

**WINSTON CHURCHILL'S 'BLACK DOG': A PSYCHOBIOGRAPHICAL CASE  
STUDY FOR DEPRESSIVE REALISM**

**by**

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**PHOTOGRAPH OF SIR WINSTON CHURCHILL**



**Churchill's "V Sign"**

Source: [richardlangworth.com](http://richardlangworth.com) (14 July 2012)



**STUDENT DECLARATION**

Student Number: 3116 500 1

I, Samantha Human, declare that the aforementioned dissertation: Winston Churchill's 'Black Dog': A psychobiographical case study for depressive realism, is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references. The aforementioned dissertation has also not previously been submitted for assessment to another university or for another qualification.

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Signature

(Ms) Samantha Human

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Date



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## SUMMARY

This qualitative psychobiographical study sets out to explore and describe the life of Sir Winston Churchill within the context of his lifelong experience with depression, his 'Black Dog'. The aim of the research is to present a case for depressive realism with Churchill as the single case study. The reconstruction of Churchill's life as a psychological narrative is contextualised within the theoretical framework of Alfred Adler's Theory of Individual Psychology.

Data was collated via biographical and life history material. Data was analysed by means of thematic analysis. Data trustworthiness and ethical considerations were adhered to.

The findings of this study reveal that Churchill's depression had positive gains of him striving to contribute to society, potentially demonstrating that depressive realism exists as a side-effect of depression. The significance of which, conceivably substantiates the idea that positive aspects of depression do exist, enabling a potentially more encouraging and constructive outlook for individuals suffering from depression.

*Keywords:* Alfred Adler; case study research; depression; depressive realism; individual psychology; psychobiography; single case study; Sir Winston Churchill



## **Chapter 1**

### **Introduction and Problem Statement**

#### **1.1. Chapter Preview**

This introductory chapter provides a general orientation to the current study. The problem statement is presented together with a brief overview of the theoretical framework in which this research has been conceptualised. An overview of the life of Sir Winston Churchill and his 'Black Dog' is then presented together with a brief description of the concept of depressive realism. The value of Alfred Adler's theory Individual Psychology to the life of Sir Winston Churchill, together with the rationale for this research, is then presented followed by a synopsis of the primary objectives of this study. Reference to the value of this research study to the South African context followed by an outline of the structure and layout of subsequent chapters concludes this chapter.

#### **1.2. General Orientation to the Study**

In this study an attempt has been made to present a real-life case for the concept of depressive realism, a concept that proposes that individuals with depression are potentially more realistic than those without depression and thereby potentially more effective decision-makers. A real-life case has been presented by exploring the life of Sir Winston Churchill in the context of his own lifetime experience with depression. Sir Winston Leonard Spencer Churchill (1874-1965) was a primary figure in British political history during the early and mid-twentieth century, particularly, in the events leading up to the First and Second World Wars. He was a soldier, a politician, a painter, a published author, a family man and, most

significantly, one of the most influential wartime leaders of the twentieth century. In this study, the course of his personality development and the progress of his depression, known to him and to those close to him as his 'Black Dog', have been explored over his lifespan within the context of a specific psychological theory, that being, Alfred Adler's Individual Psychology.

This study is defined as a psychobiography using the case study method. A holistic study of the life of Sir Winston Churchill within the context of his socio-historical environment and within the context of his lifetime experience with depression, using a psychological theory (Alfred Adler's Theory of Individual Psychology) to interpret and reconstruct his life into a psychological narrative, has been undertaken. The life history materials collected and considered for this study were of a qualitative nature and were sourced from documentation primarily in the public domain, including literature of an autobiographical, biographical, psychobiographical and historical nature.

The study commences with an overview of psychobiographical research and the case study method, followed by a conceptual framework of Alfred Adler's Theory of Individual Psychology and its relevance to the life of Sir Winston Churchill. An overview of the life of Sir Winston Churchill with a focus on the course of his depression over his life time is then presented. The concept of depressive realism and relevant research conducted in this area is then discussed to provide the background for the overall motivation of this study. A discussion of the findings and their implication for future research possibilities to potentially benefit individuals with depression, conclude this study.

### **1.3. Problem Statement**

This qualitative research study aims to explore and describe the life of Sir Winston Churchill in the context of his lifelong experience with depression – his 'Black Dog' (Storr,

1990). In describing his life within a psychological framework of depression, the intention is to bring to light some positive aspects of depression. Ghaemi (2011) argues that certain characteristics of depression, such as realism and resilience, are thought to be quite prevalent in individuals suffering from depression and can account for certain positive life experiences of many well-known historical figures. Galston (2010) defines realism as the opposite of idealism and utopian thinking, that is, the propensity to see things as they are rather than what they present in an ideal world. Ghaemi (2011) argues that the concept of depressive realism may therefore exist as a core character trait in many individuals suffering from depression, particularly those individuals with historical leadership stature, such as Sir Winston Churchill. In this context, depression need not be viewed as a purely negative state of mind. According to psychiatrist and psychobiographer, Anthony Storr (1990), in the case of Sir Winston Churchill, some believe that his achievements were the result of his depressive disorder not in spite of it.

Ironically, according to Ghaemi (2011), Churchill, when experiencing recurrent depression, was actually capable of being sober in his judgement and realistic in his decision making, particularly during one of the most critical periods in history, that being the Second World War. Ghaemi (2011) holds that despite Churchill's depression, he emerged as one of the greatest war strategists of modern history:

Although some acknowledge that he had mental problems, few appreciate the relevance of those problems to his prodigious leadership abilities. I believe that Churchill's severe and recurrent depressive episodes heightened his ability to realistically assess the threat that Germany posed (Ghaemi, 2011, p. 57).

Studies by Alloy and Abramson (1979) and Dobson and Franche (1989) propose that depressed people appear to have a more realistic perception of their self-standing and their

degree of control over their environment than those who are not depressed. Alloy and Abramson (1979), Langer and Roth (1975) and Taylor (1996) have shown that those suffering from depression are better than others at assessing current threats. In the case of Churchill, in the current study, it is to be explored whether his depression was also underpinned by a degree of 'realism' which potentially provided him with the crucial edge in making the necessary but unpopular and tough decisions during the Second World War.

Ghaemi (2011; 2014) recently investigated the connection between mental illness and successful leadership by means of case studies of notable politicians and business people known to have experienced mood disorders, specifically Bipolar Disorder and Major Depressive Disorder. Ghaemi (2011) emphasised that the qualities that characterise individuals with mood disorders, namely: realism, empathy, resilience and creativity are key characteristics that underpin effective leadership, particularly in times of crisis. The link between Bipolar Disorder specifically and successful leadership is observed in the presentation by Ghaemi (2011) of case histories or a series of "capsule biographies" (Vaillant, 2011, p. 126) of the lives of Abraham Lincoln, William T. Sherman, Mohandas Gandhi, Franklin D. Roosevelt, John F. Kennedy, Martin Luther King Jr., Adolf Hitler and Sir Winston Churchill (Ghaemi, 2011; 2014).

Ghaemi (2011) supports the notion that individuals suffering from depression have the potential to be more realistic about their current situation as well as future projections than individuals who do not have depression and therefore the potential to be more realistic decision-makers, reinforcing the concept of depressive realism. Ghaemi's (2011) exploration of depressive realism builds on original research in 1967 by psychologist Martin Seligman (Seligman, 1972) on the underlying theory of learned helplessness, the precursor to the concept of depressive realism as well as the subsequent research by Alloy and Abramson

(1979) on the fundamental concept of depressive realism (to be discussed in detail in Chapter 5).

Other psychobiographers (Fieve, 1997; Owen, 2008; Pearson, 1991; Post & Robins, 1993; Rintala, 1984; Storr, 1990) have also explored the impact of mental illness on leadership capability with specific reference to Winston Churchill's experience with depression and the potential for his mood disorder to have been beneficial to his leadership capability and ultimately to that of society, during times of crises.

Herein resides the motivation of the current study to explore an example of depressive realism. That is, the potential for depressive realism to exist as an underlying factor for depressed people to be more realistic than non-depressed people in their perceptions and decision-making and the propensity for this potential to have further implications for the possibility of changing long-held views that people suffering from depression are mentally ill and unable to function optimally. Sir Winston Churchill represents an example where someone suffering from depression was not only able to overcome his condition, but able to go on to become an extraordinary leader and statesman. The purpose of this research study, therefore, is to shed a more positive light on the possibilities and opportunities for those suffering from depression by exploring the applicability of the conceptual theory of depressive realism to a case study of Sir Winston Churchill using the lens of Adler's theory of Individual Psychology.

### **1.3.1. Rationale for Utilising a Case Study Methodology**

In order to explore the concept of depressive realism, contextualised in real-life experiences, a psychobiographical case study of the life of Sir Winston Churchill, in the context of his own depression, has been conducted. Psychobiographical case study research provides a rich and descriptive analysis of a well-known, enigmatic individual whose life

history may bear witness to the analysis process of the research question at hand (Fouche & Van Niekerk, 2010). The objective of psychobiographical research is to use a psychological theory to “transform a life into a coherent and illuminating story” (McAdams, 2009, p. 510). Case study research represents biographical research into the lives of outstanding people with the aim of discovering and describing their life within a psychological frame of reference and psychological theory (McAdams, 1994).

Sir Winston Churchill serves as the subject in this case study. The selection of Churchill was based on the widespread and well-documented knowledge that he suffered from depression throughout his long and remarkable life (Fieve, 1997; Ghaemi, 2011; Storr, 1990). Winston Churchill stated:

I don't like standing near the edge of a platform when an express train is passing through. I like to stand right back and if possible get a pillar between me and the train. I don't like to stand by the side of a ship and look down into the water. A second's action would end everything. A few drops of desperation (Churchill, cited in Storr, 1990, p. 15).

#### **1.4. Adlerian Theory of Individual Psychology**

Adlerian Individual Psychology was founded by Alfred Adler in 1912. According to Mosak (1999) Alfred Adler was born on 7 February 1870 in Vienna and was the second child in a family of six children. He endured a sickly childhood suffering from various illnesses in his youth and was also twice run over by a motor vehicle in the streets of his neighbourhood. As a result of these many 'near death' experiences he decided to become a doctor to overcome his fear of death and studied medicine at the University of Vienna and graduated in 1895 with a degree in medicine.

After collaborating with psychiatrist Sigmund Freud on psychoanalytic theory of human behaviour and psychoanalysis, Adler broke away from Freud's biological and deterministic view and developed a more social and goal-oriented view of human nature (Corey, 2005). Mosak (1999) argues that Adler's early childhood experiences had a profound impact on his later theoretical thinking. Mosak (1999) explains that Adler grew up in Vienna, in a minority Jewish community, in less than ideal socio-economic conditions. His early poor health and physical weakness all contributed to his own issues of inferiority and striving for superiority, all of which are reflected in his life's work.

Adlerian psychology is based on a growth model and focuses on a person's early memories, how a person perceives his past and how this influences his future identity (Adler, 1928; 1962). In contrast to Freud, Adler believed that people are motivated by social relatedness rather than unconscious sexual and aggressive drives and that behaviour is goal-orientated and conscious. Adler (1962) stressed that the meaning of life is embedded in a true interest in others and a genuine desire to co-operate with fellow human beings where "every human being strives for significance, but people always make mistakes if they do not see that their whole significance must consist in their contribution to the lives of others" (p. 13). It is only those individuals who understand that life is all about contribution to others who will be able to face life's challenges with a great deal of success and that "if life is approached in this way, as a co-operation of independent human beings, we can see no limits to the progress of our human association" (Adler, 1962, p. 23).

According to Pekker (2010), Adlerian theory is based on a positive view of human nature in that people are goal-orientated who strive for social connectedness and are in control of their future. Corey (2005) maintains that one of Adler's most significant contributions is the notion of social interest and community feeling and the need for human

beings to be part of a broader human community. Adler believed that people want to strive for the betterment of humanity (Corey, 2005).

Furthermore, Adler (1962) focused on the goal-directedness of human behaviour. He postulated that people are future-focused and goal-directed and that human beings constantly want to strive to be something better, however, the type of goals that individuals set are crucial to their reaching a true sense of betterment and superiority. Adler (1928, 1962) argued that goals set with only the self in mind and that focus on self-preservation only, will lead to a perpetuating circle of feeling inferior and will hinder one's advancement to a higher level of fulfilment and contribution. According to Pekker (2010), psychological anxieties and feelings of worthlessness stem from feelings of inferiority. Adler coined the term 'inferiority complex' proposing that inferiority is not a negative term but the catalyst for one's striving for superiority and success. As such, individuals have an innate desire to combat inferiority (Pekker, 2010).

Adler's other notable contribution to the field of psychology was his emphasis on birth order, sibling relationships and family relations. Adlerian theory contextualises human unhappiness as social in nature and therefore emphasis on family relationships is a central theme (Corey, 2005). According to Adler (1962), co-operation between mother and father is crucial to laying the foundations for a happy marriage and to providing the necessary love and security for a child's healthy development. The father needs to demonstrate a strong work ethic but should not be seen to be an over-achiever or over stress his success in the family. The same holds true for a mother who has a successful career. The father, in particular, should demonstrate a high regard and respect for the mother and they should co-operate on an equal footing in the care of their children.

An equally important part of the family's co-operation is the co-operation of the children between themselves. "Unless the children feel equal, mankind will never be equal, the relation of the two sexes will continue to offer the greatest difficulties" (Adler, 1962, p. 107). Birth order also plays a significant role and depending on whether an individual is the first, middle or last child will determine how they perceive themselves and their social standing with significant others. In that, birth order affects an individual's perception of their significance within the family unit and ultimately the goals they set for themselves (Adler, 1928, 1962).

### **1.5. Background of Sir Winston Churchill**

Sir Winston Leonard Spencer-Churchill lived one of the most interesting, challenging and captivating lives from his birth at Blenheim Palace on 30 November 1874 to his death at Hyde Park Gate in London on 24 January 1965 (Gilbert, 1992). Son of Lord Randolph Churchill and American heiress, Jennie Jerome, Winston was born into aristocratic circles and educated at Britain's finest schools, including St. George's Preparatory School and Harrow School, finally graduating from the Royal Military College at Sandhurst in England.

His early career as a war correspondent provided opportunities to cover events of the Cuban revolt against Spain in 1895; British campaigns in the Northwest Frontier of India in 1897; the Sudan in 1898 and the Boer War (renamed the South African War after South African democracy in 1994) in South Africa in 1899. It was during this time that he enjoyed the status of national hero after escaping from a Boer prison camp in 1899 (Gilbert, 1992; Singer, 2012).

Thereafter, Churchill entered the world of politics. By the time he was twenty five, Churchill was elected to British Parliament and began his career as a Statesman in the House of Commons. Churchill went on to serve as First Lord of the Admiralty, Minister of

Munitions, Chancellor of the Exchequer and finally Prime Minister of Britain from 1940 to 1945 and again from 1951 to 1955 (Hayward, 1998; Mansfield, 1995).

According to Hayward (1998), historians commonly claim that Churchill was one of the greatest statesmen of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and attribute his success as a statesman and leader of Britain, particularly during the Second World War, to his ability to inspire others, his strategic logic, his relentless passion and his tenacious and impermeable personality in the face of adversity. Ghaemi (2011) argues that the source of this inspiration was innate to his character as Churchill consistently demonstrated a public persona of enthusiasm, determination and optimism, despite his own personal battle with disappointment and depression. Churchill's life was one of privilege, controversy, action, obstacles and achievement and many biographies have been written about his life, each from a different perspective, including as a soldier, a politician, a war leader, and a Prime Minister.

The biography most widely recognised as the official biography of Sir Winston Churchill is that which was written in eight volumes and co-authored by his son, Randolph Churchill and Sir Martin Gilbert. The biography is titled: "Winston S. Churchill". (Randolph Churchill wrote volumes one and two and Sir Martin Gilbert completed volumes three to eight, including the companion volumes). The first volume was published in 1966 and, after Randolph Churchill's death in 1968, Martin Gilbert was appointed the official biographer and went on to complete the remaining volumes. This notable biography will be drawn upon in the current psychobiography of Sir Winston Churchill.

Other notable biographical works that are referred to in this study include: Bonham-Carter (1965); Gilbert (1974, 1992, 1994); Jenkins (2002); Langworth (2008, 2012) and Mansfield (1995). Despite the numerous books and autobiographies written about Churchill's life, the intention of this research, however, is not to recount Churchill's life within a

chronological historical context only, but to rather consider and explore key events in his life, particularly his lifelong experience with depression, within the psychological framework of Individual Psychology. It is also the intention to consider how these events and experiences impacted on his life, his personality and his achievements as well as to trace the possible presence of instances of depressive realism.

### **1.5.1. Churchill's 'Black Dog'**

Carson and Wakely (2013) believe that the mental suffering experienced by Churchill facilitated and contributed to his accomplishments and triumphs. Churchill was born into British aristocracy to a "strict and distant father and an adoring but all too distant mother" (Carson & Wakely, 2013, p. 24). Churchill was essentially cared for and raised by nannies and governesses. He suffered long periods of loneliness in his youth and it was in his childhood that his depression took root (Carson & Wakely, 2013).

Subsequent life events also played a role in triggering bouts of severe depression, resulting in a lifelong chronic condition (Ghaemi, 2011). According to Ghaemi (2011), there is no doubt that Churchill suffered severe periods of re-current depression, calling it his 'Black Dog'. It is believed that his most severe attack of depression came in 1910 when he was thirty five years old and elected Home Secretary to Britain (Ghaemi, 2011). Churchill disclosed, "for two or three years the light faded from the picture. I did my work, I sat in the House of Commons, but black depression settled on me" (Ghaemi, 2011, p. 59).

Origins of the metaphor 'black dog' are believed to date as far back as Roman times but, according to Foley (2005), this expression was also well used in the Victoria times as a metaphor for feeling gloomy, glum or sulky. Victorian nannies would often use the expression 'you have got a black dog on your back' when comforting a sad or bad tempered child. Dictionary definitions of the 19<sup>th</sup> century also reference 'black dog' as a child who is

sulky and was said to have the 'black dog' on its back. Other references define a sulky child as being the 'black dog' (Foley, 2005). Churchill's nanny, Mrs Everest, is believed to have used this expression on many an occasion with reference to young Churchill's sad or sulky demeanour (Foley, 2005).

Ironically, in 1910, Churchill was at the peak of his success, happily married, financially well off and politically well-established yet he was depressed. One of his first major depressive episodes is recorded during this time (Ghaemi, 2011; Storr, 1990).

Mansfield (1995) states that Churchill suffered further depressive episodes after 1910, particularly during his 'Wilderness Years' in the 1930's, when he was politically isolated from his peers and remained semi-retired at his country home. Churchill suffered more depressive episodes post-1945 when he lost the national elections and was ousted as Prime Minister of Britain, despite Britain's victorious defeat against the Nazis in the Second World War.

Two of the longest and most difficult periods of depression in Churchill's life included his fall from grace as First Lord of the Admiralty in May 1915 when the British military were defeated at the battle of Gallipoli. Churchill became a scapegoat for failed British military strategies and lost his power base (Rintala, 1984). He was, in essence, a military man with no function or power and was recorded to have been so devastated over this event that his depression lasted for months (Gilbert, 1992; Mansfield, 1995; Rintala, 1984). The other major bout of depression is recorded after the Conservative Party defeat in the British General Elections of 1945, immediately after Britain's success in the Second World War under Churchill's leadership. Churchill transitioned from the Prime Ministerial residence at 10 Downing Street (London) to a top floor hotel suite but reportedly became

obsessed with the balcony and worried about suicide. Churchill was once again devastated and depressed by the loss of power (Rintala, 1984).

Again, in his later years, after his second term as Prime Minister of Britain, Churchill was sad and melancholic (Mansfield, 1994; Storr, 1990). Despite these severe bouts of depression however, Mansfield (1995) argues that Churchill remained focused and attentive to the world around him throughout all of these dark times. Not only did Churchill warn Britain of the threat of Nazism in 1939 when everyone else wanted to follow a policy of appeasement with Hitler, he also foresaw and forewarned the threat of communism spreading throughout Europe post the Second World War, whilst the rest of the world was still recovering from the War.

Despite the many accolades and honours bestowed on Churchill in his later years, Mansfield (1995) states that the last decade of Churchill's life was filled with gloom and melancholia as well as "uncertainty of the value of his contribution" (Storr, 1990, p. 21). Mansfield (1995) argues that despite his depression, Churchill always believed he had a destiny and he never veered from its path, remaining focused and realistic about how best to achieve this destiny. He never took himself too seriously but he "possessed balance and a holistic, honest world view that incorporated all life's offerings. He could hold seeming opposites in a dynamic tension because he faced the truth about himself, found it complex, came to terms with it and moved forward" (Mansfield, 1995, p. 149).

Although Storr (1990) exhibits great admiration for the way in which Churchill overcame his 'Black Dog', he provides a contrarian perspective on Churchill's character. Storr (1990, p. 49) states that "his dogged determination, his resilience and his courage enabled him, until old age, to conquer his own inner enemy, just as he defeated all foes of the country he loved so well" and that "it only increases our admiration for the way in which,

early in his life, he fought his own destiny, for he carried a temperamental load which was indeed an exceptionally heavy burden”. However, in addition to these admirable comments, Storr (1990) believes that Churchill’s courage and inspiration were not necessarily bound in realism but “owed their dynamic force to the romantic world of fantasy in which he had his true being” (p. 50).

Where Mansfield (1995) believes that Churchill was a man who lived his life by constant self-examination and realistic perspective, Storr (1990) challenges the views of Mansfield (1995) as well as Ghaemi (2011) in whose research there is support for Churchill’s depressive realism. Storr (1990) states that it was Churchill’s world of make-believe and his incredible imagination, not his actual reality, that led to his “finest hour” in 1940 (p. 49).

It is the purpose of this study to explore the varied and opposing opinions of the effect of Churchill’s ‘Black Dog’ on his personality and his leadership capability. To this end, a comprehensive view of the life of Sir Winston Churchill within the context of his depression will be presented so that a real and representative case for the concept of depressive realism may be considered.

## **1.6. Brief Overview of Depressive Realism**

Depressive realism is a term that has evolved out of psychological research that has explored the proposition that depressed people are more realistic in their thinking and have a more realistic perception of their environment than non-depressed individuals (Ghaemi, 2011). Depressive realism has been applied to people with moderate depression.

In 1967, Martin Seligman proposed the theory of learned helplessness. He researched the conditions and types of events that individuals believed they could exert a degree of control as well as the effects resulting from events that individuals could not control by their

actions (Seligman, 1972). He proposed that, for some individuals, uncontrollable events are traumatising and leave the individual feeling debilitated and helpless. So much so, that any future events, particularly traumatising events, cause the individual to display passivity and an inability to react appropriately. The traumatised individuals display an inability to learn that responding can be effective and 'learn' to become helpless in the face of trauma. "Such uncontrollable events can significantly debilitate organisms: they produce emotional stress in animals and possibly depression in man" (Seligman, 1972, p. 407). According to Ghaemi (2011), Seligman reasoned that depressed people see the world too negatively because they are "scarred by early hardship and learn to feel helpless" (Ghaemi, 2011, p. 51). In 1979, two students of Seligman, Lauren Alloy and Lynn Abramson (1979), decided to study learned helplessness further.

In the United States of America, Alloy and Abramson (1979) conducted a series of four experiments using college students who were divided into two groups: depressed and non-depressed students. They tested the rating that depressed and non-depressed college students gave to their ability to influence the outcome of an action. Results indicated that depressed college students were more accurate in judging how much control they had over an outcome whereas non-depressed students demonstrated a higher degree of illusion about their control over an outcome. The students with depression had a more realistic perception of their locus of control and ability to influence an outcome than students with no depression (Alloy & Abramson, 1979).

Essentially, Alloy and Abramson (1979) made a controversial discovery: depressed students did not underestimate how much control they had, in fact, normal students overestimated it. This observation was termed depressive realism.

Although these results have been replicated by other researchers since 1979, some researchers (Bryson, Doan & Pasquali, 1984; Dobson & Pusch, 1995; Dunning & Story, 1991; Kapci & Cramer, 1999; Langer & Roth, 1975; Msetfi, Murphy & Simpson, 2004; Vazquez, 1987) have failed to replicate the results and criticism has been levelled against the initial research findings (Allan et al. 2007). The existence of depressive realism therefore remains a contentious debate.

### **1.7. The Value of Adler's Theory of Individual Psychology to the Life of Sir Winston Churchill**

The dynamic psychological journey through life as described by Alfred Adler provides a rich and descriptive model on which to base the exploration and explanation of Churchill's personality development.

Adlerian theory is a growth model and stresses a positive view of human nature. The value of Adlerian Individual Psychology to the psychobiographical study of Churchill is the provision of a holistic view of the individual and describes the dynamic processes that drive personality development.

The relevance of Adlerian theory to Churchill's life is contextualised by observing key events in Churchill's life, starting with his earliest recollections and early experiences as a child to his formative years in politics and later as a world leader. These events and experiences are explored for their significance and impact on Churchill's personality development, the development and consequences of his depression and ultimately his choice of life goals.

Family dynamics, the significance of Churchill's birth order and the relationship he had with his parents and his sibling, are further explored as key factors impacting on his

individual development and the appearance and reappearance of his depression. According to Storr (1990), Churchill's political ambitions and striving for power were an attempt to overcome certain childhood setbacks and certain emotions that were denied him as a child. Rintala (1984) argues that the adult Churchill compensated for these lost years by seeking and craving power. For Churchill, political ambition and depression were interconnected and are both traceable to his childhood (Storr, 1990).

Churchill had a younger brother, John Strange Churchill, known to his family as Jack (Rintala, 1984). Churchill, however, spent little time with his brother as Churchill was sent to boarding school at the age of seven. Churchill's parents also appeared to favour Jack more because he was apparently easy-going and less demanding on their attentions or affections. Randolph Churchill is noted to have said that Jack never did stupid things and was therefore far superior in intelligence to Winston (Rintala, 1984). To compensate for these feelings of inferiority as well as a childhood characterised by loneliness, Churchill's view of the world appears to have developed from a foundation based on the world being a cold and harsh place. As such, he would have to either enter into battle and conquer or be conquered. Churchill's ambition for power, dominance and superiority may well have been formed early in life and when, in his later life, his power base was either weakened or challenged and his superiority was under threat, bouts of deep depression would ensue (Rintala, 1984). "Sometimes the child who has lost his power, the small kingdom he ruled, understands better than anyone else, the importance of power and authority" (Adler, 1962, p. 110).

Birth order is also significant to Churchill's personality development because, as a first born child, Adler believed the child is more ambitious, aggressive and driven than their younger siblings. They set higher expectations and have a high achievement drive (Corey, 2005; Rintala, 1984).

Rintala (1984) argues that Churchill was obviously deprived of something crucial in his earlier life, causing him to feel inferior and inadequate, bearing some resemblance to what Alfred Adler referred to as a “compensating for the feeling of inferiority and the striving for recognition and superiority” (Adler, 1928, p. 72). Seeking and achieving power and superiority were his primary goals as a result of earlier experiences of inferiority as a child. As such, power was the underlying foundation of his life and without it his life was devoid of value or meaning (Rintala, 1984).

According to Stein and Edwards (1998), Adler stressed that individuals can only be understood as integrated beings with various internal and external forces constantly shaping their lives. Adler stressed the importance of early recollections, familial influences and internal drivers to overcome inferiority and strive for superiority, significance and meaning. The striving for community feeling and the betterment of humanity is a key driver in the individual development of human beings (Corey, 2005; Stein & Edwards, 1998).

Therefore, in this research, Alfred Adler’s theoretical framework will be valuable to document Churchill’s life in terms of his formative years; his relationship with his mother and father; his career in politics and the impact of his father’s own career as a politician; his relationship with his wife and children and, most notably, his involvement in international events, all in the context of his experience with depression. Adler’s theory provides the framework in which to describe these life events in relation to Churchill’s mood disorder in a holistic manner and will also enable the contextualisation of both the negative and positive side effects of his depression.

In sum, Adler’s theory of Individual Psychology enables the researcher to reconstruct the life of Sir Winston Churchill into a formal psychological narrative. The focus being the development, course and impact of his depression over his lifespan in order to potentially

demonstrate the presence of depressive realism and its effect on Churchill's legacy as an exceptional wartime leader (Ghaemi, 2011).

### **1.8. Rationale for the Research Study**

The research on depressive realism provokes contentious debate but it also proposes a novel way to view mental illness and challenges the idea that depression is a purely negative phenomenon. That, indeed certain proposed characteristics of depression (realism, empathy and even creativity) can be viewed positively and extracted as a way of building up self-esteem and confidence. Fieve (1997) argues that, describing and exploring the lives of well-known individuals who, in spite of their depression, have overcome extreme personal challenges and demonstrated unbelievable tenacity, courage and real life success, provides a light at the end of a very dark tunnel.

In the case of this current research, studying the life of Sir Winston Churchill against this theoretical backdrop and observing his struggle against depression, his 'Black Dog', is a potentially vivid example to highlight the potential value of the construct of depressive realism and illuminate what is possible and positive despite experiencing depression.

In 2009, Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom (UK), together with his Communications Director, Alastair Campbell and historian, Nigel Jones, launched a health campaign to challenge the stigma of mental illness in the UK. Together, they wrote a paper titled: "A World Without the Fantastic Five" (Campbell & Jones, 2009) which argued that if Winston Churchill, Florence Nightingale, Charles Darwin, Abraham Lincoln and Marie Curie were alive today, they would have endured substantial discrimination as a result of their mental ill health and thus thwarted from achieving their ambitions:

Had this discrimination applied to Churchill, Lincoln and Nightingale, we can safely say that today's world would be a very different place. The stigma and discrimination that exists towards the mentally ill would have prevented them achieving what they did. We, as a human race, would have been worse off as a result (Campbell & Jones, 2009, p. 2).

The current study sets out to explore a single case study of Sir Winston Churchill and his experience with depression. Although findings are not generalisable to a wider population, Churchill's life history offers a positive example for individuals with mood disorders, specifically depression. That Churchill bore the scars of a life time of depressive episodes yet still managed to make major contributions to humanity, should provide a sound basis from which to reconsider the negative connotations of depression and bring hope to so many people living with depression.

While it is all too easy to make grandiose claims for the influence of particular individuals on the course of history, it might not be too fanciful here to parody the words of one of our historical heroes, 'never in the field of human suffering has so much hope been offered by so few to so many' (Carson & Wakely, 2013, p. 27).

### **1.9. Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of the current study are outlined as follows:

Firstly, to explore and describe the life of Sir Winston Churchill within the context of his lifelong battle with depression and to observe and document how this depression originated and affected his individual development on a personal and public level.

Secondly, to interpret and contextualise these observations, Alfred Adler's theory of Individual Psychology will be used to understand his life within a psychological frame of

reference. The intention is not to generalise the observations and findings to the general population but rather to generalise the findings of the research to Adler's stages of individual development. According to Yin (1994) this is deemed analytical generalisation.

Thirdly, to explore the possibility that Churchill's depression might have been beneficial to him. That is to say that certain characteristics of his depression may have unwittingly driven him to be the leader that he was and, in so doing, provide a case for depressive realism.

Fourthly, the psychobiographical research method provides the opportunity to explore multiple sources of data to describe the life of an individual, in this case Sir Winston Churchill, in the most in-depth and personal account possible (Yin, 1994). Although the observations of his life are not generalisable, the intention is that the richness of the data and the depth of analysis of such an enigmatic yet tormented historical figure may be sufficient evidence to establish a degree of credibility for depressive realism in a real-life setting.

### **1.10. Relevance in a South African Context**

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), there is currently an estimated 350 million people worldwide suffering from depression (WHO, 2012). In a South African context, Stein, Seedat, Herman, Moomal, Heeringa, Kessler and Williams (2008) found that the lifetime prevalence of psychiatric disorders in South Africa is high in comparison to other countries on the African continent. Socio-demographic factors spilling over from the Apartheid era as well as current socio-economic factors provide some explanation for this high prevalence. Results indicate a high prevalence of substance abuse, mainly alcohol, followed by mood and anxiety disorders. The results provide important data for the establishment of national health policies as well as mental health service planning and local

treatment facilities. These findings clearly establish a baseline for the need for attention and treatment of many South Africans living with depressive and bipolar disorders.

The purpose of this research study is to highlight the positive and negative effects of depression, and, with a broader understanding of these effects, could help to transform the treatment of individuals with depression on both international and national levels.

A psychobiographical study of Sir Winston Churchill provides a single case example of where one individual triumphed in the face of depression. That an example can be drawn from history is not only encouraging but also provides a refreshing approach to how depression is viewed and ultimately to how it is treated. Sir Winston Churchill was chosen as the case study for this research for three reasons:

Firstly, he is a world renowned political figure in history whose depression is well documented. The story of his life can influence the understanding of depression further.

Secondly, establishing a credible South African case to research has proved more difficult as there was, to date, insufficient reliable evidence to suggest that any of our historical political leaders suffered from clinical depression.

Thirdly, it is important to research a socio-political figure rather than a creative figure such as a writer, composer or artist, as the focus of this research is to observe factors such as decision making, governance and leadership and how these are impacted by a depressive or bipolar disorder.

Establishing a South African historical leader to profile has proven more difficult. Historical data on the true state of the mental health of many South African historical leaders is not easily found, as documentation is lacking.

### **1.11. Structural Overview of the Study**

This study comprises eight chapters, the first being the introductory chapter that provides a general orientation to the study as well as the problem statement. Chapters 2, 3, 4 and 5 are literature review chapters. Chapter 2 provides an overview of psychobiographical research and Chapter 3 provides the theoretical framework in which this study was contextualised, that being, Alfred Adler's theory of Individual Psychology. The life of Sir Winston Churchill with specific reference to his experience with depression is then explored in Chapter 4 followed by a discussion of the concept of depressive realism in Chapter 5. Preliminary methodological considerations, including the design and methodology of the study, are presented in Chapter 6. The findings and discussion regarding the life of Sir Winston Churchill and his 'Black Dog' within the psychological framework of Adler's Individual Psychology constitute Chapter 7. The study concludes with Chapter 8 which comprises a discussion of both the value and limitations of the study as well as recommendations for future research in the fields of psychobiography, personality and counselling psychology as well as therapeutic psychology where innovative treatment therapies for depression may be further explored and initiated.



## Chapter 2

### Psychobiography as Case Study Research: An Overview

#### 2.1. Chapter Preview

This chapter provides context to the research undertaking of psychobiography and its significance in case study research. The chapter begins with an overview of the field of qualitative research and progresses with an explanation of the case study method and its place within the qualitative paradigm. A synopsis of the discipline of psychobiography as case study research together with an overview of psychobiography is then presented, including a brief history of the progress of psychobiography and a summary of related concepts. These include biographical and autobiographical research, life history and life stories, narrative research, psychohistories, historical psychology and historiographies as well as personality assessment and its relation to psychobiography.

In the latter part of the chapter the benefits and advantages of using a case study method with a psychobiographical focus are discussed. A description of the uniqueness of individual case study within the context of the whole as well as the socio-historical context of psychobiography is presented. Processes and patterns over time, subjective reality and theory testing and development are also discussed.

#### 2.2. Qualitative Research

In an attempt to gain knowledge about everyday phenomena, the use of statistically driven data resultant of quantitative analysis is not always appropriate in terms of capturing the nuances and distinctions inherent to everyday experiences (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). In contrast, qualitative research is an interpretive approach to understanding and making sense

of the circumstances that define everyday life and, although not an empirical science, qualitative research is indeed scientific (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005).

Terre Blanche and Durrheim (1999) stress that qualitative research is an iterative process that requires the research approach to be flexible and pragmatic in its design and not defined only by technical considerations. Accordingly, quantitative researchers argue that the qualitative approach is not scientific and vulnerable to changes in methodology and research bias during the research process. In their defence, qualitative researchers argue that fixed, technical research designs are “restrictive and unsuited” to the exploratory and inductive realm of qualitative research (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999, p. 32). Where qualitative research focuses on real-life situations occurring in their natural context; a holistic approach to the phenomena under study and an emphasis on the researcher’s immersion into the specifics of the data, quantitative research embarks on a research process with a predetermined hypothesis and data is collected in the form of numbers and analysed mathematically and statistically by means of standardised measures, graphs and tables in order to draw generalisable conclusions (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008; Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999). The distinction between qualitative and quantitative research lies in their different approaches to data collection and analysis. Qualitative research allows the researcher to study phenomena in great depth in a naturalistic setting, that is, in its natural context in order to allow patterns to emerge from the data. Data is collected in the form of written or spoken language or observations and data is analysed through a process of data coding, categorisation and theme building (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999), which is well-suited to the humanities.

Smith (2008) comments that data collection in qualitative research is typically done through verbal or written reports, including interviews and transcripts and the focus is on textual analysis to deduce meaning in the text rather than “finding the numerical property” of

the data (p. 2). “Qualitative approaches in psychology are generally engaged with exploring, describing and interpreting the personal and social experiences of participants” (Smith, 2008, p. 2.). It is more valuable to capture the perceptions and points of view of a small group of individuals than try to test preconceived hypotheses on a larger population.

In addition, Denzin and Lincoln (2008) emphasise the importance to qualitative researchers of socially constructed realities and experiences and how meaning can be extracted from these experiences. In contrast, quantitative researchers stress the importance of measuring cause and effect relationships between variables and representing these outcomes statistically. Qualitative researchers emphasise the “value-laden nature of inquiry” whereas quantitative researchers “claim that their works is done from within a value-free framework” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008, p. 14).

Qualitative research holds significant relevance for the study of social relationships and, as such, there has been a growing interest in recent years in the value of the qualitative research paradigm due to the onset of a “pluralization of life worlds” (Flick, 2009, p. 12). This ‘pluralization’ refers to global social changes in the past few decades and a turnaround in social norms and past social inequalities. The development of new subcultures and different ways of living, have increased the need for a “new sensitivity to the empirical study of issues” (Flick, 2009, p. 12.). By way of this new genre, the value of qualitative research has gained renewed momentum and there is an ever increasing need to make use of inductive and interpretive research strategies that reflect this emerging social and cultural diversity in society in general.

Qualitative research takes on many different forms of enquiry including observation, participation, interviewing and ethnography and it makes use of a number of different research strategies including case studies, grounded theory approaches, biographical,

historical and narrative research techniques (Creswell, 2003; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005).

Creswell (2003) comments further that qualitative research seeks knowledge, often based on a constructionist perspective, through the multiple interpretations of individual experience, in order to identify patterns or themes in behaviours or phenomena. Qualitative enquiry uses multiple strategies that include narrative, phenomenological, ethnographic, grounded theory and case study approaches.

Qualitative research is a multi-method approach, explains Flick (2002) and the use of multiple methods in data collection and analysis is a means of establishing data triangulation, that is, the multi-method approach provides the opportunity to broaden the sources of data from which an in-depth understanding and a richness of detail may be drawn from the material under study, which is particularly important and relevant for psychobiographical research. In this regard, triangulation attempts to secure an acceptable standard of rigour, breadth and depth in data evaluation.

Denzin and Lincoln (2005) concur that qualitative research emphasises the value of studying a variety of material from different sources. Such sources include, but are not limited to, case study recordings, personal experiences, life stories, interviews, artefacts, observations and interactions in order to provide valuable, if not unique, meaning to individual experiences. Multiple research strategies including historical narratives, testimonies, content and discourse analysis, phonemic analysis, biographies, autobiographies and archival material may be employed. Qualitative research also draws on the practices of ethnomethodology, phenomenology, hermeneutics, deconstructionism, participant observation, ethnography, grounded theory, psychoanalysis, interviewing, surveys and case studies (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008; Nelson, Treichler & Grossberg, 1992). In this context however, Denzin and Lincoln (2008) stress that no specific method takes precedence over another and, in order to avoid subjectivity or researcher bias, there is often an emphasis to

make simultaneous use of a range of interpretive methods in order to ensure that holistic and less subjective conclusions are drawn from the data.

Since qualitative research does not favour one methodology or research strategy over another, Denzin and Lincoln (2008) also claim that no theory or paradigm dominates its focus either. “Multiple theoretical paradigms claim the use of qualitative research methods and strategies” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008, p. 9). Additionally, all of these different research approaches are equally capable of providing meaningful interpretations and knowledge (Nelson et al., 1992).

Qualitative research is also defined by its own ontology, epistemology and interpretive methodology (see Chapter 6). Ontology recognises the subjective reality of human experience and epistemology recognises that a researcher can relate to another’s experiences by observing or interacting with them and listening to what they tell us.

In sum, the field of qualitative research cuts across all of the human sciences and disciplines and is characterised by its multi-paradigmatic and multi-method approach (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). Furthermore, in all of its definitions, the field of qualitative research highlights the role of the researcher. It is the researcher who is at the epicentre of the research process and whose interpretations of the participant provide value and textual meaning. It is the researcher’s view and interpretation of the “other” that creates the distinction in qualitative research. The quality of the research is further reflected in the careful consideration of researcher bias as well as the emphasis on ethical considerations and researcher reflexivity at every phase of the research process (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). In this context, this psychobiography will draw upon the theoretical assumptions of the qualitative paradigm.

### **2.3. Case Study Research in the Qualitative Paradigm**

The case study method lends itself to research scenarios where topics require broad definitions and are best served by multiple not singular sources of evidence and where context is as important as the actual phenomena under study. The method provides the opportunity to gather data that covers both the specific and the broad context and allows for the research of numerous and varied variables within context (Yin, 1993). Case study research refers to research studies that are typically qualitative in nature and endeavour to uncover in-depth material that richly describes a small number of cases relating to any number of topics in the business, social or political spheres (Mouton, 2001). Case study research is applicable to the study of human behaviour in any social or historical setting and is also applied in educational and organisational studies that necessitate an exploratory or an in-depth investigation (Rosnow & Rosenthal, 1996). The case study method is “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used” (Yin, 1984, p. 23).

Case studies may be studied qualitatively or quantitatively, depending on the research scenario (Keen & Packwood, 1995; Stake, 1995; Yin, 1984). Qualitative methods prove most applicable when the research is being conducted in a real-life setting where context must be taken into consideration and where the researcher has no control over events or does not need to manipulate events. In these circumstances the number of ‘relevant variables’ are greater than can be controlled for, making experimental methods inappropriate (Keen & Packwood, 1995). Case studies are valuable when complex phenomenon need to be investigated and no one method is sufficient to capture all of the salient features of the situation. Case studies are effectively multi-method by nature (Keen & Packwood, 1995).

According to Yin (1993) case studies can be singular by nature (which is the case of this study of the life of Sir Winston Churchill) or multiple studies can be undertaken, in which two or more cases within the same context are studied in the hope of replicating a finding. In this instance, a replication logic is followed and the more replications that are established, the more robust the findings of the research (Yin, 1993). In either scenario, single or multiple case studies may be classified as exploratory, descriptive or explanatory. Exploratory case studies explore a particular phenomenon and aim to define a research question which may lead to a subsequent study, not necessarily a case study, or aim to determine the feasibility of a particular research process. Descriptive studies aim to provide a complete description of a phenomenon within its own context. The intention of explanatory studies is to present data that highlights a cause and effect relationship (Yin, 1993).

Yin (1993) highlights the fundamental importance of theory in case study research, not only in terms of defining the design of the study, but, more importantly, theory provides a comparative tool against which results can be presented and generalised. Theoretical propositions provide a “series of benchmarks against which actual data can be compared” and the theory can be tested even “with empirical evidence collected from a single case study” using a data analysis technique of pattern-matching (Yin, 1993, p. 39). Rival theories can also be assessed and compared in order to determine mutually exclusive patterns. Data collected from a single case could then be examined to determine which pattern is more credible and which theory best explains the research outcome (Yin, 1993).

Furthermore, Yin (1993) states that theory helps to determine the selection of a case study or cases to be studied and defines what is being explored (particularly relevant to exploratory research) or provides an applicable description when descriptive case studies are being undertaken. In the situation of explanatory cases, theory helps define and compare rival theories. Stake (2000) and Yin (2003) comment, that by far the most central role of theory,

however, is to provide a means of generalising results, which, in the case of case study research is not to other populations, but rather to other similar cases and to the actual theoretical propositions underpinning the objectives of the study. This, in turn, serves to develop our understanding of the theoretical propositions. Yin (1993) further comments that, in this context, theory means “the design of research steps according to some relationship to the literature, policy issues or other substantive source” (Yin, 1993, p. 4). Stake (1995), claims that the purpose of case study research is not to generalise findings to the greater population but rather aims to uncover meaning and relate and extend this meaning to other contexts and human experiences.

In relation to descriptive case studies, Yin (1993) further states that, although phenomena are being described, theory is still equally important in providing a foundation to support the objectives of the study. Theory also helps determine the appropriate data collection methods as well as defines the scope of the study and what the description should include and exclude.

Another distinguishable characteristic of case study research is that it takes into consideration the context of the research. Stake (1995) claims that no matter the context of the case, whether it is social, historical, political, economic or ethical, contexts are important to consider and are particularly critical for enhancing the understanding of relationships. The consideration of context further produces in-depth, richly descriptive data with numerous variables for deliberation and reflection (Yin, 1993). Furthermore, Stake (1995) explains that a case study is situated within a ‘bounded’ system as a finite entity or case about which multiple sources of contextual data are collected overtime. In this study, the ‘bounded’ system is an individual, Sir Winston Churchill, and his life story has been studied within its own socio-cultural and historical context (Creswell, 1998; Stake, 1995).

It is noteworthy that case study research rarely, if ever, relies on one single data collection method (Yin, 1993). Data collection in case study research is typically conducted by means of different yet complementary strategies which can be either qualitative or quantitative in nature, depending on the purpose and objective of the study, and whose focus are the context in which the particular phenomenon takes place not just the phenomenon itself (Yin, 1993). The interpretation of these multiple sources of information are offered by means of 'thick' descriptions and data rich analyses (Yin, 1993). "The development of rigorous data collection techniques and strategies under these conditions, in comparison to the conditions faced by ethnography, history, quasi-experimentation and surveys, has been the continuing quest in defining the case study method" (Yin, 1993, p. 3).

Defining the unit of analysis is another important feature of case study research and it may present itself as either the starting or stumbling block of any case study, depending on how the phenomenon under study are defined (Yin, 1993). Since the nature of case study research accommodates data collection from broad and numerous sources over different time periods, defining the exact unit of analysis at the outset of a study is critical (Yin, 1993). The unit of analysis can be an event, entity, phenomenon or individual (Yin, 2003).

Research findings should correspond to the theoretical suppositions underpinning the research. These theoretical propositions ultimately provide a means of generalising the results of the case study to other similar cases where the unit of analysis is the same. "Thus, the entire design of the case study and its potential theoretical significance, is heavily dominated by the way the unit of analysis is defined" (Yin, 1993, p. 10). Once the unit of analysis has been clearly defined and the parameters of the research study have been delineated, appropriate cases can then be identified or selected for the actual study. Keen and Packwood (1995) suggest that cases be selected based on how typically they represent the phenomenon

under study, or how appropriate they are to testing a specific theory or how able certain cases are in confirming or refuting a research enquiry.

Case selection may also occur as a result of the case being exemplary, that is, cases are chosen because of the prototype nature of the phenomenon or concept being studied and findings may resonate with other similar events or individuals that produce similar outcomes in other cases (Yin, 1993). In this study, the life of Sir Winston Churchill and his lifelong experience with depression, proved an exemplary and feasible case from which to explore the concept of depressive realism.

A case may be an individual or groups of individuals, a context or an event and, to determine how many cases are enough to generate a comprehensive amount of data, the nature of the inquiry and how much detail each case is able to provide must be considered (Yin, 1993). The number of necessary cases also depends on the emergence of theoretical progress in that particular field of interest, that is, according to Terre Blanche and Durrheim (1999), if there has been sufficient theoretical development then the researcher can narrow the focus of the research and look for very specific cases to verify the research idea. “We may even settle for a single-case study design when we wish to test a theory in an exceptional context” (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999, p. 381).

Once a case has been selected, the focus of case study research moves from the case selection phase to the process of data collection. As previously noted, data collection is not limited to any one particular method, that is, it typically follows a multi-method approach from a variety of sources (Yin, 1993). Accordingly, Merriam (1998) comments that whilst interviews are the most common source of data collection in case study research, observations constitute another substantial source of information. In the case of a biographical or psychobiographical study, however, information is gathered by means of an

even broader spectrum of data sources, including but not limited to interviews, biographical information, diary entries, documentary data and archival material, depending on the circumstances of the individual under study (Yin, 1994).

Three key steps in the data collection process are highlighted by Yin (2003). These include the use of multiple sources of information, the development of a case study database to organise raw data and the recording of the sequence of data collected. According to Yin (2003), the value of multiple data sources is that they provide an opportunity to corroborate information and identify recurring patterns in the data through the process of data triangulation.

Once data collection procedures are complete, the process of data analysis becomes the focal point. Merriam (1998) claims that, the process of data analysis in case study research, is typically interpretive and intuitive. Levels of data analysis involve the identification of categories or themes in the data, naming these categories and, finally, placing the data into the appropriate categories. This process demands of the researcher considerable theorising and a high degree of data immersion, illustrating the interpretive and information rich nature of case study research (Merriam, 1998).

Yin (1984; 2003) proposes that data analysis be contextualised within and focused around the theoretical propositions underpinning the study. He also stresses the importance of considering rival explanations in the analysis process. Yin (1984; 2003) proposes specific analytic techniques including, but not limited to, pattern-matching which involves the identification of patterns in the data; explanation building, time series analysis which involves observing changes over time and logic models. Whichever technique is used, however, Yin (1984) emphasises the key importance of ensuring that all available evidence is

considered and that appropriate rival interpretations are assessed in order to develop a plausible line of reasoning that is reflected in the data.

Stake (1995) and Yin (1984) sum up the aforementioned discussion on data collection and analysis by presenting the six phases of successful case study research. These include: defining the research questions; selecting the cases and deciding the data collection and analysis techniques; preparing to collect the data; collecting the actual data; evaluating and analysing the data and, finally, preparing the report.

In Chapter 6 on Research Design and Methodology, the importance of ensuring trustworthiness of the data and its particular relevance to the case study method is explicated. According to Yin (1993), to ensure trustworthiness of qualitative data, multiple sources of evidence and different data collection methods should be consulted. In this context, data triangulation becomes both important and relevant, whereby data is corroborated from at least two sources and by more than one method of data collection (Keen & Packwood, 1995).

An overview of case study research would not be complete without a brief discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of this research method. Critics of the case study research method cite a lack of reliability and an inability to generalise findings due to the limited number of cases that are studied, if not just one case. Concentration on such a small number of cases or only one case may ultimately bias the overall findings as well as increase the potential for researcher bias (Soy, 1997). Although Yin (1984) recognises the criticism that case study research lacks rigour, objectivity, quantification or generalisation, he challenges this view by stating that case study research is more appropriate than other methods when 'how' or 'why' questions are being posed, when the research focuses on contemporary phenomenon and when the investigator has little control over events. In

addition, Yin (2003) readily acknowledges that findings are not generalisable to populations but rather their purpose is to build on and generalise theories.

A key advantage of the case study method involves its use of multi-method data collection procedures and the consultation of multiple data sources which ultimately provide layers of complexity, depth and descriptive richness to the data as well as significant insights into human behaviours and events (Stake, 1995; Yin, 1984). The case study method is able to build upon theory, challenge existing theory, create new theory or simply explain, explore or describe a situation or phenomenon (Yin, 1993). In so doing, this method lends itself to studying ‘real-life, contemporary, human situations’ and the findings typically resonate with everyday human experiences which further enhances our knowledge and understanding of ‘complex real-life situations’ (Soy, 1997). Furthermore, Stake (1995; 2000) comments that case studies may often be the preferred choice of methodology because they may mirror the reader’s own life experiences, enabling the findings to be generalised for that person. He does, however, caution that case studies are prone to subjective procedures rendering them less ‘scientific’ than experimental studies and proposes that case studies are most appropriate when the objectives of the study are to explore, understand and enrich the experience of phenomenon already known rather than to explain unknown events or instances where hypotheses or relationships need clarification. Terre Blanche and Durrheim (1999) sum up case study research as follows: “In building theory or understanding, we are concerned with talking in a ‘general’ way about phenomenon, whilst in finding ‘cases’ of the phenomenon we are concerned with the particular or specific manifestations of the phenomenon in the world”(p. 382).

In justifying the choice of research method for this study, that being, a psychobiography couched in a descriptive case study method, the researcher has been able to research and explore a complex phenomenon (depressive realism) within a ‘bounded context’

(Creswell, 1998; Stake, 1995), using real-life data sources (the life of Sir Winston Churchill) and contextualising the data within a theoretical framework (Alfred Adler's Theory of Individual Psychology). The interpretation of the findings is intended to illuminate the complexities of the phenomenon under study (depressive realism) and enhance the understanding of this phenomenon to provide meaningful, affective information that could not necessarily be collected otherwise (MacNealy, 1997).

In the forthcoming section of this chapter, the concept of psychobiography as case study research is explored in more detail. It is noteworthy at this juncture that the 'intensive' psychological case study has been used on an individual basis by psychoanalysts to explore and understand human behaviour since the early work of Sigmund Freud, dating back to the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In addition, innumerable case studies of individual behaviour over the past century have deeply enhanced our knowledge and understanding of psychological disorders (Rosnow & Rosenthal, 1996).

#### **2.4. Psychobiography as Case Study Research**

To understand case study research in its entirety, an explanation of what is meant by psychobiography becomes relevant because case study research lays the foundation for psychobiographical research. Psychobiography represents the biographical study of the personality development of lives already lived (Carlson, 1988) in their socio-historical context within a structured psychological frame of reference (Fouché & Van Niekerk, 2010). Psychobiography is the comprehensive study of an individual over their entire life span, where the researcher typically utilises biographical data and where the subject is identified by name rather than an anonymous subject (Fouché & Van Niekerk, 2010). The psychobiographical study of an individual subject or 'case' provides the platform from which to explore underlying themes, interpret meaning in individual experience and behaviour as

well as uncover potential myths underpinning the distinctive story of an individual life (Elms, 1994).

In this context, the term psychobiography is created by two separate terms: psychology and biography, where the “unit of analysis is the story of a single life characterised by an idiographic approach” (Fouché & Van Niekerk, 2010, p. 496). That is, the investigation and psychological interpretation of unique life events within a holistic context (Carlson, 1988; Van Niekerk, 2007). The two research disciplines of psychobiography and biography share common ground in that they seek to explore unique life stories of exemplary individuals using biographical data. However, the two disciplines differ as psychobiography makes use of psychological theories to interpret the biographical data and contextualise the life events of the individual. Psychobiography captures the ‘scientific disciplines’ of psychology and the intuitive and interpretive approach of biography where the central focus is on the distinctiveness of human lives (Fouché & Van Niekerk, 2010; Van Niekerk, 2007).

Where biography presents the factual life story of an individual, psychobiography seeks the “creation of meaning” in an individual case by approaching biography from the perspective of personality theory and, where biography attempts to “re-create” a life, psychobiography enables us to “re-live”, appreciate and understand an individual’s life within his or her socio-cultural context (Manganyi, 1983, p. 50). “In captive societies, psychobiography possesses the potential of disturbing traditional lies, silences and can change a muted consciousness into a vocal and manifest consciousness” (Manganyi, 1983, p. 35).

In so far as psychobiographical research is interested in the unique and personal experiences of the individual, that is, the seeking of meaning in individual experiences and

particular life events, psychobiographical case study research is deemed idiographic rather than nomothetic by nature (Hermans, 1988). A nomothetic approach to research seeks commonalities in behaviour across individuals and attempts to identify broader behavioural patterns that may provide general context for individual behaviour. In the case of psychobiography, the in-depth analysis of the unique and idiosyncratic behaviour and practices of a particular individual, derived from biographical sources, lends itself to an idiographic approach (Hermans, 1988).

For developmental psychologist Erik Erikson (1963), successful psychobiography means understanding and interpreting a particular case or life story on three core levels: firstly, the person as a physical being, secondly, the person and their ego, that is, how a person interacts and copes with the world around him or herself, and, thirdly, the person in relation to his or her family and society, reflecting the broader societal, cultural and historical influences. According to McAdams (1988), Erikson (1963) views psychobiography as a vehicle to “discern the psychosocial story of the individual life” (p. 5.). Furthermore, the analysis of data derived from a single life story or narrative case can be channelled and contextualised within a theoretical frame of reference to produce an effective structure for discovering and organising major themes in an individual’s life story. In this study, Alfred Adler’s Theory of Individual Psychology provides such a framework for the collection and psychological analysis of the selected biographical data on Sir Winston Churchill.

#### **2.4.1. Psychobiography, Biography and Narratives**

Where psychologists and sociologists seek to understand human behaviour or attempt to explain individual personality development, research material is drawn from the stories or life narratives of their subjects by means of autobiographical or biographical information

(autobiographical refers to accounts told in the person's own words and biographical is the interpretation by the researcher on available biographical data) (McAdams, 1988).

In discerning and establishing meaning in the data, whether it is autobiographical or biographical, psychobiographers employ psychological theory to conceptualise and contextualise the data to “transform a life into a coherent and illuminating story” (McAdams, 1988, p. 2). To this end they are conducting psychobiographical research. “What psychology offers to the biographer is the hope of approaching closer to the human heart” (Anderson, 1981, p. 475).

Even the harshest critics of psychological biography concede that the application of psychology to biography makes sense. Since comprehensive biographical studies inevitably include an analysis of the subject's personality, it is reasonable to carry out such an analysis systematically and with psychological sophistication (Anderson, 1981, p. 455).

Anderson (1981) and McAdams (1988) explain that psychobiography has significant value in the realm of qualitative case study research in that it takes the biographical facts of an individual's life and transforms these into a psychological frame of reference by challenging what lies beneath the surface of the factual data to uncover the inner self of the individual. Anderson (1981) cites that “the nature of the inner self is that it is hidden, consequently, the biographer who would attempt to unearth it must take advantage of all available resources, and psychology is one of those resources” (p. 475).

As the objective of psychobiography is to research the personality development of completed lives (Carlson, 1988) over their entire lifespan (Fouché & Van Niekerk 2010; Van Niekerk, 2007) to uncover central themes of historical and psychological significance,

researchers turn to the analysis of historical data (Simonton, 2003), the majority of which is based in richly descriptive narrative text.

The systematic use of narrative to explore and uncover the meaning in human behaviour is gaining increasing popularity amongst social scientists and psychologists of many sub-disciplines (McAdams, 1988) as it applies to the study of human behaviour and personality development in context. Analysing the story of a person's life in the form of a narrative text facilitates the further investigation of underlying themes, nuances and hidden meanings to better understand behaviour. McAdams (1988) refers to an "emergence of narrative and story as guiding frames for human understanding" (p. 3). Life narratives will be discussed in more detail in the section on Psychobiography and Related Concepts (see section 2.5.3.3.).

In the following section an overview of psychobiography is presented detailing the evolution and progress of the field of psychobiography and how psychobiography is defined and distinguished from related concepts.

## **2.5. Overview of Psychobiographical Research**

### **2.5.1. Historical Progress**

At the outset of the twentieth century and up to the 1930's the study of personality was a well-established genre but personality itself was considered to be a topic relevant in many areas of psychology rather than a separate field of study on its own (Barenbaum & Winter, 2003). However, Gordon Willard Allport (1937), a pioneering American psychologist of that time and a professor at Harvard University, was instrumental in defining personality psychology as a definitive subfield of psychology, while his colleague, Henry Alexander Murray (1938), also a renowned American psychologist of the mid-1900's, played

a pivotal role in developing “experimental investigations of the psychoanalytic concepts of personality” (Barenbaum & Winter, 2003, p. 185; Runyan, 2005). Both practitioners promoted the study of individual lives with an emphasis on intensive and holistic investigations of individual personality, a research method previously overlooked by many of their colleagues during the earlier years of the twentieth century. It was Henry Murray, that, from early on in his medical career as a physician, emphasised the importance of researching the complete medical history as well as the broader social circumstances of his patients. Murray was also drawn to Carl Jung’s notions of depth psychology which later fuelled his interest in personality typology (Barenbaum & Winter, 2003). In addition, Gordon Allport was also particularly interested in the German based interpretive method of *Verstehen* which he referred to as the contextual understanding of an individual, that is, the interpretation of personality in its holistic sense, in its socio-cultural context (Allport, 1968).

Despite these early developments in personality psychology that later served the establishment of psychobiography as a stand-alone research genre, there was still a tentative uncertainty, both in Europe and the United States of America, towards the psychobiographical study of individual lives as a credible research method in the early part of the twentieth century (Barenbaum & Winter, 2003; Runyan, 1988). Interestingly, Clandinin and Huber (2010) comment that people have lived and told stories about the lives of others for as long as humans could communicate and that these ‘lived and told stories’ give meaning to human existence. Yet the study of individual lives by way of psychobiographical research only gained momentum and formal acknowledgement towards the end of the twentieth century (Barenbaum & Winter, 2003; Elms, 1994; Runyan, 1988).

In spite of the initial ambivalence towards psychobiographical research, there is recognition of a few early psychoanalytic psychobiographies attempted prior to 1910 (Sadger, Jones, Graf, cited in Runyan, 2005) with Sigmund Freud’s psycho-biographical portrayal of

Leonardo da Vinci in 1910 (*Leonardo da Vinci and a Memory of His Childhood 1910/1957*) considered to be the formal beginnings of psychoanalytic biography (Runyan, 1988).

Moreover, Elms (1994) claims that Freud's study of Leonardo da Vinci is deemed the official start of psychobiographical research because it was the first psychobiography to receive so much attention and debate.

Growth of psychobiographies continued slowly through the 1920's, 1930's up to the 1950's with a temporary decline in the years post the Second World War. This vacillation towards psychobiography as a viable research method up to the 1950's was in part due to the practice of psychology being predominantly influenced by and attracted to quantitative methods which served to validate the empirical and scientific value of psychological research (Barenbaum & Winter, 2003). During this time, the qualitative study of individual lives received even less attention by personality psychologists who preferred the use of surveys and quantitative techniques were deemed more 'respectable' methods of studying personality.

Notwithstanding this temporary setback during the 1940's and early 1950's, the study of individual lives received a good deal of attention from political psychologists and historians during the same time period. Psychobiographical studies completed during this era included the psychobiographies of writers such as Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, Goethe, Nietzsche and Poe and political figures including Napoleon, Lincoln, Darwin and Alexander the Great (Anderson, 1978 cited in Runyan, 1988). A significant milestone in establishing improved rigour in the methodology of these studies was achieved in the 1950's with the publication of psychobiographies on Woodrow Wilson and Martin Luther by George and George in 1956 and Erik Erikson in 1958 respectively (Barenbaum & Winter, 2003; Runyan, 1988). In particular, Erik Erikson's studies of Martin Luther in 1958 and Mahatma Gandhi in 1969 received much acclaim. "Erikson's studies of Luther in 1958 and Gandhi in 1969 were

widely viewed as models of how to study individuals through the combined lenses of personality psychology and history” (Barenbaum & Winter, 2003, p. 192).

From the 1960’s to present day there has been a steady growth in the number of psychobiographies published worldwide, covering diverse personalities from various disciplines by such individuals as psychologists and psychoanalysts, historians, political scientists and literary critics (Runyan, 1988).

According to Barenbaum and Winter (2003), by the 1980’s, the “wave of interest in psychobiography began to enter the mainstream as personality psychologists explored how psychobiography studies of individual persons could enrich their field” (p. 192). From the 1990’s, Kováry (2011) claims there was a ‘renaissance of psychobiography’ due to the growing popularity of narrative research making life story analysis acceptable. By the late 1990’s individual case study research was being further influenced by other disciplines such as feminist theory, hermeneutics and narrative methods. And, in 1997, Nasby and Read (1997) published a “truly landmark case study” (Barenbaum & Winter, 2003, p. 193) of Dodge Morgan, an electronics entrepreneur who, at the age of fifty four years, sold his business for \$41million and proceeded to circumnavigate the earth on a solo non-stop journey lasting one hundred and fifty days. Barenbaum and Winter (2003) comment that Nasby and Read (1997) “integrated a rich and diverse array of quantitative and qualitative data” (p. 193) to deliver an in-depth historical and psychobiographical narrative, depicting a truly remarkable and vivid personality. In so doing, Nasby and Read (1997) raised the bar for psychobiographical research in terms of its ability to contextualise psychological theory to ‘transform a life into a coherent and illuminating story’ (Barenbaum & Winter, 2003; McAdams, 1988, p. 2).

Runyan (1988) comments, that although there has been a steady growth in psychobiographical studies, publications and associated professional organisations in recent decades, there is still only partial academic and institutional support for the work being done in this field of research. Runyan (1988) further argues, however, that substantial intellectual progress in a field is still viable despite limited access to institutionalised academic support. To this end, he presents an evaluation tool for determining progress in psychobiographical research as a valuable entity capable of contributing to our improved knowledge and understanding of human lives.

Furthermore, Runyan (1988) believes that progress in psychobiographical studies can be judged according to criteria such as the quality and comprehensiveness of the data, the persuasiveness of the interpretation and the literary appeal of the story. The process of determining progress in psychobiographical understanding can be explained in eight component parts and relates specifically to the criteria of quality of evidential data and the interpretation thereof. The eight components proposed by Runyan (1988) include the following: the identification of additional sources of information; critical examination of existing and prior evidence; gaining insight into background socio-historical and cultural knowledge as well as psycho-theoretical knowledge which is used in the interpretation of the individual case; generating new interpretations of the individual and critical examination of proposed interpretations; the creation of a narrative account that includes the complete analysis of the life within the theoretical and socio-cultural framework; the critical evaluation of the narrative account and, finally, the consideration of the social, political, psychological and historical factors influencing the entire research process.

According to Runyan (1988) the motivation for a new psychobiographical study can stem from development in any one of these eight component parts and biographers may often rationalise their decision to undertake a new psychobiography according to one or more of

these categories such as the revelation of new material; the critique of earlier evidence; new theoretical bases to draw from and the enticement of generating fresh interpretations of the same individual case.

Since 1995, Schultz (2005) claims that the field of psychobiography has become more formally conceptualised as a result of the literary contributions and support from various esteemed psychologists and proponents of the psychobiographical method, including, but not limited to the published works by William McKinley Runyan (1982, 1988, 2006); Alan. C. Elms (1994); Irving Alexander (1988, 1990) and Dan McAdams (1988, 1994, 2006). Psychobiography “in its various guises has flourished, both in the mainstream of psychology and outside it, in scholarly arenas at large” (Schultz, 2005, p.16). Universities in the United States of America that currently draw on the value of psychobiographical research methods in their graduate and postgraduate programs include Duke University, Harvard University (Henry Murray Research Centre), Northwestern University (Foley Centre for the Study of Lives), Pacific University, Rutgers University and the University of California (Van Niekerk, 2007).

Schultz (2005) further claims that Sarbin’s (1986) projection of the narrative being a useful root metaphor for psychology is proving more evident. Schultz (2005) concludes that as more publications on the subject of psychobiographical research emerge, so more successful psychobiographies are likely to be completed; with more successful psychobiographies published, there is likely to be increased acceptance of the method and further research may be encouraged, thus, the potential for more successful psychobiographies is likely to grow.

Within the South African context, psychobiography has also experienced a gradual period of growth and is progressively becoming an “established methodology used by various

academics and postgraduate research scholars in departments of psychology at South African universities” (Fouché & Van Niekerk, 2010, p. 495). The first recognised psychobiography of a significant South African figure was that of author Cornelis Jacobus Langenhoven in 1939 by Burgers who also completed a similar psychological study of poet Louis Leipoldt in 1960 (Van Niekerk, 2007). A third study of poet Ingrid Jonker was undertaken in 1978 by Van der Merwe and eighteen years later, in 1996, a psychobiographical study was undertaken on the life of painter, Gerard Sekoto, by Manganyi, followed by the psychobiography of General Jan Christiaan Smuts completed by Fouché in 1999 (Fouché & Van Niekerk, 2010).

Despite the protracted start to the popularity of psychobiography in South African academic circles, a range of completed academic psychobiographical studies in various occupational fields have since been undertaken between 1994 to present day in the departments of psychology at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU) (previously named the University of Port Elizabeth), Rhodes University, the University of Johannesburg, the University of the Free State and the University of Stellenbosch, as part of the postgraduate research in their master’s and doctoral degree programmes in psychology where psychobiography is regarded as a “strategic research focus area” within these faculties (Fouché & Van Niekerk, 2010, p. 495). A list of completed studies (cited in Fouché & Van Niekerk, 2010) of the lives of famed personalities undertaken at the aforementioned universities during this time, include, but are not limited to, the following:

<b>Psychobiography</b>	<b>Author and Date</b>	<b>University</b>
Jan Christiaan Smuts	Fouche, 1999	NMMU
Bantu Stephen Biko	Kotton, 2002	NMMU
Balthazar John Vorster	Vorster, 2003	NMMU

Bruce Fordyce	Morrison, 2004	NMMU
Wessel Johannes Cronje	Warmhoven, 2004	NMMU
Christiaan Neethling Barnard	Van Niekerk, 2007	University of Stellenbosch
Herman Mashaba	McWalter, 2008	University of Johannesburg

More recently, at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU), psychobiographies on the lives of Jeffrey Lionel Dahmer by Chéze; Kurt Donald Cobain by Pieterse and Vincent Van Gogh by Muller, were completed during 2009 whilst psychobiographies on the lives of John Winston Lennon by Kitching, Friedrich Nietzsche by Booysen, Josephine Baker by Eckley and Winston Leonard Spencer Churchill by Moolman were completed in 2012 as well as Ellen Kuzwayo by Arosi in 2013. “These studies reflect a greater biographical diversity with regard to the gender and the career fields of the subjects under study” (Fouché & Van Niekerk, 2010, p. 499).

The growth of academic psychobiography in South Africa is encouraging but there are still challenges that require further consideration, including the need to motivate additional postgraduate psychobiographical studies at universities across southern Africa and other African universities as well as encourage more psychobiographical research on female and black personalities (Fouche & Van Niekerk, 2010). There is also a need for a broader selection of psychological theories from which to interpret individual lives and a need to raise the profile of the value of psychobiography amongst academic institutions and the public at large (Fouché & Van Niekerk, 2010).”South African history presents the academic psychobiographer with a wide and rich collection of famous, exemplary and enigmatic personalities

that can serve as case studies to evaluate and further develop aspects of psychological theory” (Fouché & Van Niekerk, 2010, p. 504).

In this psychobiography, despite a broad choice of enigmatic leaders in a South African context, the life of Sir Winston Churchill was chosen due to the abundance of publicly available material documenting not only Churchill’s life but also evidence of his experience with major depression during his lifetime. In a South African context, it proved challenging to identify an appropriate individual in a leadership role with a history of mental illness, specifically depression, that is supported by well-documented data.

### **2.5.2. Defining Psychobiography**

Psychobiography is, in essence, the study of individual lives, actual individuals with a history, contextualised in a psychological frame of reference, with the objective of gaining a better knowledge and understanding of the human mind and behaviour (McAdams, 1988; Schultz, 2005). The individual is the unit of analysis, and, equipped with psychological theory, the researcher attempts to make sense of that life and establish what makes that individual unique (Schultz, 2005). The subject is not anonymous and no effort is required to establish rules to be generalised to a broader population, rather, the individual resides at the core of the research as the single unit of analysis and the objective of research is to “dig out their uniqueness irrespective of any reference group” (Schultz, 2005, p. 4). Moreover, the subjects to be studied are often “exactly those people whom knowing more about, as intimately as possible, may be seen as most profitable” (p. 4). In psychobiographical research, the researcher studies the individual life in its entirety, that is, the ‘whole’ person. In studying a complete life from a holistic perspective, the researcher finds him or herself listening to stories about their subject’s life, stories told by the subject (autobiography) or

interpreting the data from stories told by others about that person (biography) and then attempts to establish underlying themes that make up that life (McAdams., 1988).

The world's Ghandis and Hitlers, Picassos and Van Goghs – these are the figures who define the limits and the architecture of the human mind, in all its horror or magnificence. We must know them because to know them, is to know ourselves (Schultz, 2005, p. 4).

In psychobiographical research the study of lives is interpreted within the context of psychological theory. According to McAdams (1988), “it is the systematic use of psychological, especially personality theory, to transform a life into a coherent and illuminating story” (p. 2). Furthermore, Carlson (1988) claims that the stories of individual lives provide a well-balanced platform from which to test basic personality theory: “finished lives enable us to trace personality development in ways that are impossible in even the best of our longitudinal researches” (p. 106). Psychobiographical research allows for the consideration of valuable socio-historical contexts and enables us to test original psychological theories to extend our knowledge of individual persons (Carlson, 1988).

According to Runyan (1988), psychobiography overlaps both biography and psychology and was initially defined as ‘applied psychoanalysis’. Today, psychobiography is more clearly defined as the biographical study of an individual life, contextualised within a formal psychological theoretical structure, drawing on psychodynamic, social learning, phenomenological or trait theories of personality and extending itself to the broader disciplines of developmental, cognitive and abnormal psychology (Runyan, 1988).

Psychobiography is one of the major arenas in which an in-depth understanding of individual lives is pursued, and one in which the relationships between evidence,

general theory and the explanation or interpretation of individual lives are pursued in some detail (Runyan, 1988, p. 321).

According to Runyan (1982b), from a nomothetic perspective, the primary goal of psychology is to “make generalisations across populations as wide in scope as possible” (p. 6) to better understand social phenomenon and human behaviour. However, the differentiator in human existence is that individuals are not all the same and cannot be so easily grouped together uniformly. For this reason, Runyan (1982b) identified three levels at which our understanding of human behaviour can be classified and which reflect the goals of personality psychology: to understand what is true of all humans; to understand what is true of groups of humans in terms of such criteria as race, sex and social class and to determine what is true of individual human beings. Runyan (1982b) continues that “according to this view, there is order or regularity in the world at each of these three levels, and there is a need to develop universal generalisations, group-specific generalisations and generalisations applicable to specific individuals” (p. 8).

Furthermore, although the nomothetic view of psychology seeks to establish general laws and broad generalisations about individuals which serve our understanding of behaviour at the group and individual level, to interpret an individual life based solely on universal generalisations, potentially highlights the limitations of this approach. According to Runyan (1982b), it is better to explain individual behaviour by means of exploring individual reasons for that behaviour. Collecting as much data as possible about the individual and identifying idiographic patterns within the data that can be collated into an individual life story provides a uniquely authentic and potentially more plausible explanation for the individual behaviour. Runyan (1982b) further adds that these three levels of analysis are not necessarily independent of each other. There can be a “trickle down and ripple up effect” (p. 8) as psychobiography proceeds, in part, from general theorising to explain individual lives.

### **2.5.3. Psychobiography and Related Concepts**

#### ***2.5.3.1. Autobiography, Biography and Psychobiography***

Fouché and Van Niekerk (2005) speak about the ‘symbiotic alliance’ between psychology and biography where both disciplines contribute to the understanding of individual lives. Importantly, one way to understand human development and personality development is to draw on biographical sources of information to gain an in-depth understanding of the individual and enhance psychological research. Fouché and Van Niekerk (2005) believe that psychobiography essentially reflects this synthesis between biography and psychology. Biography aims to explore the structure and content of individual lives based on authentic historical data and, where this data is further contextualised and interpreted in a formal psychological framework, it is deemed psychobiographical (McAdams, 1988).

Psychobiographies aim to present a psychological account of an individual life by means of applying psychological theory and psychological concepts to the interpretation of that particular life (McAdams, 2005). Where the account is based on the individual’s own self-reflection and their internalised perspective of their life, that is, “the story of my life as I see it” (p. 74), the account is deemed autobiographical. Where the story of the individual’s life is based on the interpretation of data from a third party or observer, that is, the biographer, it is deemed to be a biographical account of the person’s life. Psychobiographies may draw their data from either autobiographical or biographical sources (McAdams, 1988).

