Chapter 1. Introduction to the Social Ecology of Training Individual and Marital Counsellors.

1.1. Introduction.

My vision is to develop a training program for individual and marital counsellors in which the counsellors can be empowered to select their own counselling methods and techniques which will suit their temperament, learning style and personal motivation. The application of this vision will express the need to introduce marriage counselling within Lifeline, as well as being an expression of my own growth.

In many ways this project will be a reflection of my own personal growth as a counsellor and as a researcher, so I will commence with a brief retrospective report of my journey during this period. In doing this I will use Mezirow’s (1991) phases of perspective transformation, as a theoretical method for ordering and selecting the important aspects of my personal experience over the past 25 years. This process of perspective transformation will be discussed in more detail later.

(i) Disorienting Dilemma.

My early upbringing was based on a strong religious fundamentalist framework. I was told what was the ‘right’ direction for me to take in life, and positive reinforcement was provided when I followed the guidelines. At an early age (18) I entered training to become a Salvation Army Officer, and I followed this profession for 23 years, between 1950 and 1973.

Being a Salvationist became more than a profession, it was the perspective which I took for my life, and for the lives of others, as I endeavoured to persuade them to follow the ‘right’ path.

However, toward the end of this period with the Salvation Army, I was exposed to other meaning perspectives, through such teachings as Carl Rogers, (1965) which led to the view that goodness was ‘within’ not ‘without’. I was capable of deciding on the direction for my own life and making my own decisions. However, this was not the way that I had been conditioned earlier. What was the ‘right’ way?

(ii) Self Examination.

I then felt I needed to examine my past as well as current meaning perspectives. I wished to resolve these conflicts in my values, my beliefs, and my expectations. I wanted to move from a fundamentalist viewpoint of seeing myself as naturally biased toward ineptitude and dependency, to recognising the
potential for growth and self direction which my new reading and experience led me to believe resided within my very being.

(iii) A Critical Assessment.

Who was I, or more correctly, who am I? There was a strong wish to discover my personal identity as separate from the roles and the relationships in which I was placed. I had spent so much time and energy in developing my "persona". Now I wanted to take the risk and peel back the layers of imposed values and set answers, which had become encrusted over the years. I needed to start to take responsibility for myself. I had been conditioned to think and believe in certain ways, but, having been confronted with options, it was now within my power to think and act in ways that were consistent with my new values and personal meaning.

(iv) Sharing with Others.

My framework was beginning to change, but I wondered if it would really change if I kept this process to myself? Although I am an extravert, I do have a tendency to keep my thoughts to myself, especially if those thoughts are still being formulated. I was able to share my dilemma with my wife, who was also undergoing her own transformation in her values, customs, and beliefs. After much discussion, we decided to move out of the Salvation Army, which meant a move away from the security of "given" answers.

I no longer had the predictable roles to perform. I did not have to please others, or at least the 'others' who had been important in my life. This meant forming a new network of friends, who could share some of my newly formed values and beliefs.

(v) Exploration of new roles, relationships and actions.

Leaving an authoritarian role behind is a slow process. My interests were no longer directed toward 'saving sinners', but in trying to understand myself and others. This led me into training and a professional vocation in marriage and family counselling. A new position with the Family Life Movement of Australia gave me the scope to develop and to test out my new roles. Instead of being the authoritarian leader, I was learning to become the facilitator and, occasionally, the delegator.

Transformation is a process, not a drastic change, which occurs over a long period, and so there were occasions when the old roles and the old beliefs would re-emerge. This was not altogether negative, for me, as my new position required the exercise of control and power. The difference was that I was able to choose consciously to exercise power 'with' people, not 'over' them.
(vi) Planning a Course of Action.

Since transformative learning leads to application in a practical way this was the time for independent study, for testing out my ability to select the topics which were of interest to me. I felt drawn toward the study of Jungian psychology, which is really the study of the inner life, the unconscious with its archetypes, shadow, ego and Self. I also spent some time and energy in an endeavour to understand the concepts of 'creation spirituality', as espoused by Matthew Fox (1983).

There was still the danger of becoming a follower of another 'guru'. I needed to resist the temptation of moving back into being dependent on another to tell me the 'right' way. These ideas and concepts could add to my meaning perspectives, but they could not replace my meaning.

(vii) Acquisition of Knowledge and Skills.

In my search for my own personal meaning and my meaning perspectives, I studied a number of counselling systems, e.g. Transactional Analysis, (Berne 1961) and I became so involved in this form of therapy that I formed a local T.A. study group, which met every Monday lunchtime for four years. (This took place between 1975 and 1979) This same kind of enthusiasm was put into the study of Relationship Enhancement skills, (Guerney 1977) where I completed an advanced training course in the U.S.A. in 1987.

In my search for knowledge I enrolled at the Hawkesbury campus of the University of Western Sydney, in 1985, where the emphasis was on self-directed learning, systems theory and social action research. I was pleased to have been able to share my involvement in the Graduate Diploma in Social Communication, with my wife.

(viii) Provisional Trying out of New Roles.

In 1988, after 16 years in the Family Life Movement, I was appointed Director of the Lifeline Centre at Newcastle, where I had direct responsibility for the training of personal and marital counsellors. As this was a completely new direction for Lifeline's services, I was able to implement a new policy for this activity.

I knew that the transformation of meaning perspectives could work for me, and I believed that it would work for others. I also believed that the process which I had experienced could be extended to others, and I decided to use these concepts, in the design of a training course.
(ix) **Building Competence and Self Confidence.**

In the true spirit of participatory action research I believe that the empowerment of trainees in a training program could only result from my own example, and grow out of my own experience. My self confidence increased as my ability to engender self confidence in the trainees increased. How could I assist them to develop their own competencies to excel in their chosen field? Perhaps my own example to acquire competence in completing the Master of Applied Science, and attempting the Master of Science (Honours) degree, would help.

I realise that a major part of my transformative learning was the discovery of the questions, without feeling it necessary to find the answers. My old way required the answers.

(x) **Reintegration of the New Perspective.**

The application of this cycle of learning will depend on combining participatory action research with transformative learning.

From my own experience and the experience of many other individuals who have become counsellors, I believe that the intention to improve difficult interpersonal situations is often associated with a substantial or even a profound re-examination of one's personal beliefs, attitudes and behaviours. Accordingly, designing a training program in counselling requires a holistic viewpoint, such as the notion of perspective transformation. This is a central theoretical framework of this thesis.

It then follows that I will also need to foster the trainees ability to reflect on their own meaning perspectives and provide an opportunity for them to apply some of these same concepts within their own life. In this way the cycle of transformative learning can commence again.
1.2. Current Context.

In developing a curriculum for training counsellors I will start with the context in which the training course will take place, and answer the question of the need for such a development.

The specific context is Lifeline, a telephone counselling organisation which commenced in Sydney, in 1963, and is now located in 12 countries throughout the world, including Australia which has 41 separate Centres. My present position is as Director of one of those Centres, hence my specific interest. However, the concepts, theories and methodologies outlined in this paper are not confined to any one organisation.

There are a number of questions which I will address before proceeding. As Lifeline is mainly a telephone counselling agency and has gained a reputation for this service over a period of thirty years, then why expend energy in extending it to an individual and marital counselling service?

* Out of the thousands of individuals who contact the Lifeline telephone counsellors, some 10% require in-depth counselling on an individual or couple basis.

* Telephone counsellors who are keen on improving their skills are looking for opportunities to develop alternative, face to face, forms of counselling.

* The constitution of Lifeline allows for the introduction of marriage counselling as part of its total service.

* It is self evident that any organisation that does not adapt to changing circumstances and accept current challenges will soon decline. Accepting the need to provide counselling on a face to face basis, my next question is why not allow the existing agencies or universities to provide the training?

Considering the universities first, my inquiries revealed that only two universities in N.S.W. were offering a degree in counselling, and their main focus is a cognitive behavioural approach. Other Universities provide a background in psychology but this is not directly related to counselling. There are Universities which offer a post-graduate degree in which training in counselling is provided. However there is little consideration given to the personal characteristics or the development of self awareness on the part of the students. TAFE Colleges provide skills in interviewing but not in counselling.
Having initiated an inquiry into the training programs being conducted by the existing marriage counselling organisations within Australia (Cathcart 1992). I have discovered that most of the training given by agencies base their methods on either a systemic approach to counselling (Skynner 1976), or on a psychodynamic approach (Macnab 1991). This is not to suggest that such an approach is not constructive, but it can be too narrow. The few exceptions are found outside N.S.W. and therefore would be of no assistance in training counsellors within N.S.W.

Before dismissing this possibility, I need to ask, what prevents me from following either the psychodynamic or the systemic approach? Studies (Wile 1981) have shown that both methods are very effective, if one or the other approach is used exclusively, but, used exclusively they overlook both the specific needs of the individual clients, and the individual strengths, motivation, temperament and learning styles of the counsellors.

My proposed training curriculum will include both the psychodynamic and the systemic approach, and the emphasis will be on the inclusion of both, without presenting a bias in any one direction.

At this stage of my inquiry I am inclined to agree with Macnab (1991) who suggests that effective therapy will:

* evolve from the already developed therapies;
* encourage an active informed collaboration between counsellor and client;
* embrace both the intra-psychic and the interpersonal context of clients;

In other words, my social action research will need to become a participatory action research. By embracing both intra-psychic, or psychodynamic, and inter-personal, or systemic approaches to counselling I will inquire into the manner or the methodology which will be used for the proposed training program.

1.3. Educational Methodology - Transformative Learning.

In providing a curriculum for the training of individual and marital counsellors, the question of relating to the educational methodology to be used in such a training course will be addressed.
Looking at the current methods used, there are a number of available approaches which will be considered. With the various methodologies available I have used a progression, moving from the more directed methods to the non-directed or self directed methods which parallel the transformative learning methodology.

1.3.1. **Trainer Organised Methodology.**

I have identified three different examples of this approach.

(i) Behaviour Modification, which provides a strong emphasis on restructuring dysfunctional patterns of learning through the positive reinforcement of acceptable patterns, and negative reinforcement of unacceptable patterns. (Acceptable or unacceptable to the trainer who organises the program, sets the required 'standards', and actively encourages conformity to the norm.)

This approach puts the power in the hands of the organiser, the trainer, and dismisses the freedom and personal dignity of the individual trainee, or learner. Knowles (1973), rightly states that 'people aren't pigeons'.

(ii) Learning by Objectives. Management by objectives has been the ruling design of many organisations, including learning institutes, over the past twenty years, and in some cases this has progressed from objectives set by the organisation, to objectives set through mutual discussion and consent.

One problem about this approach is the over emphasis on the content of the learning agenda, as determined by the agreed objectives. Nadler (1982) believes that objectives written in specific behavioural terms do not allow for the spontaneity that many people need in a learning environment.

(iii) Scientific learning, depends on proven methods and data which can be clarified, classified, and codified. Authority is vested in the trainer, never the trainee, and lines of responsibility are clearly defined in a top to bottom, orderly hierarchy. In this approach there is no doubt who has the knowledge, and who has the need to acquire that knowledge.

1.3.2. **Client-Centred Methodology.**

The client-centred approach encourages the trainees, with the trainer, to discover the real unique individual person with unrealised potential who has the capacity to reach out and make new discoveries of growth and personal development.
Putting this concept into an educational framework requires the trainer or facilitator to produce the right conditions and environment in which the trainee can learn and grow. (Thomas and Harri-Augstein 1985.)

Carl Rogers (1983) places a strong emphasis on what he calls 'whole person learning' and encourages the learner's use of both right and left brain functions. Rogers also believes that the only valid base for the individual's experience is that offered by the individual him/herself.

1.3.3. Self Directive Learning Methodology.

Self directive learning occurs when the individual learner is able to break away from the bonds of dependency on authority and realise that the responsibility for learning is based on personal initiative and motivation. This is a step into the world of Adult Learning and to quote Knowles (1975), who is credited with being one of the originators of self directive learning, 'self directive learning assumes that the human being grows in the capacity to be self directed as an essential component of maturing'.

Self directive learning emphasises the concept of the learner's control over the planning, application, and evaluation of the learning. In recent years it has spawned a number of derivatives which have developed into separate methodologies in their own right.

1.3.4. Experiential Learning Methodology.

In experiential learning the emphasis is on generating ideas through experience rather than through the traditional way of tapping into the storehouse of accumulated knowledge. (Bruner 1971) suggests that the purpose of education is to stimulate inquiry and skill in the process of obtaining knowledge, not to memorise a body of known knowledge.

The main focus of experiential learning is the process of learning rather than the product of learning. Kolb (1984) believes that the process of experiential learning is a four stage cycle involving four adaptive learning modes.

