

APPENDIX 2

The survey results

A survey was conducted during the months of August and September, 1999, primarily in NZ. The section numbers refer to the numbering on the survey in the previous Appendix.

Surveys were sent out in both hardcopy and email formats. Recipients were encouraged to photocopy and forward them. For this reason it is almost impossible to say how many surveys were distributed.

I received 28 useful responses. Since respondents were free too omit questions they did not wish to answer, the number of answers to each question averages at 26.5. Due to this variable, I have where possible used percentages to give more consistent results.

1. There were 28 useable responses.

2. 32% were male
68% were female

Age: Under 35 3%
35-60 70%
Over 60 25%
(One unknown)

Directing less than 2 years 33%
Directing between 2 and 10 years 52%
Directing more than 10 years 15%

Training in spiritual direction?

No	14%
Yes	86%
A little	25% (of total)
Some	50% (of total)
A lot	7% (of total)

Number of sessions given to Xers:

Less than 15	26%	I estimate that this survey drew on the experience of over 900 sessions.
15-40	41%	
Over 40	33%	

Number of GenX directees ever directed?

Less than 6	52%	I estimate that this survey drew on the experience of directing around 200 GenXers.
6-10	20%	
11-15	12%	
more than 15	16%	

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3. About directing GenX

Harder to direct GenX?

25% found it harder to direct GenX than other directees.

68% found it no harder. (The others were not sure or did not comment).

GenX are directed with a different style of direction?

48% use a different style of direction for GenX

50% treat GenX no differently to other directees.

Some comments made about this question:

- *Require a more directive and informative style of direction.*
- *Informality is a key component.*
- *A less reflective approach.*
- *An open-ended discussion is useful to an Xer.*
- *Intensity is noticeable in the GenX approach to direction.*
- *GenXers have little interest in a contemplative approach.*

Spiritual direction understood differently?

70% thought that GenX understand spiritual direction differently to older people.

28% considered that GenX understand it the same...

Some comments about the perceived key differences:

- *GenXers have a less traditional approach than older people.*
- *“What can you offer me?” is a common GenX approach to direction.*
- *GenXers frequently ask, “Am I OK?”*
- *Direction to the GenX requires more discipling than directing.*
- *Trust is a very important quality to be established with the GenX directee.*
- *The contemplative model has little relevance for the GenX directee.*

Termination.

Only one direction relationship had been terminated due to the GenX dynamic.

Adequately equipped?

61% felt adequately equipped to direct GenX.

39% felt in need of more (specific) training.

Some comments about training:

- *Current training is based on a contemplative model and not relevant to GenX.*
- *Directors feel less confident in this area of direction.*
- *Many directors are looking for specific information than will equip them.*
- *Many directors have limited contact with GenXers.*
- *Having GenX children provides many with a useful pool of experience.*

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Is GenX simply the latest young generation, or is there something uniquely different?

25% see GenX as the latest young generation.

68% see GenX as being in some way different.

Comments included:

- *An obvious hunger for guidance..*
- *There is much disillusionment with the established Church.*
- *A passionate searching for meaning in life not materialism.*
- *Spiritual direction is perceived as being outside the establishment.*
- *A willingness to explore the spiritual realm.*
- *A deepening spiritual awareness is apparent at a younger age.*

4. Further comments and insights were invited.

Comments included:

- *GenXers have a full-on understanding of life and God.*
- *The desire for intimacy with God is noted by many.*
- *The need for the director to be adaptable with a GenX directee.*
- *GenXers are individualists and self-motivating.*
- *Modelling the faith is an important component for the GenX directee.*
- *Finding older mentors to share the journey with is an essential ingredient.*
- *GenXers question everything.*
- *Trust is a key component.*
- *Teaching is often needed for the GenX directee.*
- *Questions such as, "Where is God?" and "Is this God?" are relevant to the GenXer.*
- *Silence and quiet days appear to have little relevance to the GenXer.*
- *Cynicism is a noticeable trait of the GenX directee.*
- *GenXers look for unconditional love, acceptance and able "listeners".*
- *Spiritual friendship is a better description of the relationship.*
- *This generation offers a huge challenge to the Church.*