McAdams (2005) explains further that the interpretation of a life story by the psychobiographer may not necessarily be the same as the story told by the subject directly. “The third-person narrative that becomes a psychobiography itself is not synonymous with the subject’s first-person narrative identity” (McAdams, 2005, p. 75). Psychobiography is,

therefore, first and foremost an interpretation of data sourced from either the subject directly (autobiographical information) or indirectly as biographical information. Yet, McAdams (2005) adds that psychobiography's third-person account of their subjects' lives "should aim to uncover, interpret, incorporate and critique the subjects' first-person narrative identities" (p. 75).

Psychobiography differs from biography in that the latter is an account or story of a person's life as told by another person and tends to be descriptive whereas a psychobiography is more explanatory and interpretive drawing on theoretical frameworks and personality psychology to explain the design and development of human development. Biography is concerned with the "what" questions and psychobiography is about the "why" questions of human behaviour (Schultz, 2004).

Roberts (2002) defines autobiography as the "self-representation of an individual life" (p. 4) by that individual, that is, the author is the subject and the material supplied by the subject is inherently subjective or biased. "It is a structured account of a life written by and about oneself" (Cole & Knowles, 2001, p. 15). Biography, however, is the representation of an individual's life by means of secondary sources including 'personal documents' (Plummer, 1983). "It is a structured account of a life written by another" usually according to literary sources (Cole & Knowles, 2001, p. 16). According to Roberts (2002), biographical research is the explorative study and interpretation of the personal experiences provided by the subject. Sources of information are broad and diverse and include: diaries, letters, autobiographical accounts, memorandums and photographs (Roberts, 2002)). Biographical research in its own right refers to a particular type of research to interpret lives and may be applied within different disciplines and empirical fields (Roberts, 2002).

Howe (1997) states that psychobiographers, as well as psychologists at large, study the lives of exceptional individuals to deepen their knowledge of human behaviour using biographical sources of information and, in turn, biographers also make use of psychodynamic theories and psychobiographical findings to provide renewed and alternative interpretations of individual life accounts. The disciplines of psychology and biography may occupy different domains but they serve mutually beneficial purposes in the study of individual lives.

Although the criticisms levered against psychobiography (that it is not a research method that lends itself to the generalisation of results and it is too subjective) remain in the mix (McAdams, 2006), counterarguments by McAdams (2006) claim that the critics of psychobiography are neglecting the fact that good biographical studies provide an immensely rich collection of data that is informative, revealing and enlightening. Furthermore, psychologists are avoiding their intellectual responsibility when they do not consider biographical information (McAdams, 2006).

Brief definitions of other related concepts that may overlap with psychobiography are now discussed. These include:

### ***2.5.3.2. Life Histories and Life Stories***

Life stories refer to stories that an individual chooses to tell about their life and specific events in their life in their own words. Life stories are therefore completely subjective (Fouché & Van Niekerk, 2005). Life histories are essentially based upon life stories, but there is additional factual information from other sources and related parties that is added to the life story to build an objective layer of information to create the life history.

Goodson and Sikes (2001) explain that a person's life story becomes a life history when further layers of interpretation are involved in the analysis of that life. Moving from life story to life history involves various sources of data collection and different analytical methods with a core focus on the socio-historical context. Life history enables the audience to identify with the experiences of another, that is, to 'walk in the shoes' of the subject.

McAdams (2006) elaborates further by stating that where psychobiography focuses on one particular life, life histories examine the relationships across many lives. Life stories are what the individual chooses to tell about their life. Life histories may refer to the collection and interpretation of both subjective and objective sources of information.

Bertaux and Kohli (1984) explain life stories as the oral, autobiographical narrative accounts of an individual's life and have proven a rich source of original interpretive material for the development of theory. Roberts (2002) explains that life stories are the stories relayed by the individual about their own life, highlighting significant experiences or events. Life stories are therefore defined by the information provided by that individual and are thus subjective narratives (Fouché & Van Niekerk, 2005; Roberts, 2002; Simonton, 2003).

Life histories refer to the collection and interpretation of the personal history of an individual life or sample of lives in the context of their socio-historical surroundings as relayed by the individual. Such data is gathered by means of subjective autobiographical sources as well as by means of secondary, biographical sources (Fouché & Van Niekerk, 2005; Rosenwald, 1988). In this context, the researcher remains at the centre of the research process and their own personal history may influence and bias the course of the study. Researcher subjectivity therefore, remains a consistent area of concern (Cole & Knowles, 2001; Simonton, 2003).

Lives are rarely lived in complete isolation from social context and, for this reason, life history research aims to study the lives, individual or collective, in their socio-cultural and historical context (Cole & Knowles, 2001; Runyan, 1982b). As such, life history research makes use of life stories, personal stories, autobiographies and biographies for this purpose. Life history highlights the cross section of human experience and social context and acknowledges the “personal, social and contextual influences that facilitate the understanding of lives and phenomena being explored” (Cole & Knowles, 2001, p. 10). Life history research allows the exploration of the individual’s micro-historical (individual) experience within a macro-historical (history of the time) frame of reference and therefore captures the relationship between the individual and the social context as well as the past and present context (Hagemaster, 1992).

Cole and Knowles (2001) elaborate further by stating that life history research focuses on gaining knowledge of other human beings within the context of complex interactions between “life, context, self and place” (p. 11). Life history aims to understand the “complexities of a person’s day-to-day decision-making and the ultimate consequences that play out in that life so that insights into the broader collective experience may be achieved” (p. 11). Understanding lives in their broader collective, that is, their communal, social and cultural context, draws us closer to understanding the “complexities of lives” (p.11) in a communal sense. Although life history research is influenced by the epistemological orientation of the researcher, all researchers view the individual as a lens into broader social contexts, and, in psychology, the individual and their life story provides the lens through which the individual’s psychological development may be viewed (Cole & Knowles, 2001).

The rationale for analysing historical data in life history research, according to Simonton (2003), is that certain research topics cannot be explored by any other means and this becomes most relevant in the case of psychobiography where “psychologists wanting to

study the lives of historical figures have to analyse historical data” (Simonton, 2003, p.630). In addition, historical data provides a “rich repository of information” (p.630) of human behaviour across social, cultural and historical time periods.

Furthermore, Bromley (1986) explains that life history research has the potential to focus on the complexities of relationships and experiences across many lives whereas, importantly, psychobiography specifically focuses on the interpretation of the uniqueness of individual persons (Runyan, 1988).

### ***2.5.3.3. Life Narratives***

Life narratives refer to a mode of sharing the experiences and stories of events in a person’s life as told or narrated by the person in their own words. The narratives of life events as told by the person themselves, provides psychologists with a unique opportunity to gather a holistic understanding of a person’s life and the social context in which they occur (Sandelowski, 1991).

Clandinin and Huber (2010) describe narrative enquiry as another unique interpretive and qualitative methodology to investigate human nature by interpreting lived experiences narratively. Individuals live and communicate their life experiences through stories - stories about who they are and what they experience as well as how they relate to each other. They interpret their own lives through these stories as well as provide a gateway for others to ‘listen’, decipher and find meaning in their life experiences through the story. Essentially, life narratives provide a means of interpreting experience through the interaction of researcher and story teller “over time, in a place or series of places and in social interaction with milieus” (Clandinin & Connelly 2000, p. 20, cited in Clandinin & Huber, 2010). These three features of narrative inquiry: temporality (the transitional nature of events and experiences); social context and place provide the core dimensions of an inquiry and serve as a conceptual

framework from which to interpret experience. This is partly what differentiates narrative research from other methodologies (Clandinin & Huber, 2010).

Life narratives may be any written or oral text that focus specifically on the stories about life events and actions as told by the individual (Chase, 2005). It is their life story that describes their personal experiences and ascribes meaning to these experiences (Chase, 2005). Through a process of studying and chronologically ordering these life events the researcher is able to provide meaning to these life experiences (Cresswell, 2006). Furthermore, Creswell (2006) explains that a narrative study typically reports on the life of a single individual, as is the case in psychobiography, and identifies the many different forms that narrative research may take, including biography and autobiography, which are both practices of narrative study as well as life story research which portrays the events of a person's entire life.

Sarbin (1986) refers to narrative inquiry as the storied nature of human interaction whereby people live and interpret their own life experiences by fashioning stories as well as by listening to and interpreting the stories of others. The narrative or story becomes the means by which human beings convey the meaning of their life experiences - the narrative becomes 'a root metaphor for psychology' (Sarbin, 1986). In this light, psychobiography is also a means of understanding how individuals interpret their own life experiences but with the added context of a theoretical framework within which to interpret such experiences.

#### ***2.5.3.4. Psychohistories, Historical Psychology and Historiographies***

Whereas psychohistory focuses on the interpretation of historical events within a modern psychological framework or theology, historical psychology refers to research based on the history of psychological phenomena and the history of thought about psychological development (Runyan, 1988b). However, Runyan (1988b) claims that there is conflict and

confusion about the definitions of psychohistory because of the underlying tension between the disciplines of history and psychology. The relationship between these two disciplines is characterised not just as one of mutual interest but rather as one characterised by “suspicion and misunderstanding” (p. 3). Yet, history is concerned with the study of human action in the past and psychology is concerned with the scientific study of human behaviour, which by definition, implies that psychology could actually be useful in exploring the psychological components of historical events (Runyan, 1988b, p. 3).

According to Loewenberg (1983), psychohistory is a discipline of research that is born out of an assimilation of traditional historical research and psychoanalytic theory. It is best defined as the application of psychological theory to interpret historical events (Berg, 1995) or the use of psychology in historical analysis (Runyan, 1988b).

Psychohistory can be explained as the evaluation of historical events by means of psychological theory (Schultz 2005) whereas historical psychology refers to the study of the history of psychological phenomena and the history of the intellectualising of the development of psychology as well as the importance of the life course (Runyan, 1988b).

Historiography is past-orientated research aimed at uncovering and exploring a contemporary matter of interest by means of analysing existing material (Anderson, 1981). It refers to more than the obvious collection of historical data from public records, government documents, confidential reports, newspaper editorials, photographs, films and artefacts. It is the systematic collection and evaluation of this data in order to explore past events and recreate meaningful historical explanations for past events (Berg, 1995).

### ***2.5.3.5. Personality Assessment and Psychobiography***

Personality assessment refers to the study of lives that are in progress, that is, how an individual portrays him or herself in present time and assumes an “analysis of the forces that helped to shape or mould that person” (Alexander, 1990, p. 9). In addition, personality assessment may be further concerned with the development of the person into the future, that is, what the future might hold for that individual. By comparison, psychobiography is the study of lives already lived (Alexander, 1990; Carlson, 1988) and endeavours to explore and describe those aspects of the life history which are not obvious or easily detected by simple psycho-analysis. “The steps between who they were and how they got that way may not be apparent to the untutored eye” (Alexander, 1990, p. 9). For this reason, Alexander (1990) explains, in part, our fascination with those individuals of “unusual stature or accomplishment or notoriety” (p. 9).

Personality assessment involves collecting and evaluating various sources of data about an individual to enable an assessment of their personality by means of psychological tests, interviews or biographical research and, by ‘assessment’, it is implied that there is a systematic application of measurement procedures to operationalise those aspects of personality that are being assessed (Wiggins, 2003). Different paradigms within the realm of personality assessment provide different perspectives on the study of personality. According to Wiggins (2003), in the personological paradigm, to understand an individual’s personality, is to understand the history of that personality. The personological approach is, therefore, at the centre of narrative life history research (Wiggins, 2003). In studying the psychological life history of an individual, psychobiography is in progress.

Psychobiography and personality assessment are similar in that they both involve an in-depth description of personality at some point in time and assess consistencies in

personality development over the life span. In addition, they endeavour to understand the influencing factors that led to particular outcomes in the life of the individual. However, they differ from the perspective that a study of a life already lived (as in psychobiography) eliminates the challenge of prediction and the importance of the notion of ‘understanding’ becomes paramount (Alexander, 1990).

#### ***2.5.3.6. Case Studies and Case Study Research***

Psychobiographies, single-case experiments and psychological case studies are all forms of individual case research that share similar characteristics to wider case research (McLeod, 1994). The meaning of case study overlaps with many areas of research, including ethnography, participant observation and life history research and is used differently in diverse professions such as psychology, law, medicine and education (Gomm & Hammersley, 2000). Bromely (1986) explains that case study in psychology is a form of clinical study in order to develop knowledge and insight as well as to explore solutions to problems in the case. Modern psychobiography, however, tends to avoid pathography and instead focuses on a holistic view of the individual in order to understand and interpret the psychological aspects of the person’s life history (Kováry, 2011).

According to Gomm and Hammersley (2000), all research is a type of case study in one form or another because there is always a unit or set of units about which data is collected and analysed. The number of cases and amount or quality of information required is central. The fewer cases, the more information about each case can be ascertained (Gomm & Hammersley, 2000). Psychobiography typically uses a single case study design in order to gather as much in-depth information as possible on one single case. In this instance, psychobiographical case studies are deemed idiographic rather than nomothetic in that they focus on the uniqueness of an individual case and enable the researcher to explore the

personal meaning of an individual's life history and discover a window into the particular world of that person (Hermans, 1988; Kováry, 2011).

McLeod (1994) comments that psychobiography specifically, has a single case research design and aims to provide an in-depth study of an individual life within a psychological framework and within a historical time frame. It uses qualitative material including, biographies, autobiographies, diaries, letters and other material to provide a holistic, extensive and personalised description of an individual's life (McLeod, 1994).

Yin (1994) claims three main reasons for utilising a single case study approach. Firstly, it is pertinent in the situation where a researcher wishes to test a well-established theory where the theory has a clear set of propositions and circumstances under which the propositions are considered true. In this instance, the single case is able to test if the theory's propositions are correct or if an alternative explanation should be considered. Secondly, a single case study is relevant where the case is truly unique or exceptional, and, thirdly, where a case presents the opportunity for the researcher to analyse phenomenon that were previously unobtainable.

In contrast to psychobiographical case research where the focus is on the life history of an individual over their life-span, psychological case studies explore specific events or episodes at one particular point in time (Bromley, 1986). By comparison, single case experiments refer to the observation and measurement of single or multiple aspects of one subject in a controlled environment (Bromley, 1986; Yin, 1994). Variables are manipulated and outcomes are measured before, during and after interventions in order to assess the effect of the intervention and ultimately draw conclusions about cause and effect relationships (Gerdes, cited in Chéze, 2009). Psychobiography has the advantage over single case experiment and psychological case study in that it is not confined to the controlled conditions

of a laboratory setting, or one point in time, but is able to consider and contextualise the influence of broader socio-cultural and environmental factors on the life of an individual over their lifetime (Carlson, 1988; Simonton, 2003).

Judicious choice of materials permits us to consider various socio-historical contexts, avoid inconveniences of informed consent and achieve a degree of consensual validation beyond the best hopes of clinical case studies. Above all, excellent biographical studies allow us to test novel theoretical directives (Carlson, 1988, p. 106).

## **2.6. The Benefit of Utilising a Case Study Approach with a Psychobiographical Focus**

The following five reasons support the undertaking of a psychobiography:

### **2.6.1. The Uniqueness of the Individual Case within the Whole**

Gordon Allport, (cited in Hermans, 1988) referred to a nomothetic approach to the study of human behaviour which involved the identification of general laws to explain human phenomenon whereas an idiographic approach highlighted a consideration for processes occurring within the individual and for what is unique to the individual. The term nomothetic originates from the Greek word 'nomos' meaning law and, in the field of psychology specifically, pertains to the establishment of laws or generalisations between people (McLeod, 2007). The term idiographic comes from the Greek word 'idios' meaning own or private and refers in psychology to what makes a person unique (McLeod, 2007).

The idiographic approach has been criticised for polarising the study of human behaviour into dimensions of what is either 'particular' or 'general' without calibrating a reasonable explanation for the uniqueness of the person within the whole (Hermans, 1988). For this reason, Allport changed the term idiographic to morphogenic to encompass a study of the unique elements of the individual within the context of the whole.

Case studies, as well as other qualitative research methods such as informal interviews and unstructured observation, are deemed idiographic (McLeod, 2007) whereas psychobiographical case studies, in particular, encompass a morphogenic approach in that psychobiography provides the opportunity to describe the individuality of a person within a specific historical and psychological context and provides a unique and holistic description of the individual. Thus, the focus is on understanding a single life in its entirety (Carlson, 1988; Elms, 1994) and understanding the totality of the person (Plummer, 1983).

### **2.6.2. The Socio-Cultural Context**

In order to provide a holistic description of the individual, the individual should be studied within his or her historical, social, cultural and familial context. Through the careful consideration and choice of life history materials, these contexts can be taken into account (Carlson, 1988). To establish a true reflection of the individual's life experience and to develop a sense of empathy for the subject, a thorough analysis of the historical and cultural context in which they lived is indispensable (Anderson, 1981).

An understanding of the socio-cultural 'etiquette' of late nineteenth century Victorian Britain (a brief overview is provided in Chapter 4 on the Life of Sir Winston Churchill) in this study enables a more thorough appreciation of the familial relations experienced by the young Winston Churchill and provides an opportunity to better understand the various external factors that worked in tandem to shape and influence his personality development as well as his experience with his 'Black Dog'.

### **2.6.3. Process and Pattern over Time**

Studying the life of an individual already lived enables the researcher to describe the development of that person over their entire lifespan and provides the opportunity to record

different processes and dynamics at play in the personality development of that individual at any point in time and in any given situation (Fouché & Van Niekerk, 2005).

Psychobiography not only typically studies a life already lived but also studies that life over an extended period of time, that is, over their entire course of life, rather than making observations at one point in time. This process enables the researcher to observe changes over time and develop an appreciation for the 'personality in action' (Fiske, 1988). This ability to reconstruct the past through narrative highlights the emphasis that life history research places on change over time (Mouton, 2001; Plummer, 1983).

#### **2.6.4. Subjective Reality**

Psychobiographical research enables the researcher to provide a personalised description and explanation of the subject's experiences, thoughts and feelings within a psychological framework (Fouché & Van Niekerk, 2005). An understanding of the subjective world of an individual as they experience it has the ability to move us emotionally, develop an appreciation for life experience within context as well as hold up a mirror to our own life experiences in reflection to those of the subject (Runyan, 1982b). According to Yin (2003), a good case study should be so compelling and vivid that the reader will be enticed to read the report to its end.

#### **2.6.5. Theory Testing and Development**

Finally, according to Yin (2003), theory underpins the process of data collection, analysis and generalisation, which holds true for psychobiographies. Theory guides what aspects to focus on during the collection of data and the objective basis on which to analyse and compare the collected data. This guides the conceptualisation of the case study within the chosen theoretical framework (Fouché & Van Niekerk, 2005). In addition, theory assists the

process of generalising from a case study to specific theory (analytic generalisation) allowing a previously developed theory to act as the basis against which to compare the results of the study. This in turn facilitates the further development of the theory (Yin, 2003). According to Carlson (1988), life history material forms an ideal method for validating and developing various theories of human development.

## **2.7. Conclusion**

Sometimes an emotional journey back in time to uncover hidden truths, psychobiography provides a powerful lens through which the lives of extraordinary people may be explored and understood. In this chapter psychobiography was defined and discussed within the context of case study research and within the broader context of qualitative research. This preliminary discussion is relevant in this context because the current study of Sir Winston Churchill's 'Black Dog' is a qualitative psychobiographical study that aims to present a case for depressive realism with Churchill as the single case study. An overview of psychobiography, including a brief history of the progress of psychobiography with specific reference to its growth in South Africa and a formal definition of psychobiography as well as related concepts within the narrative genre were also presented.

The chapter concluded with a brief overview of the value that psychobiography holds not only for the profession of psychology but for related disciplines interested in human behaviour and development.

In the following chapter, the theoretical framework in which the life of Sir Winston Churchill has been contextualised, is presented. In order to describe and explore the origins and prevalence as well as the effects of depression on Churchill's life, Alfred Adler's Individual Psychology provides the theoretical framework within which the life of Churchill may be reconstructed into a psychological narrative.



## **Chapter 3**

### **Alfred Adler's Theory of Individual Psychology**

#### **3.1. Chapter Preview**

This chapter introduces Alfred Adler's theory of Individual Psychology as the theoretical framework to describe and explore the life of Sir Winston Churchill in the context of his personal development and his lifetime experience with depression. Individual Psychology emphasises the multi-faceted progression of individual personality development and stresses the importance of understanding the individual within their social context. The chapter commences with an introduction to the establishment of Adlerian Theory and its basic tenets, followed by a description of Adler's general view of human nature and of the person. A discussion of the factors underpinning the development of personality followed by a description of lifestyle development is then presented. The latter part of the chapter highlights the interactive role of social factors such as family relations, early memories, parental involvement, birth order and the role of teachers and school in the development of individual personality as well as the influences of character traits and emotions. Finally, a discussion of optimal development versus psychopathology and a brief critique of Adler's theory of Individual Psychology concludes the chapter.

#### **3.2. Introduction to the Adlerian Theory of Individual Psychology**

##### **3.2.1. Early Beginnings**

Alfred Adler (1870-1937) was born on 7 February 1870 in Vienna, Austria and was the second child in a family of six children (Mosak, 1999). Adler was a sickly young boy, suffering from various illnesses, including rickets and a serious bout of pneumonia at the age

of four years (Corey, 2005; Wagner, 2010). He also dealt with two near death experiences as a result of twice being run over by a motor vehicle in his neighbourhood. According to Mosak (1999) these 'near death' experiences served as the impetus for him later becoming a doctor in an attempt to overcome his early fear of death. Corey (2005) comments that although Adler's early years were marred with illness and feelings of inadequacy and physical weakness towards his peers and, especially towards his older brother, who was particularly athletic, he was resolute in overcoming these physical limitations and went on to become a prominent medical doctor and psychiatrist during the early 1900's in Vienna.

Adler was also a contemporary of Sigmund Freud but later moved away from Freud's psychoanalytic theory to focus on a more optimistic, less deterministic view of human nature. Fundamentally, Adler's theory of Individual Psychology is based on a goal-oriented view of human nature (Mosak, 1999).

Mosak (1999) and Corey (2005) note that Adler's early childhood experiences played a significant role in shaping his lifelong work on individual development. Adler highlighted the importance of early memories as well as the influence of social factors on the development of individual personality as well as the potential for the development of inferiority complexes. Mosak (1999) further comments that Adler's early experiences with poor health and physical weakness as well as growing up in a minority Jewish community in tough socio-economic conditions all contributed to his own issues of inferiority and the striving for superiority and self-betterment. According to Corey (2005), "Adler is an example of a person who shaped his own life as opposed to having it determined by fate" (p. 93). Despite poor academic performance as a young student, Adler went on to study at the University of Vienna and graduated in 1895 with a degree in medicine.

Adler started his career as an ophthalmologist but eventually moved to general medicine and then specialised in neurology and psychiatry. He was most committed to research on childhood diseases and to developing positive child-rearing practices with a holistic view of the role that family, school and society played in the overall development of human beings (Corey, 2005). Ultimately, Alfred Adler's Individual Psychology was officially instituted in 1912 (Mosak, 1999). Adler's approach was called Individual Psychology from the Latin *individuum* meaning undivided, that is the individual should be seen as an integrated whole (Wagner, 2010).

### **3.2.2. Fundamental Concepts of the Theory**

There are four fundamental concepts underlying Alfred Adler's theory of Individual Psychology:

Firstly, Adler (1928, 1962) stressed the importance of viewing the individual as a functional and contextual whole and should be observed in its entirety rather than as a sum of its individual parts, that is, the wholeness of the human being.

Secondly, Adler (1928) emphasised the conscious mind and that individuals are free to express their own creative self. Individuals are not bound by deep seated drives or motives, that is, human beings are all self-determining beings (Wagner, 2010). Adler (1931, 1962) stressed the positive nature of human beings and that people have the capacity to create and influence events in their lives. Although there are environmental and hereditary constraints in everyone's life, behaviour is not dictated solely by these factors. Individuals still have the freedom of choice and a responsibility to themselves to realise their goals and fulfil their unique lifestyle choice.

Thirdly, Adler (1962) emphasised the importance of social motives and social relationships. The true meaning of life rests in the ability of an individual to fully understand what it means to co-operate with others and to continuously strive to contribute to society. The need to feel part of a community, to contribute to that community and striving towards building an ideal society are all key motivating factors in behaviour. Social commitment to community and the betterment of society are core to the individual's development (Corey, 2005). Adler believed that "all failures – neurotics, psychotics, criminals, drunkards, problem children, suicides and perverts – are failures because they are lacking in fellow-feeling and social interest" (Adler, 1962, p. 12). Adler, in his Victorian context, thus argued that psychopathology is rooted in a lack of an individual's sense of feeling for fellow human beings and social interest. As such, psychopathology is arguably linked to a lack of *Ubuntu*, that is, a lack of compassion, understanding and concern for fellow human beings.

Fourthly, Adler (1928, 1962, 1949) believed that human beings face many challenges during their life span but that there are three main tasks that need to be faced and overcome. These include the task of society or social connectedness; occupation; and love and marriage. Adler stated that the individual who faces these challenges with the interests of his fellow human beings at heart, will have the greatest success in meeting these challenges and enjoying the most fulfilling life.

### **3.3. Theoretical Foundation of Individual Psychology**

#### **3.3.1. Basic View of Human Nature**

According to Adler (1928, 1962) there are three basic tenets of human nature. These include the self-determining nature of human beings; the requirement for human beings to face and master three core challenges of life (social relationships, occupation and love and

marriage) and the final tenet refers to an individual's inherent need for social relatedness and sense of community.

The first basic tenet of self-determination refers to the concept that people are empowered with the freedom to create their own style of life and that individuals are responsible for their actions. This creative freedom enables individuals to control their own lives; to determine their own goals and the method by which they strive for these goals (Adler, 1928, 1962). According to Adler, this self-determination enables each person to be a free member of the 'psychic world' and provides the impetus for movement, that is, all psychic life involves movement towards a goal (Adler, 1928, 1949).

Adler (1928) acknowledged the role of heredity and the environment in forming personality. He believed that these factors provide the building blocks for personality but, ultimately, however, it is a human being's creative free will that shapes personality and ensures the uniqueness of one's style of life. Adler believed that individuals have the ability to interpret, influence and create events and that what a person is born with is not as important as how they utilise their strengths and weaknesses. "We are self-determined by the meaning we give to our experiences. Meanings are not determined by situations but we determine ourselves, the meanings we give to situations" (Adler, 1962, p. 16).

The second basic tenet is that all human beings need to master three universal life challenges regardless of age, gender or nationality. According to Adler (1931), these three tasks include the building and nurturing of relationships (the task of society); contributing to society and the betterment of fellowmen (the task of work or occupation) and establishing intimacy (the task of love and marriage). "The solution of these problems is not a private matter. Human society can exist solely by the mutually protective, reciprocal contribution of groups and of individuals" (Adler, 1931, p. 36). According to Corey (1995) these life tasks

are so fundamental to human living that dysfunction in any one of them is usually due to an underlying psychological disorder.

The third basic tenet of human nature refers to the individual's acute awareness of their belonging to a broader human community, that is, their concept of social interest and community feeling. Individuals with a social interest have a sense of belonging and a sense of contribution to their fellow-persons and society. The individual who is not interested in his fellow human beings faces the greatest challenges in life and presents the greatest danger to others (Adler, 1962). Individuals, who meet the tasks of life successfully, act as if they understand fully that the meaning of life is having an interest in others and in co-operating with others. Human beings are socially embedded and one's happiness and success, as well as one's basic survival, is dependent on this sense of community and social connectedness (Adler, 1962).

Stein and Edwards (1998) state that Adler predicted that if human beings did not learn to co-operate and co-habit, they would be at risk of self-destructing the human population. Adler's view of human nature is thus centred on the 'social human', inseparable to others and all of nature (Stein & Edwards, 1998).

### **3.3.2. Basic View of the Person**

Adler's view of the person relates to two major concepts: firstly, the concept of holism and, secondly, the concept of the unity of the personality.

Adler (1928, 1931) believed that a human being should be viewed as a dynamic whole moving through life toward a definitive goal. Man should not be viewed in isolation but as a 'whole being', capable of thinking, feeling and acting. Man is in constant interaction with his environment (Adler, 1928). The individual is seen as an indivisible whole, living in a

broader social system and, given the self-determining nature of individuals, cannot be fully understood without taking into consideration these contexts that are meaningful to him (Adler, 1928). In short, the individual must be viewed holistically (Mosak, 1999).

According to Stein and Edwards (1998) the term Individual Psychology denotes a psychology of the individual. Ironically, however, Adler's theory is based on social psychology whereby the individual is understood within his or her social context. In addition, although the development of a person is considered unique and 'individualistic', the person is viewed as a complete system in which the whole is greater than the sum of its parts, that is, the unity of the person. To understand the individual, we must study the whole person, not isolated individual parts and we must study the individual within the context of their social environment.

The second concept of the unity of human personality or the unity of the soul refers to a human being's tendency for all of their senses to think, feel, act and work together, consciously and unconsciously (Adler, 1931). It is the total expression of an individual's personality (Adler, 1931).

### **3.4. Personality Development**

#### **3.4.1. Goal-Directed Behaviour and the Striving for Superiority**

Adler (1928, 1931), stated that the human organism is not a stagnant creation, but rather a dynamic whole moving through life toward a definitive goal, constantly adapting and responding to the external environment. Individuals have their own unique way of responding to the environment in order to maintain their pattern of life and their goal. The success of this movement through life depends on the person's aptitude for change and adaptation. This

goal-directed behaviour is, however, at the core of human personality development. "This teleology, this striving for a goal, is innate in the concept of adaptation" (Adler, 1928, p. 19).

Unlike Freud, Adler emphasised movement towards the future, rather than fixating on or being driven by the past. Adler believed that individuals are motivated by their goals and ideals and are thus drawn towards the future. This concept is called teleology. The teleological approach to lifestyle development also implies that life is unpredictable and goals can therefore change or ideals may not always be met but the opportunity to keep adapting and striving is ever present (Boeree, 2006).

The goals toward which every individual's actions are directed are moulded at a very young age as a result of the influences and early impressions of one's environment. Multiple factors and experiences soon shape the child's attitude towards life and influence his or her particular type of response to the three universal life tasks, these being the ability to nurture relationships (the task of society), contributing to society (the task of occupation) and establishing intimacy (the task of love and marriage) (Adler, 1928).

Adler (1928, 1962) maintained that all human behaviour has a purpose and that individuals set goals which will move them in a direction of improving the current environment. Adler referred to this concept of striving towards an ideal or a level of superiority as the guiding self-ideal or the goal of perfection. Adler (1928) believed that the child strains for superiority in order to provide oneself with the necessary security and adaptation for survival as well as for the achievement of set goals. Individuals strive toward a superior position because of the creative power of the individual which manifests itself in the desire to grow, improve, achieve and compensate for failures in one area by striving for success in another area (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956).

The source of goal directed behaviour, according to Adler (1962), is a human being's need to strive for something better but that the types of goals people set are critical to their reaching a true sense of superiority and betterment. Goals that are set in pursuit of co-operation and concern for fellow human beings are the types of goals that will lead to fulfilment and a true sense of superiority. However, Adler held that goals with only the self in mind will lead to a negative spiral, perpetuating one's inferiorities and hinder any true sense of fulfilment (Adler, 1962). Stein and Edwards (1998) argue that an individual with a strong sense of social awareness and a mature sense of community well-being will view the striving towards the ideal goal as a life-long movement toward optimal development with acceptance that there is no end point to this process of striving.

Similarly to Freud, Adler (1931, 1962) believed in the power of an individual's earliest memories. An individual's earliest recollections are the key to understanding future behaviour. Adler (1931, 1962) believed that a person's earliest memory is the clue to their present and future identity.

According to McAdams (2006) an individual's earliest memories can influence and disclose a subconscious direction or orientation towards life. Adlerian theory proposes that early recollections reflect the individual's interpretation of childhood experiences which further shape one's worldview, life goal and ultimately the way a person chooses to live. That is, a lifestyle tailor-made to help achieve one's goals.

Earliest memories reveal major themes in a person's later choice of lifestyle, their selected goals and ways of activating these goals (Adler, 1931, 1962). Childhood events influence the way an individual perceives the world. How the individual experiences and perceives earlier events in their life determines their world view and consequently the type of life goals established (Corey, 2005; Wagner, 2010). An individual's worldview will

determine their life goals and ultimately their lifestyle. Human beings create a unique style of life at an early age (Corey, 2005). Wagner (2010) explains when a negative worldview is established at a young age, the individual will view the world as an antagonistic place that he or she must either fight for survival or escape from in order to achieve superiority. The goals that this person sets for him or herself could be to dominate, destroy or simply to withdraw and thereafter a certain lifestyle will ensue. If, however, a positive worldview is established, the child will be drawn to participate in the world in order to achieve superiority and goals may be to create, to love and to cooperate and, again, a variety of applicable lifestyles will develop in order to achieve their goals.

In sum, the striving for superiority and the corresponding life goals that individuals set for themselves, are unique to each individual. This is a direct result of the meaning that each individual gives to their life at an early age through their experience of early life events. This striving for superiority is innate in all individuals and has been the source of all our contributions to society (Adler, 1962). However, it is only those individuals who have nurtured a striving for superiority focused on the betterment and enrichment of others, that are truly able to meet the tasks of life and experience a true sense of fulfilment (Adler, 1928, 1962).

Wagner (2010) argues that, for Adler, individuals strive to become something more than what is prescribed in their inherent potential, that is, they strive to overcome real or imagined inferiorities beyond their potential of self-actualisation and therefore have an idealist version of development rather than an actualisation version of development.

### **3.4.2. Inferiority and Compensation**

Adler (1928) stated that feelings of inferiority are common to all human beings because, in life, individuals find themselves in positions which they wish to improve. Adler

(1928) further stated that individuals cannot cope with this feeling of inferiority for long and are in a state of tension which requires action. As such, Adler observed that individuals suffer from feelings of inferiority and that these feelings are the motivating force behind personal striving for superiority (Wagner, 2010).

However, if an individual does not feel confident or capable of improving the situation, he or she will struggle with his or her feelings of inferiority and will try to convince him or herself into feeling superior even though he or she has not actually overcome the real obstacle at hand. Feelings of inferiority will accumulate because the situation which produces these feelings remains unchanged:

His efforts to fool himself will meet with only a partial success and will be a lasting undercurrent of his psychic life. There will always be a compensatory movement towards feeling superior but it will no longer be directed towards solving the problem. The movement towards superiority will be towards the useless side of life. In such a case we may truly speak of the inferiority complex (Adler, 1962, p. 43).

According to Adler (1962), inferiority feelings are not in themselves abnormal as they are the source from which all movements and striving towards improvement are born. However, the way in which individuals overcome these inferiorities has a direct impact on the development of one's personality.

Adler (1931, 1962) explained that the human child is especially fragile and needs care and protection for many years from birth. It is in this context that the original feeling of inferiority is created. As the child grows and is not trained in the value of continued co-operation and social connectedness, he or she, in some circumstances, may be driven towards feeling isolated, inadequate, anxious and pessimistic. A fixed inferiority complex may then be formed. Whilst each person is capable of adapting their personal shortcomings and can

become a useful contributor to society, there are a variety of factors that work against this optimum compensation of the inferiority feeling. As a result, these individuals grow up with an inferiority complex.

One of the most influential factors that crystallises the inferiority complex at an early age, as stated by Adler (1928, 1962), is the presence of a physical defect or an inferior organ in the young child's body. The inferior organ could refer to an actual physical deformity or an unimportant medical condition but one that is still socially embarrassing. "It is self-understood that those who come into the world with organ inferiorities feel an added burden of existence from their earliest days and as a result find themselves pessimistic as regards the whole matter of existence"(Adler, 1928, p. 78). These intense feelings of inferiority at such a young age, coupled with feelings of isolation, can lead to a situation where the child does not wish to interact with other human beings and the crucial education and development of the social feeling is lost. They see themselves in a world without love and affection which has far reaching consequences on their personality development, that is, they can develop a pessimistic or even hostile attitude towards the world (Adler, 1928).

A core foundation of Adler's individual psychology is that he observed that human beings have a tendency towards feeling inferior and these emotions are the drivers that propel individuals towards personal goals and achievements (Adler, 1931, 1962). Initially, he viewed the motive for human behaviour as a striving to be aggressive but later this view was revised to an individual's striving towards power. Individuals want to feel strong, powerful and empowered and so they avoid experiences that make them feel weak or inferior. Eventually, Adler abandoned this notion of 'will to power' to a general concept of striving for superiority. Adler spoke of the 'upward drive of human nature' (Adler, 1931, 1962). In other words, feeling inferior is not seen as a negative process but rather a positive striving towards feeling superior and constantly moving away from that what makes us feel weak and inferior.

Adler (1962) stressed that in order to reach a true sense of superiority, the type of goal an individual sets for his or her life is crucial to achieving this true sense of superiority. If an individual is to achieve a higher sense of superiority and fulfilment in their life, the goals that are set must focus on co-operation and contribution to humankind. Goals that are focused on self-preservation will only serve to provide a false sense of superiority.

### **3.5. Life Style Development**

According to Adlerian theory, in striving for goals that have meaning, individuals develop a unique style of life. All their actions, values and perceptions come together to assist the individual in moving towards their life goal (Ansbacher, 1974). From the earliest experiences of infancy, feelings of inferiority (and the way the child experiences the world in overcoming these inferiorities), correlate to a characteristic goal in life (Adler, 1928, 1962). This goal reflects the issues of security and superiority that are important to the individual and it reflects all that is meaningful to that person. The pattern of life is predetermined by the experience of one's childhood inferiority situation and its compensation is reflected in the chosen goal of life (Adler, 1928, 1949, 1962). Everything an individual does is influenced by this predetermined unique lifestyle. According to Mosak (1999) the 'style of life' is Adler's term for what is referred to as personality.

Wagner (2010) comments that Adler encouraged a lifestyle that incorporates social interest and Stein and Edwards (1998) add that the style of life is the way in which individuals tackle the three main tasks of life and try to achieve optimal development. Stein and Edwards (1998) continue that in the first five years of life, the individual personality is shaped. By six years old, a child has developed a blueprint for their goals and style of life and, despite some adjustments to this blueprint through adolescence, the way the individual views the self and the world is firmly established. Adler referred to this as the scheme of

apperception which describes the discrepancy between perception and reality. This discrepancy is relatively small for normal individuals but for psychologically challenged individuals this discrepancy becomes far greater and the ability to deal with the tasks of life becomes less flexible and less intuitive. Problem solving becomes increasingly difficult and the striving towards optimal goals becomes stunted.

### **3.5.1. Typology**

Adler (1935) emphasised the importance of having a holistic view of an individual and, to understand an individual, one must appreciate the value of the person's particular perception of their environment. How a person perceives the outside world is more critical than the actual physicality of the outside world. It is not environmental or hereditary factors alone, but rather the person's experiences of the outside world and how he or she interprets these experiences, that forge their attitude to life (Adler, 1935). Although individuals are goal-directed in their pursuit of superiority and success, Adler (1935) stressed that each individual has a different meaning of what constitutes success and people should not, therefore, be classified into types. Individual psychology is based on the study of individuals in the context of his or her own unique development.

However, for the purposes of illuminating the broad field of personality development, Adler (1935) identified four types of personality: the Ruling Type; the Getting Type; the Avoiding Type and the Socially Useful Type. Mosak (1999) states that certain life styles have common themes or central issues that can form recognisable patterns or types. According to Adler (1935) the first three personality types, namely, Ruling, Getting and Avoiding are not well prepared to solve the problems of life and lack the skills for co-operation and contribution. The relationship between their lifestyle and the demands of life results in discord and shock which further may lead to failure and psychoses. Adler (1935) argues that

only the fourth type, Socially Useful, has an effective style of life capable of mastering the demands of life.

Adler (1935) describes the Ruling Type as an individual who demonstrates from a young age the tendencies toward being dominant and has a ruling attitude towards the environment. The Getting Type is an individual who expects everything from others and relies heavily on others to solve the problems of life. The Avoiding Type attempts to avoid the solution of problems or sidesteps the problem to avoid defeat. Whereas, the Socially Useful Type attempts to tackle the problems of life and tries to find a solution that is useful to others.

The Socially Useful Type appears to reflect some likeness to the character of Churchill over his lifetime and will be explored in more detail in Chapters 4 and 7. According to Manchester, (cited in Churchill, 1930,1996) Churchill was born into an aristocratic family with all the privileges inherent to this life yet he chose a political career which demonstrated a great deal of support for political policies favouring the underprivileged. His concern for the unemployed, the sickly and the elderly were often reflected in legislation he designed and drove to protect such individuals.

Manchester (cited in Churchill, 1930,1996, p. xix) comments:

We see a child, born with all the advantages, who accepts them and enjoys them. Then, in the fullness of time, his character begins to emerge. He revolts against warlords who are his superior officers, then joins hands with the underprivileged and moves toward statesmanship and greatness.

### **3.6. The Significance of the Social Environment**

In dealing with inferiority complexes and striving towards superiority, the role of the family as well as external social influences becomes a focal point in personality development. However, an explanation of the concept of 'social feeling' is a necessary prelude to the discussion of these socio-environmental factors.

#### **3.6.1. Importance of Co-operation and the Social Feeling**

Adler based his theories on the concept of *Gemeinschaftsgefühl*, translated as notions of social interest, social feeling and community feeling (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956). The 'social feeling' is a multi-level concept, explains Stein and Edwards (1998), with individuals understanding some levels but possibly disregarding other levels. At the affective level, if an individual has a well-developed social interest, they are likely to feel a deep connection to others and a true sense of belonging to the human race and therefore have a highly developed sense of empathy for others. At the cognitive level, social interest implies that an individual recognises the interdependence of people and that the well-being of one person depends on the well-being of everyone. At the behavioural level these feelings can be translated into actions that not only help others but ultimately serve a greater sense of co-operation and self-development.

According to Stein and Edwards (1998), Adler saw no conflict between the individual and society and between self-interest and social interest. In fact, they influence each other in recurring positive ways. The more we develop on an individual level, the more able we are to connect positively to others and the greater our ability to connect to others, the more we can contribute to the betterment of humankind. Issues of war, prejudice and discrimination would likely cease to permeate and threaten to destroy the human race.

The underlying foundation of Adler's theory of personality development rests on the ability for individuals to develop the critical skills of co-operation and social connectedness to other individuals. "The oldest striving of mankind is for men to join with their fellowmen. It is through the interest of our fellowmen that all progress of our race has been made" (Adler, 1962, p. 182). Adler maintained that co-operation is also the final goal of religion and politics. He believed that nobody could accomplish anything by politics without co-operation (Adler, 1962). As previously mentioned, those individuals who have been able to master the tasks of life (society; occupation; love and marriage) are the individuals whose life goals strive towards the betterment of humanity and place a value on social co-operation rather than placing the emphasis on personal superiority (Adler, 1962). Interest in fellow human beings is nurtured and trained in the home and at school. The mastering of this social feeling is the foundation of human development. For Adler, the meaning of life can be found in the individual who has learnt to be a "good fellow worker, a friend to all other men and a true partner in love and marriage" (Adler, 1962, p. 189).

### **3.6.2. Family Constellation**

#### ***3.6.2.1. The Value of Early Memories***

Adlerian theory holds that an individual's approach to life starts to develop in the formative years before the age of seven years old. Life events in these early years play an important role in adult development (Corey, 2005). Adler believed that the meaning of life is to serve the interests of the whole of humankind and nurturing this social interest begins in childhood (Adler, 1962). By the end of the fifth year of life, a child has already reached a 'crystallised pattern of behaviour'. Through the interpretation of their experiences, children develop their own unique view of the world and establish a well-defined approach to handling life's challenges (Adler, 1962). According to Adler (1962) this view of life is fixed

even if the perception and approach to solving life's task is mistaken and brings with it frustration and agony. The pattern of life is not easily changed, therefore childhood experiences, or at least the interpretation of these experiences, is critical to how individuals form their view of the world. "Meanings are not determined by situations, but we determine ourselves by the meanings we give to situations. There are certain situations in childhood from which a gravely mistaken meaning is frequently drawn and it is from children in these situations that the majority of failures come" (Adler, 1962, p.16).

In the context of children who develop mistaken meanings and have misguided views of the world, Adler (1962) describes three different child profiles: the Sick Child, the Pampered Child and the Neglected Child. Adler, himself, was a sickly child, constantly fighting off childhood illnesses and a near death experience with pneumonia at the age of four (Corey, 2005). Because of his inferior physical strength, he was pampered by his mother and felt threatened by his younger and older siblings. According to Corey (2005), it is apparent that Adler's own childhood experiences had a direct influence on the development of his theory of Individual Psychology.

In the first instance, Adler (1928, 1962) describes the Sick Child, the child who is born with inferior or imperfect organs, who feels disadvantaged and overburdened and who will struggle to view the world in a positive light. Adler (1928) believed that these children do not place contribution to society high on their agenda. "They may turn in upon themselves and lose hope of playing a useful part in our common life and consider themselves personally humiliated by the world" (Adler, 1962, p. 17). In addition, the type of care and attention these children receive because of their ailments may result in their expectation that others should always take care of them and they do not need to accept responsibility for themselves. Whether it is pity or ridicule that they experience, their feelings of inferiority may become

exaggerated and their ability in adulthood to take responsibility for themselves and their actions becomes inhibited (Stein & Edwards, 1998).

In the second instance, Adler (1928, 1962) describes the Pampered Child. This child is the one who is overprotected and overindulged by his or her parents from a very young age. These children learn that being the centre of attention is the norm and that “being prominent is a birth right” (Adler, 1962, p. 17). As these children grow into adulthood and are forced to face life’s challenges, they may find themselves in a position where they are no longer the centre of attention and people do not respond to their every demand. Adler (1962) states that this type of child is certain to feel inadequate and frustrated and will be convinced that the world has once again let them down. Since these children have only ever been trained to receive attention and not to contribute to their environment, they are ill-equipped to solve life’s problems.

In the third instance, that of the Neglected Child, Adler (1928, 1962) demonstrates what happens when a young child does not receive the appropriate love and attention and is not taught the value of contribution and co-operation. According to Adler (1928, 1962), this child views the world as a cold and inhospitable place. When faced with a life challenge, this child will find it overbearing and believe he or she is unable to overcome the challenge. Adler (1928) believed that it is only when a child is shown that happiness in life is about social contribution and trust, that they will be able to meet its challenges with courage and success.

Mansfield (1995) provides evidence that the notion of the Neglected Child bears a resemblance to Churchill’s youth, when, as a young boy, he was ignored by his parents and handed over to the care of his nanny, Mrs Elizabeth Everest. Mansfield (1995) states that Churchill’s mother was consumed by social ambitiousness and his father “thought Winston was retarded, rarely talked to him and regularly vented his mounting rage on the child”

(Mansfield, 1995, p. 38). It was through the care and attention of his nanny, Mrs Everest, that Churchill experienced a degree of love and affection in his youth and, it was from Mrs Everest, that Churchill learned the basic tenets of compassion and Christianity (Mansfield, 1995). “While his parents neglected him in pursuit of their social and political dreams, Mrs Everest - or Woom as the boy called her – was the centre of Winston’s existence. It is hard to overestimate her influence on him” (Mansfield, 1995, pp. 38-39).

### ***3.6.2.2. The Role of Parents***

Adler (1962) stated that the role of both parents is critical in the development of co-operation. From birth, an infant is physically dependent on the mother but, as the child grows older, the mother’s role becomes more critical in her ability to co-operate with her child and nurture that same co-operation from her child. It is the role of the mother to avoid pampering and encourage independence as well as encourage the child’s interest in his or her social environment. Adler states that “her task is twofold: she must give the child his first experience of a trustworthy fellow being and then she must be prepared to spread this trust and friendship until it includes the whole of human society”(Adler, 1962, p. 95). According to Stein and Edwards (1998), Adler considered the role of the mother as the primary influence in the early development of the feeling of community.

In situations where the biological mother is not physically or emotionally present, a substitute for a mother plays an equally important role, with the main focus being to gain the child’s trust and interest. It follows that this individual will also nurture a reciprocal love and co-operation with the child (Adler, 1962). It is in this context that the presence of Churchill’s childhood nanny, Mrs Everest, plays a significant role as his primary caregiver in his early personality development and will be discussed in more detail in Chapters 4 and 7.

The role of the father is to focus on providing the appropriate support and love to the mother. Adler (1962) stated that one of the first examples of co-operation that a child observes, is the co-operation in the parents' marriage. If this is a supportive and loving co-operation it will serve to teach the young child the value of co-operation between the sexes and nurture a positive view of the opposite sex and of marriage itself (Adler, 1962). The other key function of the father is the task of occupation. By being able to meet this task successfully in terms of supporting himself and his family, he teaches his children courage, responsibility and, once again, co-operation with the environment (Adler, 1962). Essentially, Adler (1962) stated that the role of a father is to openly meet the three tasks of life, that is, he must prove himself a true partner to his wife, to his children and to society. This is accomplished by meeting the three challenges of life: friendship, occupation and love.

Adler's interest in family relations, particularly between siblings and between parent and child, as well as the importance of one's birth order, is an exceptional contribution to the theories of individual personality development (Corey, 2005). The individual should be viewed holistically as an integral part of a social and family system. According to Adler (1962) each member of the family plays a crucial role in the healthy and balanced development of the young child. The importance of a positive early bond with one's mother, the influences and guidance of the father and the role he plays as protector and provider can never be under played. Adler (1962) also focused on the importance of love and respect within a marriage. "The first co-operation among other people which the child experiences, is the co-operation of his parents and, if their co-operation is poor, they cannot hope to teach the child to be co-operative himself" (Adler, 1962, p. 100). It is noteworthy at this juncture to make mention of the fact that at the time of Adler's theory development other family structures were not accounted for and, as such, Adler's theory pertaining to the roles of

mother and father specifically, would need to be reviewed to account for same-sex parenting families.

Stein and Edwards (1998) comment that with a positive, secure family base, where the child receives support and encouragement, the individual grows up capable of overcoming challenges and developing the appropriate life skills to deal with the three major tasks of life. If, however, a child does not receive the appropriate encouragement and security, their feelings of inferiority may become exaggerated and they are likely to become discouraged. Instead of pursuing optimal goals and overcoming difficulties, they pursue unrealistic goals of imagined superiority and avoid true actualisation. Instead of pursuing goals of co-operation and a feeling of community, the individual pursues goals that are inwardly-focused and egocentric, remaining on the useless side of life.

### **3.6.3. Birth Order**

Adler (1962) holds that another equally important part of the family constellation is not just the co-operation between the parents but also between the children of the family. If children do not feel equal amongst themselves within the family unit, they will never be well-prepared in their development of social interest (Adler, 1962). It is for this reason that the issues of favouritism creates tension in the family (Adler, 1928, 1962). According to Adler (1962) the child's experience of his or her position in the family leaves an indelible mark on his or her view of the world and on the chosen style of life. "Every difficulty of development is caused by rivalry and a lack of co-operation in the family. We can get rid of these disadvantages only by training children better in co-operation" (Adler, 1962, p. 115).

One of the cornerstones of Adler's theory is the importance he gives to a child's position in the family, that is, their birth order, and the potential impact that this may have on their personality development. In the case of Churchill, he was the firstborn. The implication

being that he experienced being an only child for his first five formative years before having to share the attentions of his parents with his only sibling. This change, Adler argues, makes a great impression and has the potential to negatively affect the future development of the firstborn (Adler, 1962).

Adler (1962) holds that the position of each child in the family is an influential factor in their attempts to adapt to life and to establish their lifestyle. The firstborn child faces the challenges of losing poll position, once a second or even third child arrives. The only child faces the disadvantages of being over-pampered and the second child, who already shares the attentions of another sibling, is nearer to co-operation and therefore naturally well situated. The second and third child also have a pacemaker in their older sibling leading the way ahead. They have the opportunity to avoid many of the pitfalls of the older sibling. They are often more ambitious and will try to go beyond the pacemaker. Adler (1962) argued that the only way to overcome these many disadvantages is to train children in the art of co-operation and nurture the social feeling

The firstborn is often accredited with being the more responsible child. This child may view him or herself as the stronger and more prominent of all the children. If this child's development continues on this path without being knocked down by rivalling siblings or more favoured siblings, then this child may have an especially high regard for power. This refers not only to their own personal power as the oldest child, but also to power in general (Adler, 1928).

The second born child also has a strong focus on power but more from the perspective that they seek or strive for power and superiority over their older sibling. This child is usually ambitious and focused on out-doing the older sibling. The older sibling will only start to feel insecure if the younger child threatens to pass him by (Adler, 1928).

An only child runs the risk of being the pampered child. This child may become too dependent on others to solve challenges and is so unaccustomed to coping with personal difficulties that when the child grows up he or she is poorly equipped to cope with anything. Being the constant centre of attention may lead to the character traits of pompousness; an over-inflated sense of self-importance and manipulation (constantly manipulating parents and others to ensure they remain the centre of attention). It is crucial in this scenario that parents are particularly vigilant about not being over-indulgent or over-cautious but allow their child to try to solve their own problems, nurture an interest in others and assist in establishing an appropriate level of independence in order that the child may acquire the social skills necessary to face life's three major tasks (Adler, 1928).

According to Adler (1928) the youngest child holds the view that they are smaller and inferior and this ignites a strong desire to prove to everyone around them that they can do anything. The striving for power is often the strongest in the youngest child. Adler (1928) described two types that emerge out of this group of youngest children: those that excel at everything and surpass all of their siblings in achievement and those that strive to become the most capable member of the family but lack the confidence and ability as a result of their relationship with their older siblings. This latter child is still ambitious but lacks courage and will do anything to avoid duties and responsibilities. "He does not become less ambitious but he assumes that type of ambition which forces him to wriggle out of situations and satisfy his ambitions in activity outside of the necessary problems of life"(Adler, 1928, p. 150). Essentially, both types of youngest children lack the selflessness required to be a good fellow human beings. The overly ambitious type is highly competitive and seeks accomplishment at the cost of others whilst the other type hides behind feelings of inferiority and feels inadequate all through life (Adler, 1928).

Notably, whatever the context of a child's upbringing, what remains at the core of Adler's theory, is the importance of the development of the social feeling. Rather than to focus on elevating oneself above one's fellow human beings, it is more useful to focus on the value that living with fellow human beings can bring to one's life. If this social feeling is well developed then life's tasks become manageable (Adler, 1928).

#### **3.6.4. Influence of School and Teachers**

Adler's theory encompasses a view on the role and influence of the school environment on a child's life. He believed that the school is an extension of the family in the training of children for the tasks of life (Adler, 1928). From the first day at school as a young child, right through the senior school years, the child is constantly learning the lessons of social co-operation. It is in the school environment that the pampered child must learn to adjust to co-operating in a wider setting and break the apron-strings from the primary caregiver. The neglected child's negative view of the world and feelings of mistrust will also be challenged. It is the task of school teachers to identify all these issues and "try to correct the mistakes of the parents" (Adler, 1928, p. 119).

According to Adler (1928) school teachers (like mothers) need to connect with their children and engage them and nurture their interest in schoolwork and in their environment. "It is on the interest of the child that his whole future adjustment depends" (Adler, 1928, p. 119).

Adler (1928) stressed the importance of not scolding and ridiculing a child as this only serves to break the bond between adult and child and also potentially lead to a loss of interest on the part of the child. Adler argues that teachers play an important role in tapping into the interests and capabilities of the child and then nurturing these skills. Teachers also play a role in encouraging children in areas where they are weaker. In addition to educating

children about the world they live in, teachers need to encourage a child's self-confidence and find the right way to engage a child in order to enhance their healthy development. Adler (1928) believed that this is all only possible if the teacher is truly interested in the well-being of the child.

Adler (1928) stressed that teachers also have the difficult job of training children to be less competitive with each other (which is inherent in a school environment) and become more focused on being interested in one another. In this context they will naturally co-operate better and learn the important life skills of social contribution. It is apparent that only during his later years in senior school, did Churchill develop a sense of co-operation and mutual respect for his teachers and his peers (Gilbert, 1992).

Finally, Adler (1928) also stressed the importance of not over-emphasising the role of hereditary factors on a child's capability. Adler (1928) proposed that teachers have the ability to engage and influence a child and, by capturing a child's interest and nurturing this interest in the environment, the child has equal opportunity for optimum development. Focusing on hereditary factors only gives teachers and parents an excuse for their own lack of interest and effort in a child's achievements and diminishes their responsibility for a child's development (Adler, 1928). "Both teachers and children should get rid of the superstition that the progress of a child of normal intelligence can be related to his hereditary" (Adler, 1928, p. 124).

### **3.7. Character Traits and Emotions**

A character trait is a mental attitude of an individual towards the environment (Adler, 1928). Human beings are constantly striving for superiority but are held in check by their relative degree of social feeling. These two opposing forces are in constant flux and, according to Adler (1928), their manifestations are what he refers to as character. In order to describe an individual's character traits, an individual needs to be contextualised within their

environment. Character traits are the external reflection of one's style of life and a reflection of an individual's behaviour pattern. Character traits contribute to an understanding of an individual's attitude towards his or her environment, fellow human beings and the tasks of life (Adler, 1928).

Adler (1928) identified two groups of character traits: aggressive character traits, which include vanity, jealousy, envy, avarice and hate, and non-aggressive character traits, which include reclusiveness, anxiety, faint-heartedness, cheerfulness, submissiveness and imperiousness. Of all these traits, imperiousness is the trait most relevant to this research as it closely describes the character of Sir Winston Churchill. Imperiousness describes an individual who seeks a position of dominance and who thrives in a leadership role, demonstrating courage, determination and tenacity (Adler, 1928). "In times of unrest, when a nation is in revolution, such natures come to the surface; they have the proper gestures, the proper attitudes and desires and usually also the necessary preparation to assume the leaders role" (Adler, 1928, p. 260). In relation to Churchill's character, Mansfield (1995) describes Churchill as an exceptionally tenacious leader driven by duty and a higher purpose in life:

Churchill's sense of duty lifted him above the comfort and self-absorption that satisfied other men. Undoubtedly, he loved his pleasures and all that the fruits of his labours provided. But the measure of the man is that he was willing to lay aside the very things he loved for a higher cause. He wanted to make his mark, do his bit, play his role, and know that he had walked in the paths of greatness. To merely exist was no better than death. But to live the vital existence of one who rises to duty, who takes in hand the gauntlet of destiny, this is a life worth the trouble and worthy of emulation (Mansfield, 1995, p. 125).

According to Adler (1928) emotions are an extension of character traits. Emotions are sudden expressions of a particular feeling at a particular point in time. Emotions are “psychic movements which possess a definite time boundary” (Adler, 1928, p. 265) and are common to all human beings. Adler (1928) made specific reference to the following emotions, namely, anger, sadness, disgust, fear, anxiety, joy, sympathy and modesty. Whilst these emotions are likely to be experienced by all human beings at different points in time, the emotions particularly relevant to the current research on depressive realism are those of sadness and melancholia.

### **3.7.1. Sadness and Depression**

Adler (1928, 1949) explained that sadness is a compensation for a feeling of loss or weakness (it also refers to unhappiness and depression). He argues that there is a natural tendency for the individual to seek a better scenario, that is, a degree of striving for superiority becomes evident in the wake of sadness. “The sad person complains and with his complaint sets himself into opposition to his fellows. Natural as sorrow is in the nature of man, its exaggeration is a hostile gesture against society” (Adler, 1928, p. 270). The individual elevates him or herself depending on the reaction of his or her environment, that is, individuals may use exaggerated sorrow to gain sympathy and attention and in so doing secures better personal elevation and satisfaction. The individual moves from weakness to perceived superiority and evades feelings of inferiority. However the misuse of sadness leads to increased transparency, that is, the more the individual exaggerates the sorrow, the more critical and judgemental they also become but in using sadness to get more attention, they become more transparent to people around them.

According to Adler (1949), sadness is different to anger because anger is directed at someone whereas sadness is directed inwards and the soul is isolated. Adler (1949) stated that

it is possible to overcome sadness by expanding the soul upwards again and striving towards a state of betterment. The strategy for the sad person is to first release their emotions into the environment through tears and grief and then rebuild a new attitude towards the environment by focusing outwards towards others. Adler argued that for some people sadness can be used to elicit empathy and gain a higher degree of attention and self-importance than is necessary. This strategy, however, only leads to short-term healing. Adler (1928, 1949) described this scenario as manipulative and antagonistic behaviour towards the environment. This scenario also highlights its particular relevance to the life of Sir Winston Churchill. According to Mansfield (1995), Churchill never abused or misused his 'Black Dog' to manipulate his environment or to solicit undue attention and empathy.

Mosak (1977) elaborates Adler's theory, arguing that an individual's underlying thinking pattern drives a certain outward behaviour pattern but it actually masks a deeper seated inferiority complex. An individual may say that he or she is unloved and that the world is a hostile place so it is better to keep to oneself in order to avoid rejection when, in fact, the individual is masking a deeper desire to be superior. The individual actually wants to control the environment and get what he or she wants out of life but does not have the confidence to pursue these goals. The individual's focus turns inward towards self-preservation at all cost. Depression is a resultant emotion used as an excuse to retreat from life. The individual is therefore unable to be a socially contributing member of society.

The focus of therapy for depression, from an Adlerian perspective, is not to view the individual as mentally ill but rather to view the individual as being discouraged. In turn, through encouragement, an individual can learn to change their 'mistaken' thought pattern and become more externally focused. The individual can discover that internal resources are available from which they can draw upon in order to tackle significant life tasks.

The emotion of anger signals a complete negation of the social feeling where sympathy is the “purest expression of the social feeling” (Adler, 1928, p. 276). In both instances, these emotions are valuable tools to overcome feelings of inferiority. In the misuse of these emotions, individuals attempt to control the environment again and again. This type of play acting in adults becomes a habitual response whenever an individual does not get his or her way or whenever dominance of the personality is threatened.

Even though our sympathies are associated with them in various degrees, anger and sorrow are disjunctive emotions. They do not serve to really bring men closer.

Actually they separate by injuring the social feeling. Sorrow, it is true, eventually effects a union, but this union does not occur normally, because both parties do not contribute. It effects a distortion of the social feeling in which the other fellow has to contribute the greater share (Adler, 1928, p. 272).

### **3.7.2. Politics, Co-Operation and Melancholia**

“The oldest striving of mankind is for men to join with their fellowmen. It is through interest in our fellow men that all the progress of our race has been made” (Adler, 1962, p.182). In the context of politics, Adler (1962) explains that nothing would be achieved without a degree of co-operation and all political, national or social movements should be judged according to their ability to further interest in fellowmen. Where individuals pursue personal advantages, they obscure both common and individual progress and such individuals have little interest in and are unable to connect with their fellowmen (Adler, 1962). For Adler, the most extreme case of isolation is represented by insanity, but even insanity can be cured if the interest in others can be encouraged. Paranoia and melancholia are two other conditions that also represent a disconnection with other human beings. For individuals with melancholia, they tend to take on all the blame for their situation but in actual fact they hold

others responsible. “Melancholia is like a long-continued rage and reproach against others, though for the purpose of gaining care, sympathy and support, the patient seems only to be dejected about his own guilt” (Adler, 1962, p. 186).

The melancholic individual is constantly pessimistic, does not like risking change and is highly cautious and lacks confidence in the pursuit of goals. This type of person is inwardly-focused, thinking more of him or herself than of others, is highly introspective and is consumed by their past (Adler, 1928).

Adler (1962) argues that melancholic individuals have a tendency towards suicide in order to avenge their deep rage and have an excuse to blame others. These individuals want to dominate and accuse others. However, by giving them unconditional support and agreeing with whatever they wish to do, their actions may be diffused as they no longer are able to dominate or blame others. Another way to disarm the melancholic is to encourage the individual to engage positively with others and to do kind gestures for others. In this way, the individual is forced to stop indulging him or herself in their unhappy situation and focus their interests towards their fellowmen (Adler, 1962).

All my efforts are devoted towards increasing the social interest of the patient. I know that the real reason for his malady is his lack of co-operation and I want him to see it as a tool. As soon as he can connect himself with his fellow men on an equal and cooperative footing, he is cured (Adler, 1962, p. 188).

Furthermore, as discussed, this interest in fellowmen is rooted in the individual’s family life as well as their experience of school. It has been discussed how important it is for the child to feel an equal member of the family and to take an interest in the other family members. Equally, at school, children should feel part of their class and engage in supportive and co-operative friendships. If the individual can contribute positively to the lives of others

through useful work and positive relationships, the individual “will never feel inferior to others or defeated by them” (Adler, 1962, p. 189) and he or she may feel a sense of belonging to “the whole human process – past, present and future; but he will feel also that this is the time in which he can fulfil his creative tasks and make his own contribution to human development” (Adler, 1962, p. 189).

### **3.8. Optimal Development versus Psychopathology**

In Stein and Edwards’ (1998) view, Adler believed that optimal development grew from the earliest years of life, where a child received appropriate love and attention by parents and family members. The child would have been encouraged to learn co-operation with others, feelings of inferiority would have been minimised, courage would have been bolstered and attention drawn to become contributing members of a broader society. In this way, children grow up to be co-operative and productive adults, capable of facing life’s challenges, developing intimate relationships with others and to better themselves for mutually beneficial reasons. They strive for superiority over difficult tasks rather than superiority over their fellowman and potentially are driven by notable qualities of justice, integrity and truth.

However, Stein and Edwards (1998) argue that there is a difference between optimal development and development that is deemed normal or sufficient. That is to say that individuals may acquire an adequate sense of co-operation and are able to ‘get by’ but they are not maximising their potential and may not have developed their courage and sense of co-operation sufficiently enough to cope with life’s real challenges such as raising children, divorce, losing jobs, illness, children leaving home or retirement. At these junctions, their distress may cause psychological problems. Psychopathology for Adler, therefore, is the result of either exaggerated feelings of inferiority and, or, a poorly developed sense of

community. Ansbacher and Ansbacher (1956) and Stein and Edwards (1998) comment that in the face of difficult challenges, these individuals become so discouraged and totally overwhelmed by feelings of inferiority that they attempt to mask rather than overcome their sense of inferiority, that is, they develop a false sense of superiority.

In contrast, the optimally developed individual, according to Adler (1931), is that person whose goal in life is to compensate for personal weaknesses and negative childhood experiences by pursuing and fulfilling productive and socially meaningful work. "Such a human being would develop the traits of honesty, sincerity and responsibility. As he grew older, his social connections would become more extended, his usefulness wider, his poise better, his courage greater" (Adler, 1931, p. 26). Any unresolved vanities or misspent ambitions in the striving for superiority would be channelled into contributing to the common good.

Adler (1931) argues, however, that few human beings make humanity their ultimate goal in life. Most goals are purposefully or unintentionally egocentric and are the result of mistaken perceptions of childhood events. "The more inferior a child feels himself in the beginning, the higher his goal of compensatory superiority, the closer to the idea of godlikeness" (Adler, 1931, p. 27). The sick child strives for complete health, the poor child strives for wealth and the hated child demands unconditional love. However, in these contexts, these goals are often beyond the reach of human action and thus a substitute technique evolves to take the place of the original goal that creates a false sense of achieving the original goal. In the case of the pampered child, whose sole purpose in the first few years of life is to continue to be an indulged and spoilt child, he or she may realise at some point that he or she is no longer the adored child. If taken seriously ill, this child experiences a renewed concern and heightened attention from his parents. The child thus learns the value of sickness and that it is a means to power and ultimately a way of achieving the ideal. Illness

becomes the secondary goal with attention-seeking the primary goal. This process is manipulated into each new task, challenge or decision in the young adult's life and perpetuates into adulthood (Adler, 1931).

The disaster in this process is that the true potential of the individual is never explored and an ever-increasing need to maximise his or her efforts to fain illness in order to achieve their goals, spirals out of control, until the individual eventually loses contact with the outside world. "The tragedy of the neurosis is that every neurotic eventually pays more dearly for avoiding the responsibilities of living than he would pay for living responsibly (Adler, 1931, p. 29).

### **3.9. Critique of Adler's Theory of Individual Psychology**

Individual Psychology stresses the freedom of individuals to choose their course in life and that they are responsible for their own self-realisation. For this reason, Adlerian theory is considered a forerunner of the existential movement (Corey, 2005). Conversely, Individual Psychology differs from Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic approach quite fundamentally. Wagner (2010) argues that where Freud viewed the mind as a unit comprising of 'warring factions' resulting in inevitable psychic conflict, Adler viewed the human mind as an integrated whole. Where Freud studied the unconscious mind and focused on biological motives for behaviour and the importance of repressed early memories, Adler studied the conscious mind and considered the social motives of behaviour as well as conscious childhood memories as driving factors of personality development. In addition, Adler focused on family dynamics, birth order and the influence of broader social relationships on the development of a lifestyle that incorporated social interest. Whereas Freud was also less optimistic about human nature and believed that individuals are influenced by their past and

by heredity and environmental factors, Adler believed that people are free to determine their own personality and are very much future orientated (Wagner, 2010).

Arciniega and Newlon (1999) believe that Individual Psychology has an overall respect for diverse cultural identities because it focuses on the subjective view of the individual. Although Churchill is not from a minority group, Arciniega and Newlon (1999) state that, of all the therapeutic approaches, Individual Psychology best suits the needs of minority groups because of its focus on the individual's subjective view of him or herself; the community; the family unit and social contributions. In this instance, contextualising Churchill's depression within the framework of Individual Psychology provides the opportunity for the research to inform and be applied to different groups of individuals across the general population.

According to Watts (2000), the main advantage of applying Adler's theory is that it is flexible and open to the 'subjective reality' of the individual. Ansbacher and Ansbacher (1956) and Corey (2005) comment that Adler emphasised the importance of understanding the individual as an integrated whole within the milieu of their socio-cultural and socio-economic circumstances which provides a genuinely holistic view of the individual. In addition, Individual Psychology also contributes greatly to the role that family relations, birth order and early memories play in the development of the individual.

Criticisms against Adlerian theory cite the lack of empirical testing and scientific rigour to contextualise key constructs such as the unity of the personality, the establishment of lifestyles and the striving for superiority (Boeree, 2006; Corey, 2005). The majority of criticism levelled against Adler involves the degree to which his theory is scientifically measurable, that is, many of his concepts such as 'striving for superiority' or 'compensating for feelings of inferiority' are near impossible to measure by means of physical experiment or

controlled testing (Boeree, 2006). For Adler, human behaviour is not based on 'cause and effect' but rather is self-determined depending on the individual's ideals and goals. This teleological approach recognises the creative power of the individual and the freedom of choice to create one's own personality or lifestyle. Adler did not attempt to seek 'absolute truths' but rather explored and established 'useful constructs' to encourage and guide all individuals (Boeree, 2006).

According to Corey (2005), another criticism directed towards Adler's theory is the difficulty in establishing generality of his propositions regarding family relations and the impact of birth order. Critics argue that aspects of Adler's theory are too subjective and circumstantial. The impact of being the firstborn or the only child, for example, may apply to some individuals but does not necessarily hold true for all such individuals (Boeree, 2006).

Boeree (2006) concludes, that, despite criticisms that Adler's theory suffers a degree of 'lacklustre' compared to Freud's theories of sexuality or Carl Jung's emphasis on mythology, it is more likely to be considered the most 'common-sense' of the three theories and is much favoured by students of psychology in general. Adler's approach holds potential because his style is direct, his interpretations are logical and straight-forward and his theoretical structure is uncomplicated and practical to comprehend.

### **3.10. Conclusion**

Individual psychology accepts that people are shaped and motivated by social factors and are self-determining individuals, driven by goals and responsible for their own thoughts, feelings and actions. Adlerian theory stresses a positive view of human nature and holds a dynamic and teleological view of personality and lifestyle development. Individual psychology is future-orientated rather than reflective of the past and is thereby positive and affirming by nature. Human beings begin at an early age to create their own unique style of

life which is influenced by various social and family dynamics. Parental and sibling relationships, birth order within the family and early childhood memories, including school experiences, all play a significant role in the shaping of individual lives. In Chapter 7 Adler's theory of Individual Psychology will be comprehensively applied to the life of Sir Winston Churchill to contextualise his personality development and occurrence of depression across his lifespan.

The following chapter provides an overview of the extraordinary life of Sir Winston Churchill commencing with his birth and early childhood and progresses to explore his many challenges and achievements throughout his adult life within the context of his lifetime experience with depression.



## Chapter 4

### The Life of Sir Winston Churchill and His 'Black Dog'

#### 4.1. Chapter Preview

This chapter describes the life of Sir Winston Churchill from his birth in 1874 to his death in 1965 with contextual reference to his lifelong experience with depression, known as his 'Black Dog'. The purpose of this study is to illustrate the development and course of Churchill's depression over his lifespan and to present a case for the concept of depressive realism to potentially exist as a positive side-effect of depression.

Evidence for his 'Black Dog' will be discussed as part of Churchill's developmental life phases as a child, scholar, soldier, politician, military leader, post-war statesman and family man.

The life of an enigmatic, controversial yet highly accomplished individual, such as Sir Winston Churchill, stimulates a vast amount of historical and bibliographical material. As such, the available documentation and archival material, spanning ninety years of Churchill's life, creates an unrealistic expectation to uncover every aspect of his life or every detail of his personality in its entirety. The current study, does, however, provide an opportunity to take an in-depth view of the nature and effect of one aspect of Churchill's life, his experience with depression, and the possible role it may have played in his decision-making and leadership choices. Source information for this study includes Churchill's autobiography, personal correspondence, speech writing, personal letters written between Churchill and his wife, Clementine, from the time of their marriage in 1908 until their last years together in 1965 as well as a broad selection of biographical and historical materials available in the public domain.

The chapter commences with a brief discussion of the significance of Churchill's life and the motivation for selecting his life story for this psychobiographical case study. Then, before exploring Churchill's individual life phases and salient events in his life, the importance of hereditary factors in Churchill's family history provides familial context to Churchill's 'Black Dog' followed by a brief overview of nineteenth century Victorian Britain which provides a socio-historical context to the era in which Churchill was born.

#### **4.2. The Significance of Churchill's Life**

Arguably, Sir Winston Churchill played one of the most decisive roles in the history of the world during the twentieth century (Gilbert, 1992; Mansfield, 1995). In particular, during the Second World War (1939-1945), Mansfield (1995) explains that Churchill was a stand-alone visionary with the courage, resolution and foresight to lead, not only Britain, but its allied neighbours (France and Russia) through one of the most threatening encounters of democracy and freedom in the modern world. At this time, Churchill's strategic prowess, fortitude and valour were unparalleled in the face of Nazi tyranny and he possessed the "moral compass and world view of the twentieth century coupled with a twenty-first century realism" (Mansfield, 1995, p. 33).

During his remarkably long military and political career, spanning nearly fifty years, Churchill held eight Cabinet posts in the British Parliament before he became Prime Minister of Britain for the first time in 1940. When Churchill resigned as Prime Minister for the second time in 1955 he had been in Parliament for over fifty five years (Gilbert, 1992). During his extraordinary career, Churchill achieved many honours but also endured much controversy and antagonism for his forthrightness, dogged determination and gritty independence (Gilbert, 1992).

Churchill was born into aristocratic circles and attended some of the finest schooling establishments in Great Britain. He received his first army commission during the reign of Queen Victoria and learned to fly before the First World War, remaining fascinated with aviatory progress all his life and established Britain's first official Royal Naval Air Service. As a strategic war commander, Churchill was instrumental in the development of the tank, anti-air craft defence and advancements in aerial defence. Churchill also predicted the building of weapons of mass destruction and proposed the notion of using the hydrogen bomb as a deterrent to secure world disarmament after the Second World War (Gilbert, 1992).