* Concrete experience.
* Reflective observation.
* Abstract conceptualisation.
* Active experimentation.
Kolb also explains how these learning modes are used by the learner to stimulate ideas and to re-form those ideas according to the specific interest, experience, and motivation of the learner. Warner, Weil and McGill (1989) extend this idea by suggesting that meaning can not be gained from external sources, even though knowledge is obtained externally. Meaning must come from action, from our thinking, and from our experience, and it is therefore personal to the individual learner. There remains the risk that a bias exists when personal experience is held to be the only source of learning. More than experience is required.

1.3.5. **Self-Organised Learning Methodology.**

Thomas and Harri-Augstein (1985) make a strong case for a methodology based on understanding how learners self-organise their own behaviour and experience in order to produce changes, personally chosen and valued by the learner. The motivation for such self-organised learning appears to come from the personal meaning which learners attach to the event in their lives, rather than to the event itself. The real learning is the personal learning which the learner attributes to the experience of his/her life.

Self-organised learning places an emphasis on creatively negotiating shared meaning and works hard to avoid being caught up with a dogmatic system of public knowledge. Shared meaning has to start with the individual learner and is then compared with the evaluated meaning of others. This is an approach closely related to action research.

1.3.6. **Transformative Learning Methodology.**

Mezirow (1991) provides a strong argument for learning to be perceived as a progressive construction of meaning perspectives, or frames of reference, which can be transformed through experience, reflection, maturity and growth.

Transformative learning focuses on the need to understand and transform our meaning perspectives which are made up of acquired knowledge, beliefs, value judgements, and personal interpretations.

These can be transformed as a result of confronting perceived reality, consciousness raising, a critical event, or a sudden insight. This transformation results in the long run, in a paradigm shift of our meaning perspectives.
The actual term 'transformative learning' belongs to Boyd and Myers (1988) who later became critical of Mezirow's views as they believed that perspective transformations place the power for change in the hands of the 'ego', and completely overlooks the central force of the 'Self' as the controlling factor of our psychic being, integrating both conscious and unconscious forces.

Mezirow does not overlook the power of the Self, but he does not come from a Jungian background, so he does not use the same terminology. Nor should he, as this could imply that there is only one correct methodological viewpoint. Even Carl Jung once said, 'thank God I'm Jung, and not a Jungian'.

The Jungian viewpoint, as espoused by Boyd and Myers (1988) adds another dimension to the transformative process, that of the inner life of the individual with all of its psychic structure contained within the Self. If transformative learning provides a shift in my meaning perspectives or frame of reference, then it must effect my whole life, unconscious as well as conscious. Mezirow (1991) suggests that perspective transformation will involve profound changes in the self, changes with cognitive, emotional, somatic, and unconscious dimensions.

In taking transformative learning as my educational methodological approach in the training of counsellors I am aware that I will need to foster the trainees' ability to reflect on their own meaning perspectives and I will need to provide an opportunity for them to apply transformative learning within their own experience and learning situation.

**Application and Reflection.**

There is a case to be made for self-directed learners to have the freedom to initially choose a highly directive approach for the subjects for which they have little current understanding. Although the goal of the educational process must remain the production of self directed, lifelong learners, as Grow (1991) puts it, yet there is nothing contradictory in allowing a dependency which is temporary or limited to certain subjects, provided that the initiative comes mainly from the self directed student or trainee, and the approach changes as the trainees assimilate their own learning, and start to make their own transformations in meaning perspectives.

The question remains, how does the trainee become aware of his/her developmental needs without some direction in the first place? There is a risk in moving away from the comfort zone which direction provides. From a methodological perspective I see the need for a progressive movement from direction to self direction, which could be diagrammed as follows:-
Diagram No. 1. Movement from Direction to Self Direction.

Applying the above diagram to the training of individual and marital counsellors, I would suggest that trainees could commence the course with the expectation of being 'taught' or trained, and will therefore look to the trainer as an authority figure who will provide directions. There will, no doubt, be some trainees who have developed a high level of self direction in their life, but because of a lack of relevant skills, knowledge and experience in the counselling field, will be dependent learners at the commencement of training. (Stage A of the diagram.)

The training course will need to allow for a minimum degree of authority to be used in the introductory segments, but through an emphasis on self awareness, trainees will be encouraged to take responsibility for their own lives and learning.

Although writers like Fox (1983) would criticise this approach as the 'transfer' method of education where teachers pour knowledge into students, yet I believe, on the basis of past experience, that such a method is only ineffective if it encourages and perpetuates dependency, instead of being a stepping stone to independency.
The second stage (Stage B of the diagram.) would combine the 'Motivator' educator with the 'Engaged' trainee. During this period trainees would be expected to respond favourably to the motivational techniques of the trainer. At this stage the educator, or trainer, will persuade, explain, and convince, using a directive but highly supportive approach that encourages learner willingness and enthusiasm. (Grow 1991)

In the third stage of the training (Stage C of the diagram.) I would anticipate the trainer moving into a 'Facilitator' role, as the trainees become more involved in their own learning process. It is at this stage that trainees would achieve what Virginia Satir (1976) calls the five freedoms, of which the most relevant is - 'The freedom to take risks on one's own behalf, instead of choosing to be only secure, and not rocking the boat'.

During the final stage (Stage D of the diagram.) of the training, the trainees would be encouraged as self directed learners to set their own goals and standards, with the relationship with the trainer more like an elder to a younger or less experienced peer. This will be possible provided that the trainers have learnt how to delegate the responsibility for the required learning, and cultivate the trainee's ability to learn within an atmosphere of autonomy.

As I have mentioned in Section 1.1. the complexity of personal changes motivated by life's difficulties requires the deeper orientation of perspective transformation, or transformative learning, as an underlying awareness and principle. All the other concepts presented in this section can be integrated within this principle.

1.4. Thesis Synopsis.

It is my intention to address the following questions.

* What are the current approaches to training individual and marriage counsellors?

* What problems or difficulties are encountered with these approaches?

* What educational methodology would be most effective to overcome these problems or difficulties?

With these questions in mind the proposed outline of this thesis are is out below.
Chapter 1. Introduction to the Social Ecology of Training Individual and Marital Counsellors

As Russell (1991) believes that the notion of transferring information between humans involves an epistemological error, and as I concur with that view, then I must rely on my experience and my ability to reflect on, and learn from, that experience, as being the ground of my learning process.

I will therefore consider the resources which I can bring to bear upon this project. What approach will I take? What methodologies for research and learning can I use for this task? My research methodology will be participatory action, and my educational methodology will be based on transformative learning.

Chapter 2. Emerging Awareness of the Possibilities.

Although my own experience is an essential element in creating a social ecology for a training program, yet it is not the only element. The total counselling milieu will need to be taken into account, i.e. how my proposal relates to the existing philosophies and procedures of marriage counselling programs within Australia and also in the United Kingdom. I have included the U.K. as Marriage counselling in Australia was the offshoot of English initiatives.

As this project will effect others who are, or will become, involved in this training, then they will have a right to be included, as fellow researchers as well as participants. This is where participatory action research will need to be introduced, and a starting point made to the project.

This process of inclusion is something which was denied to me in my early development. Now is the opportunity to change this situation for others. These others will be selected from past and present trainees of the counsellor training program. Their selection will not be based on their academic achievements, or on their understanding of the concept of action research. In many ways I will endeavour to see that they will have the kinds of understanding which I have had in the process of my development.
Chapter 3. The Project Evolves in Curriculum Development.

Reflection, design and sharing will need to give way to decisions and plans. What will be the distinctive features of this project, and how can this thesis encapsulate this uniqueness without becoming either too cumbersome, or, on the other hand, too brief.

The curriculum will offer a number of Core subjects, considered to be essential, plus a number of Electives plus opportunities for independent studies, which may be taken outside of the agency. The context in which this curriculum will be presented will be the result of action research and an experiential method of development.

In this way trainees will be encouraged to develop their own unique approach, in their use of counselling theories and skills, which will express their temperament, personal motivation, and meaning perspectives. This encouragement will also empower the trainee counsellors as self-directed learners.

Chapter 4. Encounter through Research.

Plans must now give way to involvement, action and further reflection. How will this approach, which allows for individual preferences and even idiosyncratic deviations, work in practice? In this section of the project I will test and assess the effectiveness or otherwise, of the training course through action research.

At the same time I am interested in answering the question, do temperament, learning styles, and individual interests make any difference to the personally selected mode of counselling in which the trainees prefer to engage? Will it make a difference to the subjects trainees select as an elective and/or independent study? Or, more importantly, will it make a difference to the effectiveness of the trainees in their counselling practice? The whole project will need to be tested through multiple methods of research, including some minor experiments.

Chapter 5. Evaluation.

The formation of a participatory action research team can assist with the analysis through discussion of the total project. Have the stated goals been achieved? Does the proposed curriculum make sense to those who will benefit from these findings? What changes will need to be made? I have addressed these questions by asking all trainees in the current training course to evaluate the various core and elective subjects, and to comment on methods used in the training. A comparison was also made between the temperament and learning style of the trainees and their effectiveness as counsellors.
Chapter 6. Communication.

Who needs to be informed of the results of this work? As this project has been carried out within the context of a Lifeline counselling agency, then it will be important to communicate my findings to other Lifeline centres, as well as the trainees who will be involved in the training program. The critical reference groups will also include fellow researchers, work colleagues, counselling agencies, and consultants. Can they learn from my mistakes and successes?

Chapter 7. A New Praxis.

Is there a new epistemological understanding of the practice of training individual and marital counsellors, and how can such a comprehension be incorporated within the body of current practice? Can my shift in meaning perspectives be shared by trainee counsellors who will be involved in the training program? Can it be shared by other agencies?

In the development of a new praxis new questions will emerge which will demand an answer, and that answer will require further research, which in turn will commence another cycle of further planning, acting, observing and reflecting.

Chapter 8. Review.

Returning to the original research questions, I hope to state how these questions have been answered. What is the outcome of this research? Other, anticipated, outcomes from this research will be:-

* My practice, as a researcher, will be clarified.

* My understanding of the needs of trainee counsellors will have been more empirically grounded.

* The methods of training individual and marital counsellors will be more effective.

* My understanding of the context in which individual and marital counsellor training takes place will have improved.

In this concluding chapter I will return to a subjective approach, and seek to answer the following questions.

* What changes, if any, have occurred in my life as a result of my involvement in this research project?

* As a result of insights gained, and experiments completed, what changes have I made in my counselling practice?

* What now will be my future direction, as a researcher, and as a trainer of counsellors?

In answering these questions I will reflect on the impact of this research project on my personal as well as my professional life. Can I gain from the mistakes as well as from the successes of this project?

1.5. Research Vision.

Vision.

I believe that by using participatory action research I can design a training program for suitably selected individuals which will enable them to develop their own unique, self-directed framework of choices among available options useful for individual and marital counselling, leading to empowerment and more effective co-counselling. This is shown in Diagram 2 below.

![Diagram 2: Vision process](image)

In conceptualising my vision I needed to confront a number of essential questions. e.g What process will be used to select potential counsellors? As a training program had been commenced I have an excellent opportunity to engage the trainees as a social action group to respond to pre and post course assessments.
I will also address the question as to the relationship between temperament, preferred learning styles and preferred choice of course electives, and later their preferred method of counselling. I also intend to explore my frame of reference, or as Mezirow (1991) calls it, 'my meaning perspective', which will underlay the training program. What will be the epistemic, sociolinguistic and psychological perspectives which will provide the guidelines for this course?

Another question which will need to be addressed will be the choice of a training, or educational, methodology. My hypothesis is that a self-directed educational approach to the training of counsellors will be an effective method to use. How can I validate this assumption?

(i) **Statement of the Problem.**

How can I design, and then validate, a training program for individual and marital counsellors which respects each trainee's choice of electives and independent studies, based on the trainee's personal decision and which may be related to such variables as, temperament, learning style and personal motivation, after they have been exposed to training in a series of counselling methods and therapies, which respects both intra-psyche and interpersonal counselling theories?

(ii) **Operational Definitions.**

Contained within this statement of the problem are a number of variables, which will be defined.

* **An individual and marital training program.**
  This is a program which aims at producing effective counsellors, who could assist individuals and/or couples to attain satisfaction in their life or relationship, and be empowered to achieve personal and relationship goals.

* **Electives based on available methods and approaches.**
  A range of counselling methods currently used in therapeutic interventions will need to be examined. Some of these electives could be available within the agency, and others could be available through other counselling agencies or organisations. Such a choice will empower the trainees in their self-directed objectives.
* Temperament.
   Temperament will be defined as it is in the Myers Briggs Typology which provides an understanding of personality factors, which includes the different temperaments. It would appear that temperament plays an important part in determining the direction in which individuals can develop most effectively and with most personal satisfaction. (Briggs-Myers 1985) (Sharp 1987). Will trainees with certain temperaments become more effective than those with other temperaments?

