred to by Fouché (1999), the researcher of this study engaged herself systemically and self-consciously in selected psychological theories to provide an alternative view (see Runyan, 2005b, p. 96) on Paulo Coelho’s life that is different from the ones usually provided, for example, by Arias (2001) and Morais (2009).

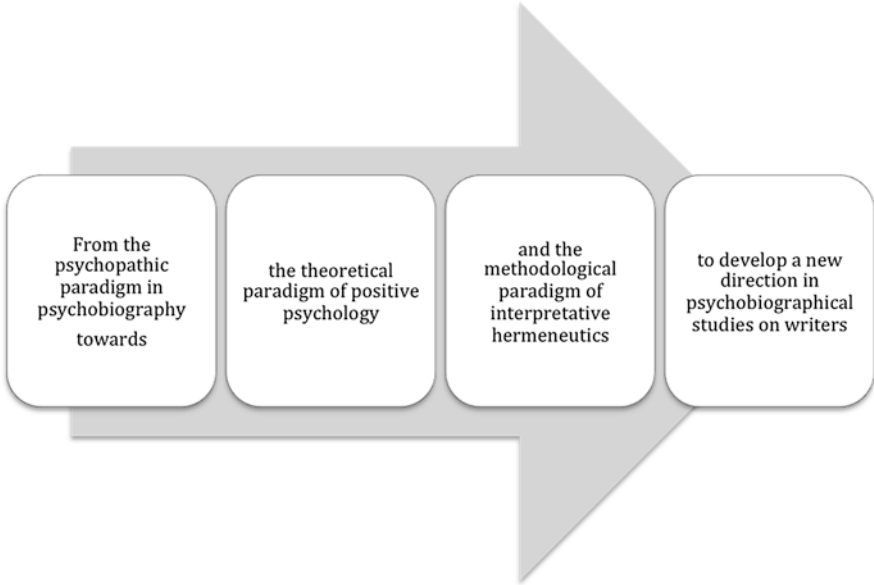


Fig. 9.6 Paradigm shift in psychobiographical studies on writers (Source: Researcher’s own construction)

9.6.1.1 From Psychopathology to Positive Psychology in Psychobiographical Research on Writers

In Chap. 2 it was stated that psychobiographical works have in the twentieth century often aimed at exposing neurotic and other pathological features of famous and influential individuals in their lives and works (Scalapino, 1999). According to Kováry (2011, p. 747), the psychoanalytic approach to studying artists and writers has been criticised from the viewpoint of highlighting psychopathologic patterns, but has also been accepted by surrealists as a “relevant method to explore the dynamics of creative processes”.

This study takes the conscious step to anchor a psychobiography of Paulo Coelho within the theoretical positive psychology frame, combining it methodologically within interpretative hermeneutics (Fig. 9.6).

This study promotes the application of the theoretical paradigm of positive psychology to emphasise the positively oriented psychological constructs in the life of extraordinary persons. It shows that the focus on positive psychology constructs, such as wellness and faith development, can contribute to a deeper understanding of the positive forces involved in the life of extraordinary individuals. These positive forces are bound to the question of what keeps an extraordinary individual healthy and strong to live his/her life to the full: successfully, creatively and productively. This study emphasises the ability of Paulo Coelho to remain well and faithful and/or to regain his wellness and faith during different phases of his life.

9.6.1.2 Challenges of a Psychobiography on an Extraordinary Writer

The study adds to psychobiographical research on writers and artists. It can be classified, according to Kováry (2011, p. 740), as a part of “creativity research” and describes Paulo Coelho’s life in terms of a healthy self-functioning process (as mentioned by Csikszentmihályi (1996)), contributing to health research. It therefore includes the analysis of selected creative work, which was criticised according to Kováry (2011, p. 747). However, this criticism does not apply to this study, since it does not use a psychopathological approach to interpret creative works.

This study contributes to psychobiographical methodology and theory through the way in which it provides an example of how life data and creative work can be analysed, interpreted and integrated in a psychobiographical study while exploring the dynamics of creative processes in the writer, Paulo Coelho, with regard to holistic wellness and faith development. As Niu and Sternberg (2001) have emphasised, the explanations and interpretations of art works do require a comprehensive understanding and knowledge of the times, the context and the conventions of art and artistic expression to understand and contextualise the artworks. This study supports the perspective that creative work and psychobiographical analysis can support each other and provide even deeper insights, particularly into creative periods of the writer across the life span. At the same time, Kováry’s (2011) statement that analysing and interpreting life-stories by drawing on works in terms of literature and psychology is a challenge is supported. This is also true of this study. The integration of data of the life and creative (autobiographical) work is a challenge in the way that Schönau and Pfeiffer (2003) referred to, citing Kris (2000): Psychobiography using creative works for analysis always needs to reflect on the presentation and representation of the inner biography of the artistic individual. According to Schönau and Pfeiffer, the question is still unanswered if the biography of the writer is relevant to his or her scientific literature and literary studies. This means that it is unanswered to the extent in which the biography and the creative works are independent or dependent and how they influence each other. The relationship between the writer and the creative work has not yet been explored in depth and needs further exploration (Schönau & Pfeiffer, 2003, p. 11).

This study, however, contributes responses to these open research questions. The findings show that, for Coelho, his biography is highly relevant to his creative works. It can be emphasised that his creative, autobiographical works are mainly based on (auto)biographic experiences. Therefore, the biography of Coelho and his creative works are strongly integrated and the creative works support the writer’s biographical development in terms of holistic wellness and faith development throughout his life span (Fig. 9.7).

Through this integrated approach to analysing biographical texts as well as creative works of the writer, Carlson’s (1971) famous question: “Where’s the person in personality research?” is answered: The writer is not only represented in his biography, but also in his creative writings. Therefore, this study focuses on the person in this personality research on two different layers of the (auto)biographical and the creative expressions, which are both theoretically and methodologically based, sys-

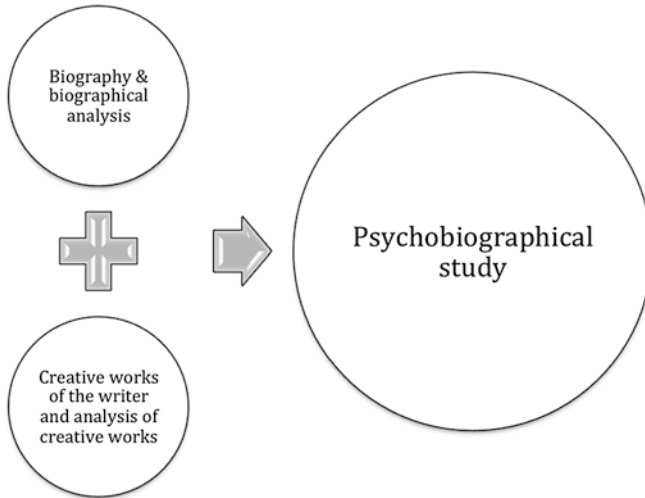


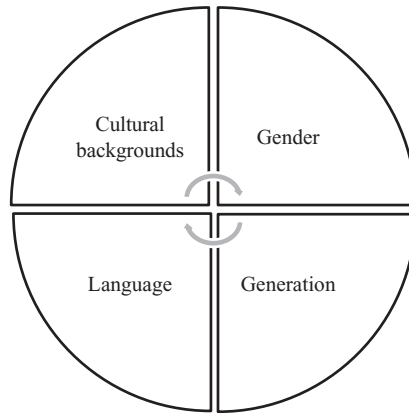
Fig. 9.7 Integration of biography and creative work analysis (Source: Researcher's own construction)

tematically analysed and integratively interpreted. Through this approach, the study contributes to the holistically oriented psychology, as outlined by Kováry (2011, p. 749).

9.6.1.3 Human Subjectivity in Psychobiographical Research

The subjectivity in qualitative research and in psychobiographies has been criticised over several decades (Kováry, 2011). This study uses the subjectivity of the researcher and her view on the life of Paulo Coelho. It has been expressed that this psychobiography could only be written with the researcher's subjective motivation (see Sect. 1.9) and her view on why it was necessary to write a psychobiography on Paulo Coelho (see Sect. 2.7) in the beginning of the study. For transparency, the application of the qualitative quality criteria of this research and the idiographic, hermeneutic approaches used (Dilthey, 2002), as well as the reflections of the researcher at the end of the study, are included. The subjective development of the researcher in the context of this psychobiographical research is presented. This presentation of the researcher's subjective reality on Paulo Coelho and the study emphasises human subjectivity as part of the research study. The researcher developed her subjective reality on the writer while reconstructing herself as a researcher and a writer. Thereby, the study also aims at supporting the psychobiographical approach promoted by Schultz (2005b), which highlights that the biographer is a researcher and an artist at the same time. This statement is referred to in Sect. 9.9.

Psychobiography as a research study across cultures / cross-cultural research



Cultural gaps (bridged) through the researcher and the researched in this research through cultural awareness and sensitivity

Fig. 9.8 Psychobiography as cross-cultural research (Source: Researcher’s own construction)

9.6.1.4 The Impact of Culture in This Psychobiographical Study

According to Roberts (2002), life experiences need to be understood in the context of their cultural, contextual and structural settings to provide insightful information on an individual’s past, present, and future. With regard to this study and its subjective qualitative nature, the researcher is a female, German South African-based researcher who aims at understanding the subject of research by reconstructing it from her subjective perspective across cultural, gender and age gaps, while exploring Coelho with an intuitive focus (Allport, 1961) in his place and based on the interpretation of the world as a product of the reality of the individual researched and his creative works (Dilthey, 1976, 2002), as well as the observer and the observed (Bateson, 1987).

The female researcher is about 30 years younger than Paulo Coelho and stems from a different generation. She grew up in Germany and has spent over 11 years in African cultural contexts. The researcher has never been to Brazil, speaks neither Portuguese nor Spanish and is not familiar with the region of origin of Paulo Coelho, Latin America. With regard to this study, the researcher aimed at understanding the cultural context of Paulo Coelho’s home country during his lifetime to gain insight into the complex processes of the society and socio-historical processes that built Paulo Coelho’s context of enculturation processes during his childhood, adolescence and young adulthood.

The contextualisation of the researcher with Paulo Coelho’s various life contexts facilitated the analysis, interpretation and discussion of the person’s psychobiography within the theoretical and methodological paradigm used (Fig. 9.8).

Psychobiographical research has been defined as cross-cultural research (McLeod, 1994; Anderson, 1981) and this study crosses cultural boundaries, historical periods, gender boundaries and generational gaps. The researcher tried to apply culture-specific theories to the individual and his particular cultural context, which has been defined as very challenging in psychobiographical research (Berry et al., 1989). The researcher aimed at developing cross-cultural understanding – through (a) reading up on Brazil and the Latin American context in history and present times, (b) talking to Latin American individuals about Brazilian culture, upbringing and Paulo Coelho, (c) exploring the concept of gender (and particularly malehood) through reading and discussions, (d) exploring French culture and thereby gaining deeper perspectives onto Paulo Coelho’s interest in France and French culture, and (e) gaining knowledge of Swiss culture and thereby approaching an understanding of Paulo Coelho’s choice of Switzerland as his preferred home – which is possible, according to Anderson (1981). The conscious consideration of the cultural contexts and the cultural bias, while applying theories and methods, made the researcher aware of and sensitive to this challenge. It can be assumed that through in-depth research, the researcher built her intercultural competences and extended her cultural sensitivity with regard to knowledge of the Brazilian and Latin American contexts, as well as tolerance for ambiguity, emotional intelligence and the ability to change perspectives (as explained in Mayer, 2011). Several key situations in Coelho’s life, such as his kidnapping and torturing, could only be understood by gaining knowledge of the socio-political situation in Brazil at that time. This biographical study can therefore be seen as a study that cuts across culture, gender, generation and time and is seen as a cross-cultural psychobiographical study (as emphasised by Schultz, 2005d), although the concept of culture is not the main focus of research. The study contributes to multifaceted research in psychology, reunifying different approaches and aspects from personal psychology, via developmental psychology to cross-cultural psychology within itself.