Gilbert (1992) further explains that, on the domestic front, Churchill was a champion for social reform in Britain prior to and post the Second World War, working tirelessly to secure minimum standards of living for the working classes and social well-being for all citizens, including improved education, national health services, unemployment insurance, pension schemes, prison reforms, employment incentive schemes, improved working conditions in shops and factories and promoted profit-sharing by employees. Essentially, according to Gilbert (1992), from a young age, Churchill had an uncanny understanding and vision for the future. He also had great confidence in his own ability to contribute to the survival and improvement of mankind.

After two World Wars, Churchill was exceedingly committed to securing world peace, revisiting the injustices of the Second World War and restoring balance to world power. Churchill influenced every aspect of British domestic and foreign policy from before the First World War and through the Second World War. Churchill also attempted to equalise the potential threat of the Cold War post the outcome of the Second World War (Gilbert, 1992; Jenkins, 2002; Mansfield, 1995). According to Gilbert (1992), however, Churchill's finest hour was arguably the leadership of Britain throughout the Second World War when it

was at its most isolated and most threatened whilst Churchill's own courage, resolution and belief in democracy was at its most stoic, uniting the British nation and all of its allies.

On a personal level, Churchill is well remembered for his sharp wit, critical tongue and outspokenness. He was perceptive and shrewd about events taking place around him, and was uniquely a man of both words and action (Gilbert, 1992; Hayward, 1998). Churchill had an exceptional mastery of the English language which he used to negotiate, convince and encourage those around him. Churchill was considered to be magnanimous, compassionate and devout in his friendships (Hayward, 1998; Singer, 2012). He disliked victimisation and bullying and often championed for the under-dog (Gilbert, 1992). Churchill, however, also had many indulgences, including an expensive taste for cigars and fine champagne as well as a lifelong passion for flying. Churchill enjoyed many different pastimes, including horse-riding, horse-racing, writing, painting and swimming (Mansfield, 1995; Singer, 2012). In his lifetime, Churchill published fifty books, over eight hundred articles, three short stories as well as a novel, a film script and contributed numerous notes for several jigsaw puzzles. In 1953 Churchill was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature (Mansfield, 1995).

Churchill also had a great love of fine dining, using the 'dining table' as more than a means to indulge in good food, excellent champagnes and expensive cigars, rather, it was an appropriate stage for discourse, negotiation and conflict resolution (Stelzer, 2012). Dining with colleagues, friends or foes, whether it was in his own dining room or a picnic table at the battlefield, provided Churchill with the opportunity for face-to-face discussion, which, for Churchill, was essential if any progress was ever to be made on any issue. Such intimate encounters facilitated Churchill's confidence in his unique ability to persuade others and ultimately to get his own way. Churchill was also well known for dominating the dinner conversation: "One achievement (of his time spent at dinner tables) – if one were needed –

the establishment of the special relationship with Roosevelt that was so crucial to defeating Nazi Germany, clearly outweighs any subsequent setbacks” (Stelzer, 2012, p. 40).

A man with a great sense of humour and enormous energy for life, Churchill had many idiosyncrasies, but his genius, tenaciousness and persistent ability to be larger than life, inspires Jenkins (2002) to describe Churchill as “the greatest human being ever to occupy 10 Downing Street” (p. 912). Ghaemi (2011) continues, however, that behind the face of this extraordinary man, belies his lifelong challenge with recurring depression, openly naming it his ‘Black Dog’. Churchill suffered severe bouts of depression in his early twenties, his mid-thirties as Home Secretary to Britain, and again, at age forty one, as Lord of the Admiralty during the First World War after the British naval defeat at Gallipoli. Churchill also endured long periods of depression prior to and just after the Second World War in 1945. “His fifties were a particularly dark decade when he was seen as politically washed up and rejected by his own Conservative Party as well as his enemies” (Ghaemi, 2011, p. 61).

It is in the context of this paradox, that being, the indisputable legacy of Churchill’s remarkable leadership in the face of recurring depression, that his life is significant as a psychobiographical case study for depressive realism.

### **4.3. Significance of Hereditary Factors in Churchill’s Family History of Mental Health:**

#### **Churchill’s ‘Black Dog’ in Context**

Fieve (1997) and Storr (1990) suggest a hereditary link to Churchill’s depression. One of Churchill’s early ancestors, John Churchill, the first Duke of Marlborough, is believed to have suffered from mood swings and depression during his lifetime. Storr (1990) comments that “the first Duke of Marlborough alternated between optimism and depression in a way which some people would not expect in one of England’s most famous military commanders” (p. 7). Pearson (1991) comments that it is believed that at least five subsequent dukes

suffered from melancholia. Storr (1990) adds that an even earlier ancestor, the father of the first Duke of Marlborough, also known as Winston Churchill, is also believed to have endured a depressed demeanour in his later years.

According to Ghaemi (2011), Churchill's father, Lord Randolph Churchill, also exhibited a depressive temperament during his lifetime whilst Churchill's eldest daughter, Diana, also suffered bouts of major depression and committed suicide in 1963. Ghaemi (2011) explains further that, although Lord Randolph appeared to have developed and later died from syphilis (which may also cause various psychotic symptoms), in the nineteenth century, it was not possible to distinguish such cases from schizophrenia or other similar psychoses. Not until the later development of tests that could differentiate syphilis, was it possible to be sure which patient had psychosis caused by syphilis and which had schizophrenia. Ghaemi (2011) further adds that manic-depressive illness (Bipolar Disorder) can also make patients sexually impulsive and thus sexually transmitted diseases such as syphilis are more common in individuals with manic-depression (Bipolar Disorder). For this reason, according to Ghaemi (2011), it is difficult to determine if Lord Randolph died insane because he had syphilis or because he was manic-depressive or both. Although syphilis is not genetic, Winston Churchill, his daughter Diana and Churchill's first cousin, Sunny, the ninth Duke of Marlborough, all suffered severe depressive episodes in their lifetime. "Thus we find a familial predisposition to severe depression among Churchill relatives and the presence of suicide indicates that this familial mood condition was more than a mild hereditary taint" (p. 59).

Pearson (1991) describes Lord Randolph as a nervous character who had inherited the 'Marlborough melancholy' and was often the victim of 'black depression' (p. 34). Pearson (1991) adds that Lord Randolph died at the age of forty six years old after many years of recurring bouts of illness, speculated to have been the result of syphilis. Some members of

the Churchill family claim that Lord Randolph's death was the result of excessive medication to treat anxiety and stress together with a weak physical disposition as a result of childhood glandular fever. Other members, however, including Sir Winston Churchill, openly accepted that Lord Randolph's death was the result of syphilis (Pearson, 1991).

Ghaemi (2011) further comments, that Churchill suffered not just major depressive episodes during his life but, conversely, also experienced long time periods of elation and elevated moods. During these times, when Churchill was not depressed, he "became another person", moody and aggressive or overly energetic, highly sociable and extroverted (p. 60). According to Ghaemi (2011), this frequent alternation of mood states lends itself to a cyclothymic personality diagnosis, which is biologically and genetically related to Bipolar Disorder. Cyclothymic Disorder is classified as a mood disorder by the fifth edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5) (American Psychiatric Association, 2013) under the Bipolar Disorder category, wherein adults experience both hypomanic and depressed moods without meeting the criteria for an episode of mania, hypomania or major depression for a minimum period of two years.

According to Fieve (1997) Churchill's son, Randolph Churchill, also suffered depressive episodes during his life. "Randolph Churchill told me that he had been painfully depressed during major periods in his life and that he had become a chronic alcoholic partially as a result of his attempts to treat his depressions with alcohol" (Fieve, 1997, p. 143). Pearson (1991) also describes another of Churchill's children, Sarah Churchill, the younger sister of Randolph, as being an unhappy individual who "sober, was as charming as her brother but drunk, she was a nightmare" (p. 13) and, in 1982, like her brother, Randolph before her, died of alcoholism (Alcohol Use Disorder).

Pearson (1991) comments that, it is difficult to determine why, three out of four of Winston Churchill's adult children (Diana, Randolph and Sarah) displayed a self-destructive nature that eventually claimed all of their lives. He concludes that it may have been coincidence or the result of them being victims of their father's genius or perhaps "some deep genetic flaw" (Pearson, 1991, p. 14). In addition, Sir Winston Churchill's cousin, Charles Richard John Spencer Churchill, otherwise known as "Sunny" and also the ninth Duke of Marlborough, also inherited his share of the depressive Churchill temperament (Pearson, 1991).

In this light, Fieve (1997) believes that there is a strong genetic cause for Winston Churchill's 'Black Dog' and concludes that "this was indeed a family in which mood-swings prevailed and had been passed down from generation to generation" (p. 144). Storr (1990), however, believes that both hereditary and environmental factors played a significant part in Churchill's depression and that a substantial study of Churchill's childhood, adolescence and interpersonal relationships are critical to understanding the course of his depression. Pearson (1991) adds that, although tempting to blame the depressive afflictions of the Churchills to a distant genetic disposition, it is hard to prove such a theory. According to Pearson (1991), the Marlborough Churchills did not descend in a direct male line from the first Duke of Marlborough (John Churchill). His first two sons died in infancy and the dukedom had to pass to John Churchill's eldest daughter, Henrietta. However, Henrietta's only son died before her, so that on her death, the dukedom passed to the son of her second sister, Anne, who married Charles Spencer, Earl of Sunderland. Their son, also called Charles Spencer, became the third Duke of Marlborough and it was only after 1817 that the name Churchill was reassigned to the Spencer name to become Spencer-Churchill to honour the memory of the first duke, John Churchill. "The Spencer stock was anything but melancholic" but somehow "the Marlborough Spencers were infected by the gloom of Blenheim. For more

than a century the dukes who lived there were to prove themselves a resolutely sad and self-destructive lot” (Pearson, 1991, p. 28-29).

When applying Adler’s theory of Individual Psychology to this study, hereditary influences become a relevant factor for consideration even though Adler placed more emphasis on the influence of childhood experiences and environmental factors on the psychological development of the individual. In this study, therefore, it is appropriate to consider what role hereditary factors played in Churchill’s depression as well as the influence of early conditioning and environmental factors.

#### **4.4. Overview of Nineteenth Century Victorian Britain: A Socio-Historical Context**

Nineteenth century Britain is best characterised by the Victorian era, the period of time in which Queen Victoria ruled the British Empire from 1837 to 1901. Prior to the Victorian era, Britain lived through the Georgian era under the rule of King George IV until his death in 1830 (Dixon, 2010). Queen Victoria came to power in 1837 during the early stages of the Industrial Revolution in Britain (Evans, 2011).

According to Mansfield (1995), Winston Churchill was born during a most exceptional time of change in British history, where the Industrial Revolution had made Britain the “workshop of the world” (p. 30), producing trains, steamships and factories as well as a rapid emergence of banks, making London the largest city in the world and the centre of global finance. Queen Victoria was already in her thirty-seventh year of her reign when Churchill was born (Mansfield, 1995). British industrialisation created a local economic boom by way of new products, new factories, employment, new markets, consumerism and overall prosperity for the entrepreneurs and wealthier classes of that time. Such prosperity, however, also created oppressive and squalid working conditions, minimum

wages, long working hours, poor sanitation and unmanageable infectious diseases that saw the working classes endure untenable work and living standards (Evans, 2011).

On an international scale, by 1882, the Victorian era was well entrenched and Britain was in the final stages of establishing the largest empire in world history (Evans, 2011). By the end of Queen Victoria's reign in 1901, the British Empire extended over one fifth of the world's surface (including, Great Britain, Canada, West Indies, Australasia, Polynesia, Burma, India, Pakistan, Malaysia, Singapore, Hong Kong, Nepal and most of Africa, including South Africa) and almost one quarter of the world's population, in theory, pledged allegiance to the British monarch – three times the size of the Roman Empire. It was an era of unprecedented population growth, urban expansion and gross colonialisation with the ultimate goal of spreading Victorian values of order, obedience and Christian virtues to the far reaches of the British Empire (Evans, 2011; Mansfield, 1995). It was a patriotic time, a golden age for the Englishman and there was no apparent end in sight. This euphoric, if not false optimism was the very environment that Churchill was born into in the latter part of the 1800's. This unshakable British confidence of 'Empire' was soon to be tested, however, by impending political conflict and world war as Mansfield (1995) comments:

The Old Order would meet its match in the new democracy, the new morality, the new technology and the new politics. Violence and revolution would become commonplace in the new century and the doctrines of socialism would forever transform the aristocratic art of governing (p. 31).

Churchill further reflects:

I was a child of the Victorian era, when the structure of our country seemed firmly set, when its position in trade and on the seas was unrivalled, and when the realisation of the greatness of our Empire and of our duty to preserve it was ever growing stronger.

In those days the dominant forces in Great Britain were very sure of themselves and of their doctrines. They thought they could teach the world the art of government and the science of economics. They were sure they were supreme at sea and consequently safe at home. They rested therefore sedately under the convictions of power and security. Very different is the aspect of these anxious and dubious times (Churchill, 1930/1996; p. xxi).

At the start of the Victorian era, British society still mirrored characteristics of the old feudal system with its hierarchical class structure comprising three main classes: the upper class elite of aristocratic landowners who had established themselves as the traditional ruling class over both society and politics; the middle class comprising salaried white collar professionals; and, the working class, comprising of individuals who performed the lowest and most menial of jobs (McKay & McKay, 2012). According to McKay and McKay (2012), each class generally accepted their place within the system. It was unacceptable to challenge or try to integrate with the class above or below one's own station. The upper class elite valued more than anything, their own heritage as hereditary landowners and truly believed in their right to a pre-ordained life of privilege. They fervently maintained the status quo by means of various traditions and institutions, in particular, the law of primogeniture which ensured that the firstborn son inherited everything.

Manchester (1995), cited in the introduction to Churchill's autobiography (Churchill, 1930/1996) noted that aristocratic noblemen of nineteenth century Britain considered themselves 'godlike' and children, such as Churchill, born into this elite circle had extraordinary childhoods under the auspices of luxury yet endured miserable school years at private boarding schools, away from their families and forced to undergo a 'rite of passage' to prepare for their privileged manhood. Manchester (1995, cited in Churchill, 1930/1996) explains that "youth was an ordeal for most boys of this class" (p. x) but that "the ordeals of

those years were, for them, simply a prelude to all that was to follow – they were sustained by the knowledge that life for them would improve afterward, and that the improvement would be dramatic” (p. xi).

McKay and McKay (2012) further explain that, as a result of the Industrial Revolution, the middle class was a relatively new but rapidly growing social class of intellectuals and successful entrepreneurs that forced a degree of social mobility between the existing classes and challenged the prevailing social structure. Throughout the Victorian era new values of individualism were constantly evolving amongst members of the middle class who believed in and aspired to the ideal of the self-made man.

Wood (1991) further describes British society during the Victorian era as comprising of many layers, namely, the new and old rich, the skilled and unskilled and the rural and urban dwellers. Social problems amongst the poor were dire and the need to improve social conditions in terms of housing, education, sanitation and prisons was never more critical than during this time in British history. The poor were an unavoidable part of urban expansion and their plight could no longer go unnoticed. Industrialisation had created many wealthy entrepreneurs who stood not only in direct contrast to the predicament of the ‘redundant’ farmer and the over-worked factory worker but also in contrast to the aristocracy whose traditional land wealth was no longer as noteworthy as business wealth. It was, in many instances, a society of unfair discrepancy and disparity.

On a cultural level, during the nineteenth century there was a transition away from the Georgian period of rationalism to the more austere Victorian values of social and sexual restraint, prudishness and a strict adherence to a more puritan moral code than existed in the previous Georgian era (Dixon, 2010).

Interestingly, Merriman (2004) comments on the contradictory nature of Victorian society in that it was outwardly established according to a set of rigid and sombre moral standards yet these were hypocritically applied in terms of the prevalence of certain social phenomena such as child labour, exploitation of coalminers and prostitution, the latter of which, according to Young and Neff (2013), was particularly popular amongst gentlemen of the upper classes for whom promiscuity was fairly common. According to Young and Neff (2013), men were considered head of the family and consequently provider and protector thereof but they were also seen as superior to women both mentally and physically. McKay and McKay (2012) explain that Victorian men followed a very strict honour code of strength, courage and mastery which was automatically transferred to the next male generation who were equally expected to live and excel by this honour code or be shamed by it (McKay & McKay, 2012). Women were the homemakers, supportive and obedient of their husbands and focused on bearing and raising their children. They were considered more inferior to men and therefore had fewer rights. As such, women could not vote or own property (Young & Neff, 2013).

Despite the many socio-cultural contradictions of the Victorian age, Gordon and Nair (2003) regard the Victorian era as a time of great progress, particularly in terms of transportation, communication and industry, most notably witnessed in the modernisation of steam ships and improved rail facilities which further served manufacturing and trade, and, in turn, stimulated industrial innovation and economic stability. Sanitation reforms as well as charitable and relief agencies merged to relieve social tribulations of the working classes and, finally, towards the end of the nineteenth century, reformers began to organise movement for women's rights and voting equality.

Mansfield (1995) describes how, towards the end of the nineteenth century, and, against the backdrop of a thriving economy and social reform in Britain, dissidents on the

international political front were emerging and ideals of independence and revolution were looming in the build up to what transpired as the First World War. A new world order was evolving that lent itself to a new brand of leadership (Mansfield, 1995), one that was exemplified by and herein explored in the study of the life of Sir Winston Churchill.

#### **4.5. Historical Periods over Churchill's Lifespan: 'Black Dog' to 'Bull Dog'**

##### **4.5.1. The Child: 1874-1888**

*"The seeds of Churchill style were initially sown by nobility and neglect – the manner of the man was bred in the upbringing of the child" (Singer, 2012, p. 19).*

The story of Churchill's life begins with his birth and early childhood as the oldest son of an aristocratic nineteenth century British-American family and progresses with a description of his early years at boarding school.

##### ***4.5.1.1. Birth and Early Childhood: 1874-1881***

Winston Leonard Spencer Churchill was born into a prominent Victorian aristocratic family on 30 November 1874 at Blenheim Palace, a stately home in Oxfordshire, once built by Queen Anne for Winston Churchill's ancestor, John Churchill, the first Duke of Marlborough, an esteemed military commander and statesman, famed for many victorious battles including his defeat of the French at Blenheim in Bavaria on 13 August, 1704 (Mansfield, 1995; Schoeman, 2013).

Winston Churchill was the firstborn son of Lord Randolph Churchill, the third son of the seventh Duke of Marlborough and a prominent Tory Parliamentarian and American-born heiress, Jennie Jerome, daughter of Leonard Jerome, a wealthy American businessman (Mansfield, 1995; Schoeman, 2013). On his father's side, Churchill was a descendant of

British aristocracy from the first Earl Spencer and from the distinguished soldier, John Churchill, the first Duke of Marlborough. On his mother's side, Churchill was a child of wealthy American lineage, with his grandfather, Leonard Jerome, a successful stockbroker, financier and media mogul (Gilbert, 1992).

Lord Randolph and Jennie Jerome met at a yachting regatta in Cowes, on the Isle of White, in August 1873. Ms Jerome was just nineteen years old and Lord Randolph in his early twenties (Jenkins, 2002; Singer, 2012). Captivated by her beauty, Lord Randolph proposed to Ms Jerome within days of their first meeting (Churchill, 1930, 1996; Mansfield, 1995). They married on 15 April, 1874 at the British Embassy in Paris and, after a short honeymoon in Europe, they returned to Britain to enjoy the high society life of their aristocratic surrounds and the numerous social engagements at Blenheim Palace (Jenkins, 2002; Mansfield, 1995).

It was on the eve of 29 November, 1874, at the annual St. Andrew's Ball at Blenheim Palace, hosted by Lord Randolph's parents (Winston Churchill's grandparents), the Duke and Duchess of Marlborough, that the young Winston Churchill made his first attempts to enter the world. "The Duke's daughter-in-law, the brash but magnificent Jennie Jerome had dared to make her appearance in a loose fitting gown, dance card in hand. But she was seven months pregnant and it was simply not done" (Mansfield, 1995, p. 36). With all the evening's excitement, the young Winston, destined to be famed for his impatience and impetuosity, entered the world, two months premature, in the late hours of 30 November 1874 (Mansfield, 1995). "Throughout the night of Winston's birth, the rain beat at the windows and the wind ripped through the oak trees in the grounds – perhaps an omen of the stormy and eventful life that lay ahead for the child" (Schoeman, 2013, p. 6).

Sadly, despite being born at Blenheim Palace, it was never to be Winston's home as his father, Lord Randolph, being the third son of the seventh Duke of Marlborough, only lived in the palace from the age of eight until he married Jennie Jerome in 1874. The Palace was eventually inherited by Lord Randolph's eldest brother, George Spencer Churchill, the eighth Duke of Marlborough (Gilbert, 1992; Schoeman, 2013).

Winston Churchill's childhood is considered by many biographers (Gilbert, 1992; Jenkins, 2002; Mansfield, 1995) to have been a sad and lonely experience. His parents were in their early to mid-twenties during Winston's formative years and were absorbed with their own social and political ambitions. "It is clear that both his parents influenced him deeply – at long range" (Bonham-Carter, 1965, p. 25). They neglected Winston and deprived him of their time and attention, replacing their care with that of nannies and servants. "True Victorian parents maintained an astonishing distance from their children, receiving them only at prearranged times and under the watchful eye of servants, but the Churchills were remote even by these standards" (Mansfield, 1995, p. 38).

Mansfield (1995) continues that, shortly after his birth, Winston's care was given over to his nanny, Mrs Elizabeth Anne Everest, a kind, loving and "unceasingly overprotective" caregiver (p. 39). Churchill (1930, 1996) describes how it was Mrs Everest who looked after him and became his sole confidante all through his childhood. It was with his nanny that he found the attention and adoration which his parents neglected to provide (Gilbert, 1992). "Mrs Everest, or "Woom" as the boy called her, was the centre of Winston's existence" (Mansfield, 1995, p. 39). Mrs Everest became Churchill's consolation and security during his solitary childhood and lonely schooldays; in essence, his primary attachment figure. She was "his one source of unfailing human understanding" (Bonham-Carter, 1965, p. 25) and her photograph remained in his bedroom until the end of his life.

In 1879, the Churchill family relocated to Ireland (Lord Randolph had gone to Ireland as secretary to his father, the Duke of Marlborough, who was appointed Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland in 1876) and it was during this time that the young Winston recalls his first memories as a child, taking his morning walks with Mrs Everest and being introduced to his first governess for private tuition (Churchill, 1930, 1996; Singer, 2012). Winston found his early education very taxing and tiresome and was unable to solicit any sympathy from his mother who found Winston's objections annoying and sided unconditionally with the Governess on any matter relating to his instruction (Churchill, 1930, 1996). Churchill spent most days in the company of Mrs Everest or his governess and rarely interacted with his parents for any length of time, describing how, during these early years in Ireland, his parents "hunted continually on their large horses and sometimes there were great scares because one or the other did not come back for many hours after they were expected" (Churchill, 1930, 1996, p. 4).

Despite, the emotional and physical distance imposed on young Winston, he was still in awe of his mother and loved her unconditionally. In his autobiography, Churchill (1930, 1996) writes that his "mother made the same brilliant impression upon my childhood's eye. She shone for me like the Evening Star. I loved her dearly - but at a distance" (p. 5). In contrast, according to Manchester (cited in Churchill, 1930,1996), Churchill's mother was certainly beautiful but shallow, describing her as "a diamond-studded panther of a woman who neglected him (Winston) shamefully" (p. ix). Jenkins (2002) also comments that she was no doubt attractive but her photographs reveal a woman who was "hard, imperious and increasingly self-indulgent" (p. 7). Although their relationship grew closer as Churchill approached adulthood, her time as a young mother to Winston was preoccupied with parties, romantic liaisons and extra-marital affairs (Manchester, 1995). Interestingly, Pearson (1991) adds that Jennie Churchill was politically ambitious with an underlying interest in power and

money and used her feminine wiles to secure solid political networks for both herself and her husband. “She was a lion hunter and a snob, but she was not a fool. She talked well, knew exactly what she wanted and her preferred dinner guests were not necessarily her lovers” (p. 47).

Manchester (cited in Churchill, 1930, 1996) continues that Churchill’s recollections of his father were as distorted as those of his mother, recalling that Churchill believed his father to be an accomplished politician and a role model to whom he could look up to, yet, in reality, Lord Randolph was a failed political manipulator who enjoyed a brief career as Chancellor of the Exchequer in the mid-1880s and had little time for young Winston. Mansfield (1995) writes that Churchill’s father thought Churchill was intellectually disabled and annoying and rarely interacted with him: “More than one historian has concluded that Lord Randolph simply loathed his son” (p. 38). Jenkins (2002) comments, that, the young Winston’s relationship with his father was more non-existent than with his mother. Lord Randolph was too preoccupied with his erratic career in politics to be concerned with parenthood. Churchill described the interactions with his father as transitory and functional (Jenkins, 2002).

According to Manchester (cited in Churchill, 1930, 1996), during his childhood years, Churchill actually blamed himself for his parent’s apparent loathing and, searching for a conduit for his adoration of them, created false images of them in his mind of how he wished they were and, as his resentment of their neglect increased, his bitterness was redirected into behaviour that was ill-disciplined and disobedient. He became a difficult child and an even more unmanageable student, reflecting a deeper sadness. “All his life he would be plagued by spells of depression – his ‘Black Dog’ as he called them. Love, he had come to believe, was something that had to be earned and he sought it in achievement, becoming a creature of ambition and raw energy” (Manchester, cited in Churchill, 1930, 1996, p. ix).

In February 1880, when Churchill was five years old, his younger brother, John Strange Spencer Churchill or 'Jack', was born and, shortly after his birth, the Churchill family left Ireland and returned to London (Gilbert, 1992; Singer, 2012). During the next two years of Churchill's life, he and his brother Jack spent most of their time between their residence in London and visits to their grandparent's home at Blenheim Palace. It was Mrs Everest who watched the two brothers whilst their parents spent most of their time travelling and socialising. Singer (2012) describes Mrs Everest as the "adoring parental surrogate of his (Winston's) often lonely childhood" (p. 20). But, as Gilbert (1992) writes, Winston missed his parents, and, when his grandmother left Blenheim Palace for a short visit to London on one occasion, Churchill wrote to his father that he wished he could have accompanied his grandmother to London so that he might visit his father and "that I might give you a kiss" (p. 3). Sadly, during this time, most of the communication that Churchill had with his mother and father was by means of written communication. During the autumn of 1882, when Winston was seven years old, he was informed by his parents that he was to be sent to boarding school (Gilbert, 1992). His parents regarded him a troublesome boy and therefore required education under the watchful eye of schoolmasters. Interestingly, Churchill's mother's sister, Leonie, did not find young Winston so troublesome at all, describing him as "full of fun and quite unselfconscious" (Gilbert, 1992, p. 3).

#### ***4.5.1.2. Preparatory School: 1882-1888***

The boarding school was St. George's School in Ascot (Gilbert, 1992; Mansfield, 1995) and it marked the beginning of a "dark and painful period in his life" (Mansfield, 1995, p. 39). It was here that Winston encountered the extreme severity and even brutality at the hand of the schoolmaster, Mr. Sneyd-Kynnersley, who initiated habitual flogging of students whom he considered disobedient (Gilbert, 1992; Mansfield, 1995). These two years at St

George's School (1882-1884) were an anxious and desperate time for Winston who struggled to be away from home at such a young age. He made little progress academically which was met with even more sternness and annoyance by his parents. Winston repeatedly asked his parents to visit him during the school term but only Mrs Everest was ever able to visit on a few occasions. Churchill's school reports indicated that he was capable and clever but rarely applied himself and that he was undisciplined, naughty and despondent (Gilbert, 1992). Churchill, however, despite his unhappiness, remained strong-willed and defiant and often found himself on the receiving end of Mr. Sneyd-Kynnersley's lashing cane. Eventually, during a school vacation, Mrs Everest discovered the evidence of his many lashings and brought this to the attention of his parents who immediately removed him from the school (Mansfield, 1995).

Churchill was a sickly young boy, suffering many bouts of ill health during his younger years, which subsequently resulted in his parent's decision to send him to a new preparatory school by the sea in Brighton, a school run by two sisters, Miss K and Miss C Thomson (Gilbert, 2002). During the next four years in Brighton, between 1884 and 1888, Churchill was treated with kindness and patience, and, slowly, his defiant and stubborn demeanour began to change as did improvements in his health. At this school, Churchill enjoyed French, history, poetry and two of his most favourite pursuits, horse-riding and swimming (Gilbert, 1992). Churchill (1930/1996) comments on his memories of his time in Brighton: "the impression of those years makes a pleasant picture in my mind, in strong contrast to my earlier school-day memories" (p. 40).

Interestingly, Singer (2012) describes Churchill during this time as a wilful child who became rebellious "not simply disdaining to do what he was told but pointedly refusing to do anything to which he objected or which he did not understand" (p. 23). Pearson (1991) further describes young Winston as an "uncontrollable, aggressive child who at nine had

already had to be removed from his first school, St. George's, Ascot, for his bad behaviour" and that "his sojourn at the school had been one long feud with authority" (p. 57). According to Pearson (1991), Winston had even continued to behave badly at his school in Brighton. Although it has been suggested that Churchill was the product of parental neglect and the "flighty, never-present figure of his mother" (p. 57), Pearson (1991) argues that it is unfair to lay blame at his mother for his misbehaviour. Pearson (1991) states that, by Victorian standards, Winston had been well cared for and had enjoyed unusually close contact with both his parents as well as the unconditional devotion of Mrs Everest up until he left for St. Georges School. In addition, although Mrs Everest was an ideal surrogate mother, there is also evidence to suggest that Winston enjoyed a great deal of his mother's attention and affection and that "Winston's childhood owed much to his mother's presence" (Pearson, 1991, p. 58). Pearson (1991) also argues that young Winston benefited from a close relationship with his father and, despite Lord Randolph's recurring poor health, his constant travelling and his many political distractions, Winston often accompanied his father to France and Germany for holidays. In the context of Victorian standards, perhaps Churchill did enjoy the company and attention of both his parents, more so than other boys of his age and social standing, but there is substantial evidence from other biographers and psychobiographers (Fieve, 1997; Ghaemi, 2011; Gilbert, 1992; Mansfield, 1995; Rintala, 1984; Singer, 2012; Storr, 1990) to the contrary.

In March 1886, whilst still at school in Brighton, Gilbert (1992) describes how Churchill suffered a severe bout of pneumonia, bringing both his parents to his bedside in Brighton. Once recovered, however, they returned to London, leaving him again in the care of his school mistresses. Winston experienced two further disappointments that year when he discovered that his father had twice been to Brighton on business but did not come to visit him at school (Gilbert, 1992). Winston's mother maintained a distant yet more interested

attitude towards his progress at school and, although she rarely visited him in Brighton, would often organise private tutors to supplement his education during his school holidays (Gilbert, 1992).

It was during the latter part of 1886, whilst still at school in Brighton that Winston, now twelve years old, learned of his father's resignation as Chancellor of the Exchequer in December 1886. According to Pearson (1991), Winston's father, Lord Randolph, had been a very determined young politician with his own ambition of becoming Prime Minister of Britain. Despite his health issues, his past indiscretions, his numerous political enemies and a "maverick reputation" (Pearson, 1991, p. 49), Lord Randolph had become one of the youngest Chancellors of the Exchequer in British history. However, Lord Randolph's over-ambitiousness became his undoing and, after using numerous threats of resignation to drive his own political agenda, his final threat of resignation was actually accepted by the highest ranks of the British Cabinet. With his bluff being called, Lord Randolph's resignation was finally accepted without recourse. Only thirty seven years old, Lord Randolph was ousted from his position and his political party. His former colleagues shunned him and his fast-tracked career in politics was over, not to mention rumours of a breakup in his marriage to Jennie Churchill (Pearson, 1991). "The shipwreck of his life began in earnest" (Pearson, 1991, p. 57) and, for Winston, news of his father's resignation was devastating. Pearson (1991) comments that Winston "was an emotional, small boy, passionate and possessive and he had been intensely proud of his father's rise to fame" (p. 57). All this had now ended abruptly and it saddened and angered Winston who had long shared high ambitions with his father. For Churchill, his idol had fallen and it marked the beginning of a whole new era of change within his family (Pearson, 1991).

Distracted and withdrawn, together with increasing bouts of poor health, Lord Randolph accepted his fate as a failed and unpopular politician and started to travel abroad

more frequently. Over the next nine years, Lord and Lady Churchill spent increasing amounts of time away from home and from their two sons (Pearson, 1991). Despite the misery of his home-life and mounting family debt, Winston sought refuge in relationships with Mrs Everest and his extended family members, most notably with his younger brother, Jack, who was a calm and well-behaved young boy, favoured by his parents, but always kind and loyal to his older brother, Winston (Pearson, 1991).

By the end of 1887, Winston was pleased to hear that he would soon be attending the prestigious Harrow School for his senior school education and began studying hard for his entrance exams the following year. Churchill was also excited to be spending Christmas at home that year but was disappointed to find out unexpectedly that he and his brother, Jack, would be spending Christmas without their parents who would be travelling abroad again until February 1888 (Gilbert, 1992). On 15 March 1888, despite being extremely nervous and anxious, Churchill wrote and passed the Harrow entrance examinations. Churchill was very excited at the prospect of attending Harrow, particularly because of its many attractive facilities, the most attractive being its proximity to London, which Churchill hoped would make it easier for his mother to now visit him more frequently at school (Gilbert, 1992). Churchill's last month at his Brighton school in March 1888 was occupied with his desire to go home and to see his mother. "But that Easter, his mother was again away from home; in vain he pleaded with her, 'Do come home soon'" (Gilbert, 1992, p. 17). The end of Churchill's preparatory years marked the consolidation of the seeds of Churchill's personality development embedded in nobility and neglect (Singer, 2012): "This is to say that the manner of the man was bred in the upbringing of the child" (Singer, 2012, p. 17).

#### **4.5.2. The Young Adult: 1888-1894**

*“In retrospect these years form not only the least agreeable, but the only barren and unhappy period of my life. This interlude of school makes a sombre grey patch upon the chart of my journey” (Churchill, 1930/1996, p. 38).*

The following time period describes Churchill’s senior school years and his admission to the Royal Military College at Sandhurst, marking his entry into military life.

##### **4.5.2.1. Harrow School: 1888-1892**

On 17 April 1888, Churchill entered the prestigious Harrow School for Boys near London, but, according to Mansfield (1995), he had not done very well in his entrance exam. It was only by the grace of the Headmaster, Dr Weldon, that Churchill was allowed to pass into Harrow. Dr Weldon observed a particular potential in young Winston which not only served him well as a young scholar but also cultivated a lifelong friendship between Dr Weldon and Churchill (Mansfield, 1995).

Singer (2012) comments that the decision to go to Harrow was taken by Churchill’s father under the auspices that it would be better for Winston’s health since Harrow’s climate was more favourable to protect Churchill from further bouts of pneumonia. However, Singer (2012) argues that Lord Randolph despaired that Churchill would never amount to anything and, since Lord Randolph had attended another prestigious rival school, Eton College, (as six generations of Marlboroughs had done before him) a most respected school amongst British aristocracy, preferred to avoid any potential for Churchill to embarrass Lord Randolph at his alma mater. “His father despaired of his eldest son ever amounting to anything much, just as the son despaired of his father ever acknowledging or even encouraging his abilities” (Singer, 2012, p. 25).

According to Singer (2012), Churchill found his years at Harrow challenging and was not thought of as a good academic. He engaged himself in subjects that he enjoyed, including history, geography and English but was “barely teachable in subjects that he did not, particularly Latin” (Singer, 2012, p. 25). Pearson (1991) explains that Churchill did nothing to discourage his reputation for being a dunce where, in reality, he was extremely clever at the subjects that he enjoyed. Churchill had an excellent memory and powers of concentration as well as a true gift for writing. Jenkins (2002) states that Churchill’s writing genius was perceptively recognised by his headmaster, Dr Weldon, who not only gave him personal tuition but also corresponded with Churchill at length, years later, during his time in the military.

During his youth, Churchill was quite small for his age with a weak physical stature, “small and raspy in the chest and he fell ill more than most boys” (Mansfield, 1995, p. 42). Churchill also battled with a lisp impediment that he inherited from his father (Singer, 2012). To compensate for these physical disadvantages and to strengthen his physique whilst at Harrow, Churchill took up swimming and fencing and was actually considered a bit of a school bully, a “pint-size tough guy” (Singer, 2012, p. 27).

During his time at Harrow, Churchill saw very little of his father, who, according to Singer (2012) only visited Churchill once. During this time, Churchill’s father’s political decline was devastating to the family, particularly for his hero-worshipping son, and, in the months that followed, Lord Randolph became increasingly distant and unreachable. During his Harrow years, Churchill wrote of his relationship with his father:

I would far rather have been apprenticed as a brick-layer’s mate or run errands as a messenger boy or helped my father to dress the front windows of a grocer’s shop. It

would have been real; it would have been natural. Also, I should have got to know my father, which would have been a joy to me (Singer, 2012, p. 28).

As such, it is evident that Churchill hankered after his parents' love, care and attention. Pearson (1991) comments that, despite a few academic successes, most of Churchill's days at Harrow were considered some of the unhappiest period of his life. "His parents were distracted and unhappy and the rigours of an English boarding school added to his misery. Mrs Everest's concern and her letters were not enough to overcome his loneliness" (Pearson, 1991, p. 65). Churchill had a reputation for being precocious and extremely tough and was not popular amongst his peers - he was generally quite a loner. Churchill's latent aggression however, helped him to become a champion fencer, winning the Public School Championship whilst at Harrow (Pearson, 1991; Schoeman, 2013). Interestingly, Gilbert (1992) writes how upset Churchill had been when he had asked his father to watch him at this competition to which his father had replied that neither he nor Churchill's mother would be able to attend as they had been invited to attend a horse racing event. "His father found no joy in Winston's few accomplishments. All Lord Randolph saw in Winston was a source of trouble and expense and a reminder of his own sense of failure" (Gilbert, 1992, p. 66). Relations with his mother were fairly amicable but not ideal with Churchill maintaining regular written communication and "cajoling his 'Dearest Mummy' for attention and affection throughout the time he was at school" (Gilbert, 1992, p. 67).

Relations with his father worsened towards the end of Churchill's time at Harrow. Unbeknown to Churchill, his father was suffering the ravages of advanced syphilis that was undermining his physical health and mental sanity and resulted in increased bouts of unwarranted anger and disdain towards Churchill (Gilbert, 1992). Instead of a career in the Church, Lord Randolph suggested to his son to "make some use of his childish love of playing soldiers and his natural aggressiveness" and pursue a career in the military (Pearson,

1991, p. 67). Churchill believed for many years that his father saw in him qualities of military brilliance but he later discovered that his father supported his choice of career only because he had no faith in Churchill's ability to do anything else (Churchill, 1930/1996; Pearson, 1991).

A week before his seventeenth birthday, in November 1891, Churchill learned that Mrs Everest was to leave her employ with the Churchill family. Both Winston and Jack were so distressed at her imminent departure that it was arranged that she would work for their grandmother, Duchess Fanny (Lord Randolph's mother), in London, where the two boys could still visit her (Gilbert, 1992). However, only two years later, Mrs Everest was finally dismissed by letter, without further employment, an act that Churchill found "cruel and mean" and proved a watershed moment for Churchill who associated Mrs Everest, "more than anything else, with home" (Gilbert, 1992, p.41).

#### ***4.5.2.2. Sandhurst Military Academy: 1892-1894***

In 1892, after taking the entrance examinations three times, Churchill finally entered the Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst (Mansfield, 1995; Schoeman, 2013). Churchill's marks were not high enough to enter the ranks of the infantry but rather the lower ranks of the cavalry which was of no consequence to him but evoked the wrath of his father to such a degree that he received the most scathing and distressing letter from Lord Randolph who blamed Churchill for being totally worthless both as a scholar and conscientious worker (Gilbert, 1992). Unaware of his father's illness, however, Churchill was "crushed by his father's rebuke" (Gilbert, 1992, p. 39) and became quite depressed. One of his former school masters tried to help Churchill overcome the shock of this letter by pointing out that life at Sandhurst would be a new chapter in his life and an opportunity to start afresh.

In contrast to his days at Harrow, Churchill loved the military life and developed a huge fondness for horses. “His time at Sandhurst was one of learning and comradeship” (Gilbert, 1992, p. 41). Despite his physical weaknesses, Churchill forced himself to become an accomplished rider by spending up to eight hours a day in the saddle. Churchill and Mrs Everest continued to exchange letters in which she provided guidance and words of encouragement: “My sweet darling, how I do love you, be good for my sake” (Gilbert, 1992, p. 43). Churchill finally graduated from Sandhurst in December 1894, in eighth position out of a class of 150 cadets (Jenkins, 2002; Mansfield, 1995).

Gilbert (1992) comments that, just months before Churchill’s graduation from Sandhurst, his mother and father departed for a trip around the world in a desperate attempt to improve Lord Randolph’s health. Churchill came to the train station in London to see them off but thereafter never saw his father in good health again. Jenkins (2002) explains that Lord and Lady Randolph returned to London on Christmas Eve, 1894 and, on 24 January 1895, Lord Randolph passed away at the age of 45 years old, leaving Churchill, his brother, Jack and their mother with an ill-famed political legacy and very little money in his estate. Churchill (1930, 1996) describes how, at this time, his relationship with his mother changed from one of mother and son to one of mutual allies, and, although in his opinion she had always been “at hand to help and advise”, she did not exercise parental control at this time but rather went about “furthering my plans and guarding my interests with all her influence and boundless energy. She was still at forty, young, beautiful and fascinating” (p. 62). Despite her great networking clout, however, Lady Randolph remained a financial drain on the family estate, having little regard for her limited means (Jenkins, 2002).

Lord Randolph’s death instilled in Churchill a fear that he too might die young which only served to drive Churchill forward, not only to vindicate his father’s memory but also to prove to himself that he was not the worthless individual his father had prophesied. Sadly,

Churchill never knew the extent of his father's illness and was therefore mistaken in his believe that he might also be cursed by "hereditary weakness" to die young (Gilbert, 1992, p. 49). Interestingly, Singer (2012) comments that the death of his father was devastating on one hand for Churchill but equally liberating on the other, in that had Lord Randolph lived, he may well have been an obstacle to Churchill's own meteoric rise in politics:

He was shaped both positively and negatively but altogether decisively by the premature loss of his father. On the one hand, it propelled him out into the world with the adventurous, liberated spirit of an orphan set loose from the orphanage. On the other, it left him bereft of any chance to ever connect with his father, a loss he would rue all his life (Singer, 2012, p. 33).

A recurring theme in Churchill's young adult life appears to be the idealisation of a father Churchill wished he had known better and an image of a man he wanted to believe in but Churchill also rebelled against his father's constant rebukes, unkindness and disdain. The death of his father spurred Churchill on to follow in the political footsteps of a man he believed was a great politician but it also fuelled an unrelenting desire to prove his father wrong about being incapable of amounting to anything.

#### **4.5.3. The Soldier: 1895- 1900**

*"I passed out of Sandhurst into the world. It opened liked Aladdin's Cave. From the beginning of 1895 I have never had time to turn round"* (Churchill, 1930/1996, p. 59).

The following time period describes Churchill's exploits as a war correspondent and soldier and his early entry into British politics. It also illustrates the first notable signs of major depression that became characteristic of his adult life.

#### *4.5.3.1. The 4<sup>th</sup> Hussars: 1895-1898*

On graduation from Sandhurst, Churchill received his first formal commission as a Second Lieutenant in the 4<sup>th</sup> Queens Own Hussars Regiment, a prestigious and time-honoured cavalry regiment in the British Army, in February 1895 (Jenkins, 2002). Interestingly, Mansfield (1995) writes that in his military career, Churchill served in nine different military regiments including the 4<sup>th</sup> Hussars.

In that same year of 1895, two major events occurred: the death of his father, Lord Randolph, on 24 January 1895 and the death of his beloved nanny, Mrs Everest, on 3 July 1895. These two events were to forever leave an indelible mark on Churchill's character (Mansfield, 1995). With particular reference to the death of Mrs Everest, Mansfield (1995) comments that "his lasting devotion to her is evidenced by the picture of her that sat on his desk throughout his life and lay at his bedside when his own death came seventy years later" (p. 46).

After Churchill was assigned to the 4<sup>th</sup> Hussars Regiment in Aldershot, Pearson (1991) describes how Churchill soon became dissatisfied with the "gentlemanly life of a hussar" and began to exhibit uncharacteristic traits of "grandiose ambitions" with an unstoppable energy to pursue them (p. 76). All of this was in contrast to what his father had always believed that Churchill would merely rest on his laurels and exploit the "happy and extravagant life of a hussar" (Pearson, 1991, p. 76). In his search for adventure, and in an attempt to avoid his mundane "peacetime regimental duties", Churchill enlisted the help of his mother and her many political connections to secure a temporary post as a war correspondent in Cuba where the Spaniards were suppressing a colonial uprising and where Churchill believed he would witness some real fighting (Pearson, 1991, p. 77).

In November 1895 Churchill set sail for Cuba as a war correspondent with the *Daily Graphic* where he experienced the “dangers and valour of the battlefield” and where he first discovered his lifelong appreciation for Cuban cigars (Singer, 2012, p. 34). Pearson (1991) describes how, at this time, Churchill began to possess a “pronounced awareness of his own importance” (p.77). However, before his so-called life of grandeur could unfold, Churchill still had to endure months of “home-based soldiering” after his return from Cuba and it was “during these boring months at Aldershot that something of the hidden side of Churchill’s nature revealed itself, showing a little of what lay behind that galloping ambition” (Pearson, 1991, p. 78). Pearson (1991) explains that after his Cuban adventure, Churchill appeared to sink into a low depression, the first recorded instance of his ‘Black Dog’.

Pearson (1991) explains further that the real trigger for this early depression was Churchill’s father’s premature death and that the memory of his father was a recurring source of negative emotion that plagued Churchill throughout his life. The memory of his father and how he wished he had known him better now began to haunt Churchill in earnest. Styron (1990) emphasises a link between chronic depression and a state of incomplete mourning, whilst Pearson (1991) refers to a state of depression that follows the traumatic death of a parent during puberty that is not entirely explained by grief. Long-term emotional damage may result if the death of a parent is not grieved properly and timeously by the adolescent. Pearson (1991) believes that Churchill could well have been a victim of suppressed grief that later developed into major depression, as a result of not having come to terms with his father’s death at the time and not having dealt with his own memories of being such a disappointment to his father. Lord Randolph’s predictions that Churchill would live “the life of a wastrel” (Pearson, 1991, p. 79) would forever haunt and drive Churchill to prove his father wrong. Had Churchill come to terms with his father’s death and, in particular, the negative memories of his father through a natural and timeous process of grief, Churchill

might have found longlasting peace. There was, however, no outward mourning but rather guilt and despair, the “prime ingredients of Churchill’s enemy, his Black Dog” (Pearson, 1991, p. 80).

Churchill’s determination to overcome his depression spurred him forward and, with limitless sources of energy, Churchill occupied his time with many activities and an unrelenting desire for not just adventure but more so for danger (Pearson, 1991). In October 1896 Churchill sailed for India with his regiment to attend to garrison duties in Bangalore, India. The tedium of his duties in Bangalore had the potential to fuel his depressive tendencies but Churchill was once again determined to ward off a recurrence of depression and initiated a strict regime of physical and mental self-improvement, reading copious books on history, literature and philosophy and focusing on becoming one of the top polo players in his army regiment whilst in India (Churchill, 1930, 1996; Pearson, 1991).

Interestingly, Storr (1990) comments, that, during most of Churchill’s young adult life, there was a notable discrepancy between Churchill’s courageous spirit and his physical body. Churchill’s small-boned, weak physique was in direct contrast to his risk-taking behaviour and lust for extreme adventure. Churchill’s ambition and obstinacy were not necessarily genetic but rather the result of sheer iron will.

In 1897, Churchill returned from India to England on three months army leave where he learned of the unrest that was brewing in the Northwest frontier of India and, once again, summoned his mother’s political connections to secure a position as a commissioned officer and war correspondent for the *London Daily Telegraph* (Pearson, 1991; Schoeman, 2013). Soon thereafter, Churchill joined the Malakand Field Force in the Northwest frontier of India and became involved in combat against Pathan tribesmen (Mansfield, 1995; Pearson, 1991). Pearson (1991) explains that during this tour of duty, Churchill was particularly hell bent on

putting himself in situations of exaggerated danger, not so much for the purposes of being awarded medals for bravery but rather for testing himself and exploring “the depressive’s urge to self-destruction” by “wagering his life against his great career and detecting destiny in his survival” (p. 84). Pearson (1991) continues, that, behind the ambition of an individual with depression, lies their true vision of the world, and, for Churchill, “life seemed unsatisfactory” (p. 86). Despite the ambition, the excitement, the fame and adventure, there appeared for Churchill, a constant emptiness.

Mansfield (1995) further comments that during this particular tour of duty in northern India, Churchill gained a reputation for “exceptional physical courage” (p. 49) with a fellow soldier describing Churchill as “a slight, young subaltern, vehement, moody, quickly responsive, easily hurt, quite opinionative with a tumbling flow of argument, confident to the point of complacency but capable of generous self-sacrifice, proud but no snob” (p. 49). It was also during this time that Churchill wrote the first of his many published books, *The Story of the Malakand Field Force* (Mansfield, 1995). Not only did Churchill’s writing skills and experience as a war correspondent provide him with an additional source of income but it prepared him with the skill of political networking necessary to secure assignments in other warzones as well as prepare him for his future role in British Parliament (Singer, 2012).

Two years later, after his adventures in northern India, Churchill joined the ranks of Lord Kitchener’s army in the Sudan where he was commissioned to write for the *Morning Post*. Churchill also took part in the infamous cavalry charge at the Battle of Omdurman in September 1898 (Pearson, 1991) which resulted in another of his masterful books, *The River War*, published in November 1899 (Singer, 2012). Writing of his exhilarating experience in the cavalry charge and describing much of what would be mirrored in his later political life, Churchill (1930/1996) wrote:

In one respect a cavalry charge is very much like ordinary life. So long as you are all right, firmly in your saddle, your horse in hand, and well-armed, lots of enemies will give you a wide berth, but as soon as you have lost a stirrup, have a rein cut, have dropped your weapon, are wounded or your horse is wounded, then is the moment when from all quarters enemies rush upon you (p. 191).

After the Battle of Omdurman, Churchill returned to his regiment in India, and it was at this time, according to Pearson (1991), that Churchill first thought of the significance of love and marriage, a subject about which he was awkward and uncomfortable. According to Pearson (1991) Churchill's thoughts had been thus far preoccupied with the thrill of battle and pursuits of glory whereas "sexual pleasure would have wasted precious time and energy, love for another would have made hiccups in the grand design" (p. 100). For Churchill, his mother remained the most important woman in his life and provided all the benefits of female company and influence that he desired. At the age of twenty four Churchill still addressed his mother as "My Dearest" and "My Darling Mama" (Pearson, 1991, p. 100).

#### ***4.5.3.2. Escape in the Boer War: 1899-1900***

In June 1899 Churchill returned to London, and, confident of his ability to earn decent money as a writer and journalist, Churchill resigned his army commission and entered the world of British politics for the first time (Singer, 2012). In September 1899 Churchill stood in a by-election as the Conservative Party representative in the constituency of Oldham, where he made his first political address but was unfortunately narrowly defeated (Schoeman, 2013; Singer, 2012). During this time, however, a series of events in South Africa, concerning the diamond and gold rushes of 1871 and 1886 respectively, had led to an over-population in South Africa of fortune hunters, mostly from Britain, resulting in the 'Uitlander' population in the Transvaal (known now as Gauteng) exceeding that of the Boers

(Schoeman, 2013). Despite protracted negotiations between President Paul Kruger of the Transvaal and the British to reach a compromise with regards the 'Uitlander's' rights, peaceful discussions failed and, in an attempt to prevent the British from taking over the gold-mining industry in South Africa and annexing the Transvaal and the Orange Free State (known now as the Free State), war was declared by the Boer Republics on Britain in September 1899 (Schoeman, 2013). Churchill was immediately offered a position with the *Morning Post* as their chief war correspondent. "To a young man of twenty-four, with a flair of adventure, it was a proposition of a lifetime" (Schoeman, 2013, p. 16) and, on 14 October 1899, Churchill boarded the steamship, *Dunnottar Castel*, and set sail for South Africa (Mansfield, 1995; Schoeman, 2013).

Churchill's escapades in South Africa became a major turning point in his life, propelling him to a far higher degree of prominence and recognition amongst his peers both in South Africa and in Britain. "It was an exploit that sent him home a hero and helped to launch his political career" (Singer, 2012, p. 46). Shortly after arriving in South Africa, Churchill was captured by Boer soldiers whilst traveling on board a troop train that was derailed and was taken prisoner to Pretoria. Interestingly, Churchill (1930/1996) describes how, three years after the Anglo-Boer War (now known as the South African War since South African democracy in 1994), three Boer Generals visited England seeking financial assistance. One of them introduced himself as General Botha and, as both men spoke of the devastating war and of Churchill's capture, General Botha was surprised to see that Churchill did not recognise him as he was the man who had captured Churchill just three years prior. This was the moment from which General Botha and Churchill struck up one of the most profound friendships that endured throughout Churchill's life.

Defiant in his captivity, Churchill planned to escape from his prison camp in Pretoria and, four weeks later, broke-out through a bathroom window, dressed as a Boer soldier and

proceeded to walk through the main prison gates. After two days of walking and hiding from Boer combatants, Churchill came across a small mining settlement near Witbank, approximately 60 miles east of Pretoria, whose inhabitants, fortunately for Churchill, happened to be British (Gilbert, 1992). They undertook to help Churchill escape for the second time away from enemy territory (Mansfield, 1995, p. 54-55). After hiding out in one of the underground mines for three days, Churchill was loaded onto a westbound train and travelled to Portuguese East Africa (now Mozambique) from where he made his way by ship to re-enter South Africa via Durban where he received an unexpected and overwhelming hero's welcome. In Durban, Churchill learned that "accounts of his escape had filled the pages of newspapers throughout the world" (Mansfield, 1995, p. 55).

Singer (2012) describes how Churchill's escape made him famous overnight but it was also met by mixed feelings amongst the international press who cited that he was sent to South Africa as a correspondent and not as a soldier and that he had no right being captured in the first place. Churchill responded to these claims by re-joining the British army to fight the Boers once again, taking part in the relief of Ladysmith, the defeat of Johannesburg and the capture of Pretoria where he personally freed his old comrades from his former prison camp. Churchill only returned to Britain on the 7<sup>th</sup> of July 1900 (Singer, 2012). Churchill (1930/1996) described how most people thought the war was over after the capture of Pretoria, but, for the next few years, guerrilla warfare ensued amongst the remaining Boers who refused to succumb to British rule which "bred shocking evils" of concentration camps and a British 'scorched earth policy' in an attempt to quell resistant Boers (p. 355). Churchill (1930/1996) also commented that "both sides preserved amid frightful reciprocal injuries some mutual respect during two harsh years of waste and devastation" (p. 356).

Churchill's brother, Jack, also served in the British army during the Anglo-Boer War and during the two months of fighting for the relief of Ladysmith, Jack and Churchill were

re-united briefly on the warfront. “It was a great joy to me to have my brother Jack with me, and I looked forward to showing him around and doing for him the honours of war” (Churchill, 1930/1996, p. 319). However, this enjoyment was cut short when Jack was wounded in his first encounter with Boer soldiers near Hussar Hill. Churchill rescued Jack from the firing line and escorted him safely to a field hospital. In the meantime and, coincidentally, Churchill’s mother had been busy with her own war effort whilst in Britain and had successfully raised funds, secured a ship and fitted it out as a hospital vessel to be sent to Durban. On her arrival in Durban, her first consignment of wounded soldiers included her younger son, Jack. “I took a few days’ leave to go and see her, and lived on board as on a yacht. So here we were all happily reunited after six months of varied experiences” (Churchill, 1930/1996, p. 320).

Despite his new found notoriety, Churchill’s experience in South Africa had a profound impact on his inner character. Not only did this life experience enhance his belief that he survived the war because he was destined for a higher purpose but it also crystallised for him a unique sense of magnanimity toward one’s enemies and a deep sense of empathy for all concerned in the Anglo-Boer War, “an empathy overlooked over the years by those who condemn Churchill as a one-dimensional colonialist” (Singer, 2012, p. 48). It also solidified what would become the motto of his life in warfare and a silent mantra for how he lived his personal life: “For defeat there is only one answer...victory” (Langworth, 2012, p. 15).

#### **4.5.4. The Politician and His ‘Black Dog’: 1900-1929**

*“Live dangerously, take things as they come, dread naught, all will be well”*  
(Churchill, cited in Langworth, 2012, p. 20).

The following time period marks the rise and fall of Churchill's political career prior to the Second World War as well as two of the most notable depressive episodes in his earlier life.

#### ***4.5.4.1. British Home Secretary: 1900- 1910 - First Major Depressive Episode***

On his return home from South Africa, and enjoying the success of his first and only published novel, *Savrola*, in February 1900, Churchill was invited to run again as a candidate for the Conservative Party in the constituency of Oldham, a textile town near Manchester, in the upcoming British general elections. Churchill won his seat and earned a place as Conservative Member of Parliament for Oldham in the House of Commons in October 1900 (Mansfield, 1995). Not in the least bit daunted as one of the youngest members of the House of Commons, Churchill soon earned the reputation for being a bold speaker and a non-conformist and, by May 1904, Churchill made a dramatic change in party politics by "crossing the floor" to the Liberal Party. Mansfield (1995) describes how, from early on in his political career, Churchill did not pledge any real alliance to any one specific political party but rather was a loyal servant to the British sovereignty, its people and to "his vision for the British nation" (p. 58). In 1905 when the Liberal Party swept into power, Churchill was made Under Secretary of State for the Colonies and two years later, at the age of thirty two, was made a Privy Councillor. Churchill then went on to become President of the Board of Trade in April 1908 (Mansfield, 1995).

It was during his time as Under Secretary of State, that Churchill was engrossed with writing his father's biography and, in January 1906, *Lord Randolph Churchill*, was published (Mansfield, 1995). The significance of this literary work is highlighted by Pearson (1991) as he describes how Churchill used this process of writing his father's biography not only as a means of vindicating his father's legacy but also took advantage of the opportunity that the

process provided for Churchill to get to know his father as never before in his lifetime. In addition, it provided all the necessary life lessons for Churchill to learn from his father's political mistakes and successes and not only "annul the failure that his father had once predicted for him" but also build on his father's ideas to enhance his own name in British politics (Pearson, 1991, p. 110). However, a greater weakness hindered Churchill in this pursuit, his "serious deficiency" as an orator - Churchill was confident with the written word but he was all too aware of his lack of "commanding looks and stature" and his speech impediment (Pearson, 1991, p. 108).

For Churchill, however, this challenge only made him more determined. Pearson (1991) comments that for Churchill "in the last five years he had trained himself to beat his weaknesses of education and physique" (p.108) and had become a champion polo player and a best-selling author. "The skill of oratory was just a fresh accomplishment to master" (Pearson, 1991, p. 108). Churchill's dedication to his work, his political writing and to overcoming his oratory angst was absolute. "Apart from his ambition, constant work was the surest way of staving off depression" (Pearson, 1991, p. 111).

#### 4.5.4.1.1. *Churchill and Clementine*

Although never considered a ladies' man, Churchill always enjoyed the company of beautiful and intelligent women. His first great love was Pamela Plowden, daughter of the Minister of Hyderabad in India, but this relationship did not last and, in 1904, Churchill proposed marriage to Muriel Wilson, the daughter of a shipping magnate, but this relationship was also short-lived. Interestingly, Churchill remained friends with both women for the rest of his life (Singer, 2012).

Churchill first met his future wife, Clementine Hozier, in 1904, at a society ball in London. Their first meeting did not proceed very well with Churchill only talking about

himself and about politics and proving incapable of ‘small talk’. Churchill was 30 years old and Clementine just 19 years old at the time (Gilbert, 1992; Singer, 2012). Interestingly, Pearson (1991) states that Churchill’s relationships with women were hindered still by his mood swings. “On a manic up-swing he became all-powerful and needed no one, least of all a demanding and dependent woman, near him. Only his depressive down-swings saw him vulnerable and lonely, but on these occasions he learned to keep his troubles to himself” (p. 115). According to Pearson (1991) only two women had been allowed close enough to this vulnerable side of Churchill, his mother and Mrs Everest.

It was four years after their initial meeting, in March 1908, when Churchill was President of the Board of Trade, that he and Clementine met again at a dinner party in London (Gilbert, 1992). From that day onwards their courtship moved at a “Churchillian” pace (Singer, 2012, p. 64).

Clementine is described by Singer (2012) as a widely admired society beauty of her time, independent, liberal and intensely interested in politics, a perfect match for Sir Winston Churchill. They were engaged in August 1908 and married at St. Margaret’s Church, Westminster Abbey, London, on 12 September 1908, with the King of England and British high society in attendance. Dr Welldon, Churchill’s former Harrow headmaster, provided the wedding address (Gilbert, 1992; Mansfield, 1995; Singer 2012). “The ensuing union would last fifty-seven years, to the end of Churchill’s life, enduring as the foundation of his existence, a sustaining anchor though all the political storms to come” (Singer, 2012, p. 65). In July 1909, Diana, Churchill’s first child was born, followed by the birth of the Churchill’s only son, Randolph, in May 1911 (Gilbert, 1992; Mansfield, 1995).

#### 4.5.4.1.2. *Home Secretary and his 'Black Dog'*

In February 1910, Churchill was promoted within the Liberal Party to Home Secretary for Britain, the second youngest person to achieve this status and was responsible for Britain's justice system, prisons, fire brigades, immigration services, mines, fisheries, roads and bridges, public morals, drugs, explosives and firearms. Churchill worked tirelessly to make improvements in each of these areas, in particular, improving the living conditions in Britain's prisons and doggedly pursued prison reforms, demonstrating a genuine concern for human suffering (Singer 2012). Churchill's time was also consumed by constant labour disputes, where he mostly sympathised with the workers and believed that parliamentary debate, not violence, was the best means of effecting change. This resulted in one of Churchill's greatest achievements as Home Secretary, the establishment of compulsory independent arbitration in industrial disputes which was accepted by management and labour in 1911 (Singer, 2012).

Despite a successful career and family life, Churchill suffered from low self-worth and it is during this time period that his first major depressive episode is recorded. Ghaemi (2011) states that Churchill's depression of 1910 was possibly his most severe. Despite being at the peak of his success, happily married, wealthy, politically powerful and widely respected, even famous, Churchill felt desperate and even suicidal at times. According to Pearson (1991), Churchill found himself plagued by his primal enemy, his 'Black Dog'. Churchill had little reason to be depressed but his sadness came uncontrollably from within (Ghaemi 2011). Churchill commented that "for two or three years the light faded from the picture. I did my work. I sat in the House of Commons, but black depression settled on me" (Ghaemi, 2011, p. 59; Pearson, 1991, p. 129). Pearson (1991) continues that Churchill was often overcome by suicidal tendencies during this timeframe, explaining that he avoided the

edge of railway platforms and steered clear from the sides of ships. “A second’s action would end everything. A few drops of desperation” (p. 129).

Gilbert (1992) explains that Churchill found his role as Home Secretary particularly distressing, having been responsible to make life or death decisions in capital cases (Britain supported capital punishment at that time) and having to read numerous letters of appeal from convicts with life sentences or death sentences begging for reprieve.

As such, Churchill’s responsibilities as Home Secretary exposed him to the darker, sadder side of life which appeared to further fuel his own depressive tendencies (Pearson, 1991). During this time Churchill was always aware of his ‘Black Dog’ and was always open to seeking or receiving professional advice for his depression. According to Pearson (1991) the only thing that seemed to really help was to talk his emotions through with Clementine. In a letter that Churchill wrote to Clementine (Soames, 2001, p. 53) in July 1911, whilst at Caernarvon Castle in Wales, Churchill refers to his ‘Black Dog’:

*All is going smoothly here. Very nice dinner last night with Ivor and Alice. Alice interested me a great deal in her talk about her doctor in Germany, who completely cured her depression. I think this man might be useful to me – if my Black Dog returns. He seems quite away from me now. It is such a relief. All the colours came back into the picture. Brightest of all, your dear face, my Darling.*

*With fondest love,*

*Always your devoted*

W.

***4.5.4.2. First World War and the Dardanelles Disaster: 1911-1918 - Second Major Depressive Episode***

***4.5.4.2.1. First Lord of the Admiralty***

During the course of 1911 Churchill was aware of Germany's growing aggression and ambition in terms of foreign expansion and, as Germany increased their arms to a threatening degree, Churchill began speaking out at parliamentary Cabinet meetings about the possibility of war with Germany, having already observed German army manoeuvres during his role as Home Secretary (Gilbert, 1992). Aware of the impending dangers that Germany posed, Churchill sought approval from the British Prime Minister, Herbert Asquith, for the post of First Lord of the Admiralty for the British Navy. According to Singer (2012) Churchill was "indisputably an exceptional First Lord during the run-up to the First World War" (p. 77) immersing himself tirelessly in everything there was to know about the Royal Navy and preparing Britain for war at sea. Churchill also researched and promoted the notion of naval air services to be used more aggressively by the navy for the purposes of being prepared for air and sea battle (Gilbert, 1992). During this time period, Ghaemi (2011) comments that Churchill was acutely aware of the threat that Germany posed to Europe and to England and envisaged the possibility of a war on a scale far grander than anything the modern world had witnessed before. Despite his constant warnings to a disinterested British Parliament of the impending danger, Churchill busied himself entirely with preparing the Royal Naval fleet for war.

Pearson (1991) comments that Churchill now had his "most exciting job in British politics" and appeared to have beaten his 'Black Dog' from the previous year (p. 137). "It is hard to believe that barely eighteen months earlier he had been in the grip of suicidal misery" (Pearson, 1991, p. 137).

A credit to Churchill's foresight was his suggestion to Parliament to purchase a 51 percent share in the profits of all oil produced by the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, securing all the oil necessary to maintain the Royal Navy and its warships without being dependent on any private company or foreign government, a move that proved most genius, when, on 28 June 1914, just eleven days after Churchill negotiated the oil contract and secured the oil for the British Navy, the assassination of the Archduke Ferdinand of Austria-Hungary in the Bosnian City of Sarajevo sparked a series of events that culminated in the initiation of the First World War (Gilbert, 1992). Pearson (1991) comments that Churchill demonstrated an "uncanny accuracy" in an official government report he had written just before he joined the Admiralty, the course of events that would follow (p. 137).

Churchill's concern about the rapid and ominous growth of the German navy and his instincts about a looming war were soon realised when Germany declared war on Russia with plans to defeat Belgium and France en-route and negotiations between England and Germany, to maintain Belgian neutrality, finally broke down (Gilbert, 1992; Mansfield, 1995). Late into the evening of 4 August 1914, Churchill authorised a signal to be sent to all British naval commands: "Commence hostilities against Germany" (Gilbert, 1991, p. 275). Britain and Germany were at war. The extent of Churchill's preparedness of British naval and air services and his intuition about the war were well appreciated. *The Times* newspaper described Churchill as "the one Minister whose grasp of the situation and whose efforts to meet it have been above all praise" (Gilbert, 1992, p. 274). Churchill was the visionary behind the Royal Navy's rapid modernisation and expansion and had positioned the naval fleet at various war stations long before hostilities broke out. Churchill was revered and praised for all his efforts (Mansfield, 1995). Pearson (1991) comments that Churchill's revitalisation of the British Navy provided him with the "antidote" to repress his depression

as well as providing another “patriotic cause” to engage his sense of destiny and rouse his “deepest instincts of aggression” (p. 137).

#### 4.5.4.2.2. *The Dardanelles Crisis*

On 7 October 1914, Churchill’s second daughter, Sarah, was born (Mansfield, 1995). Despite this auspicious event as well as the elation of the many commendations received by Churchill on his performance as First Lord of the Admiralty, the euphoria was short lived as Churchill was about to enter one of the most difficult crises of his career if not his life (Mansfield, 1995). The impetus for such a crisis would be the result of a war strategy created and advocated by Churchill and considered by many to be the “best tactical idea of the entire war” but which back-fired incredibly to Churchill’s demise (Mansfield, 1995, p. 61).

According to Mansfield (1995) Churchill had suggested that in order to relieve pressure on the main ground fronts of the war, the British Navy should attack the enemy at their flank, the site being the Dardanelles, where Europe and the Middle East become connected near Istanbul, Turkey and the Aegean Sea. Such a naval attack was proposed to provide support to Russia and force Austria-Hungary and Germany between two fronts. Whilst the strategy to defeat Germany’s weakest ally, Turkey, at the Dardanelles, and launch a surprise attack by sea was considered noble, the implementation thereof was a disaster with various British Admirals and Generals arguing over the timing of the attack and whether naval forces should launch the attack with or without army re-enforcements (Mansfield, 1995; Singer, 2012). Commander of the British Armed forces, Lord Kitchener, believed that army troops were not necessary and that naval forces alone could manage a victory at the Dardanelles. Churchill was not convinced of this strategy and formally recorded his disagreement. Churchill, however, eventually conceded to launch an attack ahead of army support, and, under much duress, deployed the Naval Air Service under his command,

without initial support from Lord Kitchener's ground troops. Repeated delays regarding army back-up and the presence of naval war ships only served to warn the Turks of an actual invasion, providing the Turks time to reinforce and entrench themselves (Mansfield, 1995).

Weeks were lost to cowardly deliberation. When the army finally arrived for support, thirty days after the naval bombardment, incompetence and confusion ruled.

Navigational errors placed men miles away from their destination and Generals who disembarked at nearly undefended beaches routinely made camp rather than charge to the interior (Mansfield, 1995, p. 61).

What resulted was a bloodbath of British troops being gunned down by prepared and entrenched Turk soldiers. Churchill was distraught as he watched his clever war strategy "collapse under the weight of military incompetence" and, instead of being at the front of the battle implementing the strategy himself, Churchill was miles away, tormented by the disaster of his poorly executed strategy, by public outcry and the slaughter of over 100 000 men for which he was blamed (Mansfield, 1995, p. 62).

Pearson (1991) argues, however, that Churchill did not originally request army back-up and was not perturbed by the initial lack of support by the British Army as he believed the British Navy was adequately prepared to force the Dardanelles alone. Churchill in fact initiated the Dardanelle campaign "overruling or ignoring the doubts and criticisms of his service advisers" (Pearson, 1991, p. 149). Jenkins (2002) also comments that Churchill's belief that his strategy for the Dardanelles was full-proof and that had he been in complete command it would have been implemented successfully, was misguided. Churchill was not willing to accept blame for any part of the outcome of the Dardanelles but rather attached blame to everyone else. According to Wilson (2002), Churchill had an inherent fear of failure as the mere thought that he had made a mistake "would get him down" (p. 222). As a result,

Churchill avoided anything, even admission of error, that might attract his 'Black Dog'. As such, Churchill developed a habit of refusing to recognise his own blunders (Wilson, 2002), and, in the context of the Dardanelles, was therefore potentially unable to recognise the risks and subsequent failures of such an assault.

Mansfield (1995) argues, however, that it was Lord Kitchener who was emphatic about the fact that troops were unnecessary and that naval forces could easily win the day, leaving Churchill and the British Navy unsupported and exposed. To Mansfield's (1995) point, Jenkins (2002) counter-argues, that, in Churchill's "retrospective justification" of the Dardanelles manoeuvre, he assigned too much blame on others and too little to himself (p. 264). Regardless of the means, the end of the Dardanelles disaster spelt the end for Churchill's political career and, according to Pearson (1991), instead of leading his nation through one of its greatest wars, satiating his ambitions and vindicating his father's predictions, Churchill's failure at the Dardanelles not only cost the lives of thousands but it precipitated the collapse of Herbert Asquith's government and it propelled Churchill and his family into social and political isolation and ridicule.

#### 4.5.4.2.3. *The Depressive Aftermath of the Dardanelles*

The failure of the Dardanelles resulted in Churchill being removed from the Admiralty in May 1915 and made Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, a titled position with no responsibility or purpose (Mansfield, 1995). Churchill knew he had been made the scapegoat for the Dardanelle crisis and, according to Gilbert (1992), even blamed for the series of events after his departure from the Admiralty that involved the land war which was Lord Kitchener's responsibility. The betrayal of his colleagues was profound and, after nearly ten years of Ministerial responsibility, Churchill was without a position in the Government, still a Member of Parliament, but without a position of any significance (Gilbert, 1992).

For a while, Churchill was plunged back into a deep depression and, cited in Mansfield (1995), Clementine Churchill describes the failure of the Dardanelles expedition as the worst part of their married life and one of the darkest times in Churchill's life, to the extent that she felt Churchill would never recover from it and even feared he might end it all in suicide. According to Pearson (1991), the Dardanelles disaster was Churchill's greatest setback since the death of his father and it resulted in a period of depression worse than Churchill's years at the Home Office. Churchill took comfort in the "citadel of the heart", his family, but it was Clementine who understood all too well how "wounded" Churchill really felt and how much he believed his career was over (Mansfield, 1995, p. 63). Churchill was described at this time by his friend, Lord Beaverbrook, as "a character depressed beyond the limits of description" (Pearson, 1991, p. 157). Clementine Churchill commented that she thought Churchill "would die of grief" (Jenkins, 2002, p. 277; Gilbert, 1992, p. 321). Similarly, Churchill's friend and confidante, Violet Bonham-Carter, considered the outcome of the Dardanelles to be one of the most damaging and depressing events in Churchill's whole career: "I had felt in his despair an acceptance of finality" (Bonham-Carter, 1965, p. 406). Despite these "dark nights" in his personal demeanour, according to Jenkins (2002), Churchill's public demeanour was "not that of a wounded animal wanting to crawl off and hide in the bushes", rather Churchill was keen to pursue whatever appropriate public activities were available to him (p. 277).

In a letter to Clementine in December 1915 (Soames, 2001, p. 137), Churchill wrote:

*Darling, I want you to burn those two letters I sent you yesterday. I was depressed and my thought was not organised. It is now quite clear and good again and I see plainly the steps to take. You will do this to please me. Everyone has hours of reaction and there is no reason why written record should remain.*

*Always your devoted,*

W.

Pearson (1991) comments that, for Churchill, political power and military glory were essential factors in protecting him from the misery of his latent depression and the haunting judgements of his father. Churchill famously remarked to his close friend, Violet Bonham-Carter, that “we are all worms but I intend to be a glow worm” depicting Churchill’s striving for power and his desire for a place in history (Pearson, 1991, p. 158). Hence, Churchill’s deep depression when power and military glory was denied him after the Dardanelles disaster (Pearson, 1991). “The glow worm lost its light” and the “Black Dog in all its awfulness descended” (Pearson, 1991, p. 158).

Interestingly, it was during this time that Churchill turned more seriously to painting, not just as a past-time, but more of a salvation from his depression. “Ever since childhood, Churchill had been turning to aggression to dispel depression. Now he found in art the ideal way of sublimating this aggression. And he learned, too, to curb his anxieties, to cope with his ‘Black Dog’ ” (Pearson, 1991, p. 158- 159). Storr (1990) explains that there is a close link between depression and hostility, in that, in the context of an emotionally deprived child who later becomes victim to depression, that individual has great difficulty in disposing of their latent anger and hostility. The individual “resents those who have deprived him but cannot afford to show this resentment since he needs the very people he resents” (Storr, 1990, p. 34). In the difficulty of disposing of their hostility, some individuals with depression seek out external opponents worthy or justified of their anger; alternatively, their hostility becomes inwardly focused against the self, further feeding a sense of worthlessness and sadness. Interestingly, for Churchill, such worthy opponents came later in the guise of Hitler and the threat of communism. However, in the absence of a worthy opponent, Gilbert (1992) explains

that Churchill found great solace in painting and used it as a “release for his tension and depression” (p. 322). Churchill coined the phrase, ‘paintatious places’, his own adjective to describe sunny places that were attractive and conducive for painting (Langworth, 2012, p. 41).