* Learning Styles.
   I will define learning style after the work of Kolb (1984) who suggests that all learners develop a preference toward one of four distinct educational orientations. i.e. concrete experience; reflective observation; abstract conceptualisation or active experimentation. Kolb goes on to suggest that the manner in which these orientations are combined in the life of the learner produces the basic styles of accommodation, divergence, convergence or assimilation.

* Personal Motivation.
   Prospective counsellors will need a high level of motivation in order to commit themselves to two or three years of intensive training, self-disclosure and exposure to the pressures of constant assessments and supervision.

1.6. Research Methodology - Participatory Action.

One way of describing this methodology would be to say that 'two heads are better than one'. That being so I will need to take a collaborative approach to the task of defining its meaning. What do others say? As I discuss what others say it will become apparent that participatory action research systematically generates the process of perspective transformation in the participants, including the researcher, myself.

Kurt Lewin (1946) who is said by McNiff (1988) to be the father of Action Research, stressed the importance of democratic collaboration and participation and described action research as a spiral of steps, with each step having four stages: Planning; Acting; Observing; Reflecting. It must also be stated that Reinharz (1992) found that feminist writers such as Crystal Eastman had discovered as early as 1907 that investigation for the sake of investigation served little purpose unless an action plan was also considered.
Carr and Kemmis (1986) state that action research is a form of self-reflective inquiry undertaken by participants. This idea is expanded by McNiff (1988) who places the main emphasis of action research on involvement. She states that the 'action' of action research implies change in people's lives, and therefore in the system in which they live. She goes on to say that it is participatory, in that it involves the 'researcher' in his/her own inquiry, and collaborative, in that it involves other people as part of a shared inquiry.

This emphasis on 'action' is reinforced by writers such as Reinharz (1992) who believes that action research must be oriented to social and individual change, and, in fact, it can only be considered action research if it is linked to action.

Gahan, Bird and Pinn (1993) appear to be coming from the same school of thought when they state that action research is fundamentally a doing process with the best experience of shared understanding arising from the give and take of working together.

Although the idea of action research grew from the work of Lewin (1946) it has only been in recent years that this methodology has been taken seriously by researchers, and so we turn to some other mainstream researchers who were not content to simply stand aside and just report findings to the decision makers, but were determined to involve the key informants as active participants in the actual research.

Reason (1988) equates action research with co-operative inquiry. Co-operative inquiry is aimed at people working together as co-researchers in exploring and changing their world. This idea of co-operative inquiry implies equality and a democratic process in which both the researcher and the informants can engage together. He would prefer to use the term 'initiator' instead of 'researchers', as everyone involved becomes a researcher if it is a true collaboration.

Zuber-Skerritt (1991) defines action research as a form of collective self-reflective inquiry undertaken by participants in social situations in order to improve the rationality and justice of their own social or educational practices, as well as their understanding of these practices and the situations in which these practices are carried out.

Winter (1989) expands on the ideas of Elliott (1982) and Kemmis (1982) and starts with a definition of action research as the study of a social situation with a view to improving the quality of action within it. He states that action research, although containing elements of self-evaluation, will often involve a mutual, collaborative process between two or more people. He sees action research as seeking to unite two central concerns, improvement in practice and increased knowledge and understanding of that practice.
Whyte (1991) prefers to use the term 'participatory action research' and considers it necessary for the people or community under study to participate actively with the professional researcher throughout the research process from the initial design to the final presentation of results and discussion of their action implications.

My last resource will be McTaggart (1991) who also uses the term 'participatory action research'. He defines action research as the way groups of people can organise the conditions under which they can learn from their own experiences and make this experience accessible to others. For research to be authentically participatory it must involve sharing in the way research is conceptualised, practiced, and brought to bear on the world.

For it to be truly action, it must be concerned with changing both individuals and the culture of the groups, institutions, and societies to which they belong. He follows and expands on Lewin's original idea of the spiral of steps. McTaggart describes a spiral of cycles of Planning; Acting; Observing; Reflecting, and then Re-planning; with further implementation, observing and reflecting.

Before moving on to reflect on these various ideas, I will need to consider this emerging new paradigm for research as it effect my project. What was the orthodox approach which was found wanting?

This was largely positivism and reductionism which were more concerned with experimental methods, quasi-experimental methods, statistical significance and dependent and independent variables.

As such they encouraged an alienated relationship between the experimenter and the subject. People were seen as self-contained, isolated from their social context, counted and measured but not personally involved in the actual research. Since I too tested the groups of counsellors I need to briefly mention why and how my testing was different.

Counsellors were videoed conducting a counselling session, and the replayed video was assessed with the counsellor present, providing his/her rationale for using a particular counselling method within the interview. The counsellor was involved, explaining his/her perception of events and placing them in their social context collaboratively.

What the positivist oriented researcher often forgets is that while the researcher is observing and interpreting the actions of the human 'object' that same human object is also observing and interpreting the actions of the researcher, and deciding how to respond. Winter (1989), suggests that action research is the study of a changing situation from the inside. The researcher is also personally involved. This is research with, rather than on, people.
Participation at every stage of the process is more likely to gain the co-operation required for the action which will need to be followed. Winter goes as far as to suggest that action research, being in an important sense the study of a changing situation from the inside, must ensure that its methods do not depend on positivist assumptions.

1.6.1. Reflection.

If this methodology is to have any meaning to me personally then, in the true spirit of action research, I must make it my own, and not a carbon copy of another’s ideas. After reflecting on the ideas and definitions of others, I now ask what is my definition?

As my research is centred on the training of individual and marital counsellors, then it is their lives and the lives of their clients which are at stake. So, no matter who else is involved, it is the trainees who are the major stake holders in this whole process. By encouraging the trainees to be participants in this process I will evolve a relationship which will, as a result, strengthen the respect of other stake holders, ie. the agency, for the quality of the information and data generated through active participation by everyone involved.

Participation by trainees in the research also encourages the self directed educational approach which I plan to use in the facilitation of the training program. As Kemmis (1982) suggests, and to which I agree, the people involved, ie, the trainees, will need to collaborate in the planning, acting, reflecting and evaluating of the total process.

My methodology will need to be 'participatory action research', with the emphasis being on action as well as participation. The purpose of this research will be the creating of a new approach to the training of counsellors. In other words, it will have to result in the necessary action in order to improve the present situation.

If the training is to result in a changed situation, then it will also result in the changed lives of everyone involved in the process. The external changes, a new training program, will really be the result or the consequence of the struggle by those who have participated in the research. Researcher and researched alike will be caught up in the action which will empower the initially untrained participators in carrying out a role as fully competent counsellors.

In summary then my definition of participatory action is the involvement of all parties, trainees and trainer, in evolving a plan of action which reflects the interests and research of both parties.
My research methodology of participatory action will therefore be directed at:-

* Learning more about the temperament, learning styles, and interests of trainee counsellors;

* Achieving social action through trainee feedback and participation in the development of the training program; and

* Adding these training methods to the public knowledge.

1.6.2. Shared Transformation.

Having outlined two separate methodologies, i.e. Participatory Action Research (1.6.), and Transformative Learning (1.3.6.), as the basis for the development of a new curriculum for training individual and marital counsellors, I am aware that these two are not separate parts of a system, for one without the other is ineffective.

Guerney (1977) believes that relationships with other people are at the heart of everything we do, and McNiff (1992) states clearly that researchers develop as reflective practitioners, only as they critique their own work, and then share that work with others.

Transformation, although part of the individuation process, cannot be isolated from participation with others. Shared ideas, reinforcement and encouragement of progress are essential elements of the transformative process.

During the task of writing this thesis I have been influenced by the Hawkesbury culture of engaging in an independent study, where the emphasis has been placed on process rather than on content.

The process, however, has to produce the content of a new curriculum. Would there be any positive reinforcement for work well done? Would this be necessary for my progress and personal well being? The struggle to find an answer to such questions increased my level of stress, yet provided the motivation for sharing my work with my partner, and with my participatory action research team.

Throughout this process I felt de-motivated by my two consultants. One who believed that my work lacked a subjective viewpoint, and the other consultant who encouraged me to take a more objective approach. Perhaps Habermas (1989) is right in taking a more balanced view, when he states that there are three kinds of knowledge: objective, social, and subjective.
I would suggest that the missing element of transformative learning has been social knowledge. Transformative learning needs to be initiated through joint actions, or, as Melser (1993) puts it, through participation with others, in such a transaction.

Coming back to my plan to develop a new training curriculum, my vision needs to be shared with others, especially those who will be personally involved as trainees. I then need to take another step forward in seeking members of a research team, who can share the vision, to also share the task of developing the curriculum through participatory action research.

This process of working on a new project together should also result in the process of transformative learning, and the system should complete the cycle with shared transformation by all parties involved.

1.7. Designing the Training Program.

Having considered the methodological framework for a training program, I will now explain the proposed design for such a program. The usual approach, used by the majority of counselling agencies, has frequently been based on a hegemony concept in which the trainee is directed all the way throughout the training according to an agenda set by the agency or the trainer.

I would suggest that the problems facing individuals and couples who present for counselling are systemic and therefore they need to be managed systemically. The kind of control, predominantly exercised by most agencies, does not serve the needs of clients, as such an attitude largely serves itself. (Mitroff 1993)

Taking a systemic approach requires a multi-discipline perspective. Unlike positivism, which is mainly concerned with observable data which can be measured and scientifically proved, or disproved, the systemic approach which I would advocate uses a participatory action research methodology within a constructivist framework in order to create some of the connections required in the presentation of the whole. I will now introduce some of these connections.
Diagram No. 3. Systemic Framework for Developing the Vision.

Diagram No. 3, above, shows that this thesis was commenced with my vision, as already discussed, which then led onto increasing awareness, where a proposed training curriculum could be developed, evaluated and shared and before emerging into a new vision, where the whole process could commence again.

As my Vision involves the free choice of trainee counsellors in the use of specific skills and approaches, then I must avoid the trap of setting out a proposed agenda which reflects only my thinking and present perspectives. If participatory action research means anything then I must allow the research team to develop the agenda, as far as possible, and not impose one myself. (See Diagram 1. p 11)

However, I am committed to the idea of making available a range of counselling methods, which will provide the opportunity for the trainees to select the method or methods which suit their temperament, learning style and personal interest. As I have trained in a number of counselling methods, and other staff members have trained in other methods, then these will be made available during the course.

There will also be an encouragement for the trainees to attend training programs and workshops arranged by other agencies and organisations. I also plan to encourage the trainees to be involved in independent studies, in which they can peruse a specific subject throughout the two year period.
There will need to be some essential segments included within the training, ie. the development of self awareness, and the grounding of the trainees in basic counselling skills. These will be the foundation for building an eclectic approach to the counselling of individuals and couples.

1.7.1. Planning Time Line.

Aug. 92. Advertise the training program.
Sept. 92 Plan the Selection procedure.
Oct. 92 Selection Procedure for Applicants.
Oct. 92 Commence the Self-Awareness training segment.
Feb. 93 Commence the Basic Counselling Skills training segment.
July 93 Planning for the Proposed Electives.
Aug. 93 First Elective Offered.
(As this will not be compulsory, trainees will be given the option of commencing an independent study)
1994. Further Electives, and Core Courses, as designed by the research team. All of these courses will be focused on personal counselling approaches.

1.8. A Subjective Perspective.

Just as there is a dichotomy between a quantitative and a qualitative analysis of research material, and a contrast between a didactic and an experiential approach to learning, there is also an apparent contradiction between an objective and a subjective understanding of the material to be researched and analysed.

When we prize logical and rational thinking over fantasy thinking, which is guided by unconscious or subjective motives, our lives become trapped in a limiting psychic one-sidedness. This is not to say that we should dismiss logical thinking, but we need to put it in balance with what may appear to be irrational, subjective thinking.
In working with clients within the context of counselling, it is important that we recognise the client's subjectivity as the true focus of our endeavours. Bugental (1987) goes as far as to suggest that, for counsellors and therapists, our subjectivity is our true home, our natural state, and our necessary place of refuge and renewal. Perhaps it is time that we escape the cages of objective determinism to discover the autonomy which resides in our subjectivity.

In counselling there is a need to take both an objective and a subjective view of the client's situation. At first clients talk about their concerns, or objectify the issues that confront them. As counselling proceeds they begin to experience the effect of those concerns and search within themselves for the answers, thus subjectifying the issues.