9.6.2 The Holistic Wellness Model Re-Examined

The theoretical background of holistic wellness will be discussed in the light of Paulo Coelho’s life and creative works.

The HWM was chosen as a theoretical model because of its integrativeness, its multidimensionality and its synergetic approach. Holistic wellness was viewed within the frame of positive psychology (Roscoe, 2009) and it was seen as a basis for positive functioning. With regard to Paulo Coelho’s life, it can be emphasised that his strong holistic wellness, which is balanced by life tasks and life forces, contributed to his optimal functioning (Roscoe, 2009) – which is also connected to personal responsibility and motivation – as a writer. The strong holistic wellness in Paulo Coelho seems to contribute positively to his creativity and writing.

The findings show that Coelho strives for a personal “wholeness”, which according to early approaches is part of wellness and well-being (Sweeney, 2009). As

described by Myers (2009), holistic wellness integrates physical, psychological and spiritual aspects. Coelho addresses all three aspects of holistic wellness through, for example, walking, archery and aikido (physical), deep reflection and exchange of ideas with his wife (psychological) and a deep connection to God, nature and RAM (spiritual).

As emphasised by Hettler (1984, p. 14) wellness is “an active process through which people become aware of, and make choices toward a more successful existence”. This is true for Paulo Coelho, too. His autobiographical accounts show that Coelho feels well, positive, successful and in contact with positively perceived emotions when he is active, aware and able to make (intuitive) decisions that are aligned with his emotions and beliefs.

Myers et al. (2000) developed their model of wellness as a multidimensional, synergetic wellness construct with a holistic and integrative focus (Sect. 4.3). Spirituality is conceived as the foundation of wellness and the individual is viewed as the central point of subjective focus of wellness. Findings show that spirituality is definitely the central point of Paulo Coelho’s wellness. However, spirituality does not contribute to Coelho’s wellness only, but also – if unfulfilled, unsatisfying or unfitting in its way of conduct – to ill-health. With regard to Coelho’s life and creative work, his subjective wellness seems to be strongly interrelated to spirituality, which is connected to the life task self-direction and love and the life forces of religion and family.

9.6.2.1 Basics of the Holistic Wellness Model in This Study

According to Moe et al. (2012, p. 2), Adler’s assumptions include “(a) an innate striving for superiority or mastery and (b) a social interest in the development of others’ well-being”. In Paulo Coelho an innate striving for superiority and mastery is inherent – when he was, for example not chosen for the trip to the US, he felt he was too good to be chosen to go to such a country (Morais, 2009). His self-conscious belief in himself provides him with strength and faith in self-mastery and superiority. However, the second assumption with regard to strong social interest in the development of others’ well-being is not evident in the findings on Coelho.

According to Adler (1927), the optimal development of the individual is based on a constructive lifestyle. For most of Paulo Coelho’s life, it can be said that he led a constructive lifestyle. Only during a few periods, a different lifestyle was chosen that appeared to be less constructive, for example the time when he took drugs (Morais, 2009).

In this revision process, the HWM and the WOW are revised.

9.6.2.2 Holistic Wellness and the Wheel of Wellness in This Study

The WOW theory developed over years; however, in this study, the final and most recent one is used (Myers et al., 2000). It is profoundly based on spirituality as the foundation of wellness (Moe, Perera-Diltz, & Rodriguez, 2012; Myers & Sweeney,

2007). This is also true for Paulo Coelho's holistic wellness, which is based on the core concept of spirituality. For Coelho, spirituality is defined by purpose, meaning, sense of connection and optimism, as described by Sweeney and Witmer (1991), as well as religious or spiritual beliefs and practices (Myers & Sweeney, 2007).

Coelho's WOW is different from that of Myers and Sweeney (2007): Around the centre of spirituality, Coelho's WOW includes self-direction and love. Self-direction is thus mainly influenced by sense of worth, sense of control, realistic belief, emotional awareness and coping, problem-solving and creativity and cultural identity across his life span. The other sub-tasks of sense of humour; exercise; nutrition; self-care; stress management and gender identity do not play an outstanding role in Coelho's life.

The assumption of Myers and Sweeney (2007) that the function of the 12 sub-life-tasks is to direct the self, while dealing with the other three life tasks of work and leisure, friendship, and love, can be redefined. In the HWM that is developed on the basis of Myers and Sweeney's model (2007), it is assumed that all five layers are systemically interrelated and not that the function of the sub-life-tasks is to direct the self only.

With regard to Coelho's holistic wellness, it appears that spirituality is the core life task, followed by self-direction and love. Self-direction is mainly based on six sub-life-tasks.

The life forces that are important to Coelho are mainly defined by the life forces of family and religion and partly by community. The other life forces, such as media, government, education, business and industry, do not seem to have as much impact on Coelho.

The impact of global events is hardly described in any of the data analysed. It rather seems that the focus on the present moment (direct, self-related local events) and the ability to express himself through writing (holistic self-expression and reflection) are mainly important for Coelho's holistic wellness.

Fig. 9.9 provides an overview of the redefined holistic wellness of Coelho, which is based on the model of Myers and Sweeney (2007)

Outstanding in the model on Paulo Coelho's holistic wellness is that global events are replaced by local events and that the focus on the self is within the present moment. Furthermore, the model of Myers and Sweeney (2007), which focuses on holistic wellness in terms of life tasks, life forces and global events, is reduced to three main life tasks (with the core life task of spirituality, followed by self-direction and love) and to two to three life forces (family and religion (partly community)).

9.6.2.3 Life Tasks Revised

The holistic wellness of Coelho is strongly influenced by holistic life activities, such as writing, which is an activity that includes life tasks, life forces and local events (self-focus and self-reflection). Figure 9.9 shows the innovations with regard to the holistic wellness based on the psychobiographical analysis. It is seen as an ecological, systemically and interactively interlinked model, as described by Myers and Sweeney (2007).

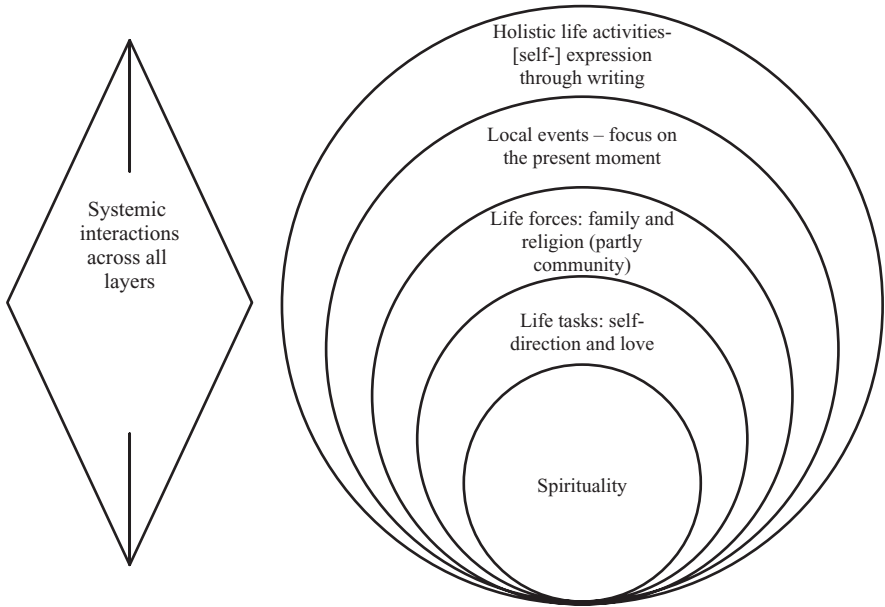


Fig. 9.9 The holistic wellness model of Paulo Coelho (Source: Researcher’s own construction)

Spirituality

Spirituality encompasses life-enhancing benefits, including human dignity, human rights and reverence for life (Witmer & Sweeney, 1992) and has a positive impact on wellness if well established (Myers & Sweeney, 2008). The findings on Coelho support these assumptions: In the phase in which Coelho feels spiritually settled, this feeling affects his subjective well-being positively. At the same time, spirituality in Coelho is bound to purposiveness in life and optimism, as highlighted by Nortjé, Fouché, and Gogo (2013). The findings on Coelho emphasise – like previous research – that spirituality in itself is a strong health resource (Larson & Larson, 2003; Mayer, 2011; Mayer & Krause, 2013; Temane & Wissing, 2006), which is interlinked with the construction of meaningfulness across the life span (Mayer & Viviers, 2014b). Myers et al. (2000, p. 9) define spirituality as the “awareness of a being or force that transcends the material aspects of life and gives a deep sense of wholeness or connectedness to the universe”, which is supported by the findings of this study.

Findings on Coelho further show that spirituality is multidimensional and multi-layered (as emphasised previously by Fouché, 1999) and connects the subjective experience of the individual with oneself, others and the entire universe (as highlighted by Krishnakumar and Neck, 2002). Spirituality is an inclusive and unifying concept that connects Coelho and the individual in general to a higher power (Koch, 1998). It is part of the life-long process of identity formation and contributes to experiencing wholeness (Fuqon & Mustofar, 2014), as shown in the findings on

Coelho's life and creative works. Coelho defines moving beyond the self as an opportunity to search for meaning and belonging (as previously stated by Hill et al., 2000).

Mosak and Dreikurs (2000) define – based on the Adlerian concept – spirituality in terms of five dimensions, which have been discussed with regard to the findings in this study in Chaps. 7 and 8, including the description of God, the choice of practice of religion, the conceptualisation of humankind, the consideration of the nature of immortality and the contemplation of the presence and nature of meaning in life.

Self-Direction and the Twelve Sub-tasks

For Coelho, self-direction is highly important: Being able to direct, control and manage the self in ways that are self-enhancing within the boundaries and defined norms of the social group or society (Witmer & Sweeney, 1992). With regard to Coelho, boundaries are overcome and defined norms of the social group or society are rejected. Self-direction and the 12 sub-tasks have been discussed in terms of Coelho's life and will not be discussed here again. They show that Paulo Coelho is mainly directed by his idea of becoming a famous writer, "in pursuit of long-term goals" (Myers et al., 2000, p. 353). As highlighted by Bandura (2005), self-direction in Coelho is associated with the acquisition of knowledge, skills, the achievement of potential and the level of self-development. Coelho's high degree of self-direction is interlinked with his strong and enduring self-development.