Ironically, Churchill’s strategic war prowess and his courage, if not insatiable appetite for battle, had not failed the attentions of Field Marshall French, a British Commander stationed in France, who swiftly offered Churchill a General’s position in charge of a brigade with the Grenadier Guards in France in November 1915 (Mansfield, 1995; Pearson, 1991). Churchill celebrated his forty first birthday on 30 November 1915 in the trenches with the Grenadier Guards before being promoted to Lieutenant Colonel in command of an infantry battalion, the 6<sup>th</sup> Royal Scots Fusiliers (Mansfield, 1995; Pearson, 1991; Singer, 2012). During this brief time as a frontline infantry commander, Churchill was drawn out of his depression and proved once again to be tough, resourceful and courageous, writing to Clementine that he would “go on fighting to the very end in any situation open to me from which I can most effectively drive on this war to victory” (Mansfield, 1995, p. 63).

By December 1916, David Lloyd George, a friend and fellow Liberal parliamentarian, managed to oust Prime Minister Asquith and took over as Prime Minister of Britain. Although Churchill’s reputation was still tainted by the Dardanelles, Lloyd George was able to offer him a post as Minister of Munitions in the new Liberal Government in July 1917 at which point Churchill was hauled from his miserable political exile back into the British Cabinet (Singer, 2012). Once again, Churchill tackled this post with fervour and commitment and ensured that British army and naval forces had everything they needed in abundance until the end of the First World War in November 1918 (Mansfield, 1995; Pearson, 1991). Notably, General Sir Henry Wilson described Churchill as a “real gem in a crisis” (Gilbert,

1992, p. 385). Just four days after the end of the First World War, on 15 November 1918, Churchill's fourth child and third daughter, Marigold, was born (Singer, 2012).

#### ***4.5.4.3. Political Turmoil: 1919-1929***

In January 1919, Churchill was made Secretary of State for War responsible for the demobilisation of nearly three and a half million soldiers from Europe and on New Year's Day 1921, Prime Minister Lloyd George named Churchill his Secretary of State for the Colonies focusing on the issues now present in Ireland and the Middle East which threatened domestic peace. Churchill put in place contingency plans to ward off threats from the Irish Republican Army, who were demanding Irish independence, as well as contingency plans for Palestine, where he focused on the creation of a homeland for the Jewish people whilst simultaneously working to create Arabic entities out of the defeated territories of the Ottoman Empire. This was a difficult negotiation process between anti-Semites, Arabists, Unionists and Irish separatists, yet Churchill succeeded at both: the Irish Free State Act and the Palestine Mandate remain, today, two of his abiding legacies (Singer, 2012). During these years, between 1919 and 1922, Churchill worked hard to vindicate his reputation from the Dardanelles. Churchill was not permitted to publish all the official documentation that would have validated his actions, so, instead, he wrote his own defence report and, in November 1920, Churchill commissioned a literary agent to negotiate the sale of his war memoirs (Singer, 2012).

##### ***4.5.4.3.1. Career in Crisis: 1919-1924***

The year of 1921 was a significant year for Churchill, marking a time of distressing personal events and recurrent depression. It was the year that his mother, Jennie, died after a near fatal accident, falling down a flight stairs, resulting in her leg being amputated and then dying from a sudden haemorrhage on 29 June 1921. It was also the year that his youngest

daughter, Marigold, died from septicaemia on 23 August at the age of two and a half years old (Mansfield, 1995; Singer, 2012). Churchill was inconsolable yet, despite his “abject sorrow”, he embraced the Churchillian way: upwards and onwards (Singer, 2012, p. 106). Pearson (1991) comments that such personal tragedies would have normally flattened a man of Churchill’s depressive temperament but, in fact, the reverse happened, determination, hard work and subsequent political success from 1921, sustained him. Storr (1990) and Fieve (1997) claim that Churchill could not afford to ever be idle, that is, he kept himself constantly occupied to ward off any opportunity for his ‘Black Dog’ to descend. Even in the wake of personal tragedies, Churchill could not afford not to be active as a means of controlling his depression. Singer (2012) believes that Churchill’s “near paralysing fear of depression” was the source of his resilience, energy and fortitude (p. 105). By January 1922, Clementine was again pregnant and gave birth to their fourth daughter, Mary, on 15 September 1922, “an abiding consolation” (Singer, 2012, p. 106).

In 1922, whilst Prime Minister Lloyd George’s post-war coalition government was being overrun by the Conservative Party, under the leadership of Andrew Bonar Law, Churchill was suffering from a severe attack of appendicitis. As Lloyd George tendered his resignation and the Conservative Party took over the Government with Bonar Law the new Prime Minister in October 1922, Churchill found himself “without an office, without a seat, without a party and without an appendix” (Gilbert, 1992, p. 454). Churchill was unsuccessful in defending his parliamentary seat in the constituency of Dundee and for the first time in twenty two years, Churchill was out of Parliament (Gilbert, 1992; Singer, 2012). Churchill had been a leading Liberal Parliamentarian for seventeen years but with the changing of the guard from Liberal to Conservative Party dominance, Churchill had to decide just where his place should be in the new face of British politics (Gilbert, 1992). Churchill occupied the next two years with writing his war memoirs of the First World War, known as *The World*

*Crisis* and, according to Pearson (1991), Churchill immersed himself in the long spells of dictation that produced this particular literary piece. The successful publication of Volume One in April 1923 (Mansfield, 1995) did much for Churchill's private happiness, "large cigar in hand and brandy and soda on his desk, he walked back and forth, long into the night, regaling his attentive secretary with his own uninterrupted version of events from his extraordinary memory" (Pearson, 1991, p. 198).

According to Singer (2012), Churchill kept the threat of his 'Black Dog' at bay by embracing this new defeat as an opportunity to take a rest from political life and enjoy his pastimes of writing, painting, travelling and the refurbishment of his new country home, Chartwell Manor, in Kent, England, the former birthplace of Mrs Everest. Pearson (1991) describes Chartwell's significance as Churchill's "paradise on earth", requiring the employ of numerous staff and a personal valet to keep pace with Churchill's energetic and industrious nature as well as to attend to the constant entertaining and socialising (p. 210). The upkeep of Chartwell, however, was hugely expensive and much to Clementine's distress, Churchill refused to ever sell his country home despite its drain on their personal finances. Churchill turned to journalism to supplement their income and more definitively to ensure that he "would never be unable to drink a bottle of champagne and offer another to a friend" (p. 212). For Churchill, journalism was not only a way to "pay the bills" but it also served to create strong allies in the media which he frequently called upon to boost his political agendas (p. 212). Journalism also developed Churchill's penchant for mass communication, again, a tool that he exploited for his oratory genius during the Second World War to communicate with and reach out to the nation's people (Pearson, 1991, p. 212).

By November 1923, Stanley Baldwin had taken over from Bonar Law as Prime Minister of Britain and was calling for another General Election. Mr Baldwin had plans to reintroduce Protectionism to fight unemployment which Churchill was vehemently against in

favour of free trade. Feeling the compulsion to return to politics, on the premise of defending one of his most passionate causes, Churchill chose West Leicester as the constituency he would contest under the banner of a Liberal Free Trader (Gilbert, 1992; Singer, 2012). Despite his legacy for social improvements and the institution of pioneering social legislation, Churchill was branded by the Conservative Opposition as being unsupportive of the working classes. Churchill lost this election and not until 1925, after Stanley Baldwin was replaced by Britain's first Labour Prime Minister, Ramsay MacDonald, in March 1924, and then reinstated in October 1924, did Churchill decide to run as an independent Constitutionalist and Anti-Socialist in the district of Epping. During this election run, Churchill won his seat back into Parliament (Mansfield, 1995; Singer, 2012). For Churchill, there was no longer any differentiation between Conservatives and Liberals, rather a common enemy of socialism (Singer, 2012). By 1925, Stanley Baldwin invited Churchill back into the Conservative Government as Chancellor of the Exchequer, a position his father once held in 1896 (Mansfield, 1995). "Despite inherently loathing him politically, his sworn Conservative enemies could not resist reemploying Winston in troubled times" (Singer, 2012, p. 112).

#### 4.5.4.3.2. *Chancellor of the Exchequer: 1925-1929*

Between 1925 and 1929, Churchill endured some unstable political periods and, on the whole, a fairly unsuccessful run as Chancellor of the Exchequer, while all the time his public popularity waned even further. During this time Churchill prepared national budgets that attempted to bring about profound social and economic reform. Churchill instituted a Widows and Orphans Pension Plan and attempted to return England to the gold standard. However, by 1926, Churchill was blamed for causing the General Strike of 1926 which greatly effected major industries and increased unemployment. Poor economic conditions in Britain and Churchill's outspoken views of military threats in Europe did nothing to improve

his relationship with Stanley Baldwin (Mansfield, 1995; Singer, 2012). By June 1929, Churchill's term as Chancellor of the Exchequer came to an end with Baldwin's government being ousted at the next general election and replaced by the Labour Party under Ramsay MacDonald for a second time (Singer, 2012). Although Churchill initially reacted positively to this defeat, viewing it as an opportunity to have time to complete his biography of his ancestor, John Churchill, the first Duke of Marlborough (Singer, 2012), little did Churchill realise that this was the beginning of a grim decade of political and personal isolation during which Churchill "would stay unheeded and alone in what he called the wilderness of politics" (Mansfield, 1995, p. 66).

#### **4.5.5. The Wilderness Years: 1929-1939**

*"I saw it all coming and cried aloud to my own fellow-countrymen and to the world, but no one paid any attention"* (Churchill, cited in Langworth, 2012, p. 268).

The following time period describes the years building up to the commencement of the Second World War in 1939. Churchill remained on the fringes of British politics but was outcast by his fellow politicians and spent most of his time at Chartwell, engaging in creative pursuits of writing, painting, travelling and brick-laying, a favourite hobby he cultivated during the renovations of Chartwell. This decade is marked by political humiliation and isolation and is considered one of the darkest periods in Churchill's life. However, during this time, despite the presence of his 'Black Dog', Churchill's intuition and realism were never more acute as he foresaw and forewarned of the dangers of Nazism. Unfortunately, Churchill's constant warnings went unheeded.

One of Churchill's closest friends, Brendan Bracken, comments that "no public man in our time has shown more foresight, and I believe his long, lonely struggle to expose the

dangers of the dictatorships will prove to be the best chapter in his crowded life” (cited in Gilbert, 1992, p. 613).

#### ***4.5.5.1. Calm before the Storm: 1929-1936***

Ousted from his seat in British Parliament and without political office, Churchill found solace at Chartwell, busying himself with writing, farming, painting and entertaining his wide circle of high-profile guests and friends. According to Stelzer (2012) Churchill believed there was no better way to indulge old friends, persuade new ones, become acquainted with one’s allies or opponents or display one’s charm and knowledge than at the dinner table. At dinner parties, luncheons or even tea parties, “Churchill sought to convey information as well as to receive it” (Stelzer, 2012, p. 7). Outside of the gates of Chartwell, however, Mansfield (1995) claims that “it is hard to exaggerate how despised and isolated Churchill was during these years” (p. 67). The British public were still outraged by the Dardanelles disaster as well as his unsuccessful fiscal policies as Chancellor of Exchequer. Politicians thought Churchill’s political viewpoints were archaic and embarrassing and his opposition to Indian independence from the British Crown only fuelled his unpopularity further – he was viewed as a political “has-been” (Mansfield, 1995, p. 67).

To manage his unrestrained energy that the political arena would otherwise have absorbed, Churchill became engrossed with activities at Chartwell, from excavating ponds and lakes to constructing waterfalls and building tree houses for his children. Churchill also learnt how to raise farm animals and how to lay bricks. Churchill envisaged the life of a “gentleman farmer” and purchased expensive livestock and numerous pets, each named individually and hand-fed by himself (Mansfield, 1995, p. 68).

During these years, Churchill maintained links with the outside world by entertaining numerous guests of a “fascinating variety” (Mansfield, 1995, p. 68), including, T.E.

Lawrence, Charlie Chaplin, Professor Frederick Lindemann, an Oxford physicist and one of Churchill's closest and most enduring of friends and Brendan Bracken, a financier, Member of Parliament and one of the most loyal friends to Churchill during his 'wilderness years'.

Churchill also devoted himself to a "staggering literary output" publishing his autobiography, *My Early Life*, in 1930 and completed his historical version of the First World War, *The World Crisis*, in 1931. Churchill also completed a collection of work called *Thoughts and Adventures* in 1932 as well as all four volumes of *Marlborough: His Life and Times* by 1938. Churchill also began his research on the *History of the English-Speaking Peoples*, a monumental literary piece that was only published in the 1950's (Gilbert, 1992; Mansfield, 1995). At this time, Churchill also became more absorbed in painting, a past-time he had become increasingly interested in since his fall from the Admiralty, and, an occupation that engaged him so wholeheartedly, it distracted and rescued him during these "dark moments" of his life, providing a vital source of peace and consolation (Bonham-Carter, 1965, p. 463).

Gilbert (1992) comments that, during 1929, Churchill was particularly interested in a new warship that the Germans had designed, and, although Germany had been disarmed and was considered militarily weak, Churchill viewed this new battle-cruiser as an ominous foreboding, being "light, fast and well-armed" (p. 487). Churchill warned Parliament that existing British cruises were soon to become obsolete and that more attention should be focused on the state of the Royal Navy. However, his warnings went unheeded. Churchill once again, as prior to the First World War in 1912, was "vigilant in his scrutiny of German intentions and prospective power" (Gilbert, 1992, p. 488).

At this time, however, Pearson (1991) provides a different perspective on Churchill's frame of mind: "the optimistic years were over and Churchill was badly hit by a midlife

crisis” (p. 225). Churchill believed he was virtually finished as a politician and that “his mortal end was not far off” (p. 225). Pearson (1991) adds that, although Chartwell provided solace to Churchill, it was a reminder of his isolation from public life and he would exhibit very different moods, if not dark and depressive moods, for hours at a time. Ghaemi (2011) states that Churchill’s ‘wilderness years’ were a particularly dark decade during which he was considered “politically washed up” and rejected by his colleagues as well as his enemies (Ghaemi, 2011, p. 61). Ghaemi (2011) continues that the essence of any link between the melancholic Churchill and his political realism is best found during this time of political exile. Sidelined by his own Conservative Party and shunned by a “war-weary” nation, Churchill was “not part of the national unity club of the interwar peace years” because his military objectives were in sharp conflict with those of his peers (Ghaemi, 2011, p. 64).

Churchill wanted to prepare Britain for a Nazi invasion whilst his peers wanted to conserve military spending, seeing no real threat from their German counterparts. According to Ghaemi (2011), the former British Prime Minister, David Lloyd George, described Adolf Hitler as “a born leader, a magnetic dynamic personality with a single-minded purpose. I only wish we had a man of his supreme quality at the head of affairs in our country” (p. 65). Ironically, that man already stood before them - Churchill foresaw the war nearly ten years before it happened. Ghaemi (2011) continues that, whether Churchill’s isolation made him depressed or his depression made him isolated, he was nonetheless confined to his ‘wilderness years’ by Prime Minister Baldwin and his political peers because his eccentric, if not progressive and threatening personality, provided an excuse to ignore his “realistic political judgement” (p. 65). In the wake of this political isolation and periods of deep depression, it appears that Churchill’s foretelling of the events that precipitated the Second World War proved more accurate and more realistic than what his peers and colleagues were willing to give him credit and provides further testimony for Churchill’s depressive realism.

In August 1931, a new British National Government, made up of politicians representing all political parties, including Labour and Conservatives, was formed with Ramsay MacDonald as the Prime Minister. Churchill, however, was not invited to join the National Government. On 27 October 1931, the National Government held a nationwide election and support for the new all-Party coalition was overwhelming. The Conservative Party, committed to serving under Ramsay MacDonal, won majority seats in Parliament with the Liberal Nationals and National Labour Party trickling behind. The Liberal Party, outraged by what they considered a betrayal by Prime Minister MacDonal to form a coalition, were reduced to 52 seats. “Under MacDonal’s banner of national unity, the Conservative Party had achieved parliamentary ascendancy. Churchill, who almost doubled his majority at Epping, was isolated but unbowed” (Gilbert, 1992, p. 503).

In December 1931, Churchill, now fifty seven years old, left England for a lecturing tour of the United States of America, where, not only could he recoup some of his losses of the Wall Street Crash of 1929, but could also regain some personal self-esteem away from his humiliating Parliamentary sequestration since 1929 (Gilbert, 1992). Unfortunately, whilst in New York, Churchill was struck by a taxi whilst crossing Fifth Avenue, and, despite a quick recovery and continuing his tour, Churchill’s ‘Black Dog’ again overtook him (Singer, 2012). The misery of his physical injury, coupled with his financial losses of 1929 and his estrangement from the Conservative Party left Churchill at a very low point and he did not believe he would every fully recover from these three setbacks (Singer, 2012). Churchill was once again on the verge of another deep depression and felt unable to recover from it (Pearson, 1991).

During 1932, world economic depression from the 1929 Wall Street Crash as well as stirrings in German military manufacturing, encouraged Churchill to propose a joint Anglo-American policy to fight economic depression as well as increase international co-operation

between all nations of the western world to combat a far greater evil to world stability: the danger posed by Germany's desire to regain lost territories as a result of First World War (Gilbert, 1992). The growing popularity of Adolf Hitler's Nazi Party and his policy of treaty revision and rearmament, whilst the rest of Europe was committed to armament reduction and a general cutback of all armies, navies and air forces, was, in Churchill's opinion, a blatant show of intimidation. However, it was the popular opinion of many British Parliamentarians that comprehensive disarmament was the only way to avert a future second world war. In contrast, Churchill openly expressed his concerns regarding lowering arms and exposing Europe and Britain to the hidden strengths of Germany (Gilbert, 1992). By May 1932, Count von Papen had replaced Heinrich Brüning as Germany's Chancellor and, although Hitler and his Nazi Party were not invited to join the new Government, von Papen appealed to Hitler for his support. On 19 June 1932, in the German provincial elections at Hesse, Germany, the Nazi vote increased from 37 to 44 percent, "making the Nazis the single largest Party in the province" and, by November 1932, it was the second largest political party in Germany (Gilbert, 1992, p. 507). For Jenkins (2002), Churchill's fortitude and foresight in identifying and challenging these threats to peace and democracy "was more creditable than that of any other major British politician" (p.464).

During the course of 1932, Churchill remained at the forefront of his political article writing and continued to make speeches in the House of Commons in Parliament against Britain's policy of disarmament. Churchill defended any attempts to allow Germany "an equality of arms" in line with other European countries (Gilbert, 1992, p. 510). If Britain forced France to disarm, Germany would take advantage of her "own numerical superiority to seek revenge for the defeat of 1918" (Gilbert, 1992, p. 510). Churchill believed that Germany's increase in weaponry meant they could increase their demands for the return of

their lost territories from the First World War and then attempt once more to extend their grip on the rest of Europe (Gilbert 1992).

Churchill's advocacy of treaty revision while the allied European countries were still strong and, his insistence of national armed strength, in the face of Germany's growing demands and aggressiveness remained the cornerstone of his warnings to the British Government over the next few years (Gilbert, 1992). Until 1936, Churchill remained vocal about Germany's apparent demands for equality of status, their anti-Jewish and anti-democratic sentiments as well as Britain's continued policy of disarmament for all European states, including Britain, to appease Germany's demands for equal status where armaments were concerned. Churchill believed that Britain showed weakness in the face of Germany's aggression and that it was bringing Britain closer to war, weaker and more defenceless (Gilbert, 1992).

By January 1933, Hitler was Chancellor of Germany and issued a series of laws that entrenched his authority and gave him the power to prevent freedom of press, to arrest several thousand opponents of Nazism and to demand a way forward for German rearmament. After the humiliation of the First World War, Hitler was able to harness the bitterness of the German people and "through his angry rhetoric and carefully orchestrated political rallies, Hitler turned the rage of the nation toward the Jews and launched a plan of rearmament in defiance of post war agreements" (Mansfield, 1995, p. 70). However, in this light, Churchill's "continual vigilance in defence matters was of no concern to those who were opposed to the policies he now advocated" and, ridiculed, ignored and rebuffed, Churchill was at a low point in his hopes to influence events (Gilbert, 1992. p. 515). Pearson (1991) comments that Churchill was all too aware of his "impotence" to prevent the march to war and was absorbed by a "grim, depressive's vision of the future" (p. 245). According to Pearson (1991), in previous depressive spells, Churchill had always found relief through action and aggression

but in this instance, he was forced to observe and advise from the sidelines. Jenkins (2002) comments, that, Churchill's frame of mind was now disheartened and glum. "There was a sense of political impotence, of his talents wasted, of time passing him by and of some periods of 'Black Dog', even though the incidence of these tends to be exaggerated" (Jenkins, 2002, p. 466). In the wake of this depression, however, there is evidence to suggest that Churchill demonstrated a true sense of foreboding and an uncanny accuracy about events to follow:

As a former Minister of Munitions, no one knew better the awful power of modern mass-destruction and he foresaw another war as a cataclysm for humanity with massive civilian casualties, horrendous destruction from the air and the probable collapse not only of Britain and the Empire but of Western civilization. Such was the nightmare that afflicted Churchill in moments of his acute depression in his wilderness at Chartwell (Pearson, 1991, p. 245).

By the end of 1933, Hitler had withdrawn Germany from Europe's disarmament conference in Geneva, Switzerland, whilst Britain and France, much to Churchill's "disgust and dismay" (Singer, 2012, p. 132), continued to pursue peace through the disarming of their own military and air-forces. By 1936, despite Churchill's constant opposition to naval and air disarmament, and, despite his warnings of overwhelming German rearmament, suggestions to reorganise civil factories so that they could rapidly be transformed for war purposes were ignored. Britain had disarmed to such a degree that they were in a dangerously weak position to defend themselves or their allies should a war ensue. The British Government, still under the leadership of Ramsay MacDonald, did not believe there was any threat of another war and took delight in mocking Churchill for being a warmonger and attention-seeker, lacking in judgment and a fiscal liability (Gilbert, 1992, Singer, 2012).

Whilst British parliamentarians believed Hitler's dictatorship was waning and Churchill's ranting was unfounded, Hitler had amassed so much power that he had combined the Offices of Chancellor and President of Germany and the German armed forces swore a personal oath of "unconditional obedience to Hitler as their new Commander-in-Chief" (Gilbert, 1992, p. 530). Churchill was thus, all the while, shrewder than "almost anyone else in fastening on to the menace of Hitler" and to the dangers that the Nazi regime posed for Britain (Jenkins, 2002, p. 469).

According to Mansfield (1995), in 1936, Churchill was called upon to support a close friend during a time of great opposition but at great political cost to himself. This friend was the King of England, King Edward VIII, and the crisis was his desire to abdicate as King. King Edward VIII had succeeded his father, King George V, but soon after his ascension to the throne of England, announced his intention to marry an American divorcee, Mrs Wallis Simpson, a move that was vehemently opposed by the British government, the British people and the Church of England. For Churchill, his "romantic attachment to the monarchy" and his loyalty to a long-time friend, meant he could not turn his back on his Sovereign and worked tirelessly to change public opinion (Mansfield, 1995, p. 69). However, Churchill's attempts were to no avail and Edward abdicated on 10 December 1936. Churchill's unconditional support for Edward only served to confirm the public's opinion of Churchill and that of his political enemies that he was "old, out of touch and obsolete" (Singer, 2012, 144). As such, "Churchill's support for Edward only distanced him further from the political and social mainstream, filling his wilderness years with even more ridicule and loneliness" (Mansfield, 1995, p. 69). Churchill withdrew to the sanctity and refuge of his home at Chartwell, and, although continuously mindful of public events, kept himself away from the criticism and scorn of public life.

Churchill's personal physician, Lord Moran (formerly, Dr. Charles McMoran Wilson), writes of Churchill's depression prior to 1940 as well as in his later life, explaining that Churchill was afflicted by his 'Black Dog' from an early age with bouts of depression occurring throughout his life and often lasting for months:

He dreaded these bouts and instinctively kept away from anyone or anything that seemed to bring them on. He had to school himself not to think about things when they had gone wrong, for he found he could not live with his mistakes and keep his balance (Wilson, 2002, p. 222).

Importantly, Churchill's reluctance to open up old wounds was often an attempt to keep his 'Black Dog' at bay but that this need to put aside any cause for failure eventually resulted in his own inability to recognise when he was in fact at fault (Wilson, 2002).

#### ***4.5.5.2. Tempest on the Horizon: 1936- 1939***

In May 1935, during a Defence debate in Parliament, former British Prime Minister, Stanley Baldwin, admitted "he had been completely wrong the previous November in his estimate of future German air strength " (Gilbert, 1992, p. 543) and Churchill's claims about Germany that had been mocked as alarmist were now vindicated. By June 1935 Ramsay MacDonald was succeeded once more by Stanley Baldwin as Prime Minister of Britain but there was still no place offered to Churchill in the new Baldwin administration. By 1936, Churchill was anxious that the time had already passed for Britain to prepare and secure any margin of air superiority (Gilbert, 1992). Churchill had sourced private intelligence documents describing the extent of Germany's air strength with 800 aircraft to Britain's 453 and their manufacturing of further planes provided no further opportunity for Britain to close the gap (Gilbert, 1992).

It was uphill work to warn the nation of the nightmare that obsessed him. His party was against him – as was his reputation – as he began to preach the dangers of a resurgent Germany, the need for toughness in his nation's foreign policy and his desperate message of rearmament. This was the 'psychic dynamite' that he was brewing (Pearson, 1991, p. 246).

In March 1936, Hitler sent his troops into the Rhineland, a German sovereign state which had been demilitarised after the First World War. Hitler also embarked on a calculated plan of negotiations to appear to settle Anglo-German differences lulling Britain into a false sense of appeasement. Churchill, however, was not at all convinced by Hitler's seemingly virtuous gestures, warning the British Government that Hitler's plans were more focused on a possible advance on Austria and fortifications in the Rhineland made it possible for Germany to attack France through Belgium and Holland, eventually striking Britain (Gilbert, 1992). Discussions amongst senior officials in the British Cabinet intensified around the need for a Defence Ministry to oversee all three areas of British defence: the army, navy and air force. There was also a need for a Minister to take charge of this onerous task. Despite hostilities towards Churchill from all corners of Parliament, including Prime Minister Baldwin, it was obvious that man was Winston Churchill (Gilbert, 1992). By 1937, there was a growing divide between those who "believed Hitler had no aggressive designs and those who saw a pattern of aggression in the making" (Gilbert, 1992, p. 555). Yet, still, Prime Minister Baldwin saw no imminent threat and little was being done to prepare Britain for what was to become the Second World War.

In April 1937, Neville Chamberlain succeeded Stanley Baldwin as Prime Minister of Britain with a renewed focus on reconciliation with Germany through negotiated settlement of German grievances rather than a policy of rearmament (Gilbert, 1992). Neville Chamberlain and Churchill not only disagreed fundamentally on policy but they also had a

clash of personality, rendering Churchill once more unwelcome in Chamberlain's Administration. Churchill was disappointed and depressed, still waiting for the "call to serve his country" (Gilbert, 1992, p. 579). While Neville Chamberlain pursued a policy of appeasement with Germany and Churchill urged the mobilisation of the British air and naval forces as well as encouraging military alliances against the demonstrative power of German forces, Germany continued its advances beyond the borders of Germany, annexing Austria, occupying the Sudetenland and marching on Czechoslovakia. Blinded by their faith and attempting all options to avoid a war, Britain signed the Munich Agreement in September 1938, granting Hitler permission to incorporate the Sudetenland, a highly industrialised region of Czechoslovakia, into the Germany's Third Reich (Singer, 2012). "Peace with honour, peace in our time" was Neville Chamberlain's mantra to a grateful and approving British public but Churchill was "personally devastated" by Britain's surrender to Hitler foreseeing the magnitude of the disaster and deceit to follow (Singer, 2012, p. 147).

Where Churchill had begun to warn the British nation of the threat of Nazism as early as 1930, Neville Chamberlain remained naïve and ignorant as late as the Munich Agreement in 1938. Chamberlain met Hitler three times prior to the outbreak of the Second World War and was confident of his plans for conciliation and appeasement. Where most cheered and applauded him, Churchill anguished over the "suicidal" nature of these discussions with Hitler (Ghaemi, 2011, p. 66).

According to Singer (2012) the outcome of the Munich Agreement resulted in stirrings for Churchill's return to government and, as Hitler's activities grew more ominous during 1939, the public's call for Churchill grew louder. All the while, Neville Chamberlain continued to "wound and insult" Churchill's better judgement during debates in the House of Commons (Singer, 2012, p. 148). Naively, in an attempt to ensure peace, Prime Minister Chamberlain continued to search for a compromise even after Germany invaded Poland on 1

September 1939 (Mansfield, 1995). For two days after Germany's invasion of Poland, Churchill waited to be summoned by Chamberlain to serve his part in the impending war but no such call came.

It was only on 3 September 1939, when Chamberlain was forced to announce that England and Germany were at war, that he finally succumbed and agreed to re-instate Churchill, after nearly twenty five years of absence, as First Lord of the Admiralty (Singer, 2012). "When the Admiralty informed the fleet of its new chief, the signal was simply: 'Winston is back'" (Mansfield, 1995, p. 71). Churchill's appointment as First Lord of the Admiralty signalled the end of his 'wilderness years' and the beginning of Britain's historical participation in the Second World War. Brendan Bracken's (Churchill's friend) sentiments of April 1939 echo a testament to Churchill's depressive realism: "no public man in our life has shown more foresight and I believe that his long, lonely struggle to expose the dangers of the dictatorships will prove to be the best chapter in his crowded life" (Gilbert, 1992, p. 613).

Churchill's return to the Admiralty was the "vindication of his lifetime" and, for the time being, there was little emphasis on failure and rejection and "no further struggles with 'Black Dog'" (Pearson, 1991, p. 277).

#### **4.5.6. The Second World War: 1939-1945 – 'Black Dog' to 'Bull Dog'**

*"In war, Resolution. In defeat, Defiance. In victory, Magnanimity. In peace, Goodwill"* (Churchill, cited in Langworth, 2012, p. 30).

The following time period traces the broad events of the Second World War, detailing Churchill's personal role in guiding and influencing the war. This section is divided into two time frames: 1939-1942 and 1942-1945.

#### **4.5.6.1. 1939-1942**

*“Never give in, never, never, never, never – in nothing great or small, large or petty – never give in except to convictions of honour and good sense” (Churchill, cited in Langworth, 2012, p. 23).*

“The hat, the bow tie, the overcoat, the cigar and the ‘V’-sign” became Churchill’s trademark during these challenging and formidable war years. The physical and emotional demands on Churchill during this time were so colossal, that it is questionable as to whether anyone else could have survived such an overwhelmingly responsible task (Singer, 2012, p. 151). Churchill remained in the Admiralty for nearly nine months but, by May 1940, disillusionment with Neville Chamberlain’s strategic capability, Germany’s invasion of Denmark and Norway, their ‘blitzkrieg’ (lightening attacks) on Holland and Belgium and their subsequent invasion of France, led to the forced resignation of Chamberlain and the appointment of Churchill, now sixty-six years of age, on 10 May 1940, as Prime Minister of Britain and leader of the British Empire in the Second World War (Mansfield, 1995; Singer, 2012). “Where his father had failed in reaching the pinnacle of British politics, Churchill had now succeeded” (Singer, 2012, p.154).

The task at hand, however, was daunting with Britain’s military readiness almost non-existent after years of disarmament, Germany’s untamed aggression and Churchill’s political support being only marginal. Nonetheless, Churchill appeared exhilarated by the near impossible odds that lay before him with a sense of destiny that every one of his past experiences had prepared him and the opportunity to make his mark in history (Singer, 2012). “Nourish your hopes, but do not overlook realities” (Churchill, cited in Langworth, 2012, p. 19).

Between the end of May and beginning of June 1940, following Belgium's collapse after Germany's early invasion in May 1940, more than 340 000 French and British soldiers were frantically and narrowly evacuated from the beaches and harbour of Dunkirk, France, back to England (Gilbert, 1992; Singer, 2012). This narrow escape prompted Churchill to deliver a speech to the House of Commons in which he shared his innermost fears as well as his refusal to give in to those fears: "We shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills, we shall never surrender" (Gilbert, 1992, p. 656; Singer, 2012, p. 157). After Germany advanced through The Netherlands and through France and the "Battle of France was over", Germany turned on Britain in what became known as the "Battle of Britain" (Singer, 2012, p. 158).

Nazi Germany planned to invade Britain by first attempting to destroy the British Royal Air Force and secure air supremacy (Pearson, 1991; Singer, 2010). However, the Royal Air Force proved a formidable enemy and the struggle between German and British air forces continued between July and October 1940. During this time, and most of the remaining time of the War, Britain's major cities endured devastating air raids by German bombers, destroying most of London and killing nearly 50 000 civilians (Mansfield, 1995, Singer, 2012). "Britain was weak, vulnerable and alone against the possibility of Nazi invasion. Yet, in that desperate hour, Churchill exploded into action with such force that he jolted the nation out of its numbing fear" (Mansfield, 1995, p. 74) and marshalled his words as ammunition, dominating the radio waves with speeches of "courage and defiance" to his anguished nation (p. 74). Singer (2012) adds that Churchill's apparent reputation for rudeness and arrogance was well balanced by his eloquence, playfulness, sincerity, determination and strategic patience, all of which made him a formidable communicator.

"Throughout these awful weeks, Churchill's was the voice that offered courage to the people making a national disaster appear as one of the real heroic moments in the nation's

history” (Pearson, 1991, p. 281). Churchill’s oratory brilliance gave his people comfort, hope, courage and, above all, a sense of certainty about the future.

Churchill’s former bodyguard during the Second World War, Detective Inspector Thompson, comments that, throughout the bombing of Britain, Churchill’s public persona was always encouraging, positive, upbeat and confident but the strain took its toll on Churchill in his private capacity, as he showed signs of extreme exhaustion, irritability and emotionality, constantly absorbed by the unfolding events of each day (Thompson, 1951).

In September 1940, Germany, Italy and Japan signed the Tripartite Pact, thereby securing a three way alliance against Britain and France (Gilbert, 1992). By October 1940, Hitler realised that attempts to destroy the Royal Air Force were ineffective and that Germany’s plan to launch and sustain long range air operations and secure air supremacy was futile. The invasion of Britain therefore never materialised (Singer, 2012). Despite the heroic resistance to German invasion during the Battle of Britain by an outnumbered British Royal Air Force, Churchill knew that Britain’s “ultimate salvation” rested with the United States of America (Singer, 2012, p. 164). Having built a steady and close relationship with American President, Franklin. D. Roosevelt, whilst still at the Admiralty, and having benefited from essential supplies from America, Churchill “desperately needed” Roosevelt’s active support in the War (Singer, 2012, p. 164). It was only after the bombing of Pearl Harbour, in December 1941, by Japanese naval forces and Hitler’s declaration of war on the United States of America, that America entered the war and became a full partner to Britain and her allied forces (France and Russia). Hitler’s invasion of Russia in June 1941 had brought Soviet Leader, Joseph Stalin, into the fold and, despite Russia’s fundamental communist philosophy, proved a solid ally against Germany until the end of the Second World War (Singer, 2012).

According to Singer (2012), Churchill worked his staff to exhaustion but, at the same time, instilled unconditional devotion. One of Churchill's war-time secretaries, Elizabeth Nel, comments that "from first to last we were utterly devoted to him, not because he was Prime Minister, but because he was himself, Mr Churchill" (Nel, 1958, p. 11). To ensure expedience on all matters, Churchill designed his own special red labels inscribed with the words: ACTION THIS DAY and placed these stickers on everything that demanded urgent attention (Singer, 2012).

Churchill also believed in face-to-face communication and was prepared to travel anywhere "despite his health and advancing years" (Singer, 2012, p. 170). As such, Churchill commanded three monumental War meetings of the Big Three (United States, Russia, Britain) during the course of the Second World War – the first at Teheran, Iran, in 1943, the second in Yalta, on the Crimean Peninsula, in 1945 and the third in Potsdam, Germany, in 1945 (Gilbert, 1992; Singer, 2012). According to Schoeman (2013), these conferences, led by Churchill, achieved much success in influencing the design of post-war Europe "It can legitimately be said that his appetite for conversation and social contact helped build the alliances that shaped the outcome of the Second World War as much as anything that transpired on the battlefields" (Singer, 2012, p. 170). As such, "meeting jaw to jaw is better than war" (Churchill, cited in Langworth, 2012, p. 19).

Pearson (1991) comments that Churchill's inspiring wartime leadership did not rest completely in dialogue but also in his human limitations that prepared him for the "power he yielded" (p. 282). In addition to his obvious strengths of physical endurance and immense concentration, Churchill's "less admirable qualities" were even more effective (Pearson, 1991, p. 282). Churchill's dogged determination, aggression and egotism provided guaranteed self-assurance and his sheer iron will "forged to withstand those periods of despair when misery and depression had assailed him" (Pearson, 1991, p. 282).

By the end of June 1942, the American Navy had victory in the Pacific at the Battle of Midway, marking a turning point for Allied forces. The year of 1942 also marked the beginning of the horrors of Auschwitz (Gilbert, 1992).

#### **4.5.6.2. 1943- 1945**

*“I realised at Teheran for the first time what a small nation we are. There I sat with the great Russian bear on one side of me, with paws outstretched, and on the other side the great American buffalo and between the two sat the poor little English donkey who was the only one, the only one of the three, who knew the right way home”*(Churchill, cited in Langworth, 2012, p. 70).

By September 1943, Italy had surrendered to the Allies, after the Allied victory in North Africa enabled their invasion of Italy and its territories. Events of 1943 also saw the Germans surrender at Stalingrad, Russia (Gilbert, 1992). According to Singer (2012), by the end of the Teheran Conference in November 1943, Churchill was gripped by “forebodings of doom” consumed by thoughts that the war would destroy civilisation, he would not have the strength to outlast the war and that he would be held responsible (p. 180). Ghaemi (2011) comments that despite fewer outward symptoms of depression during this time, there is evidence of manic mood swings and depression, even when events in the war were going well. Jenkins (2002) also comments that during early 1944, Churchill demonstrated great fluctuations in mood overlaying a general appearance of weariness, disillusionment and sadness. Gilbert (1992) comments that, as far back as early 1942, Churchill’s family were aware of his inner stress and his physical and emotional weariness from the pressure of events and unavoidable public criticism.

Singer (2012) adds, however, that Churchill’s “bulldog countenance” became the face of Allied resistance, courage and determination (p. 174) and Gilbert (1992) writes that

Churchill's leadership was "remarkable" providing a constant flow of new ideas and a steadfast course of political and military guidance if not genius (p. 672). Churchill's former secretary, Elizabeth Nel, comments: "One was at once aware of the great force at his command, of the strength and determination within him" (Nel, 1958, p. 54). Churchill's personal bodyguard, Inspector Thompson, also comments: "Mr Churchill thrived during times of adversity and, although suffered bouts of unhappiness throughout the war days, he faced the world with remarkable fortitude" (Thompson, 1951, p. 89).



Source: [lincolinandchurchill.org](http://lincolinandchurchill.org) (2014)

During November 1943, Churchill suffered two mild heart attacks and had to convalesce in Marrakech, Morocco, for a further three weeks. By New Year's Day, 1944, preparations for the final defeat of Germany in Normandy, France, via the famous Normandy

'D-Day' landings of June 1944, were well underway. By July 1944, Allied forces had gained sufficient ground in Europe, Russia had securely defended its own borders and those of Eastern Europe and the development of the atom bomb was in its final stages – Nazi Germany was decidedly weakened and completely threatened (Gilbert, 1992; Singer, 2012). Churchill's health, however, was ailing and the effects of his recent heart attacks had left him more fragile than generally suspected. At times "he felt weakened and depressed" (Pearson, 1991, p. 329). In a letter to Churchill from his doctor, Lord Moran, on 14 August 1944, Lord Moran consoles Churchill: "Your trouble – I mean the Black Dog business – you got from your forebears. You have fought against it all your life. That is why you dislike visiting hospitals. You always avoid anything that is depressing" (Wilson, 2002, p. 204).

However, contact with direct battle, never failed to excite Churchill and "once excited his energy was unabating" (Pearson, 1991, p. 330). Churchill sought to witness the action first-hand and, to keep himself occupied, he travelled continuously throughout the war. Churchill worked tirelessly to meet the demands of his unforgiving occupation and wasted no time in having face-to-face meetings with key people wherever possible (Pearson, 1991). Stelzer (2012) comments that dinner was always a preferred means to satisfying the needs of the physical body and also wasted no time in simultaneously attending to matters of war. Churchill even hosted several picnic 'conferences' on the battlefield sidelines with his military commanders to discuss tactics and strategy. "No matter the circumstances, whether in the dining room at Chartwell or on a picnic chair in the desert, Churchill's profound belief in the importance of face-to-face meetings and his unshakeable confidence in his ability to get his own way in such intimate encounters, never wavered" (Stelzer, 2012, p. 34).

The signed declaration between the 'Big Three' at the Yalta Conference in the Crimea in February 1945 presented a scheme for non-discriminatory post-war repatriations and pledged to uphold a liberated post-war Europe. Despite Stalin's outward support for this, and,

in particular, free and fair elections in Poland, Churchill became suspicious of Russia's intentions to maintain positive post-war diplomatic ties with the Allied countries and believed that Russia might instead attempt to engulf post-war Eastern Europe under a Soviet banner (Gilbert, 1992; Pearson, 1991). Churchill was especially suspicious of Russia's intent to grant free elections in Poland. Churchill was already envisaging a new threat for post-war Europe, "the inexorable advance of Soviet power" and the rise of a new Communist order (Gilbert, 1992, p. 836). According to Gilbert (1992), Churchill wrote that beneath the triumphs of the war "lie poisonous politics and deadly international rivalries" (p. 839). Churchill's physician, Lord Moran, comments on the "lonely processes" of Churchill's mind at this time: "The war had exaggerated the isolation in which he had dwelt apart during his political life" (Wilson, 2002, p. 301).

By April 1945, Russian troops had liberated Auschwitz and marched into Berlin. On 12 April 1945, President Roosevelt passed away and was immediately succeeded by President Harry Truman. On 30 April 1945, Hitler committed suicide, acknowledging Germany's defeat (Gilbert, 1992). According to Singer (2012), Captain Pim of the British Map Room, woke Churchill with the news of Germany's official surrender on 7 May 1945 with Churchill responding that "for five years you've brought me bad news, sometimes worse than others, now you have redeemed yourself" (p. 184). For Mansfield (1995), what most people remember of Churchill during the Second World War, was his extraordinary energy and staggering capability to be everywhere at once. "While Stalin and Roosevelt stayed largely at home, the Prime Minister of England drew enemy fire in Athens, rallied the troops in northern Africa, strengthened the Alliance in Washington and proposed conferences with leaders all over the world" (Mansfield, 1995, p. 75). Churchill needed to be at the centre of the action, armed with all the facts, to fulfil his capability of effective command. "He believed he understood more clearly than others the course the war would take and how it

could be won but only because he had invested himself in mastering the cold realities of the problems his nation faced” (Mansfield, 1995, p. 76).

On the evening of 2 May 1945 Churchill had dined quietly with two friends of pre-war years, Lady Juliet Duff and Venetia Montagu. The only other guest was Noel Coward, who later recalled how, towards the end of dinner, during which Churchill had been at his most benign, he and the two ladies were suddenly struck by how significant it was that they were in the presence of the man who had contributed so much foresight, courage and genius to the winning of the war (Gilbert, 1992, p. 838).

On 8 May 1945, Britain and the rest of Europe celebrated Victory Day (V-Day) in recognition of their triumph over Nazi Germany (Gilbert, 1992). On 6 August 1945 an atom bomb was deployed over Hiroshima, Japan, with devastating effects, followed by a second atom bomb over Nagasaki on 9 August 1945, bringing finality to the Second World War (Gilbert, 1992). Whilst the end of the Second World War signalled a new world order and swept away so much of the old order of aristocratic Britain (Pearson, 1991), it proved the catalyst for Churchill to demonstrate his true character, energy, resolution, tenacity and realism.

#### **4.5.7. Victory and Defeat: 1945-1955 - The Statesman and his ‘Black Dog’**

##### **Returns**

*“Let us be contented with what has happened to us and thankful for all we have been spared” (Churchill, cited in Langworth, 2012, p. 561).*

##### **4.5.7.1. The 1945 Election Defeat**

Within a week of Germany’s surrender, the British public went to the polls in a general election and Churchill, now seventy one years old, was voted out of Office in a

Labour Party victory over Churchill's Conservative Party. "Churchill was stunned" and deeply hurt (Mansfield, 1995, p. 77). "He blamed no one. He was very sad as he talked quietly about what had happened" (Wilson, 2002, p. 352). When offered the Order of the Garter as an honorary accolade, Churchill declined by saying: "I could not accept the Order of the Garter from my Sovereign when I had received the order of the boot from my people" (Mansfield, 1995, p. 77). Singer (2010) comments that the majority of British voters wanted a Socialist government to address the social wrongs of post-war deprivation as well as wanted to "punish the Conservative Party" for having appeased Hitler in the first place, "in voting Labour, however, the voters tossed out their nation's saviour as well" (Singer, 2012, p. 188).

Despite leading Britain to victory, being voted out as Prime Minister on 26 July 1945, so soon after their world war victory, left Churchill in despair, facing another lengthy decade of recurrent depression (Ghaemi, 2011). Gilbert (1992) comments that on the evening of 28 July 1945, Churchill's daughter, Mary, "saw with near desperation a cloud of black doom descend" (p. 856). Soon after resigning from the Premiership, Churchill moved out of No. 10 Downing Street (the official residence of British Prime Ministers) to the penthouse suite of a nearby hotel and remarked to his physician, Lord Moran, about the top floor balcony that he "didn't like sleeping near a precipice like that" and although he had "no desire to quit the world, thoughts, desperate thoughts, come into the head" (Ghaemi, 2011, p. 59; Pearson, 1991, p. 342). Pearson (1991) further comments that, during Churchill's earlier bouts with his 'Black Dog' during his time as Home Secretary in his late thirties, Churchill felt a similar urge to "violent self-destruction" and that this latest political defeat of 1945 had now also caused another bout of "harrowing depression as bad as any in the past" (Pearson, 1991, p. 343). According to Jenkins (2002), Churchill's public persona was far more composed than his private one and describes a letter that Clementine Churchill wrote to their daughter, Mary, describing Churchill's state of mind whilst at home at Chartwell: "He is so unhappy and that

makes him very difficult. He hates his food (hardly any meat), I can't see any future" (p. 804).

Following the election defeat, Clementine urged Churchill to retire from politics altogether but Churchill had a new agenda and as his spirits revived, Churchill decided to remain in Parliament as Leader of the Opposition (Pearson, 1991; Singer, 2012). "His brush with 'Black Dog' must have reminded him how much he still required the royal jelly of politics and power to keep depression at bay" (Pearson, 1991, p. 345). Churchill continued to enjoy his beloved country home, Chartwell, which had by now, due to the financial burdens of the estate, been placed in a trust and would remain at the disposal of the Churchill family for the rest of their lives but would be the property of the State to later become a National Trust and museum (Singer, 2012).

In March 1946, President Truman invited Churchill to give a series of lectures at Westminster College in Fulton, Missouri, where Churchill seized the opportunity to warn the world of the ensuring dangers of Communism. According to Mansfield (1995), as Churchill had once prophesied the dangers of Nazi Germany, he was now in a position to warn the world of the growing threat of Communism. It was during this lecture tour, that Churchill's famous 'Iron Curtain Speech' was unveiled detailing the issues of the Cold War and a defining call for a unified Europe against the Soviet threat without military action (Mansfield, 1995; Singer, 2012). The reaction to Churchill's speech was nearly as hostile as the reaction had been in Britain when he forewarned them about Hitler, although, in 1946, this hostility was worldwide (Singer, 2012). Churchill's words threatened the "artificial peace that the Western world now clung to so desperately" in the aftermath of the Second World War (Mansfield, 1995, p. 79). Ironically, despite his foresight and pragmatism, Churchill was once more accused of being a "warmonger, an attention seeker, an egoist – out of touch of office

and out of touch with the new post-war world” (Singer, 2012, p. 192), but, “the Soviet threat disturbed him profoundly; the opinion of the world did not (p. 192).

For the remaining years between 1946 and 1951, Churchill’s appetite for political centre stage and his dubious reputation for wisdom and insight increased (Pearson, 1991). Churchill busied himself with his many past-times of painting and writing his war memoirs (In June 1948 the first volume of the *Second World War* was published) but most of his time was spent in party politics, taking a stand against Indian independence from Britain; devaluation of the British pound and the socialist policies of the Labour Government under Prime Minister Clement Attlee (Gilbert, 1992; Mansfield, 1995). Churchill remained equally vocal on the lurking “communist menace” in Europe to which Prime Minister, Clement Attlee and his Government, remained mostly oblivious (Mansfield, 1995, p. 80). Churchill “brooded over what he saw as the increasing menace of Soviet expansionism in Europe and the hesitant American resistance to it” (Jenkins, 2002, p. 806). In February 1948, Churchill’s brother, Jack, died after a long battle with heart disease. “The loss affected Churchill profoundly. No one had been closer to him over the years than his brother” (Singer, 2012, p. 198). According to Pearson (1991), Jack’s passing sent Churchill into another deep depression, most notably because Jack’s death appeared to trigger once more the haunting memories of Churchill’s father’s condemnation and the source of his lifelong anxiety that not only fuelled his ambition but also “brought him to the verge of suicide and bleak despair” (p. 354) .

By 1950, Churchill’s call for magnanimity towards Germany helped create the Marshall Plan and his call for a United States of Europe against the Soviet Union helped to create the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO). The Korean War in 1950 also served to confirm his predictions of world disorder under the threat of Communism (Singer, 2012). In Britain, tensions between the Labour and Conservative Parties were mounting, and, by the

end of 1950, British public opinion appeared to be supporting a return of Churchill to Office. In October 1951, the Conservative Party had won over the majority seats in a general election and on 26 October 1951, Churchill, just shy of his seventy seventh birthday, entered his second term as Prime Minister of Britain (Mansfield, 1995; Singer, 2012).

#### ***4.5.7.2. Prime Minister for the Second Time: 1951-1955***

Churchill's second run as Prime Minister of Britain was partially marred by his increasing age and poor health, but, refusing to give in to his frailty, Churchill dedicated his time to improving the devastating post-war economic conditions in Britain and forging his ideal of unity against the Communist threat abroad (Singer, 2012). In June 1953, Churchill suffered a massive, debilitating stroke that left him partially paralysed, but, refusing defeat once more, Churchill slowly recovered. According to Pearson (1991), Churchill was determined not to let go of his Premiership and his iron will overpowered his ailing body and often his ailing heart in times of apathy and hopelessness. What Lord Moran referred to as Churchill's "Secret Battle" to survive, now began (Pearson, 1991, p. 369).

In April 1953, Churchill was awarded a knighthood of the Most Noble Order of the Garter, becoming Sir Winston Churchill (Schoeman, 2013) and, in December 1953, Churchill was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature, partly as a result of the successful publication of his war memoirs in *The Second World War* (Pearson, 1991; Singer, 2012). Despite the many accolades, however, due to his poor health, Churchill grappled with the prospect of possibly having to resign his Premiership which fuelled a near constant presence of depression. Churchill relied on his painting and memoir writing to distract his 'Black Dog' (Gilbert, 1992; Jenkins, 2002). In November 1954, Churchill celebrated his eightieth birthday and was struggling with the decision to step down as Prime Minister. After many months of self-

protracted decision-making, Churchill finally stepped down as Prime Minister of Britain on 5 April 1955 (Gilbert, 1992; Mansfield, 1995; Pearson, 1991; Singer, 2012).

#### **4.5.8. The Final Decade: 1955-1965**

*“I have achieved a great deal to achieve nothing in the end” (Churchill, cited in Pearson, 1991, p. 417).*

Churchill’s final years were filled with many accolades and honours befitting his lifetime’s service to his country and to the rest of the modern world, including the French Cross of Liberation; the American Freedom Award and honorary citizenship in the United States of America (Mansfield, 1995). However, much of this decade was also a time of sadness and self-reflection. Many of his friends had already passed before him and without further political aspirations, Churchill found himself alone (Pearson, 1991; Mansfield, 1995). Churchill spent most of his time painting and escaping the dreary British weather visiting his wealthy international friends, one of which included the former home of Coco Chanel, named La Pausa, in the South of France, now owned by millionaire businessman, Emery Reves (Mansfield, 1995; Pearson, 1991). La Pausa became Churchill’s secret refuge during his early eighties where he spent much time writing and painting to chase away his now continual bouts of depression (Pearson, 1991). Churchill had become increasingly bored and depressed, finding little enjoyment in life and disparaged by the prospect of growing old, “waiting about for death” (Pearson, 1991, p. 374). Churchill voices: “I feel like an aeroplane at the end of its flight, in the dusk, with petrol running out, in search of a safe landing” (Pearson, 1991, p. 374).

Churchill also came to enjoy the company of Greek millionaire, Aristotle Socrates Onassis, who revered Churchill and for whom nothing was too much effort. For Churchill, he

enjoyed the wealth and opulence of Onassis's very generous lifestyle, often sailing together with Clementine in the Mediterranean aboard his yacht, the *Christina* (Pearson, 1991).

Singer (2012) comments that the last five years of Churchill's life were sad and dark and, by the early 1960's, travel had become increasingly difficult due to his declining health and the ravages of repeated pneumonia and previous strokes (Mansfield, 1995; Singer, 2012). Most tragically, Sarah, Churchill's second daughter, had become an equally frail figure as the family finally accepted that she was an incurable alcoholic. Diana, Churchill's eldest child, had also been struggling with her own issues of insecurity, a broken marriage and subsequent bouts of a deep and dangerous depression. Finally, to the profound despair and agony of Churchill, Diana finally took her own life on 20 October 1963 (Mansfield, 1995; Pearson, 1991). In the aftermath of this tragic loss, Churchill became increasingly withdrawn and depressed, enjoying only occasionally the company of old friends whom he had not yet outlived (Singer, 2012). "Wait and see how you feel when the tide is running the other way. It does not seem so easy to die when death is near" (Churchill, cited in Langsworth, 2012, p. 15).

Churchill was present in the House of Commons for the last time on 27 July 1964, having been a Member of British Parliament almost continuously for nearly fifty years (Soames, 2001). On 12 January 1965, Churchill suffered a final and fatal stroke, leaving him in a comatose state for a further 12 days. On the morning of 24 January 1965, Churchill died in his ninety-first year, at home, exactly seventy years to the day of his own father's passing (Singer, 2012), a "macabre coincidence" (Jenkins, 2002, p. 911). After a lifetime of glory, underpinned by so much misery, Churchill's body lay-in State for three days in Westminster Hall, London, where more than 300 000 weeping mourners filed past his coffin. Churchill was given a grand yet emotional State funeral on 30 January 1965 at St Paul's Cathedral in London (Gilbert, 1992; Pearson, 1991; Singer, 2012).

At Churchill's request, there were lots of "soldiers and bands" (Singer, 2012, p. 215) in the form of the Royal Household Cavalry, the bands of the Royal Artillery and the Metropolitan Police, together with a fly-past by 16 fighter planes from the Royal Air Force. During the memorial service at St Paul's Cathedral, royalty and international dignitaries, including American President, Dwight D. Eisenhower, paid tribute to Churchill whilst millions of people around the world watched the television broadcasts and listened to the radio messages (Singer, 2012). After the service, Churchill's coffin was taken by boat along the Thames River before being transported by train along a specially demarcated route to Bladon Churchyard, next to Blenheim Park (Jenkins, 2002). Churchill was finally laid to rest, at the family plot at Bladon Churchyard, less than a mile from his ancestral home, Blenheim Palace, next to his father, mother and his beloved brother, Jack (Mansfield, 1995; Pearson, 1991; Singer, 2012). Clementine Churchill died on 12 December 1977, at the age of ninety three. Her ashes were laid in Winston's grave (Soames, 2001).

#### **4.6. Churchill: The Private Man**

On a final yet anecdotal note, a brief portrayal of some of the idiosyncratic and distinctively Churchillian characteristics that uniquely depict Churchill are herewith provided:

##### **4.6.1. Wine, Whiskey, Song.....and Cigars**

Churchill shared a lifetime's enjoyment of both whiskey and champagne:

A single glass of champagne imparts a feeling of exhilaration. The nerves are braced, the imagination is agreeably stirred, the wits become nimble. A bottle produces the contrary effect. Excess causes a comatose sensibility. So it is with war and the quality of both is best discovered sipping (Singer, 2012, p. 40).

On his expedition to South Africa, as a war correspondent, Churchill took with him 24 bottles of champagne, six bottles of vermouth, six bottles of port, 18 bottles of whiskey and 12 bottles of lime juice cordial. From this early start Churchill developed a 40-year relationship with London's wine and spirits merchant, Randolph Payne and Sons (Singer 2012).

According to Singer (2012), Churchill's excessive alcohol consumption was not as it has often been reported and Sir John Colville, a friend and colleague, commented that Churchill always mixed his whiskey with soda and "would get frightfully cross if it was too strong" (p. 155). Whilst Churchill's consumption of alcohol was consistent throughout his life, there is strong debate that he drank in excess, with reference to his drinking to excess being grossly exaggerated. There are mixed views that include Churchill was a moderate drinker or was someone who could hold his liquor or was a perpetual alcoholic, none of which has been properly substantiated. "Despite the weight of the evidence, the myth of Churchill regularly drinking to excess persists" (Stelzer, 2012, p. 191). Thompson (1951) comments that during long evening conferences, "successive visitors" would find Churchill consuming a whiskey and soda but most of the time it would be the same drink which remained "forgotten and hardly touched" for most of the evening (p. 43). Interestingly, Stelzer (2012) continues that, despite the myths, Churchill had no use for cocktails or any mixed drinks, with champagne being his primary choice, followed by brandy and whiskey and soda. But, according to Stelzer (2012), "not just any champagne would do" as Churchill was a connoisseur of many of the older and stronger vintages with Pau Roger being his most favourite" (p. 197).

Churchill loved to sing but did not have an ear for music so he limited his singing to the bathtub. Churchill was also very fond of dancing. Singer (2012) recalls a funny story during the Second World War when Churchill was Prime Minister and decided to put his

gramophone on at 2am in the morning, dancing in his multi-coloured silk dressing gown with a sandwich in one hand and watercress in the other, “giving little skips to the tunes” (p. 176).

There is also no doubt as to his love of cigars evidenced by the abundance of photographs of the all too familiar smoking cigar in hand. According to Singer (2012), Churchill’s cigar bills were exorbitant, with a preference for Cuban cigars, he ordered “one hundred to two hundred per month” plus hundreds of Turkish cigarettes (p. 68). His purchasing tactics allowed many of his cigar merchants to believe they were his sole and preferred supplier thus “stretching his credit with each to the maximum” (Singer, 2012, p. 68). Rather than using ordinary matches, Churchill preferred to light his cigars using candles or long-stemmed matches (Singer, 2012).

#### **4.6.2. Dining**

Stelzer (2012) explains that Churchill would refer to “tummy-time” to determine when meals should be served at home or during his many flights abroad, meaning that he “didn’t go by sun time but by tummy-time” (p. 170). Churchill had a taste for both simple foods, including sandwiches, soups and Irish stew but also enjoyed the indulgence of more extravagant foods and usually preferred cheese and port to dessert, although could “easily be persuaded to take both”, enjoying the “combination of Roquefort cheese, a peeled pear and mixed ice-cream” (Stelzer, 2012, p. 181). One of Churchill’s favourite meals was his habitual late night cup of consume soup, made from bouillon cubes, believed to help him fall asleep (Singer, 2012). Churchill was also very fond of turtle soup, “a popular, aristocratic staple” (Singer, 2012, p. 168). Churchill’s dinner menus may have been plentiful but the quantities of food that he actually consumed himself were quite measured and although he loved caviar, Churchill ate it in small portions (Stelzer, 2012).

Regardless of the meal in front of Churchill, he never “allowed his preferences for food and wine to interfere with the main purpose of his dinner gatherings – people and conversation were always the indispensable items on this menu” (Stelzer, 2012, p. 183).

#### **4.6.3. Personal Pastimes**

From his early youth at Harrow School, Churchill had trained himself to become a skilled horse-rider, and later a proficient polo player. Horse-riding, including hunting, remained one of Churchill’s personal passions well into his late seventies. Churchill tried to enjoy golf and tennis but his weaker right arm prevented him from mastering these sports and thus, hunting, polo and salmon fishing in Scotland “remained his principle outdoor pursuits” (Singer, 2012, p. 53), (although he was forced to give up the game of polo at the age of fifty two due to the strenuousness of the game).

Churchill loved to swim, particularly in the sea, and, during one of his visits to Egypt in August 1942, “he was rolled over by the waves and came up upside down doing the ‘V’ sign with his legs” (Singer, 2012, p. 176). On another occasion, while on a State visit to the United States of America, Churchill spent a few days in Palm Beach with his private body guard and his personal valet, where he made an appearance on the beach in front of his private residence, dressed only in a large towel. “He walked towards the water, threw the towel to his valet and dived stark naked into the sea. We did our best to envelope him immediately he came out of the water. We were far more concerned on this score than he was!” (Thompson, 1951, p. 83).

Another of Churchill’s passions was aviation and flying, developed during his early years as First Lord of the Admiralty in 1913. However, two of Churchill’s instructors were killed in separate incidents during this time, causing Clementine to beg Churchill to stop

flying. Churchill returned to active flying as a pilot in 1919 until another near fatal crash shortly thereafter urged him to stop flying for good (Singer, 2012).

During his years at Chartwell, Churchill developed a love of brick-laying and amongst his many construction achievements at Chartwell, he built all kinds of rockeries, pools, a small lake and a large natural swimming pool that was heated (Singer, 2012). Churchill found bricklaying particularly cathartic and became so good at it that in September 1928, was invited to join the Amalgamated Union of Building Trade Workers (Singer, 2012). Churchill also had an immense love of animals, purchasing livestock, in particular pigs and many swans for his lake and fish for his ponds at Chartwell.

Clementine and Churchill both enjoyed gambling and spent many hours in Monte Carlo, together or separately with friends, gambling at the Grand Casino. In addition, Churchill loved to play cards, with Bezique, an eighteenth century French card game for two players, being his most favourite and which he played to the end of his life (Singer, 2012).

#### **4.6.4. Work Schedule**

Over his life time, Churchill developed a distinct, yet eccentric personal working pattern, rising at eight in the morning with an ample breakfast, then proceeding to work in bed, reading newspapers and dictating letters and memorandums to one of many faithful secretaries sitting at the foot of his bed. This was all followed by a leisurely bath and then dressed for lunch, usually a working lunch with colleagues. Afternoons were typically followed by a long afternoon sleep after which Churchill would join his family for dinner. After dinner, Churchill would resume his working hours, completing vast amounts of paperwork, conferring with his colleagues or dictating to his secretary into the very early hours of the morning (Gilbert, 1992; Pearson, 1991; Singer, 2012, Thompson, 1951). Because of these unconventional hours, Churchill and Clementine kept separate bedrooms throughout

their married life (Pearson, 1991; Singer, 2012). Neither was particularly easy to live with as Churchill, consumed with his political life, was often distracted, and Clementine could be overly anxious and moody. They kept different hours and Churchill's "spontaneity and emotional zealotry" forced Clementine to keep separate sleeping quarters and only by invitation, usually written, was Churchill permitted to join Clementine, "it was one of Clementine's sole sources of power in their household" (Singer 2012, p. 70).

In addition to his long working hours, Churchill was reportedly demanding, exhausting and often unreasonable towards those that worked for him, yet, he was also human and sincere and his staff, in particular his private secretaries, were unconditionally loyal and devout throughout each of their tenures "They shared the tempest of his fortunes and its glory, and to exchange these for a calmer, freer lot would have been like leaving the sea for a mill-pond" (Bonham-Carter, 1965, p. 149).

#### **4.6.5. Friendships**

One of Churchill's endearing qualities was his sense of loyalty and he was always regarded as earnest and sincere in his friendships. "One always measures friendships by how they show up in bad weather" (Churchill, cited in Langworth, 2012, p. 18). His closest friend was Conservative Member of Parliament and former barrister, F.E. Smith, who had also failed his entrance exam to Harrow and had not been admitted. "Clementine believed him to be a bad influence on her husband as a drinker and as a gambler. He was, however, in every sense, Winston's equal" (Singer, 2012, p. 73).

Pearson (1991) comments that Churchill was a highly sociable person who placed much emphasis on good entertaining with excellent food and champagne as well as absorbing personalities. Amongst his closest and most faithful of friends were his cousin, Sunny Marlborough, the rich and elitist Professor Frederick Lindemann, science and mathematics

academic from Oxford and self-made newspaper baron, Brendan Bracken (Pearson, 1991, p. 211).

#### **4.6.6. Family Life**

Churchill and Clementine travelled on a regular basis but often apart. For Churchill it was a combination of work and recreation and for Clementine, unless required to accompany her husband on official work trips, she travelled frequently for her leisure to relax and recuperate from Churchill's demanding political life and her own numerous illnesses. Their children were cared for by either parent during the other's journey but mostly they were raised by competent nannies (Pearson, 1991; Singer, 2012). When Churchill was at home, he "savoured his children, whom he clearly adored" which was a "vast improvement over the parental neglect" Churchill had endured as a child (Singer, 2012, p. 102).

Pearson (1991) comments that Churchill, despite his exhausting work schedule, was more often than not, the source of genuine affection and fun for his children, more so than Clementine, who was seen as a far more distant and austere mother figure.

Chartwell, the family home, was the epicentre of all of Churchill's children's childhood memories and the refuge to which Churchill turned throughout his life. It was the place of many happy family gatherings and festive Christmas celebrations with all the family together, enjoying hearty meals and good champagne (Pearson, 1991). Chartwell also became a centre for all the family during school holidays together with friends and other relations. "Churchill felt happy with members of his precious family around him" (Pearson, 1991, p. 219).

Churchill's marriage endured for nearly fifty years, despite their many strains and stresses and numerous sojourns apart. According to Pearson (1991), Churchill had a true

talent for the written word and no matter how far apart they would sometimes be, either physically or emotionally, he would always write the most heartfelt letters to Clementine. Pearson (1991), however, explains that Clementine felt a degree of resentment at always having to be Churchill's support base, particularly during bouts of his depression, claiming that being needed was neither romantic nor uplifting. Over their years together, Clementine became low in energy, increasingly more anxious and worrisome whereas Churchill appeared to have the "secret of perpetual energy" and his character became more assertive if not overbearing with age (Pearson, 1991, p. 217).

#### **4.6.7. Churchill Remembered**

According to Pearson (1991), Churchill, from a young age, was prone to being a bully and was easily offended if not dismissive of anyone who disagreed with him. Churchill was often described as ill-mannered, short-tempered and egotistical yet he displayed remarkable energy, industry and knowledge, widely read and well-informed of factual details. Gilbert (1992) comments that Churchill's memory was reported to be amazing as was his attention to detail. Pearson (1991) continues that Churchill was eloquent, highly imaginative, obsessed with war and had an innate "genius for politics" but his belief in destiny and a resolute desire to make his mark in history made him hungry for power and virtually "impregnable in argument" as he believed he was unquestionably always right (p. 148).

Despite being organised, Churchill needed his faithful employees and many servants to keep him functioning and maintain his momentum. At one point, before the Second World War began, there was 18 staff on the Chartwell payroll. Churchill's personal valets would ensure that he received his breakfast in bed each morning, drew his bath, helped to dry and dress Churchill afterwards and even tie his tie and shoe laces. Churchill's valet would be on call seven days a week (Pearson, 1991).

Churchill's former private body guard, Inspector Thompson, describes Churchill as absolutely honest, firm and straightforward, always prepared to do what he could for those in need of his personal assistance, and without whose fortitude and leadership during the Second World War, Britain and the rest of the world might have suffered dire consequences. Sir Winston Churchill is acknowledged as the "greatest man I have ever known and no words can express adequately my pride to have been of some service to him" (Thompson, 1951, p. 198).

#### **4.7. Conclusion**

Churchill lived his life in the shadow of unrelenting depression and a constant dread of failure. To obscure the enemies of boredom and idleness that provoked his 'Black Dog', Churchill nurtured an unbelievable energy and a ruthless ambition which ultimately created his own legend (Pearson, 1991). In his final days, however, Churchill remained haunted by an underlying belief that he had in fact achieved very little in his lifetime and was deeply saddened by a "bitter sense of failure" (Pearson, 1991, p. 416). Churchill felt that, ultimately, all his efforts had ended in disaster. "He had won the war but lost the Empire, communism had swallowed up half of Europe and socialism was threatening the world he loved at home" (Pearson, 1991, p. 416). For Jenkins (2002), however, Churchill was "the greatest human being ever to occupy 10 Downing Street" (p. 912). Mansfield (1995) comments that, today, in Westminster Abbey, London, there is a marble tribute to Churchill that encapsulates the heroic traits of action, duty, courage, realism, compassion and greatness, engraved in the simple words: Remember Winston Churchill.

Interestingly, the Bank of England recently announced at the end of 2013 that they will be introducing a new polymer £5 Winston Churchill banknote in 2016 to further commemorate and honour the legacy that is Sir Winston Churchill (Dennys, 2013).

Churchill's official biographer, Sir Martin Gilbert, cited in Langworth (2012), eloquently concludes:

In my work, as I open file after file of Churchill's archive, from his entry into Government in 1905 to his retirement in 1955, I am continually surprised by the truth of his assertions, the modernity of his thought, the originality of his mind, the constructiveness of his proposals, his humanity and, most remarkable of all, his foresight (p. vii).

This chapter served to contextualise Sir Winston Churchill's experience of depression over his entire life. In highlighting the major socio-historical events in Churchill's life with specific reference to the occurrence and course of his depression, this chapter potentially laid the foundation for a plausible case for depressive realism, a key objective of this study. The findings and discussion of Individual Psychology as it pertains to the life of Sir Winston Churchill and his experience with depression will be discussed further in Chapter 7. In the following chapter, Chapter 5, the concept of depressive realism is explored in more detail.

A timeline of Churchill's key life events and major depressive episodes is presented at the end of this study in Appendix B (see p. 413).

## **Chapter 5**

### **Depressive Realism**

#### **5.1. Chapter Preview**

This chapter explores the concept of depressive realism and the contentious academic debate that surrounds the notion that depressed individuals are more realistic than non-depressed individuals. The chapter commences with a general definition of depression and a brief discussion on the differential diagnoses of bipolar disorder. Within the broader context of depression, depressive realism is then explored in more detail with an overview and review of the research that has been conducted in this field that both supports and opposes the concept. Depressive realism is then contextualised and contrasted against the backdrop of cognitive behavioural theory. The chapter concludes with an overview of the criticisms and limitations of depressive realism.

#### **5.2. Depression: An Overview**

Depression is a clinically classified disorder in that it has severe and often longlasting symptoms and side effects. It is an emotional state characterised by feelings of severe sadness, hopelessness and worthlessness (Sue, Sue & Sue, 1994). The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders Fifth Edition (DSM-5) (American Psychiatric Association, 2013) provides an overall diagnostic definition of depression by distinguishing between eight different depressive disorders of which major depressive disorder (including major depressive episode) and persistent depressive disorder, also known as dysthymia, denote the classic conditions of depression in this group of disorders. (The other depressive

disorders include disruptive mood dysregulation disorder; premenstrual dysphoric disorder; substance/medication–induced depressive disorder; depressive disorder due to another medical condition; other specified depressive disorder and unspecified depressive disorder).

According to the American Psychiatric Association (APA) (2013), a Major Depressive Disorder is characterised by depressive episodes lasting a minimum of two weeks with significant changes in physiological, cognitive, behavioural and affective functioning. Major Depressive Disorder may also be diagnosed based on a single episode but usually the disorder is of a recurrent nature. Persistent Depressive Disorder (Dysthymia) is a prolonged depressive disorder continuing for at least two years in adults and at least one year in children (APA, 2013).

The DSM-5, (APA, 2013) states that in order to classify Major Depressive Disorder, at least five of the following symptoms need to be present during the same two week period and should correspond to a change in previous behaviour patterns. At least one of the symptoms is either depressed mood or a loss of interest or pleasure. The symptoms include: depressed mood most of the day nearly every day; diminished interest or pleasure in almost all activities most of the day, nearly every day; significant weight loss or gain; insomnia or hypersomnia nearly every day; psychomotor distress nearly every day; fatigue or loss of energy nearly every day; feelings of worthlessness or inappropriate/excessive feelings of guilt; diminished ability to think or concentrate nearly every day and recurrent thoughts of death and possible suicidality. In addition to these symptoms, it is also critical that these symptoms are not the result of substance abuse or another medical condition or are not better accounted for by bereavement or grief, that is, after the loss of a loved one the symptoms persist for longer than two months. Also, that the occurrence of a major depressive episode is not better explained by Schizoaffective Disorder, Schizophrenia, Schizophreniform Disorder, Delusional Disorder or other psychotic disorders (APA, 2013). In addition, if there are two or

more major depressive episodes, each separated by at least two consecutive months, in which criteria for a major depressive episode are not present, recurrent Major Depressive Disorder may be diagnosed (APA, 2013).

According to the DSM-5 (APA, 2013) Persistent Depressive Disorder (Dysthymia) is described as a depressed mood that is chronic and more consistent. Sue, Sue and Sue (1994) propose that Major Depressive Disorder is more severe than Dysthymia and can result in crisis situations whereas Dysthymia is considered less severe but continual throughout one's life. The DSM-5 (APA, 2013) holds that Dysthymia is characterised mainly by a depressed mood that lasts for most of the day and is present for the majority of days in each month lasting for at least two years in adults and one year for children and adolescents. Major Depressive Disorder may precede Persistent Depressive Disorder and major depressive episodes may also occur during Persistent Depressive Disorder. If symptoms meet the criteria for Major Depressive Disorder for at least two years, a diagnosis of Persistent Depressive Disorder as well as Major Depressive Disorder would be appropriate (APA, 2013).

### **5.2.1. Differential Diagnosis of Bipolar Disorder**

There appears little disagreement that Sir Winston Churchill suffered from depressive episodes. However, there is less diagnostic consensus on whether he suffered from Bipolar Disorder. In this context, a brief definition of Bipolar Disorder is relevant. The DSM-5 (APA, 2013) typically classifies bipolar and related disorders as either Bipolar I, Bipolar II or Cyclothymic Disorder. Bipolar I Disorder is characterised by episodes of manic symptoms and may or may not be accompanied by hypomanic or major depressive episodes. The lifetime prevalence of a major depressive episode is not a requirement for a diagnosis of Bipolar I, but, most individuals who experience manic episodes also experience major depressive episodes during their lifetime. Bipolar II Disorder requires the lifetime occurrence

of at least one episode of major depression and at least one episode of hypomania (less severe manic symptoms). Cyclothymic Disorder is classified by the DSM-5 (APA, 2013) as a mental state wherein adults experience both hypomanic and depressed moods without meeting the criteria for an episode of mania, hypomania or major depression for a minimum period of two years (one year for children).