    The one who thinks less
    and has less desire to act
    does more.

    (Teresa of Avila, 1985.)

In many ways the assumption taken by the positivists is that there is an objective world, separate from and independent of the observer, which can be explored by scientific inquiry. (Shepherd 1994.) Whereas the constructivists take the view that both thinking and feeling, objective and subjective, become aligned in the endeavour to understand the world. Theories must be seen as simplified models of reality, not absolute truth.

Jean Charon (1983), the French physicist, who followed in the steps of Einstein suggests that matter and spirit, ie. objective and subjective, must always be taken together in our understanding of science. He subscribes to the view held by the neo-Gnostics, that science, in the true sense of the word, can become a window in order to contemplate the universe of spirit and matter. This is an attempt to synthesize that which perceives and that which is perceived.

It will therefore be important that my inquiry will reflect on both the objective and the subjective aspects of the context in which this research will take place. If counselling places the focus on the subjective world of the client, then this research will also need to focus on the subjective understanding of the research team, and the trainees involved in the training program.
Chapter 2. Emerging Awareness of the Possibilities.

2.1. Personal Experience.

In commencing a research project on the training of individual and marital counsellors, my first, and possibly most valuable resource will be myself. What is it that I can contribute to this inquiry?

As mentioned I have trained as a Marriage counsellor with the Family Life Movement, and as a staff member of that organisation I was instrumental in commencing marriage counselling in Newcastle, Tamworth and Gosford. I became one of the founding members of the Australian Association of Marriage and Family Counsellors, and received accreditation as a clinical member and a supervisor of A.A.M.F.C. For three years I was the Chairperson for the N.S.W. Chapter of A.A.M.F.C. and currently I am the Director of another counselling organisation, Lifeline.

I have also trained as a family therapist with such people as Virginia Satir in 1978, and as a Relationship Enhancement Marital and Family therapist with Bernard Guerney in 1983 and 1987. This leads me to an examination of my viewpoint on counselling theories and I will need to identify my philosophical orientation or perspective, for this purpose.

Reflecting on my present values and beliefs, which I admit has resulted from conditioned conceptual boundaries, I am inclined to hold a 'humanistic' viewpoint, where I would be more comfortable with an existentialist theory, and an educational stance of facilitation in the actual training practice.

I believe, on the basis of past experience, that such a set of values lends itself to action research where involvement and co-operation would be emphasised. However, I also find that I still have a leaning toward a 'behaviourist' approach, where I take the role of managing, and directing the work of others. I would like to use control groups in this research, and to set up research experiments and then measure and compare the outcomes. Is there a danger of moving too far toward the objective? I will need to balance these contrasting views.

So where am I? With a foot in both camps? This could result in a tension between being the Facilitator or being the Manager. I am being challenged to move away from the traditional perspective which is based on a methodology of measurement, as if people were entirely predictable, as McNiff (1988.) would say. I will need to plan, act, observe, and reflect in collaboration with others.
In this regard I have been influenced by Wadsworth (1991), Reason (1988), and McNiff (1988 & 1992) to move away from researching and evaluating a situation on my own, where others are used as passive subjects, and to move into a team approach where I would have the co-operation of work mates or fellow counsellors, as active subjects. As a researcher I would also need to be included as an aspect of the researched and my peers would have the dual role of researcher and researched.

2.2. Making a Start with Action Research.

Before making a start with the proposed training curriculum for prospective counsellors, I planned to set up a small action research team for the purpose of sharing insight and understanding of methods for designing a training program.

Drawing on previous contacts I invited three individuals who have had a vast experience in the marriage counselling field, especially the training aspects. Two were retired managers of a Marriage counselling agency, and the other one had been the training officer and supervisor of a counselling agency. One person is fully retired, one is a part time consultant to the department of Health, and the third person is currently in private practice as a counsellor.

We held two separate group discussions during the early part of 1994, in which we each shared previous experiences with both positive and negative aspects being covered. We did some brain storming of ideas and I provided a summary of the discussions. Some interesting concepts emerged from those discussions.

* The conflicting ideas of a systemic approach to counselling versus the psychodynamic approach was verbalised without resolution. ie. does the problem belong to the individual or to the system in which the individual operates?

* There was a strong emphasis on traditional learning practices where the trainee would need to be told or directed into the 'right' frame of reference, with a set agenda for the training program.

* I was strongly criticised for having a bias toward an eclectic approach to the training of counsellors, and for not being objective enough to be an effective researcher.
Reflection.

Did something go wrong with my effort to set up an action research inquiry? What are the lessons that I can learn from this first attempt at action research? The tension between myself and the group indicated a strong doubt about the possibility of a co-operative endeavour being continued. If this research team was to continue, then it may have resulted in the loss of my vision. The vision won this battle.

Looking back on the exercise it seems to me that the proposed project did not make sense to the potential group members of my research team. (Reason 1988.) The contract was not clear. Did I want the group to come up with alternative methods of training, or was it my desire that the group should reinforce my proposals?

2.3. The Australian Perspective.

Participatory action research can be strengthened by other forms of research, eg, survey research to explore a broader context. I posed the question, 'What is the current situation regarding the training of marriage counsellors within Australia?'

In order to discover answers I contacted the existing marriage counselling agencies within Australia and requested information about their current training programs. Over a two months period I received 17 replies out of an initial 25 inquiries. 15 of these were by mail and 2 via a phone conversation. Table 1 (below) entitled 'training of Marriage Counsellors in Australia' indicates the stated basis of their training requirements, plus their main focus or methodological perspective.
Training: Counselling methods taught.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>VIC</th>
<th>ACT</th>
<th>Trained elsewhere</th>
<th>Academically trained</th>
<th>Psychodynamic</th>
<th>Systemic approach</th>
<th>Social issues</th>
<th>Behavioural</th>
<th>Specific agency model</th>
<th>Supervised practice</th>
<th>Personal awareness</th>
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Table 1. Training Requirements of Marriage Counselling Agencies in Australia

From this information it would appear that there are possibly only two agencies who have developed their own unique approach to the task of training counsellors, while the others have taken or adapted existing approaches being used either in the U.S.A. or the U.K.

Researching the Australian perspective was made difficult by the frequency with which these approaches were being changed, e.g. Agency A stated that they had only recently changed their training program and as it had not been field tested they were not in a position to share the rationale behind their current approach.
Is it possible that new forms and systems are being tried and applied without quantifiable or qualifiable evidence? According to many family researchers e.g. Rubin (1983) there is also a sense in which the institutional status of a marriage has changed to one where sharing, equality and companionship has become the glue which now holds a relationship together.

There is a corresponding need for counselling and counsellors to change in their counselling methods in order to keep pace with these changing conditions.

From my findings there appears to be little agreement among the agencies as to the method of training counsellors. It also appears that some agencies could have used guess work and such guessing may well be done in favour of either the agency's or the trainer's preferred approach.

**Three Major Propositions.**

After considering the various scattered and sometimes tangled theoretical formulations shown in Table 1, it appears that there are three major theoretical positions which could be identified within the Australian scene.

(i) **A Intra-Psychic Approach.**

The main proposition here is that personal maladjustment is viewed as the cause of marital difficulties. Individual sessions with the 'problem' person becomes the dominant method of counselling and other forms of intervention are seen as secondary to this individual approach. The main method used is Dynamic or Depth Psychology in which the counsellor may attribute partner or individual problems to:-

* Infantile impulses where immature individuals who are controlling the relationship and manipulating or dominating their partners may well be seeking or obtaining significant regressive gratification

* Childhood conflicts, which may be re-enacted in the present relationship difficulties, yet have their origin in unresolved childhood conflicts.

* Séparation - individuation failure, which is seen as the developmental task which lies at the root of most couple problems. e.g. Wile (1981) believes that the working out of a relationship with one's mother has certain similarities with the working out of a relationship with a partner.
(ii) A Systems or Inter-Personal Approach.

The main proposition here is that a sense of marital maladjustment is a systemic process in itself, having its own dynamics and ecology. Counselling consists of working with the couple, and occasionally with the whole family, in order to make adjustments to the system itself, and not to the individual components of the system.

In many ways the systems approach was developed as a reaction against the diagnostic labelling of individuals, which often occurred in personal counselling. Attention is focused on the couple or the family as a whole. However, instead of an identified client, we now have identified couples. Partners are described as 'double binding', as having 'hidden agendas', or 'colluding with each other', and even attempting to 'sabotage' the counselling. Labelling is also disempowering.

An important concept is 'circular casualty', in which each partner's behaviour is viewed as a reaction or adjustment to the behaviour of the other. As the caused pattern is seen as a circle, then the past becomes less important and perhaps irrelevant. The same may well be said of intra-psychic factors which pale into insignificance in comparison with inter-personal concerns.

Family members are viewed as active components of the family system or willing victims of this system. One important goal of the counsellor is to challenge and change this system, a task requiring the disruption of the family's homeostatic balance. There is a danger of the counsellor outwitting the patterns of the clients, and not being perceived as the client's trusting friend.

(iii) An Eclectic Approach.

The main proposition of this approach is seen in the multiple causes which lie behind marital disharmony, including both intra and inter personal factors. This allows for multiple choices for interventions on the part of the counsellor.

Although most agencies would claim to take an eclectic approach, yet in effect they appear to retain their main emphasis on either an intra or an inter personal methodology, and in practice they would then add some of the other approaches, but give them much less time and emphasis in the training program.
Reflection.
I have chosen the marriage counselling agencies for this inquiry as there are a number of organisations which link these agencies together, so it would be reasonable to expect that some common threads would run through them all. Also, as an accredited marriage counsellor myself, I had assumed that these agencies would be more partial to my request.

Considering the available information obtained from this inquiry, there are a number of possible conclusions which could be made, and a number of unresolved issues which will need to be addressed.

(i) The Need for and the Availability of Training.

Contrary to an earlier inquiry, in which I had been informed that only a minority of agencies provided their own training, I have found almost fifty percent of agencies still provide their own training programs, although it would appear to be difficult for a well motivated person to obtain training in marital counselling unless they were prepared to:-

* Work for the agency which provided the training, or

* Embrace either the psychodynamic or the systemic approach to counselling as these are the two main counselling theories used by the majority of the agencies.

In the past all training for marriage counsellors was conducted by the accredited agencies without cost to the trainees. But within the past few years a few entrepreneurs have set up their own training programs, and their successful trainees can then apply for positions in the existing agencies.

(ii) Theoretical Orientation.

As mentioned earlier there appears to be no generally accepted ideas concerning what constitutes 'good' marital counselling training. It also appears that an increasing number of agencies are no longer providing training in any specific orientation.

Where previous training is accepted, it seems to be limited to either the psychodynamic or the systemic approach and here we have two contrasting viewpoints. With the former the emphasis is placed on the histories and dynamics of the respective partners, whereas systems theory regard the psychodynamics of the individuals as secondary to the patterns of interaction exhibited by the partners. (Dryden & Brown. 1985.)
(iii) **Selection.**

From the survey there appears to be contrasting views on selection procedures. Some agencies place a strong emphasis on the assessment of the trainee’s personal suitability for marital work, while other agencies place more weight on the trainee’s professional background.

It seems that more careful attention is given to the non-university trained trainee counsellor in the selection procedure, while university trained individuals are accepted at face value, and, in many cases, without orientation training or experience in self awareness.

(iv) **Supervision.**

In many agencies supervision is seen as a means of improving the counselling practice of trainees, and supervised practice is accepted as an essential part of the training. However, there seem to be other agencies who make no mention of supervision.

I am left wondering if it is still possible for trainee counsellors, in some agencies, to complete their training experience without their counselling work being directly supervised?

(v) **Self Awareness.**

Where self awareness is included as an essential part of the training process, it appears that methods fall into one of three categories.

* Personal therapy, which is usually recommended only when a trainee experiences personal difficulties in the execution of their training or counselling.

* Sensitivity training, which is included in the form of awareness groups. Exercises used are usually limited to the early stages of the training program.

* Working with one's own family, which is limited to a few agencies who are concerned with the use of family therapy.
From the letters received which make up Table 1, it appears that self awareness is used less by agencies who rely on counsellors who have been university trained, and many trainers seem to have become less enthusiastic about the value of self awareness and sensitivity groups in the training of counsellors. e.g. one agency, which had reported the inclusion of self awareness in their training, has trainees who complained about the lack of emphasis provided by the trainers on self awareness.

Summary.

Reflecting on the present state of the art in the marriage counselling field within Australia, a number of unanswered questions and unresolved issues are raised which will need to be considered in the development of any new approach to the design of a training curriculum.