Work and Leisure

Work and leisure are defined as an "opportunity for pleasurable experiences that are intrinsically satisfying and provide a sense of accomplishment" (Myers et al., 2000, p. 256). This is true for Paulo Coelho as well: He has highlighted that work is only meaningful when there is time for self-reflection and when work serves as a pleasurable, satisfying experience. Accomplishment is also important for Coelho (Morais, 2009). Meaningfulness and work are for Coelho interlinked, as found in other recently conducted studies (Mayer et al., 2015).

In the context of Witmer and Sweeney's (1992) theoretical frame, work includes activities such as home-making, volunteer work and child rearing, as well as paid work. According to this definition, writing is "work" and supports Coelho economically and psychologically (Witmer & Sweeney, 1992). As referred to by Sweeney and Witmer (1991), inability to fulfil this life task might be health-threatening (Sweeney & Witmer, 1991) and individuals who are unable to "work" might struggle psychologically and economically (Witmer & Sweeney, 1992). Findings show that without the work of the writer, Coelho feels depressed, frustrated and in deep crisis.

This life-task of work includes the leisure that is related to leisure-time activities, such as physical activities, creative work and social engagements, which all have a

positive effect on emotional well-being and wellness (Myers & Sweeney, 2008; Witmer & Sweeney, 1992). Coelho's work and leisure time cannot be distinguished, because his work as such is already creative and his so-called leisure activities, such as archery or walking, can also be seen as part of his work, since he uses those activities as preparation times of reflection and focusing. It is therefore suggested that the concept of work and leisure in the model be changed; concepts of work and leisure should either be distinguished more clearly from each other and thus become more distinct, or they should be integrated into one concept. It seems that the definitions of the concepts at this point are not distinguished enough to provide a solid foundation for a clear analysis of work on the one hand and leisure on the other hand, since the concepts seem to melt into each other.

Friendship

The life task friendship is related to all social interactions, as well as social connectedness, which is experienced on an individual, communal or collective level. The findings of this study show that friendship in the life of Paulo Coelho is, in comparison with the other life tasks, not particularly important. Coelho refers to friendship in the context of work and practical support, rather than in the context of trusting personal interrelationships.

Love

Love in the life of Paulo Coelho is very important and defined and differentiated in terms of *philos*, *eros* and *agape* (Coelho, 2003b). The theory of Witmer and Sweeney (1992) does not differentiate between different forms of love, but is rather seen as including intimate and cooperative aspects, long-term commitment and self-disclosure. These characteristics could be found in the love relationships of Paulo Coelho and therefore the love relationships can be defined as basically healthy (according to Myers et al., 2000, Chap. 7).

Love contributes to wellness and is defined as one of the most important aspects of social support (Myers et al., 2000). This is shown in the findings on Paulo Coelho, particularly with regard to the relationship between Paulo Coelho and Cristina that fulfils the values of shared cooperation and problem-solving, clear roles, commitment to the family and effective communication, as defined by Witmer and Sweeney (1992) and as emphasised by Coelho. Healthy family relationships are based on appreciation, shared interest and values, social connectedness and spending time together (Myers et al., 2000). These characteristics could be found between Coelho and Cristina, more than in his two previous marriages and love relationships with girlfriends. It is suggested that different forms of love should be included in the theory. By providing these differentiated forms, an analysis on love relationships could provide more detailed information.

9.6.2.4 Life Forces and Global Events Reassessed

Sweeney and Witmer (1991) and Witmer and Sweeney (1992) emphasise that managing the five life-tasks is connected to the external life forces. For Coelho, family and religion are the most important life forces. A few comments will be made on the theoretical background of the life forces and their reflection in the findings.

Family

DeFrain and Asay (2007) highlight that families across cultures and around the world seem to be quite similar in terms of what is defined as a strong family: they are characterised by showing appreciation and affection, commitment, positive communication, enjoyable times together, spiritual well-being and the ability to manage stress and crisis effectively. Strong families are associated as a resilient institution in which individuals grow and support each other and thereby increase health and well-being (DeFrain & Asay, 2007). The findings show that Coelho's family seemed to be supportive of him to a certain degree in terms of commitment. However, particularly from Coelho's teenage years onwards, communication with his parents was difficult. Appreciation and affection for Coelho's work was ultimately not shown by his family, although they attended his theatre plays, followed his success later in his life and asked his forgiveness for their mistakes. Coelho did not feel that his support came from his parents, but rather from his extended family and he did not always feel a strong sense of belonging (Morais, 2009), which is important for strong families (Armstrong, Birnie-Lefcovitch, and Ungar, 2005).

Religion

As stated by Witmer and Sweeney (1992), religion is seen as a life force. It is a source of well-being, contributes to social harmony and meaning in life, hope and inner peace, as well as certain values (Witmer & Sweeney, 1992). With regard to Paulo Coelho, religion was a life force, particularly in his early childhood (having parents with a strong belief and religion) and then again later in life from the time he met Cristina. Religion became a strong positive life force when Coelho joined RAM (Arias, 2001; Coelho, 2003b; Morais, 2009), after it had been a rather difficult topic to deal with during his teenage years.

The world religions acknowledge a higher being or higher power and have reverence for human life, as Paulo Coelho does (Arias, 2001; Coelho, 2003b, 2011; Morais, 2009), being a Christian. It is common sense that strong meaningfulness based on religion and spirituality contributes positively to health and well-being (Mayer, 2011, 2012). As found in Mayer (2011, 2012), religion can also be experienced as a negative life force, not providing holistic wellness for Coelho. He associated religion negatively with strictness, guilt and a punishing God. In middle and later adulthood, spirituality seemed to be more important than religion and provided him with strong wellness.

Education

Witmer and Sweeney (1992) highlight that education influences health, well-being and wellness by affecting life-style decisions. Cohen (2006) points out that education needs to include academic learning, as well as the development of emotional, social and ethical competences to contribute to overall health and well-being. Educational environments that foster participation, meaningfulness, manageability and comprehensibility increase a sense of coherence and through that mental health and well-being in learners and educators (Mayer & Boness, 2011b). These insights are supported by the findings on Paulo Coelho. For Coelho, formal school education was not a source of holistic well-being, particularly since it is mainly connected to academic learning, without focusing on socio-emotional skills and a participative approach. Throughout his life, Coelho emphasised that education only makes sense when it is meaningful for the individual, helping to fulfil the individual's dreams and ideas. Coelho is highly critical of the formal educational system (school, as well as university), as shown throughout the data. Coelho values informal education, such as that experienced through travelling or social contacts. Education therefore needs to be defined with regard to Paulo Coelho in a broad way, including formal and informal education (see Chap. 7). The definition provided by Witmer and Sweeney is too narrow with regard to the analysis of the data on Coelho.

Community

Witmer and Sweeney (1992) refer to community as a major life force that affects health and well-being through social institutions. This is also true of Paulo Coelho. However, Coelho did not focus on becoming part of mainstream communities, such as the Jesuits or the university. He sought to become part of communities that only served his interests and his development, such as the theatre community or the reading and literary club Rota 15. Through those communities, Coelho experienced belonging and independence simultaneously (see Chap. 7). The findings on Paulo Coelho support the assumption of Antonovsky (1996) that belonging to a community can have a positive impact on the health and well-being of an individual: After his first admission to the mental hospital, he reconnected with his theatre and stage production community, which provided him with strength, well-being, feelings of belonging and meaningfulness. However, being part of other communities, such as the Jesuit school, rather had a negative impact on Coelho, because of his subjective impression that belonging to that community did not serve his personal interests and did not allow him enough independence (see Chap. 7).

Media

Witmer and Sweeney (1992) highlight that the media influence the individual in terms of needs, beliefs, priorities, values and norms, as well as attitudes and desires. The media did play a particular role in Coelho's life, particularly when one focuses

on the development of his internet community. Coelho used the media to communicate with his audience and readership (Morais, 2009) and the media formed an important part of his celebrity life and his success and self-pirating concept (Bosman, 2011; Coelho, 2006, 2014a). As Stree Gold, and Manning (1997) highlight, the media contribute to health and well-being when they fulfil a health-enhancing role, using interactive technology tools and relating to positive concepts. This is true for Paulo Coelho, with regard to his success, his contact with his readership and his ability to promote his work online. The media seem to have had a wellness-related impact on Coelho, as impressively referred to with regard to his sixtieth birthday (Chap. 7).

Government

The data on Paulo Coelho do not provide much insight on the impact of government policies and practices. Only during selected incidents in Coelho's life did the government have a direct impact on his wellness: In the 1970s, Coelho stated that he had gone on a trip to the US to flee from the Brazilian dictatorship. He was later kidnapped and tortured by Brazilian militia (Morais, 2009) and was highly irritated in 2014 with the Brazilian government's decision on the selection of Brazilian authors being sent to the Frankfurt book fair (Deutsche Presse Agentur, 2014). All the contacts with and references to the Brazilian government are experienced and judged as negative. Coelho is very critical about government policies and practices with regard to Brazil. He was also concerned about the US government's warfare policy under President Bush and criticised that publicly. Governmental warfare policy can also be seen as having a negative impact on Coelho's life.

Business or Industry

Organisations, businesses or industry, can affect the wellness of employees by creating healthy work environments that empower individuals and foster them (Mayer, 2011; Mayer & Boness, 2011a, 2013). In the case of Paulo Coelho, the work environment is chosen by himself: As a writer, Coelho works from home or from any other place where he enjoys working. He is not bound to any particular workplace in an organisation. He is only bound to the contracts with his publishers, which he changes when he is unhappy with their cooperation (Coelho, 2011; Morais, 2009). With regard to business and industry, it can be said that Coelho is an independently working individual who does not necessarily respect the rules of the industry (see self-piracy), but rather creates his own rules within the business and industry.

Global Events

With regard to the WOW, life tasks and life forces are connected to global events, which relate to global environmental issues (Sweeney, 1998). For Coelho, these global issues do not play a huge role. Coelho (2014a, b) loves the new technology and the internet, providing a huge variety of global information. However, there are hardly any references in the data to concrete global events and their impact on Paulo Coelho. The influence of global networks, the media and the internet affects the individual, according to Sweeney. Coelho highlights that he spends hours on the internet every day; however, the impact of global events (Myers, Willse, & Villalba, 2011) is either rather minimal in his life or not described in the data analysed.

9.6.2.5 The Value of the Holistic Wellness Model Reconsidered

The HWM has been used previously in psychobiographical research. Its value for this study is reassessed as follows:

1. The study is a positive psychology study within the qualitative, psychobiographical context and contributes to positive psychology theory and the psychobiographical research frame. It moves from psychopathology towards positive psychology in psychobiography.
2. It is a study that describes, explains and interprets holistic wellness throughout the life of an individual, focusing on the longitudinal development of Paulo Coelho's life from a positive psychology psychobiographical perspective.
3. This psychobiographical study revises and develops the HWM theoretically (as highlighted by Nel, 2013).
4. By using the HWM, the study contributes to a multidimensional framework of the model (Fouché, 1999).
5. The study allows understanding of Paulo Coelho's holistic wellness across his life span (as highlighted by Nel, 2013).
6. It provides new insight on spirituality as a core issue of wellness in Paulo Coelho (as mentioned by Burnell, 2013).
7. This study shows the dynamics of holistic wellness in Paulo Coelho, including high and lower levels of holistic wellness (as mentioned by Fouché, 1999) throughout Coelho's life, changing with regard to the focus of holistic wellness, its strength and the dimensions, life tasks and life forces.