### **5.2.2. Epidemiology of Major Depression in South Africa**

Results from the South African Stress and Health Study report (2009) highlighted the limited available data on the prevalence of Major Depressive Disorder and the significance of under-funding of related mental health services in South Africa (Tomlinson, Grimsrud, Stein, Williams & Myer, 2009). This research conducted by Tomlinson et al. (2009) involved a nationally representative household survey between 2002 and 2004 using the World Health Organisation Composite International Diagnostic Interview (CIDI) to ascertain a diagnosis of depression. The data was sourced from 4351 adult South Africans of all racial groups.

Results indicated that prevalence of major depression was 9.7% for a lifetime course and 4.9% for the 12 months prior to the interview. Prevalence rates were significantly higher amongst female respondents than among male respondents and rates were also higher among those with a low level of education.

Compared to data from other countries, South Africa appears to have lower rates of depression than the United States of America but higher rates than neighbouring African countries, most notably, Nigeria (Tomlinson et al., 2009). Not only do these results indicate a noteworthy incidence of depression, they also highlight the need for healthcare in a context where there is substantial under-funding of mental health services and research in South Africa (Tomlinson et al., 2009).

Stein et al. (2008) found similar lifetime prevalence rates of psychiatric disorders in South Africa, that is, the prevalence rates in South Africa are high in comparison to other countries on the African continent. As mentioned in Chapter 1, socio-demographic factors spilling over from the Apartheid era as well as current socio-economic factors are considered to be contributing factors for this high prevalence. According to Stein et al. (2008), results indicate a high prevalence of substance abuse, mainly alcohol, followed by depressive and bipolar disorders and anxiety disorders. These findings support the research by Tomlinson et al. (2009) in that there is a definitive need for healthcare and treatment of many South Africans living with depressive and bipolar disorders.

### **5.3. Depressive Realism**

#### **5.3.1. An Introduction**

Depressive realism is a concept that has evolved out of research that investigated the notion that depressed people are more realistic in their thinking and have a more realistic perception of their environment than non-depressed individuals (Ghaemi, 2011). Notably, however, depressive realism is mostly applied to individuals with moderate depression.

In 1967, psychologist Martin Seligman proposed the theory of learned helplessness. Seligman (1972) researched the conditions and types of events over which individuals believed they could exert a degree of control as well as the effects resulting from events that individuals could not control by their actions. He proposed that, for some individuals, uncontrollable events are traumatising and leave the individual feeling debilitated and helpless. So much so, that any future events, particularly traumatising events, cause the individual to display passivity and an inability to react appropriately. The traumatised individuals display an inability to learn that responding can be effective and ‘learn’ to become helpless in the face of trauma. As such, “uncontrollable events can significantly

debilitate organisms: they produce emotional stress in animals and possibly depression in man” (Seligman, 1972, p. 407). In 1979, two students of Seligman, Lauren Alloy and Lynn Abrahamson (1979), decided to study learned helplessness further.

In the USA, Alloy and Abramson (1979) conducted a series of four experiments using college students who were divided into two groups: depressed and non-depressed students. They tested the rating that depressed and non-depressed college students gave to their ability to influence the outcome of an action. Results indicated that depressed college students were more accurate in judging how much control they had over an outcome whereas non-depressed students demonstrated a higher degree of illusion about their control over an outcome. The students with depression had a more realistic perception of their locus of control and ability to influence an outcome than students with no depression (Alloy & Abramson, 1979). Alloy and Abramson (1979) had made a contentious and provocative discovery: depressed students did not underestimate how much control they had, in fact, normal students overestimated it. This observation delineated the term ‘depressive realism’.

The notion of depressive realism challenges conventional clinical thinking by demonstrating that not only can depressed individuals make realistic judgements but that they do so to a greater extent than non-depressed individuals. The evidence for such a theory stems from studies involving depressed individuals who demonstrate an ability to better judge experimenter-controlled contingencies between their actions and a response than non-depressed individuals (Moore & Fresco, 2007)

Although these results have been replicated by other researchers since 1979, some researchers (Bryson, Doan & Pasquali, 1984; Kapci & Cramer, 1999; Dobson & Pusch, 1995; Msetfi, Murphy & Simpson, 2004; Dunning & Story, 1991; Vazquez, 1987 and Langer & Roth, 1975) have also failed to replicate the same results. Criticism has thus been levelled

against the initial research findings of Alloy and Abramson in 1979 (Allan et al. 2007). For this reason, the concept of depressive realism remains a controversial topic in current academic inquiry.

### **5.3.2. The Academic Debate**

#### ***5.3.2.1. Seminal Study of Alloy and Abrahamson***

The literature on depressive realism demonstrates contentious views within the discipline of psychology. Early studies on the concept of depressive realism by psychologists Alloy and Abrahamson (1979), suggest that depressed people appear to have a more realistic perception of their importance, locus of control and abilities than non-depressed individuals. They conducted a series of four experiments using college students divided into two groups: depressed and non-depressed based on their scores on a number of depression inventories, including Beck's Depression Inventory (Allan et al. 2007). On a series of 40 trials, participants were asked to estimate the relationship between pressing or not pressing a button and the result of a green light appearing. The participants were being assessed on their perception of control or contingency that they believed they had on the outcome of their actions (Allan et al. 2007).

In the first experiment, Alloy and Abramson (1979) demonstrated that individuals with depression and individuals without depression did not differ in their ratings of control when the relationship was contingent. They also showed that ratings of control increased with an increase in the probability of that outcome and there was no difference between the two groups. In the second experiment, Alloy and Abramson (1979) tested the participants' responses when the outcome was non contingent, that is, the outcome occurred regardless of whether or not the participants responded.

Results indicated that when the probability of the outcome was low (25%), that is, when the outcome of their actions was infrequent, ratings were close to zero for both groups. However, the ratings of non-depressed participants increased considerably when probability of the outcome was set much higher (75%). The ratings of the depressed group were unaffected by the probability of the outcome. Thus, in this experiment, non-depressed participants demonstrated an illusion of control, that is, their perception of control increased with increases in probability, whereas the depressed group demonstrated depressive realism, that is, judged control was not affected by the probability outcome (Allan et al. 2007).

In the remaining third and fourth experiments the focus was to invoke a different decision-making process but still with the emphasis being on the rating of participants' locus of control. In these remaining two experiments, Alloy and Abramson (1979) decided to test effect on outcome valence rather than probability. That is, to test the effect of one's actions if an outcome was perceived desirable or undesirable rather than frequent or infrequent. Participants were told that every time they pushed a button and the light went on they would receive something of monetary value. Results of these tests showed similar findings to the probability tests, that is, outcome valence affected the ratings of individuals without depression but not the ratings of individuals with depression. According to Allan et al. (2007), these results indicated that when a value was assigned to the action, individuals who did not have depression still felt that they had a bigger influence on the outcome and therefore pressed the button more frequently. "Thus, depressive realism was demonstrated with an outcome valence effect as well as with an outcome density effect" (Allan et al, 2007, p. 485).

In sum, Alloy and Abramson (1979) demonstrated that American college students who did not have depression overestimated the control that their responses had over the outcome of an action whereas the group of depressed students proved more accurate in

judging the control or influence they had over an outcome. Allan et al. (2007) conclude that subjects who were not depressed overestimated their degree of control when non-contingent outcomes were frequent (experiment two) or desired (experiment three) and underestimated their control when contingent outcomes were undesired, as in experiment four.

#### ***5.3.2.2. Further Studies in Relation to Alloy and Abramson's Study***

According to Stone, Dodrill and Johnson (2001), the overriding result of Alloy and Abramson's research (1979) was that even when there was no contingency, non-depressed subjects thought their response to push or not to push the button affected the onset of the green light whereas depressed participants were able to judge that there was no relationship.

Allan et al. (2007) argue that one of the objectives of Alloy and Abramson's (1979) research was to test the learned helplessness theory of depression (Seligman, 1975). As such, according to this theory, depressed people consider themselves to be ineffective and powerless to control outcomes in the real world. A further deduction from this theory is that depressed individuals hypothetically should underestimate the degree of contingency or degree of control between their responses and their outcome (Allan et al, 2007). However, the research by Alloy and Abramson (1979) indicated that depressed college students were quite accurate in judging how much control they placed over the outcome whereas non-depressed college students yielded to illusions about their control over the outcome.

Other researchers have since also reported similar findings to Alloy and Abramson's (1979) research. Dobson and Franche (1989) were also able to demonstrate positive evidence for the existence of depressive realism. However, they state that, the strength of these findings appeared to weaken as the ecological validity of studies increased.

Lennox, Bedell, Abramson, Raps and Foley (1990) conducted a similar experiment to Alloy and Abramson (1979) and were able to replicate the results of Alloy and Abramson's (1979) first experiment. Lennox et al. (1990) conducted their tests using hospital patients with four different diagnoses: Major Depressive Disorder; Schizophrenia with depression; Schizophrenia without depression and non-psychiatric medical patients. The results demonstrated that ratings of control increased with an increase in probability and there was no difference in the ratings among the four groups when the relationship was contingent.

Vazquez (1987) and Presson and Benassi (cited in Allan et al, 2007) have also been able to demonstrate replications of Alloy and Abramson's (1979) results in experiment two, which demonstrated that, when probability is high, individuals who are not depressed rate their control higher than those individuals who do have depression. They were able to show that ratings of people without depression increased with higher probability but that ratings of individuals with depression did not change.

Langer and Roth (1975) investigated the tendency for individuals to overestimate their ability to control outcomes or events, that is, they give in to illusions of control. In an experiment where feedback to participants emphasised success rather than failure, there was evidence for an increase in effect compared to feedback that emphasised failure could lead to a decrease in the effect. Here, this illusion of control over their situation appeared weaker for depressed individuals.

Taylor and Armor (1996) researched the concept of positive illusions and how people cope with adversity. Research conducted with breast cancer survivors indicated that the patients appeared to have a greater sense of control over their disease and long term recovery than was actually the case. They overestimated their prognosis in comparison to statistical data. They appeared to have unrealistic optimistic attitudes which further correlated with

better psychological adjustment and presented as psychologically healthier but mildly unrealistic. This concept of positive illusions is, in essence, the opposite of depressive realism (Taylor, 1996).

According to Ghaemi (2011) the discovery of healthy illusions by Taylor (1996) in a real-life setting and not in a laboratory setting with contingency-based judgement tasks, begs the question of what it means to be mentally healthy. “We tend to see mental health as being normal, happy, realistic and fulfilled. Yet Taylor showed that individuals sacrifice realism in the interest of happiness” (Ghaemi, 2011, p. 54). Thus, Ghaemi (2011) argues, that individuals with depression may be sadder yet wiser and suggests that “depression may be the royal road to realism” (p. 55).

#### ***5.3.2.3. Critique of Research on Depressive Realism***

Conversely, there are numerous examples of research that has been unable to replicate the findings of Alloy and Abramson (1979) thereby creating a debate as to the validity of depressive realism. According to Bryson, Doan and Pasquali (1984), neither of their research groups demonstrated an illusion of control and ratings were constant with increases in probability. Kapci and Cramer (1999) testified that both mood groups showed an illusion of control where both groups' ratings increased with increases in probability.

Ackermann and DeRubeis (1991) argue that only studies using tasks containing an objective standard against which to compare participant responses can determine the validity of the depressive realism proposition. They argue that although many studies have provided evidence to substantiate the depressive realism theory, almost as many studies have provided evidence to the contrary. Results appear to vary as a function of the type of task performed in the study. Results from contingency-based judgements support the view that depressed individuals are more accurate than their non-depressed counterparts, however, other studies

that emphasise the participants' recall of self-evaluation information, indicate that the non-depressed participants are more accurate.

Dobson and Pusch (1995) studied depressive realism in a non-contingent situation (the light bulb would go on and off regardless of the subject pushing the button and so their actions could not affect the outcome either way) with samples of 15 clinically depressed, 15 remitted and 15 non-depressed females. They used a computerised version of Alloy and Abramson's (1979) judgment of non-contingency task and set out to test depressive realism in the depressed subjects and demonstrate a degree of non-realistic and positively biased reactions in the other two groups (Dobson & Pusch, 1995). Results indicated that depressive realism was not evident in their results across all three groups. The clinically depressed subjects overestimated their degree of control and were not more realistic than either the remitted subjects or the subjects who did not have depression. This research suggests that depressive realism is not generalisable from the college student sample to clinically depressed subjects. Dobson and Pusch (1995) argue that tests in support of depressive realism can be set up in a laboratory setting but when the test is taken into a real-life situation, too many other factors can override the effect on depressive realism and the effect cannot be replicated.

Dobson, Pusch, Ardo and Murphy (1998) also conducted a study on the relationship between personality styles, mood and depressive realism in mildly depressed (dysphoric) and non-depressed (non-dysphoric) university students. The results indicated that the relative accuracy of participant perspectives varied as a function of personality style and mood. That is, depending on personality styles and mood, the dysphoric individuals reacted differently to tests designed to test for depressive realism. Dobson et al. (1998) explain that inconsistencies in the depressive realism literature are a result of the interplay between personality style, mood and the experimental methodology. Depressed individuals can provide accurate judgements in certain situations but these situations are typically ones that pose little threat or

loss to the individual's self-esteem. Conversely, negative cognitive biases are more likely to emerge among dysphoric participants who are in personally significant situations.

Furthermore, Carson, Hollon and Shelton (2010) criticise the research on depressive realism for being predominantly limited to non-clinical participants. They conducted a study with psychiatric patients who met the criteria for Major Depressive Disorder and whose results indicated that they underestimated control in a contingent situation and were less likely to overestimate control in a non-contingent situation. This was largely as a result of their perception that they received less positive reinforcement and were consistently more negative in their judgments than their non-depressed counterparts. The findings of Carson et al. (2010) did not support the notion of depressive realism and suggested that depressed patients tend to distort their judgements in a characteristically negative manner.

In a compelling argument by Pacini, Muir and Epstein (1998), depressive realism may be the result of depressed individuals overcompensating for a tendency towards maladaptive intuitive processing. In so doing, such individuals exercise extreme rational control in trivial or artificial situations yet in more serious and realistic emotional settings their propensity for rational thinking decreases.

Msetfi, Murphy and Simpson (2007) found that, in trying to replicate Alloy and Abramson's (1979) research findings, the overestimation of control in non-depressed people was only evident when the interval was long enough, implying that these individuals took into account more factors before making a decision compared to their depressed counterparts. In this regard, Adelson (2005) comments that inter-trial length does not affect the depressed individual's sense of control partly because it is more difficult for people prone to rumination to pay attention during long intervals and/or because such individuals are unable to process information about the context of the task adequately, that is, depressed individuals may be

unable to take the context into account when judging their sense of control. Msetfi et al. (2007) suggest that the way in which information is processed differs between depressed and non-depressed people. This difference in information processing removes the notion of realism that was originally used to explain the depressive realism effect presented by Alloy and Abramson (1979). Msetfi et al. (2007) argue that depressed people are not actually realistic, instead, they fail to consider context or all of the available background information when making a judgment or assessing the level of their control. These observations imply that depressive realism is possibly a result of different ways in which information is processed.

Dunning and Story (1991) demonstrated that when applied to real-world situations, depressed individuals who were asked to make predictions about future actions and outcomes that might occur in their personal world, displayed a high level of overconfidence, that is, they overestimated the likelihood that their predictions would prove to be accurate. However, the depressed subjects were less accurate in their predictions than their counterparts who did not have depression. They were more overconfident yet less accurate in their predictions about future events. As such, depressed individuals may express greater confidence in their judgements but these are not necessarily more realistic than non-depressed individuals.

Moore and Fresco (2007) also conducted a meta-analysis of 75 studies of depressive realism representing 7305 participants from across the USA and Canada as well as from England, Spain and Israel with results indicating a small overall depressive realism effect. The presence of an objective standard of reality and method of assessment moderated this overall effect. Different methodologies in measurement appeared to strongly influence whether a depressive realism effect was found yet quality of the research methods employed was also a significant factor in moderating the effect. Arguably, studies lower in methodological quality supported depressive realism more.

Research conducted by Dykman, Abramson, Alloy and Hartlage (1989) explored schematic processing as a means of predicting when depressed people would be negative relative to people without depression and when depressed and non-depressed people would show biased or unbiased/realistic thinking. Results indicated that depressed subjects showed negative encoding relative to subjects without depression only when their schemas were more negative and both depressed and non-depressed subjects showed positive bias, negative bias and unbiased encoding depending on the relative feedback on 'cue-to-schema match'.

According to Allan et al. (2007) depressed people are pessimistic. "Depressives may be sadder but they are not wiser" (Allan et al., 2007, p. 494). Depressive realism results from depressed people's bias to saying "no" more often, than their propensity to actually be more realistic.

Interestingly, Alloy and Abramson (1979) made reference to motivational factors that may play a role in differences in judgment of control. They suggested that people without depression have a higher level of self-esteem than depressed people and behave in a way so as to protect this self-esteem. Since non-depressed individuals are motivated to enhance their self-esteem, people without depression over estimate their degree of control over desirable outcomes and underestimate their degree of control over undesirable outcomes. Individuals with depression, on the other hand, do not make these mistakes because they do not have a specific motivation to protect their self-esteem.

Further research in the USA by Stone, Dodrill and Johnson (2001) tested depressive cognition using general knowledge questions to determine if cognition in depressed individuals incorporates a realistic view of the world or rather a general tendency toward negativity. Participants comprised of depressed and non-depressed individuals who were asked to complete a set of general knowledge questions and then required to provide two

types of probability judgements of the likelihood that they correctly answered the questions, that is, the probability that they correctly answered each of the individual questions as well as an aggregate judgment of the percentage of all the questions they thought they had correctly answered.

Results indicated that in accordance with depressive realism theory and general negativity, depressed individuals demonstrated less overconfidence than non-depressed individuals in their item-by-item assessment of their answers to the individual questions. That is, they displayed less individual item overconfidence than did the non-depressed group. These results would appear to support depressive realism because the depressed group gave more realistic probability judgments in this situation than non-depressed participants. However, in their aggregate or average judgments of the percentage of correct questions answered, in which accuracy is determined, the depressed group of participants demonstrated lower probability judgements in their results than the non-depressed participants. In this situation, the non-depressed group were more accurate and the depressed group were actually more under-confident which supported a theory of general negativity but not of depressive realism. The implications of these findings suggest that the researchers produced a scenario where depressed individuals were both more realistic and less realistic than their non-depressed counterparts. And, although the research could propose that depressed individuals are more realistic when it comes to individual item judgements but not in their aggregate judgments, Stone et al. (2001) believe that it is more plausible that the depressed participants displayed a more general negativity which was manifested as reduced overconfidence in one situation and as under-confidence in the other situation. According to Stone et al. (2001) only when depressed individuals can demonstrate realistic reasoning in both situations and to the extent that the results can be generalised, will the theory of depressive realism be substantiated.

Moore and Fresco (2007) conducted a study to determine a link between attributional style, dysphoria and the degree of objectivity that individuals possess regarding how they attribute causes to events in their lives. They postulated that individuals with a depressogenic attributional style would be more realistic in how they assign causes to events than those with a non-depressogenic attributional style. Furthermore, Moor and Fresco (2007) postulated that dysphoric individuals would be more realistic than their non-dysphoric counterparts, supporting the pre-existing findings of depressive realism. However, contrary to the theory of depressive realism and their expectations for the study, participants with a depressogenic attributional style as well as dysphoric individuals, irrespective of their attributional style, were found to be less objective in their assessment of the causes of events in their lives. Individuals with a depressogenic attributional style were found to be negatively biased and individuals with a non-depressogenic attributional style were found to be overly optimistic. In addition, dysphoric individuals were found to be negatively biased compared to the non-dysphoric group who were found to be relatively realistic in their attributions of events. The implications of these results suggest that attributional style needs to be taken into consideration in the depressive realism debate.

Interestingly, Dobson, Pusch, Ardo and Murphy (1998) suggest an explanation for the inconsistencies seen in the depressive realism literature. They claim that personality style of the depressed individual impacts on the response of such participants in relevant studies and may account for the considerable variance in the way participants respond. Dobson et al. (1998) conclude that depressed participants can provide accurate judgments in certain situations, that is, they can demonstrate depressive realism, depending on their particular personality.

## **5.4. Depressive Realism and Cognitive Behavioural Theory**

### **5.4.1. Introduction to the Cognitive Behavioural Theory of Depression**

Aaron T. Beck (1967, 1970) proposed a cognitive theory of depression wherein he argued that depression is the result of a person's tendency to be intrinsically more negative and interpret events in more negative ways. Depressed people have a general negative bias that underpins their overall outlook and interpretation of events (Beck, 1970). Individuals prone to depression acquire certain negative attitudes about themselves, their surrounding environment and their future. As a result of these attitudes, the individual develops sensitivities to certain stresses such as being rejected or deprived. When these stresses threaten the individual, he or she overreacts with notions of not being adequate or 'good enough' and reacts with intense pessimism. These attitudes become persistent cognitive patterns that are known in cognitive behavioural theory as schemas. It is these schemas that influence the way an individual interprets and reacts to events and conceptualises experiences. For a depressed person these schemas represent negative feelings of self-worth and lead to the typical depressed feelings of sadness and pessimism (Beck, 1970). Beck states that "as the depression deepens, these schemas increasingly dominate the cognitive processes and not only displace the more appropriate schemas but also disrupt the cognitive processes involved in attaining self-objectivity and reality testing" (Beck, 1970, p. 290). It is these negative automatic thoughts, derived from the individual's maladaptive perceptions, that underlie depressive symptoms rather than the other way around, that is, depression causes negative perceptions.

Beck's (1967, 1970) cognitive model of depression assumes three specific concepts: firstly, the cognitive triad, secondly, the notion of schemas which are persistent dysfunctional thoughts and beliefs which negatively influence the individual's self-worth and, thirdly,

cognitive errors whereby maladaptive beliefs are accompanied by negative or unrealistic reflections of reality. An individual with dysfunctional beliefs becomes more vulnerable to depression because of their negative belief pattern.

Most notably, the ‘primary triad of depression’ is the cornerstone of Beck’s (1967, 1970) cognitive theory of depression. It describes three major cognitive patterns or components that interact with each other and result in a person having a negative self-concept as well as negative feelings about the world around them. The first component is the pattern of viewing experiences in a negative way; the second is a pattern of viewing oneself in a negative way and the third component is a pattern of viewing the future in a negative way. According to Beck (1967, 1970) the epicentre of one’s thoughts is consumed with feelings of personal deficiency, self-defeat and an inability to overcome life’s demands and obstacles. The person views himself as deficient and inadequate and anticipates that his current negative situation will continue into the future. “These cognitive distortions lead to the affective and motivational symptoms that are characteristic of depression” (Beck, 1970, p. 273). These affective and motivational symptoms, characteristic of depression, include depressed mood, paralysis of will, avoidance wishes, suicidal wishes and increased dependency (Beck, 1967, 1970).

Cognitive behavioural theory postulates that depression is the result of cognitive distortions such as “faulty thinking, making incorrect inferences and failing to distinguish between fantasy and reality” (Corey, 2005, p. 284). Changing these negative schemas should reduce the level of depression but, if, according to depressive realism, depressed people are more realistic, attempting to change these negative schemas and create more truthful cognitions would be ineffective (Stone, Dodrill & Johnson, 2001). If depressed people have a tendency to show biased negative thinking, then depressive realism is once again challenged by one of the most fundamental theories of depression.

The cognitive behavioural theory of depression arguably tends to sit at the opposite continuum of the scale of depressive realism. However, Beck (1967) cited in Moore and Fresco (2007), asserted that schemas and automatic thoughts and the depressed affect that results from them tend to be self-perpetuating. The cognition of depressed individuals is schema-driven that are negatively weighted whereas the cognition of non-depressed individuals is data driven, which implies that depressed people's cognitions are less informed by reality and therefore they are less able to objectively evaluate their environment. Moore and Fresco (2007) add, however, that despite the significance of negatively-biased cognitions in Beck's (1967) theory, realism remains empirically under-investigated in terms of the aetiology of depression.

#### **5.4.2. Depressive Realism versus the Cognitive Behavioural Model of Depression**

Ghaemi (2007) explains that cognitive behavioural therapy rests on the premise that clinically depressed individuals have a tendency to distort reality through mistaken cognitive processes, that is, what they interpret and perceive about the world around them is inaccurate or not true and their perceptions make them sad. As such, their mood is depressed because they are consumed by depressing thoughts. However, the depressive realism model stands in direct contrast to the cognitive behavioural model of depression and has an important implication: non-depressed individuals might have some gaps in their degree of insight or 'psychological blind-spots' which are necessary for realistic emotional performance.

Haaga and Beck (1995) agree that Beck's (1967) cognitive theory of depression has provided a well-founded basis for depressive thinking with one major exception: the research by Alloy and Abramson (1979) used subjects scoring nine or above on the Beck Depression Inventory and demonstrated more accuracy than their non-depressed counterparts in judging

contingencies between their responses and outcomes. This notion of depressive realism is therefore contradictory to Beck's theory that depressed people show biased negative thinking. Consequently, Haaga and Beck (1995) believe that the debate around depressive realism can be heuristic for the refinement of the cognitive theory of depression.

Alloy and Abraham's (1979) research has some bearing on the traditional views of the cognition of depressed individuals (Haaga & Beck, 1995) as it challenges the views of depression as pathology and maladaptive. Haaga, Dyck and Ernst (1991) also reviewed studies testing the cognitive theory of depression and found that many aspects of the theory's claims about negative schemas and depressive thinking are substantiated empirically, however, evidence that depressive thinking is particularly inaccurate or illogical, is weak.

Although the two models of depressive realism and cognitive behavioural theory of depression appear contradictory wherein the depressive realism model argues that depression is associated with more insight whereas the cognitive behavioural model argues that depression is associated with less insight, according to Ghaemi (2007), it appears that in milder forms of depression, the realism effect is more notable. However, with more severe cases of depression there tends to be more impaired levels of insight. In this context, it could be argued that mild to moderate chronic depression may better fit the depressive realism model while more severe depression may better fit the cognitive distortion model (Ghaemi, 2007). In fact, Beck (1967, 1970) cited in Ghaemi (2007) concurs that cognitive bias can extend positively towards mania and negatively towards major depression and be mildly positive in euthymia and may be completely equalised in mild depression.

Seidel et al. (2012) conducted research on causal attribution in depression. As discussed, biased causal attribution is a critical factor in the cognitive model of depression wherein negatively biased information processing is a key factor in the maintenance of

depressive symptoms. Where depressed individuals interpret events negatively, non-depressed individuals show a self-serving bias (internal attributions of positive events, one feels responsible for a positive event and external attributions of negative events). Seidel et al. (2012), using magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) for brain scanning purposes to investigate behavioural and neural correlates of causal attribution in major depression, were able to demonstrate that depressed individuals were able to show more balanced attributions. Both depressed and non-depressed groups were confronted with positive and negative social events and asked to make causal attributions (internal versus external). On a behavioural level the results supported the concept of depressive realism in that, behaviourally, the non-depressed group showed a self-serving bias towards causal attribution whereas the depressed group showed a balanced attribution pattern consistent with depressive realism. The depressed group did not see the world through 'rose-coloured glasses' associated with the self-serving tendencies of the non-depressed group. In addition, an interesting finding by Seidel et al. (2012) demonstrated that those individuals with the most severe depressive symptoms exhibited a negative attribution bias more consistent with Beck's (1967) theory of depression. With increasing symptom severity, depressive realism turns into a non-self-serving tendency and, in contrast, the non-depressed are happily self-serving. These findings thus indicate that depressive realism is found to be present in moderately depressed individuals but with the increased severity of symptoms, depressed individuals become more negatively-biased, supporting the cognitive behavioural model of depression.

In summation, Haaga and Beck (1995) provide a positive outlook on the overall research findings of depressive realism and cognitive theory, suggesting more theoretical revision of the two theories could prove useful in establishing a better appreciation of their constructs. They believe that depressive realism should not necessarily be viewed as an antagonist of cognitive behavioural theory and that it may be useful to review its principles

against those which underpin cognitive theory. They propose a ‘meeting of the minds’ approach in which individuals with depression and individuals without depression are likely to interpret their world in different ways, sometimes biased and sometimes not, which can lead to either accurate or distorted perceptions (Haaga & Beck, 1995). Furthermore, they comment that despite ambiguities in the literature on depressive realism, there are two conclusions that seem unlikely to change: firstly, that, neither depressed nor non-depressed people are likely to be uniformly realistic or unrealistic across all situations and, secondly, there is a trade-off between clinical relevance and internal validity when it comes to evaluating realism. “In other words, the more rigorous one’s definition of an objective standard against which to evaluate judgements for accuracy versus distortion, the higher a proportion of clinically relevant cognitions is excluded from study” (Haaga & Beck, 1995, p. 45).

Furthermore, Haaga and Beck (1995) surmise of their research on both theories of depressive realism and cognitive behavioural theory, that, it is important to emphasise that cognitive distortions are not an exclusive feature of depressive thinking, nor unheard of among non-depressed individuals. Likewise, it would be a mistake to ignore clinical observations of cognitive bias in depressed individuals in favour of laboratory results that suggest that in some circumstances moderately depressed individual appear particularly realistic. Rather than implying that depression is uniquely associated with biased processing and negative cognitions and non-depression is associated with more realistic perceptions, it would be more viable to understand that both depressed and non-depressed individuals view their environment in sometimes biased ways that are only partially answerable to data and that can lead to “either accurate or distorted perceptions, depending on situational affordances, the content of biased beliefs and opportunities for translating beliefs into outcomes via the actions one chooses” (p. 46).

### **5.5. Overall Critique and Limitations of Depressive Realism**

By virtue of many influential factors, it has proved difficult for quantitative researchers to consistently replicate results and, regarding depressive realism, even more difficult to substantiate the strength of the results. Methodological concerns with regards to some of the research studies as well as the inability to generalise results to other population groups in real-life settings all jeopardise the credibility of the hypothesis (Allan et al. 2007; Stone et al. 2001).

Stone et al. (2001) comment that most research is conducted with dysphoric or mildly depressed individuals and not so much with clinically depressed individuals and therefore from a methodological perspective it is difficult to make conclusions that any judgement processes made by non-depressed, dysphoric or clinically depressed people are unbiased based solely on the basis of accurate performance on one particular task. However, although most of the research investigating depressive realism does not involve clinically depressed participants but rather mildly depressed individuals, there is good reason to believe that an investigation of dysphoric individuals provides insight into more serious cases of depression.

Further observations by Stone et al. (2001) highlight that depression and anxiety often co-exist and, in tests to determine depressive realism, depressed participants' responses may be further confounded by degrees of anxiety. In research on depressive realism, assessing the influence of anxiety and determining whether the arousing effects of anxiety could counteract depression is a consideration for the final results.

Ackermann and DeRubeis (1991) observe that most of the evidence in support of depressive realism has been tested using the contingency methodology developed by Alloy and Abramson (1979) and there is much less evidence for depressive realism to translate beyond this domain. Stone et al. (2001) make a further observation that it is unclear whether

depressed people reason realistically only in certain situations or whether they have a general negativity that sometimes leads to self-deprecation biases and sometimes to accuracy.

Haaga and Beck (1995) also outline four critical reactions: firstly, depressive realism is not necessarily replicable across tests by different researchers. Secondly, depressive realism studies have often used self-report depressive symptom measures with subjects who do not necessarily meet the diagnostic criteria for depression. Realism may ultimately be limited to mild depressive states only. Thirdly, much of the research on depressive realism does not evaluate realism effectively and, fourthly, there appears to be some difficulty testing the hypothesis in more natural environments outside of a laboratory setting. Laboratory tasks are possibly insufficient to document realism effectively.

Furthermore, Haaga and Beck (1995) mention that it is important to assess whether realism is possibly a general characteristic of either depressed or non-depressed individuals, that is, neither realism nor cognitive distortion are necessarily inevitable characteristics of depression or of healthy functioning. Ultimately, they suggest a 'modification of emphasis' assigned to the link between depression and biased processing and the link between non-depression and more realistic perceptions (as highlighted by cognitive theory of depression). Such a modification would render both theories of depressive realism and cognitive theory more viable and both theories would not need to be viewed as antagonists but instead, depressive realism could be experiential for further theoretical refinement of the cognitive theory of depression.

## **5.6. Concluding Comments on Depressive Realism**

In sum, Allan et al. (2007, p. 493) state that "the literature does not readily fall into a coherent picture". However, the research on depressive realism has attracted a good deal of attention and there are findings that both support and criticise its authenticity. Loewen (2011)

comments that despite studies leaning slightly towards depressive realism, there are problems with the methodology of these studies in many cases and the evidence is not wholly conclusive. Many of the terms within depressive realism are difficult to define and even arbitrary. Moore and Fresco (2007) also confirm the inconsistency of findings in the literature on depressive realism.

Moore and Fresco (2007) further comment that the discrepancies in the findings varies consistently with the ecological validity of the contingent stimuli used, with more ecologically valid stimulus materials being less supportive of depressive realism (Dobson & Franche, 1989; Moore & Fresco, 2007). However, this explanation has not been empirically tested and other more plausible reasons may apply to the divergent findings, such as differences in cognitive processing that occur between causal attributions and judgements of contingency, irrespective of the research methods used.

The purpose of this research study therefore is not to necessarily prove its existence or validity but rather to discuss its potential to exist, in one form or another in a real-life setting, by examining and exploring the life of Sir Winston Churchill within the context of his own depression. The study aims to richly describe the possibility that a degree of depressive realism may have fuelled or interplayed with Churchill's tenacious personality and dogmatic decision-making ability during some of the most challenging periods of his life and that of humanity in general. Ghaemi (2011) argues that Churchill's ability to see the truth where other politicians had failed, particularly in relation to events leading up to the Second World War and the threat of Nazism, was unique to Churchill. "Perhaps the key to finding a link between this melancholic Churchill and his political realism can be found in the era of his political exile" (Ghaemi, 2011, p. 63).

## 5.7. Conclusion

In this chapter, an overview of depression together with a brief discussion of its clinical diagnoses and a basic overview of the prevalence of major depression in a South African context were provided. The concept of depressive realism within the context of a broader overview of depression was then discussed together with a literature review of the various studies conducted to test the theory of depressive realism. Despite the discrepancies in the various research findings, there is sufficient evidence to suggest the possibility that depressive realism is a 'real' phenomenon and its potential to prompt a revision and refinement of traditional therapeutic methods to treat depression may provide an encouraging and positive outlook for individuals with depression.

The following chapter reviews the research design and methodological considerations relevant to this study.



## Chapter 6

### Research Design and Methodology

#### 6.1. Chapter Preview

A qualitative research methodology has been selected to explore and describe the concept of depressive realism as applied to a case history. According to Terre Blanche and Durrehim (1999) qualitative research enables the researcher to study complex issues in an in-depth and holistic manner and allows the researcher to be immersed in the detail of the data and explore the inter-relationships that exist within the data. “The whole phenomenon under study is understood as a complex system that is more than the sum of its parts and focuses on more complex inter-dependencies rather than linear, cause and effect relationships (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999, p. 43).

Of the various qualitative research techniques, a single case study method has been employed for this study in order to explore the idea of depressive realism within a real life context. The aim of the study is to reconstruct the life history of Sir Winston Churchill with a particular focus on his lifetime experience with depression against a theoretical backdrop of Alfred Adler’s Theory of Individual Psychology in order to provide a real-life context for depressive realism. Before embarking on a psychobiographical case study, the researcher must secure the highest degree of credibility in the research process and ensure maximum trustworthiness of the research findings. In order to do this, a number of methodological issues inherent to psychobiographical research, need to be highlighted and discussed, together with possible recommendations and strategies to minimise the effects and influences of possible shortcomings.

In the first part of the chapter a historical context to the development of psychobiography as well as the overall advantages and disadvantages of this methodology will be provided. Specific methodological considerations, inherent to psychobiographical research, will then be presented, together with possible solutions to reduce their impact on the quality of the research process. The application of these methodological considerations to the case study of Sir Winston Churchill will also be discussed. These considerations include: researcher bias, reductionism, analysing an absent subject, cross-cultural differences, easy genre elitism, infinite amount of biographical data, inflated expectations and trustworthiness of the data. Ethical considerations relevant to psychobiographical research and, to this study in particular, will also be discussed.

The second part of the chapter addresses the ontology and epistemology of the research, the research design, the case selection process, data collection and analysis techniques. Finally, a discussion of the researcher's self-reflexivity, during the course of this study, concludes the chapter.

## **6.2. Brief History of Psychobiography and Overall Advantages and Disadvantages**

In the field of personology, as such, personality psychology (the study of individual personality), psychobiography has emerged and progressed into a respected and influential research methodology (Runyan, 1988). Straddling biography and psychology and, commencing officially with Sigmund Freud's psychobiography of *Leonardo da Vinci and a Memory of His Childhood* in 1910, psychobiography has ignited a spark of enthusiasm amongst many social scientists towards its application in exploring the lives of individuals to advance the understanding of human nature (McAdams, 1988; Runyan, 1988). Psychobiography has defined itself as biography framed within psychological theory, a

method of study that makes use of “any kind of formal or systematic psychology” (Runyan, 1988, p.296).

The number of psychobiographies produced since Freud's *Leornado* in 1910, have continued to grow through the twentieth and twenty first century, with Erik Erikson's analyses of Martin Luther in 1958 and Mahatma Gandhi in 1969 establishing prominence. A more active resurgence of psychobiographical study, focusing on more comprehensive and persuasive biographical analyses, has also been observed from the late 1980's to present day (McAdams, 1988). The growth of psychobiography is indicated by the multitude of individuals studied as well as by the range of disciplines involved and the contributions of relevant professional institutions and publications (Runayn, 1988).

Furthermore, Runyan (1988) emphasises that progress in psychobiographical research is best understood by analysing eight relevant component processes, including, but not limited to the following: the collection of additional data; the compilation of ‘fresh interpretations’; the scrutiny of previous explanations and the application of new theoretical frameworks. Yin (1994) believes that the value of psychobiography has evolved in its ability to provide a basis from which to build new theory or challenge existing theories, all of which are applicable to real-life, contemporary situations. Barresi and Juckes (1997) argue that “the story-like structure of lives makes narrative the most promising methodology” (p. 693).

According to McAdams (2009) psychobiography is advantageous because it addresses human dynamics within a natural, real-life setting. One of the prime functions of case study research is its “ability to bind together disparate aspects of a person's life in order to construct a narrative that confers unity and purpose in life. Narrative approaches to personality address directly the question of what a life means” (McAdams, 2009, p.426).

Psychobiographies are also valuable in developing hypotheses and theoretical insights as well

as providing the researcher with the opportunity to consider various socio-historical influences (Carlson, 1988; McAdams, 2009).

Runyan (1988) states that, despite psychobiography's evolution into a recognised discipline that enables the in-depth analysis of individual lives in their real-life setting and provides a link between narrative data and theoretical framework to better understand and illuminate individual lives, there are numerous criticisms and drawbacks inherent to this methodology. As far back as Freud's psychobiography of Leonardo da Vinci, criticisms against psychobiography point to a lack of objectivity and the presence of bias in the case of the researcher. Definitive conclusions can be easily made from insufficient evidence leading to precarious conclusions, poor reliability and the inability to generalise the findings (McAdams, 1988; McAdams & West, 1997; Runyan, 1988).

Whilst a plethora of literature supports and justifies the use of psychobiography (Barresi & Juckes, 1997; Carlson, 1988; Elms, 1994; Fouché & Van Niekerk, 2010; McAdams, 1988, 1997, 2009; Runyan, 1988; Schultz, 2005) equal consideration is given to the inherent drawbacks of the psychobiographical method, namely, researcher bias, poor reliability and insufficient validity and interpretive truth (McAdams, 2009; Yin, 1994). Anderson (1981) argues that even the 'fiercest' supporters of psychobiographical research will attest to its tendency to being reductionist, narrow and judgemental and that a "marked disparity exists between the potential and the execution of psychobiography" (p. 455).

Despite criticism, McAdams (1988) concludes that psychologists and social science academics are making significant strides in raising the profile of psychobiography and life-narrative research. Carlson (1988) believes that despite criticisms for the lack of scientific rigour, "psychobiographical study is simply too important to remain an outsider in

psychology” (p.137) and provides an exciting opportunity to strengthen and expand our knowledge of personality theory and individual behaviour.

The methodological considerations specific to psychobiographical research, together with potential solutions to reduce their impact on the research process and their application to the study of Sir Winston Churchill, will now be discussed in more detail. Ethical considerations pertinent to psychobiographical research and to this study in particular will then conclude the first part of this chapter.

### **6.3. Primary Objectives of the Research Study**

The objectives of this study are outlined as follows:

Firstly, to explore and describe the life of Sir Winston Churchill within the context of his lifelong battle with depression and to observe and document how this depression originated and affected his individual development on a personal and public level.

Secondly, to interpret and contextualise these observations, Alfred Adler’s theory of Individual Psychology was used to understand his life within a psychological frame of reference. The intention of the research is not one of generalising the observations and findings to the general population but rather to generalise the findings of the research to Adler’s stages of individual development. According to Yin (1994) this is deemed analytical generalisation.

Thirdly, to explore the possibility that Churchill’s depression might have been beneficial to him. That is to say that certain characteristics of his depression may have unwittingly driven him to be the leader that he was and, in so doing, provide a case for depressive realism.

Fourthly, the psychobiographical research method has provided the opportunity to explore multiple sources of data to describe the life of an individual, in this case, Sir Winston Churchill, in the most in-depth and personal account possible (Yin, 1994). Although the observations of his life may not be generalisable to the general population, the intention was that the richness of the data and the depth of analysis of such an enigmatic yet tormented historical figure may be sufficient evidence to establish a degree of credibility for depressive realism in a real-life setting.

#### **6.4. Methodological Considerations and Methodological Considerations Applied**

##### **6.4.1. Researcher Bias and Countertransference**

Mouton (2001) stresses the importance of the researcher to demonstrate integrity and, in the case of psychobiographical research specifically, there is the danger of researcher bias towards the case subject. In-depth analysis of a single case reveals intimate knowledge of that person which unavoidably evokes emotions, opinions and bias within the researcher. Every endeavour is to be made to ensure that data is recorded and discussed. This may be partly achieved through the accurate and honest recording of knowledge and avoiding any kind of falsification or fabrication of information (Mouton, 2001).

Alexander (1990) refers to the tendency for researchers to be so central to the sourcing of data in the psychobiographical process that the researcher's participation may negatively influence the objectivity of data gathering. "Important aspects of the data will not be sufficiently highlighted nor inferential steps clearly enough stated to allow the reader to follow the path of the teller" (Alexander, 1990, p. 6).

Anderson (1981) refers to the concept of 'disparagement' whereby he explains that psychobiographers have a tendency to be unsympathetic or disapproving of their subject.

This is not necessarily a conscious act but, in describing the subject's personality, the researcher may subconsciously belittle the subject by overemphasising extreme or neurotic aspects of the subject's personality.

In a critique of *Freud as Leonardo: Why the first psychobiography went wrong*, Elms (1988) refers to a similar error of 'projective identification' whereby the researcher identifies with the subject in such a personal way that they tend to project their own idiosyncrasies and anxieties onto the subject. The researcher, in turn, 'rebuilds' the subject's personality to mirror the researcher's own traits and characteristics, thereby distorting the subject's true personality. Elms (1988) thus cautions the researcher to avoid both idealisation and pathography of the subject, that is, the tendency to overemphasise the negative aspects, failures or pathology of an individual's character.

In a similar vein, Erikson (1968) refers to the psychoanalytic concept of countertransference and the impact it has on psychobiographical research, that is, the way in which the researcher may transfer his or her own opinions and biases to the subject and, again, distort the true picture of the subject.

Anderson (1981) believes the best way to overcome the tendency to idolise or be negatively disposed or disparaging towards the subject is for the researcher to critically examine his or her own feelings towards the subject. Rather to dismiss these feelings or biases, the researcher should openly analyse and recognise them as a conscious component of the research process, that is, to "deliberately try to cope with them" (Anderson, 1981, p. 464). Anderson (1981) also proposes the value of encouraging more empathy in the researcher as a further step to lessen the impact of researcher bias and disparagement. Where researchers are able to listen with an open and enquiring mind and empathise with their subjects, they may be able to relate to their subject with the least amount of bias.

Alexander (1990) suggests two ways of sourcing data to help reduce researcher bias and improve objectivity in collating and analysing data. Firstly, he states that the most reliable data sources are those that are provided spontaneously by the subject through their personal recollections of past experiences. Data that is provided freely by the subject in an autobiographical manner is untainted. In this instance, Alexander (1990) stresses the importance for the data to reveal itself or speak for itself and that the researcher should focus on sorting the raw data to identify themes that appear important for further inquiry. The second way to extract data without prejudice is to ask the data a question that is relevant to the object of study. Alexander (1990) claims the importance of the researcher to develop specific questions that will reveal key information about the subject's personality or personal view of their experiences.

In response to the use of autobiographical sources, as stated above by Alexander (1990), it is relevant at this juncture to consider the argument by Manganyi (1983) wherein he cautions the outright use of biographical and autobiographical data without careful consideration of its accuracy. Manganyi (1983) refers to the term of 'witnessing' whereby the research subject is considered the primary witness to his or her own life story (and often guilty of distorting the truth about actual life events) and the biographer or researcher becomes the secondary witness to the subject's life. Being a secondary witness "the biographer as a late arrival on the scene must tread softly, debunk 'heroisation' and enrich his own witnessing" (p. 36). Manganyi (1983) argues that the researcher should treat biographical data and, in particular, autobiographical data, with a healthy and disciplined dose of 'scepticism' to ensure that data is not distorted or embellished in any way.

In terms of applying these methodological considerations, in order to minimise the potential for researcher bias, countertransference and data distortion to influence the current study, the following steps were taken: firstly, the researcher endeavoured to ensure that all

data was accurately and honestly recorded by making use of the extensive information available on public record (including personal letters and quotes that have been publically issued). Only biographical material residing in the public domain was used in order to prevent any falsification of data or any disrespect to Winston Churchill, his legacy and his remaining extended family. (Living members include his youngest daughter, Mary Soames, as well as six grandchildren from his daughters Diana and Mary and from his son Randolph respectively, as well as great-grandchildren from these descendants).

Secondly, at the outset of the study, the researcher did not hold a particular view or personal opinion of the research subject. However, with progressive reading and research of the available biographical information, personal letters and Churchill's own autobiography, an initial sense of awe and appreciation developed for the subject. To counteract any undue admiration and to maintain a healthy 'scepticism' for the data, the researcher kept a record of personal thoughts, feelings and opinions and regularly discussed these with the research supervisor (this point is discussed further in the self-reflection piece at the end of this chapter). The researcher discussed and openly shared thoughts and personal opinions about the subject with the research supervisor on a regular basis in order to encourage a strong sense of objectivity without losing a sense of empathy in the research process.

#### **6.4.2. Reductionism**

Anderson (1981) cautions the tendency for psychobiography to explain and analyse the complex dimensions of an individual's life history from only one perspective, that is, a psychological perspective. The tendency to reduce the analysis of an individual's development to a fixed psychological dimension and view the individual's personality development through a single psychological lens means negating the influence of other external factors such as socio-cultural and historical factors. Elms (1994), stresses the

importance of analysing the person as a whole, that is, to explore the individual in their social and historical context as well as their psychological state of being. McAdams (2009) believes the researcher should employ psychological theory to interpret and analyse an individual's life in its broadest context over a lengthy time period. In this way the researcher will establish a more comprehensive understanding of the individual's development over their life span and avoid focusing on only one aspect or one process.

Schultz (2005) believes that psychobiography provides a solid template to investigate multiple causes of behaviour. Psychobiography is not merely person-centric but emphasises the importance of exploring the meaning of behaviour in its broader socio-political, historical and economic context. These factors are undeniably linked to an individual's personality development over time.

Anderson (1981) proposes four strategies to minimise reductionism: firstly, it is imperative for the researcher to be extremely thorough in their research and investigate a broad spectrum of data relating to the subject so as to ensure that the information gathered is as accurate and objective as possible. Immersion into the data "helps the psychobiographer to develop a complex understanding of his or her subject and therefore counteracts the tendency to be reductionist" (p. 458). Secondly, the use of psychological terminologies and jargon should be kept to a minimum and always backed up with a thorough explanation and language that is easily relayed. Thirdly, events need to be contextualised in their socio-economic and historical contexts, that is, events do not occur as a result of a single psychological cause but are usually the result of multiple and even inter-related effects. Finally, Anderson stresses the importance of respecting the 'complexity of a subject's personality' (p. 459) and that an individual's personality cannot be explained by psychological scrutiny alone.

Runyan (1988) emphasises that the value psychobiography rests in the validity of the data and highlights key processes such as sourcing additional information through personal letters, diary accounts and additional archival records. This information needs to be closely examined for any discrepancies or falsifications. Runyan (1988) also stresses the importance of establishing 'background theory and knowledge' of the subject by drawing on knowledge of cultural and historical background as well as medical conditions relevant to the individual.

To apply these methodological considerations and, in view of the importance of studying Churchill in a holistic, socio-cultural context, nineteenth century Britain formed the backdrop to exploring Churchill's life, with an appreciation for the influence that Victorian culture may have had on Churchill's early life experiences. Information was also sourced from a broad spectrum of historical texts, biographies, Churchill's own biography and books written by Churchill's children and personal doctor, each providing a broad perspective on the socio-cultural, economic and political climate as well as insight into his medical condition during each phase of his life.

Furthermore, the life events of Churchill were contextualised and analysed within a psychological theoretical framework which provided an external structure within which to interpret his personality and individual development. Alfred Adler's psychological developmental theory of Individual Psychology provided a multi-dimensional template from which to explore the life of Sir Winston Churchill from birth through to adulthood and into death.

### **6.4.3. Analysing an Absent Subject**

Interpreting the life of a deceased subject has obvious drawbacks in that the researcher is unable to access the subject directly and is reliant on historical data. Runyan (1982) is cautious because information gathered in this way on the subject may be inaccurate

or insufficient. Anderson (1981) defends this criticism by stating that researchers may well be able to access data on the subject from various sources, providing a holistic and balanced view of the individual. Carlson (1988) argues that the analysis of life histories provides a unique platform to for developing and testing personality theory. “Finished lives enable us to trace personality development in ways that are impossible in even the best of our longitudinal researches” (Carlson, 1988, p. 106).

Izenberg (2003) stresses the importance of conducting thorough research and the value of basing research on accurate evidence and reasonable inference. Being able to identify themes or recognise pertinent features in formal and credible data ‘may signify multiple meanings’ in the data that are unique to that subject’s life. “The question of evidence is central: psychobiographical inference depends on it as heavily as any other kind of historical explanation to avoid being speculative” (Izenberg, 2003, p. 32).

Schultz (2005) states that successful psychobiography is achieved when cogency is achieved. That is when interpretations have been based on solid evidence from various sources and where multiple motives for establishing behaviour can be tabled. Ultimately, the data presents overwhelmingly persuasive reasons and drivers for the individual’s behaviour. “The best psychobiography leaves the reader feeling ineffably ‘won over’ ” (Schultz, 2005, p. 7).

Anderson (1981) proposes several strategies to overcome the disadvantages of not being able to interview or access the subject directly. In addition to sourcing information from personal data such as diaries, letters and autobiographies, unconventional sources, such as “odd jottings”, “doodles on scrap paper”, drawings, paintings or caricatures by the subject directly, should also be considered, to provide a rare and highly personalised glimpse into the individual’s private state of mind. Medical records and reports also provide a rich insight into

the physiological and psychological state of being as well as provide evidence for any hereditary factors influencing the subject's behaviour or personality.

To apply these methodological considerations, in the case of Winston Churchill, numerous sources of credible and personalised data have been analysed, including biographies, books and articles pertaining to his life. Biographies consulted for this research include (Gilbert, 1992; Jenkins, 2002; Manchester, 1984, 1988, 2004; Mansfield, 1995; Singer, 2012; Stelzer, 2011; Storr, 1973, 1990). Autobiographies include *My Early Life* first written by Winston Churchill in 1930. Books written by his daughters, Sarah Churchill and Mary Soames, relating to Churchill's home life and the relationship between Winston and his wife, Clementine, as well as books portraying his many paintings and sketches were consulted. Books written by his close friend, Violet Bonham Carter and his personal physician, Lord Moran, amongst other sources, were also consulted (Bonham-Carter, 1965; Churchill, 1967; Sandys, 2003; Soames, 1982, 2001; Wilson, 2002, 2006). Publications depicting his artistic talents, his speeches and famous quotes were also reviewed (Coombs & Churchill, 2003; Langworth, 2008, 2012). Letters between Winston and Clementine as well as diary extracts, photographs and cartoons also provided a rich source of personal material (Alkon, 2006; Gilbert, 1992; Soames, 1982, 2001).

#### **6.4.4. Cross-Cultural Differences**

In order to consider cultural differences between the culture of the times and the culture of present day, studies of the individual should include a consideration for the social, cultural, historical, political and even religious context in which they lived (Anderson, 1981). More specifically, Anderson (1981) argues that applying current psychological concepts to individuals who lived in previous centuries or historical eras has little to no relevance on

behavioural interpretation without a measured appreciation of the cultural divide and societal differences of each historical time period.

However, having a thorough understanding of the cultural and historical context within which the subject lived, argues Parin, Levine and Friedman (1975), the researcher is able to develop not only knowledge and familiarity with the culture of the times but, more importantly, empathy for the subject's cultural environment and subsequent constraints and influences. Parin et al. (1975) urge the researcher to develop an in-depth knowledge of the relevant culture from the viewpoint of the subject and, in so doing, will be able to establish a truly empathic relationship with the subject.

With reference to applying these methodological considerations, Churchill grew up in a vastly different socio-economic and historical era to the researcher, namely South Africa in the 2000's. In order to reduce the influence of cultural bias and to establish a cultural and social understanding and an appreciation for Victorian norms, Churchill's early life was contextualised within the culture of late nineteenth century Victorian Britain and further understood within the context of industrialisation and its threat to the stronghold of the British Empire at the turn of the century. The researcher's literature review included texts and books that reflected the social, political and historical contexts of the time period in which Churchill lived.

Applying the Individual Psychology of Alfred Adler as the psychological framework within which to contextualise Churchill's life, the theoretical concepts applied are applicable to Churchill because Adler's theories were developed during the same era as Churchill (1929, 1930, 1949) and thus coincided well historically and culturally with Churchill's life events. Adler also stressed the uniqueness and individualistic nature of human development with the emphasis on the role of the individual's family, early memories, schooling, striving for

superiority and achievement of the social feeling, which are concepts that are applicable to all cultures and culturally unbiased.

#### **6.4.5. Easy Genre Elitism**

Easy genre elitism refers to the criticism that psychobiographies focus on famous people and have the tendency to be considered both elitist and somewhat easy to complete. Runyan (1988b) believes that a credible psychobiography demands extensive research from numerous sources of data, including socio-historical and psychological analysis and that this accumulation of knowledge is far more important than the social status of the subject under study.

With reference to the criticism of elitism, Fouché and Van Niekerk (2010) point to the fact, that, traditionally, a subject is chosen because their life story has historical and psychological significance. “The choice of the subject is based on the exceptional contribution of the famous, exemplary and enigmatic individual” (Howe, 1997; McAdams, 2006, cited in Fouché & Van Niekerk, 2010, p. 496). However, according to Fouché and Van Niekerk (2010), in South Africa currently, there are a variety of psychobiographical studies being undertaken at various universities whose subject choices reflect a strong “biographical diversity” with regards the gender and professional occupation of the subject. The focus, therefore, of these psychobiographical studies, is not necessarily on famous people but rather on individuals from different professional backgrounds and from different communities who have made a significant contribution to our socio-political landscape. The emphasis, it appears, is on ‘extraordinary’ rather than ‘famous people’.

South Africa abounds with stories of individuals in an array of careers and from different communities who have expanded our horizons. Psychobiographical life descriptions can play an important role in enhancing our understanding and respect

for people from contrasting socio-cultural backgrounds” (Fouché & Van Niekerk, 2010, p. 501).

Despite the diversification of subject choice, Fouché and Van Niekerk (2010) also state that in order for psychobiography to maintain its momentum and ‘popularity’ as a credible research field amongst potential researchers in South Africa, and Africa as a whole, it needs to remain ‘relevant’ and ‘topical’, particularly if the intention is to attract younger researchers to this field of study. For this reason, Fouché and Van Niekerk (2010) propose the need for psychobiographies to focus more on current celebrity personalities, particularly female and black personalities.

Manganyi (1983) states that the subject of a psychobiography has most often been a person with a “status personality” and has had the potential for that individual to become an “object of cultural idealisation” and even stereotyping or, as Manganyi (1983), refers to as heroisation. “Heroisation is one of the core problems in the intricate and intimate relationship, actual or by proxy, which develops between a biographer and his subjects for it is here where culturally activated transferences are easily traded for truth” (Manganyi, 1983, p. 36). He further adds that it is, therefore, important for the researcher to be cautious of being lured by cultural stereotyping and to make a concerted effort to demystify heroisation and focus rather on “truth seeking” and uncompromising evidence. Manganyi (1983) also states that in order for the psychobiographer to investigate the truth of his subject he or she must first strive for self-knowledge and a well-defined sense of self so that one’s own preconceptions or prejudices do not mar the process of gathering and contextualising the data.

McAdams (1988) agrees that, traditionally, psychobiography has focused on famous and enigmatic individuals. However, in the quest to understand human behaviour, narrative research has gained considerable popularity in recent years and the scope of persons

considered for research has therefore also broadened. Biographical data is now not necessarily only relevant to and drawn from famous people. “The recent focus on story by personality psychologists reflects a broader upsurge of interest among many social scientists, as well as many scholars in other disciplines, in the concept of narrative as it applies to the lives of persons and their societies” (McAdams, 1988, p. 2).

With regards to the second criticism that psychobiographies tend to be an easy genre, Runyan (1988) argues that psychobiography “is one of the major arenas in which an in-depth understanding of individual lives is pursued, and one in which the relationship between evidence, general theory and the explanation or interpretation of individual lives are pursued in some detail” (p. 321). Carlson (1988) argues that narrative data provide the ‘perfect laboratory’ for assessing and enhancing personality theory and through the application of psychology theory to biographical data, together with socio-historical contexts, we are able to study personality development in more effective ways than is possible by other means of study.

To address the criticism that psychobiographies have a tendency to be elitist and to apply the aforementioned methodological considerations, the researcher disagrees that the subject choice of Churchill is such. Churchill was chosen as the subject of this study because of his life time experience with depression and how, ironically, it proved to be one of his most invaluable assets that underpinned his tenacious and courageous personality. Despite his aristocratic and ‘elitist’ beginnings, Churchill was first and foremost a scholar, a soldier, a prisoner of war, a military strategist and a working politician who suffered many political trials and tribulations. His life’s challenges were no more or no less significant than anyone else. It was his extraordinary personality and courage in the face of adversity that enabled him to become one of the most respected leaders of our time. It was his many achievements (both personally and politically), despite his life-long struggle with depression, that inspired

the researcher to case study Churchill – an ordinary man, with extraordinary challenges, who achieved great things.

To address the second criticism of this psychobiography being ‘easy’ to complete, it should be noted that despite the many biographies, books and publications written about Churchill, only a limited few make direct reference to his depression, let alone the concept of depressive realism. And, where there are references, the researcher found the literature tended to downplay his struggle with depression. The researcher had to consider multiple sources of data and become immersed in the debate as to his state of mental health in order to uncover the facts and the fiction about Churchill’s mental health. The multi-layered nature of his personality and the numerous yet diverse sources of data available on his life, his political and military career, his family and personal relationships, his personal interests and hobbies, his temperament and his psychological state of mind, made this a complex and multi-faceted research process and of value to the discipline of psychology.

Despite his British heritage, it should also be noted that the study of Churchill remains relevant to the South African context, not only because of his escapades as a prisoner of war during the Boer War, but because he suffered from depression for most of his life. Depression is a universal disease, culturally and racially indifferent and, according to Stein et al. (2008), mood disorder is the second most prevalent psychiatric disorder in South Africa. With depression rates becoming increasingly prevalent, the concept of depressive realism is valuable to South African society in terms of its relevance to the development of contemporary and affordable treatment strategies. Whilst there are many biographies and, to a lesser extent psychobiographies, written on Churchill, few address the concept of depressive realism.

#### **6.4.6. Infinite Amount of Biographical Data**

To address the concern that researchers are often faced with an extraordinary amount of information and biographical data to analyse, McAdams (1988) claims that Irving Alexander provides the most unique method of sorting through all the data. “Alexander is the only one to provide specific guidelines on just how the personologist should deal with data” and “his guidelines are concrete enough to offer specific nuts-and-bolts suggestions about how to make sense out of large quantities of narrative data” (p. 12).

Alexander (1988; 1990) distinguishes between two means of sorting and analysing data. In the first instance, the researcher allows the ‘data to reveal itself’ and in the second instance, the researcher ‘asks the data a question’. The most important issue is how to extract the most critical or salient aspects of the individual’s personality (Alexander 1988). The first method, that of, ‘letting the data reveal itself’ or as Alexander (1988) refers to as ‘extraction by salience’, involves the sorting of raw data to identify the most important and salient features of the life already lived. This process involves the implementation of nine essential guidelines or ‘principal identifiers of salience’ to sort the data. These nine principles include: primacy (what is first in the story), frequency (how often does the same idea or concept repeat itself), uniqueness (what is extra-ordinary), negation (what is not mentioned), emphasis (what is accentuated), omission (what has been left out), error (what appears to be inaccurate or mistaken), isolation (what appears out of place) and incompleteness (when the narrative has an incomplete or unsatisfying ending). McAdams (1988) proposes that without these guiding principles to distinguish what is pertinent, the researcher may well become overwhelmed by the amount of overall data to consider. Alexander (1988) explains that once the data has been extracted accordingly, it can be transformed into abstractions that may highlight specific themes, patterns or explanations for an individual’s life story.

The second method, that of 'asking the data a question' can be used either as a complementary or independent means of identifying relevant and prominent information about the subject's life and which is relevant to the objectives of the study (Alexander, 1988; 1990). Key questions may be framed for the data in an attempt to extract salient features but Alexander (1988; 1990) cautions the researcher to be aware of the issue of reliability of such a process in that the data may become isolated from its original context.

With regards applying these methodological considerations, for the purposes of this research, the primary source of data was published materials, including history and psycho-history books, biographies, autobiographies and books written by family members, close friends of Churchill and his personal doctor. These materials provided the opportunity to examine personal as well as psychological material and an over-arching view of his lifestyle by those who had direct contact with him. It also provided the opportunity to cross-reference this personal data with alternate psycho-biographical accounts of Churchill's personality that have been documented by recognised psychiatrists (Fieve, 1997; Ghaemi, 2011; Robins & Post, 1993; Storr, 1990) and historians and political authors (Gilbert, 1992; Hayward, 1998; Mansfield, 1995; Owen, 2008; Rintala, 1984; Singer, 2012; Stelzer, 2012) who have had a personal interest in Churchill's personality development.

In the collection and analysis of all of this data, the researcher kept a steady focus on what information was pertinent and relevant to the key objectives of the research, that being to identify illustrations related to depression and depressive realism. Not only did the researcher allow the data to reveal itself in its many forms but the researcher also consistently questioned the data for exemplars and patterns that revealed and attempted to extract evidence for Churchill's depression as well as correlating personality traits of foresight, courage and realistic thinking and planning.

#### **6.4.7. Inflated Expectations**

Researchers need to be aware that psychobiographical research has its shortcomings and that psychological interpretations are not absolute but rather add to or complement existing data (Anderson, 1981). Only focusing on psychological factors and not considering the influence of other factors such as historical, political and social, only serves to limit the interpretation of an individual's life. Psychological factors should complement and extend other types of explanations. Fouché and Van Niekerk (2010) also comment that psychobiographical data that is contextualised within a psychological framework provide the opportunity to further investigate and develop existing theoretical constructs and psychological theory. The theoretical framework, in turn, provides a background against which the biographical data can be explored and conceptualised and even compared to existing data.

Runyan (1988) emphasises the importance of social, political and cultural analyses in developing a truly holistic explanation of an individual's life and properly complements the psychological theorising in a psychobiography. He proposes an eight step model as a means of assessing the value and credibility of a psychobiography and its contribution to understanding individual lives. This eight step model emphasises the importance of gathering additional information and archival records and critically analysing this evidence; assessing background theory of a psychological, historical and cultural nature as well as gathering an understating of relevant medical or physical ailments. The model emphasises the value of generating new interpretations and critically evaluating exiting interpretations as well as the value of "drawing on theoretical and background knowledge" (Runyan, 1988, p. 308). The eighth and final step in the model stresses the importance of considering the social, political,

psychological and historical dynamics that interact with each other and shape the course of an individual's development.

Mangyani (1983) also stresses the importance of studying the individual in the social context within which they live or have lived so as to avoid the overemphasis of 'psychic determinants of behaviour'. Failing to consider the social and environmental influences on a person's development, hinders the 'real' investigation and establishment of meaning to that person's life.

In applying these methodological considerations, the researcher notes that whilst the life of Sir Winston Churchill was contextualised to some degree within his socio-political and historical surroundings, this psychobiography analysed his life from a majority psychological and clinical perspective in an attempt to better understand the role that depression played in his life and to contextualise the potential for depressive realism to have influenced his decision-making. The researcher does not claim to have studied and analysed the subject from every context nor does the research study assert that it has uncovered the multi-faceted nature and character that was Sir Winston Churchill, in his entirety.

#### **6.4.8. Validity and Reliability**

Establishing validity and reliability are two key areas of concern for any type of research but more specifically for case study research (Yin, 1994). According to Golafshani (2003) "the most important test of any qualitative study is its quality" and, from a qualitative perspective, Golafshani (2003) believes that reliability is a strong marker for establishing quality. However, he also states that the actual term 'reliability', in a qualitative context, is not a commonly used term. In fact, according to Stenbacka (2001), the term reliability can be confusing if used in a qualitative context. Reliability is more concerned with measurements and therefore more aptly used in quantitative research.

Shenton (2004) argues that qualitative researchers prefer to use different terminology for the construct of reliability and validity that are typically referred to in quantitative research. Shenton (2004) states, that “one such author is Guba, who proposes four criteria for establishing a trustworthy study” (p.64). These criteria for qualitative research correspond to the criteria laid down by quantitative research and include the following: credibility (relates to internal validity); transferability (relates to external validity or generalisation); dependability (relates to reliability) and conformability (relates to objectivity).

Lincoln and Guba (1985) also propose that reliability is in fact a precursor to validity and that if validity is established, it follows that reliability is also established.

#### ***6.4.8.1. Trustworthiness of the Data***

In outlining case study research, Yin (1994) refers to four constructs (mentioned above) that can be used as measures to test the quality and trustworthiness of the research design, namely: construct validity, internal validity, external validity and reliability. Construct validity ensures that the correct operational measures or theories (as in the case of psychobiography) are applied to the concepts being studied, that is, that the intended concepts or constructs are measured in line with the objectives of the research. According to Yin (1994), the researcher should carefully select the constructs that are to be studied and these should be in line with the original objectives of the study. More importantly he stresses the importance of using multiple sources of data in order to increase a study’s construct and internal validity (internal validity refers to the ability of a research study to repeat the same findings at separate intervals). External validity refers to the propensity to generalise a study’s findings to another context (Runyan 1984). Yin (1994) explains that external validity in psychobiography is established by analytic generalisation where findings are compared to a previously accredited theory. McAdams (2009) states that psychobiography is the

systematic use of psychological theory to reconstruct the life narrative of an individual. By comparing the results of the study to a well-established theory, the single case study can then be used to determine whether a theory's propositions are correct and generalisable and therefore determine its external validity (Yin, 1994).

In terms of establishing reliability, this refers to evidence that the research methods employed can be repeated with the same results (Yin, 1994). Because of the qualitative and subjective nature of psychobiographical research, it is difficult to replicate the same results but Yin (1994) counteracts this challenge by proposing that the process of data collection and analysis should be well documented and that data collection be based on credible sources.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) believe that trustworthiness is the overarching key to quality research and that to ensure such trustworthiness, it is the responsibility of the researcher to ensure that research findings correspond to the context and objectives of the research study by sourcing data from multiple as well as plausible sources (valid). It is also the responsibility of the researcher to ensure that the findings are consistent over time and no irregularities appear in the data (reliable). In this context, Lincoln and Guba's (1985) criteria for establishing trustworthiness of research data, namely: credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability will be discussed in more detail and strategies to meet these criteria will be considered.

#### *6.4.8.1.1. Credibility*

Shenton (2004) states that one of the key criteria in a qualitative study is to certify that the study has investigated what it intended to investigate (essentially, internal validity in quantitative studies). The qualitative researcher's equivalent of internal validity involves the establishment of credibility which investigates how relevant or comparable the research

findings are with the real world and if findings are 'believable' (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Merriam, 2009).

Krefting (1991) believes that credibility is possibly the most important benchmark when assessing the trustworthiness of research data. Establishing credibility of a research study implies that the research process has been subjected to a high degree of rigour and scrutiny to ensure the highest level of quality.

Strategies to enhance credibility in the research process and maximise the potential for the research design to "accurately record the phenomena under scrutiny" are presented by Shenton (2004, p. 64). Only those strategies applicable to psychobiographical research are included for the purposes of this research study.

Firstly, the researcher should adopt measures that are well established and have been applied previously. Secondly, triangulation is a valuable means of establishing credibility in that different methods of data collection are used and ensures that data is drawn from a wide berth of sources. Thirdly, the researcher should seek frequent debriefing session with his or her supervisor to develop ideas and concepts and to test and challenge the researcher's interpretations and biases. Fourthly, the researcher should also seek peer scrutiny of their research project to gather a broader set of opinions and constructive criticisms. Fifthly, the researcher's own self-reflection is an important addition to external peer scrutiny in that it allows the researcher to evaluate the development of his or her research ideas and evaluate the influence of his or her own subjectivity on the data collection and analysis process. Finally, a substantial description of the phenomena under study is important in order to provide the reader with a rich and detailed account of the context of the study.

In addition, Krefting (1991) explains that, in qualitative field research, credibility requires submersion by the researcher into the research setting and requires the researcher to

invest a great deal of time with the participants and informants, a process that Lincoln and Guba (1985) refer to as ‘prolonged engagement’. However, in the case of psychobiographical research, the nature of research is more interpretive and therefore requires the researcher to immerse his or herself in the data and conduct in-depth data analysis in order to become so familiar with the data that recurrent themes or irregularities are easily identified. The data can then be integrated into a holistic life narrative, underpinned by individual themes (Krefting, 1991).

Of the various strategies to enhance credibility, triangulation is one of the most relevant to psychobiography and “is a powerful strategy for enhancing the quality of the research, particularly credibility” (Krefting, 1991, p. 219). Triangulation involves the in-depth analysis of multiple sources of data and ensures that data sources can be cross-checked for consistency. It also “minimizes distortion from a single data source or from a biased researcher” (Krefting, 1991, p. 219). Patton (2002), another advocate of triangulation, proposes that it strengthens the research process and establishes truth in the data by combining multiple methods of data collection and analysis.

Denzin (1984) identified four types of triangulation: data triangulation (researcher asserts if data remains the same in different contexts); investigator triangulation (different investigators examine the same construct); theory triangulation (investigators with different theoretical perspectives interpret the same findings) and methodological triangulation (when one method is followed by another to validate the interpretations).

In applying these methodological considerations, establishing credibility was an important consideration for this study because of the interpretive and exploratory nature of psychobiographical research. In order to ensure the integrity of the researcher’s interpretations and inferences, the researcher employed a well-established and appropriate

method of research, that being, the single case study method. This method is most appropriate when assessing individual events or behaviours, where no controls of such events are needed and where the objective of the research is descriptive or exploratory in nature (Yin 2003). According to Yin (2003), it is an all-encompassing research method with regards data collection and analysis. Credibility was further established through in-depth data triangulation from multiples sources of biographical data which were also cross-referenced to identify and counteract any irregularities as well as identify recurring themes in the data. Data sources included recommended biographies and autobiographies; books containing personal letters written by Churchill as well as his family, colleagues and personal physician; published articles; cartoons and speeches written by Churchill.

The use of Adler's theory of Individual Psychology also established a degree of theoretical triangulation in that the theory enabled Churchill's key life events to be contextualised and situated within the theoretical framework of Individual Psychology.

In addition to data and theoretical triangulation, frequent debriefing sessions with the researcher's supervisor ensured that the researcher's interpretations could be reflected upon and evaluated for researcher bias. The researcher also embarked on a continual process of self-reflection to evaluate emotions and feelings toward the subject so as not to impact the data analysis process in a biased manner.

#### *6.4.8.1.2. Transferability*

In quantitative research, external validity is concerned with the generalisation of findings to other populations. The researcher is concerned with random sampling and testing to assess if findings can be applied to a broader population. In contrast, qualitative researchers are more concerned with assessing the extent to which the research findings could be useful or have meaning in other contexts and therefore speak of transferability (Lincoln &

Guba, 1985). The qualitative researcher is more concerned with providing the reader with a detailed description of the context of the research and in-depth information about the setting in which the research was conducted. Lincoln and Guba (1985) refer to this as ‘thick’ descriptions of the research setting.

Shenton (2004) also comments that it is “also important that sufficiently thick descriptions of the phenomenon under investigation is provided” (p. 70) in order to provide the reader with a broad and deep understanding of the context of the study so as to be able make an informed decision as to the congruency and compatibility of the research findings to other situations. Shenton (2004) cautions, however, that it is equally important for the researcher to disclose any limitations of the study so as to provide the researcher with a balanced view of all contributing factors to the research outcome and thus the applicability of the findings to other settings. Limitations will be discussed further in Chapter 8 under Conclusions, Limitations and Recommendations.

Krefting (1991) believes that the nature of the research will determine if transferability is an issue for concern. If findings are descriptive and exploratory in nature, representing the perspective of one subject as may be the case in life histories or single case studies, transferability may not be as relevant as a research study that sets out to establish generalisation of findings to other populations. Krefting (1991) explains that because each situation is different, that is ‘situational uniqueness’, it is difficult to make accurate generalisations or transferences to other settings or populations. A key strategy then is to provide dense background information about the research subjects as well as the research context and setting to then enable others to judge transferability.

Yin (1994) concludes that case study researchers should not be so concerned about generalising results to a broader population but should rather focus on what is termed

‘analytic generalisation’ (rather than statistical generalisation) which allows the research data to be compared and generalised to a previously developed theory thereby providing opportunity to enhance, confirm or contest an existing theory. “Transferability is thus not a major criterion for trustworthiness in psychobiographical research as the findings are more of a “descriptive worth in and of themselves” (Krefting, 1991, p. 220). However, the ability to generalise the interpretations of a single life story within a theoretical framework (Yin, 1994) provides an alternate measure of transferability and ultimately trustworthiness.

Stake (1995) argues for the relevance of ‘naturalistic generalisation’ whereby there is a natural interaction between the reader’s personal experiences and the findings of the case study. The data findings of a research study may resonate experientially with a cross-section of readers and thereby expedite a broader understanding of the object of study.

To apply these methodological considerations, the results of this study are not intended to be generalisable to the larger population but rather to inform and be applied to other research on depression and depressive realism and even resonate with some readers depending on their own experiences. Sir Winston Churchill’s life is a unique portrayal of an individual suffering from life-long struggle with depression but at the height of one of the most significant crises in world history, he was a lone individual able to predict and warn the rest of the world of the impending dangers of Nazism. He stood alone in his predictions and only time availed others of the opportunity to witness his foresight and realism. His leadership capability in steering Allied forces to victory through this treacherous time in world history demonstrates a case for the existence and potential of depressive realism.