2.4. The Situation in the United Kingdom.

Having considered reports such as 'Marital Therapy in Britain' by Dryden and Brown, and Freeman's 'Comprehensive Textbook of Psychiatry', plus the Journal of the British Association for Counselling, and personal conversation with U.K. trained counsellors, I have discovered that within the U.K. subsidised marital counselling is provided by one major agency, the National Marriage Guidance Council, which encourages the non-professional to train through their Regional Centres. Assessment is a continuous process spread over the entire period of training, which is two years. The trainees are encouraged to take an active part in their own assessment.

However, a number of other organisations are now making training in marital and family counselling available for the professionals. These include the Institute of Marital Studies; and Institute of Psychiatry, and the Tavistock Institute. These courses are available on a full or part time basis for 'experienced workers in the caring professions'.

Emphasis on the psychodynamic approach appears to be greater than a systems approach, although both approaches are used extensively. Unlike Australia, there appears to be a strong interest in the Behavioural approach as well as the Rational Emotive method of counselling. (Dryden 1985)

From what I can gather it appears to be easier in the U.K. to transfer from one training program to another than it is in Australia. There also seems to be a lack of re-orientation in training methods when this does occur.
Emphasis on self awareness does not appear to have a high priority, but there seems to be a greater emphasis on selection and self assessment than is the case in Australia. One main concern about the U.K. situation appears to be the lack of supervisory methods designed to assess the skills of the counsellor. Dryden (1985) found that it was possible for trainees to complete their training without their counselling having been directly supervised. Group supervision seems to be used more frequently than does individual supervision.

From information gathered in this brief survey, it seems that, like Australia, there is no training program available which caters for, or encourages, the personal choice or the self directive learning style of the trainees.

2.5. Introducing Participatory Action Research.

Having considered the 'state of the art' as far as marriage counselling training in Australia and the United Kingdom is concerned, and having made an unsuccessful endeavour to enlist an action research team, I will now re-consider the rationale for the basis of forming a new action research team, which can be committed to a unified approach.

This approach will need to include participation, involvement, and a willingness to take action in changing the present situation as far as the training of counsellors is concerned. McNiff (1988) explains this premise clearly when she states that the 'action' of action research implies change in people's lives, and therefore in the system in which they live.

In forming my team, I am aware of the need for heterogeneity, where each person can contribute to a common task. The team was chosen with a mixture of two people who had been counselling for over twenty years, two who brought six years of counselling experience to the team, two who had over three years of counselling experience, three who are currently trainee counsellors, and two who are not involved in the task of counselling at all.

Gender balance saw six males and five females. There were six tertiary trained persons, and five who were not. There were three people who had been married for the second time, seven currently married for the first time, and one person who had never married. There were seven people whose work was within the helping professions, three who work in business, and one who had retired from the helping profession, but was currently working part time in this field. The team also represented cultural differences as well as socio-economic differences.
The common threads which could be expected to bind this team together were:-

* Each person had an association with the writer.

* Each person was committed to personal growth - their own and that of others.

* Each person had a vested interest in the production of an effective counselling training program.

2.6. Participatory Action Research team Meeting No. 1.

Against this mix of backgrounds and interests, the team met in mid 1994 to plan and reflect on proposals to formulate a training agenda for individual and marital counsellors. During the first half of this first session together, each person explained a little about themselves and of their interest in contributing toward the project of researching the proposed action required in planning this training program. This exercise helped to create cohesion for the team, where trust and understanding could be experienced and shared by each team member. The team was beginning to form.

On this occasion I tape recorded the discussion, but did not write a transcript. However some important concepts and questions which came out of the discussion, and which will need to be followed up, included the following:-

* There is a disadvantage in following one counselling method or approach. e.g. Rogerian, which has been the main focus of telephone counselling, and becoming rigid as a result. ie. This is the 'right' way.

* Sensuality has been missing from the counselling field. How can we introduce the understanding and acceptance of sensuality, as well as sexuality?

* What about humour and fun in counselling?

* It was considered that there could be a number of people who become counsellors in order to deal with their own issues. How could this be incorporated within the training program?

* The needs of the 'Inner Child' may not be recognised in our counselling.

* Counsellors don't always practice what they preach.
* There seems to be a tendency for counselling to be perceived as 'problem centred' rather than 'growth centred'.

* Many counsellors appear to focus on issues which reflect their own concerns.

* We need a base for our training - core subjects, which are the building blocks for the rest.

* Core subjects could include 'Self Awareness' and 'Listening Skills'.

* How can we nurture the trainee's own potential?

* As clients often respond to different styles of counselling, then it would be essential to make different methods available.

* Perhaps it is not the method, but the relationship between the counsellor and the client that makes the difference.

**Summary.**

There appears to be an acceptance that the building blocks for a training course must start with 'core' subjects. e.g. self awareness and listening. There was also a strong emphasis on the need to include sensuality, humour, and the discovery of the 'Inner Child'.

Different styles or methods of counselling was also mentioned, and the last comment about the relationship between the counsellor and the client will need to be explored.

**2.7. Participatory Inquiry through Action Research. Team Meeting No.2.**

On this second occasion, which took place in August 1994, the team included Graham B, a consultant from the University, as well as Alan A; Jacquie A; Joe D; Kevan S; Pat C; Pat L; Noel C; and Michael P; who had arrived late. It seemed that, after some short introductions and review of the last session, we were ready to settle down into a joint effort for improving the process of developing a curriculum for the training of individual and marital counsellors. Team members were given a summary of the last session.
Although Graham B. was present, this did not appear to have adversely affected the full participation of the team. It was not long before slight differences of opinion arose regarding the use of humour, and I believe this assisted in raising the energy level of the team. It was interesting to note that everyone present worked hard to listen attentively to each other, even in the disagreements.

There appeared to be some confusion about the ownership of the research, as most team members addressed Noel C, the author, in the early stages of the meeting. It was not until the latter stage that ideas, concepts, and opinions were being exchanged between all members.

This change in the group process brought about a more co-operative relationship between everyone present, and team members were united in their resistance to any bureaucratic invasion of imposed guidelines.

Concepts raised in the first meeting were being expanded.

(i) The Use of Humour.

Although it was agreed that humour is often missing in counselling yet the team suggested caution. Jacque A. said, 'Humour, in counselling, cannot be imposed, it has to be used with caution'. Pat C. added, 'A bigger problem than the lack of humour is if the counsellor trivialises the client's issue'.

I, Noel C. added, 'When I ask clients what fun they have in their lives or in their relationship, the result is frequently tears, rather than laughter'. Apart from this word of caution, other team members drew attention to the constructive use of humour. 'I find it helpful to draw attention to the opposites, when clients talk about the negatives, I remind them of the existence of the positives', commented Alan A.

Perhaps the comment which needs to be expanded was contributed by Pat L. 'Counsellors need to have the skills to see behind the drama, there has to be fun at some time - too often we take ourselves too seriously'.

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Reflection.

Following the team meeting I was able to reflect and consider the concepts raised and it appears that the area which will need expanding is for the counsellor to develop a perspective on life which allows for fun and humour in his/her own life, which becomes a model for the clients. I wonder what kind of a model I am for the trainees? Life is serious, and is made up of decisions which have to be made at every step of the journey. I think that my heart attack a few years back was a reminder that I need to learn this lesson for myself.

(ii) The Inner Child.

In developing a meta approach to counselling it was agreed that the counsellor will have to look behind the presenting problems, or the surface identity of the client and discover the Inner Child. Alan A. said, 'Listening to the problems of distressed couples, I am reminded of the 'adaptive child' who wants to retaliate and blame the other'. Pat C. provided a contrasting viewpoint, 'Perhaps the person who is constantly jovial is also in their adaptive child. Perhaps the true inner child is that which comes spontaneously. Laughter will then come naturally, it cannot be forced'.

Noel C. added, 'Adler suggests that restricting or over-indulging the child can retard the growth of the child, and prevent him/her from becoming a responding and responsible adult'. This was followed by Kevan S' comment, 'Sadly too many children grow up with a lack of self-worth, because their contributions are not welcomed'.

How then can we encourage the inner child as we would encourage the actual child? The focus of the discussion changed when Joe D. said, 'Even counsellors have an inner child which needs acknowledging and encouraging'. This was followed by Alan A’s comment, 'Should counsellors have a supervisor who could help them to deal with their unresolved adaptive child issues?'

Discussion moved into the training course, with Alan A's comment, 'Is the training itself discouraging to the fun loving child?' Alan added, 'Perhaps every fifth or sixth session should contain a break from the training and provide a fun night'. The team had difficulty with this proposal, as it was seen to be an imposed idea - for whose benefit? Pat C. added, 'Perhaps an hour every now and again for relaxation would be helpful'.

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Reflection.

There were two very good ideas which will need to be expanded.

a. The need for the training itself to be an enjoyable learning experience.

b. Counselling will need to keep the needs of the Inner Child in mind in exploring the various issues with clients.

This aspect reflects my continued growth, as I come to terms with my adaptive child, who wants to please others, and discover my natural child, who can enjoy life and make my own decisions.

(iii) Relationships.

Following on from the comment made at the last session about the importance of developing a relationship with the client. a note of warning was given by Jacquie A. 'Developing a relationship between counsellor and client is important, provided it doesn't become a 'chat session'. Noel C. said, 'Counselling is not a normal conversation'.

The discussion changed with Pat L's comment, 'Is the relationship more important than the method, or is it a matter of balance between the two?' Alan A. added, 'If you haven't achieved a relationship you're not going to get anywhere, anyhow'.

When it came to the question of how such a relationship could be developed, team members provided a number of positive suggestions. Pat C. said, 'It is important to avoid jargon - we need methods, and we need to present it in a more relaxed relationship mode'. Graham B. added, 'Perhaps it is a case for developing a conversational method for presenting our specific intervention methods'.

Illustrations were provided by team members of effective counselling being provided while other activities were in progress. e.g. walking along a beach. Other team members spoke of their own experience of counselling and being counselled through the trust which had been developed.

Reflection.

Perhaps there is another way to develop a trusting relationship between the counsellor and the client, without relying on such jargon concepts as empathy and active listening. This could well be another way in which the 'gurus' maintain their control. One must use their frame of reference. My own journey has taught
me that as I am responsible for me, I am also responsible for my frame of reference.

(iv) Differences of Temperament.

The team recognised the need to allow trainees to select their electives according to their specific interests, temperament, and strengths. During the whole of this discussion, reference was constantly made to temperament and personality characteristics. e.g. Pat C. stated that the trainees with a 'perceptive' attitude would enjoy the opportunity for fun provided that it wasn't structured, while those with a 'judging' attitude would need to have their fun structured, and planned in advance.

Reflection.

The planning for this training course has given a lot of attention to the need to acknowledge the differences of temperament, and the various strengths which trainees will bring to their task of counselling, and the ease with which they will select the various electives, if given the opportunity. This factor will need to be kept in mind for future planning.

As my own temperament contains a strong 'judging' attitude, with the emphasis on advanced planning, I must keep in mind the need for spontaneity, where structure and agendas may need to play a secondary role. With my own need for structure I can now see how I had become a follower of structured programs and organisations.

(v) Core and Elective Subjects.

This was the area which received the greatest attention by the team, and this was encouraging to me as my plan will soon be developed for the proposed curriculum.
Again differences of temperament were expressed from the beginning of this discussion. In providing Core and Elective subjects, Jacquie A. said, 'My natural preference is for structure', while Alan A. asked, 'Isn't it more important to discover what the client's needs are, and therefore the counsellor will need to be more flexible to adapt any plans in order to meet those needs'. Pat L. trying to find a balance, said, 'There needs to be structure within the course, and you can do whatever else you want to do outside of the structure'. Joe D. added, 'Trainees need to have a contract to know what is required and what extras they can explore'.

Considering the general structure, Kevan S. proposed that an outline is necessary in order to provide the framework. Discussing the Core subjects, it was agreed that these will need to include self awareness, basic counselling skills, systems practice, and an understanding of social issues.

Joe D. suggested that there was a need for subjects to be provided on a progressive basis, moving from the easier subjects to the more difficult ones. Joe also added that structure is essential. e.g. Relationship Enhancement needs to come before Couples Therapy, which was found to be very difficult by those who did this course in the last training program.

It was generally agreed that trainees needed to have practical experience in counselling individuals before moving into training in couples counselling.

Although the choice of electives was seen as useful, yet there were problems which would have to be faced. Pat C. said that 'a big difficulty with electives is that the whole group could split into separate interest groups, and some trainees may even omit that particular elective. (This would prevent the continued support of the whole group of trainees by the total group.)