The study is of value to explore holistic wellness in depth in psychobiographical research, as outlined above. However, critical aspects need to be considered as well.

9.6.2.6 Critical Aspects of the Holistic Wellness Model in This Study

First of all, the study is – with regard to holistic wellness in the life of Paulo Coelho – limited to one particular model of wellness, namely the HWM. It is therefore reductionist with regard to choosing only one theory of holistic wellness. By using this theory and applying it to the life of Paulo Coelho, the study is limited with regard to its focus on the life of Coelho and the data of analysis chosen.

Like any other positive psychology study, this study can be criticised in terms of reductionism and the neglect of socio-historical, cultural and economic factors, which are not primarily addressed (Fouché, 1999). At the end of this study, it must be highlighted that the study's focus is on the individual, Paulo Coelho, and not as much on the influence of the socio-historical context. The HWM is limited with regard to the wellness indicators regarding cultural background, gender or developmental stages and lack of the exploratory framework of holistic wellness development, as already mentioned by Fouché. These aspects have been reflected with regard to the influence and bias of the researcher and with regard to their limitations in the study.

The model is limited to the selected life tasks, forces and global events and can be criticised for this focus, which defines spirituality as the core. This is valuable for the study on Paulo Coelho, whose life focus is on spirituality – however, this focus also limits the view on the person. The concepts of meaningfulness (also mentioned by Nel, 2013) and vocation in life are not explicitly mentioned as life tasks in the HWM. This can be seen as a limitation. However, these two limitations are addressed through the FDT in this study.

Myers and Sweeney (2008) highlight that the values in the HWM tend to be universal and transcend time and culture and that culture influences holistic wellness (Myers et al., 2000; Mayer & Geldenhuys, 2014; Mayer & Viviers, 2014a). This study, however, could not explore the connection between holistic wellness, universal concepts and cultural background in depth. It therefore offers limited conclusions regarding holistic wellness and culture in Coelho's life.

9.6.3 Faith Development Theory Reconsidered

This psychobiographical study contributes to psychological and interdisciplinary research on faith development, as emphasised by Heywood (2008) and to qualitative-empirical research (as described by Streib, 2005) from South Africa on FDT. This study further expands the predominant use of the faith development instrument as described in the manual (Moseley, Jarvis, & Fowler, 1986, 1993), by using the theory in a qualitative, psychobiographical way, applying it across the life span of a selected individual.

Originally, FDT was developed to “map” faith development to provide new ideas to pastoral and educational practices (Coyle, 2011). This study “maps” the faith development of the writer Paulo Coelho to provide knowledge on the faith develop-

ment of this extraordinary and successful person. The knowledge gained provides ideas for educational practice by interconnecting faith development, success, achievement, health and career in education. Strong faith leads to perseverance in following the aims and purpose in life, which might lead to success in the field of interest. The development of faith, the constantly new exploration of the relationship of the self and God, might lead to new perceptions, intuitive ideas, career decisions, success and wellness. Achievement is influenced by faith in self-mastery and intuition, a vision and the perseverance to work for the idea, success and the expected achievement.

FDT was viewed as a framework for understanding “how the Higher Being impacts on core values, beliefs and meanings in the life of individuals and in their relationships with others” (Fowler & Dell, 2004, p. 17). This study contributes to this theoretical question in that it uncovers core values in the life of Paulo Coelho, the transformations of belief across his life and the meanings in his life, as well as relationships with others.

According to Fowler (1986), the stage theory claims to identify and explicate fundamental underlying structures that shape the development of an individual throughout his/her lifetime. This study emphasises developmental processes of faith in Paulo Coelho’s life and selected books. Fowler claims that the faith development stages are universal and independent of culture. This assumption cannot be supported entirely. However, this study shows that the stages of faith development are present in the writer with a Brazilian upper middle class background. It must be kept in mind that Paulo Coelho was influenced through the Jesuit tradition of St Ignatius (see Chap. 3), as was Fowler, who was introduced to the spiritual exercise of St Ignatius (see Chap. 5). A similar educational background during Coelho’s childhood and during Fowler’s time of research might have influenced the development of these structures. At the same time, the findings show that there are also at least two developments in Paulo Coelho that do not conform to the theory applied. Coelho seems to reflect and to re-evaluate his development repeatedly over the years. Therefore, it is argued that stages reached need to be reassessed, re-evaluated and refined after someone has passed them.

9.6.3.1 Redefining Faith – Paulo Coelho’s Faithful Mode of Intuition

As Niebuhr (1960) states, Coelho regards faith as a possibility to find meaning in life, by trusting in a higher force and a personal legend, a personal dream and the calling of God. Coelho’s idea is seen in the way of Fowler’s “human faith” (Nelson, 1992), which is humanistic, providing a possibility of “meeting life” (Fowler, 1986).

According to Elifson and Stone (1985, p. 27), “Meaning-making is dependent on the developmental stage” and is an orientation of the person, his/her purpose and goal, hopes and strivings, thoughts and actions. Coelho constructs meaningfulness according to developmental stages (Chaps. 7 and 8), his life’s purpose, his personal goal to become a writer, the call of God, his hopes and his desires, his failures and his coping strategies, his thoughts and actions, and environmental influences.

Paulo Coelho's faithful mode of intuition

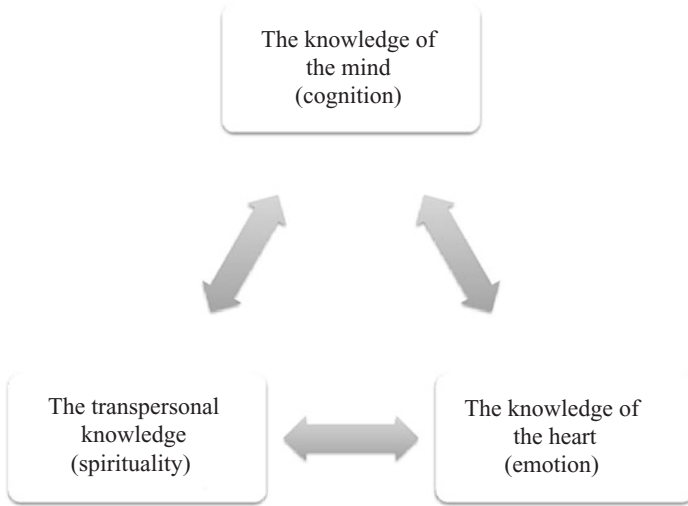


Fig. 9.10 Paulo Coelho's faithful mode of intuition (Source: Researcher's own construction)

According to Fowler and Keen (1978, p. 1), “anyone not about to kill himself lives by faith” and has a heart that rests somewhere. Coelho has lived through several emotional crises and doubts referring to faith, meaningfulness and his calling, but did not commit suicide. Therefore, he lives by faith. The assumption of Fowler (1980) is supported that the writer's heart rests in his faith and meaningfulness, constructing something between the individual and God. For Coelho, the mode of “knowing and being” (Fowler, 1980) is a faithful mode that is based on intuitive, interlinked knowledge that consists of the mind (cognition), the heart (emotion) and the transpersonal connection (spirituality). This faithful mode of intuition shapes Paulo Coelho's convictions and assumptions and composes a sense of the world with regard to character, pattern and unity (Fowler, 1980) (Fig. 9.10).

As for Fowler (2004), faith has a functional and structural form for Paulo Coelho: It includes different dynamics of faith in many traditions that influence the writer's beliefs and decisions. The findings show that Coelho's actions are strongly influenced by his faith and his changing beliefs, as indicated by Fowler (1981), supporting the creation of a form of coherence in the writer's life and providing meaning (Fowler, 1986). The findings on Coelho show that faith strongly affects the writer's life and the interpretation of the happenings. In Fowler's words (1981, p. 16): Paulo Coelho's life is strongly influenced by “faithing”, it is a central aspect of Coelho's life orientation and is interpreted (by Fowler, 1981) as a “core element” in the writer's character or personality.

The data strongly support Fowler's (1986, p. 37) assumption that faith develops in human beings when they grow older and continue to believe in the same things, but believe in them in a different way. The findings show that the way Coelho

believes changed in its detail, but not in its basis of believing in God. As Fowler and Dell (2004) point out, faith involves the heart (will), a commitment of loyalty and trust. The findings on Coelho (2011) show that becoming the king of his kingdom involves his passion and heart, his commitment, loyalty and trust. The findings support Fowler's (1981) assumption that faith always has an individual (his personal urge to explore the spiritual realm), as well as a social component (his parents, his wife).

9.6.3.2 Basic Assumptions in Faith Development Theory Revised

Fowler (1981) highlights "faith-as-a-process", influenced by the life context and experiences. The findings show that Coelho's faith is influenced by his direct life forces, but not so much by global events.

Coelho's knowledge is strongly based on his commitment and faith (as explained by Fowler, 2004) and influences the basic core values that he follows. Faith serves for Coelho as a copying strategy to deal with daily challenges (Fowler & Dell, 2004), to create meaning and to fulfil his life dream of becoming a writer (Arias, 2001; Coelho, 2003b, 2011; Morais, 2009).

Fowler (1987, p. 55) states that "The emergence of awareness, of reflective consciousness and eventually of various kinds of self-reflectiveness, comes in humans as a gradual and difficult sequence of developmental construction" (Fowler, 1987, p. 55). This awareness and self-reflectiveness develops early and strongly in Coelho throughout his life and is expressed in his autobiographical works.

As Astley (2009) highlights, the theory concentrates on faith as a form, rather than on faith as a content (the "how" of faith). This study, however, emphasises the content of Paulo Coelho's faith while analysing its form and the way in which it has developed across his life span. Therefore, it is argued that by applying Fowler's life span theory, the "how" and the "what" are addressed in this study.

9.6.3.3 Influencing Constructive Dimensions of Faith Development Theory Revised

Focusing on the seven influencing constructive dimensions of FDT presented in Chap. 5 (Elifson & Stone, 1985, pp. 27–31), it can be summarised that the findings on Coelho show that his logic includes a dialogical form of reasoning that is based upon the understanding that ideas fit into more than one category. As suggested by Fowler (1981), the person, here Coelho, moves from a "me-centred perspective" to a more social perspective (Elifson & Stone, 1985, p. 28). With regard to the development of moral judgement, Coelho is hardly dependent on the "nature of the claims that others have" (Elifson & Stone, 1985, p. 28) that are not weighted strongly. This is only the case in terms of critics of his works. Morais (2009) emphasises that Coelho does not respond well to negative criticism.

The dimension social awareness and its impact are important in Coelho's life: He values his family and others without the boundaries of immediate familial, racial, social or religious communities (as stated by Elifson and Stone, 1985, p. 30). He is empathetic in exploring the perspectives of others and presenting them in his creative works (as stated by Elifson and Stone, 1985, p. 30). However, it is an open question whether Coelho applies his empathetic ability in his life on a daily basis. Selected incidents show that he seems to be self-focused rather than empathetic (see Sect. 7.3).