In this study, Churchill’s personality development and, in particular, his depression was explored in detail from multiple sources and the findings were contextualised and generalised to Adler’s theory of Individual Psychology.

#### 6.4.8.1.3. *Dependability*

Dependability refers to the 'reliability' and soundness of the research findings. Guba (1981) defines dependability as corresponding to the consistency of findings. Shenton (2004) argues that quantitative researchers seek to establish reliability by testing for consistency of results over time, that is, if the same test were repeated under the same conditions with the same participants and yielded the same or similar results then reliability could be confirmed. In contrast, qualitative researchers seek to establish dependability.

Fidel (1993) explains that establishing dependability is more complicated because of the human-orientated and exploratory nature of qualitative research. The type of data being researched is not as 'reliable' because it is situation specific and situations and human behaviour are subject to change over time. In this context, Shenton (2004) believes that in order to assert a degree of dependability, the researcher should provide a detailed account of the research design and methodology. Data collection and analysis procedures should be well documented so that future researchers may be able to repeat the study if not to actually repeat the results.

Krefting (1991) agrees that qualitative research findings are situation dependent and that the best way to achieve dependability is to recite the exact methods of data collection, analysis and interpretation. The dense description of the study's research methods provides prospective researchers with information as to the repeatability of such research as well as information about the uniqueness of the situation.

According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), describing the research methods in rich detail is similar to providing an audit trail that is valuable to subsequent researchers. Lincoln and Guba (1985) argue that a 'single audit' of a research study can enhance dependability as well as a confirmability of a research study. Krefting (1991) and Fidel (1993) also believe that

dependability can be improved with data triangulation as this ensures that the shortcoming of one method of data collections is compensated by the use of other data-gathering methods.

Krefting (1991) also mentions peer review of the research design and methodology as a valuable means of confirming dependability.

In terms of the application of these methodological considerations, to establish dependability, the researcher employed a detailed and systematic data collection and analysis method presented by Braun and Clarke (2006) that relays a process of thematic analysis. This approach identified and analysed patterns or themes within the raw data. According to Braun and Clarke (2006) thematic analysis is a flexible approach to organising data that is rich in detail. This process of thematic analysis involved six phases in which raw biographical data was transcribed, initial codes generated and general themes then identified. These themes were then refined for final analysis.

In terms of Churchill's life, biographical data from multiple sources was read and re-read to identify initial concepts and broader recurrent patterns relating to key life events (with particular reference to the course of his depression). Interesting facts and recurring ideas presented in his early childhood and early family dynamics, his adolescent years, his life as a soldier, politician and war-time leader as well as his personal past-times, were coded into meaningful parts with particular reference to his depression and to Adler's theory of Individual Psychology. More specific themes were then drawn from these groupings of ideas relating to his early childhood experiences, his relationship with his parents, his experience of boarding school, his relationship with his nanny, his experience as a war correspondent, soldier and commanding officer, as well as his many challenges as a politician. In all of these themes the presence and effect of depression was noted and explored. These themes were then refined, cross-referenced and contextualised within Adler's theoretical framework in

order to obtain a coherent and balanced review of Churchill's 'Black Dog' and the potential for depressive realism.

#### *6.4.8.1.4. Confirmability*

Confirmability refers to the extent to which the researcher is able to remain objective and ensure, to the best of their ability, that findings are not influenced by researcher bias. Miles and Huberman (1994) define confirmability as an awareness of subjectivity and a freedom from researcher bias where unavoidable bias is measured, declared and reflected upon during the research process. Lincoln and Guba (1985) state that the nature of qualitative research implies it has a tendency to be affected by researcher subjectivity. The concept of confirmability in qualitative research is comparable to objectivity and is based on the assurance that every attempt has been made to reduce the influence of researcher bias and subjectivity on the outcome of the research findings (Shenton, 2004).

Strategies to enhance confirmability include triangulation and reflective analysis (Krefting, 1991). Shenton (2004) states that triangulation of data sources and data collection methods is again a valued method of reducing researcher bias. In addition, according to Miles and Huberman (1994), another key criterion to reduce the effect of investigator bias is the extent to which the researcher reflects and acknowledges his or her own beliefs and suppositions. According to Krefting (1991), self-reflection is an important step to ensure that the researcher is self-aware of his or her influence on research findings and also confirms that "triangulation of multiple methods, data sources and theoretical perspectives tests the strength of researcher's bias" (p. 221).

Shenton (2004) believes that full disclosure of the methods undertaken, as well as the preference for certain methods over others and the weaknesses inherent in the chosen

methodologies, should also be revealed. This on-going 'reflective commentary' assists in improving the transparency of the researcher's subjectivity and enhances confirmability.

Another strategy to overcome researcher bias is once again the implementation of an audit trail as described by Guba (1981). The audit trail provides an opportunity to assess each phase of the research process and evaluate the procedures that were followed. Shenton (2004) describes how the audit trail can be presented diagrammatically following two different methods. Firstly, a data-orientated audit trail can indicate how data was collected and analysed to arrive at the research outcome and, secondly, a more theoretical audit trail may be drawn to display the underlying concepts of the research question and indicate how these concepts inspired the research process from a holistic perspective.

To apply these methodological considerations in this study, attention was given to data triangulation by using multiple sources of data collection (biographies, personal letters, family accounts and photographs, medical reports and historical data) to ensure an acceptable level of confirmability. To evaluate and minimise the influence of researcher bias, continued interaction with the researcher's supervisor provided an external audit process for the researcher to evaluate thoughts, interpretations and emotions relating to the character of Churchill. This continual self-reflective analysis enabled the researcher to reflect on personal interpretations and perceptions and address the impact of these subjective opinions on the progress of the research.

The researcher also attempted to establish confirmability by keeping a record of the process and progress of data collection and analysis methods. An audit trail, as described by Guba (1981) and Krefting (1991), was maintained by the researcher in the form of record keeping of the raw data consulted and explored; the interpretations of this data and the decision-making process involved in the coding and analysis of the data. The concept of

depressive realism and the potential for its existence (being the underlying motivation for this study) served as an over-laying framework against which the raw data was explored, interpreted and contextualised. Furthermore, the events pertaining to Churchill's life and the course of his personality development and progression of his depression, was also contextualised within the theoretical framework of Adler's theory of Individual Psychology.

#### ***6.4.8.2. Construct Validity***

Construct validity, typically a quantitative research term, refers to establishing correct operational measures for the concepts to be studied (Yin, 1994). In the situation of qualitative research, construct validity refers to the quality and trustworthiness of the research process and outcome (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The 'constructs' under study, that is, the concepts or ideas to be explored, need to be contextualised and studied within an established theoretical framework so as to ensure that the constructs intended for study are in fact investigated and that, in the case of psychobiography, the correct theories are applied to the concepts being studied (Yin, 1994). In quantitative research, confidence in the research process and findings is established through measures of reliability and validity whereas, in qualitative research, confidence is established by means of trustworthiness of the data and quality of the research design (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Yin (1994) explains that it is the responsibility of the researcher to identify and conceptualise the constructs for study and these should be guided and directly related to the objectives of the study. In addition, Yin (1994) states that another means of establishing construct validity or trustworthiness is to consult and utilise multiple sources of data for collection and analysis.

In this study, multiple sources of evidence on the life of Sir Winston Churchill and his experience with depression were considered by means of historical, psychobiographical and autobiographical data as well as transcripts, letters and diary extracts (Churchill, 1930, 1996;

Fieve, 1997; Ghaemi, 2011; Gilbert, 1992; Jenkins, 2002; Mansfield, 1995; Rintala, 1984; Soames, 1999; Steltzer, 2012; Storr, 1990). Original works by Alfred Adler (Adler, 1928, 1931, 1935, 1949, 1962) and commentary on Adler's Theory of Individual Psychology by other contemporary psychologists (Ansbacher, 1974; Mosak, 1977, 1999) were also consulted. The concept of depressive realism was operationalised using data from key life events in Churchill's life (with a core focus on his 'Black Dog') and contextualising these within the theoretical framework of Adler's theory of Individual Psychology. Parallels were drawn between Adler's theory of personality development and key life events in Churchill's life, with a specific focus on Churchill's experience with depression and notable depressive episodes over his lifespan (See Appendix C). The researcher constructed this table in order to visually operationalise the constructs under study and provide a visual representation of how the researcher explored the life of Sir Winston Churchill (with a focus on his depression) and integrated key life events and depressive episodes into a theoretical framework.

Furthermore, to substantiate the trustworthiness of this study, methodological considerations relevant to psychobiographical research and strategies to overcome these inherent difficulties were presented in the aforementioned sections of Chapter 6. The practical application of these considerations to the outcome of the study of Sir Winston Churchill, were also presented.

## **6.5. Ethical Considerations**

The psychobiographical study of an individual's life presents ethical concerns, necessary and worthy of discussion. Elms (1994), outlines some of the key ethical considerations relevant to a psychobiographical case study. He states that psychobiographies should focus on individuals who are no longer alive and have been deceased for a long period of time so that there are no close surviving relatives who could be emotionally affected by the

comments in the psychobiography. In addition, a critical ethical consideration for any psychobiographical study is the commitment by the researcher to treat all personal and intimate data with respect (Elms, 1994).

General ethical guidelines and a professional code of conduct for all psychology professionals are also provided by the Health Professions Council of South Africa (2008) as well as the American Psychological Association (2010). According to the Health Professions Council of South Africa (2008), these specific ethics principles and codes of conduct are designed to guide psychologists in practicing the highest ethical standards in their profession. They are further supported by five general principles which are relevant to the current study. These five general principles include: beneficence and non-maleficence; that is the commitment to safeguard the welfare of those with whom psychologists and researchers work; fidelity and responsibility; integrity; justice and respect for people's rights and dignity.

In terms of the application of ethical considerations in this study, the researcher studied an individual (Sir Winston Churchill) who is long deceased, however, consideration for surviving family members (See Appendix A) was still observed to avoid any disrespect or embarrassment to the family. In addition, no informed consent from close family members was necessary for this study as the report was written for academic purposes only (Cheze, 2009).

Information used for this study was predominantly sourced from data available in the public domain. A key source of biographical information came from the works of Sir Martin Gilbert, the official biographer of Sir Winston Churchill. Sir Martin Gilbert was initially hired in 1962 by Randolph Churchill (Winston Churchill's son) to assist him in writing the first volume of his father's biography. When Randolph Churchill died in 1968, Sir Martin Gilbert became the official biographer of Sir Winston Churchill (Gilbert, 1992).

In the second part of this chapter, the aspects of research design and methodology will be presented, commencing with a preliminary discussion of the ontology and epistemology of this research study.

## **6.6. Ontology and Epistemology**

The nature of research is defined by a specific paradigm or mode of thinking which in turn is guided by three interrelated dynamics or principles. Terre Blanche and Durrheim (1999) describe these three principals as: Ontology, which is concerned with the nature of being; Epistemology, which is concerned with the study of knowledge together with the interaction between researcher and that which is to be researched; Methodology, which is concerned with the practical application of the research and how the researcher will implement the research.

Terre Blanche and Durrheim (1999) highlight three main paradigms, these being, positivist, interpretive and constructionist:

Many researchers conduct most of their research within a single paradigm, in the same way that artists typically prefer a certain style. If one was to compare the three paradigms to artistic styles, positivism would resemble realism; interpretive research would reflect impressionism and social constructionism would be the equivalent to cubism (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999, pp. 7-8).

Cubism relates to a type of artwork in which the artist views the subject from every different angle, analyses, deconstructs and then combines all the separate images into a new abstract vision. The subject is presented from a totally new perspective and represents a multitude of viewpoints (Sauter, 2010). Examining a subject from different angles is a main objective of the current psychobiography.

The foundation of this research study follows a social constructionist epistemology. Social constructionism is concerned with how the social world gets constructed and employs research methodologies that are qualitative, interpretive and concerned with meaning, specifically “broader patterns of social meaning encoded in language” (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999, p. 149). The case study method lends itself to analysing how reality is reconstructed in the social world, that is, it aims to reconstruct the life history of an individual to provide an in-depth description and understanding of their life within a broader, holistic social context (Mouton, 2001). As in the case of Cubism, case study research provides the opportunity to study a subject from every different angle thereby gaining a deeper understanding and appreciation of the value of that individual’s life.

Gergen (1985) maintains that social constructionism is based on the concept of ‘communal interchange’, that is, the process by which individuals gain knowledge and interpret the world around them through social interaction and social exchange. Social constructionism accentuates the significance that everyday social practices have on an individual’s view of themselves and of their environment as well as influencing the way they construct their reality. Gergen (1985) explains that the way in which individuals understand the world and themselves is based on “historically situated interchanges amongst people” (Gergen, 1985, p. 267). He maintains that social constructionism attempts to gain a mutual understanding of human behaviour within a social context as it exists in the current situation, as well as in previous historical contexts and in possible future contexts. Accordingly, Terre Blanche and Durrheim (1999) propose that case study research provides the opportunity to reconstruct and understand the life events of a particular individual within a social and historical context. Case study research creates the potential to reconstruct that individual’s ‘reality’.

Lock and Strong (2010) state that individuals experience and give meaning to their world through a socio-cultural process. "Social meanings are constructed and reconstructed through people's histories in interacting with each other" (Locke & Strong, 2010, p. 2). Social communication and language is fundamental to human experience and to creating a social world and social reality. Case study research, in particular, psychobiographical research, is able to reconstruct a person's history, within a psycho-social framework, through the analysis of diverse, qualitative data sources and discourses (McLeod, 1994).

Lincoln and Guba (1994) define the ontology of constructionism as the social realities produced by individual intellects that may change over time with further social interactions and improved knowledge. They describe its epistemology as knowledge created by interaction among individuals or more specifically between researcher and subject. The aim of inquiry is typically explorative in order to gain in-depth understanding and the criteria for quality research are based on the trustworthiness and authenticity of the data.

### **6.7. Research Design**

The study of Sir Winston Churchill, within the context of his lifetime experience with depression from the perspective of Alfred Adler's Theory of Individual Psychology may best be described as psychobiographical research (McAdams, 1988) with a qualitative single case study design (Yin, 1994). This design is based on autobiographical and biographical accounts of the subject's life from which the data is analysed and interpreted in order to explore, discern and determine a central theme or themes illuminating that life (McAdams, 1988). Case study is a superlative yet practical methodology when a comprehensive and holistic investigation is required (Feagin, Orum & Sjoberg, 1991) and is designed to explore and uncover the details from the perspective of the individual subject, using multiple sources of data (Tellis, 1997).

The main strength of the case study method is that it emphasises the subjective reality of the individual and enables the researcher to study the subject as a complex whole (Plummer, 1983). Runyan (2006) argues that the insight gained from the personal experience of an individual through a psychological biographical case study is not only valuable to the field of psychology but also to a broader psychology of science. According to Mouton (2001) the case study method provides a rich and in-depth examination into the life of the subject

Single case studies may be used to affirm or challenge an existing theory or may represent an exceptional case (Yin, 1994). Yin (2003) further acknowledges that the results of case study research are not intended to be generalisable to populations but rather their purpose is to develop and generalise theory. In this case study, the theory of Alfred Adler's Individual Psychology was contextualised. Psychobiographical case study research is characteristically idiographic by design in that it focuses on the investigation of unique events and processes of a single life story within a much broader socio-historical and psychological context (Carlson, 1988; Van Niekerk, 2007). The early life of Sir Winston Churchill was contextualised against the background of late nineteenth century Britain with the socio-economic demands of that Victorian era, whilst events in his adult life were contextualised within the socio-political climate of the early twentieth century and the demands of the First and Second World Wars.

Keen and Packwood (1995) state that case study research is valuable where complex and broad investigative questions need to be addressed under complex circumstances and where the research objectives are best tackled through the investigation of a real life event. In addition, case studies typically use multiple methods of data collection, thereby providing the best possible opportunity to uncover and capture the most pertinent features of the research. According to McAdams (1988) psychobiography is defined as the "systematic use of psychological theory to transform a life into a coherent and illuminating story" (p. 2). The

design of this research study can therefore be specifically defined as a psychobiographical study of a single case over an entire lifespan.

Yin (1993, 1994) identified three specific types of case studies, namely, exploratory, explanatory and descriptive. In addition, Stake (1995, 2000) identified three other types of case study research, including intrinsic, collective and instrumental. Intrinsic case study research implies that the researcher intends to obtain a more in-depth understanding of a particular case itself rather than particular phenomena, that is to say the researcher has a personal interest in the case. Collective case study research applies to the situation where multiple cases are studied to better understand a phenomenon or a population. Instrumental case study research applies to the situation where a case is used to uncover details that are not outwardly obvious. In the case study of Sir Winston Churchill, the research design can further be described as exploratory and instrumental in that the concept of depressive realism was explored within the context of Churchill's lifetime experience with depression and attempted to highlight evidence, that, during some of the most difficult depressive episodes and demanding periods in Churchill's life, it was perceived but not necessarily obvious, that he also exhibited characteristics of the utmost decisiveness, foresight, fortitude and realism (Ghaemi, 2011; Mansfield, 1995).

### **6.8. The Case Selection**

This study is a single-case qualitative psychobiography of Sir Winston Churchill with the subject being selected by means of focused and purposive sampling. Since case study research is not based on random sampling from a broader population, the selection of a case must ensure that the maximisation of knowledge can be gained in the limited time available (Stake, 1995; Yin, 1993). It is critical that the researcher identify a case that provides unique evidence to support the development of an idea or concept (Berg, 1995). Case studies are

based on a careful and discerning choice of subject with a focus on one or two issues that are fundamental to understanding the phenomenon under study (Tellis, 1997). Furthermore, Fouché and Van Niekerk (2010) claim that “psychobiographical study entails a systematic and descriptively-rich study of renowned, enigmatic, exceptional, or even contentious individuals in socio-historical contexts within a psychological frame of reference” (p. 495).

Since the focus of psychobiographical research is therefore based on the personality development of exemplary and completed lives (Carlson, 1988) over their entire lifespan (Van Niekerk, 2007) and the choice of subject is based on the extraordinary contribution of an exemplary and enigmatic individual (Howe, 1997; McAdams, 2006), it is fitting that the subject selection for this case study of depressive realism was Sir Winston Churchill. He was selected not only because of his extraordinary career as a political and war time leader for most of the twentieth century but more because of the prevalence of depression during his lifetime and the potential role that it played in his leadership capability.

This psychologically focused narrative of an extraordinary and idiosyncratic individual with a core focus on his lifetime experience with depression (particularly during some of the most poignant and challenging times in world history) serves as a credible case for the exploration of the psychological concept of depressive realism. A preliminary literature review on the psychological impact of his depression revealed evidence that, despite his lifetime battle with depression, it was not necessarily a debilitating condition, but, in fact, a potential driving force in his desire to succeed and lead (Churchill, 1930, 1996; Fieve, 1997; Ghaemi, 2011; Jenkins, 2002; Mansfield, 1995; Rintala, 1984; Storr, 1990).

According to Howe (1997) psychobiographical research of outstanding individuals provides a relatively scientific approach to understanding why and how certain individuals develop into extraordinary characters and who may leave an indelible mark on humanity

despite their own shortcomings. Yin (1994) also notes that the findings of case study research may be used to confirm or refute a particular theory and may be useful in explaining complex causal links in real-life contexts.

Feagin, Orum and Sjoberg (1991) state that case studies allow for data to be analysed from multiple perspectives. It is not just the narrative details from the subject himself or herself that are considered but also the interactive perspectives of all related individuals, pivotal to that person's life. It is this aspect alone that differentiates case study research. According to Yin (1994) each individual case study is a holistic study based on data drawn from various sources and conclusions are surmised from this broad based evidence. The study of Sir Winston Churchill from a multi-perspective standpoint was facilitated by the abundance of available biographical and psycho-historical data and further served to enhance the overall findings describing the course and impact of depression during his lifetime.

For the purposes of this study, the selection of Sir Winston Churchill as the case subject was a purposeful process which involved the identification of an individual who best displayed a lifetime prevalence of depression yet was able to challenge and combat this disorder to prevail as a highly accomplished and enduring character of the twentieth century. Sir Winston Churchill was the single individual selected for this case study research because of the significant role that depression played in his life and the potential for his life story to have relevance to the concept of depressive realism.

## **6.9. Data Collection**

The collection of data for this research study focused predominantly on published materials, including biographical and autobiographical information, documentary sources and life history material. Data that was produced by the subject himself, that being of a primary nature, included Churchill's autobiography (Churchill, 1930; 1996), personal letters between

Churchill and his wife, Clementine Churchill, (Soames, 1999) as well as quotes, speeches, personal diary accounts and family portraits and paintings produced by Churchill himself (Langworth, 2012; Soames, 1982; Stelzer, 2012). Secondary data sources, that is, documents produced by other authors, included various biographical materials, historical documentation and life history accounts written by historians, political authors, medical professionals and former colleagues and friends of Sir Winston Churchill (Bonham-Carter, 1996; Ghaemi, 2011; Gilbert, 1992; Jenkins, 2002; Hayward, 1998; Mansfield, 1995; Owen, 2008; Robins & Post, 1993; Storr, 1990; Wilson, 2006).

Yin (1994) describes six possible sources of evidence for data collection applicable to the case study methodology, namely, documentation, archival records, interviews, direct observation, participant observation and physical artefacts. Since the subject of this study is deceased, only historical and biographical documentation, archival records and physical artefacts (artwork and paintings produced by Churchill himself) were relevant to this study.

The search and selection of published data on Sir Winston Churchill was conducted via the Internet, with particular reference to Winston Churchill's official website, ([www.churchill.org](http://www.churchill.org)) from which various initial literary sources were consulted and reviewed. Other suitable biographical and life history materials were sourced and ordered on-line, with particular emphasis on sourcing psychobiographical resources pertaining to his experience with depression. Further published materials on the life of Sir Winston Churchill as well as relevant academic material on Alfred Adler's theory of Individual Psychology and literature sources on depressive realism were retrieved from the University of South Africa's on-line library services as well as related journal and book collections from the University of Stellenbosch's library services. The range of data sources consulted for this study is definitively outlined in the study's Reference List.

To overcome the potential yet unavoidable pitfalls of author bias as well as researcher bias, inherent to published materials (Yin, 1994), and, to improve the credibility of the various data sources (Stake, 1995; Yin, 1994), data triangulation strategies were employed to compare and evaluate data from multiple sources so as to establish a degree of corroboration in the data as well as consistency in the findings (Golafshani, 2003). Pertinent data sources included a range of biographies (Gilbert, 1992; Jenkins, 2002; Mansfield, 1995) as well as a range of psychobiographical documentation depicting Churchill's state of mental health and depression over his lifetime (Fieve, 1997; Ghaemi, 2011; Owen, 2008; Robins & Post, 1993; Storr, 1990). To further improve the interpretation of the data findings from multiple authors, investigator triangulation was also employed, whereby the research supervisor for this study provided additional and continuous feedback to the researcher on the data collection and interpretation procedures. The researcher's personal self-reflection process (described at the end of this chapter) also assisted in minimising the effects of author and researcher bias.

In summation, Yin (1994) stresses the importance of formally organizing and documenting all data collected so that a 'chain of evidence' can be maintained, not only for the benefit of enhancing the study's dependability but also to facilitate the use of such data by future researchers in similar fields of study. In this context, the final research report cites its evidence and findings in both the body of the text and in the final reference list. The researcher also maintained a primary file management system of all data and documents consulted and collected for this study.

## **6.10. Data Analysis**

In case study research, data analysis typically follows a qualitative approach such as grounded theory and analytical induction (Mouton, 2001). For the purposes of this research study, within a social constructionist paradigm, the approach by Braun and Clarke (2006),

concerning thematic analysis, was utilised to analyse the data (outlined in detail in section 6.10.1.). This approach to analysing data is flexible. “Thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data. It minimally organises and describes your data set in rich detail” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p.79).

In addition, to complement this process of thematic analysis, a case description strategy proposed by Yin (1994), as a means of organising, contextualising and visually displaying the data, was also employed and is presented in Appendix C.

According to Tellis (1997) the analysis of data in case study methodology is considered one of the least sophisticated techniques of analysis in qualitative research as “the researcher needs to rely on experience and the literature to present the evidence in various ways, using various interpretations” (Tellis, 1997, p.12). However, Yin (1994), proposes that data analysis in case study methodology actually comprises a specific, albeit rudimentary, sequence of analytic measures that include data examination, categorisation, tabulation and recombining of the evidence to enable the data to reflect a high degree of synergy with the overall orientation of the study. Miles and Huberman (1984) suggest similar analytic techniques such as recording the frequency or consistency of events, ordering or grouping information into categories and seeking data patterns, all of which provide a systematic approach to this genre of data analysis. The interpretation of psychobiographical and historical information may be viewed as the researcher evaluating data as if it were an actual interview but is in fact data assessment from a distance (Simonton, 2003).

Since psychobiography premises itself on the study of an individual’s life within his or her particular social, historical and cultural context, across the individual’s entire lifespan, the effect of which generates an enormous quantity of information, the resultant body of evidence can become overwhelming for the researcher (McAdams, 1988). It is therefore

imperative for the researcher to implement a strategy that will assist in identifying salient pieces of information and cues to pertinent data that can be more easily extracted and categorised (McAdams, 1988). In the context of this study, the strategy of thematic analysis proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006) was implemented for the purpose of identifying salient themes and grouping the initial data into manageable categories.

Yin (1994) further stated that every research study should commence with a general strategy for data analysis and proposed two such strategies. The first of which involves data analysis that is guided by the theoretical propositions underpinning the study and the specific objectives of the study. In this strategy, the researcher examines and familiarises him or herself with the theoretical schemas and research objectives of the study in order to identify meaningful material from the collected data. This process expects the researcher to identify a series of questions that will explore the objectives of the research and examine its theoretical framework.

Within this context of relying on theoretical propositions to guide the analysis of data, with specific reference to psychobiography, Alexander (1990) proposed two strategies for organising large amounts of raw narrative data. In the first instance, Alexander (1990) explains that the researcher should let the data reveal itself or speak for itself, a process in which the most meaningful data becomes obvious. "The most satisfying data sources are those which deal with the spontaneous recollections from memory of various aspects of life already experienced, as in a freely produced autobiographical essay about particular aspects of lived experiences" (Alexander, 1990, p. 11). In order to sort through the raw data for salient themes, he proposed nine different markers or identifiers that can be used to determine what data is important and how best to categorise it. These identifiers include: primacy, frequency, uniqueness, negations, emphasis, omission, error, isolation and incompleteness. A

second way to sort data and reveal key aspects of a subject's life is to ask the data specific questions based on the overall emphasis of the study (Alexander, 1990).

The second strategy proposed by Yin (1994), which was applied in this study, involves the development of a case description. This refers to the development of a conceptual framework that integrates and organises biographical data with the theoretical aspects of the study so as to reflect the original purpose of the study. Appendix C (see p. 419) in this study is a visual representation of the historical life events across Churchill's entire personal and professional life, highlighting major depressive episodes as they occurred during periods of history when Churchill was called upon to be his most decisive and insightful. This visual representation therefore attempts to demonstrate a case for depressive realism, whilst simultaneously contextualising these notable life events within a theoretical framework of Alfred Adler's theory of Individual Psychology. This overall conceptual structure (see Appendix C) provides a historical, psychological and theoretical frame of reference for Churchill's 'Black Dog'.

Ryan and Bernard (2003) state that analysing qualitative text commences with the identification of themes and subthemes, followed by a consolidation of these 'idea sets' into final themes based on their relevance and salience to the objectives of the study. Methods of discovering themes and subthemes range from "simple word counts that can be done by a computer to labour-intensive, line-by-line analyses, that so far, only humans can do" (Ryan & Bernard, 2003, p. 85). In the case of rich, complex narratives, Ryan and Bernard (2003) suggest specific theme identification techniques that are practical and appropriate for this type of qualitative data and, which, in the case of this study, proved beneficial in the overall data analysis process. These techniques include: identifying repetitions or recurring topics; observing "naturally occurring shifts" (p. 90) in the content of the text such as new paragraphs or new phrases which indicate a transition in ideas and a possible new theme;

identifying similarities and differences and making comparisons across units of data and, finally, a process of cutting and sorting which, in principal, involves highlighting quotes or expressions that appear important and then arranging them into categories of “things that go together” (p. 94) as themes.

A more detailed description of the data analysis strategy and the six phases of thematic analysis, described by Braun and Clarke (2006) that were employed for this study, will now be presented in section 6.10.1.

### **6.10.1. Thematic Analysis**

The six phases of thematic analysis as outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006) that were implemented to conduct the initial analysis of the data are defined below:

Phase one involved transcribing the data. Biographical information of Churchill was read and re-read in order to identify initial concepts and broader themes relating to key life events (with particular reference to the course of his depression).

The second phase involved the researcher generating initial codes. Initial codes were generated by grouping interesting facts and relevant ideas into a systematic format. Related facts regarding Churchill’s early life, his school experiences, his early family dynamics, his rise into political life as well as his experiences as a soldier and commanding officer and, later, his two terms as Prime Minister of Britain, were grouped together into meaningful parts that were later collated into larger coded groups of information that were relevant to his depression and to Adler’s theory of Individual Psychology. Initial codes were also derived from the analysis of Churchill’s personality and personal pastimes.

Phase three involved establishing initial themes. Initial themes were formulated by collating the groups of facts and coded data aforementioned into potential groups of related

information representing broader themes and ensuring data was appropriately matched to these themes. Broader themes that were established related to Churchill's early childhood experiences, his relationship with his parents, the influence of his nanny and his schooling and education up to military school. Other themes considered include Churchill's experiences as a war correspondent, a soldier and a commanding officer. Initial themes focused on his challenges, triumphs and disappointments as a politician, war leader and Prime Minister. The social aspects of Churchill's life, including his marriage, his children, his personality, his quirks and his many pastimes were also considered. In all of these broader themes the presence and effect of Churchill's depression was a focal point.

Phase four reviewed the initial themes into more coherent themes, with certain themes merging into others whilst some were separated further into two separate new themes.

Phase five involved refining and naming the themes and placing them into categories. At this stage themes were refined via a process of further analysis in relation to the overall course of Churchill's life and his experience with depression.

The sixth phase was the production of the final report. It involved the final analysis and write-up of the report, producing a concise, coherent and non-repetitive account of all the related data of Churchill's life, his 'Black Dog' and appropriate incidents that presented a case for depressive realism.

In summation to this section on data analysis, Yin (1994) concludes that no matter the specific analytic technique, every study should at least have a general strategy of analysis to guide the researcher's decision as to what data is salient and what data can be discarded. The important fact remains that the analysis of the data must be guided by the original motivation for the study as well as the overall theoretical orientation of the study.

## **6.11. Conclusion**

This chapter described the methodological considerations applicable to psychobiographical research together with recommendations and strategies to undertake this type of qualitative research. The chapter also explored these methodological considerations as they applied to the case study of Sir Winston Churchill. In addition, the researcher highlighted the significance of establishing trustworthiness in qualitative data and provided an overview of the key ethical considerations applicable to psychobiographical research and how these related to the study of Sir Winston Churchill. The latter part of this chapter described the research design as well as the data collection and analysis techniques employed by this psychobiographical case study. Specific attention was given to the process of identifying salient themes and the application of a conceptual framework to categorise data.

In the following chapter, Chapter 7, the personality development of Sir Winston Churchill and his experience with depression is reviewed and discussed within the theoretical framework of Alfred Adler's theory of Individual Psychology and within the broader context of depressive realism.



## **Chapter 7**

### **Findings and Discussion**

#### **The Individual Personality Development of Sir Winston Churchill and His ‘Black Dog’: A Case for Depressive Realism**

##### **7.1. Chapter Preview**

This chapter explores and presents the development of Sir Winston Churchill’s personality and his experience with depression within the framework of Alfred Adler’s theory of Individual Psychology. The analysis and discussion of salient psychobiographical and historical data are presented within the context of Adler’s theory of Individual Psychology and overlaid within the broader context of depressive realism. Aspects of Adlerian theory are discussed as they relate to each of Churchill’s developmental life phases from child, to scholar, to soldier and to statesman with specific reference to pertinent life events and corresponding depressive episodes. The purpose of this chapter is to explore and consolidate the overarching objective of this study which is to describe and assess the life of Sir Winston Churchill within the context of his ‘Black Dog’ and to investigate the plausibility of depressive realism in relation to Churchill’s experience of depression.

##### **7.2. Setting the Scene**

###### **7.2.1. Basic View of Human Nature and the Significance of the Tasks of Life**

Adler’s (1928, 1931, 1962) basic view of human nature is captured in the three basic tenets that drive human existence. Firstly, that, individuals are driven by a conscious mind rather than subconscious motives and emotions, that is, they are self-determining beings. In

this regard, Adler (1931, 1962) further stressed the positive nature of human beings and the capacity for individuals to determine and influence their own life events. In this context, freedom of choice and self-determination are at the core of human nature. Although Adler (1931, 1962) recognised the role that environmental and hereditary factors play in shaping an individual's personality, he believed that, all things being equal, human beings still have the power and freedom of choice to dictate the course of their life. The individual's creative free will ultimately shapes personality and empowers the individual to create their own style of life (Adler, 1928).

Never truer is the concept of self-determination exemplified than in the life of Sir Winston Churchill. As Mansfield (1995) states that, despite his childhood difficulties, which may ordinarily have provided the opportunity and excuse for failure later in life as well as the influence of hereditary depressive tendencies (discussed in Chapter 4), Churchill achieved historical greatness by prevailing over his early setbacks and depressive predisposition. By way of determination, courage and foresight, Churchill overcame many of his childhood challenges and strove to master adversity throughout his life. Mansfield (1995) continues that, despite his father's constant disapproval, his mother's emotional distance and his weak and sickly physique that endured through most of his difficult and lonely childhood, Churchill had two redeeming qualities. These qualities appeared to save Churchill from his father's self-fulfilling prophecy that he would always "be a wastrel" (Mansfield, 1995, p. 151) and propelled him on the road to self-determination and self-mastery. The first quality refers to Churchill's honesty with himself and his realistic view regarding his weaknesses and limitations. The second quality identified refers to his ability to "exert himself against his own nature, to force himself to go beyond what by all accounts he was destined to be" (Mansfield, 1995, p. 152). Though his weak physique and inherent personality traits may have easily gravitated Churchill toward a life of complacency, something within Churchill,

“something titanic” (Mansfield, 1995, p. 162), motivated him to challenge and overcome many obstacles and move his “whole being against nature to become the man he wanted to be” (Mansfield, 1995, p. 152).

The second basic tenet of human nature refers to the individual’s need to master three universal challenges or life tasks. These include the nurturing and maintenance of social relationships and social connectedness, that is, a sense that individuals belong to a broader society and need to be able to co-operate and co-habit in order to thrive (the task of society); the need to contribute to society and be committed to the betterment and progress of fellow human beings (the task of work and occupation) and the need to establish intimacy (the task of love and marriage) (Adler, 1931). The mastery of these tasks is a necessary process for all human beings to not only ensure that human society remains enlightened, tolerant and co-operative but ultimately to ensure the survival and prosperity of the human race (Adler, 1931).

During his life, Churchill appears to have grasped and nurtured the first two tasks of life, that of society and of work and occupation. This is evidenced by the fact that Churchill’s life is significantly discernible by his fifty years of public service and a natural call to action and duty to serve his fellow human beings (Mansfield, 1995). In the task of society, Churchill was certainly socially connected, enjoying a broad circle of friends and acquaintances and was considered devout in his friendships (Singer, 2012). Although Churchill had a reputation for arrogance, impatience and self-centredness, he was also intensely loyal to both his family and friends and was easily affronted if his or the loyalty of others was in question. “The few real friends he had, those who stayed with him in the darkest hours, were more precious to him than life. He loved and honoured them and they knew it” (Mansfield, 1995, p. 187). Other expressions of Churchill’s loyalty, steadfastness and social awareness are to be found in his lifelong relationship and adoration of his childhood nanny, Mrs Everest, as well as his

unconditional loyalty to Britain's King Edward VIII during his abdication crisis (Mansfield, 1995).

More than his personal social relationships, however, Churchill was also acutely aware that he resided within a much broader social context and felt destined to play a significant role in the prosperity of humanity and in contributing to society (Churchill, 1930, 1996; Mansfield, 1995; Singer, 2012).

From his early years, Churchill had an uncanny understanding and vision of the future unfolding of events. He had a strong faith in his own ability to contribute to the survival of civilisation and the improvement of the material well-being of mankind (Gilbert, 1992, p. xix).

According to Ghaemi (2011) and Mansfield (1995), from a young age, Churchill openly accepted the notion of *noblesse oblige*, an understanding by Victorian nobility that individuals born to a life of privilege were obliged to act honourably and kindly to those less fortunate. Churchill understood that privilege of birth demanded unquestionable devotion and sacrifice to those less fortunate. Churchill's birth afforded him so much but so much was required in return and, in that context, he never shied away from this obligation to serve his fellow human beings and embraced every opportunity to protect and serve his nation. Churchill's role in leading Britain and her western allies to victory during the Second World War is evidence that Churchill viewed the war as more than just a British threat but indeed a global threat to freedom, democracy and human rights.

With regards the task of work and occupation, Churchill was motivated to work hard (Singer, 2012), and, despite his school reputation for being lazy, he grew to be a man with a notable capacity for hard work (Mansfield, 1995). Partly driven by a need to prove his father wrong and partly due to certain inferiority complexes established in his early childhood,

Churchill developed a strong work ethic as part of a higher need to achieve his goals, even if he did not believe he had the natural talent or ability. Churchill was determined to accomplish through hard work and drive what he thought he could not achieve through competency (Mansfield, 1995). In addition, Pearson (1991) states that, in an attempt to drive away his continuously threatening depression, Churchill sought to keep his mind constantly occupied which further contributed to his notable work ethic and assertiveness.

Thus, it can be argued, that, during his extraordinary and extensive career as a politician, statesman and writer, Churchill not only mastered the task of society but also the task of work and occupation. Churchill continuously strove to safeguard his fellow human beings and do all that was possible for the betterment of the society in which he lived, not just British society, but the world at large. According to Mansfield (1995), Singer (2012) and psychoanalyst, Anthony Storr (1990), Churchill believed it his duty and his calling to protect his fellow human beings, evidenced by his continuous warnings of Nazism during the 1930's, despite being politically shunned and socially ridiculed. And, again, during the years post the Second World War, when Churchill was removed from his Premiership, he remained closely involved in British domestic and foreign policy, speaking boldly about the threat of communism, the need for fair treatment of post war Germany and the need to address social issues within Britain. Even during his second term as Prime Minister of Britain in 1955, well into his seventies and overcoming the setbacks of a serious stroke, Churchill believed he could still make a valuable contribution to preventing a third world war and to securing a lasting peace settlement that was so desired worldwide (Gilbert, 1992; Mansfield, 1995).

One of the mysteries of Churchill's life is that time and again, when he might have easily pursued less bruising occupations or settled into a life of ease, he kept reaching for the power to shape events and saw himself as born with a responsibility to do good (Mansfield, 1995, p. 123-124).

In terms of mastering the third task, that of love and marriage, Churchill's devotion to Clementine is well recorded and, despite their many differences, they managed to nurture a loving, supportive and unconditionally loyal relationship over their 55 years of marriage (Mansfield, 1995; Pearson, 1991). Clementine was an early riser who retired to bed early, whilst Churchill would often work until 3 a.m. and sleep later in the mornings. Clementine was a natural worrier who conducted her life conservatively and cautiously and was risk averse where Churchill had an insatiable appetite for adventure and high risk. Clementine was frugal whilst Churchill had little respect for money and never appeared anxious about personal debt. Churchill was an open emotional book whilst Clementine kept her emotions to herself and was considered more austere yet more highly strung than Churchill (Mansfield, 1995; Pearson, 1991; Singer, 2012). Despite their differences and irritations, however, Churchill and Clementine appeared to compliment and regulate each other and maintained an affectionate and enduring relationship, clearly depicted in the sentimentality of their numerous letters to each other and their respective pet names: Churchill was referred to by Clementine as "Mr Pug" or "Pig" and Clementine as "Mrs Kat" or "darling pussycat" (Langworth, 2008; 2012).

Mansfield (1995) further comments, however, that the Churchill's marriage was not immune to the effects of loneliness, anger, resentment and opportunities for indiscretions, common to many marriages. Pearson (1991) adds that during the course of their marriage, Clementine had endured his extravagance, his enormous ego and accepted his limitless capacity for work, and, in the latter years of their marriage, she often felt drained and resentful of her husband's neediness and his many whims and idiosyncrasies. "To be a husband's rock in moments of his depression was neither stimulating nor warming for a romantic nature. Being needed, could be terribly exhausting" (Pearson, 1991, p. 217). It was, however, in the essence of this very real marriage, with all its trials and tribulations, that their

respect and love for one another grew stronger with each passing year. Churchill wrote of his marriage to Clementine:

What it has been to me to live all these years in your heart and companionship, no phrases can convey. Time passes swiftly but is it not joyous to see how great and growing is the treasure we have gathered together amid the storms and stresses of so many events and to millions, tragic and terrible years (Churchill, cited in Langworth, 2008, p. 511).

According to Fieve (1997), Clementine grounded and steadied Churchill throughout his turbulent career and his many bouts of severe depression whilst he provided for Clementine an unquestionable devotion and unconditional faithfulness. Langworth (2008) refers to one of Churchill's favourite expressions, one that was often applied in reference to Clementine: "Here firm, though all be drifting" (Langworth, 2008, p. 511).

The third and final tenet of human nature refers to an individual's inherent need for social interaction and a sense of belonging to a broader human community, that is, an individual's sense of community, an interest in other human beings, compassion for others and a desire for human collaboration and prosperity (Adler, 1962). Individuals who are concerned about their fellowman and have a desire to contribute to the betterment of society have developed a higher sense of social interest and social co-operation. In developing one's social feeling, one is better able to develop a deeper connection to other human beings, a heightened sense of empathy and an enhanced ability to master the three tasks of life (Adler, 1928, 1962). The concept of the 'social feeling' underpins the foundation of Adler's theory of personality development in that the more human beings are able to connect positively to others and acquire the skills of social co-operation and social connectedness, the more human

beings take a positive interest in one another and are able to contribute to the betterment of humankind (Adler, 1962).

The concept of the 'social feeling' is not only fundamental to Adler's theory of personality development, and is a recurring theme in this study of Churchill's life, it is pertinent to the discussion of Churchill's personality development for two key reasons: firstly, Adler (1962) maintained that social co-operation was essential in achieving political objectives and that without it, no-one would be able to accomplish anything by politics without the ability to collaborate and co-operate. Secondly, the mastery of the 'social feeling' is relevant to Churchill because empathy, compassion, courage, self-mastery and a sense of duty to serve his fellow human beings were the cornerstones of Churchill's character (Mansfield, 1995).

Furthermore, Churchill developed a notable sense of compassion from an early age (Storr, 1990), but, according to Mansfield (1995), it is one of his personality traits that is seldom recognised. Interestingly, however, Gilbert (1992), Pearson (1991) and Wilson (2002) argue that although Churchill was inherently against cruelty and was always willing to fight for the 'under-dog', if being tough and ruthless served the purposes of war, then he was more easily convinced of their merits. Mansfield (1995) further adds that whilst Churchill is well remembered for his role in sending thousands of soldiers to their death in both the First and Second World Wars, the loss, pain and horror that Churchill felt and his acknowledgement of their sacrifice is undervalued.

This war proceeds along its terrible path by the slaughter of infantry. I say to myself every day. What is going on while we sit here, while we go away to dinner or home to bed? Nearly 1000 Englishmen, Britishers, men of our race are knocked into bundles

of bloody rags every twenty-four hours and carried away to hasty graves or to field ambulances (Churchill, cited in Langworth, 2008, p. 235).

Mansfield (1995) adds that Churchill believed it was his life's purpose to protect his nation's people and bring an end to human suffering, and Storr (1990) states that Churchill was not an introspective individual absorbed by his own needs; if he had been, he would never have accomplished all that he did in his long life. To this end, Churchill was a leading social reformer throughout his political career. Churchill's nanny, Mrs Everest, was the first person to expose him to the plight of the working classes in Britain and how those individuals, not born into a life of privilege, existed. As a result of his social awareness, during his tenure as Home Secretary in 1910, Churchill took on the role of social reform with great conviction and established various policies that addressed the quality of life for the working masses, including, minimum labour standards, excess-profits tax, national insurance and pension schemes, child labour protection acts as well as major reforms to improve prison conditions. Furthermore, according to Mansfield (1995), "compassion moved Churchill to the kind of action that brought meaningful change to the lives of people from aged women to the children of the Blitz", by means of acts of "hard devotion to the needs of others" (p. 157).

Churchill's commitment to the betterment of society and his interest in the well-being of his fellow human beings is substantiated in these immortal words: "You make a living by what you get; you make a life by what you give" (Churchill, cited in Langworth, 2008, p. 576).

### **7.2.2. View of the Person and the Significance of Holism**

Adler's view of the person incorporates two major themes, the notion of holism and the unity of the personality. Adler (1928, 1931) believed that individuals should not be viewed in isolated parts but rather as a dynamic, contextual whole, existing as part of a family

and broader social system and interacting with and being influenced by his or her environment. The self-determining nature of human beings also requires that an individual's personality and behaviour be viewed within the context of their environment and socio-cultural surrounds, that is, a person should be observed and assessed holistically.

The unity of the personality refers to the combined effects of a person's senses, emotions and behaviours, that is, the tendency for an individual to think, feel and act in unison, either consciously or unconsciously, to reveal the personality in its totality (Adler, 1931).

In the context of this study, a holistic view of Churchill's personality development within the framework of Adler's Individual Psychology would be incomplete without an in-depth exploration of his experience with depression and the specific life events that not only shaped his personality but also underpinned his 'Black Dog'. The significance of hereditary factors in Churchill's depression, the influence of the socio-cultural environment in which he grew up and the basic course of his lifelong depression have already been addressed in Chapter 4, thus, the focus of the proceeding chapter is to explore specific life events from the perspective of their influence on Churchill's personality development and on his experience with depression. In the course of this discussion, it is the researcher's intention to not only provide a holistic view of Churchill's personality development but also provide evidence for the debate on depressive realism.

### **7.3. The Personality Development of Sir Winston Churchill and His 'Black Dog'**

#### **7.3.1. Introduction**

Before embarking on an analysis of specific life events as they relate to Churchill's personality development and his experience with depression, a brief discussion regarding the

overall nature of Churchill's mood disorder is presented to provide a general framework from which to commence the investigation of Churchill's 'Black Dog'.

According to Fieve (1997), Churchill presented with more than just depression during his lifetime, he suffered from major mood swings of a manic-depressive nature that would today be diagnosed, according to Fieve (1997), as Bipolar II Disorder (refer to Chapter 5) with a strong emphasis on hereditary origins. Fieve (1997) goes further to suggest a more applicable diagnosis of the unofficial beneficial Bipolar subtype, namely, Bipolar IIB Disorder, in which the manic depressive uses the 'highs' to benefit himself, his family and society. "In my experience the bipolar beneficial patient, whom I call Bipolar IIB, is a genuine and separate diagnostic entity, yet to be recognised by the American Psychiatric Association" (Fieve, 1997, p.61). Fieve (1997) claims, that, "Bipolar IIB individuals are often well known and or highly successful" (p. 57) and, that, such individuals "have been major contributors to our society", as in the case of Sir Winston Churchill (Fieve, 1997, p. 61). According to Fieve (1997), Churchill's mania is evidenced throughout his life by numerous periods of frenetic energy during which time he required little sleep, had unwavering self-confidence and became obsessed with words, demonstrated by his endless talking and writing. "He was never complacent and never still" (Fieve, 1997, p.146), yet, these manic patterns resulted in Churchill's prolific literature accomplishments and his brilliant war-time leadership that saved a nation.

Fieve (1997) further claims, however, that not all great achievers possess tireless amounts of energy and drive and neither do all manic individuals possess the inner capacity to become exceptional leaders but, when circumstances, social and cultural life events and intelligence work together in an individual who also has a manic depressive tendency, this individual has the propensity to rise to greater heights than his or her contemporaries of a similar background who do not have the manic drive.

Owen (2008) argues that the Second World War years reveal the true underlying character of Churchill, one that was not marred by manic depression (Bipolar Disorder). During these years there was “no trace of depression, hypomania, hubris or manic behaviour” (Owen, 2008, p. 39). Churchill demonstrated the characteristics of a “complete politician using reasoned argument and every political skill in his armoury” to win critical debates and implement rational strategic plans during a time that his country and the world were in serious peril (Owen, 2008, p. 39).

Fieve (1997) continues his argument that, in addition to Churchill’s manic moods, he suffered numerous protracted episodes of depression. Furthermore, since five of the last seven Dukes of Marlborough suffered from severe melancholia, Fieve (1997) believes there is sufficient evidence to suggest Churchill’s depressive mood swings were not only characteristic of manic-depressive behaviour but they were also hereditary (refer to Chapter 4). According to Hart, James, Plumb, Storr and Taylor (1969), however, a classification of Churchill as manic-depressive as a result of his genetic make-up is an oversimplification of what belied the true nature of Churchill’s mood disorder. Without an in-depth psychoanalytic study of all the integrated aspects of Churchill’s childhood and adolescence, including his relationship with his parents and his nanny, Mrs Everest, an authentic understanding of the nature of Churchill’s mood disorder cannot be achieved. Hart et al. (1969) believe that Churchill’s depression was a result of early deprivation and loss of the love object, mainly his mother, which led to subsequent repressed anger. Hart et al. (1969) also claim that people with depression deny themselves rest and dislike being idle because they cannot afford not to be busy, that is, their unstoppable energy is a defence against their latent depression rather than a symptom of mania. Furthermore, Hart et al. (1969) argue that Churchill’s resolve, fortitude, confidence and even aggression were not rooted in genetics but rather the result of

his self-determination, decisiveness, ambition and sheer iron will. Churchill sought to control, if not, overcome his depression, rather than lay victim to it.

Storr (1990) adds that it would be most appropriate to define Churchill's recurrent depression as the result of both hereditary factors and early environmental conditioning factors. This also supports Adler's (1928) view that both hereditary and environmental factors provide the basic building blocks for personality and from which an individual's creative free will can grow and further shape personality. Adler (1928; 1962) believed that what a person is born with is not as important as how they interpret and give meaning to their experiences. In this context, Churchill was a self-determining individual not necessarily bound by his genetic predisposition to depression.

Furthermore, Owen (2008) claims, that, currently, there is substantial resistance to a diagnosis of mania where Churchill is concerned due to a sense that there is a lack of clear clinical evidence and due to the fact that the general public prefer to remember Churchill as mentally healthy rather than mentally ill. Individuals generally prefer to look up to Churchill as a unique historical figure, different to the average person, capable of extraordinary energy and confidence, rather than an individual who suffered from clinical mania.

Owen (2008) continues that, provided leaders, such as Churchill, are meeting the needs of the public, they are revered as highly competent and unusually capable of tasks that ordinary people would not be able to fulfil but, the moment such leaders lose the support of their public, people are more ready to label such individuals as mentally ill, because they are no longer doing as the public demands or requires. These public figures are then deemed out of touch with reality or considered out of control, even if there are insufficient symptoms to warrant a clinical diagnosis of a mental illness. In Churchill's case, Owen (2008) states that no-one can deny Churchill suffered severe depressive episodes during his life, but whether he

suffered from clinical mania is debatable. When Churchill was not wrestling with his 'Black Dog' and displayed elated moods, high energy, self-confidence, even arrogance and brashness, it is difficult to determine if these periods of euphoria were actually pathological and if he was really deserving of being branded mentally ill or manic-depressive by his peers and by subsequent biographers. Today, even a retrospective diagnosis of Bipolar Disorder is questionable or unwarranted without more detailed clinical evidence (Owen, 2008).

Interestingly, Post and Robins (1993) postulate that much of Churchill's manic behaviour may well be attributed to his natural tendency to be flamboyant and eccentric in the extreme. In his later years, however, Post and Robins (1993) believe that Churchill's erratic behaviour can be medically explained in that it was the result of progressive arteriosclerotic dementia. Plagued by ailing physical health, the damage of two major strokes and encroaching arteriosclerotic dementia, Churchill was unable to function optimally or control his temperament. "He was frequently unable to contain his emotions, often irritable and short of temper, at other times breaking into tears or becoming extremely maudlin. He also suffered from delusions of grandiosity, believing that only he could prevent a third world war" (Post & Robins, 1993, p. 21). Churchill's progressive dementia was amplified by his vulnerability to depression and, whilst in his earlier years, Churchill summoned his strength of will to overcome his depression, in his final years, his depression became increasingly unmanageable and dementia began to control his behaviour. Post and Robins (1993) conclude, that, although Churchill's medical ailments were greatly affected by his propensity for depression, he was always "able to cope" with his 'Black Dog' (p. 24), and that, rather, it was cerebral arteriosclerosis that ultimately affected his ability to function optimally and consistently as a public statesman.

Ghaemi (2011) also believes that Churchill suffered more than just depression, in that when he was not depressed, his moods were still erratic. According to Ghaemi (2011), when

his 'Black Dog' subsided, Churchill became another person: disagreeable and sometimes aggressive. Churchill was not a man of consistency but rather a "mass of contradictions" and, as his military chief of staff, General Ismay, revealed: "He's either on the crest of the wave or in the trough, either high laudatory or bitterly condemnatory, either in an angelic temper or a hell of a rage. There are no half-measures in his make-up" (Ghaemi, 2011, p. 60).

Ghaemi (2011) continues that this alternation between up and down moods is more indicative of a cyclothymic personality, which is also biologically and genetically related to Bipolar Disorder (refer to Chapter 5). When he was not depressed, Churchill was more likely to be hypomanic, that is, displaying mild manic symptoms of high energy, high sociability and impulsivity. Churchill frequently worked late into the night, dictating volumes of work or manuscripts; he demonstrated immense courage in his military service as a young man and he was also a famed conversationalist, dominating social settings and talking incessantly (Ghaemi, 2011). Always on the move, planning, thinking and strategising, President Franklin D. Roosevelt claimed that Churchill always had so many brilliant ideas: "He has a hundred a day and about four of them are good" (Ghaemi, 2011, p.61). Ghaemi (2011) concludes that, since cyclothymic personality involves a constant alternation between mild manic and mild depressive symptoms, and, since Churchill also suffered more severe bouts of depression, he sufficiently meets the criteria for a diagnosis of Bipolar Disorder Type II.

Whether one supports the notion that Churchill was bipolar or suffered severe mood swings of a cyclothymic nature or was ultimately plagued by a cerebral illness, what remains difficult to qualify is Churchill's remarkable ability to control and overcome his depressive episodes (Hart et al., 1969), often in the wake of some of the most demanding and challenging periods of his career, demonstrating incredible foresight and fortitude (Ghaemi, 2011). In this context, therefore, Churchill's experience with his 'Black Dog' theoretically

uncovers the possibility that there is a reasonable and probable case for the concept of depressive realism and that it potentially exists as a positive side-effect of depression.

Salient events in each of Churchill's life phases will now be discussed with the view to understanding his individual personality development and his experience of 'Black Dog'.

### **7.3.2. Churchill: The Child (1874-1894)**

Adlerian theory maintains that the first six years of a young child's life are the most critical in the formation and crystallisation of behaviour patterns and personality development (Adler, 1962). Life events and how the child interprets these events during their formative years are integral to shaping the child's view of themselves, the world and their subsequent behaviour as an adult. By six years old, through the interpretation of their early life experiences, including family and external social influences, the child firmly establishes a unique view of the world. These early impressions of the self and of the environment not only have a profound effect on the child's attitude towards life and towards fellow human beings, but also their development of the 'social feeling', how they establish their life goals and the way in which they respond to the three tasks of life, that is, their ability to nurture relationships, contribute to society and establish intimacy with another human being (Adler, 1928, 1962).

Due to the significance of childhood experiences and the importance that Adler (1962) places on the development of the 'social feeling' during these formative years, the following section dedicates considerable attention to Churchill's childhood and the various factors that, combined, shaped not only his personality but also the way in which he experienced and faced his 'Black Dog'. Particular reference is made to the social influences of Churchill's home and school life, after all, according to Adler (1962), an individual's

potential to develop a positive 'social feeling' and connection to fellow human beings is first and fore-mostly nurtured at home and at school.

Of the various childhood experiences that influenced the origins of Churchill's personality and his experience with depression, parental neglect is the most obvious and striking (Storr, 1990).

### *7.3.2.1. The Role of Parents: Churchill's Parental Neglect*

Winston Churchill was born two months prematurely, which, for Storr (1990), brings into question whether this event affected his future emotional development. The way that an infant is cared for and nursed during these first critical months "affects the rate of its physical and mental progress" and the fact that "a premature child is unexpected and therefore something of an embarrassment" has some impact on the early mother child bond (Storr, 1990, p. 22). With Churchill's unexpected arrival, basic preparations such as clothing and a baby bed were not yet made, coupled with the anxiety that a first child is bound to cause an inexperienced mother, factors which may all have impacted on Churchill's mother's earliest response towards her newborn son. Storr (1990) also confirms that Churchill was not fed by his mother but, in accordance with Victorian customs, was given over to a wet nurse in the early weeks of his life, thereby stunting a healthy early bond with his mother.

Churchill's mother, Lady Randolph Churchill, was twenty years old at the time of Churchill's birth and was considered to be a woman of exceptional beauty. She was, however, also considered shallow and overly consumed by fashionable society and shamefully neglectful of her infant son (Manchester, cited in Churchill, 1930/1996; Storr, 1990). Manchester (cited in Churchill, 1930/1996) further comments that when Churchill was a little older, his mother found him "interesting but she didn't like children" (p. ix). More recent research, however, postulates that Lady Randolph may have spent more time with her

young son than has been suggested but that there can be no doubt she preferred high society life, parties and romantic liaisons (Pearson, 1991). Churchill comments that “I loved her, but at a distance” (Mansfield, 1995, p. 38). “In fact, Churchill received remarkably little affection or support from either parent in the vital years of early childhood” (Storr, 1990, p. 22).

Gilbert (1992) comments further that, as a young child, Churchill was often disappointed that he would have to spend Christmases or school holidays without his parents as they were travelling abroad. On one occasion, as Churchill was preparing for the school fencing cup at his senior school, Harrow, he learned that his mother would not be able to attend his performance as she would be in Monte Carlo, and, after winning the school cup and preparing for the Public Schools fencing championship, Churchill was even more disappointed to learn that his father would be unable to attend this competition (which he also subsequently won) because he had to attend a horse-racing meeting (Gilbert, 1992).

Churchill’s father, Lord Randolph Churchill, absorbed in his political life and equally consumed by his social life, took a remote interest in his son. According to Mansfield (1995), Churchill adored and revered his father but “in searching for the parental devotion and approval that ought to have been his, Winston collided with the steely arm of heartless rejection” (p. 87). Storr (1990) claims that a vulnerability to depression is the result of an early failure in the child parent relationship. A child, who is neglected, rejected or disapproved, will not develop a positive sense of his own value and will not be able to cope with the disappointments of childhood secure in the knowledge that the world is predominantly a positive place. Although such a child may experience periods of both success and happiness, ultimately, as a result of never having been able to create a positive sense of self-worth, the child will not be convinced that he or she is worthy of love or that life is accepting of them. Storr adds: “A whole career may be dedicated to the pursuit of power,

the conquest of a woman or the gaining of wealth, only in the end to leave the person face to face with despair and a sense of futility” (1990, p. 19).

Interestingly, Pearson (1991) comments that Churchill may have enjoyed a closer relationship with his father than has been given credit and, that, although he was preoccupied with his career and his social commitments, Lord Randolph, ever so often, took “Winston to France and Germany for holidays” (p. 59). And, later, “knowing how much Winston loved tales of adventure, Lord Randolph introduced him to his friend, the famous writer Bram Stoker, the famous author of *Dracula*” (p. 59). Pearson (1991) also remarks on a similar scenario with Churchill’s mother, Lady Randolph, who was possibly more concerned about her son than she is given credit: “There is also evidence that far from being starved of Jennie’s affection and attention, Winston’s childhood owed much to his mother’s presence” (p. 58).

Mansfield (1995) argues that Churchill was essentially abandoned to boarding schools during most of his youth, with few visits from either of his parents. During his time at Harrow School, Churchill’s father’s work commitments would often take him to meetings that were located in the vicinity of Churchill’s school but Lord Randolph was never able to visit him: “Letters home were filled with lonely pleas to his parents to visit and tender efforts to stir the affection of a father he knew mainly from newspaper articles” (Mansfield, 1995, p. 88). In fact, Lord Randolph took it upon himself to habitually write to Churchill with the main purpose of scolding or admonishing him (Storr, 1990). In Churchill’s autobiography (1930/1996), he comments that he can only recall three or four intimate conversations with his father during his early years and that, for the most part, communication between father and son was limited to letter writing, with most letters from his father being words of admonishment and disapproval. Pearson (1991) comments that Churchill would often write home for extra pocket-money and constantly sought the attention of his parents which, in

turn, drove his father to view Churchill as irresponsible with money as well as “ill-disciplined and lazy” (p. 66).

When Churchill finally entered Sandhurst Military College, in 1892, after three attempts at the entrance examinations, the relationship with his father became worse. Lord Randolph firmly believed Churchill would amount to nothing and continued to maintain an austere, unaffectionate and disapproving relationship with Churchill, accusing him of being stupid and extravagant and reminding him constantly that his younger brother, Jack, was “vastly his superior” and much more conscientious (Mansfield, 1995, p. 88; Pearson, 1991).

Letters written to Churchill by his father during Churchill’s time at Sandhurst provide clear evidence that Lord Randolph’s disapproval of Churchill had “reached obsessional proportions” and that Churchill had become one of Lord Randolph’s “principal *betes noires*”, particularly during the latter part of Lord Randolph’s ailing final years (Pearson, 1991, p. 70). One such example describes the instance when Churchill qualified for a cavalry position at Sandhurst and was excited at the prospect of becoming a soldier on horseback, not to mention his relief at finally passing his entrance exams after three attempts. Lord Randolph, however, took a different view and was extremely angry that Churchill had not instead passed into the infantry: “He was extremely dissatisfied and, in due course, I received from him a long and very severe letter expressing the bleakest view of my educational career” (Churchill, 1930/1996, p. 36). Lord Randolph warned Churchill of his potential to become a “social wastrel” (p. 36). Importantly, Gilbert (1992) further points out that, unbeknown to Churchill at the time, the vitriol expressed by Lord Randolph in this most crushing of letters to Churchill “showed all the anger that was to characterise the gradual collapse of his nervous system” as a result of Lord Randolph’s declining health and subsequent diagnosis of syphilis (p. 38). Unfortunately for Churchill, the symptoms of his father’s illness caused a great deal of moodiness, frustration, and later, senility for Lord Randolph, which manifested in

potentially unwarranted disdain towards Churchill. Had his father not suffered from syphilis, it is debatable that Churchill may have enjoyed a closer, if not less scornful relationship with his father, particularly as Churchill approached adulthood.

Despite their remote and painful relationship, however, Churchill idolised his father and remained devoted to him, desperate to prove himself and gain his father's respect. Even after Lord Randolph's death in 1895, Churchill vowed to pursue his father's goals and vindicate his memory (Mansfield, 1995). Interestingly, Mansfield (1995) comments further, that, despite Churchill's propensity for depression as a result of potential hereditary links, he chose to use the memory of his father as a driving force to propel him forward in a life of purpose rather than to sink into a life of self-destruction and misery. Strengthened by his resolve borne from a lonely and difficult childhood, Churchill "cast off bitterness in order to grasp the future" (Mansfield, 1995, p. 89). Pearson (1991) adds, however, that, although Churchill had the resolve to overcome his father's scorn, much of this strength came from his interaction with other significant individuals that influenced his life, Mrs Everest being the most significant as well as the encouragement and attention he received from another interesting, yet unlikely source, Count Kinsky, one of his mother's lovers, in whom Churchill found a surrogate father figure (Pearson, 1991). Count Kinsky was a vibrant and glamorous man who often took Churchill to the circus and "made a fuss of him in London during school holidays" (Pearson, 1991, p. 67).

The role of the father within the family unit, according to Adler (1962), is to provide support and love to the mother and provide a parental example of social-co-operation within the marriage. The father serves to nurture the value of co-operation and respect between the sexes and encourage a positive view of marriage in general (Adler, 1962). In addition, the role of the father is to demonstrate a positive outcome in the pursuit of the three tasks of life, particularly the task of occupation, during which, if the father meets this task successfully,

teaches his children the value of work ethic, responsibility and, once again, social co-operation (Adler, 1962). In Churchill's case, the guidance of his father and his role as protector was flawed, so much so, that Churchill created an image in his mind of how he wished his father to be rather than who he was in reality. The less Churchill interacted with his father, the easier this transformation became and Churchill merely idolised a false father figure (Manchester, cited in Churchill, 1930, 1996, p. ix). This damaged and distorted idolisation is reflected in Churchill's recollections of his father as the most powerful influence on his early life as a result of Lord Randolph's ambitions and successful career. In reality, however, Lord Randolph was a failed politician who enjoyed a brief stint as British Chancellor of the Exchequer in the mid-1880's but thereafter was a disastrous political failure (Manchester, cited in Churchill, 1930, 1996; Gilbert, 1992; Mansfield, 1995). Furthermore, Bonham-Carter (1965) confirms that Churchill worshipped the false image of his unknown father all his life.

The emotional abandonment experienced by Churchill at such a young age led him to believe that he was truly a wretched and unworthy son. It not only fed a false idolisation of his parents but also resulted in a suppression of negative emotions (Storr, 1990). In search of an outlet for these emotions, Churchill not only created images of his parents as he wished they were but his suppressed resentment at their neglect was redirected to his early poor behaviour. From a young age, Churchill was reportedly hostile and difficult, with a reputation for being a petulant student (Gilbert, 1992; Storr, 1990). According to Storr (1990), the most difficult and badly behaved children are those who are unloved. As a result, such children tend to have a strong disregard for authority, viewing it as hostile. Winston Churchill was no exception. Storr (1990) continues that the negative image of authority is balanced by a positive, yet distorted image of the idealised parents. The less a child knows or has intimate contact with his or her real parents, the more this double-edged image persists. The

idealisation process therefore serves as a defensive and protective function for the young child (Storr, 1990). “A small child, being weak and defenceless, finds it unbearable to believe that there are no adults who love, support and guide him and if there are not, he invents them” (Storr, 1990, p. 31). According to Storr (1990), Churchill demonstrated this idealisation very well. In addition, Storr (1990) further comments, that an individual’s genetic inheritance may predispose them to depression but whether that depression manifests will likely depend upon early childhood experiences and family influences, which, in the case of Churchill and his relationship with his parent’s, had a profound effect . “All his life he would be plagued by spells of depression. Love, he had come to view was something that had to be earned and he sought it in achievement, becoming a creature of ambition and raw energy” (Manchester, cited in Churchill, 1930/1996, p. x).

Churchill’s childhood, sources show, might have been lonely but he was not alone. The person that saved him from his emotional childhood trauma, was his nanny, Mrs Everest, who began caring for Churchill just a few months after his birth and who remained his faithful surrogate mother, his confidante and friend until her death when Churchill was twenty years old (Mansfield, 1995; Storr, 1990). Mrs Everest was a jovial, affectionate and encouraging individual who was highly protective of her young charge and provided the unconditional security and love that Churchill lacked in his own parents. Churchill loved her dearly and a photo of his dearest “Woom”, as he affectionately called her, remained by his bedside until his own death in 1965 (Mansfield, 1995; p. 39).



**Mrs**

**Churchill's nanny,  
Everest.**

Source: Gilbert, 1992.

Adler (1962) claims that the role of both parents is integral to the healthy development of a child, particularly in terms of their understanding of social co-operation. The mother's early involvement in caring for her infant is a young child's first exposure to the 'social feeling' and the development of trust and faith in a fellow human being. As the

child grows older, the mother's role becomes more critical in demonstrating co-operation and a broader sense of social connectedness, nurturing these same sentiments in her child. It is also the role of the mother not to pamper her child but to encourage independence and a natural interest in the social environment. Adler (1962) further adds that if there is no biological mother present, a substitute for a mother plays an equally important role in building trust, social interest and reciprocal love. In this context, Mrs Everest's role as Churchill's primary caregiver played a significant role in his early personality development and his ability to cope with his childhood experiences. Interestingly, however, Storr (1990) argues that, although Mrs Everest's presence made up for the love and affection that was missing in Churchill's life, it could not have fully replaced the love and attention Churchill lacked from his parents.

The issues of parental neglect and emotional distance that Churchill grappled with in his youth left an indelible mark on Churchill's early childhood memories and his subsequent character, but, according to Mansfield (1995), what might have been seeds of self-destruction and uncontrollable misery became the impetus for resolve, determination and greatness. As Churchill wrote:

Famous men are usually the product of an unhappy childhood. The stern compression of circumstances, the twinges of adversity, the spur of slights and taunts in early years, are needed to evoke that ruthless fixity of purpose and tenacious mother wit without which great actions are seldom accomplished (cited in Mansfield, 1995, p. 89).

#### ***7.3.2.2. The Value of Churchill's Earliest Memories***

Through the interpretation of their early life experience, children develop their own unique view of the world around them and a concept of the self within that world. They in turn develop their own set of skills and armoury to tackle life's challenges (Adler, 1962).

This view of life is fixed, however, no matter how appropriate or mistaken, and may bring with it much fulfilment or much frustration and difficulty. Adler (1962) argues therefore, that life events themselves are not as critical as the child's interpretation thereof in terms of forming their view of the world and their subsequent behaviour patterns. Adler (1962) continues that there are many events or situations in childhood from which mistaken interpretations, meanings and memories are drawn and which become the source of an individual's inability to face life's challenges through to adulthood.

In the context of children who develop mistaken meanings and who have flawed interpretations of the world, Adler (1962) classified three different child profiles, namely, the Sick Child, the Pampered Child and the Neglected Child (refer also to Chapter 3).

Churchill was not only a physically small young boy but he was "weak of limb" and was often more ill than his peers (Mansfield, 1995, p. 42). From the moment of his birth, Churchill was sickly and endured many bouts of influenza, not to mention "contracting any disease he was near", including pneumonia, from which he nearly died at the age of eleven and from which he suffered many bouts throughout his life (Mansfield, 1995, p. 142; Storr, 1990). Mansfield adds, "He was particularly prone to rashes, boils and hives and friends teased him about the silk underwear that he wore to prevent maddening skin irritations" (1995, p. 142). In addition to being short, physically weak and accident prone, Churchill also suffered from a speech impediment in the form of a lisp. "Indeed, he started life with considerable physical disadvantages" (Storr, 1990, p. 9), potentially fuelling a strong sense of inferiority and impotence, mirroring what Adler (1928) referred to as an inferiority complex, an inner sense of doubt about one's capability and self-worth.

Despite the impression of being a 'sick child', Churchill does not typically match the criteria for Adler's (1962) notion of the Sick Child. That is, a child who is born with inferior

or weak organs feels disadvantaged and views the world negatively. The child does not feel a desire to contribute to society but rather has the potential to feel either self-pity or humiliation which further feeds their sense of inferiority and their subsequent belief that they should not have to take responsibility for themselves or their actions. In Churchill's case, he was determined from young to overcome and strengthen his feeble physique by participating in as much school sport as he could, by way of swimming and fencing (Mansfield, 1995). Whilst at Harrow School and, later, at Sandhurst Military College, Churchill was "determined to be tough in spite of a lack of height and muscle" (Storr, 1990, p. 9).

When Churchill attended his first preparatory school, St George's School, he recalls one of his earliest memories of being afraid of other boys throwing cricket balls at him, forcing him to hide behind the protection of nearby trees. This created an enduring yet shameful memory for Churchill, one which fuelled his resolve, very early in life, to be as tough as anybody could be (Storr, 1990). "There is no doubt whatever that Churchill's physical courage was immense, but it rested upon his determination to conquer his initial physical disadvantages" (Storr, 1990, p. 10). Storr comments further:

In other words, we have a picture of a man who was, to a marked extent, forcing himself to go against his own inner nature: a man who was neither naturally strong, nor naturally particularly courageous but who made himself both in spite of his temperamental and physical endowment. The more one examines Winston Churchill as a person, the more one is forced to the conclusion that his aggressiveness, his courage, and his dominance were not rooted in his inheritance but were the product of deliberate decision and iron will (1990, p. 11).

Contrary to Adler's (1962) notion of the Sick Child, Churchill appears more to emulate Adler's (1962) profile of the Neglected Child. Adler (1928, 1962) described the

Neglected Child as lacking in appropriate love and attention and fails to learn the value of social contribution and co-operation. This child views the world as hostile and, when faced with challenges, becomes overwhelmed and unable to cope. It is only when this child is shown that happiness in life is born from social contribution and concern for and faith in fellow human beings, that they will find the courage to meet life's challenges (Adler, 1928).

In Churchill's case, the neglect of his parents during his childhood is interestingly revealed in one of his earliest memories as a young three-year-old boy living with his family in Ireland (1876-1879). Churchill recalls enduring long days with a private governess learning mathematics and reading whilst his parents spent their days socialising. "My picture of her in Ireland is in a riding habit. She and my father hunted continuously on their large horses and, sometimes, there were great scares because one or the other did not come back for many hours after they were expected" (Churchill, 1930/1996, p. 4). Churchill further recalls other memories that speak of his feelings of neglect, anxiety and sadness in his youth. One in particular refers to him being sent to boarding school for the first time at the age of seven years old: "I was also miserable at the idea of being left alone among all these strangers in this great, fierce, formidable place. After all I was only seven" (Churchill, 1930/1996, p. 10). Unfortunately for Churchill, this scenario was common practice in upper-class Britain but it had devastating emotional consequences.

Churchill's memory of his first preparatory school, St Georges, also reveals the pain and anguish of the severe floggings that he and his peers endured at such a young age, despite the conventional nature of such customs, common to private schools of that day. "How I hated this school, and what a life of anxiety I lived there for more than two years" (Churchill, 1930/1996, p. 12). Pearson (1991) counter argues, however, that, although Churchill is frequently depicted as a child neglected by his parents, with particular blame being pointed at his "flighty" mother, the reality was a child, who, by upper-class Victorian standards, had

been treated very well and had enjoyed “unusually close contact with his parents and relations”, not to mention the unconditional devotion of Mrs Everest (p. 57).

Indeed, Churchill’s earliest memories were fraught with feelings of angst and sadness and a general remoteness from his parents. But, likewise, through the care and attention of his nanny, Mrs Everest, Churchill recalls many happier memories of his childhood, of time spent walking in the park or playing in his nursery and also of learning the values of love, compassion, faith and trust (Churchill, 1930/1996; Mansfield, 1995), so important in overcoming the disadvantages of Adler’s (1962) profile of the Neglected Child and striving towards the mastery of life’s challenges.