Alan A. added, 'Perhaps this can work if there are occasions for the total group to meet for support in between electives'. Michael P. suggested, 'There appears to be a need for an over-view of electives so that trainees can have an awareness of what is involved, or perhaps everyone could do the first couple of sessions of an elective so that their choice would be made on the basis of knowledge and awareness'.

Pat C. gave a note of warning, 'Many people are attracted to the counselling field, but very few are really suitable. There needs to be a process for assessing the trainees who are suitable before allowing them to continue into the actual task of counselling'.

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Reflection.

There appears to be an acceptance for the concept of providing a number of Core subjects plus Electives, which will enable the trainees to select the specific counselling approaches which encourages their individual styles, motivation and temperament functions.

There is also the need to keep a balance between task and maintenance. Trainees will have to learn the specific skills involved in becoming an effective counsellor and there is also the need to provide support through an enjoyable learning experience, supervision and group cohesiveness.

The research team proposed providing the training on a progressive basis from subjects which are easier to digest to the more complex subjects. This now brings me to my proposed Curriculum.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Proposed Curriculum</th>
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<td>Cognitive</td>
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<td>Marital Counselling</td>
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<td>Relationship Enhancement</td>
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<td>Core: Systems Practice</td>
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<td>Social Issues</td>
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<td>Behaviour - Modification</td>
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<td>Reality Therapy</td>
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<td>Crisis - Counselling</td>
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<td>Core: Basic Counselling Skills</td>
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Table No 2. Proposed Curriculum Based on Three Levels of Approaches.
Following the Survey and its results and the discussions of the participatory action research group the proposed curriculum shown in Table 2 was devised. The three levels of approaches shown are, first Self Awareness as a prequisite for Basic Counselling Skills, then the second level covers the various methods of individual counselling. With Core elements of Systems Practice and Social Issues behind them the trainees may then go to the third level of approach - Marital Counselling.

Each of these three levels can be divided (vertically on the Table) into three different foci; cognitive forms of therapy, meta-cognitive, which deals much more with underlying emotions, and epistemological, relating to the client’s meaning perspective. These will all be discussed in the next section where I will consider each of the components of the proposed curriculum in more detail, in which I will use an extended metaphor - the rose - to discuss the process of transformation of the client.
TRANSFORMED GROWTH THROUGH CULTIVATION
Chapter 4. Encounter through Research.

4.1. Introduction.

Having planned an eclectic approach to the training of individual and marital counsellors, and having put this plan into action, in the form of an experiential training program, I will now reflect on the effectiveness or otherwise of such a proposal, and re-examine some of the questions raised in Chapter One.

Does the temperament type or the learning style of the individual counsellor make a noticeable difference to their effectiveness as a counsellor? If this is not the case, then what are the possible qualities which could be assessed in a selection procedure?

Throughout this project I have used concepts like counselling and therapy as if they were interchangeable words. Is there a case for distinguishing such a difference? I have worked on the assumption that learners have the right to be self directive in their choice of counselling methods which would suit their specific temperament and personal preference. Has this concept a valid basis?

One might hope that the end result of this research will be different from what was anticipated in the early part of the inquiry. This is the time to pause and encounter the people involved in the project. How have their expectations been realised or frustrated? Throughout the research I have had the advantage of having a collaborative and immediate group of trainees, and therefore an immediate opportunity to apply these concepts in the training of individual and marital counsellors.

Collaborative inquiry has been an ongoing process, with continued evaluation, feedback, and modification of procedures and concepts in the training program. Everyone involved has willingly moved from seeking first order change, ie. making what already exists more efficient and effective, to obtaining second order change which addresses issues of program design and the application of innovative methods.

I have already discussed my rationale for using a collaborative inquiry and action research in Sections 1.6 - 1.8. perhaps all that needs to be said here is that Swepson and Dick (1993) consider that most action researchers have few, if any, good models to guide them in the practice of action research, so most researchers respond by doing research which is some awkward mixture of conventional research and professional practice.
What then is the main difference between action research and the conventional post-positivist method of research? Swebson and Dick (1993) in their presentation to the Social Psychologists Meeting at Newcastle University stated that a post-positivist approach seeks to understand the world by observing it, whereas action research seeks to understand the world by engaging it.

They go on to make a number of comparisons, including the statement that a post-positivist approach collects quantitative data to further control for experimenter bias, whereas action research perceives data as intrinsically coloured by the stakeholders perceptions, therefore uses qualitative data.

Returning to my own transformative journey, am I now moving back while moving forward? Having discovered the importance of action research, is there a danger of now disregarding all other methods? As this research has evolved I am now discovering that there is a need to combine quantitative and qualitative methods in the research. This use of multiple methods reflects my desire to be responsive to the people involved. (Reinharz, 1992).

As I encounter the reactions to this project I will use a triangulation method which will include collaborative research, data comparisons and in-depth interviews.

4.2. Participatory Action Research Team Meeting No. 3.

This meeting took place in October 1994, and it allowed two months for team members to give consideration to the ideas and concepts raised in the last meeting.

I started this session with an explanation of the sequence of subjects and approaches which have now been rearranged with subjects ranging from the less difficult to the more complex. This allows for the suggestion made in the last session of the research team meeting.

Discussion focused for a while on the subjects which had been proposed in the last two meetings but were not necessarily included in the actual training course. (see p.45) e.g. Carmel M. expressed a disappointment that Logotherapy was not included in the course. Pat L. inquired about the meaning of Object Relations Therapy, while I, Noel C. gave a brief explanation and provided the information that Object Relations Therapy would be available in the marital counselling segment of the course. There was also the need to develop skills in other training courses, as well as independent studies.
At this stage in the discussion, team members moved away from discussing the pros and cons of the curriculum to a discussion on the effectiveness or otherwise of the trainees within the program.

Pat L. raised an important question of how are the ineffective trainees culled out of the course? Jacque A. pointed out that failing a video assessment created more problems than it resolved. Alan A. said that he had observed that trainees quickly moved into homogeneous sub-groups, and then supported each other. Jacque A. added that in a few cases this support was one of resisting change and progress.

Alan A. saw the need for the sub-group to provide support and security, but once the trainees started to develop, they would outgrow their need for this group. In contrast, Jacque A. commented that quite a number of the trainees had become stuck and their dependency on their group had increased. Pat L. believes that a number of the trainees had learnt the right words, and 'I'm not sure that they have actually moved'. Jacque A. confirmed this within her supervision. I would add that four of the team members were also supervisors of the trainees.

Alan A. suggested that there is a need for the trainees to have outside people to work with, Jacque A. added that she saw a need for a number of trainees to receive further counselling themselves, in order to prevent potential problems. There is a risk of their own 'stuff' re-emerging in their counselling practice. Carmel M. asked a pointed question, 'why do so many clients go around and around in their story telling?' Jacque A. replied that, that happens when they become stuck. Pat C. added that there might be a lack of solution focused counselling, and she went on to say that challenging for feelings must not be overlooked.

I, Noel C. summarised the discussion as a joint concern for trainees who have not made progress in dealing with their own unresolved issues. One suggestion was to refer these trainees to the more experienced counsellors for further work. Pat C. suggested that they need to be challenged before being referred on for more counselling. Alan A. added that a recent self awareness weekend saw a number of the trainees becoming unstuck and starting to move forward.

Carmel M. added another dimension by saying that real growth comes from 'inner work', and it's 'hard work'. it's not a matter of dealing with an issue in one session, it's work that has to be carried on every day.

Pat C. asked whether the breakthrough is becoming aware of the inner work, and then proceeding on the journey? The discussion proceeded along the lines of this suggestion of doing inner work, and the struggle to change directions.
Considering this need for inner work, Pat L. suggested that a number of self awareness weekends would be an advantage. If unresolved issues remain for the trainees, then that person could be challenged and referred for further counselling. Pat C. pointed out that we need to be careful in equating unresolved issues with inefficiency in counselling. It does not always follow.

**Reflection**

The team was very animated in this session, although I am aware that there were some members who either didn't say a word, or if they did, it was not picked up on the tape.

Although I would have preferred the discussion to focus on the curriculum, the energy of the team moved the conversation onto the effectiveness or otherwise, of the trainees in the current training course. There appeared, to me, to be some criticism of my methods of selecting some of the trainees into the course, and then allowing them to continue on, even when personal issues and blockages seem to be preventing these trainees from making progress. This is an area of concern which needs addressing.

Having committed myself to the process of transformative learning, I am extending this opportunity to the trainees as well. Although some of them are experiencing some difficulty in the training, yet this is also part of their journey. The valley has to be traversed before the mountain can be climbed. These trainees need challenging but they also need encouraging and empowering.

The comment by Carmel M. about the need to focus on 'inner work' will need to be followed up, and Carmel would be a good person to provide an explanation of this concept.

**4.3. Participatory Action research Team Meeting No.4.**

Present: Peter O; Carmel M; Jacquie A; Alan A; Pat C; Kevan S; Barry F; and Noel C; This meeting took place in February 1995.

Apologies from Pat L; and Michael P;

Peter O. was introduced to the group and Barry F. was welcomed back. Question to be discussed was:-

Are multiple electives a good idea, or not, or is it better to concentrate on one specific counselling approach that counsellors could be more at ease with?
Noel C. commented that the subject 'Individuation' came out on top in the evaluation of courses which helped trainees personally, but it was rated in sixth place in the question "What counselling approach would you use in your counselling?"

Jacquie A. noted that a number of counsellors whom she supervises have said that they would like to use a number of the counselling methods, but they don't believe that they have enough skills to do so. Noel C. added that, that supports his assumption that trainees, although helped personally by a method like Individuation felt that they were out of their depth in using this method with clients.

Jacquie A. said, 'For me I need to go over the material again before I can feel comfortable with it. A particular approach needs to be re-focused'. Noel C. asked if the training in a specific subject needs to be conducted in two sections. First, an awareness of the personal application of the method, then the involvement in the skill learning segment.

"What you learn for yourself has more meaning when it is used for others', said Jacquie A. Alan A. shared that he and his partner were involved in a course on Relationship Enhancement for their own benefit, then some four years later they did the skill training in R.E. and it made a lot more sense.

Carmel M. posed the proposition that self application is the best way of learning. e.g. 'Individuation for me is largely self awareness. It's great for understanding myself and my inner life, but I'll never be able to use it in counselling others'. Jacquie A. added that you need to learn for yourself before you learn how to use any counselling skill.

Peter O. remarked that some counsellors may use a small part of a particular therapy, e.g. double chair work, in the belief that they are using Gestalt therapy, but it is only a small part. The discussion continued around the question of how much training is sufficient to enable counsellors to feel competent in the use of any specific counselling method.

The general consensus was the suggestion of providing a greater depth of self awareness and personal experience of a counselling method before the skills are taught. Noel C. gave a summary, 'Have I the right to ask a client to travel on a journey that I haven't travelled myself?'
The group took up this theme of self awareness and applied it to their own training experience. Carmel M. observed that the course in individuation was most helpful to her as it presented a personal challenge. 'I like something that challenges me, and I can go into it more deeply'. Carmel went on to share her experience of Clinical pastoral education and the need to work at both a spiritual and a psychological level.

Noel C. asked if the team thought that the counsellor would have to be at ease in going deeper into him/herself, before the client could be at ease in exploring their inner life? Everyone agreed that this is the case, and Carmel M. added that, in her experience, an increasing number of people are seeking something deeper in their lives.

Alan A. proposed that trainees needed to start their training with this awareness of their own unconscious experiences in order to understand their 'own strengths and weaknesses. Noel C. 'Yet we say that training is not therapy'. Jacque A. 'But if trainees don't do some work on their 'blocks' there can be no progress'.

Peter O. 'We have to ask how much time are we, trainers and trainees, prepared to invest in this process? Are we looking for long-term or short term investment?' Peter went on to illustrate advantages of short-term investment in the counselling field.

Kevan S. suggested that it was not until the self awareness week-end that he saw some of the counselling skills being used and he was personally involved in it, that it made sense to him. Yet should trainers set themselves up as models, asked Noel C? The team concluded that experiential learning is one of the best training methods for teaching counselling skills and approaches.

Barry F. reminded the team that other people may learn best be being involved in the skill learning first, and then integrating the material into their self awareness. 'For me, I have to learn the material, by numbers if you like, then process it into my awareness and understanding, and then learn the application of that skill in working with clients', suggested Barry.

Discussion focused on the need to recognise the different methods needed for different trainees, and not to impose a set approach for everyone. Pat C. made a case for counsellors with different temperaments being encouraged to use the specific counselling methods which would best suit them. e.g. 'feeling' people could have difficulty with rational Emotive Therapy.