With regard to the locus of authority (Elifson & Stone, 1985, p. 30), individuals learn to question authorities as well as personal experiences and external evidence of judging authorities are balanced. Coelho has been highly critical of authorities from his childhood onwards and does not accept them easily (Chap. 3). He rather placed the locus of authority within himself from an early age.

Elifson and Stone (1985, p. 30) see the world view changing from an episodic, to a narrative, towards a symbolic and conceptual one. This process is reflected in Coelho's development; he finally acquires a symbolic and conceptual worldview. Individuals move from the interpretation of random and disconnected events towards a perception of coherence and meaning in events, leading to world coherence. Coelho's striving for world coherence experiences (at least from the experience in Dachau onwards, see Chap. 3) seems connected and meaningful. In retrospect, the crises of his teenage years, his 20s and early 30s fall into place, preparing him for writing and living his dream. Coelho's struggles are understood as necessary steps of his faith development, the conscious awareness of his dream, its implementation and the developing relationship with God. According to Elifson and Stone (1985, p. 30), the individual becomes part of all the experiences lived through (Elifson & Stone, 1985, p. 30); he becomes a writer by applying his previous experiences in the processes of writing. Fowler (2004, p. 413) concludes that a form of world coherence includes the ability to reconstruct "a coherent and meaningful account of the world." Coelho constantly reconstructs and shares in his works this subjective, revised and constantly newly constructed account of the world. He shares the recognition of coherence, the meaningfulness and the ability of living his dream while the reader identifies with his personal journey (Coelho, 2003b).

Finally, symbols are understood and used, symbols being experienced as emotional and/or conceptually powerful (Elifson & Stone, 1985, p. 31). Coelho uses many symbols throughout the reconstruction of his identity in his autobiographical accounts (e.g. the sword in "The pilgrimage"). However, he also uses symbols to reconstruct himself in his life (e.g. taking his saints wherever he goes, see "Aleph"). The symbols are connected to emotional descriptions in his autobiographical accounts and part of who he is (e.g. Coelho, 2011). The symbols connect with the reader on a deeper level and are messengers between the world and the spiritual, inducing deep reflections, emotional stability as well as initiation and belonging.

9.6.3.4 Fowlers' Stages of Faith Development Theory Reconsidered

The content and form of the faith development stages in the life of Coelho are analysed and discussed in Sect. 7.6 and summarised in Sect. 9.5.2. The stages occurring in Paulo Coelho's life are similar to the descriptions and the developmental stages of cognitive structures in the life of individuals. Findings show that once the stages are reached, they are not necessarily researched for ever. Coelho revises, refines and reconstructs previously reached stages at later points in his life by consciously deepening his faith. The "stages" are rather "circles" that are deepened with each revision process. The possible revision of stages needs to be reflected in the theory.

Fowler (1981, p. 101), defines later stages as more comprehensive and adequate than earlier stages of faith development. This is true for the later stages reached by Coelho. The last stage, which is described as philosophical and theological traditions and commitments (Astley, 2009, p. 5) is not reached by Coelho. The findings support the assumption that each stage level allows for the development of greater self-knowledge and greater intimacy with God. However, the findings do not provide information on the assumption of Fowler (1981, 1987) on whether the stages reached allow for greater intimacy with others (Fowler, 1981, 1987). While developing through these stages, human beings develop a "disposition of faith" (Fowler, 1987, p.56) which involves both cognitive and emotional aspects of the self. Coelho seems to explore faith on cognitive and emotional levels, supporting Fowler's assumption (1987).

9.6.3.5 Vocation in Life Revised

The findings (Sect. 9.6.3.5) show that vocation in life affects Coelho unconsciously during childhood and consciously from his teenage years. His vocation shapes many aspects in his life and is connected to relationships, work, resources and his private life, as pointed out by Fowler (1984). The stages of vocation in young, middle and late adulthood could also be found in Coelho's life. However, the aspect of caring for others, the environment, the government, justice and lawfulness in societies does not play an outstanding role. Coelho mainly refers to God's call with regard to the liberation of socio-economic and political ideologies (e.g. plagiarising his own work, focus on ideologies, not on materialism etc.), but for him, God's call seems to be his primary connection to writing, self-expression, the spreading of his belief, spirituality and faith. While the dimensions of Fowler (1987) are primarily socially and collectively anchored, Coelho's vocation is highly individualised.

The theory of Fowler (1981, 1987) needs to be extended by referring not only to social-collective aspects, but also to individually based vocations that are founded in self-expression. The social dimension only seems to be too limiting in the context of Coelho. If Coelho's writing is seen as a collective or social act, it might be seen too as an act of self-creation, self-liberation, self-exploration and therefore as a relationship with God to promote freedom, self-creation and individualism. An expansion of Fowler's theory (1987) could therefore include a fourth dimension of

vocation in life with regard to the relationship with God for freedom, self-creation and individualism.

This relationship with God includes involvement with liberation (Fowler, 1987) to transform society towards increased holistic wellness of the individual and society within the framework of God's call.

The findings do not support Burnell's assumption (2013) that this vocation is connected to solidarity with the oppressed and rejected, withdrawal from supporting forces that suppress others, as well as liberation from egocentric motives of using power, purpose, significance and security in order to participate in liberation movements. Vocation, as seen in Coelho, can be highly individualised and self-related.

9.6.3.6 Contribution to Empirical Research in Faith Development Theory

Empirical studies that use FDT are quantitative in methodology and Streib (2005) argues for more content-analytical procedures using FDT, as this research study does: It contributes to the highly heterogeneous research on faith development. As Fowler (2004) indicated, by studying the development of faith, understanding of the concept of faith improves and the impact of faith in the life of a person is explored. This is true for this study: It contributes to the understanding of developmental theories, their systemic contextualisations and the idea of a kind of circular development.

Streib (2005, p. 104) emphasises that structural evaluation is the key to FDT; Fowler (1981), includes a variety of factors, such as "life history and event markers, contents of faith, dynamics of the unconscious or the regio-cultural force field", which are not evaluated explicitly. This study used a structural content-analysis approach that integrated the life history of Coelho, the transformation of content of faith, the highlighting of event markers and the description of unconscious and cultural aspects and built on previous qualitative research studies (Bolen, 1994; Cowden, 1992; Pendler, 2000; Real, 1995; Watt, 1997).

9.6.3.7 Fowler's Faith Development Theory in Psychobiographies and Writing Reassessed

Coelho (re)constructs his world and life coherence through writing and is not completely restricted in his writing in times of crisis, competing claims or insecurities in moral decision-making, as explained by Elifson and Stone (1985). For Coelho, crises and insecurities rather restrict him to the moment of crisis, but then lead to transformation and the ability to write to reorganise and transform his own, personal worldview (see Chap. 7). Crises and insecurities thus become an engine of writing ability if transformed into constructive energy through a resilient attitude and the activation of resources.

9.6.3.8 Critical Responses to Faith Development Theory Reflected in this Study

The FDT of Fowler has been criticised extensively (Astley & Francis, 1992; Dykstra & Parks, 1986; Fowler et al., 1991; Streib, 2001c). This study contributes to the idea that faith can be defined as a “meaning-making” process (as in Hughes, 1997, p. 1), which is shown in the findings on Paulo Coelho’s faith development. Critics refer to the focus of faith development being on the “how” of faith rather than the “object of faith” (Hughes, 1997, p. 1). This criticism is not supported here: The study focuses on the structure as well as on the content of faith and takes both into account. The anchor of faith is Coelho’s relationship with God primarily and secondarily with the saints and other magical influences in his life.

Although Fowler’s theory is cognitively based and has been criticised for it (Reich, 2008), it leaves space for the analysis of emotional processes within its theoretical frame, as shown in this study. In Coelho, the emotional descriptions and expressions are addressed – not least through the HWM and the life task self-direction, including emotional awareness.

The gendered bias and the theories’ culture-specificity have been criticised (Coyle, 2011, 288). FDT does not account for gender-specific, particularly female faith development needs (Slee, 2004), which are not addressed in the study. However, Harris (1989) has argued from a feminist perspective that the stages of faith development are fluid, dynamic, non-hierarchical and influenced by emotion, cognition, imagination and relationships. This perspective is supported (as explained before), although the study focuses on a male individual.

It is assumed that faith development depends on cultural and social backgrounds (Elifson & Stone, 1985). However, a problem with regard to theory and culture could not explicitly be found. It can be assumed that since Coelho and Fowler are both influenced by a Christian background and the St Ignatius tradition, there will be overlaps in terms of religious and faith development ideas. Since Coelho grew up in an upper middle class family in Brazil with academic and religious parents, it might be assumed that his cultural values might be relatively similar to the values applied to the FDT by Fowler (1981). Therefore, this study might be criticised as culturally biased by reproducing the stages of faith development in a writer who comes from an upper middle class Brazilian background, with an academic father and a strongly Christian mother. Coelho is seen as influenced by Western cultures (as an international celebrity) and the cultural bias and question of the universality of the theory needs to be explored in a different study (as already emphasised by Ashdown and Gibbons, 2012). This exploration of the influence of culture is beyond the frame of this psychobiographical work and is only briefly addressed (Sect. 9.6.1.4).

By comparing participants from Guatemala and the US, Ashdown and Gibbons (2012) show that participants with a lower level of collectivism among individuals predict higher levels of faith development. This finding is not surprising, since the faith development model describing the transition from lower to higher stages requires the formation of a kind of personal or individual faith (Ashdown & Gibbons,

2012). These findings are supported by this study, since Paulo Coelho, who has been described as strongly individualistic and self-related, displays a high level of faith development throughout his life and a strong faith. This faith development seems to be related to his strong individualistic development, which does not succumb to socio-cultural, political or economic restrictions or values. The development of Paulo Coelho's identity and the development of particularly his writer's identity are strongly interlinked with his faith development (as described previously by Barker, 2005).

Further criticism highlights the neglect of transitional stages in the theory (Hamrick, 1988; Rizzuto, 2001) and the lack of research focusing on longitudinal developments (Smith, 2003). In this study, the information on the transition processes is given to a certain degree and shows that transitions reveal ambivalent processes that are combined with dynamic reflection and analysis, crises and questions. The complex pattern of transitions is not easily described in a stage model and the data on Coelho do not provide this deep information on transitional stages. It is suggested that both transitional periods and the refining of stages that have been achieved need to be researched, as emphasised by Nelson (2002) and that regression is part of stage transition and needs to be included in the faith development stages. In this study, the revisions of stages reached before are called "revisions" rather than "regressions", owing to the fact that the revisions are seen as further and refined developments of faith development and not as regressions, steps back. This supports Streib's (2001a, 2001b) idea that faith development stages include the replication of earlier stages. He emphasises that faith development is not limited to a certain development path, but occurs in multiple ways (Streib, 2003), such as in Coelho with regard to his two outstanding developments beyond the development stages and the "circular" development.

Finally, the theory has been criticised for its insubstantial methodological empirical foundation (Nelson & Aleshire, 1986), as well as for its inflexibility about accommodating postmodern sensibilities (Coyle, 2011). This study contributes to a stronger and deeper manifestation of an empirical foundation of the theory by this single-case hermeneutical study. As Fowler (2004) points out that faith in postmodern times needs to be addressed with the vision of a global faith, the faith of Paulo Coelho can be described as a post-modern construct that turns towards a global spirituality and faith including many different religious aspects.