#### ***7.3.2.3. The Significance of Churchill’s Birth Order***

Adler (1962) explained that the significance of a child’s position in the family is recognised by their experience and interpretation of their interaction with their parents and siblings and the subsequent degree of favouritism, rivalry and co-operation that they encounter. Churchill was the firstborn son for the first few years of his life before having to share the attention of his parents and be challenged by the potential rivalry of his younger brother, Jack, born five years after Churchill. The experiences of the firstborn child, according to Adler (1962), have the potential to negatively affect the development of co-operation and social feeling and ultimately affect the child’s ability to adapt positively to their environment. The firstborn is the only child who is faced with the risk of losing their unique poll position in the family once a second or third sibling arrives and is potentially the most challenged in learning social co-operation (Adler, 1962)

The firstborn is also credited with being the most responsible child and often views their position in the family as more prominent or more important and may subsequently develop a high regard for power (Adler, 1928). In Churchill’s case, not only was he the

firstborn but he was also the only child for quite a few years. However, as a result of not being overly indulged or pampered by his parents, but, rather, guided by the loving hand of Mrs Everest, Churchill developed a degree of independence at a young age and appeared unperturbed by the arrival of his younger brother, Jack, who later became one of Churchill's lifelong confidantes (Gilbert, 1992). Pearson (1991), on the other hand, counter argues that Churchill had been an uncontrollable and aggressive child who had to be removed from his first school, St George's, for bad behaviour which continued at his school in Brighton. Pearson (1991) ascribes much of this hostility to being a firstborn son, jealous of his more popular, younger brother. Jack was a well-behaved and gentle child who adored his older brother, but was often victim to bullying at the hands of Churchill. "Almost from the start, Winston dominated Jack, and when he allowed him to join in one of his favourite pastimes – pitched campaigns with carefully assembled armies of toy soldiers, Jack was permitted no artillery so that Winston invariably won" (Pearson, 1991, p. 71).

Storr (1990) claims, that, although Jack was born a few years after Churchill, he was young enough for Churchill to have felt he had retained his solitary position in the family during the first five years after Jack's birth, potentially feeding a heightened sense of self-importance and a thirst for power and control. Storr (1990) continues that a failure to meet a child's need for total devotion and care during the earliest part of his or her life also results in a sense that something is missing, which, in later life, creates a scenario in which the individual becomes more self-centred, impatient and demanding. They expect their "slightest whim is immediately attended to and resent the fact that this is not always possible" (Storr, 1990, p. 28). Children who are deprived as well as solitary retain their sense of omnipotence, invincibility and arrogance but also retain a degree of neediness, characteristics that closely resembled Churchill's own personality in his adult life, surrounding himself with numerous assistants, attendants and servants, not to mention his constant reliance on his wife,

Clementine and his personal doctor, Lord Moran (Storr, 1990). Interestingly, Storr (1990) further claims that, amidst his arrogance and impatience, Churchill was equally magnanimous and often contemplative of the plight of others. More significant though, Churchill also inspired devotion from all who worked for him because he “manifested a childlike helplessness” which evoked a positive empathetic response from his many caregivers and assistants (Storr, 1990, p. 29). For Churchill, “as with a small child, omnipotence and helplessness went hand in hand” (Storr, 1990, p. 29).

Mansfield (1995) claims, however, that Churchill may have been demanding and impatient, but not because he was necessarily self-absorbed or omnipotent, rather because he believed his life had a purpose; he had a destiny to fulfil and that “death would not come until it was fulfilled” (p. 107). Churchill had always had a childhood love of soldiers, an inherent attraction to military splendour and he dreamt dreams of military glory (Pearson, 1991) but more than that, he had an acute sense of destiny, that his life was reserved for a higher purpose; a noble vocation. “This was Churchill, who, even in battle, when most men contemplate the frailty of life, was not shaken from his sense of destiny” (Mansfield, 1995, p. 107). Churchill was indeed unstoppable and did not like to be distracted or idle from his work but that did not detract from his inherently kind and compassionate character, of which courage, resolve and fortitude were the bedrock (Mansfield, 1995).

#### ***7.3.2.4. The Influence of School and Teachers***

At the age of seven, when Churchill was sent away to his first boarding school, St George’s School in Ascot, it marked the beginning of a “dark and painful” time in his school career (Mansfield, 1995, p. 39). Churchill was not only far from his home, his family and Mrs Everest, but he was introduced to the harshness and brutality of an elite Victorian boy’s school. Churchill recalls the ritual caning of poorly behaved students by their “sadistic

schoolmaster” Mr Sneyd-Kynnersley, who, on a regular basis, summoned the whole school into the library to witness the “flogging” of such students “until they bled freely while the rest sat quaking, listening to their screams” (Mansfield, 1995, p. 40). Since Churchill was a “strong-willed non-conformist, who rarely chose the well-worn path”, he regularly received similar lashings from the headmaster, which, “given his extremely sensitive skin, must have been excruciating” (Mansfield, 1995, p. 40). In reaction to the trauma of this early school discipline, and, given his own strong-willed resolve, Churchill found it difficult to fully engage and apply himself to his schoolwork, particularly in subjects that were of no interest to him, earning him the reputation of being stubborn as well as “backward and precocious”, reading only books that were of interest and often beyond his years yet still maintaining his place “at the bottom of the Form” (Churchill, 1930/1996, p. 13; Mansfield, 1995, p. 40).

Churchill became quite ill whilst at St George’s School and, after a serious bout of pneumonia, moved to a new school in Brighton which was run by two sisters (Churchill, 1930/1996). This was a much smaller and more nurturing school and one in which there “was an element of kindness and of sympathy which I had found conspicuously lacking in my first experiences” (Churchill, 1930/1996, p. 13). Initially, Churchill’s teachers found him to be equally precocious but persevered in their attempts to occupy his enquiring mind and engage him more in his schoolwork. One of Churchill’s teachers observed that “he was a small, red-haired pupil, the naughtiest boy in the class; I used to think he was the naughtiest small boy in the world” (Mansfield, 1995, p. 40). Nevertheless, with patience and kindness, Churchill slowly responded to his teachers with a positive demeanour and began to temper his defiant and stubborn behaviour. During his time in Brighton, despite his near-death experience with double pneumonia, Churchill grew much stronger physically and emotionally, embracing the fresh sea air and the gentle surroundings of his Brighton school:

At this school I was allowed to learn things which interested me: French, History, lots of Poetry by heart and, above all, riding and swimming. The impression of those years makes a pleasant picture in my mind, in strong contrast to my earlier school-day memories. (Churchill, 1930/1996, p. 13).

The significance of Churchill's school years are partly explained by Adler's (1928) belief that school is an extension of the home and of the family in preparing children for the tasks of life. In the case of Churchill, it is Adler's (1928) view that it is the role of school and teachers to encourage, in particular, the Neglected Child, to develop a positive view of the world and nurture feelings of trust and social connectedness. Teachers have a critical role to play in teaching the lessons of social co-operation. In connecting with their students, teachers have the ability to engage their interests in their school work and, more importantly, engage and nurture their social interests in their environment. Hence the importance of not scolding and ridiculing students, but rather focusing on their interests and capabilities to further develop their strengths and help them to overcome their weaknesses. In developing self-confidence and a natural interest in their environment, teachers are best placed to encourage children to become socially aware and concerned for their fellow human beings, thereby cementing the 'social feeling' (Adler, 1928).

In Churchill's case, he suffered through the brutality of his first school which was ill-equipped to nurture any feelings of trust or sociability, but, in his second school in Brighton, Churchill experienced more sympathy from his teachers who endeavoured to engage and encourage him regardless of his temperament (Jenkins, 2002). Their proactive encouragement ultimately had a positive effect on Churchill who became more amenable to his schoolwork and engaged more readily with his fellow students. These two years spent in Brighton were a pleasant reprieve before commencing his senior school years at Harrow School (Pearson, 1991).

During his time at Harrow, Churchill appeared to endure another lengthy depressing period in his school career (Pearson, 1991). Churchill was not physically strong enough to compete in mainstream sports and was not considered a strong academic, struggling with nearly every subject except English and History. He was, however, fortunate to have caught the eye of a few perceptive and appreciative teachers who recognised in Churchill a true talent for the use of the English language and noted that “there was something unusual in him, which was well worth trying to bring out” (Jenkins, 2002, p. 18). The most notable of these teachers included Robert Somervell, a lower school English master and Dr Welldon, Headmaster of Harrow (Jenkins, 2002). Despite having actually failed his entrance exam, Churchill entered Harrow School in 1888 and was immediately impressed by Dr Welldon who, according to Churchill (1930/1996), was obviously “a man capable of looking beneath the surface of things” (Mansfield, 1995, p. 41).

Although Mansfield (1995) states that Churchill passed some of the most formative years of his life whilst at Harrow, Pearson (1991) argues that Churchill “hated Harrow from the start” and, since he refused to make an effort with any subjects that bored him, including mathematics, science and all foreign languages, he remained in the lower form for most of his senior years, doing nothing to discourage his reputation for being a school dunce (p. 65). In fact, Churchill was extremely intelligent in the subjects he liked and benefited greatly from his extensive powers of concentration and memory and his incredible gift for words and writing (Pearson, 1991), enlisting the support of his English master and the Headmaster, Dr Welldon (who took a personal interest in helping Churchill with extra lessons). Despite his talent for English language and literature and the support and encouragement he received from Dr Welldon, Churchill remained, on the whole, reticent and unhappy, commenting that his schooldays were some of the most unhappiest of his life (Pearson, 1991). Churchill was apathetic towards his schoolwork and suffered a reputation for poor academic performance as

well as endured the disadvantages of being small and physically weak for his age, making him unpopular and a target for bullying right from the start of his time at Harrow (Pearson, 1991). “One of the habits of Winston’s form master was to place him in the front of the class saying: ‘Look at the stupidest boy at Harrow who is the son of the cleverest man in England’” (Pearson, 1991, p. 66).

Furthermore, Churchill (1930/1996) commented that he was “considerably discouraged” by his schooldays, achieving no distinction in anything except fencing and had “hardly ever been asked to learn anything which seemed of use or interest” (p. 38). Churchill found his time at Harrow to be emotionally draining, anxiety-evoking and monotonous. “In retrospect, these years form not only the least agreeable, but the only barren and unhappy period of my life” (Churchill, 1930/1996, p. 38). Churchill (1930/1996) further comments:

I would far rather have run errands as a messenger boy or helped my father to dress the front windows of a grocers shop. It would have been real, it would have been natural and it would have taught me more and I would have done it much better. Also, I should have got to know my father, which would have been a joy to me (p. 39).

Feeling emotionally abandoned and looking for the attention and paternal love of his father, the rigours of an English boarding school appeared to be a negative extension of his home and family life (Adler, 1928), only serving to further fuel Churchill’s misery. Not even letters of concern and comfort from Mrs Everest or the encouragement of Dr Welldon could ease Churchill’s angst (Pearson, 1991). Churchill truly believed he was a “backward schoolboy”, a failure in his father’s eyes and a hopeless dunce in the eyes of his peers (Churchill, 1930/1996, p. 40). According to Pearson (1991) Churchill would often resort to aggression to counter any bullying he received and had a reputation for being precocious and tough but also lonely and a loner.

Storr (1990) comments that the early emotional deprivation suffered at the hands of his parents during childhood, further entrenched by his miserable experiences at boarding school, caused Churchill to react to his neglect in two ways: idealising his parents on one hand and fostering a high degree of hostility on the other. Churchill's obstinacy and resentment of authority, particularly at school, were obvious very early in his life but these reactions were actually meant for his parents. Storr (1990) continues that there is an "intimate connection between depression and hostility" and that the "emotionally deprived child who later becomes prey to depression has enormous difficulty in the disposal of his hostility" (p. 34). Unable to vent the resentment of those who have emotionally abandoned the child for fear of further recrimination, the hostility felt by the child becomes inwardly focused against the self, causing depression and low self-worth. Furthermore, "it is this difficulty in disposing of hostility, which drives some depressives to seek out opponents in the external world" (Storr, 1990, p. 34).

In Churchill's case, his latent hostility enabled him to become a champion fencer as well as stand up to any teasing and bullying at school. Storr (1990) believes that it is a great relief for the individual with depression to find an enemy justifiable of unleashing their hostility. Therefore, in the case of Churchill, his reputation for being a warmonger is misguided, rather, for Churchill, fighting worthy enemies had a strong emotional appeal for him. Ultimately, during the Second World War, Churchill's 'Black Dog' was minimised because Hitler proved to be the most evil of foes to the Western Allies, providing Churchill with the ultimate aggressor and an opportunity to unleash for himself the most vitality. "If all depressives could constantly be engaged in fighting wicked enemies, they would never suffer from depression. But, in day to day existence, antagonists are not wicked enough and depressives suffer from pangs of conscience about their own hostility" (Storr, 1990, p. 35).

Although Churchill's overall impression of his school years was negative, filled with feelings of abandonment and inadequacy, he still managed to excel in English and History studies as well as nurtured an appreciation for art and became accomplished in both fencing and swimming (albeit as a means to overcome his physical weaknesses). Towards the end of his senior school years at Harrow, Churchill also developed an appreciation and respect for his peers as well as his teachers who were a major source of continual support and encouragement throughout his latter school years. Of his Headmaster, Dr Welldon, Churchill (1930/1996) comments that: "I had been surprised on taking leave of Dr Welldon to hear him predict, with a confidence for which I could see no foundation, that I should be able to make my way all right, I have always been very grateful to him for this" (p. 39).

#### ***7.3.2.5. Inferiority and Compensation: The Striving for Superiority***

In September 1893, after three attempts at his entrance examinations, Churchill entered the Royal Military College at Sandhurst. According to Mansfield (1995), this was a new beginning for Churchill, "all of his deficiencies in subjects like Latin and Mathematics were left behind in deference to new and more stimulating topics" (p. 43) and provided the opportunity to ride horses, "though he complained that he was cursed with so feeble a body" and had to spend many hours a day to master the craft (p. 43). Churchill graduated from Sandhurst in 1894, in eighth position out of a class of 150 cadets, a significant achievement in overcoming his inferiorities.

For Adler (1962), inferiorities are the source from which the impetus to strive towards improvement is born but it is the way in which the individual overcomes these inferiorities that impacts on personality development and life style choices. Compensating for feelings of inferiority and striving towards superiority to become a socially contributing member of society is influenced by a variety of factors and has a direct impact on personality

development. One such factor, which crystallises the inferiority complex at an early age, is the issue of a physical defect or an inferior organ which may cause intense feelings of low self-worth, embarrassment, isolation and hostility towards one's environment (Adler, 1928). In the case of Churchill, he may have been born into privileged aristocratic circles but was burdened by many physical disadvantages, including a small, thin physique, sensitive skin, a lisp and a slight stutter (Mansfield, 1995; Storr, 1990). Churchill felt cursed by a "feeble body" (Storr, 1990, p. 9) throughout his school years including his time at Sandhurst, creating feelings of inadequacy and inferiority to his schoolmates. Churchill refers to feeling particularly vulnerable, lonely and isolated during his earlier boarding school years (Churchill, 1930/1996).

The result of these inferiority feelings drove an intense desire to become stronger and physically courageous. Churchill's determination to be tougher fuelled an aggressive and even reckless streak from a very young age. "Churchill was a very much more aggressive and dominant individual than one would expect from his basic physique" and this complemented and contributed to character traits of high energy, assertiveness and a love of adventure and risk-taking (Storr, 1990, p. 11). For Churchill, courage was something that he had to prove to himself, "a compensation for inner doubts about his own bravery" (Storr, 1990, p. 10). Churchill forced himself to be something other than what nature had bestowed him, and, despite his temperamental and physical endowments, he nurtured more dominant personality traits of aggression and physical courage. From a young age, these personality traits were not based on genetics but on "deliberate decision and iron will" (Storr, 1990, p. 11). Interestingly, this also reflects Adler's (1931, 1962) belief that individuals strive to become more than what is prescribed in their genetic potential, that is, they strive to overcome inferiorities over and beyond their actual or perceived capabilities.

Adler referred to the “upward drive of human nature” (Adler, 1931, 1962), the movement away from what makes human beings feel inferior and weak towards positive feelings of superiority. This has a direct impact on the type of goals an individual sets and the pattern of life they choose to live, with the ultimate goal of living a meaningful life, based on social interest and contribution to fellow human beings. An individual’s personality, that is, their style of life, is predetermined by the experience of one’s childhood inferiorities and compensation and is further reflected in the chosen goals of life and the mastery of the tasks of life (Adler, 1928, 1949, 1962).

Storr (1990) believes that Churchill’s personality was directly influenced by his childhood experience of parental neglect, coupled with his own feelings of inferiority born from his physical defects. These experiences deprived him of a healthy source of self-esteem “upon which most predominantly happy persons rely” (Storr, 1990, p. 25). Where Adler (1931, 1962) believed that childhood events influence the way an individual perceives the world and consequently their choice of life goals and ultimately their personality, Churchill compensated for his negative childhood experiences by developing extreme ambition from a young age, often making him even more unpopular during his youth. For Churchill, it was a compulsive drive to be accepted and recognised by way of external achievements and most certainly a means of controlling any feelings of depression: “In youth, especially, success, or even the hope of success can be effective in staving off depression in those who are liable to this disorder” (Storr, 1990, p. 26). A child who feels loved and wanted will incorporate a healthy sense of self-worth and will face childhood challenges and disappointments with transient trepidation and sadness, secure in the belief that the world is mostly a happy place. The child who feels neglected and rejected, feels low self-worth and has little faith in the outside world, often resulting in unwarranted and unhealthy pursuits of power and recognition without true personal fulfilment and happiness (Storr, 1990). In the latter years of

Churchill's life, despite his many accolades, he still felt he had not achieved a great deal and there was still a "void at the heart of his being which no achievement or honour could ever completely fill" (Storr, 1990, p. 19). For Churchill, his later years reflected a lifelong striving to be all that he could be, accomplished, acknowledged and justified; a striving to fulfil his destiny but it also reflected a lifelong battle with depression, an inner sense of low self-worth and longing. To this point, however, despite his 'Black Dog', Churchill indeed accomplished many feats, many creative pursuits and is most certainly recognised today as one of the most remarkable leaders in world history.

### **7.3.3. Churchill: The Soldier and His 'Black Dog' (1895-1899)**

In the following time period between 1895 and 1899, Churchill experienced life as a soldier, firstly being appointed as a Lieutenant in the Fourth Queen's Own Hussars in April 1895 and then encountering armed conflict for the first time in Cuba in November in 1895. Between 1896 and 1898, Churchill also spent time in India and the Sudan, gaining experience in the cavalry, mastering his horsemanship skills, despite his physical disadvantages and embarking on a quest of self-education in history and politics until 1899, when he joined British forces as a war correspondent in South Africa during the Boer War (renamed The South African War post-democracy) (Mansfield, 1995).

Much of these five years are significant in terms of Churchill's rite of passage into adulthood and, in terms of Adlerian theory, significant for his striving to meet the first major task of life, the task of occupation (Adler, 1928). Churchill's pursuit of knowledge and his commitment to rigorous horseback training to overcome his physical inferiorities as well as his combat bravery earned him the reputation of exceptional physical courage, confidence and self-sacrifice. This striving against his inadequacies marked a turning point in his life and reflected a true sense of Adlerian striving for superiority and inferiority compensation.

More striking, however, is the impact of two major life events that occurred during this time period, each of which had a profound effect on Churchill's personality development as well as a realisation that sadness, indeed, depression, was not only a childhood emotion but an enduring malady that was to challenge Churchill all his life.

### ***7.3.3.1. The Death of Lord Randolph and its Significance to 'Black Dog'***

On the 24 of January 1895, Churchill's father, Lord Randolph died, after suffering the ravages of a degenerative illness, believed to have been syphilis. During this time, Churchill was unaware of the extent of his father's illness and was not shielded from the many harsh and painful outbursts that his father regularly unleashed on Churchill, perhaps creating the unnecessary and painful gap in their relationship (Mansfield, 1995). In June 1894, Lord Randolph was slipping quickly from a healthy existence, caught between periods of apathy, deep depression and extraordinary outbursts of rage. Lord and Lady Randolph thus decided to embark on a year of travel which was not an easy task for Churchill's mother or Lord Randolph given his condition but it meant that his illness could be kept away from the public eye ((Pearson 1991). By Christmas 1894, however, Lord Randolph was so ill that they had to return to England and, on the morning of 24 January 1895, Lord Randolph passed away. Churchill (1930; 1996) recalls: "all my dreams of comradeship with him, of entering Parliament at his side and in his support, were ended. There remained for me only to pursue his aims and vindicate his memory" (p. 62). Churchill (1930; 1996) further comments that he did not necessarily appreciate, as a young adult, how much his father thought and cared for him and that "more than ever do I regret that we did not live long enough in company to know each other" (p. 48).

Pearson (1991) contests whether Churchill really did mourn his father's death: "Deprived of a father he may have been, but one looks in vain through the mass of letters

written at the time for any reference to Winston's grief" (p. 75). Within a few days of his father's death, free from the victimisation and tyranny of his father, Churchill unashamedly asked his mother to engage her contacts for Churchill to join the 4<sup>th</sup> Hussars, a smart and expensive cavalry unit. This, no doubt, would have infuriated his father, who was always insistent that Churchill join the infantry, assigned to a life of "oblivion in the infantry" (Pearson, 1991, p. 75). Churchill soon became bored, however, restless and eager to experience real combat. Again, through his family networks, Churchill attempted to secure a more exciting, interim post as a war-correspondent in Cuba. "Suddenly he seemed to have his own long-term objectives, fixed with a tireless sense of purpose and it startled everyone" (Pearson, 1991, p. 77). From the time of his father's death, Churchill ironically unleashed an unbridled striving for superiority, and, by the age of twenty, Churchill knew the value of his family name in his pursuit of glory and adventure and possessed a "pronounced awareness of his own importance, which life was helping to confirm" and which served to appease his new found ambitions (Pearson, 1991, p. 77).

Equally significant to his striving for superiority, was Churchill's awareness of his latent depressive tendencies. Before Churchill left for Cuba as a correspondent with the *Daily Graphic*, he "was secretly complaining to his mother" of the glum despondency that he suffered and, although, his adventures in Cuba appeared to solve his depression temporarily, it was not long after his return to regimental life that he began to sink into misery and gloom once more, waiting for his next adventure to unfold (Pearson, 1990, p. 78). Although Churchill had been miserable for long periods at school, particularly at Harrow, the time period post his stint in Cuba, is the first recorded instance of Churchill suffering from a deep depression.

Pearson (1991) believes that this depressive episode was triggered by his father's death, or more importantly, by the memory of his father, and that, memories of his father

were a source of continual bouts of depression throughout his life. Yet, Pearson (1991) admits that this is an odd conclusion to draw, given the fact that Churchill showed very little outward grief at the time of his father's death and was more likely to have been relieved of his father's continuous criticism and the repercussions of his father's deteriorating disease. In reality, however, Churchill became increasingly haunted by his father's memory and how he wished he knew him better. Pearson (1991) suggests that Churchill's subsequent depression over his father's death is explained, in part, by his lack of coming to terms with the memories of his father through a natural and timely process of grief and mourning. Had Churchill dealt with his father's death at the time of his death, he might have been able to let go of his angst, anger and resentment, but, instead, he suffered a delayed and more intense reaction to his father's death. There was no timely mourning process, but rather guilt and subsequent despair at his father's lifelong disapproval: "the prime ingredients of Churchill's enemy, his Black Dog" (Pearson, 1991, p. 80).

It was the torment of this depression and the danger to self-destruct, that spurred Churchill forward in a "hyperactive", thrill-seeking pattern throughout his career as a soldier, denying himself time to relax so as to ward off any further attacks from his 'Black Dog' (Pearson, 1991, p. 80). In the ensuing years until 1899, Churchill busied himself with any opportunity for high-risk combat and adventure as well as immersed himself in his father's political speeches as part of a long term objective to follow his father into politics and vindicate his father's memory: "An ambiguous example for a son to follow, his whole career a tragic warning. Yet, for his son, there was no alternative" (Pearson, 1991, p. 80). Even when he was forced to spend fourteen months assigned to his regiment in Bangalore, Churchill embarked on a strict regime of physical and mental self-improvement, keeping his mind continuously occupied and preventing a recurrent episode of depression.

Reflecting on the significance of Adler's (1928; 1962) notion of self-determination and striving for superiority, Churchill was "acutely aware of his deficiencies" and "started to re-create himself in preparation for the life he wanted. His determination was worthy of the young Napoleon himself" (Pearson, 1991, p. 81). With a desperate desire to finally be recognised and acknowledged and dispel the haunting prophesy of his father's contempt, the seeds of determination and resilience were now well entrenched in Churchill's psyche, right alongside his 'Black Dog'. Interestingly, as a young boy, Singer (2012) comments that Churchill had compensated for his father's neglect by elevating him as a beacon of political perfection, almost reinventing his father's image to a level of god-like political stature, when in reality, Lord Randolph's political success was fleeting and his career was ultimately regarded as a failure (Pearson, 1991). Churchill not only wanted to emulate his own vision of his father but actually achieve a level of status that was far beyond his father's expectations and "reverse every negative opinion his father had privately held of him" (Singer, 2012, p. 28).

Furthermore, during his expeditions in the northwest frontier of India and his subsequent participation in the Battle of Omdurman in 1898, Churchill was driven by an even deeper purpose than career and fame, he sought out dangerous opportunities to test his own physical courage and affirm his belief in destiny: that the unseen hand of fate was protecting him for a higher purpose. Writing to his mother, Churchill professed, "being in many ways a coward, and particularly at school, there is no ambition I cherish so keenly as to gain a reputation for personal courage" (Pearson, 1991, p. 84). Pearson (1991) continues that these moments of immersing himself in exaggerated danger and surviving the odds was a thrill-seeking behaviour pattern that not only provided an opportunity to relish in his belief that he was truly destined for some higher purpose but it also helped Churchill escape from his

inherent melancholia. The yearning for extreme danger can also be regarded as a reflection of the individual with depression as having an actual urge for self-destruction.

In sum, Pearson (1991) comments that, “behind ambition lies the true depressive’s vision of the world and life itself” (p. 86) and, that, for Churchill at this time, and throughout his life, there was a real sense that something was missing. “When all deductions had been made on the scores of ambition, duty, excitement or fame, there remained an unabsorbed residuum of pure emptiness” (Pearson, 1991, p. 86). No matter how many external successes Churchill achieved, nothing was ever able to compensate for his sense of loss and early deprivation of self-worth. Churchill was never able to shake his ‘Black Dog’, yet, in spite of his own personal battle with depression, the story of his life depicts a man who not only challenged his depression but exemplified a leader of great courage and fortitude, during some of the most poignant milestones in world history.

#### ***7.3.3.2. The Death of Mrs Everest***

On 3 July 1895, Mrs Everest passed away from peritonitis. Although, by now, Churchill was a grown man and a lieutenant in the Queen’s army, he and Mrs Everest had maintained an affectionate correspondence throughout his school years and, on learning that she was gravely ill, he travelled at once to be by her bedside in London (Mansfield, 1995). “She had been my dearest and most intimate friend during the whole of the twenty years I had lived” (Churchill, 1930/1996, p. 73). Churchill made all of the funeral arrangements and, in a letter to his mother, proclaimed that “I shall never know such a friend again” (Gilbert, 1991, p. 53). Churchill’s enduring devotion to Mrs Everest is evidenced by the picture he kept of her on his desk all through his life and, later, the same picture gave him much comfort at his bedside when he died nearly seventy years later (Mansfield, 1995).

Mrs Everest's death was a devastating yet poignant event in Churchill's life as it not only signified the loss of a key mother figure and a severed link from his childhood but it also crystallised, for Churchill, Adler's (1928, 1962) concept of the 'social feeling'. The death of Mrs Everest highlighted for Churchill, the plight of so many elderly women who no longer have anyone to care for them and no means of financial support. This knowledge later impelled Churchill, in his future roles as Home Secretary and Chancellor of the Exchequer for Britain, to put in place various social welfare programs, including pension structures, State-aided pensions for widows and orphans and a National Health Service that, to this day, continue to provide social support to the citizens of Great Britain (Churchill, 1930/1996; Gilbert, 1992).

#### ***7.3.3.3. The Boer War***

Churchill's exploits in the Boer War (renamed The South African War post-democracy) have been discussed in detail in Chapter 4. Suffice to say here that his capture and subsequent escape from the Boers had two profound outcomes for Churchill: not only did his heroic feats send him home a hero but they also launched his career into politics (Singer, 2012). In addition to his new found fame, a further significant outcome of Churchill's time in South Africa was the affirmation of another of Churchill's key characteristics: magnanimity toward one's enemies (Singer, 2012). Churchill's first-hand experience and observation of the cruelty of war, particularly for the vanquished parties as well as his own experience as a prisoner of war made an "ineradicable impression" upon Churchill (Fieve, 1997; Storr, 1990, p. 36). These impressions elicited far-reaching emotions of compassion and concern for all fellow human beings, characteristics often observed in Churchill's personality (Mansfield, 1995) and also reflective of Adler's (1928; 1962) notion of the social feeling and the striving towards the tasks of society and occupation. Furthermore, in his post as Home Secretary for

Britain in 1910, Churchill's experience as a prisoner of war proved invaluable in terms of his concern for the welfare of prisoners and prison conditions, enabling the establishment of appropriate policies for prison reforms (Gilbert, 1992).

Storr (1990) claims, that, it is those individuals who are prone to depression who are the most horrified by the prospect of prison and potentially the least able to adapt to prison life. For Churchill, incarceration during the Boer War, meant deprivation from external stimuli, crucial in providing the necessary excitement and adventure to ward off depression. Without external stimuli, Storr (1990) explains, depressive individuals relapse into "that state above all which they most fear" (p. 37). Churchill was only happy when he was fully occupied and actively engaged, which is a possible explanation for the lack of documented evidence for his 'Black Dog' during this exhilarating and dangerous time in South Africa. Even his imprisonment in the Boer camp in Pretoria was a short-lived experience as a result of his fast-acting and daring escape plan.

Furthermore, Storr (1990) claims, that, routine army life had a constraining effect on Churchill, similar to that of prison. The realisation that he became depressed as a result of this type of monotonous routine, may have been the contributing factor to his decision to enter politics rather than to pursue a military career.

On his return from South Africa to Britain in 1900, Churchill was immediately invited by the Conservative Party in October 1900 to run again as a candidate for Oldham, Manchester, in the upcoming general elections. Churchill's election was a success and he was appointed Conservative Member of Parliament for Oldham. Thus began his extraordinary journey down the corridors of power and his pursuit of his own brand of destiny in the annals of political history (Singer, 2012). Churchill's experiences as a soldier provided an opportunity to consolidate his ambitions and life goals, but more importantly, his experiences

brought him closer to the striving for superiority and a genuine concern for his fellow human beings, entrenching the characteristics of empathy and decisiveness and a truer sense of Adler's (1928; 1962) 'social feeling'.

#### **7.3.4. Churchill: The Politician and His 'Black Dog' (1900-1918)**

##### ***7.3.4.1. First Major Depressive Episode***

During 1900 to 1908, Churchill was occupied with building his stature within British politics, first within the Conservative Party and later within the Liberal Party, becoming Under Secretary of State for the Colonies in 1905, President of the Board of Trade in 1908 and eventually Home Secretary of Britain in 1910. It was in 1910, however, that Churchill experienced his first documented major depressive episode, significant for its timing at a stage in Churchill's life when he was at the height of personal and professional success and significant for its timing in relation to Churchill's personal foresight regarding the unfolding events of the First World War.

In the build up to 1910, aside from his focus on his political career, Churchill embarked on three personal pursuits: the biography of his father, overcoming his deficiency as an orator and the task of finding a wife. The biography of his father was a cathartic three year journey during which time "he got to know his father as never in Lord Randolph's lifetime" (Pearson, 1991, p. 110). It was also a quest that provided an opportunity to vindicate his father's memory as well as acquire the all-important knowledge that Churchill believed his father possessed in becoming a great statesman. "Only by acquiring Lord Randolph's powers could Winston annul the failure that his father had once predicted for him, and it was in the details of his political career that Churchill found exactly what he needed for his own" (Pearson, 1991, p. 110). Churchill's dedication to his father's biography was unqualified in

terms of satisfying his personal ambitions and more importantly, the constant work was a sure way of keep his latent depression at bay.

Churchill's second personal goal of overcoming his oratory weaknesses became another short-term obsession. Churchill was aware that he lacked a commanding physical stature, and, coupled with his speech impediment, he would be greatly hindered in his ability to become a recognised and respected politician. Just as he had trained himself to overcome his weaknesses of education and physique during his years in the military, Churchill's commitment to becoming an accomplished orator was absolute in terms of his practice and painstakingly prepared speeches (Pearson, 1991).

In addition to his striving to accomplish the task of occupation (Alder, 1928; 1962) during this time period, Churchill also turned his focus to the task of love and marriage. Up until the age of 30 years old, Churchill had few romantic encounters. "Love proved a difficult emotion for him to cope with and sex an irrelevant diversion from the more important matters that obsessed him" (Pearson, 1991, p. 100). The effects of witnessing his father's death from advanced syphilis may well also have been a subconscious deterrent to engaging in any casual affairs. Pearson (1991) explains further that Churchill's core emotions were steadily fixated on the pursuit of glory and ambition and if there was any need for female adulation, this gap was easily filled by his mother, who was "aging but still beautiful" and, until this point, still provided all the chaste female influence he required (p. 100).

Pearson (1991) also explains that Churchill's relationships with women were made even more tenuous due to his mood swings. Churchill was seen as vulnerable and charming when he was in a down mood, but when he was in an up-swing he was arrogant, egotistical and over-bearing. However, by good fortune, the paths of Churchill and Clementine eventually crossed, not once, but twice between 1904 and 1908. On their second social

meeting in March 1908, Churchill was so captivated by Clementine, and she with him, that their romance “proceeded with much the same dispatch and energy he brought to politics” (Pearson, 1991, p. 119) and on 12 September, 1908, they were married at St Margaret’s in Westminster, London (Gilbert, 1992; Mansfield, 1995). In the ensuing years as a married couple, they found in each other the solace and comfort that neither had enjoyed in their respective childhoods, yet found in their marriage, “an exclusive and private world that offered a defence against whatever threats they felt around them” (Pearson, 1991, p. 126). In Clementine, Churchill would find and often demand the total love and devotion that he had missed from his mother.

Up to this point, Churchill’s life was full and busy. The range of his political goings-on was stimulating, his fortunes as a writer were increasing and he was happily married. His ‘Black Dog’ had been kept safely at bay. However, in February 1910, Churchill was appointed Home Secretary to Britain, responsible for law and order, police services and a comprehensive programme of prison reform which he embarked upon just days into his new post (Gilbert, 1992; Pearson, 1991). Although Churchill was now at the height of his success, politically powerful, famous, happily married and pursuing his master plan for ultimate political power and glory, Churchill was inexplicably hit by a severe depression, a depression that Ghaemi (2011) claims was deeply rooted within him and, given his circumstances, difficult to explain by external forces. “For two or three years the light faded from the picture. I did my work, I sat in the House of Commons, but black depression settled on me” (Pearson, 1991, p. 129; Ghaemi, 2011, p. 59). On occasion, Churchill also struggled with suicidal tendencies, explaining later in his life to his doctor, Lord Moran, that he avoided railway platforms and the sides of ships, for fear of what he might do and that the only source of comfort was to talk with Clementine (Pearson, 1991; Storr, 1990; Wilson, 1966; 2006). “I don’t like standing near the edge of a platform when an express train is passing through. I like

it wider between me and the train. I don't want to go out in the world, even so at all, at such moments" (Fieve, 1997, p. 148).

Ghaemi (2011) and Mansfield (1995) argue that it was Churchill's compassion that ironically steered him into one of the darkest and most depressing periods in his life. In his role as Home Secretary for Britain in 1910, Churchill had to review case after case of numerous prisoners with life term or death sentences. Immersed in all the tragic details, Churchill himself slipped into one of his most notable depressions captured during this time. Despite his commitment to his work, Churchill's 'Black Dog' settled on him and it was only the healing hands of time, determination and the care and support of Clementine that kept him from slipping away completely.

Interestingly, Fieve, (1997) believes that the solution for maintaining optimal performance of the highly productive 'manic-depressive' personality is to "form one or two committees around him or her" (p. 69). As such, in Churchill's case, the solid grounding and steady support of Clementine was the critical support hold that helped to maintain Churchill through these dark episodes of 'Black Dog', often citing that "it helps me to talk to Clemmy" (Fieve, 1997, p. 148).

Despite Ghaemi's (2011) belief that Churchill's depression in 1910 was born from within, Gilbert (1992) provides further evidence that Churchill's depression was also greatly influenced by his responsibility for Britain's prison reforms. It had become a "nightmare" for Churchill to decide the fate of so many convicted criminals and to read their distressing letters of appeal, "begging to be let out" (Gilbert, 1992, p. 216), a fate that Churchill knew only too well both physically, from his own time as a prisoner of war in South Africa, and, metaphorically, from the oppression he endured from his 'Black Dog'.

Interestingly, Pearson (1991) comments, that, in addition to Churchill's responsibility for prisons, he was also responsible for law and order. An opportunity to lift him "completely out of his depression" came in the wake of the famous Siege of Sidney Street on 2 November 1911 where Churchill was called in to quell a small uprising between police and suspected anarchists in a house on Sidney Street in London (p. 131). At the request of Churchill, armoured horse guards and major artillery arrived on the scene. Churchill appeared exhilarated by the prospect of a small military skirmish. The house ultimately caught fire and the situation was resolved, but the significance of Churchill's behaviour speaks to his latent aggressive tendencies and how these were often summoned to counter his inherent depressive tendencies. Despite the criticism and notoriety of this incident, Churchill appeared utterly uplifted by the military victory, claiming that perhaps it was a little overdone but that "it was such fun" (Pearson, 1991, p. 132). Incidents of striking miners during 1911 and early 1912 also provided further opportunity for Churchill to engage in heated labour disputes and allow his aggressive instincts to flow uninhibited. Aroused by the thrill of conflict, Churchill's deep depression and anxiety appeared to have subsided towards the end of 1912. Pearson (1991) explains that the notion of conflict aroused in Churchill his sense of adventure, courage and patriotism, and that it distracted his attention away from the suffering of those around him as well as his own depression towards a different enemy that "demanded all his warlike energies" and allowed him to refocus his energies away from depression towards more productive pursuits (p. 133).

Furthermore, Adler (1928, 1949) argued that there is a natural tendency for human beings to seek a healthier scenario and move away from that which makes them sad, that is, a striving for superiority in the midst of sadness. However, the misuse of sadness to gain sympathy and attention, although elevates the individual to a more satisfactory position, becomes a false sense of superiority and happiness and the individual only becomes more

transparent to those around them. In Churchill's case, he reportedly never misused his sadness to manipulate his environment or solicit unwarranted attention (Mansfield, 1995). Adler (1949) further stated that it is possible to overcome one's depression by outwardly focusing one's attention on the environment and on the betterment of others, moving away from being inwardly focused and morose. In the wake of so many of his depressive episodes, Churchill strove to overcome his depression by refocusing his efforts on his external environment rather than becoming too absorbed in his own woes. He distracted and busied himself with new activities, adventures or political crusades, always striving to move forward despite the weight of his 'Black Dog'.

It is important to clarify at this juncture, however, that, although Churchill was ambitious, aggressive and sometimes impervious or inconsiderate and even labelled a war-monger, he was never ruthless, and when he identified with the distress of others, he showed a genuine concern and empathy (Storr, 1990), indicative of a sense of Adler's (1928, 1962) 'social feeling'. In addition, whether Churchill's depressive episode of 1910 was an expression of repressed hostility as a result of a neglected childhood (Storr, 1990) or the result of inherent depressive tendencies that may or may not have been triggered by his involvement in prison reforms (Ghaemi, 2011), what remains significant is that Churchill acknowledged his depression and refused to give in to its potential to devastate his life at such a crucial time in his political career.

#### ***7.3.4.2. Second Major Depressive Episode***

In October 1911, it was announced that Churchill was to become First Lord of the Admiralty. In the next three years, he was completely dedicated to the expansion and improvement of British naval forces and naval morale (Gilbert, 1992). On the 4<sup>th</sup> of October 1914, Britain declared war on Germany signalling the beginning of the First World War.

According to Mansfield (1995), despite Churchill's vulnerability to depression and his recent major depressive episode (Pearson, 1991), Churchill had, for some time, predicted such an event and since 1911 had been warning Parliament of the ensuing dangers that Germany posed to Europe and Britain in terms of their military might. Churchill was the "visionary" behind the British Navy's dramatic modernisation and mobilisation and he was responsible for sending the British naval fleet to war stations long before hostilities broke out (Mansfield, 1995, p. 60).

Pearson (1991) adds, that, behind Churchill's renewed confidence and energy from his previous depression in 1910, his "strange psychology remained unchanged" (p. 137). During an official visit to Agadir, a city in Morocco, prior to the commencement of the First World War, Churchill had witnessed Germany army manoeuvres and had become convinced that a major European war was imminent. With "uncanny accuracy" Churchill had predicted, in an official Government report, shortly before moving to the Admiralty, the course of events to follow (Pearson, 1991, p. 137).

Furthermore, Pearson (1991) explains that Churchill's vision of a major European war compelled him to prepare Britain's naval fleet and, that, in this moment of unstoppable energy, he not only revitalised the Navy, but provided himself the "antidote" he still required against his 'Black Dog' (p. 137). This was a patriotic cause that "inspired his sense of duty", provided the opportunity for constant activity to keep his mind engaged and a "ruthless enemy to rouse his deepest instincts of aggression" (Pearson, 1991, p. 137).

Despite praise for his proactive involvement in the early stages of the First World War, Churchill's subsequent involvement in the British defeat at the Dardanelles proved to be one of the most taxing crises of his political career and the basis for his second major depressive episode (Mansfield, 1995). (The Dardanelles crisis was discussed in Chapter 4,

Section 4.5.4.2.). Although Churchill's tactical naval plan of attack was sound, the execution thereof was a disaster and there remains debate as to whether Churchill was solely responsible for the outcome of the Dardanelles or was ultimately a scapegoat for military incompetence and costly naval deliberations (Gilbert, 1992; Jenkins, 2002; Mansfield, 1995; Pearson, 1991). Pearson (1991) believes that the Dardanelles crisis provided a glimpse into that side of Churchill's character that could be too arrogant and over-confident, impervious to the advice of others. Pearson (1991) further states that the outcome of the Dardanelles highlighted the "havoc that could be created by a role-playing melancholic with a genius for politics, an obsession with war, a belief in destiny and a passionate desire to make his mark in history" (p. 148).

What resulted from the Dardanelles disaster was a call for Churchill's resignation from his post as First Lord of the Admiralty in May 1915 and his banishment to the role of Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, a titled position with no responsibility (Gilbert, 1992; Mansfield, 1995). Stripped of power and prestige, Churchill entered a very dark time of political isolation and personal ridicule (Manchester, 1995). Clementine later wrote that when Churchill left the Admiralty, "he thought he was finished. I thought he would never get over the Dardanelles. I thought he would die of grief" (Gilbert, 1992, p. 321; Jenkins, 2002, p. 277). Pearson (1991) adds that this event was Churchill's greatest failure since his father's death and it proceeded with a period of complete isolation and deep depression, worse than his depression as Home Secretary in 1910.

Jenkins (2002) comments, however, that, whatever ridicule, disappointment or depression Churchill may have felt on the inside, his public demeanour was not one of a shamed dog and he appeared to bounce back from the ordeal fairly quickly. Churchill resigned from his post as the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster within five months and was soon attracted to the prospect of a Colonel's commission with the Grenadier Guards in

charge of a battalion at the battlefield in France in November 1915: “He would forget political disgrace by once more seeking military glory” (Pearson, 1991, p. 154). Churchill was not prepared to give-in to his depression and exhaustion but determined to see a victory in the War and, most importantly, to see a way forward to clearing his name of the Dardanelles disaster (Manchester, 1995). Singer (2012) and Manchester (1995) confirm that Churchill was above all else, resilient as well as realistic of his circumstances, and, that, in the years to come, he would endure many more defeats, both personal and political, but that “each blow seemed to impel him to reinvigorate himself in some fundamental sense” (Singer, 2012, p. 45). By December 1915, Churchill’s services on the frontline brought a revival of his spirits, a restored faith in his destiny and a belief that the greatest of his work was still to be done, not to mention a graceful, if only temporary departure, from his ‘Black Dog’ (Pearson, 1991). Churchill’s active service occupied his mind and his spirits, keeping his ‘Black Dog’ at bay and the opportunity to engage in soldiering not only distracted him, it enabled him to re-focus his ambitions and continue in his striving for power and success. As his doctor, Lord Moran, comments, Churchill’s resilience and courage “were turned on by war” (Wilson, 2002, p. 41).

By 1916, Churchill was eager to re-enter politics but was still plagued by the stigma of the Dardanelles and he found himself a “political untouchable” (Pearson, 1991, p. 156). For the next twelve months, Churchill remained in limbo, described by his close friend, Lord Beaverbrook as “a character depressed beyond the limits of description” (Pearson, 1991, p. 157). Political power and military glory provided the necessary protection against the deep depression that any setback, including the memories of his father’s judgements, invariably produced. But now, with political power and military glory denied, his ‘Black Dog’ descended once more. Ironically, it was during this desperate time, that Churchill adopted painting as a pastime. According to Pearson (1991), ever since his childhood, Churchill had

turned to aggression to divert his depression but now, in his new found love of painting, he found a new diversion, one that would prove a constant source of entertainment and distraction from his 'Black Dog' for the rest of his life.

Pearson (1991) makes a further observation of Churchill's character during the post Dardanelle years (1915-1917), an observation that conflicts with past affirmations that Churchill, by now, had developed a strong sense of Adler's (1928, 1962) 'social feeling'. Although it can be argued that Churchill recovered himself emotionally from the Dardanelles disaster by focusing on the crisis of the War at large and concerned himself with the security of his fellow Britishmen by serving as a battalion leader in France in 1915-1916, Pearson (1991) claims, that, in the wake of his deep depression post the Dardanelles, there is little evidence to suggest that Churchill paid much attention to the plight of the many young soldiers who ultimately lost their lives as a result of his naval strategy. "During this period he visited no hospitals to see the wounded, made no contact with the widows and remained majestically apart from the misery of others" (Pearson, 1990, p. 157). Churchill was also less troubled by the thought that his strategy actually played a strong part in the disaster and that much of his time between 1915 and 1921 was spent trying to vindicate himself from his role in the crisis, laying blame at everyone else but himself. "There remained one crucial actor in this gruesome tragedy he could never bring himself to blame: himself. And it is this that makes his state of suicidal misery so revealing" (Pearson, 1991, p. 157).

It could be argued, therefore, that at this time, Churchill had a low sense of social awareness and connectedness to his fellow human beings and was too self-absorbed in his own misery. His thoughts were turned inwards on himself and his 'soul' became isolated, which for Adler (1949), is a major source of an individual's sadness and ongoing depression. Only in the outward focus of his attentions and the striving for superiority over his anguish, through the concern for others, rather than himself, would Churchill be truly able to resolve

and elevate himself from his depression (Adler, 1949). Interestingly, although Churchill did not relent to his depression and was able to control his depressed moods for much of the next ten years, he did not appear to have overcome his depression completely, experiencing numerous milder recurrences of his 'Black Dog' between 1919 and 1929 (Ghaemi, 2011). This scenario is indicative of both Churchill's inherent tendency to depression (Ghaemi, 2011) and the consequences of becoming too inwardly focused and self-absorbed, echoing Adler's (1949) sentiments about recurring depression and hence the need for Churchill to keep himself constantly active to ward off his 'Black Dog'.

In July 1917, Churchill's old colleague and newly appointed Prime Minister of Britain, Dave Lloyd George, offered Churchill an opportunity to return from political exile by offering him a Cabinet post as Minister of Munitions for Britain (Gilbert, 1992; Pearson, 1991; Mansfield, 1995). Once again, Churchill immersed himself in work and tireless dedication to reorganising Britain's munitions industry which proved invaluable during the war's final years, with Germany's final surrender in November 1918. Evidence for Churchill's sense of altruism and 'social feeling' came in the aftermath of the First World War, with Churchill vehemently opposing calls for retribution against Germany and citing one of his famous maxims in the House of Commons in March 1919: "Do not be carried away by success into demanding or taking more than is prudent and do not disband your army until you have got your terms. The finest combination in the world is power and mercy" (Singer, 2012, p. 95).

### **7.3.5. Churchill: Into the Wilderness - A Platform for Depressive Realism**

**(1919- 1939)**

#### ***7.3.5.1. Political Turmoil: 1919-1929***

Between 1919 and 1929 Churchill assumed various political roles, including Secretary of State for War in 1919; Colonial Secretary in 1921 and, despite a brief loss of his seat in the House of Commons in 1922, after David Lloyd George's Labour Government was toppled by Conservatives under Bonar Law, he moved to the Conservative Party in September 1924, where he was eventually asked by Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin to become Britain's Chancellor of the Exchequer in November 1924 ( like his father before him in 1896) (Mansfield, 1995). The next five years from 1924 to 1929 were a turbulent time in Churchill's life, marked by tragic personal events and political setbacks that proved some of the most challenging of his life: the death of his mother, Lady Randolph in June 1921 and the death of his fourth child, Marigold, not two months later, in August 1921(Mansfield, 1995).

Of his mother's passing, Churchill wrote that he did not feel a sense of tragedy, rather a true sense of loss (Pearson, 1991, p. 189) and of his daughter, Marigold, Churchill appeared more stoic and mourned quietly for the loss of his "lost and much lamented kitten" (p. 191). Singer (2012) claims that Churchill's strength and courage during this time were remarkable and that, despite his "abject sorrow", Churchill nurtured new distractions to keep his mind away from looming grief (p. 106). One such distraction was the purchase and refurbishment of his country home, Chartwell, which became the centre of Churchill's family life, a haven for his writing and painting and a playground for many of his personal recreations, including farming, brick-laying and small building projects. Chartwell was a source of many social engagements and family amusements, and, although a serious financial drain and a major

source of anxiety and resentment for Clementine, it provided a real-life diversion from the ever present 'Black Dog' (Singer, 2012).

In his political life, Churchill's position as Chancellor of the Exchequer proved even more damaging to both his personal life and political career than his involvement with the Dardanelles crisis during the First World War. During the early years between 1924 and 1929, Pearson (1991) claims that there was no apparent evidence of Churchill's 'Black Dog' as he immersed himself in his new-found political success, coupled with the excitement of Chartwell's refurbishments and the triumph of his memoirs of the First World War, published in 1923 as "*The World Crisis*". However, there was no apparent lack of confidence either as Fieve (1997) reveals that Churchill's over-zealous energy, his antagonistic persona and his increasingly critical attitude towards his colleagues eventually alienated him from his Party and set in motion a series of political setbacks that led to him stepping down disgracefully from his high profile post. Pearson (1991) adds that Churchill's appointment as Chancellor of the Exchequer was the golden opportunity for him to vindicate if not absolve himself from the tormenting memories of his father's disdain and his father's prophecy that Churchill would end up a failure. "What better answer could he give his unforgiving father than to reach that self-same 'splendid office' that had once distinguished him" (Pearson, 1991, p. 205).

Finance was not, however, Churchill's forte, "either publicly or privately" (Pearson, 1991, p. 205) and Mansfield (1995) and Pearson (1991) describe how Churchill's decision to return England's pound sterling to the old-fashioned gold standard ultimately deflated and toppled the British economy. British goods became too expensive in the world markets, unemployment rose, wages decreased and widespread resentment amongst the working classes eventually prompted the "catastrophic" General Strike of 1926 (Pearson, 1991, p. 206). In later years, Churchill remarked that "everyone said that I was the worst Chancellor

of the Exchequer that ever was. And now I'm inclined to agree with them. So now the world's unanimous" (Pearson, 1991, p. 206).

With increasing unemployment, a tenuous relationship with Prime Minister Baldwin over economic issues as well as military threats in Europe, Churchill found himself isolated from his Party and from Parliament and eventually out of office in the 1929 elections when Labour swept back into power under Ramsay MacDonald's premiership. "The night of 30 May 1929, at Downing Street, was thus the beginning of a grim decade in which Churchill, although still in Parliament, would stay unheeded and alone in what he called the wilderness of politics" (Mansfield, 1995, p. 66; Pearson, 1991, p. 224).

#### ***7.3.5.2. The Wilderness: 1929-1939***

Not only was Churchill out of office, labelled "an out of date reactionary" (Pearson, 1991, p. 223), the infamous 1929 Crash of Wall Street further drove Churchill to the edge of personal financial ruin. Losing both political and financial stability, Churchill believed he was finished as a politician and that "his mortal end was not far off" (Pearson, 1991, p. 225). Churchill's 'Black Dog' had ominously returned. In addition, at the end of 1931, whilst Churchill, in his endeavours to earn back some of his income lost in the 1929 Crash, journeyed to New York to begin his lecture tour across America, he survived a near fatal encounter with a taxi but was left badly injured. According to Pearson (1991), Churchill was on the verge of another deep depression and felt he was unable to recover from his three recent setbacks: his loss of office, his financial losses and now his physical weakness from the accident. "He talked gloomily of being finished" and that "politics, family and finance were creating deep anxiety and his old resilience had not returned" (Pearson, 1991, p. 226).

Mansfield (1995) emphasises that, during these early "Wilderness Years" from 1929 to 1935, one cannot underestimate how despised Churchill was by his peers and completely

isolated from any active political duty. Considered a political embarrassment, Churchill was purposefully kept on the fringes of political life and deemed a 'has-been'. Even when Conservative Party leader, Stanley Baldwin and Labour leader, Ramsay MacDonald formed a government of national unity, Churchill was left out in the cold (Ghaemi, 2011).

During this difficult and painful time, Churchill retreated to his home, Chartwell, where he found solace in painting and writing and "created a world free from the tormenting barbs of public life" and discovered new channels to absorb his "effusive energies" (Mansfield, 1995, p. 67). Painting provided a means to divert his mind from constant worry and dispel his depression (Pearson, 1991) whilst writing brought much personal happiness. Pearson (1991) comments, that, Churchill viewed writing as his constant companion during his dark days of 'Black Dog'. Carson and Wakely (2013) confirm that, during the "Wilderness Years", Churchill pursued artistic and writing activities as well as physical exercise, such as bricklaying, to help divert his attentions and channel his emotions into creative and positive pursuits, away from the damaging effects of his 'Black Dog'.

Furthermore, Churchill's public support of King Edward VIII during his abdication only served to further distance him from political life, causing even more ridicule and loneliness. "There was a sense of political impotence, of his talents wasted, of time passing him by and of periods of Black Dog" (Jenkins, 2002, p. 466).

Singer (2012) states that during these "Wilderness Years", Churchill's depression was almost tangible and "every fibre of resilience and magnanimity and every sinew of purpose and determination" was being tested (p. 125). Ironically, however, during this time, the source of his resilience and fortitude was his "near paralyzing fear of depression, yet unlike many depressives, Churchill refused to be paralyzed" and instead of giving in to his 'Black

Dog' he overruled his fear and "acted, in fact, reacted, often with resoundingly restorative results" (Singer, 2012, p. 105).

To this end, the "Wilderness Years" proved Churchill's platform to not only overcome his depression but also prove his courage, resilience and foresight in the wake of that depression. In the face of so much public ridicule, Churchill was the only public figure able to see the impending threat of Nazism to peace and democracy. During these years "his record of courage and foresight was more creditable than that of any other major British politician" (Jenkins, 2002, p.464).

Every prophet has to come from civilisation but every prophet has to go to the wilderness. He must have a strong impression of a complex society and all that it has to give, and then he must serve periods of isolation and meditation. This is the process by which psychic dynamite is made (Churchill, cited in Pearson, 1991, p. 246).

As Hitler's Nazi party grew in numbers and strength during the 1930's and Germany's rearmament drive became more ominous by 1936, Churchill's so-called 'psychic dynamite' enabled him to be more assertive and more realistic than any other politician in identifying the danger of Hitler (Jenkins, 2002). As early as March 1933, Churchill tried desperately to warn Britain of the "war spirit raging in Nazi Germany" but his calls for attention and British rearmament went unheeded, accused of being alarmist and a war-monger (Mansfield, 1995, p. 71). Ironically, the former British Prime Minister and occasional political mentor to Churchill, David Lloyd George, referred to Hitler as a born leader with a dynamic personality and wished that Britain had "such a man of his supreme quality" overseeing Britain's affairs (Ghaemi, 2011, p. 65).

Alone, Churchill wanted to rearm Britain in the face of Germany's expanding and threatening military strength whilst his peers could not fathom any such reality of danger.

Churchill foresaw war when nobody else could even entertain the idea (Ghaemi, 2011).

Where Churchill's isolation may have caused his depression, Ghaemi (2011) argues that his depression may have caused his isolation and that his "unconventional persona, partly reflecting his mood illness" provided a dangerous excuse to "ignore his sadly realistic political judgement" (p. 65).

Fieve (1997) writes that Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin felt that Churchill lacked judgement, particularly during his frenetic energy states, and that his opinions should not be taken too seriously. In this regard, Fieve (1997) agrees that Churchill's mood swings impeded his judgment and ability to be cautious, thus challenging the notion that his possible manic-depressive mood swings complemented his ability to be realistic. Pearson (1991), however, argues that Churchill's frustrations at being out of office, coupled with his depression, make it understandable to imply he was just pessimistic rather than realistic about the activities of Germany, but this pessimism alone fails to explain "Churchill's uncanny insight into Hitler's motives" and his "unerring" perceptiveness regarding Hitler (p. 249).

Even in 1939, when Germany annexed Austria and the Sudetenland and invaded Poland on 1 September 1939, Churchill's warnings, pleas and frantic speeches in Parliament continued to be ignored, whilst Britain, now under the leadership of Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain, naively followed a policy of appeasement with Germany. Hayward (1998) claims, that, Churchill's insistent warnings against appeasement were much ridiculed at the time but are now regarded as a model of fortitude and foresight. Ghaemi (2011) states, that, the contrast between Churchill's and Chamberlain's approach to Hitler is a stark reminder of Churchill's realism in the midst of his depressive "Wilderness Years". "Where Churchill began to warn about the Nazi threat as early as October 1930, Chamberlain remained oblivious as late as his fateful Munich visit in 1938" (Ghaemi, 2011, p. 65). Ghaemi (2011) believes that Churchill's insight into the character of Hitler and his instincts about the Nazi

threat were fed by his own “mental illness” (p. 66). Churchill had never given in to his ‘Black Dog’ that had plagued him from within, and, having survived thus far, “he didn’t intend to surrender to other dogs” (Ghaemi, 2011, p. 66).

Ghaemi (2011) continues that one might argue Churchill was a pessimist whose opinions about Nazism were co-incidental, but for Ghaemi (2011), it was Churchill’s depressive realism that guided him to see the path of war and not because he was a war-monger, but because he was realistic in seeing that war was inevitable.

Interestingly, Storr (1990) claims that, in 1940, Churchill became not only the grandiose hero that Britain needed but also the hero that he had always dreamed of being. “It was his finest hour. In that dark time, what England needed was not a shrewd, equable, balanced leader. She needed a heroic visionary, a man who could dream dreams of victory when all seemed lost” (Storr, 1990, pp. 49-50) but that such inspiration came from Churchill’s romantic world of fantasy and imperialism rather than his realism. Ghaemi (2011), however, counter argues that Storr (1990) misses “a deeper wisdom” in Churchill’s mental illness, in that, it was “not the supposed grandiosity of his manic temperament, but rather the realism of his depressive suffering” that provided Churchill with the emotional realism to see the situation for what it was and ultimately provide the political leadership that Britain so desperately needed (p. 63). To this end, it is arguable whether Churchill was indeed driven by an imperious imagination and a glorified sense of destiny or whether he possessed what Storr (1990) ironically referred to as ‘psychic dynamite’ that was indeed underpinned by an uncanny realism born out of a neglectful childhood and a lifetime of depressive suffering.

### **7.3.6. Churchill: The ‘Bull Dog’ - Striving for Superiority (1940-1945)**

#### ***7.3.6.1. The Second World War: 1940-1945***

After a failed appeasement strategy with Germany, England declared war with Germany on 3 September 1939, and, realising that he needed the advice of the man he had ignored and ridiculed for so long, Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain appointed Churchill First Lord of the Admiralty again in September 1939. Disillusioned by the weak leadership of Neville Chamberlain and his counterparts, the British public called for his resignation and Churchill was appointed Prime Minister of Britain for the first time on 10 May 1940 (Mansfield, 1995). Churchill's role as Prime Minister of Britain during the Second World War proved the ultimate catalyst for Churchill to demonstrate his true character: his energy, resolution, courage, aggression, tenacity, his belief in destiny and most importantly his foresight, for he understood more clearly than anyone else what course the war would take and how it could be won (Mansfield, 1995).

Churchill did not attempt to hide his jubilation at being made Prime Minister of Britain, despite the gravity of the situation. According to Pearson (1991), this was the ultimate position in his striving for recognition and redemption from his father, as such, “the culmination of a lifetime's unyielding ambition” (p.280). Churchill believed also that he was finally fulfilling his destiny and that all his past experiences now came together in preparing him for this ordeal. Pearson (1991) adds that the “prospect of waging full-scale war aroused his remarkable powers of aggression” and expelled any remnants of anxiety or depression (p. 280).

Storr (1990) states that, in spite of Churchill's aristocratic birth and social standing, he endured many physical and emotional disadvantages which he spent most of his career attempting to overcome and, that, without these disadvantages, Churchill may well have been

a happier and more balanced individual but also a far more ordinary human being unable to inspire the British nation as he did on the eve of the Second World War. “In 1940, any political leader might have tried to rally Britain with brave words, although his heart was full of despair. But only a man who had known and faced despair within himself could carry conviction at such a moment” (Storr, 1990, p. 5) and that only such a man who had “conducted a battle with his own despair could convey to others that despair can be overcome” (p. 5). At the time of the Second World War, Churchill far exceeded any career aspiration as Prime Minister of Britain, his life goals of military glory and political fame had been realised beyond his expectation and now, in these dark days, he stood before his fellow human beings ready to lead the nation against the greatest enemy of modern democracy. Churchill’s role as Prime Minister of Britain on the eve of the Second World War was a culmination of striving for superiority over his own inferior complexes, a striving to overcome the shadow of his disapproving father and a striving towards his own self-ideal (Adler, 1928). According to Carson and Wakely (2013), Churchill had a steadfast belief in his own invincibility: “He rose out of his inferior place and firmly believed in his superiority” (Carson & Wakley, 2013, p. 27).

It can be argued that Churchill’s striving for his place in history was a selfish pursuit to satisfy his ego and personal vindication from his father’s prophecy (Pearson, 1992) but Storr (1990) argues that Churchill may have been many things, demanding, egotistical, insensitive, arrogant, but he was not introspective or concerned with his own motives. “Indeed, if he had been, he could scarcely have achieved what he did, for introspection is the accomplice of self-distrust and the enemy of action” (Storr, 1990, p. 4). In Adlerian terms, therefore, the period of time in the build up to 1940 as well as during the war years, is significant for Churchill’s striving for superiority with a social focus on meeting life’s challenges, that is, according to Storr (1990), Churchill remained focused on protecting and

serving his fellowmen. During 1939- 1945, Churchill epitomised what Adler (1928; 1962) referred to as the 'social feeling' in that he invested himself unconditionally to serving his fellow human beings whilst mastering the cold realities of war. "His capacity to inspire his fellow men with courage or to kindle enthusiasm for something new is unrivalled" (Storr, 1990, p. 13).

Churchill's wartime persona is embodied in his resolute defiance against tyranny, his unparalleled energy, his unequivocal belief in victory and more importantly his confidence in the course the war would and should take: "he believed that he understood more clearly than others the course the war would take and how it could be won, but only because he had invested himself in mastering the cold realities of the problems his nation faced (Mansfield, 1995, p. 76). In the early stages of the Second World War, "England was weak, vulnerable and alone against the possibility of Nazi invasion. Yet in that desperate hour, Churchill exploded into action with such force that he jolted the nation out of its numbing fear" (Mansfield, 1995, p. 74). Churchill's memories of the failed and disastrously implemented strategies of the Dardanelles ensured that he was at the centre of all the action, never complacent and continuously travelling to enemy lines to rally the troops or strengthen alliances with Russia, France and America. Mansfield (1995) argues that, "often he won arguments about policy and tactics simply because he was in better command of the facts" (p. 76) rather than because of his arrogance or egoism.

Pearson (1991) comments that Churchill's wartime leadership rested on his "human limitations almost as much as his superhuman strengths" which worked together to prepare him for the "warlike power he wielded" (p. 282). Churchill's egotism "endowed him with massive certainty about himself" together with his aggression, his love of battle and his sheer iron will "forged to withstand those periods of despair when misery and deep depression had assailed him" (Pearson, 1991, p. 282). In addition, Pearson (1991) claims that Churchill's

“great talent for show-off exaggeration and make-believe” for which he was admonished by his father, produced the heroic courage that everyone clung to in those desperate years (p. 319). “Imagination and reality converged” to create the “warrior-statesman locked in battle for the future of the world” (p. 319).

Fieve (1997) argues that Churchill’s success in the Second World War owes itself to his “manic genius” rather than his confidence, fortitude and realism (p. 146). Churchill’s ceaseless energy, high spirits, dogmatic determination, impulsiveness and imperviousness to risk also rendered Churchill more at risk of being less prudent, cautious and potentially less far-sighted. With his enormous capacity for work, Churchill generated more strategic ideas and more memorandums than anyone else in his War Cabinet and undertook too many things simultaneously, from writing books, speeches, travelling to the battle fronts and planning the War effort from every angle, so much so, that he exhausted his staff and needed to be managed by his immediate executive team. As such, Churchill needed to be kept in check (Fieve, 1997). Ironically, in his striving for superiority, Churchill was also accused by one of his generals as “striving for supremacy over others” (Fieve, 1997, p. 147), which again detracts from Adler’s (1928) striving for the self-ideal and consolidating the true meaning of the ‘social feeling’. Yet, in subsequent comments, Fieve (1997) acknowledges that, as Prime Minister, Churchill “seemed to have his manic impulses under better control and he spent his fabulous energy and enthusiasm leading England through the Second World War” (p. 149).

Storr (1990) argues that Churchill had an uncanny ability to manage his moods, more specifically, his bouts of depression, particularly during the Second World War and well into his old age. Fieve (1997), however, believes that because of Churchill’s genetic predisposition to manic-depression, he did not manage his depression, rather, during these exhilarating times, his depression “remitted spontaneously into a mild hypomanic beneficial mood states”, testing the notion that Churchill was not so much a realist than what he was

manic, blessed with auspicious opportunities to thrive and shine (p. 152). Interestingly, according to Fieve (1997), “manics and hypomanics tend to be extremely perceptive and intuitive” (p.66) which begs the question that perhaps Churchill’s perception and realism found its source from his manic side rather than his depressive side and that even during his “Wilderness Years”, when Churchill endured severe bouts of depression, his latent manic side continually kept him physically active and politically engaged, warding off and rivalling his depression. Storr (1990) counter argues that many individuals with depression do not allow themselves to rest because they cannot afford to relax and let depression consume them, therefore implying that highly active depressives are not all necessarily manic. In Churchill’s case, “he invented various methods of coping with the depression which descended when he was no longer fully occupied by affairs of state” (Storr, 1990, p. 17). Lord Moran, Churchill’s doctor, writes that Churchill dreaded his bouts of depression and “instinctively kept away from anyone or anything that seemed to bring them on” (Wilson, 2002, p. 222).

Owen (2008) further comments, however, that whether Churchill’s bursts of manic energy tempered by periods of depressive gloom provided sufficient evidence for a diagnosis of Bipolar Disorder is a debate that psychiatrists and psychologists will continue to dispute. Those who disagree with a diagnosis of Bipolar Disorder argue that there is no hard evidence of a manic episode in Churchill’s life and are cautious to blame his eccentric behaviour on mania. “For instance, some have used his tendency to dictate to a secretary while in the bath, and, certainly, he was unself-conscious about being in the nude, as a diagnostic of mania, but this was quite common in his social class and is not conclusive” (Owen, 2008, p. 41).

Conversely, Owen (2008) comments, that, those who worked closely with Churchill, observed a manic as well as a depressive side, commenting on his volatile moods and his unconventional yet exhaustive working hours. According to Owen (2008), whatever the

conclusion, there is “no evidence that the illness led the War Cabinet into irrational decision-making” (p. 42). On the contrary, Owen (2008) believes that Churchill’s depressive mood swings provided him with the quality of inspirational leadership that proved so critical in the early stages of the Second World War and his courage as well as his insight was the product of his personal suffering and coping with his ‘Black Dog’.

Storr (1990) provides a further argument regarding Churchill’s remarkable leadership ability during the Second World War, one that is based on Churchill’s world of fantasy rather than his world of reality. Storr (1990) comments, that, in Churchill’s striving to overcome childhood neglect and early parental deprivation as well as sustain his self-esteem, he developed characteristics of imperiousness, arrogance, defiance and a tremendous dose of ambition – a striving for superiority over his inner world of loneliness. Churchill’s extreme ambition, however, was not based upon a realistic appraisal of his talents and defects, but rather on his world of make-believe. According to Storr (1990), in the case of such individuals, “there is always an element of fantasy, unrelated to actual achievement” and, for Churchill, it took the form of unwavering belief in destiny (p. 26). Churchill believed that he was being kept for a special purpose. Storr (1990) claims that during his role as Prime Minister of Britain in 1940, “his fantasy found expression in reality” (p. 27) and he truly believed he was destined for the task at hand. Churchill’s “inner world of make-believe” fuelled his reality: “the kind of inspiration with which Churchill sustained the nation is not based on judgement but on an irrational conviction independent of factual reality” (Storr, 1990, p. 27).

As a young boy, Churchill had dreamt of military glory and political power and he lived in an age where such glory was still a possible reality. Churchill sought to realise his dreams in his early career as a soldier and then again during the First World War and ultimately in the lead up to and during the Second World War. Churchill’s ambition, his

aggressive drive and his search for danger were not merely a quest to overcome his physical weaknesses but rather a quest to strive for something bigger and better, to fulfil a pre-ordained destiny. Churchill's strategic prowess regarding military strategy is well founded but Storr (1990) believes that such strategic genius lends itself more to Churchill's world of fantasy rather than his realism. Churchill's imagination led him to disregard logic or balanced judgement, and, coupled with his power of words, his ideas became even more grandiose and convincing to himself and others. Storr (1990) states that, "by the magic of words" Churchill's fantastical ideas took on an unrealistic life of their own (p. 41). Churchill's remarkable leadership through England's darkest hours, if not his own personal darkness, according to Storr (1990), was not a consequence of depressive realism, rather it "owed its dynamic force to the romantic world of fantasy in which he had his true being" (p. 50).

Interestingly, during the Second World War, Snow (1969) also refers to Churchill's lack of sound judgement but comments that he possessed a far greater talent: natural insight, independent of external influences, and, it was in most instances, a better guide than his judgement. In contrast, in reference to his realism about Hitler, Snow (1969) believes it was Churchill's insight, his instinct, rather than his judgement that proved him right about the threat of Hitler and the need for the British nation to unite against this evil. Storr (1990) comments that the insight to which Snow (1969) refers, is better described as intuition, but, that, intuition is an "unreliable guide" and most of Churchill's intuitions were equally misguided as they were accurate (p. 13). Storr (1990) observes: "In his anticipation of the menace of Hitler, and later of the threat of Russian domination of Europe, he was intuitively right where others, who had better judgement than he, failed to see the important point" (p. 14).

Pearson (1991) concludes that Churchill's steadfast belief in his destiny convinced him that, despite the numerous historical odds that had been so firmly stacked against him, he

had lived thus far because he had been preserved for a specific purpose – this was his time. “A regal sense of power with a supernatural sanction is a potent combination” and Churchill was indeed a formidable wartime leader, “to friends and allies almost as much as to his enemies” (p. 284). Post and Robins (1993) also state that Churchill “dreamt of glory” (p. 43) and that his imagination nurtured both his belief in destiny and his self-confidence.

At this juncture, it is debatable whether Churchill’s inner world of fantasy manifested in reality or whether, despite Churchill’s conviction that he was destined for a noble purpose, he foresaw and anticipated events leading up to the Second World War with more clarity than any of his counterparts, further establishing his credibility as a wartime leader. Pearson (1991) claims that, instead of realism, Churchill’s sense of destiny and sense of superiority over others underpinned his wartime leadership but perhaps it can be argued that, in spite of his belief in destiny, Churchill possessed a true sense of realism and foresight regarding the events that led to the Second World War and which continued to faithfully serve his decisive and courageous leadership style throughout the course of the war.

#### ***7.3.6.2. Churchill: His Finest Hour***

“In 1940, Churchill became the hero that he had always dreamed of being. It was his finest hour” (Storr, 1990, p. 49). During the war, Churchill appeared less symptomatic of his depression, although, by this time, Ghaemi (2001) comments that Churchill’s doctors had already started prescribing amphetamines. Nevertheless, according to Ghaemi (2011), there is still evidence of manic-like symptoms and depressive episodes, even as the war progressed in Britain’s favour in late 1943. As one member of Churchill’s staff commented in July 1943: “The PM was in a crazy state of exultation. The battle has gone to the old man’s head. The quantities of liquor he consumed - wine, brandies, whiskies - were incredible” (Ghaemi, 2011, p. 62).

Furthermore, Lord Moran, Churchill's doctor, comments, that, during 1944, Churchill could often be found in a speculative mood, wary of his 'Black Dog' and ruminating about past mistakes. "Winston told me that when he was a young Member of Parliament a mistake would get him down. It seemed to prey on his mind" (Wilson, 2002, p. 222). Churchill was always apprehensive of making mistakes and of failure and he had to train himself not to deliberate about things that had gone wrong for "he found that he could not live with his mistakes and keep his balance" (Wilson, 2002, p. 222). Over time, this pattern of behaviour made Churchill incapable of assuming responsibility for mistakes or seeing his part in any wrong doing, fuelling his reputation for arrogance and stubbornness, yet, his doctor, Lord Moran, confirms: "I am disposed to believe that his reluctance to open up old wounds was but another instance of his drawn-out battle with the Black Dog" (Wilson, 2002, p. 223).

In the months leading up to the culmination of the war and a British victory, Lord Moran comments that Churchill felt alone and that the war had "exaggerated the isolation in which he had dwelt apart during his political life" (Wilson, 2002, p. 301). By the beginning of 1944, Owen (2008) also confirms that Churchill was exhausted and depressed and quotes his private secretary, John Colville, in February 1944: "The PM looked old, tired and very depressed" (p. 41). By Spring 1944, pneumonia and his weakened heart condition began to take its toll, leaving Churchill weak and depressed, citing to his friend, Lord Beaverbrook: "I'm through, I just can't carry the burdens any longer", however, just as soon as he revealed his gloom, Churchill, being Churchill, instantly revived himself to continue with the last crucial stages of the war (Pearson, 1991, p. 329).

According to Hayward (1998), against the backdrop of such emotional highs and lows, Churchill remained a beacon of courage and optimism during the Second World War and demonstrated supernatural resources, a "frenzied" energy, prevision and an ability to coerce events (p.115). Churchill also demonstrated uncanny realism and pragmatism

regarding the planning of the war: “In the early days, he placed emphasis on aircraft production, understanding that the coming air battle would determine whether Britain would survive at all to carry on the war” (Hayward, 1998, p. 84). Thereafter, Churchill turned his attentions to the submarine threat to British shipping and the long range plans for the production of landing craft and concrete harbours that could be towed across the English Channel to create artificial harbours for supply ships, a strategy that proved invaluable in the final stages of the war. Indeed, even during the darkest hours of 1940, “Churchill was looking ahead and laying plans for eventual victory” and “kept revising what was central to the next steps of the war” (Hayward, 1998, p. 85).