Noel C. suggested that this is an argument for an eclectic approach. Counsellors with different temperaments can choose an elective in the course which best suits them. Trainees need options in order to choose.
Discussion focused on options available, including self awareness, experiential learning and skill practice. Problems were recognised in whatever training method was used, however Carmel M. strongly supported the current training as compared to training courses being offered and conducted elsewhere.

Jacquie A. wanted to know if the current training with its optional electives and core subjects has proved to be an over-load, or even confusing to the trainees. Peter O. asked if new counsellors need multiple methods when in practice they would more likely concentrate on using only one. Or, when does the counsellor start to develop his/her own eclectic approach?

The team discussed the results of the evaluations completed by trainees at the end of their personal counselling training course. These discussions will be the subject of a later report.

**Reflection.**

I wonder if some of the team members, who are opposed to the idea of multiple electives, are concerned about the welfare of the present trainees, or the lack of such an opportunity being offered to them during their training. Is there a natural tendency to oppose a concept which is different from the norm? The power of regression to old values and concepts is something which has to be resisted in the process of transformative learning. The new paradigm comes at a cost. The post positivist resists giving way to the constructivism.

However, new ideas have to be tested, and therefore they have to be tried before they can be tested.

**4.4. Differences of Temperament and Counsellor Effectiveness.**

How can I validate the effectiveness of training individual and marital counsellors, and assess the relationship between the trainee's temperament and their natural ability to adapt and become involved in a unique experience which allows the trainees to exercise their choice of electives and independent studies?

Herman (1993) questions the emphasis which has been placed on professional training, knowledge, and/or experience. He suggests that 'clinging to these traditional views may actually reduce therapist competence'. He proposes that the counsellor's personal characteristics are more likely to be the central determinant of positive client change.
The approach in this paper would support this change of focus in moving away from one which disregards the personal awareness or the individual development of the counsellor. The emphasis becomes one of encouraging the development of empathy and warmth, coupled with experiential learning on the part of the counsellor. However the question must be asked, what constitutes the desirable personal characteristics of the counsellor?

Herman (1993) summarises his research findings with the suggestion that the counsellor and the client’s interpersonal qualities are the ingredient which forms the ‘therapeutic bond’, while Strupp and Hadley (1979) propose that the essential personal characteristic of the counsellor is determined by his/her ability to communicate empathy and concern to the client.

Perhaps it is time to attempt a redefinition of counsellor competence in order to improve the effectiveness of the counselling process. In this section I raise the question of the possible relationship between the temperament of the counsellor and his/her personal characteristics of empathy and caring.

I have chosen temperament as this is the basic building block of the personality, and according to Keirsey and Bates (1984) temperament sums up the four functions of the personality, or the modes of orientation - thinking, sensation, intuition and feeling. Using the basic temperaments has made classification easier to handle. Each trainee in the training course took part in an assessment of their temperament, using the Myers-Briggs Typology Indicator (M.B.T.I.)


During my own transformative journey I was privileged to participate in a training program with Myers and MacCaulley, when they first visited Australia in 1986. Hence my preference.

Hippocrates once described the temperaments as the Sanguine, Choleric, Phlegmatic and Melancholic. These names can be misleading, as they are named after the four body fluids. Taking a different metaphor, from the Greek gods, Apollo, Dionysus, Prometheus, and Epimetheus, I have followed a Jungian approach, as these four were commissioned by Zeus to make man more like the gods.

Looking at these temperaments in detail, as they relate to personal characteristics, I have abridged the following descriptions from the references referred to above.
The Apollonian Temperament.

These are the Intuitive Feelers, as described by the MBTI. They are the individuals whose purpose in life is to have a purpose in life. They seek self actualisation, not only for themselves, but for all others, as they exhibit a sense of mission in searching for life's meaning, they often devote their lives in the cultivation of the human potential, and will reach out empathetically to others, especially those who have a genuine need for personal harmony. As Keirsey and Bates (1984) put it, 'Their need does not ground to action, it vibrates with interaction'.

As counsellors the Intuitive Feelers are likely to be drawn toward the intra-psychic approaches, where the emphasis is on the development of the individual. As they tend to see the potential good in everyone they have a natural empathic approach to their counselling. However they are inclined to become disinterested in the normal routine of daily living, and could move from one idea to another in their pursuit for meaning.

Assessment of Level of Effectiveness.

I am now faced with the question, how can I assess the level of effectiveness in the trainee counsellors? First of all I selected seven experienced counsellors and asked them to prioritise, on the basis of usefulness, a list of response skills which could be used by a counsellor in a first interview. The list below shows that the five highest rankings had to do with empathy in some form. Other response skills were ranked according to the counsellor choice, based on a majority opinion.

Trainee counsellors were then given a list of clients statements, and they were asked to provide a possible response. Their responses were marked according to the proposed rankings and expressed as percentages. The first assessment was conducted three months after the commencement of the training, and the second one was carried out six months later. Appendices 1 and 2 will show the kind of responses which were ranked according to the proposed list.

The counselling responses were ranked as follows.

10. Empathic response.
9. Empathy within a context.
8. Empathy with a probe.
7. Reflection.
5. Probing.
4. Support or Assurance.
3. Changing direction.
2. Non-probing questions.
1. Advice giving.
## Assessment of Level of Counselling Effectiveness

### Table 3 Intuitive Feeling

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trainee Initials</th>
<th>First Assessment</th>
<th>Second Assessment</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C.R.</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>+ 26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.M.</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>+ 15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.A.</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>+ 16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J.H.</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>+ 6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.G.</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>+ 25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K.M.</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>+ 12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D.N.</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>+ 4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E.F.</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>- 14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average</strong></td>
<td><strong>63.7%</strong></td>
<td><strong>75%</strong></td>
<td><strong>+ 11.3%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Response skills of Intuitive Thinking Temperament Types at two assessments.

### Table 4 Sensate Judging

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trainee Initials</th>
<th>First Assessment</th>
<th>Second Assessment</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M.T.</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>+ 24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N.E.</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>+ 14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K.W.</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>+ 29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D.D.</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>+ 40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H.M.</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>+ 8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K.K.</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>+ 5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W.B.</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>+ 7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F.W.</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>- 5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average</strong></td>
<td><strong>57.7%</strong></td>
<td><strong>74.2%</strong></td>
<td><strong>+ 16.5%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Response skills of Sensate Judging Temperament Types at two assessments.

### Table 5 Sensate Perception

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trainee Initials</th>
<th>First Assessment</th>
<th>Second Assessment</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M.Y.</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>+ 24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AnH.</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>+ 11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.K.</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>+ 21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D.H.</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>+ 22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Y.O.</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>+ 13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average</strong></td>
<td><strong>60%</strong></td>
<td><strong>78.2%</strong></td>
<td><strong>+ 18.2%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Response skills of Sensate Perception Temperament Types at two assessments.
Table 6. Intuitive Thinking

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trainee Initials</th>
<th>First Assessment</th>
<th>Second Assessment</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E.K.</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>+ 4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.H.</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>- 13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.P.</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>+ 16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.C. *</td>
<td>No data</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average</strong></td>
<td><strong>61.3%</strong></td>
<td><strong>63.6%</strong></td>
<td><strong>+ 2.3%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Trainee S.C. removed from averaging.

Response skills of Intuitive Feeling Temperament Types at two assessments.

Two analyses may be made from the data in the tables.

(i) In terms of the improvement from the first assessment to the second assessment irrespective of temperament.

(ii) In terms of differences between temperaments.

Imagery between 1st and 2nd Assessment

The tables 2-5 all show positive differences between assessment. In other words trainees shifted from lower (less effective) levels of response to higher (more effective) modes of response in 22 of the 24 cases where all data was available. Clearly trainees had learnt how to use empathy in various contexts more effectively.

The various temperament groups were compared with a one way ANOVA, and the results are shown below.

Temperament

It was necessary to perform two separate analyses of variance for the factors of temperament and, later, the learning style, due to the unbalanced numbers of subjects in the group as well as the paucity of subject numbers in the factored cells.

The analysis done on the Difference score for each of the temperamental types is as follows:

The analysis of temperament is as follows:

One-Way Analysis of Variance

Analysis of Variance on Score

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Temper</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>1.42</td>
<td>0.271</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2789</td>
<td>164</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>3489</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As the above p value is $\geq 0.05$ we must reject the hypothesis that one temperament group learned to be a better counsellor than any other group. It appears that although there was a significant improvement in the trainees counselling ability overall, and the differing temperament which they brought to the task had no significant effect.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>StDev</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N.F.</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7.86</td>
<td>7.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.J.</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14.14</td>
<td>16.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N.T.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>14.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.P.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20.25</td>
<td>11.35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pooled StDev = 12.8

4.5. Particatory Action Research: Group Reaction to the Data on the Relationship between Temperament and Counsellor Characteristics.

This was an open discussion by a group representing both trainees and experienced counsellors. Results are presented in summary form as from each group.

**The Intuitive Thinkers.**

*N.T.* The way we relate to people - there was a sudden interjection by another N.T. who had noticed the group of N.F.'s without written notes. - 'they haven't written a thing, it's all in their heads.'

*N.T.* The way we relate to people - we believe we're friendly but we're also reserved regarding trust. We're quick in making decisions and impatient with waffly people. We're adaptive with people at their level and we filter our senses, although other people are unable to do that, so it seems to us. We process everything we have in mind and other people who don't do that often become impatient with us. We look for the long term results. We have sharp wits and we often have to stay silent.

We can't stand people who can't make decisions - we tolerate them. We're impatient with people who change their mind half way through a project. We're interested in books - we want knowledge. We're willing to experiment and we'll always try something once.

In our counselling we can see the overall picture very clearly, but we have to remember to be empathic. We're very quick to adapt. We're adaptable to any type of client so we don't have to specialise in any one kind of counselling approach. We look for systems and patterns and we put in place challenges and possibilities. We're OK with rules and regulations of the agency. If we weren't we wouldn't work there. We're hindered in our counselling by being too fast and we have to dig deep into ourselves for empathy.
Question. Does your head take over from your intuition?

N.T. No - I think it's a bit of both - it's intuitively done and then we process it.

The Intuitive Feelers.

N.F. We don't need notes. We'll give it to you from the top of our head. We relate intuitively - we know whether we like you or not, and we don't need to check it out. I need everybody until I leave them, and there might not be a reason why I dislike someone. (It was pointed out that four out of the five males in this group of N.F.'s had a background of working with machines).

Question. Do you become frustrated with that kind of work?

N.F. Me personally - yes. All the detail work is tedious. On a one to one basis, and working with the here and now is challenging and it feels good, but don't ask me to plan for six weeks ahead. The intuitive part helps me to see the overall picture, and the feeling part is the key for opening the door on what is happening. It helps me to gain that empathy with the client, which gives me an understanding of the client's world.

Question. So you don't really have a plan for your counselling?

N.F. We go with the flow. We're not silly - we may not have a plan but we know where we are going.

Question. How hard is it for you to encourage your clients to apply their insights in practical ways?

N.F. It's not hard. We stay with the client. We work from our intuition in knowing what direction to take.

The Sensate Judging.

S.J. We have a strong sense of justice in life and it presses buttons when we've see an injustice. We have a strong expectation that people will move on - especially if we've spent time with them - we expect results. We dislike phonies or snakes in the grass. We have a strong sense of commitment to whatever we take on. Our attendance at courses is above the average. We're very reliable and always on time - we like concrete things. We like to talk - generally organised - we like results and we do things well - we don't like others to be sloppy. You've got to lift your game if you work with us. We like people who deliver the goods. With our counselling we focus on the process when we work with someone - we have a plan. One of the dangers is that we can get ahead of the client - we like them to move on.

We're very good at forward thinking - we try hard to get a handle on things - we're very much people centred. We make people feel at ease. We may miss the meta message, as we're not always aware of the underlying problem. We believe that we have a very clear approach to people and problems.

The Sensate Perceptive.

S.P. We work slowly as we want to get it right. We don't like people who play games. We don't trust people very well. We actually don't listen to the questions being asked - we would rather that other people take the risks.
(At this stage of the discussion I provided a summary of the results relating counselling skills to temperament. At that stage I had not had the statistical analysis done and so the differences referred to are exaggerated i.e. being made without reference to their significance or otherwise statistically. In retrospect this was not perhaps a wise move.)

At the beginning of the training program the N.F.s came out with the top scores for empathy and caring. The N.T.s were second on the list with the S.J.s slightly ahead of the S.P.s.

At a follow up assessment, six months later, the S.J.s made the greatest progress, with the S.P.s not far behind. The N.F.s made the least amount of progress, perhaps relying on their natural ability rather than on their acquired ability.

The greatest fallout were the N.T’s with 50% having dropped out of the course. Is it possible that they do not remain if they lose their motivation? It also appears that introverts have a slight advantage over extraverts, as they came out slightly ahead (5%) in their assessments, against the extraverts.