9.6.4 Combining Holistic Wellness Model and Faith Development Theory in This Study

The combination of the HWM and the FDT is a fruitful theoretical combination in psychobiographical research. Both theories contribute in combination to a complex positive psychological understanding of Paulo Coelho and thereby to wellness and spirituality research in psychobiographies. Both theories were applied successfully

in this study, as in previous studies (Fouché & Van Niekerk, 2010), integrating body, mind and spirit. The topics of holistic wellness and faith could be explored in depth with particular focus on spirituality.

The use of the HWM contributes to the exploration of the emotional aspects in Coelho, which might have been underrepresented in case of the use of the FDT only (see Sect. 9.6.3.8).

The focus on spirituality is emphasised in the HWM, as well as in the FDT, which supports the topic from different theoretical perspectives, emphasising the strong focus of spirituality and faith development in the life and creative works of Coelho, supporting the gaining of in-depth understanding from a structural as well as content-based perspective.

In this study, both theories finally proved suitable for this psychobiographical study on Paulo Coelho, its purpose and aims, for providing the theoretical background of the analysis of a single case across his lifetime.

9.6.5 Methodological Paradigms and Approaches Reconsidered for This Study

The research is based on a psychobiographical study of a single case, the individual Paulo Coelho, from birth to the year 2017, and is contextualised in the hermeneutic tradition. The methodological paradigms and approaches used in this study proved to be suitable for the study. The key principles highlighted by Fourie (1996) were applied, aiming at (a) understanding the subject of research (in the frame of the theories applied), (b) seeing the researcher as a main research instrument (as reflected in Chap. 6 and Sect. 9.9), (c) focusing on interpretation (in the findings section), (d) on subjectivity (as outlined with regard to the qualitative methodology used), (e) and on the process of research (e.g. the revisions of the research assumptions), (f) being flexible in the process of conducting research (e.g. the revisions of the research assumptions) and finally (g) pointing out the contextualisation of the research study (by describing Paulo Coelho's life context). All these key principles were adhered to and contributed to the quality of this research while applying an intuitive focus (Allport, 1929). The reality constructed is the one that exists between the researcher and the researched, whereby the researched combines the individual and creative works (Bulhof, 1982). It is subjective in nature (Bateson, 1987) and self-reflective (Ratner, 2002).

9.6.5.1 Revising Psychobiography as a Case Study Method

Psychobiography currently falls into the hermeneutic traditions in which the author of a text is seen as a “real phenomenon who can be explored and interpreted psychologically” (Kováry, 2011, p. 765). In this case study, Coelho is the author of the texts

Table 9.1 Revision of quality criteria in this study

Qualitative quality criteria	Quality criteria in this study
Credibility and subjectivity	Credibility was reached through: (1) extended engagement in the study; (2) increased understanding of the research topic throughout the study; (3) a clear description of the chain of evidence; (4) the use of multiple sources of evidence; (5) careful handling of the data.
Subjectivity	Subjectivity in this research was acknowledged and reflected with regard to the theories chosen, the methodology applied, and the findings constructed.
Generalisability	Representative generalisability was established with regard to this case study.
Transferability	Transferability was ensured through rich/thick descriptions of contexts, settings and findings.
Dependability	Dependability was ensured through the description of the internal process (reflexivity) regarding conditions and phenomena in this study.
Confirmability	The internal coherence and logical structure within this study was established through the qualitative reporting style, the process of analysis and the explicit methods used.
Rigour	Rigour was established through the structured and disciplined approach to data collection and interpretation.
Creativity	The researcher used her creative potential by flexibly handling the data, reporting data in an artful way, creative meaning-making and using her intuition throughout the entire study process.
Trustworthiness	Trustworthiness was provided through the systematically congruent study in the chosen context and the establishment of the worthiness of the data. It relates to all the other quality criteria as well.

Source: Researcher's own construction

that are analysed and are assumed as real phenomenon. Coelho's life is explored, analysed and interpreted on the level of his biographical life experiences and with regard to his creative work, which are both – as explained by Kováry (2011) – explored and interpreted psychologically as real phenomena, aiming at a deeper understanding of the person and his “artistic creativity” (Kováry, 2011, p. 764), original thinking, creativity, productivity and growth (Howe, 1997) in the context of holistic wellness and faith development. The study aims, as described before (Fouché & Van Niekerk, 2005a) to provide a view on the whole person. However, it has been concluded that this study can only provide a certain view on the person analysed and his life and creative works (see Chaps. 7 and 8). Nevertheless, it does contribute to a deeper and more complex understanding through this single case study, as emphasised by Yin (2009).

9.6.5.2 Revision of Quality Criteria in This Research

The quality criteria (Gummesson, 2000; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Sinkovics, Penz, & Ghauri, 2008; Van der Riet and Durrheim, 2008) need to be revised, as shown in Table 9.1.

Table 9.2 Psychobiography markers revised for this study

Good psychobiography markers	Addressed and extended in this study
Cogency	The decision on cogency in this study lies in the hands of each individual reader; however, the researcher tried to establish “basic interpretive persuasiveness” through the description of the data and the flow in data analysis and interpretation.
Narrative structure – extended to narrative, analytical and creative structure	This study only partly uses a “narrative structure”. Narrative and analytical structures are combined and it is argued that in psychobiographical research, narrative and analytical structures need to be combined with the creative and intuitive potential of the researcher, with creative expressions, the use of narrations, as well as tables, figures and pictures to present the findings in a creative and structured way.
Comprehensiveness	The researcher aimed at establishing comprehensiveness of the life and work of Paulo Coelho through her perspective and aimed at illuminating details and questions of the life analysed.
Data convergence	Data from various sources were used (primary and third person documents, documentaries, creative works etc.) to ensure data convergence.
Sudden coherence	The researcher tried to elucidate the life of Paulo Coelho throughout the study, which is shown in the findings section and the outcome of this study.
Logical soundness	The researcher aimed for logic and soundness throughout the study.
Consistency	General knowledge of human functioning was combined with the information gained from the data for interpretation.
Viability	The researcher aimed to withstand attempts at falsification throughout the study process.

Source: Researcher’s own construction

In parallel to the general quality criteria in qualitative research, the markers of (good) psychobiographical research were referred to.

9.6.5.3 Markers of (Good) Psychobiographical Research Reconsidered for This Study

Revising Schultz’s (2005d, p. 7) markers of “good” and “bad” psychobiographical research, the following can be concluded for this psychobiography (Table 9.2).

In this study, it is argued that three more markers of “good” psychobiography are necessary. However, these “markers” do not refer to the psychobiography as such, but to the researcher’s abilities to conduct psychobiographical research. It is argued that the markers of good psychobiography need to be extended by defined markers of the researcher’s ability without which “good psychobiography markers” cannot be established.

Table 9.3 Researcher's abilities in this study

Abilities of the researcher in psychobiographical research to establish good psychobiography markers	Addressed and extended in this study
Researcher's competences	The psychobiographical study needs a high degree of theoretical, methodological, practical and empirical competence of the researcher. The researcher tried her best to extend her research knowledge, skills, competences and understanding in this research, based on her foundational researcher's competences.
Reflexivity	The researcher reflected on herself throughout the study to ensure a reflexive approach to this psychobiography and the subjectivity that is effective in this study.
Empathy	The researcher needs the ability to understand another person on a deep psychological level. In this study, the researcher aimed at an empathetic understanding of Paulo Coelho through her lenses and perceptions reflected through self-reflexivity.

Source: Researcher's own construction

To conduct a psychobiographical study, the researcher necessarily needs a high degree of ability to conduct good qualitative, psychobiographical research. These abilities of the researcher include a high degree of competence, reflexivity and empathy.

Particularly reflexivity of the researcher is important to self-reflect, to reflect on the thoughts, behaviours, actions and developments of another individual throughout the entire life span and across different phases of life, across gender, culture and time. The ability to do this needs, on the one hand, a huge ability to self-reflect constantly, to prove the researcher's bias and to express this self-reflection to ensure the reader's understanding of the study and the findings from the viewpoint of the researcher. On the other hand, a "good" psychobiographical study needs the researcher's ability to be empathetic with the subject studied. This empathy is needed to understand the other, the analysed person, on a deep, comprehensive, emotional and holistic level and fulfil the markers of good psychobiography (Table 9.3).

After having revised the good markers of psychobiographical studies and the need to establish outstanding researcher's abilities, the research process is reassessed.

9.6.5.4 The Research Process Reassessed

As explained before (Sect. 6.7), the research process of the psychobiography was followed (Elms, 2007) by applying data collection procedures (first- and third-party data documents) and content analysis as a data analysis method (see Sects. 6.8 and

6.9). Data collection and analysis turned out to be suitable for responding to the research aims and purpose.

The psychological theories in this research proved to be suitable with regard to the purpose and aims of this research (see Sect. 9.6).

Referring to the data analysis and interpretation, the basic assumption that each and every individual creates continuity and purpose through a narrative life story is supported by the findings of this psychobiographical work on Paulo Coelho. Particularly the autobiographical narrations of Paulo Coelho contribute to creating his life story and the narrative complexity is a basic unit of identity creation, as suggested by McAdams (2005).

The content analysis of Terre Blanche et al. (2006) proved suitable for the study, particularly in combination with the analysis tools of Alexander's primary indicators of psychological salience and Schultz's prototypical scenes. Alexander's primary indicators of psychological salience and Schultz's prototypical scenes were valuable in identifying key issues in the life of Paulo Coelho and helped the researcher to understand his life in depth (as described by Schultz, 2005b). Most of the categories defined by Alexander and Schultz could be found in the life of Paulo Coelho and the data set. By using the indicators of salience and the prototypical scenes, the data were extracted, prioritised and then analysed. These methods were used to reduce the data and to draw information directly from the data by giving the data a voice to speak. In this study, the categories will not be discussed further or analysed with regard to their applicability, in view of the limited framework of the study. However, it is important to revise these categories of Alexander and Schultz with regard to future psychobiographical studies and their application.

This study combined pre-defined categories in content analysis and combined those with inductive-analytical procedures, which led to the triangulation of methodological approaches, as described by Streib (2005, p. 112).

During the research process, the tentative hypothesis (or pre-assumptions) on Coelho were defined in step 1 of the content analysis process, revised in step 4 and again revised in Sect. 9.4 as finally revised assumptions, which might be used for further studies and research. Through the revision processes the assumptions on the life of Paulo Coelho in terms of holistic wellness and faith developed into more detailed and concrete assumptions, which contributed to a more in-depth understanding and were based on a detailed psychobiographical analysis. The detailed and revised assumptions (forming part of the hermeneutical circle (Dilthey, 1976)) contribute to a comprehensible and holistic understanding of Coelho, as emphasised by Dilthey (1976, p. 254).

Finally, ethical guidelines, principles and practices (as discussed in Sects. 6.5, 6.6, and 6.10) were applied throughout the entire research process and the limitations of the methodology that had been applied were consciously recognised and dealt with (see Sect. 6.11).