The characteristics of depression, that under normal circumstances would be a liability, became Churchill's greatest asset in the events leading up to and during the Second World War. As, according to Carson and Wakely (2013), his unyielding and belligerent approach to decision making, his ruthless determination and tenacious spirit as well as his intolerance of people who disagreed with him, caused him to over-rule the advice of his colleagues and advisers and ultimately make the tough decisions that won the war - depression was critical to his success. “In fact if it weren't for the Second World War, he might never have been able to prove his worth. He might have been consigned to the dustbin of history, remembered only as a minor and not very successful politician” (Carson & Wakely, 2013, p.26). Mansfield (1995) concurs that Churchill had an undeniable confidence in knowing the hard facts, and, no matter what his mental state, he maintained a realistic focus. During his ‘Wilderness Years’, a time of solitude and isolation from the political world, Churchill still managed to warn the British Parliament of the Nazi movement and “urged honesty in dealing with the British public” (Mansfield, 1995, p.135). Accordingly, “this resolve to engage the truth at any price granted Churchill some immensely important insights” and “as a careful observer who refused to change facts to fit his philosophy or bend

reality to his imagination, he acquired shrewd insight into the ways of men and events” (Mansfield, 1995, p.135).

Ghaemi (2011) comments that during the Second World War, Churchill never gave into his ‘Black Dog’ as he never capitulated to Adolf Hitler, his advisors or his colleagues. Storr (1990) believes that Churchill had courage beyond measure, arguing that he had faced many challenges and triumphed many battles, both on and off the battlefield. In all of these experiences he demonstrated resolve and determination.

According to Carson and Wakely (2013), Churchill’s approach was always tough, unrelenting and realistic. His fight with recurrent depression prepared him for the challenges and disappointments of war and ultimately the trials and triumphs of life. Churchill viewed the course of the War for what it was and not for what he hoped it could or would be, that is, he was realistic about the potential for loss and never under-estimated the strength of the enemy.

Jenkins (2002) concludes, that, despite his depression and many emotional and physical setbacks, Churchill achieved world renowned status in political history. Jenkins (2002) believes Churchill to be the greatest statesman to have ever occupied 10 Downing Street. Against great odds, the culmination of the Second World War, celebrated as Victory Day in Europe on 8 May 1945, was, indeed, Churchill’s finest hour.

### **7.3.7. Churchill: Victor to Vanquished - His ‘Black Dog’ Returns (1945-1955)**

Churchill’s defeat in the General Election of 26 July 1945, just eighty days after the final surrender of Germany, left him shocked and devastated, deeply hurt by the rejection of his people (Mansfield, 1995). Lord Moran comments, that, on the morning of 26 July 1945, he found Churchill quiet and sad but that he blamed no-one. Churchill was also aware of the

great and unenviable task that lay ahead for the new government in demobilising the troops, dealing with unemployment and calming social unrest, a task for which Churchill was somewhat relieved not to be responsible (Wilson, 2002).

Churchill humoured Lord Moran that what lay ahead for him were endless holidays and plenty of time to write and paint but that he would miss, more than anything, the feeling of power, the power to implement his plans better than anyone else, particularly with regards domestic reforms, preventing a socialist government from taking hold in Britain and, more importantly, defending Europe against the growing threat of communism that a post-war Russia now threatened (Jenkins, 2002; Wilson, 2002). Pearson (1991) comments, that, the sense of power to which Churchill refers, was a subconscious defence against his dread of failure that his father always predicted. “With his ascension, his deepest cravings for success had been satisfied” but now in the wake of his dismissal, all those feelings of loss and failure resurfaced and he was at the mercy of the “unabsorbed residuum of pure emptiness” that had lurked and threatened him all his life (p. 343).

Shortly after Churchill and Clementine moved out of 10 Downing Street and took up temporary residence in the penthouse suite of the renowned London hotel, Claridges, Churchill is recorded to have admitted to his doctor, Lord Moran, that he disliked sleeping near the balcony of his new apartment and that although he had no desire to “quit this world – thoughts, desperate thoughts” came into his head (Pearson, 1991, p. 342; Storr, 1990, p. 38). Storr (1990) reflects further on Churchill’s words that death had an appeal to Churchill against which he had to defend himself: “Men who have to be hyperactive in order to protect themselves against depression generally have a secret longing for total peace and relaxation” (Storr, 1990, p. 39).

Jenkins (2002) also states that soon after his resignation as Prime Minister, Churchill's public persona was more composed than his private one, commenting on a letter that Clementine wrote to their youngest daughter, Mary, on 26 August 1945:

I cannot explain how it is but in our misery we seem, instead of clinging to each other, to be always having scenes. I'm sure it's all my fault, but I'm finding life more than I can bear. He is so unhappy and that makes him very difficult. He hates his food (hardly any meat). I can't see any future (Jenkins, 2002, p. 804).

Churchill's 1945 political defeat resulted in a depressive episode as bad, if not worse, than any in his past (Pearson, 1991). Despite the descent of his 'Black Dog', Jenkins (2002) makes reference to Churchill's potential realism post his 1945 setback, explaining that during the latter part of 1945, whilst Churchill "found nothing very soothing to balance his sombre reflections" of his July defeat, "he brooded over what he saw as the increasing menace of Soviet expansion in Europe and the hesitant American resistance to it" (p. 806). At the centre of his depressive state, lay Churchill's unease, once more, for the future and security of the western world. According to Jenkins (2002), there was some ambiguity as to whether Churchill wanted to remain on as Leader of the Opposition Party, seeing a way back to 10 Downing Street or whether he was looking for a genuine, graceful exit to retire, the latter of which is unlikely, given that Churchill immediately stepped up to the challenge as Leader of the Opposition. Mansfield (1995) confirms that Churchill may have been tempted to retire soon after his defeat in 1945 but once he "checked his emotions" and weighed his options, Churchill quickly embarked on a new crusade (p. 77). "As he had once prophesied the rise of Nazi Germany, he again donned the mantle of Old Testament prophet to warn the world of the growing threat of Communism" (Mansfield, 1995, p. 78). Churchill's famous "Iron Curtain Speech" defined clearly the issues of the Cold War and "shook the uneasy and

artificial peace that the Western world clung to so desperately in the wake of the Second World War” (Mansfield, 1995, p. 79).

Pearson (1991) comments, that, Churchill’s “brush with Black Dog” in 1945, reminded him how much he needed the “royal jelly” of politics and power to suppress his depression (p. 345). In the preceding five years, Churchill not only led the Conservative Party as Leader of the Opposition, he vociferously continued to warn Europe and the United States of America of the impending dangers of Soviet expansion policies and remained vigilant of the spread of Communism in Europe, foreseeing the possibility of a third world war (which ultimately became known as the Cold War). During the years between 1945 and 1951, European and American statesmen convinced themselves that the Soviet Union was merely an “ideological power” seeking territorial equality (Mansfield, 1995, p. 79). But, for Churchill, he foresaw a different scenario at play. Despite his personal challenge with his aging constitution and recurring bouts of depression, Mansfield (1995) argues that it once again “fell to Churchill to proclaim the disturbing news to the world” and, in the interests of his fellowmen, “he could not leave the challenge unanswered” (p. 79). Churchill’s opposition to the socialist nature of Britain’s economic policies, and, above all, Britain’s blindness to the general menace of Communism, was loud and profuse.

By the end of the 1940’s, as Soviet actions were rapidly fulfilling Churchill’s prophecy, Churchill’s reputation for wisdom and insight increased as did his aggressive appetite for politics. Many of his party colleagues, however, remained sceptical of his ability to continue leading the Opposition Party, given his outspoken and all too brash behaviour (Pearson, 1991). Churchill, however, was still too important to be thrown out and colleagues were forced to endure his “gloomy, grouchy” temperament and his taste for political vengeance: “A short time ago I was ready to retire and die gracefully. Now I am going to stay and have them out. I’ll tear their bleeding entrails out of them” (Pearson, 1991, p. 346).

Despite the death of his brother, Jack, in March 1947, which temporarily “sent Winston into a bout of deep depression” (Pearson, 1991, p. 352), Churchill’s political aspirations went from strength to strength during the late 1940’s, and, by 1950, he had re-established his political stronghold within his party. Despite his age, Churchill was proving an effective Leader of the Opposition. “Far from declining gracefully into that impotent old age he dreaded, he remained the most active of political volcanoes” (Pearson, 1991, p. 351).

When tensions increased between the Conservative and Labour Parties in the election of 1950, Churchill was well positioned for a second comeback, which, ultimately took place in October 1951, when his Conservative Party won a majority seat in Parliament and Churchill was made Prime Minister of Britain for the second time (Mansfield, 1995). A significant accomplishment for anyone at the age of seventy seven and a testament to Adler’s (1928; 1962) basic tenet of self-determination and a striving for superiority to meet life’s core tasks in the service of one’s fellow men, all of this, in spite of Churchill’s constant companion, his ‘Black Dog’.

### **7.3.8. Churchill: The Final Decade (1955-1965)**

“Very, very old, tragically old,” is how one colleague described Churchill the day after taking office for the second time (Pearson, 1991, p. 360). Losing his hearing and his powers of concentration, together with an ailing heart, Churchill’s arteries to his brain were also closing up and Lord Moran feared another stroke, the previous one of 18 months prior having been successfully hushed up. Post and Robbins (1993) continue that, by 1950, Churchill’s physical health began to decline rapidly, with the first of many cerebrovascular attacks from inadequate blood flow to the brain occurring in 1949, 1950 and 1951 respectively and a major stroke in 1953. Jenkins (2002) writes, that, in September 1953, Churchill’s personal secretary, Jane Portal, described Churchill as being in “the depths of

depression” and brooded continually over whether he should give up his position as Prime Minister or remain in power (p. 868). Post and Robbins (1993) also claim that, in addition to his many ailments, Churchill had progressive cerebral arteriosclerosis or arteriosclerotic dementia, which was successfully covered-up by his close friends and colleagues during his second term in office, but remained an ailing disability to the end.

Owen (2008) confirms that Churchill had already suffered a heart attack in December 1941, followed by pneumonia and pleurisy in December 1943 but, at that time, he was resilient and defiant in his recovery, however, by the time Churchill suffered his second stroke in 1953, he was completely unable to carry out his duties. According to Post and Robbins (1993), the situation was further intensified by his apparent progressive dementia, which, in turn, was “amplified by his vulnerability to depression” (p. 24). To witness both his “intellectual grasp and strength of will” sapped by age and illness was “profoundly depressing” (Post & Robbins, 1993, p. 24). Post and Robbins (1993) also conclude that because of Churchill’s arteriosclerosis and his increasing dependence on alcohol and amphetamines as well as a lack of external aggressive conflict to divert his energies, it became progressively more difficult to escape the downward pull of his depression. “Although the battle against depression may have improved his political abilities, in his later days, depression contributed to his downward spiral” (Post & Robbins, 1993, p. 45).

Until 1955, Churchill remained determined to cling to his last vestige of power and, despite his commitment to Clementine that he would soon retire gracefully, continued defiantly, in what Lord Moran called, “his secret battle to survive” (Pearson, 1991, p. 369). By 5 April 1955, however, Churchill simply could not physically continue in his leadership role (Mansfield, 1995), and, after succumbing to the after-effects of his second stroke in June 1953, was finally forced to accept his surrender and resignation as Prime Minister of Britain. Owen (2008) comments, that, although Churchill’s resignation was long overdue and his

successor, Sir Anthony Eden, was frustrated and impatient at the process of succeeding Churchill, it is revealing that, at this juncture, Churchill commented to his private secretary on the eve of his last night at 10 Downing Street, that he did not believe Anthony Eden was up to the job. “Prophetic words” in light of Anthony Eden’s later disastrous role in the Suez Crisis, and, amidst the sadness and depression that Churchill was fighting at the time of his resignation (Owen , 2008, p. 59).

Despite the many accolades and honours bestowed on Churchill during the following decade, it proved a time of great sadness, reflection and depression. Churchill’s daughter, Sarah Churchill, describes her father in his final years as a defeated man who felt he had done so much in his life but had achieved very little in the end; the world had changed so much in his ninety years that all his efforts, in his opinion, had come to nothing, and, that, even with all his paintings and literary works, there was nothing left for him to do (Churchill, 1967). Not even Churchill’s Nobel Prize for Literature in 1953 or his Honorary Citizenship to the United States of America in 1963 seemed to impress him. Post and Robins (1993) explain that Churchill’s lifelong belief in his destiny and his grandiose dreams of glory were suggestive of a narcissistic element to his personality but that it was embedded in a deep-seated insecurity and no amount of praise could ever really fill the void. Mansfield (1995) comments that Churchill had outlived most of his close friends and was left alone with nothing but his memories for comfort. Although Churchill still enjoyed his travels abroad to the homes of his wealthy friends and continued to paint and write, his declining health, by the late 1960’s, made travelling and socialising more difficult. On 20 October 1963, the suicide of his eldest daughter, Diana, proved the final distressing and depressing event in his life (Mansfield, 1995).

On the 12 January 1965, Churchill suffered his last and fatal stroke and, on the morning of 24 January 1965, after lying in a coma for nine days, Churchill passed away.

Jenkins (2002) comments that Churchill's death was a "macabre coincidence" as it marked the seventieth anniversary of his father's death (p. 911). It can be argued that Churchill's death was also an eerie confirmation of his sheer iron will, a will that saw him through every challenge in his life and seemingly persevered to the end to ensure his timely death on his father's anniversary as a final vindication of his father's condemnation. The "grim prediction of failure" that had been the source of Churchill's ambition and his striving for superiority, but had also brought him to the "verge of suicide and bleak despair" (Pearson, 1991, p. 354), had finally been negated and put to rest. Perhaps it was Churchill's eccentric humour that, on that auspicious day of 24 January 1965, he finally had the "last laugh on his father" (Pearson, 1991, p. 354).

Although in his final years Churchill had been deeply troubled by a bitter sense of failure, his legacy as a legendary statesman, prolific literary artist and loving and generous father, is, today, "enshrined in glory forever" and is a symbol to which every "Englishman owes his liberty" (Mansfield, 1995, p. 82). To this end, Churchill was finally vindicated of his father's cruel scepticism and succeeded in becoming "a greater figure than his father ever was" (Pearson, 1991, p. 354). "By making himself the saviour of the nation, he had settled accounts with his father - and himself" (Pearson, 1991, p. 387). Furthermore, it can be argued that Churchill appears to have successfully mastered Adler's (1928; 1962) three core tasks of life in his striving for superiority with the interest of his fellow human beings at heart.

#### **7.4. Conclusion**

This chapter discussed the individual personality development of Sir Winston Churchill and his experience with depression within the theoretical framework of Alfred Adler's Individual Psychology with the view to presenting a case for depressive realism.

From his youth, Churchill endured a relentless battle with depression and a deep seated dread of failure. Various factors may have predisposed him to depression, including a neglectful childhood and hereditary links to melancholia. To overcome these adversaries, Churchill nurtured an uncompromising ambition and an extraordinary surplus of energy to go beyond what nature had physically and emotionally bestowed him to become one of history's most accomplished and enigmatic individuals in world history.

Churchill found a way, through constant activity, to ward off his depression. A constant drive to be accepted and acknowledged by way of external achievement fuelled his ambitious streak and his profound striving for power, providing the ultimate defence against his 'Black Dog'. Churchill's striving for superiority to achieve his ultimate goal of political power was born from a desire to overcome his feelings of anger and resentment from a neglectful childhood as well as to overcome feelings of inferiority as a result of his physical weakness and a result of his father's disdain. The pursuit of power and glory not only helped Churchill to abate his early feelings of inferiority and neglect but also challenged his fear of failure and his false idealisation of his parents.

Churchill's overcompensation for his childhood resentment and latent aggression proved useful in his public life and manifested itself in creative achievements and political stamina, driving Churchill forward to achieve more than most individuals would ordinarily be capable. Not only did Churchill desire power and glory, its pursuit was necessary to ward off his 'Black Dog'. Churchill, through his striving for superiority and pursuit of power, avoided what could otherwise have been a devastating illness. Rintala (1984) confirms that Churchill's experience of loneliness and deprivation of parental care and affection in his earlier life, caused him to feel inferior and inadequate, bearing some resemblance to what Alfred Adler referred to as a "compensating for the feeling of inferiority and the striving for recognition and superiority" (Adler, 1928, pg. 72). Echoing Adlerian theory of inferiority

compensation and the striving for superiority, Rintala (1984) reconfirms that Churchill's striving for power and superiority were his primary life goals as a result of earlier experiences of inferiority as a child. As a result, therefore, according to Rintala (1984), power seeking and control were the underlying drivers in his personality and, without them; his life was devoid of value or meaning.

Furthermore, it was postulated that Churchill not only found, in aggressive conflict, a legitimate release for his latent aggression and ultimately a beneficial antidote to his real enemy, his 'Black Dog', Churchill also found that relief in the service of saving his fellow human beings.

Churchill needed power to suppress his depression but in that pursuit he also defined his very own brand of realism or, what Snow (1969) referred to as insight and what Storr (1990) referred to as intuition. Whether Churchill was manic depressive (Bipolar Disorder) (Fieve, 1997; Ghaemi, 2011) or just depressive (Major Depressive Disorder) (Gilbert, 1992; Mansfield, 1995; Singer, 2012; Storr, 1990), he fought to overcome his unstable mood and, in so doing, demonstrated his unique perceptiveness – what Ghaemi (2011) refers to as the “realism in his depressive suffering” (p. 63). Churchill aptly comments: “Nourish your hopes but do not overlook realities” (Churchill, cited in Langworth, 2012, p. 19). In addition, in acknowledging the reality of his 'Black Dog', Churchill found his own salvation and hope which he was able to transfer to others.

Post and Robins (1993) claimed that it was Churchill's grandiose concept of heroic self-destiny as well as his personal battle with depression that made him an ideal figure to lead Britain through the denial of its desperate situation during the Second World War but, for other biographers (Ghaemi, 2011; Jenkins, 2002; Hayward, 1998), Churchill was not an actor playing out his personal fantasy world, he was, in spite of his depression, uniquely more

perceptive than any other politician of his time. Hayward (1998) provides several poignant references to Churchill's foresight and realism: Churchill wrote about the prospect of nuclear weapons 20 years before the first atomic bomb; three years prior to the outbreak of the First World War, Churchill had written a memorandum explaining the prospect of war and how the first 40 days of such a war would unfold and, when the war finally broke out, events transpired exactly according to this memorandum; Churchill also predicted that the Cold War would be resolved in favour of the West and that eventually Eastern Europe would itself be free of Communism. Interestingly, it was Clement Atlee (Churchill's successor after the 1945 elections) that provides more evidence for Churchill's insight and realism, in that, 50 years after the Dardanelles disaster, he remarked to Churchill that the Dardanelles operation was the only sound strategic idea of the war and that he wished Churchill had had the proper authority to implement it properly (Hayward, 1998).

Finally, according to Adler (1928, 1962), the ultimate goal in the striving for superiority is in the service of one's fellow human beings and the accomplishment of the 'social feeling'. According to Hayward (1998), one of the key ingredients of Churchill's character was his magnanimity which included not only his unwavering moral compass but also his kindness and sense of fairness towards his colleagues, family and fellow citizens. In Churchill's own words, cited in Langworth (2012, p. 185), "much as war attracts me and fascinates my mind with its tremendous situations, I feel more deeply every year and can measure the feeling here, in the midst of arms, what vile and wicked folly and barbarism it all is". In his striving for superiority, Churchill appeared to grasp and realise the concept of the 'social feeling' and, ultimately, in this outward focus on his fellow human beings, rather than on his personal brooding and introspection, Churchill not only accomplished Adler's (1928; 1962) ultimate goal of the 'social feeling', he found a way of warding off his depression. In addition, a childhood marred by personal inferiorities, loneliness and sadness, potentially

fuelled an immense ambition for power and superiority, creating the strength of character that typified Churchill but also served as another defence against his 'Black Dog'. It is arguable that in the reality of his depressive experiences, Churchill possessed an inherent ability to see things for what they were and not what he wished they could be, potentially providing evidence for his depressive realism.

In the following and final chapter, the study is concluded with an evaluation of the value and limitations of the study. Further recommendations for future research in the field of depression and depressive realism are also presented.

Appendix C (p. 419) at the end of this study presents a table outlining Adlerian Theory of Individual Psychology and Personality Development as it applies to the timeline of Sir Winston Churchill.



## Chapter 8

### Conclusions, Limitations and Recommendations

#### 8.1. Chapter Preview

This final chapter revisits the purpose and value of the study as well as the significance of using a case study approach with a psychobiographical focus to present a case for depressive realism. Together with a summary of the overall themes uncovered in the research findings, limitations of the study, recommendations for future research and the researcher's self-reflection of the research process, are also presented.

#### 8.2. The Purpose and Value of the Study Revisited

The primary aim of this study was to present a plausible case for the concept of depressive realism using a 'real life' psychobiographical case study. The life of Sir Winston Churchill was explored within the context of his personality development, specifically his experience with depression, over his lifespan. The psychobiographical case study of Sir Winston Churchill involved a detailed biographical account of each of his life phases with a core focus on the course of his 'Black Dog' as well as a conceptualisation of the findings within the theoretical framework of Alfred Adler's (1928) theory of Individual Psychology, providing a means to interpret the findings from a psychological perspective. As such, psychological theory facilitated the exploration of the life of an extraordinary and enigmatic individual, in all of its complexities, over an entire lifespan and further provided the opportunity for a holistic understanding of the subject's personality development and his experience with depression from the viewpoint of a specific psychological theory.

The value of conducting a psychobiographical case study was discussed in detail in Chapter 2 (see section 2.6.) and so, mindful of repetition, only the salient aspects pertaining to the significance of initiating a psychobiographical case study approach are summarised below together with a brief overview of the advantages of psychobiographical research for this study.

### **8.2.1. The Significance of Using a Case Study Approach with a Psychobiographical Focus**

The following five reasons support the overall undertaking of a psychobiographical case study:

Firstly, psychobiography provides the opportunity to describe the individuality of a person within a specific historical and psychological context and provides a unique and holistic description of the individual. Thus, the focus is on understanding a single life in its entirety (Carlson, 1988; Elms, 1994). This study examined the life of Sir Winston Churchill and his experience with depression in each of his life phases from birth to the end of his life. Findings were further contextualised within the theory of Individual Psychology (Adler, 1928). The relevance of Adlerian theory to Churchill's life was contextualised by observing key events in Churchill's life, starting with his earliest recollections and early experiences as a child, to his formative years in politics and later as a world leader. These events and experiences were explored for their significance and impact on Churchill's personality development, the development and consequences of his depression and, ultimately, his choice of life goals. Adler's Individual Psychology provided the context in which to view Churchill's personality development, including his depression, from a social and psychological perspective.

Secondly, to be able to provide a holistic description of the individual, the historical, social, cultural and familial context within which the individual resides, needs to be taken into account, and, according to Carlson (1988), by considering a broad spectrum of life history materials, these contexts become more apparent. In this study, the researcher attempted to provide a socio-historical backdrop of 19<sup>th</sup> century Britain as the starting point from which to analyse Churchill's life, together with life history materials collected from a broad source of autobiographical and biographical data written by Churchill's family, his colleagues, his personal doctor, his close friends and confidantes as well as historians and psychobiographers, providing a rich blend of familial, socio-historical and psychological information from which to explore and understand the subject in greater depth.

Thirdly, studying a life that has already lived enables the researcher to explore the personality development of the individual over their entire lifespan and simultaneously provides the opportunity to cross reference different yet interacting dynamics influencing the personality development of that individual at any point in time and in any given situation (Fouche & Van Niekerk, 2005). The life of Sir Winston Churchill was explored in specific life stages from childhood and adolescence, to soldier, politician and elder statesman as well as family man in order to provide a holistic study of his personality over his life span but also to provide the opportunity to study his personality in component parts at different life stages so as to compare subtleties and similarities within each life phase.

Fourthly, this type of research enables the researcher to provide a tailored account of the subject's experiences within a psychological framework (Fouche & Van Niekerk, 2005) that are factual yet interesting and compelling. In this study, the researcher was aware of the over-abundance of available data on the subject and the potential to overwhelm the reader with too many historical facts. Whilst attention was placed on providing a complete and factual life history with an emphasis on the subject's experience with depression, careful

consideration was given to balancing the richness of historical detail with entertaining anecdotal stories and salient observations of the subject's experience with depression and its relevance to depressive realism.

A final significant feature of psychobiographical research is the role that theory plays in underpinning the process of data collection and analysis as well as the generalisation of findings from case study research to specific theory, what Yin (2003) refers to as analytic generalisation. This type of generalisation allows a previously developed theory to act as the basis against which to compare new findings of a psychobiographical study. This in turn facilitates the further development of the theory (Yin, 2003). It is the intention of this psychobiographical study to contribute to the increasing awareness and popularity of broader qualitative life history research, in particular, psychobiographical case study research that is steadily gaining ground within a South African academic context. In addition, where much of the qualitative life history research that has been conducted to date, both locally and internationally, has further enriched the research and understanding of various human developmental dilemmas in areas of mental health, personality development and leadership skills, it is the intention of this psychobiographical study to further contribute to existing theory in the area of depression and the successful treatment thereof, specifically, the potential for depression to have a positive side effect, that is, depressive realism. The researcher hopes that future psychobiographical research of this nature will further supplement and enhance an understanding of the drivers of depression and subsequently facilitate appropriate treatment options in the fields of clinical and developmental psychology. Of particular relevance is the importance and impact of such research in a South African context, where the prevalence of mood disorders is high and the need for appropriate mental health service planning is critical (refer to Chapter 1, section 1.10).

### **8.2.2. Key Advantages of Psychobiographical Research Relevant to this Study**

Firstly, the intention of this study is to provide a different perspective on depression by exploring the subjective reality of one individual's life experience with depression that may apply or extend to other individuals with depression. The study's findings may bring hope to individuals suffering from depression in that this study of Churchill's life story provides a real life example of how it is not only possible to live with depression but also strive to live a fulfilling and accomplished life.

Secondly, this study has the potential to advance the existing knowledge base regarding psychobiographical research as a tool to build on existing psychological theory. More specifically, Arciniega and Newlon (1999) believe that Adler's (1928) theory of Individual Psychology automatically acknowledges different cultural identities because it focuses on the subjective views of the individual and therefore best suits the needs of minority groups because of its focus on the individual's subjective view of him or herself; the community; the family unit and social contributions. In this instance, contextualising Churchill's depression within the framework of Individual Psychology provides the opportunity for the research findings to inform and be applied to different groups of individuals across the general population. In a multi-cultural South Africa, with a high prevalence for mood disorders (Stein, et.al. 2008), this application becomes even more relevant.

### **8.3. Overall Summary of Research Themes**

Whilst a detailed discussion of the findings of this research study were provided in Chapter 7, several overlying themes emerged from this study and are summarised below:

### 8.3.1. Parental Neglect and the Striving for Superiority

According to various biographers and psychobiographers (Fieve, 1997; Ghaemi, 2011; Gilbert, 1992; Mansfield, 1995; Rintala, 1984; Singer, 2012; Storr, 1990), Churchill's childhood was marred by sadness and loneliness as a result of neglectful and unloving parents and a youth spent in boarding school. Although Pearson (1991) claims that Churchill's experience of neglect is somewhat over exaggerated for Victorian times, Rintala (1984) believes that Churchill's political ambitions and striving for power were an attempt to overcome his negative childhood experiences and early emotional deprivation. Rintala (1984) further argues that the adult Churchill compensated for his lost childhood years by craving and seeking power. Pearson (1991) and Storr (1990) also claim that Churchill's early experience of neglect also generated other adult character traits of omnipotence and imperiousness. According to Pearson (1991), as an adult, Churchill was often referred to by colleagues and family members, especially his wife, Clementine, as needy and demanding of attention.

Furthermore, although Rintala (1984) and Storr (1990) believe that Churchill pursued power to compensate for early emotional rejection and strove to overcome his low sense of self-worth, Storr (1990) claims that no matter how many external successes he amounted, nothing could compensate for Churchill's sense of loss and, hence, by the end of his life, Churchill felt he had done so much to have achieved very little in the end. For Churchill, political ambition and depression were interlinked and both are reportedly traceable to his childhood.

Pearson (1991), Storr (1990) and Wilson (2002) also claim that Churchill's striving for power, which reflects Adler's (1928) notion of the striving for superiority, began as an early striving to overcome his personal physical weaknesses, or what Adler (1928, 1962)

refers to as the blight of inferior organs. Churchill cursed his own feeble body and his subsequent sense of inferiority underpinned his childhood desire to be tough and courageous and later spurred his striving for superiority. Accordingly, Churchill's striving for 'toughness' to overcome his inferior physical stature, later morphed into a striving for power to overcome his psychological weakness, that being, his desperate desire to overcome his deep fear of failure. Pearson (1991) believes that since his youth, Churchill had "lived his life as an unrelenting war against depression and a primal dread of failure" (p. 416) and, that, to defeat these enemies, he nurtured an immense amount of energy and deployed a ruthless ambition in everything he accomplished. Through sheer determination and hard work, in his striving to compensate for his early inferiorities, the adult Churchill overcame most of his physical weaknesses. In his striving for superiority, Churchill focused on his inherent desire to overcome his fear of failure and disprove his father's prophecies of worthlessness, thereby overcoming his greatest enemy of all, his 'Black Dog'.

### **8.3.2. Repressed Anger**

According to Pearson (1991) and Storr (1990), Churchill idolised his father but it was an image of how he wished his father to be, rather than the merits of the actual person. According to Bonham-Carter (1965), Churchill was consumed by this idealisation all his life. Moreover, Pearson (1991) and Storr (1990) claim that this idolisation spurred Churchill's political aspirations to be just like his 'ideal' father but it also unwittingly fuelled a ruthless ambition to overcome his inherent anger and hostility towards the memory of his disparaging and disapproving father. Fieve (1997) and Storr (1990) further surmise that, like many individuals with depression who have experienced early emotional deprivation, depression evolves as a response to repressed anger towards the perpetrator of neglect, usually a mother or father figure and, as such, these individuals have enormous difficulty disposing of their

hostility in an acceptable fashion. Ultimately, a worthy opponent or enemy is necessary to excise these repressed emotions. In Churchill's case, such enemies presented themselves in many guises, from the threat to British imperialism during the First World War, to the threat of Nazism and Hitler during the Second World War, to the threat of communism post the Second World War.

### **8.3.3. Sense of Destiny versus Depressive Realism**

Fieve (1997), Hayward (1998) and Storr (1990) further claim that Churchill's extreme ambition and striving for power were not only an attempt to make up for his experience of parental neglect and source of self-worth but his ambition was further fuelled by an acute sense of destiny. Storr (1990) believes that Churchill's intense ambition was underpinned by his personal fantasy that he was destined for greatness and that he was being reserved for a special purpose, "if not by the Deity, then at least by fate" (p. 26). Fieve (1997) and Storr (1990) argue that Churchill had an immense imagination and, instead of possessing a true sense of realism, he, in fact, lacked good judgement. Churchill's imagination blurred his sense of reality (Storr, 1990). Arguably, Snow (1967) believes that Churchill may have lacked judgment but he demonstrated something far more valuable than good judgement, he possessed a deeper intuition that was unparalleled. Storr (1990) and Wilson (2002) maintain, however, that Churchill's extreme ambition and pursuit of power and glory were linked to his inner world of fantasy.

Wilson (2002) refers to Churchill's inner world of make-believe where military glory was unconditional and where he was destined for a supreme purpose. In turn, this belief in destiny made Churchill fearless, to the point that his sense of courage and resilience were activated by the thrill of war. Post and Robins (1993) also state that Churchill "dreamt of glory" (p. 43) and that his imagination fed his sense of destiny. For Storr (1990), Churchill's

“fantasy found expression in reality” (p. 27) and Pearson (1991) believes that, instead of realism, Churchill’s sense of destiny and sense of superiority over others, underpinned his wartime leadership. Ghaemi (2011), however, counter-argues that Storr (1990) failed to identify the wisdom of Churchill’s mental illness, that being, the realism of his depressive suffering, most notable in the time of his political exile during his “Wilderness Years” (p. 63), thereby providing potential evidence for his depressive realism.

#### **8.3.4. Action This Day and Every Day: The Implications for Depressive Realism**

Another theme that became apparent in the course of this study was the significance of Churchill’s unstoppable energy and action orientated personality. Unable to remain inactive for any length of time, Churchill’s high energy appeared to be a defence mechanism against his depression. According to Fieve (1997), Singer (2012) and Storr (1990), Churchill had an immense love of and capacity for work which was fuelled by his desire to keep his mind occupied - he could not afford not to be active otherwise his ‘Black Dog’ would descend. Storr (1990) argues that Churchill’s driven nature helped him to ward off his depression and accomplish a great many career feats, including his prolific literary works, but it also had the potential to make him impulsive and less thoughtful. Churchill was tenacious and determined in his actions but also dogmatic and stubborn, and, therefore, potentially less realistic. Pearson (1991) and Storr (1990) further conclude that Churchill’s inherent need to overcome his father’s disdain as well as his acute sense of destiny created an intense ambition that served to ward off his depression but, according to Storr (1990), it also created a leadership style that was underpinned by a driven nature and an over-active mind but not one that was necessarily uniquely realistic.

It can be argued, however, that Churchill's inherent desire to keep active was the result of his lifelong experience with depression and the reality that if he became sluggish and introspective, his 'Black Dog' would get the better of him. Churchill's experience with depression made him all too aware; all too realistic, about the consequences of being idle. To this point, Post and Robins (1993) believe, that in his last decade, when his health was failing and he was battling progressive arteriosclerotic dementia, Churchill's inability to keep his mind and body engaged, coupled with intermittent periods of lucidity that permitted him to recognise his deterioration, greatly increased his propensity for depression.

### **8.3.5. Magnanimity and the 'Social Feeling'**

Despite Churchill's portrayal as a dogmatic, power hungry and ambitious politician, Rintala (1984) states that Churchill's characteristics of social interest and his commitment to social upliftment and the betterment of society, are well evidenced during and after the troubled years of the Second World War, portraying a successful striving towards Adler's (1928, 1962) 'social feeling'. Both Singer (2012) and Storr (1990) claim that Churchill's 'social feeling' continued to develop throughout his life and, although he was often criticised for being insensitive and intolerable to those around him, he was not an introspective or self-consumed individual, rather he was always ready to stand up for the 'under-dog'. In fact, by the end of the Second World War, it was Churchill who demonstrated true magnanimity and fairness to the vanquished parties of the Second World War (Singer, 2012; Storr, 1990).

Rintala (1984) and Gilbert (1992) believe that the special bond between the young Churchill and Mrs Everest was one of the most significant relationships in Churchill's life in that it minimised the damaging effects of his negative parental relationship and may well have contributed to the development of the social interest aspects that Adler (1928, 1962) refers to in his theory of Individual Psychology. Rintala's (1984) view also supports the

views of Jenkins (2002), Mansfield (1995) and Singer (2012), who claim that Churchill was a determined yet empathetic war leader, a steadfast and unwavering political leader who was committed to the betterment of his fellow human beings and, above all, according to Mansfield (1995) and Pearson (1991), a truly adored father and dedicated family man. Notably, however, Gilbert (1992), Pearson (1991) and Wilson (2002) argue that, although Churchill was inherently against cruelty, if it served the purposes of war, then, he was quickly convinced of its merits.

### **8.3.6. A Case for Depressive Realism: To Be or Not To Be**

To compensate for feelings of inferiority as well as a childhood characterised by loneliness, Rintala (1984) claims that Churchill's view of the world probably developed from a foundation based on the world being a cold and harsh place (Adler, 1928) and he would either have to conquer or be conquered. Rintala (1984) supports the view that Churchill's ambition for power, dominance and superiority may well have been formed early in life and when, in his later life, his power base was either weakened or challenged and his superiority was under threat, coupled with a hereditary propensity for depression, dark and prolonged bouts of deep depression ensued. Notably, however, in this context, Ghaemi (2011), Mansfield (1995) and Owen (2008), further comment that it was in the reality of his depressive experiences that the ultimate statesman and strategist emerged with an uncanny if not mystical ability to view events for what they were and not what he or others wanted them to be.

According to Ghaemi (2011), early setbacks repeatedly experienced by an individual predisposed to depression increases their immunity to future illusion in that their early suffering forces the individual to be more realistic about the world around them. In his darkest moments, Churchill was his most defiant and realistic self.

A detailed timeline of Sir Winston Churchill's key life events and his subsequent personality development and experience with depression, as they apply to Alfred Adler's (1928) theory of Individual Psychology, is presented in Appendix C (see p. 419). Most significantly, this timeline provides a summary of the course of Churchill's depression, commencing in his early childhood and focusing on the recurring nature of his depression over his life span. There is evidence to suggest that the recurring nature of Churchill's depression was both genetically and environmentally influenced. In certain instances Churchill's depression was triggered by external events such as the Dardanelle's disaster in 1915 and the political isolation of his "Wilderness Years" in the 1930's. However, Churchill's depression also occurred spontaneously, despite external circumstances, such as his first major depression in 1910, when he was at the height of political and personal success. These occurrences highlight the emphasis that psychobiographers Fieve (1997); Ghaemi (2011) and Pearson (1991) place on the genetic sources for Churchill's depression. Storr (1990), however, believes that both heredity factors and early conditioning factors played a significant role in the development of Churchill's depression. Furthermore and most poignant, is evidence for the co-existence of Churchill's visionary capability and realism during or leading up to these depressive episodes, most vividly depicted during the years just prior to the First World War in 1914 and during his "Wilderness Years" in the run up to the Second World War in 1939.

Churchill's first recorded major depressive episode in 1910 when he was Home Secretary to Britain, despite a successful career and family life, proved the first of many subsequent severe and recurring episodes. In that time frame of his depression of 1910, however, Churchill also envisaged the events of the First World War and began to warn the British Parliament of the looming trouble for at least two years preceding the start of the war (Gilbert, 1992; Pearson, 1991). Jenkins (2002), however, claims that Churchill may have had

an all too inflated opinion of his wartime predictions, particularly in how the war could be won, and thus, impervious to his own mistakes, always denied his own blunders in the Dardanelles disaster of 1914 which ultimately led to his second major depressive episode.

Churchill's second major depressive episode was recorded in 1915 after the Dardanelles crisis and continued in recurring bouts until 1929 when he was ousted from political office and entered one of the darkest and most isolated periods of his life in his "Wilderness Years". Yet, despite his 'Black Dog' during these years, Ghaemi (2011), Mansfield (1995) and Owen (2008) argue that Churchill's intuition and realism were never more acute as he foresaw the dangers of Nazism and the true intent of Adolf Hitler. Despite public and political ridicule, Churchill continued to warn the British public of the threat of Hitler and Nazi Germany. Between 1932 and 1939, Churchill's personal life was marked by intense political humiliation and isolation but, despite intermittent episodes of deep depression, he became even more adamant about the dangers of Hitler and the need for British rearmament and vehemently opposed any form of appeasement policy (Ghaemi, 2011; Owen 2008). Churchill stood alone but realistic (Ghaemi, 2011). Interestingly, however, Jenkins (2002) argues that Churchill's 'Black Dog' was possibly over-exaggerated in the 1930's and that potentially, during this time, Churchill suffered more from an unfulfilled love of power and frustrated ambition than he did from major depression. Jenkins (2002) also confirms, however, that Churchill was "nevertheless quicker than almost anyone else in fastening on to the menace of Hitler" (p. 469). According to Mansfield (1995), Churchill's resolve to engage the truth at any price afforded him some immensely important insights and he refused to manipulate facts to bend reality or suit his imagination, rather, he possessed a shrewd and sensitive insight, prevalent during some of the darkest moments in his life, into the ways of men and events. In his own vulnerability, Churchill was able to discern the

vulnerability of others. “Churchill’s severe recurrent depressive episodes heightened his ability to realistically assess the threat that Germany posed” (Ghaemi, 2011, p. 57).

For Gilbert (1992), Ghaemi (2011) and Mansfield (1995), the outbreak of the Second World War proved the catalyst for Churchill to demonstrate his true grit, his energy, resolution, tenacity and foresight. Churchill appeared to understand more clearly than, more than anyone else, what course the war should take and how it could be won “but only because he had invested himself in mastering the cold realities of the problems his nation faced” (Mansfield, 1995, p. 76). Owen (2008) claims that it was Churchill’s instinctive judgement that saved the world from Hitler. Hayward (2008) further believes that Churchill’s knowledge and understanding of history enabled him to look far into the future with predictable accuracy and, despite his ‘Black Dog’, Churchill immersed himself in understanding events of the past in order to realistically predict events in the future. This realistic understanding formed the basis of his strategic mastery.

Finally, after his defeat in 1945 and a lengthy decade of recurring depression, Churchill remained at the forefront of political foresight, warning the world of the threat of communism as he foresaw the possibility of a third world war which ultimately came in the guise of the Cold War (Gilbert, 1992; Mansfield, 1995; Pearson, 1991)). Even during the latter part of the Second World War, Churchill was already wary of the true intentions of Soviet expansion plans and the possibility of an “iron curtain being drawn down upon their front” (Gilbert, 1992, p. 844). According to Ghaemi (2011), one might conclude that Churchill was merely a lucky pessimist or an exceptional anomaly, but Ghaemi (2011) argues that Churchill saw “in the realism of his depressive suffering” more clearly what other politicians failed or did not want to see (Ghaemi, 2011, p. 63), ultimately earning him the reputation of one of the greatest statesmen in British, if not, world history (Jenkins, 2002).

### **8.3.7. Mental Health and Leadership Capability**

Fieve (1997) concludes that psychopathology in a leader does not automatically disqualify them from being an effective leader, in fact, manic-depressive symptoms of a mild form (Cyclothymic Disorder) can produce qualities of hyper-competency and productivity that are unmatched by mentally healthy individuals. Hyper-competent characteristics with alternating mild moods may in fact be beneficial to stressful leadership positions. “People with mood swings may even be sought after for positions of leadership” (Fieve, 1997, p. 179). According to Owen (2008), if Churchill did suffer from mood swings, they certainly were not detrimental from a leadership perspective; in fact, they provided Churchill with a uniquely inspirational leadership quality that proved so vital in the Second World War.

Ghaemi (2011) concludes that it is difficult to determine if Churchill was indeed manic depressive (Bipolar Disorder) but there is no doubt that he suffered from severe depression. According to Ghaemi (2011), in his depressive suffering, Churchill nurtured a distinct political realism and, potentially, when he wasn't depressed, probably had mild hypomanic symptoms that contributed to his outstanding propensity for work, supporting the argument that mental illness in its milder form does not impair leadership capability. Storr (1990) further claims that the positive link between great achievement, effective leadership and depression specifically, is worthy of further attention and investigation.

### **8.4. Limitations of the Study**

Where psychobiographies are valuable in developing hypotheses and theoretical insights as well as providing the researcher with the opportunity to consider various socio-historical influences (Carlson, 1988; McAdams, 2009), there are also certain drawbacks that limit the overall effectiveness of this particular type of research method. Anderson (1981) re-

confirms that even the most loyal proponents of psychobiographical research will capitulate to its potential to be reductionist and judgemental.

As previously discussed in Chapter 6, the psychobiographical research methodology is subject to considerable criticism with inherent limitations regarding researcher bias, reductionism; analysis of an absent subject, cross cultural differences, easy genre elitism, infinite amount of biographical data, inflated expectations and trustworthiness of the data. These methodological considerations and how they apply to this study were discussed in detail in Chapter 6 (see section 6.4). Therefore, to avoid duplicating a discussion on the criticisms and limitations of the methodology of psychobiographical research, the reader is referred to section 6.4. However, for purposes of consolidation, a brief overview of the most notable and applicable methodological limitations and how they were addressed in this study are provided below:

#### **8.4.1. General Overview**

Firstly, the challenge of researcher bias and subjectivity in analysing the character of Sir Winston Churchill was on-going throughout this research. To enhance the credibility of the inferences made by the researcher and improve internal validity, data triangulation and data immersion were employed together with the contextualisation of the findings within a well-established psychological framework. Consistent interaction with the researcher's supervisor (investigator triangulation), by means of consistent debriefing sessions, were also employed to counteract the issue of subjectivity.

A second major limitation of this study extends to its low external validity in terms of the research findings not being easily quantified and generalised to the greater population of individuals with depression. However, qualitative research is inherently subjective and is not limited by the fact that it is not quantitative in nature, that is, qualitative research values

personalised, individualistic and independent research. The aim of psychobiographical research is not to prove the existence of a concept but rather to describe its actuality. The aim of this study therefore was to achieve what Yin (1994) refers to as analytical generalisation whereby the findings are explored and compared within the context of psychological theory, in this case, Adler's (1928) theory of Individual Psychology. In this research study the aim was to provide a context for depressive realism and its potential implications for the future treatment of people suffering from depression.

Thirdly, the study of a life already lived potentially deprives the researcher of those intimate and insightful details which can only be sought in personal, real time interviews and obliges the researcher to rely on written evidence and historical data (Runyan, 1982; Storr, 1990), increasing the risk for analytical error and bias. Moreover, according to Snow (1969), Churchill's inner character was particularly difficult to discern and, whilst much has been written about his career successes and failures, fewer evidence exists to reveal his true inner being.

Finally, whilst the focus of the research concentrated on one dimension of the subject's personality development, that being depression, owing to the extensive and time consuming nature of psychobiographical research and the infinite amount of biographical data available on the subject, the researcher also conceptualised the findings within a single theoretical framework. However, in light of this chosen format for the study, the researcher is aware that the structure of the study could not do sufficient justice in exploring every aspect of the subject's life in detail from a multi-dimensional and multi-theoretical perspective. The advantage of employing multiple theoretical frameworks within which to analyse a subject is that they potentially contribute to improving the trustworthiness of the data and potentially counter-balance inherent weaknesses present in employing a single theory thereby providing a more accurate way of testing the research findings.

The researcher would also like to comment that, with regards the aforementioned discussion on the limitations of this study, the limitations should not be viewed in a negative light but rather embraced as opportunities to conduct new or supplementary research in the future.

### **8.5. Recommendations for Future Research**

Although analysing a subject from one specific dimension, such as depression in this study, is limiting in terms of gaining a broad yet in-depth understanding of every aspect and intricacy of the subject's life, conducting more focused research combats the issue of becoming over-burdened and over-whelmed with the infinite amount of biographical data that emerges as the research of such an enigmatic individual unfolds. It also provides the opportunity for more in-depth, quality analysis albeit on one dimension of personality development. The inherent parameters that are imposed in a qualitative study of this nature may create limitations with regards broader research but they also provide structure and act as purposeful guidelines in which to focus the research. For this reason, the researcher recommends that future research of a psychobiographical nature potentially concentrate on one or two unique dimensions of personality development in order to keep the focus of research centred and contained as well as facilitate superior data analysis. In the case of Churchill, focusing specifically on his experience with depression helped guide the researcher when analysing large volumes of life history material to select relevant data and organise information into themes that were applicable to the context of depressive realism, thereby ensuring that the research focus remained aligned to the original purpose of the study.

The researcher recognises that the findings in this study are only a point of departure from which to conduct similar studies on depressive realism or studies on depression, mood disorder and the personality development of Sir Winston Churchill in general, rather than

being presented as final and conclusive evidence. The researcher suggests that future research on the topic of depressive realism from a psychobiographical perspective could be enhanced by conducting research on multiple personalities and comparing and contrasting aspects of their personality development. Alternatively, the relationship between depression and the striving for power, as uncovered in this study, could serve as the foundation for further in-depth psychobiographical study to potentially uncover the underlying criteria for depressive realism.

The researcher further recommends that a psychobiography on depressive realism could include additional theories of depression in the theoretical framework in order to compare the psychosocial drivers of depression from multiple theoretical perspectives (refer to Chapter 5, section 5.4.). Furthermore, future research could make use of additional theoretical approaches to personality development, other than Adler's (1928) Individual Psychology in order to compliment or supplement the research already conducted and enhance the trustworthiness of the existing data. Alternatively, employing additional theoretical frameworks may highlight discrepancies in the current research findings, warranting further investigation and prompting an interest in new yet related topics for future research.

Research on depressive realism could also be conducted on a larger scale, for example, a doctoral thesis might provide an expert platform from which to further explore the complexities of such a contentious concept and, from a psychobiographical perspective, the depth of exploration required from a doctoral study has the potential to do greater justice to the wealth of available data on the life of such enigmatic individuals as Sir Winston Churchill.

Finally, this study on depressive realism potentially serves as a basic foundation for more extensive clinical research, moving away from a qualitative psychobiographical focus towards quantitative clinical research with active participants, thereby building on the clinical research already conducted and herein discussed in Chapter 5 (see section 5.3.2.2.)

## **8.6. Self-Reflexivity of the Researcher**

A major objective in case study research is the achievement of self-reflexivity, that is the ability for the researcher to turn the focus of the research back on the researcher so that he or she may look subjectively on the subject and reflect how he or she is influenced by and influences the research process (Chiseri-Strater, 1996). It is a process whereby “we learn about the self as a result of the study of the other” (Chiseri-Strater, 1996, p. 119).

Alexander (1990), comments that the researcher must be continuously aware of the influence of his or her participation in the research process, that is, the influence of his or her own thoughts, cultural biases and opinions on the course of research. He cautions that “important aspects of the data will not be sufficiently highlighted nor inferential steps clearly enough stated to allow the reader to follow the path of the teller” (Alexander, 1990, p. 6). In this context, a researcher’s failure to be self-aware and self-critical of their role and influence in the gathering and interpretation of data can undermine the integrity of the research findings (Tindall, 1994).

In the context of this study, the challenge of researcher bias and subjectivity in analysing the character of Churchill was on-going throughout the research. Seeking knowledge from multiple sources (data triangulation), consulting contradictory research, contextualising the findings within a well-established psychological framework and consistent interaction with the researcher’s supervisor, by means of debriefing sessions, was a continuous endeavour to overcome the issue of subjectivity. The researcher also maintained a

journal to document and reflect on concepts, ideas, feelings and opinions generated by the research.

The researcher in this study was a South African female with a personal and professional interest in the topic of depressive realism. A psychobiographical case study of Sir Winston Churchill provided a near perfect opportunity to present a case for depressive realism as well as a 'fresh' perspective on the potential for depression to be constructive rather than destructive. Looking back in time from 2014 to the early years of Sir Winston Churchill's life at the turn of the twentieth century, and, tracing his life through the events of the First World War and then his role in the events leading up to one of the most haunting watershed events in world history, the Second World War, provided a content rich account of the life of an extraordinary individual. A life story that exemplified Churchill's strength of character, fortitude and unquestionable realism, despite his own personal battle with depression, during some of the most critical milestones in world history.

On reflection, the researcher had mixed feelings regarding the character of Sir Winston Churchill. On the one hand, the researcher felt great empathy for what appears to have been a sad and lonely childhood as a result of various factors, including the demands of boarding school at a young age as well as the tenuous relationship with his father and supposedly distant relationship with his mother. This lack of appropriate love and attention at an early age elicited a high degree of empathy from the researcher for the young Churchill. These early hardships or 'recollections' may well have contributed towards his character as an adult, that is, his tough exterior and reputation for being dogmatic, stubborn and sometimes outright rude. Churchill appeared to have two personas: the tough, relentless exterior persona and the tormented and highly depressed internal persona (Jenkins, 2002). He lived a life of constant challenge and appeared to the researcher to be a man of complex

emotions. As a researcher, this knowledge elicited a high degree of respect and empathy for Churchill.

### **8.7. Final Conclusion**

The primary aim of this study set out to explore and describe the life of Sir Winston Churchill within the context of his lifelong experience with depression and, in the process of a psychobiographical analysis of his life, present a case for depressive realism. To this end, the researcher believes that the objectives of the research have been achieved, namely, to describe the development and consequences of Churchill's depression over his lifespan and to uncover the possibility that the concept of depressive realism exists as a positive side-effect of depression. In so doing, the researcher is hopeful that the outlook for individuals suffering from depression as well as the treatment thereof has in itself the potential to be more positive.

In this final chapter, the purpose and value of the study were discussed together with an overall summary of the main themes uncovered in the research study. Limitations and recommendations for future research as well as a brief self-reflective overview of the research process were also presented. This study concludes with the immortal words of Sir Winston Churchill: "Withhold no sacrifice, grudge no toil, seek no sordid gain, fear no foe. All will be well" (Langworth, 2012, p. 1).

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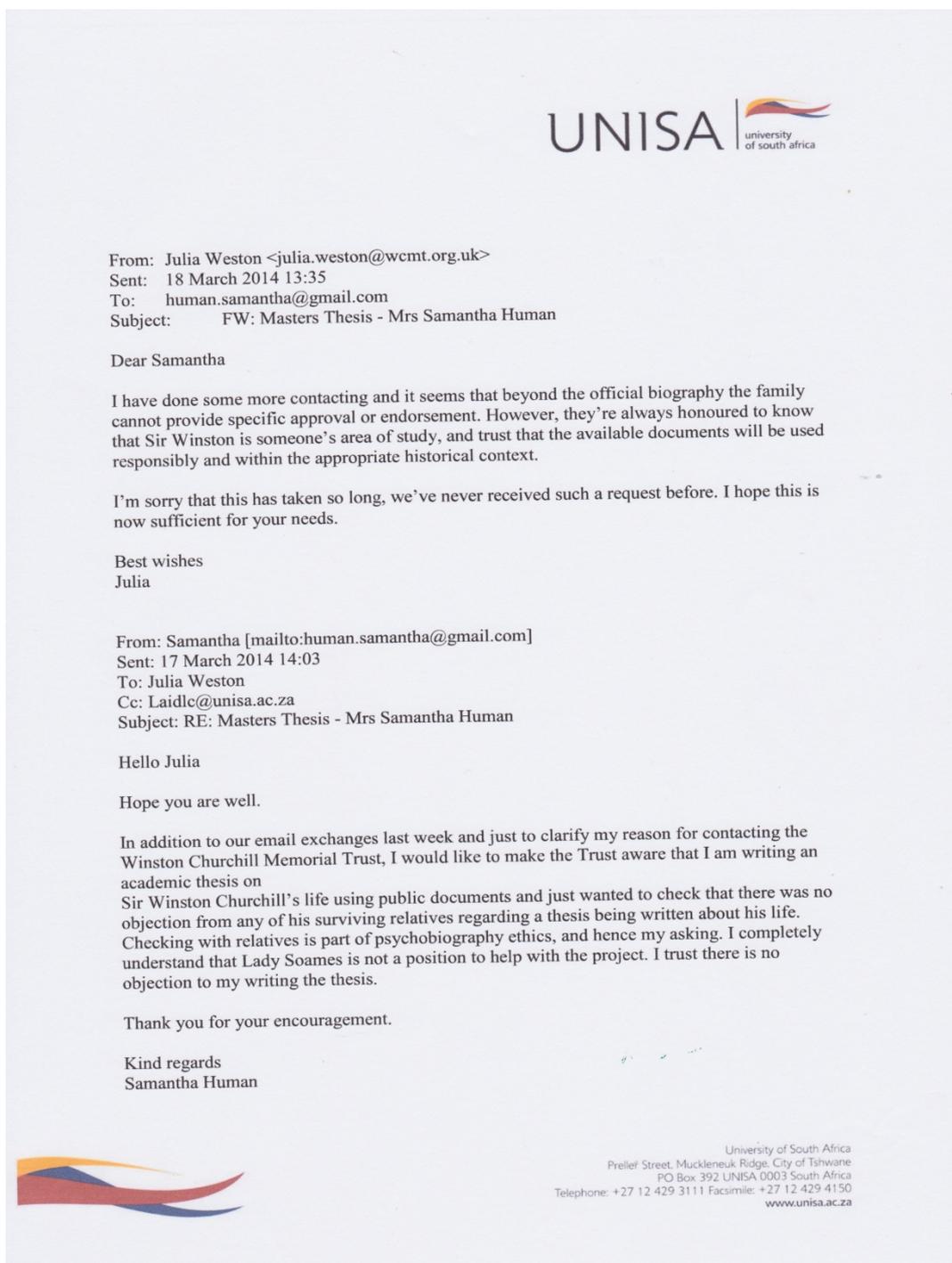
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## APPENDIX A

### Acknowledgement from the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust and the Office of the late Lady Soames

**Note:** Subsequent to the email exchange below regarding acknowledgement by the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust and the Office of Lady Mary Soames (Churchill's last surviving daughter) of the researcher's intent to conduct a Master's dissertation on the life of Sir Winston Churchill, Lady Soames passed away at the age of 91 on 31 May 2014 in London, United Kingdom.



From: Julia Weston [mailto:julia.weston@wcm.t.org.uk]  
Sent: 14 March 2014 19:27  
To: human.samantha@gmail.com  
Subject: RE: Masters Thesis assistance - Mrs Samantha Human

Dear Samantha

I've been in touch with Lady Soames' PA. She very much appreciates you letting her know about your thesis but I'm sure you will understand that as Lady Soames is now 91, she is unable to help with such projects.

With best wishes and good luck with your thesis.  
Julia

From: human.samantha@gmail.com [mailto:human.samantha@gmail.com]  
Sent: 11 March 2014 15:11  
To: Julia Weston  
Subject: Re: Masters Thesis assistance - Mrs Samantha Human

Thank you Julia,

I look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards  
Samantha  
Sent via my BlackBerry from Vodacom - let your email find you!

From: Julia Weston <julia.weston@wcm.t.org.uk>  
Date: Tue, 11 Mar 2014 14:00:47 +0000  
To: human.samantha@gmail.com<human.samantha@gmail.com>  
Subject: RE: Masters Thesis assistance - Mrs Samantha Human

Dear Samantha

Thank you for your email, sent last Friday. I do apologise for the slow response, I have been out of the office for a few days and am just catching up. I will need to get back to you on this as I need to establish first whom you should contact.

Best wishes  
Julia



From: Samantha [mailto:human.samantha@gmail.com]  
Sent: 07 March 2014 12:58  
To: office@wcmt.org.uk  
Subject: Masters Thesis assistance - Mrs Samantha Human

Dear Sir/Madam

I am currently completing a Master's thesis on a psychobiographical study of the life of Sir Winston Churchill and, as a courtesy to close surviving relatives of Sir Winston Churchill, I would like to find out who I should contact in order to get some kind of formal acknowledgement or approval on the topic of my thesis. I do not know who to contact in order to get this kind of acknowledgement/consent, particularly with regards his only surviving daughter, Lady Soames. I am hoping your organisation may be able to assist me.

Could you please assist me or point me in the right direction as to whom I should contact in this regard.

I have tried contacting Churchill.Org as well as the Winston Churchill Centre at Cambridge University but neither are able to assist me in this regard.

I look forward to hearing from you,

Kind regards

Samantha Human  
Masters student at the University of South Africa, (UNISA), South Africa





**APPENDIX B****Timeline of Sir Winston Churchill's Key Life Events and Major Depressive Episodes****CHILDHOOD: 1874-1881**

- 1874** November 30 – Winston Leonard Spencer Churchill is born at Blenheim Palace
- 1874** December – Mrs Everest, Winston's nanny, enters his life
- 1880** February 4 – John Strange Spencer Churchill, Winston's brother, is born
- 1881** Winston commences his preparatory school years at St George's School at the age of seven years old.

**YOUNG ADULTHOOD: 1888-1895**

- 1888** April 17 – He enters Harrow School to commence his senior school years.
- 1893** September – He enters the Royal Military College at Sandhurst
- 1894** December – He graduates from Sandhurst
- 1895** January 24 – Lord Randolph Churchill, Winston's father, dies

**THE SOLDIER: 1895-1899**

- 1895** April 1 – He is commissioned as a lieutenant in the Fourth Queen's Own Hussars
- 1895** July 3 – Mrs Everest dies
- 1895** November – He first encounters armed conflict during a visit to Cuba
- 1896** October 3 – He arrives in India and begins his program of self-education

- 1898** March 14 – His first book is published “*The Story of the Malakand Field Force*”
- 1898** September 2 – He takes part in the last cavalry charge in British history in the Sudan
- 1899** October 14 – He sets sail for South Africa as a war correspondent to cover hostilities for the *Morning Post*
- 1899** November 6 – His book, *The River War*, is published
- 1899** December 13 – He escapes from prison in Pretoria during the Boer War, a feat that earns him international fame.

#### THE POLITICIAN AND HIS ‘BLACK DOG’: 1900-1913

- 1900** February 3 – *Savrola*, his only novel, is published
- 1900** October 1 – He is elected as Conservative Member of Parliament for Oldham
- 1904** May 31 – He joins the Liberal Party
- 1905** December 9 – He becomes Under Secretary of State for the Colonies.
- 1906** January 2 – His biography of his father, *Lord Randolph Churchill*, is published
- 1908** April 24 – He becomes president of the Board of Trade
- 1908** September 12 – He marries Clementine Hozier
- 1909** – Jul 11 – Diana, his first child, is born
- 1910** – He assumes the role of Home Secretary.

His first major depressive episode is recorded (He is 35 years old)

- 1911** May 28 – His second child and only son, Randolph, is born

**1914** He is put in charge of British naval forces as First Lord of the Admiralty

#### WORLD WAR ONE: 1914-1918

**1914** October 1 – As First Lord of the Admiralty, he orders mobilization of the Royal Navy. Great Britain declares war on Germany on October 4

**1914** October 7 – His second daughter, Sarah, is born

**1915** May 28 – After the Dardanelles defeat he resigns as First Lord of the Admiralty

His second major depressive episode is apparent (He is 41 years old)

**1915** June 5 - He makes “The War” speech of 1915

**1915** November 19 – He takes command of the Grenadier Guards in France and later the Sixth Royal Scots Fusiliers

**1917** July 16 – He assumes the role of Minister of Munitions

**1918** November 15 – His third daughter, Marigold, is born

#### POLITICAL TURMOIL: 1919 – 1929

**1919** He is made Secretary of State for War and Minister of Air

**1921** He is made Colonial Secretary and negotiates settlements in Ireland and the Middle East

**1921** June 29 – His mother, Lady Randolph Churchill, dies

**1921** August 23 – Marigold, his fourth child, dies at the age of two

**1921** September 15 – His youngest child and fourth daughter, Mary, is born.

His 'Black Dog' reemerges during this period

- 1922** October – he is defeated and put out of Parliament for the first time since 1910
- 1923** April 10 – Volume 1 of *The World Crisis*, his story of World War One, is published
- 1924** September – He switches to the Conservative Party and is elected Member from Epping
- 1924** November 7 - He becomes Chancellor of the Exchequer (like his father before him)
- 1929** – Labour Party wins election and Churchill is out of office. He steps down as Chancellor of the Exchequer and begins a decade of political isolation.

#### THE WILDERNESS YEARS: 1929-1939

His 'Black Dog' remains a constant during this decade

- 1930** His own biography, *My Early Life*, is published

The majority of this decade was spent at his home, Chartwell, where he engaged in writing, researching, reading and painting. This was a very lonely and depressing time for him. He considered himself a failure. Local politicians isolated him and considered him an embarrassment due to his apparent inadequacies as Chancellor of the Exchequer as well as his opposition to the independence of India. Despite this depressive period, he continued to keep a close eye on political movements in Europe. He foresaw the dangers of Nazism and the inevitability of another war.

- 1932** September - He speaks at the House of Commons and warns of the Nazi movement.
- 1938** March 24 – He makes his “Danube Basin” speech
- 1938** October 16 – He makes his “The Defence of Freedom and Peace” speech

## WORLD WAR TWO AND 'THE BULLDOG': 1939-1945

**1939** September 3 – He becomes First Lord of the Admiralty again as Britain declares war on Germany

**1940** May 10 – He becomes Prime Minister of Britain

**1940** May 13 – He makes his famous “Blood, toil, tears and sweat” speech

**1943** At a presentation to Harvard University he makes his “The Price of Greatness is Responsibility” speech

**1945** May 8 – Victory Day in Europe celebrates the unconditional surrender of Germany

## VICTORY AND DEFEAT: 1945 – 1953

1945 July 26 – Despite the victory of the War, he is defeated in a general election and resigns as Prime Minister

His ‘Black Dog’ emerges again

1946 March 5 – In Fulton, Missouri, he delivers the famous “Iron Curtain” speech (also known as “The Sinews of Peace” speech)

1948 The first volume of *The Second World War* is published in America

1951 October 26 – He becomes Prime Minister of Britain for the second time

1953 December 10 – Churchill is awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature

## FINAL DECADE: 1955- 1965

**1955** April 5– He resigns as Prime Minister

**1955** March 1 – He makes his “Never Despair” speech

**1956** April 23 – The first volume of *The History of the English Speaking Peoples* is published

**1963** April – He is made Honorary Citizen of the United States of America

**1963** October 20 – Diana, his eldest daughter takes her own life

**1965** – January 24 – Churchill dies at home after a massive stroke

Sources: Gilbert, 1992; Mansfield, 1995

## APPENDIX C

### Adlerian Theory of Individual Psychology and Personality Development Applied to the Timeline of Sir Winston Churchill

TIME PERIOD	LIFE EVENT	SIGNIFICANCE OF KEY ADLERIAN CONCEPTS
CHILDHOOD : 1874-1881		
30 November 1874	Birth	Significance of:  - Birth order  (relevance of being first born and only child for first six years)
	Mrs Everest is hired as Winston's nanny.	Significance of:  - Neglectful parents  - Role of a surrogate mother and fostering of the 'social feeling'
4 February 1880	John Strange Churchill, Winston's brother, is born.	Significance of:  - Birth order (no longer the only child)  - Sibling rivalry

1881	<p>Winston commences Preparatory School at St George's School.</p> <p>A dark and difficult period in his life. Parents are neglectful; school is excessively disciplined; he struggles with school work and teachers; he feels physically weaker and inferior to his peers; is teased for having a lisp; endures great homesickness at boarding school.</p>	<p>Significance of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Neglectful parents</li> <li>- Role of surrogate mother and nurturing of the 'social feeling'</li> <li>- School with harsh teaching methods and corporal punishment</li> <li>- 'inferior organs' and inferiority complex</li> </ul>
<p>YOUNG ADULthood :</p> <p>1888-1895</p>		
17 April 1888	<p>Winston commences senior school at Harrow School.</p> <p>More nurturing and mature school environment. He enjoys history and art and begins to find his place at school. Also develops a love of horses and horse-riding but curses</p>	<p>Significance of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Inferiority compensation and striving for superiority</li> <li>- Goal setting and specific lifestyle development</li> </ul>

	his “feeble body” and lack of physical strength to excel at sports.	- Potential to develop into a ‘Socially Useful Personality’ type
1893	Enters the Royal Military College at Sandhurst.	
1894	Graduates from Sandhurst.	
24 January 1895	<p>Winston’s father, Lord Randolph Churchill, dies.</p> <p>Despite a lack of affection and attention from his father, Winston still adored his father and was very saddened by his death.</p>	<p>His life and death has significance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- He did not appear to meet the three major ‘tasks of life’ successfully and therefore highlights the impact of this on Winston’s own lifestyle.</li> </ul>
THE SOLDIER : 1895-1899		
1 April 1895	Winston appointed Lieutenant in the Fourth Queen’s Own Hussars.	<p>Significant for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Striving to meet the first major task of life: the task of occupation</li> </ul>

3 July 1895	<p>Mrs Everest dies.</p> <p>A significant event in Churchill's life as he loses his key mother figure from childhood.</p>	<p>Significant for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Crystallization of the 'social feeling' (evident in his later political policies regarding social welfare during 1922-1930)</li> </ul>
November 1895	<p>Encounters first armed conflict in Cuba.</p> <p>He gains first-hand experience of warfare which impacts choice of life goals.</p>	<p>Significant for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Goal setting and lifestyle development</li> <li>- The 'social feeling'</li> </ul>
1896-1898	<p>Spends time in India and Sudan gaining experience in the cavalry.</p> <p>Embarks on a programme of self-education in history, politics and the arts. He builds a reputation for exceptional physical courage, confidence and self-sacrifice.</p>	<p>Significance for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Striving for superiority and inferiority compensation</li> <li>- Overcoming physical inferiorities and 'inferior organs'</li> </ul>
1899	<p>Captured and escapes as a prisoner of war during the Boer War. Builds</p>	<p>Significant for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Consolidation of</li> </ul>

	<p>recognition and prominence for himself in South Africa and Great Britain.</p> <p>This experience influences his belief that he has a higher purpose/calling in life.</p>	<p>his life goals and striving for superiority and the betterment of his fellow men</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Development of character traits such as empathy, decisiveness and imperiousness</li> </ul>
THE POLITICIAN AND HIS BLACK DOG : 1900-1913		
1900-1908	Builds political stature within British parliament.	- Striving to meet life task of occupation
12 September 1908	Marries Clementine Hozier.	- Striving to meet life task of love and marriage
11 July 1909	<p>His first daughter, Diana, is born.</p> <p>Becomes a father for the first time.</p>	- Striving to meet life task of love and marriage and role of the father
1910	Assumes role of Home Secretary for Britain.	<p>Significant for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sadness/depression</li> </ul>

	<p>First Major Depressive Episode</p> <p>Despite a successful career and family life at this time, he suffers from low self-worth and his first major depressive episode is recorded.</p>	<p>being directed inward</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Overcomes depression by refocusing efforts on external environment</li> </ul>
28 May 1911	His second child, Randolph, is born.	<p>Significant for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Role of father and life task of love and marriage</li> </ul>
1914	Assumes role of First Lord of the Admiralty of the British naval forces.	<p>Significant for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Achievement of significant life goal and successful striving for leadership/power position</li> </ul>
WORLD WAR ONE : 1914-1918		

4 October 1914	<p>Britain declares War on Germany.</p> <p>He had envisaged this event and had warned the British Parliament of the looming trouble.</p>	<p>Significant for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- His visionary capability and realism.</li> </ul>
7 October 1914	His third child, Sarah, is born.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Role of the father</li> </ul>
October 1914 – May 1915	<p>British defeat at Dardanelles calls for his resignation as First Lord of the Admiralty.</p> <p>Second Major Depressive Episode</p> <p>The defeat at Dardanelles for which he was blamed and made a scapegoat for The War is a significant turning point in his career and personal life. He goes through one of the most difficult crises of his career.</p>	<p>Significant for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Striving for superiority/ power collapses.</li> <li>- The betrayal hurts him deeply and his depressive episode is one of the darkest of his life.</li> <li>- Recovers himself by focusing on the wellbeing of the nation and continues to serve as a battalion leader on the front lines – highlights his acute</li> </ul>

		awareness of the 'social feeling' and striving for the betterment of his fellowmen.
1915-1918	Holds various leadership positions in the British cavalry and assumes role of the Minister of Munitions.	- Continues to serve his country and nation and does not relent to his depression.
15 November 1918	His fourth child, Marigold, is born.	- Role of the father
POLITICAL TURMOIL : 1919-1929		
1919-1921	Assumes role of Secretary of State for War and is also made Colonial Secretary.  Recurrent Depressive Episodes in this time period.  This decade is marked by distressing personal events that put Winston's character to the test.	Significant for:  - Evidence of his self-determination and resilience in face of adversity.  - Ability to suppress his 'Black Dog' by focusing on external environment and

		<p>not on himself.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Did not use his depression to solicit attention and empathy but demonstrated great courage and tenacity to continue serving the people of Britain, despite his personal grief and unpopularity in political circles. .</li> </ul>
29 June 1921	His mother, Lady Randolph Churchill, dies.	
23 August 1921	His youngest daughter, Marigold, dies.	
15 September 1921	His fifth child and fourth daughter, Mary, is born.	
1922-1929	A time of political turmoil in his career and has an unsuccessful run as Chancellor of the Exchequer.	
1929	Labour Party wins election and Churchill is out of office and steps down as Chancellor of the	

	<p>Exchequer.</p> <p>A period of political isolation begins.</p>	
THE WILDERNESS : 1929-1939		
1929-1939	<p>He remains on the fringes of British politics but is outcast by his fellow politicians and spends most of his time at his country home. Engages in creative pursuits of writing, painting, travelling and brick-laying (a favourite hobby).</p> <p>This decade is marked by political humiliation and isolation and is considered one of the darkest periods in his life.</p> <p>Despite his 'Black Dog' during this</p>	<p>This time period is significant for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Continues to meet the challenges of the three 'tasks of life' and his focus remains steadfast on protecting and serving his fellow men.</li> <li>- He epitomises what Adler refers to as the 'social feeling' and understanding the 'true meaning</li> </ul>

	<p>time, his intuition and realism is never more acute as he foresees the danger of Nazism. However, his warnings go unheeded.</p>	<p>of life’.</p> <p>- Paradox between his ‘Black Dog’ and his sense of realism in the wake of Nazi threat.</p>
1932	<p>Keeps a close eye on political movements and “stirrings” in Europe and speaks at the House of Commons, warning Britain of the Nazi regime.</p>	
1932 – 1939	<p>Intermittent episodes of depression.</p> <p>Continues to monitor the situation in Europe and is more adamant about the dangers of Hitler and his Nazi party and the need for Britain to re-arm. Vehemently opposed to Neville Chamberlain’s appeasement policies.</p> <p>He is not taken seriously in Parliament and his warnings are ignored.</p>	

<p>WORLD WAR TWO AND THE BULLDOG : 1940- 1945</p>		
	<p>The Second World War proves the catalyst for Winston to demonstrate his true personality and character - his energy, resolution, courage, tenacity and realism.</p> <p>He understood more clearly than anyone else what course the war should take and how it could be won.</p>	<p>Significant for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Investing himself in serving his fellow men</li> <li>- Mastering the cold realities of war</li> </ul>
<p>3 September 1939</p>	<p>Becomes First Lord of the Admiralty again as Britain declares war on Germany again.</p>	
<p>10 May 1940</p>	<p>Becomes Prime Minister of Britain.</p>	
<p>1940-1945</p>	<p>Against great odds, Britain and allied forces defeat Germany.</p>	
<p>8 May 1945</p>	<p>Victory Day in Europe.</p>	

VICTORY AND DEFEAT : 1945-1951		
26 July 1945	<p>Winston is defeated in a general election and he resigns as Prime Minister.</p> <p>Recurrent Depressive Episodes</p> <p>Despite leading Britain to victory, he is voted out as Prime Minister and faces another lengthy decade of recurrent depression.</p>	<p>Significant for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- His focus remains once again on external issues and the plight of his fellow men</li> <li>- Does not allow his depression to overwhelm him.</li> </ul>
1946-1951	<p>As leader of the opposition during this time, he warns Europe and America of the dangers of communism and is vigilant of the spread of communism in Europe.</p> <p>Foresees the possibility of a 'third world war' (Ultimately known as The Cold War).</p>	
26 October 1951	Becomes Prime Minister of Britain	

	for the second time.	
10 December 1953	Churchill is awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature.	
FINAL DECADE : 1955-1965		
5 April 1955	<p>Resigns as Prime Minister.</p> <p>His final decade is filled with honorary accolades.</p> <p>Also a decade of sadness and self-reflection.</p>	<p>Significant for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- He rose to every challenge/ life task a focus on the betterment of his fellow men and exemplified the 'true meaning of life': co-operation and contribution.</li> <li>- He exemplified three basic tenets of Adler's theory: self- determination; successfully meeting the challenges of life's three core 'tasks' and striving to</li> </ul>

		<p>serve his fellow men.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- He personifies Adler's 'Socially Useful Type'.</li> <li>- His depression was a constant threat but he kept his focus externally bound which mirrors Adler's strategy for overcoming depression.</li> </ul>
April 1963	He is made Honorary Citizen of the United States of America.	
20 October 1963	<p>His eldest daughter, Diana, takes her own life.</p> <p>A deeply distressing and depressing period in his life.</p>	<p>Significant for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The potential for hereditary factors for depression to have existed in Winston's family</li> </ul>

		<p>and potentially a factor in his own depression. (Adler downplayed this notion as he believed hereditary factors played a minor role in personality development).</p>
24 January 1965	<p>Winston dies from a stroke at his London home, Hyde Park Gate, United Kingdom.</p>	

KEY:

Depressive episodes: **Blue**

Foresight and Realism: **Green**

Source: Adler, 1928, 1962; Gilbert, 1992; Mansfield, 1995