9.7 Contribution of the Study

As highlighted by Ponterotto (2014), the main findings need to be summarised in a valuable psychobiographical study, as was done in Sect. 9.5. The research aims and purpose needed to be defined and responded to. The significance of the new findings needed to be emphasised and the contribution made explicit. In the following section the value and contribution of this psychobiographical study on Paulo Coelho are summarised.

Generally, the study provides in-depth knowledge on the life of Paulo Coelho with special regard to his wellness and faith development. It gives the reader a new perspective that is systematically reconstructed through the use of psychological theories. In this work, two theories are integrated (as emphasised by Schultz, 2005a) with regard to a single case, which means that they provide in-depth and detailed insights and understanding of one person. As emphasised by Carlson (1988), this study is used to develop, test and advance the selected theories and to illustrate selected psychological theories, or to gain new conceptual insights and expand theories (Roberts, 2002). This study furthermore addresses the question of personality developments across the life span (as highlighted by Gronn, 1993; Perry, 2012; Sokolovsky, 1996) by exemplifying the life development of Paulo Coelho. It leads to theoretical explanations, influences and impacts on the person's life outcomes (Runyan, 1984) and might provide insights for writers and readers regarding their own development.

This psychobiographical study is of value regarding the researcher and the reader changing perspectives to explore and understand the subject's world. By changing perspective, the researcher and the reader explore and expand themselves further (as mentioned by Uys, 2010). The study is therefore a contribution to personal development regarding a change of perspectives across cultures, gender, generations and professions. By providing new perspectives on how Paulo Coelho interprets the world and develops himself constantly across his lifetime, the reader can explore alternative world views and understand the dynamic nature of personal development.

Finally, the study provides conclusions and recommendations with regard to its purpose, aims and research question. It is a starting point for subsequent psychobiographical studies in the positive psychology and interpretative hermeneutical contexts on writers and artists or extraordinary individuals of other professions. It further on serves as a comprehensive example of an in-depth psychobiographical study for future students and researchers in this field.

9.8 Limitations of This Study

Although this study is of value and contributes to psychobiographical research and the theories applied, it does have limitations. These limitations are outlined in the following section.

The study is bound to a single-case psychobiographical research study. It analyses the life and selected creative works of one single person, Paulo Coelho. The findings and conclusions cannot be generalised in quantitative terms. By focusing on an extraordinary individual, this study follows an elitist approach (Runyan, 1988a) and does not focus on the grass-roots level or on individuals who are unknown or unsuccessful in the global society. This psychobiography is therefore highly subjective, interpretative and non-experimental (Schultz, 2005d, p. 14). It is limited to this subjective-interpretative methodological approach and does not provide objective data on a person, but rather the perspective constructed by the researcher and the researched. Furthermore, this study refers to the quality criteria of qualitative research only (Sects. 6.5 and 6.6) and does not comply with quantitative research criteria or statistical conclusions.

The study is framed and limited by its chosen theoretical and methodological context. According to the study's theoretical and methodological outline, its relevance (as defined by Schultz, 2005a, p. 5) is also limited. It is relevant in the way of referring to research that is "alive" (Elms, 1994, p. 13); however, it is not relevant for a generalised understanding of human beings. It focuses on a single case, which can only provide information on one single individual. This study is not a comparative study and therefore does not compare the individual with other extraordinary individuals.

Moreover, the study's findings rely on first and third-person documents (Allport, 1961) and an in-depth analysis of only two selected creative works. Therefore, the study is limited to the selected literature that was analysed. In this way, the study is reductionist. It is also reductionist by relying on selected data for selected life periods and for certain events and relationships that were experienced and noted for this period of life (as emphasised by Runyan, 1982). The data analysed therefore consciously provide a reductionist view on the individual.

Another limitation of this work is that no direct contact with the subject was established. Because of his fame and celebrity status, it was impossible to establish direct contact with the writer. Furthermore, this study is limited with regard to the fact that Paulo Coelho is still alive and his life could only be analysed from his birth to the year 2017. The study is in this sense "uncompleted" since it does not study the entire life of the writer, but only 70 years of his life.

Finally, this study is culturally and disciplinarily biased in the way that it uses Western psychological theories to analyse an individual who was born and raised in Brazil. None of the theories or methodologies used in this study was developed in the Latin American region or Brazil itself. At the same time the entire structure of this study and its qualitative quality criteria are anchored in Western concepts of psychology. Therefore, certain (socio-cultural) aspects of the life of Paulo Coelho might have been overlooked, biased, interpreted in a certain way or misunderstood. The study might further be limited by gender aspects or generational gaps of the researcher and the researched. Connected to the cultural bias, this study is limited to literature and literature searches that were conducted in English, German and French. Spanish and Portuguese literature was not taken into account. The study is therefore limited with regard to literature written or translated into the three above-mentioned languages.

9.9 Reflections of the Researcher at the End of the Study

My motivation to write this psychobiographical study was based in my own subjective reality as a scientist, therapist, writer and researcher, as explained in Sect. 1.9. At the end of the study I feel strangely familiar with the writer, Paulo Coelho, without having seen him once in my life. After having read so many documents on him, all of his books and many of his documents, articles and comments, the writer seems to be very well known to me, very close. The image that I had held about him several years ago had changed, as emphasised in the quote at the beginning of this chapter (Coelho, 2005), and a new one appeared.

At the end of this study stands a new “story” about the writer Paulo Coelho, about his holistic wellness and his faith development, mirrored by myself. Working through all of the documents on and of Paulo Coelho, analysing the data in the context of the theories and methodologies applied, I am left with mixed feeling on the study and on the subject studied. On the one hand, I am even more fascinated by the phenomenon of Paulo Coelho, his writings and the resources that supported him in becoming such an extraordinary person. On the other hand, I do have even more questions with regard to Paulo Coelho. The key interest in the beginning was the question of the resources that support the writer to cope with life’s challenges and follow his dream. At the end of this study, there are several responses to this question and even more questions. The study showed me that the writer Paulo Coelho has a strong holistic wellness and a strong faith, which both support him in writing and which are both supported through writing. I did expect this, and still I feel this is only half the story.

During the course of the study, I reached clarity on the question, “Why this individual in particular?” (Schultz, 2005b, p. 42). I realised during the conduct of the study that I was fascinated with the writer Paulo Coelho, with his success and his ability to write on the one hand and his ability to market himself on the other hand. Which other artist and writer has such strong management qualities? I was struck by Coelho’s ability to be an artist and his own best manager.

During certain parts of the study, I could feel that I was positively biased towards Paulo Coelho and that I even felt rather “disappointed” when the findings did not agree with my imagined ideal of him. I, for example, struggled with the fact that I felt that Coelho does not create friendships in the way I feel friendships are valuable and important. I also struggled with Coelho’s highly individualistic side, his strong self-interest and the fact that he hardly displayed social care in terms of caring for friends and his wives. It was a very important process during the research, to balance my inner researcher’s bias and to self-reflect about my personal values, ideals about holistic wellness and faith, thoughts of ideal ways of behaviour, actions and my expectations of famous and “extraordinary” people on the one hand and unknown and ordinary people on the other hand. The deep-rooted analytical process of Paulo Coelho’s life led in several cases to deep ways of self-reflection and new thoughts on Coelho as a representative of the societal elite of the global players in this world.

Early during the research study, I had to realise that I had actually wanted to study a positive, extraordinary, happy and successful person who had made it to the top of the (Brazilian) and global societies, only to find very quickly that often in his life, Paulo Coelho had to cope with challenges, depression, doubts, resignation and negative feelings and events. When I realised that the writer had gone through many difficult times in this life, I was disappointed and shocked, since I could not only look at the glamorous side of the writer; there was also a “shadow” side to him, which contributed to his extraordinary development and his identity as a writer and person. It was highly important to recognise that even this outstanding, spiritual, faithful and healthy writer had to face challenges in life that needed all his attention and that he had to resolve creatively to re-evolve strengthened. I realised that kidnapping, torture and visits to the mental hospital brought about significant development potential in Coelho’s life, and that he would probably not have become so successful and motivated without these challenges in his life.

In the several years of my research, I developed an “empathetic relationship with the subject” (Anderson, 1981, p. 474) and after a while I could accept the positive, bright side of the writer Coelho and his doubtful, depressed, critical and egoistic side. During the research I went into a mode of reflection on Coelho and self-reflection and this interactive understanding of the other and the self through scientific research contributed to building a positive and constructive relationship between me and the researched, which was further built on (self)awareness of the self and the writer, the topics and the interpretations.

Writing Chap. 9, I sometimes felt even more confused and uncertain about who Paulo Coelho is in terms of holistic wellness and faith than in the years before I started this research on him. I had the feeling that although – or maybe because – I had read so much about this person who accompanied me during many mornings, days and evenings, I had lost an overview and any orientation on who he *really* was from my own perspective. From the research perspective, I realised that the closer one gets to a person, the less one might see him. Sometimes I had to take days off, to establish the “right” distance from the subject of research again. Sometimes I felt angry and doubtful, because I became insecure about who Paulo Coelho was, how he was reflected in his books, what was part of his life story and what was part of his fictitious descriptions in his autobiographical works. This remains an open question: How Paulo Coelho, his life, his creative writing and his characters are interlinked, what is “true” and what is fiction? I also felt sad, because I could not get into a personal contact with him to discuss my urgent questions, to *really* find out about him, from his own perspective, about what he thought about my analysis, my interpretation and my thoughts about him.¹

With regard to the application of the psychobiographical research methodologies chosen, I learnt about new aspects of qualitative research methodology, but also about scientific and creative writing. The idea of, as a psychobiographer, the researcher being a scientist and an artist (Schultz, 2005d, p. 13), was not easy to

¹I still might try to contact him after the release of this manuscript to discuss my perspectives on his life.

comprehend and to fulfil. I realised that I was more of a scientist than an artist, writing this psychobiography on Paulo Coelho. However, this might only be the first step into psychobiographical work, which might reveal lots of developmental potential for myself. I hope to uncover more creative ways in psychobiographical research, further away from satisfying expected or assumed “scientific standards”.

Furthermore, I realised that I enjoy the creative writing processes and reflecting on the question of how creativity can positively contribute to scientific writing. The concept of the “artistic scientist”, mentioned already in Chap. 1, manifested over the time of the research study and might become an applied concept in my future life. In any case, creative writing and science call for a combination in the life of the researcher, maybe even more in the life of each and every researcher and the research structures. Creativity in research, that is what I discovered, needs courage and a new understanding of research.

From another point of view than the researcher’s, namely from the therapeutic point of view, I developed ideas on how I, as an actively practising (family) therapist, could include psychobiographical work in my own therapy sessions with clients. Although I had not expected any outcome of this study in my practical therapeutic work context, I realised that I often reflected during the writing process on the possibility of applying the new knowledge and increased understanding of the person, Paulo Coelho, in my work with clients and how I could share the method of psychobiography in a suitable and applicable form during the therapeutic sessions.

Finally, I re-learnt from this psychobiographical research some very simple and basic knowledge, which found its way back from my unconsciousness into my consciousness:

Firstly, I realised that the writer Paulo Coelho is such a multiple construct in itself (as every person is) and that he as a person and his life can hardly be grasped in a holistic way in such a limited psychobiographical study.

Secondly, I realised on a deep conscious and subconscious level that development does not end throughout life and that – even if development goes back and forth and needs refinement with regard to earlier learning on an already very well-known self-development topic – these circles and refinements contribute to a deeper level of hermeneutical “Erkenntnis” (understanding) in life, as well as in science, as described in Dilthey’s hermeneutics.

Thirdly, I became aware that with each step of analysis and interpretation of Paulo Coelho, my self-knowledge with regard to theoretical understanding, methodological knowledge and self-recognition and self-actualisation increased.

Fourthly, and finally to mention here, I realised my multiple identity, as a researcher, scientist, writer and therapist, and that the new knowledge gained through this in-depth single-case study can be applied in all my different life and work areas. This study thus becomes holistically applied knowledge in the context of my daily life and work.

At the end of this study, I am grateful that I could take the time to explore the extraordinary person, Paulo Coelho, in depth and explore his strong creative

potential, his complexity and his uniqueness across many years of his life. Focusing on his life provided me with new ideas about my own standpoint in terms of holistic wellness and faith development, my opportunities, my limitations and boundaries, my personal vocation in life and my goals.

9.10 Recommendation for Future Psychobiographical Research and Practice

As referred to in Sect. 2.2, the Nigerian writer and novelist Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie speaks about the idea that lives and cultures are created from many different stories. Misunderstandings are created by focusing on one single story that is created about a person (Adichie, 2009), which can lead to stereotypes, incomplete images and misinterpretations of the person.

This story on Paulo Coelho created in this research study is only one “story” about this extraordinary, world-class author. It is written with the intention to empower, to humanise and to contribute to the dignity of the writer. However, it needs to be understood as a single story, which is only complete when other stories about and from this writer are read and taken into account by the reader. Therefore, it is recommended that this study be seen as one contribution to the attempt to understand and reconstruct the life of Coelho from a positive psychology perspective. Based on this understanding of the study, the recommendations below are made with regard to research and practice. It is not an exhaustive list of all the recommendations possible, but might provide some advice for future research and practice.

9.10.1 Psychobiographical Research

With regard to psychobiographical research, it is recommended that future psychobiographical studies should use more positive psychology perspectives to contribute to work that is based in this theoretical paradigm.

More psychobiographical research studies on writers need to be conducted to enable later comparison of holistic wellness and faith development across the lives of different authors. Further studies could also use the data provided in this study to compare these findings with the findings on holistic wellness and faith development in other writers or artists.

More psychobiographical research is needed that explores the relationship of biographies and biographical analysis of writers and artists and their creative work and the analysis of these creative works. Only a combined approach of biography and creative works can lead to a more complete picture of the life and the person of the writer or artist. Psychobiographical theories and methodologies need to be

developed on ways to combine biographical findings and findings from the creative work analysis. At the moment, there is still a theoretical and methodological void that needs to be addressed in psychobiographical analysis. Theoretical reflections and guidelines could be developed on the challenge to combine creativity and science in psychobiographical research.

9.10.2 *Paulo Coelho*

Other psychobiographical studies should be conducted on the writer, Paulo Coelho, based on other theories and research methodologies and constructed through the eyes of a different researcher with a different researcher's bias. Only the comparison of different psychobiographies on one single writer might contribute to a more complete picture of the writer him/herself.

With regard to Paulo Coelho, particularly, the deeper exploration of the life task friendship and work and leisure would be interesting and might reveal different findings and results.

A follow-up study on Paulo Coelho could also use the findings and interview Paulo Coelho with regard to the findings, open questions, his responses to the findings of the study and his view on the findings. Open questions might include the question of how spirituality and religion are interlinked for Paulo Coelho, how he wants to develop in future in terms of faith, what his ideal faith development would be and how he would describe his holistic wellness, his health, his faith.

If possible, an interview with Paulo Coelho should be conducted with the writer himself to gain more information and new insights from him on the open questions and in the context of another psychobiographical study.

9.10.3 *Holistic Wellness Model and Faith Development Theory*

With regard to the use of the HWM and the FDT, more research is needed to explore the theoretical constructs of these models and theories, their appropriateness with regard to other individuals and their application across life spans of individuals with different cultural backgrounds and gender. Further qualitative research can contribute to the deeper exploration of these models and theories of individuals who are based in different cultural contexts. Further exploration is necessary of the cultural context and its influence, the impact of culture on theoretical constructs such as holistic wellness and faith development and on individual's lives. Qualitative psychobiographical studies across cultures and with the focus on the impact of culture on the life could then lead to the cross-cultural or culture-sensitive construction of holistic wellness and faith development theories.

With regard to both of the theories, the concept of holistic wellness and faith development should not only be researched in the context of a lifetime, but should

also be addressed with regard to the belief in reincarnation. Since Coelho creates holistic wellness and faith development (particularly in later life) in the context of previous, present and future lives, this broadened perspective should be taken into account in theory development and questions should be asked on how this kind of world view affects the development of individuals within the theories.

With regard to the theoretical constructs, further exploration is needed on the question of the interconnectedness of meaningfulness, vocation in life, holistic wellness and faith across the life span and beyond. The theories should also be reflected not only as theories based on linearity constructs, but from theoretical systemic perspectives as well. More qualitative, single-case studies are needed to explore these interlinkages on a deep level of intra- and inter-psychological constructs, if possible conducted by international and interdisciplinary research teams, focusing on systemic theoretical developments.

Other research studies should combine the two theories used in this psychobiographical study with other theories that explore the creativity, the intuition, the career development, the success and achievements in the life of extraordinary individuals to determine the interlinkages of holistic wellness and faith with these constructs. Follow-up psychobiographical studies on Paulo Coelho should also focus on the concepts of creativity, intuition and career development, success and achievement in the life of this particular writer. These studies could then provide more insights on holistic wellness, faith, creativity, intuition and success, which are all highly important concepts in Paulo Coelho's life.

9.10.4 Research Methodology

Further psychobiographical research is needed to establish a professional and well-acknowledged research methodology for psychobiographical research. Different theoretical and methodological paradigms need to be combined in psychobiographical research and critically reviewed. In this study, positive psychology theories were combined with hermeneutical methodological concepts. However, more research on the research methodology in psychobiographical research, on sampling, quality criteria and markers of "good" psychobiographies are needed to establish a strong psychobiographical and methodological research culture that might draw interest from mainstream psychology. It would then also be important to explore the interrelationship of quality criteria in psychobiographical research and research ethics in terms of this psychobiographical single-case study.

Future research in psychobiographies should take mixed method approaches into account and combine quantitative methods and statistical analysis with qualitative methods and forms of analysis. At the same time, psychobiographical work could also use multiple qualitative methods of analysis, such as content analysis, thematic analysis or narrative analysis to explore the impact of the method of analysis used in the study. Research methods, particularly focusing on writers and artists, should include not only common psychological theories and methodologies, but also inter-

disciplinary ones. In the analysis of biographies and the creative works of writers, for example, linguistic analysis might be helpful to explore the extraordinary individual in further depth. Psychobiographies, as studies across the life span, should be open to include methodologies and methods across disciplines that might contribute to a more holistic view on an individual and his/her single life. In summary, a huge variety of research methods across disciplines should be used, explored and tested in psychobiographical research to guarantee a triangulation of methodology.

9.10.5 Psychological Practice

With regard to psychological practice and psychobiographical work, the following can be recommended in terms of therapeutic practice and the introduction to psychobiographical work in psychology at higher education institutions.

9.10.5.1 The Use of Psychobiographies in Therapies

Psychobiographies can be used in psychological practice. By focusing on the development of particular and selected aspects of a single life across a life span, new information can be gained, and examples can be provided by using psychobiographies in working with clients in (psycho)therapeutic practice. Psychobiographies could play a role in psychological therapy, particularly when using a positive psychology paradigm. They could be used to recognise common features, for example, with regard to stages of faith development, regarding the possibilities of overcoming challenges in life, or for looking at career paths of single individuals across the life span. Thereby, the psychobiographical excerpts used in therapies could present the clients with new ideas or even with the recognition that even extraordinary individuals have to overcome crises and often find creative and original solutions, which might even be applied constructively in the clients' lives.

In therapies, psychobiographical examples can be used to explain, for example, the development of a single person with regard to holistic wellness or the development of faith. Examples can be used, e.g. in narrative therapy, by addressing topics such as the question of how Paulo Coelho managed to overcome his trauma of being declared mentally ill and being hospitalised by his parents. By using the example of single, extraordinary individuals, their management to overcome crises and difficult situations could be analysed and discussed in the context of the client.

In systemic family therapy, psychobiographies could be used to apply a systemic view on the life of an extraordinary individual in the context of his family and his relationships. The therapist and the client could use this view on the "third person" as a method to externalise certain questions the client might have with regard to him/herself. Psychobiographies could thus be used as a form of triangulation in the context of the therapist and the client.

In biography work in therapy, examples of psychobiographies could be chosen, for example, to present ways of faith development across the life span. Psychobiographies would need to be chosen with regard to the topics of the client. A client who struggles with faith development, for example, could work on his/her biography and faith development and then compare the development of faith in a particular person by reading parts of a psychobiography or talking it through with the therapist. Psychobiographies could be used integratively in work with clients with regard to certain topics and for developing alternatives to the own way of dealing with certain issues.

Obviously, it cannot be recommended that the work with psychobiographies in therapy should be used in each and every single therapeutic process. The use of psychobiographies depends strongly on the client, the therapeutic approach, the ability of the therapist to work with it and other factors influencing the therapeutic process. However, these recommendations should be viewed as providing new insights and creative ideas to use psychobiographical research also in psychobiographical practice.

9.10.5.2 The Use of Psychobiographies in Psychology in Higher Education

Currently, psychobiographies are still not a mainstream topic in psychology taught in higher education. The value of single-case psychobiographies should be taught in psychology classes in higher education institutions, such as at university level. The use of psychobiographies in lectures and seminars can be extremely useful to make students understand psychological theories and their application in research and practice. Students of psychology should also become familiar with psychobiographical work to understand in-depth, intra-psychological developments in individuals across their life span. Psychobiographies can even support in-depth self-reflection in psychology students and thus contribute to deeper self-knowledge in the students, but also to the development of an empathetic understanding of the other (even across age, gender or cultural gaps).

Furthermore, psychobiographies can be used to teach in-depth qualitative research methodology approaches, besides providing insights into psychological theories and intra-psychological developments across the life span.

Psychobiographies can be used in multiple ways in seminars and lectures in higher education institutions and might be inspiring for students of psychology – especially when psychobiographies on extraordinary psychologists are introduced – with regard to the students' own life developments as psychologists and individuals.

Finally, the theory and method of psychobiographies should become part of mainstream psychology courses at university level, because they provide in-depth knowledge of theories, research methodology and intra-psychological understanding of an extraordinary individual. They can also provide inspiration for students of

psychology and contribute to winning future psychologists for the most fascinating, intriguing and illuminating subject in psychology: the study of the individual.

9.11 Chapter Summary

This final chapter integrated the findings of Chaps. 7 and 8. The main findings of this research study were summarised and the research aims and purpose were revised. Theories and methodologies applied were reflected in this chapter. The researcher reflected on the contribution of the study and its limitations. Finally, the chapter provided a sub-chapter on the self-reflection of the researcher on her journey through the research, as well as recommendations for future research and practice.

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