S.J. We knew that we had to work really hard, because half of the group seemed to have it through natural ability, so this information helps us to move forward. No use sitting back on our laurels.

N.F. I know that what I do I do naturally and I know that I study for an exam the night before rather than a month ahead.

Another N.F. I disagree - because I know that a group of us spent two nights a week in practice - we didn’t take it easy. We really worked at it. (The N.F.’s had a heated conversation which could not be picked up on the tape).

Leader. Any comments about the contrast between the extraverts and the introverts?

An Extravert. We like to hear our own voice and it’s hard to hear ourselves think. We often don’t know what we think until we hear ourselves speak.

An Introvert. It’s not easy being an introvert. Often I want to argue the point, but I sit and think about it and then it’s too late to say anything. That’s frustrating.

Another Introvert. If the personality has something to do with giving up or persevering then I wonder what the personality profile would be of those who failed the selection a few years ago and were willing to try again and they made it.

Leader. That would be a worthwhile exercise. so -

Those who tried again and succeeded were - three N.F.’s; one S.P. and five S.J.’s There were also seven Introverts compared with two Extraverts.

Perhaps this does reinforce the S.J.’s with more staying power and Introverts with being more willing to stay with their commitment.
N.T. We agree that it is difficult for us to be empathic and we don’t respond well to a counselling method which focuses on empathy. We seem to work best with something like Rational Emotive Therapy.

S.J. One of the weaknesses of the N.T.’s it seems to me, is that they have self doubts about their own competence, so if they get a scored result that’s low it’s going to confirm that perception of weakness, and they drop out because of that.

N.F. I would imagine that N.F.’s would make good grief counsellors. (This was followed by a general discussion on the manner in which grief counselling is conducted and whether one temperament is more suitable than another for this task - or any other task).

Reflection: This exercise seemed to have reinforced the stated characteristics of the various temperaments. From a training perspective it appears that N.T’s have to be self-motivated; S.J’s and S.P’s can be challenged, and the N.F’s need to be encouraged.
4.6 **Comparison of Extraversion/Introversion with Level of Effectiveness in Counselling Response**

Considering that temperament made no significant difference between the scores of the various temperament groups and the effectiveness of their counselling response, I wondered if the personality attitudes of Introversion and Extraversion would make any marked difference. In order to assess this possibility, the total group of trainee counsellors took part in two assessments. These assessments were applied with an interval of six months. The first one took place three months after the commencement of the course, and the second assessment was carried out some six months later.

On this second occasion they were asked to give a response to a counselling situation, where the client would be attending a third interview. (See Appendix 2.) The descriptions for Extraversion and Introversion were taken from the Myres Briggs Typology Indicator, and all trainees were accordingly assessed with the use of this indicator.

**Table 7 Extraversion**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trainee Initials</th>
<th>First Assessment</th>
<th>Second Assessment</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A.C.</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>+ 16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D.D.</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>+ 30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J.G.</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>+ 6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.F.</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>+ 28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J.D.</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>- 30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D.H.</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>+ 10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J.K.</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>+ 24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.L.</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>+ 16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.M.</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>+ 20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.N.</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>- 10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.P.</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>+ 24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W.A.</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>- 20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O.A.</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.A.</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>+ 10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.S.</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>- 20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K.S.</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>- 10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L.T.</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>+ 10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K.W.</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>- 10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P.W.</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>- 10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F.W.</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>+ 4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.Y.</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>+ 16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Average** 59.6% 64.6% + 5%
Table 8 Introversion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trainee Initials</th>
<th>First Assessment</th>
<th>Second Assessment</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M.A.</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>+ 12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.H.</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>+ 2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G.B.</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>+ 12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G.B.</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>- 2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.C.</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>- 2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N.E.</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>+ 32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.F.</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>+ 18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E.F.</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>+ 20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.G.</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J.H.</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.H.</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>- 8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R.J.</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>+ 12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.K.</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>+ 14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E.K.</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>- 2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H.M.</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>- 18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K.M.</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>+ 4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D.N.</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>+ 4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Y.O.</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>+ 10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J.P.</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>+ 16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.R.</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>- 16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Average: 62.2% | 67.6% | + 5.4%

Introversion versus Extraversion

In the following Minitab printout 2 column groups were submitted to a 2 sample T-Test. The analysis of means showed the following results:

Two Sample T-Test and Confidence Interval

Two Sample T for Extraver v Introver

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>StDev</th>
<th>SEMean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extrover</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>64.6</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introver</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>67.6</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

95% CI for mu Extraver - mu Introver: (-12.2,6.1)
T-Test mu Extraver = mu Introver (vs no =): T = 0.67, P = 0.51 DF = 39
Both used Pooled StDev = 14.5

The results show that there is no significant difference between the second assessment scores of those who are introverts compared with those who are extraverts i.e. p > 0.05. The effectiveness of the Introverts and Extraverts was statistically indistinguishable after the nine months of training.
4.7 Follow Up Action

One member of the research team, Michael P., volunteered to follow up the initial findings on temperament and counsellor characteristics, and his inquiry yielded the following results.

The Intuitive Feelers have been found to be good catalysts and appear to excel in Gestalt and also in Art Therapy. They become deeply involved with their clients, are often tireless in their efforts to help them. From all reports they respond to their clients with unconditional positive regard, and their use of empathy becomes almost automatic.

Although they seem skilled in helping clients to understand the origins of their problems, yet they seem to lack the skill in assisting clients to develop an action plan. Their biggest problem as counsellors is the risk of trying to rescue the client and ending up emotionally and physically drained.

The Intuitive Thinkers could be called ‘visionary’ and would be more at home using Rational Emotive Therapy and/or Transactional Analysis as a counselling method. Although they value competency in all walks of life, they may have to work hard at responding to the emotional content of an interview. They have been found to be skilled at identifying logical consequences and alternative courses of action.

Their biggest dangers would be the tendency to relate to clients in an unemotional way, and giving the appearance of being insensitive and emotionally cold.

The Sensate Perceptives are found to be good negotiators and troubleshooters and would prefer to use Conflict Resolution skills and Play Therapy or Psychodrama. As they are people who value freedom and spontaneity, living for the moment, not many Sensate Perceptives remain as counsellors.

On the whole they seem to prefer Crisis Counselling, rather than long term, in depth counselling. As they do not like to be tied down themselves, they prefer not to schedule appointments, but to keep the door open. Their main danger appears to be their disinterest in long term counselling and their reluctance to have follow up appointments.

The Sensate Judging are the traditionalists and will follow set programs like Reality Therapy and avoid innovative approaches. In counselling they emerge as the nurturers and caretakers. They are frequently the pillars of strength in a counselling team and exert a stable influence. There appears to be a tendency for them to accept the presenting problem as the main issue rather than digging deeper.

With their emphasis on involvement and responsibility their main danger could be their tendency to press harder toward a problem solution rather than working at the pace of the client. They also tend to be impatient if they see themselves or others wasting time. Even fun has to have a purpose.

I believe that this description reinforces the need for counsellors to be encouraged to develop their own personally chosen methods of counselling, rather than being forced to follow the same agenda.
Reflection

It is interesting to note that the training course had only attracted seven people with an Intuitive Thinking temperament, and four of these trainees had dropped out of the course within twelve months. This seems to suggest that the Intuitive Thinkers can lose interest if either the training ceases to motivate them, or the other trainees are not keeping pace with their personal ability to conceptualise the theory being taught.

It was extremely disappointing to find that temperament as measured on the Myres Briggs scale showed no difference between the groups in terms of the degree to which they could produce empathic responses on tests. More heartening was the fact that virtually all trainees demonstrated very positive movement in their scores. The course was making a marked difference to their ability to empathise.

More of interest were the clinical judgments made by trainees in the four temperament groups and by the post hoc analysis by Michael P. While these conclusions cannot be substantiated it is clear that the marked differences between the groups in more subtle aspects of the counselling process are worthy of more research.

If temperament makes little difference, then what about the individual learning styles of the trainees? Also is there a corresponding relationship between learning style and temperament? Tables No.s 8 to 11 will indicate the learning styles of the trainees using a maximum of eight people in any one category.
4.8. **Learning Style and Counsellor Effectiveness.**

David Kolb (1984) suggests that our early experiences, coupled with the demands of our present life's situations, influence us to develop learning styles that emphasis some learning abilities over others. I have adapted Kolb's descriptions to fit the various characteristics of the marital counsellor.

The **Converger** would be expected to show a greater interest in problem solving, decision making, and the practical application of ideas. As a counsellor the Converger could be expected to excel in conflict resolution skills, and in such approaches as Rational Emotive Therapy. This person would most likely prefer dealing with actual counselling tasks and problems, rather than with interpersonal issues.

The **Diverger** could be expected to focus on concrete experience and reflective observation. He/she would be less likely to rush in with solutions to a problem, but could prefer to observe how the various parts of a situation fit into the total system. In counselling the Diverger would engage in interpersonal communication and be willing to adapt to changing circumstances. He/she could prefer a client centred approach to counselling and could be expected to adapt to a systems approach as well.

The **Assimilator** seems to prefer abstract conceptualisation and reflective observation as a learning style, and could be expected to create their own models of counselling provided that the theory is logically sound and precise. The Assimilator could be less interested in people and more concerned with ideas and concepts. He/she may not be overly interested in personal counselling, unless the client can follow their conceptual models, although they could make an effective eclectic counsellor.

The **Accommodator** could focus on concrete experience and active experimentations. As a counsellor the Accommodator would enjoy becoming involved in new experiences and would quickly adapt to risk taking and changing the immediate circumstances. Plans could be discarded as this person engages in an intuitive trial - and - error approach to counselling methods. They would need to be careful against overly influencing others and making decisions for the other person.

The following assessments were based on the trainees scores for the empathy test, plus the result of using David Kolb's 'Learning Style' assessment. The two dates refer to the first test carried out three months after training commenced, and the second one being conducted after another six months of training.
Table 9 Learning Style - Diverger.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>TEMP</th>
<th>5/93</th>
<th>22/2/94</th>
<th>CHANGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M.A.</td>
<td>N.F.</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>+ 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.G.</td>
<td>N.F.</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>+ 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D.N.</td>
<td>N.F.</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>+ 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G.B.</td>
<td>S.J.</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>+ 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D.D.</td>
<td>S.J.</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>+ 40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W.R.</td>
<td>S.J.</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>+ 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.H.</td>
<td>N.T.</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>- 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AnH.</td>
<td>S.P.</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>+ 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td>495</td>
<td>578</td>
<td>+ 10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AVERAGE</td>
<td></td>
<td>61.75</td>
<td>72.25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 10 Learning Style - Accommodator.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>TEMP</th>
<th>5/93</th>
<th>22/02/94</th>
<th>CHANGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>J.O.</td>
<td>N.F.</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>+ 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J.H.</td>
<td>N.F.</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>+ 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R.J.</td>
<td>N.F.</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>+ 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.F.</td>
<td>S.J.</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>+ 34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H.M.</td>
<td>S.J.</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>+ 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F.W.</td>
<td>S.J.</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>- 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.K.</td>
<td>S.P.</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>+ 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td>392</td>
<td>475</td>
<td>+ 11.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AVERAGE</td>
<td></td>
<td>56</td>
<td>67.85</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 11 Learning Style - Converger.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>TEMP</th>
<th>5/93</th>
<th>22/02/94</th>
<th>CHANGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H.A.</td>
<td>N.F.</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>- 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N.E.</td>
<td>S.J.</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>+ 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Y.O.</td>
<td>S.P.</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>+ 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E.K.</td>
<td>N.T.</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>+ 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.P.</td>
<td>N.T.</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>+ 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AVERAGE</td>
<td></td>
<td>330</td>
<td>372</td>
<td>+ 8.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 12 Learning Style - Assimilator.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>TEMP</th>
<th>5/93</th>
<th>22/02/94</th>
<th>CHANGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M.Y.</td>
<td>S.P.</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>+ 36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J.G.</td>
<td>N.T.</td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D.R.</td>
<td>S.J.</td>
<td>66</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AVERAGE</td>
<td></td>
<td>176</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>+ 27.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Learning Styles

The *learning styles* analysis is as follows:

One-Way Analysis of Variance

Analysis of Variance on Score

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>L. Style</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>678</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>1.37</td>
<td>0.287</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2812</td>
<td>165</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>3489</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is no significant difference in the change test score differences in relation to the trainees learning styles. $F (3.17) = 1.37$ ($p > 0.05$).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>StDev</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diverger</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10.50</td>
<td>14.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodator</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11.86</td>
<td>12.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Converger</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7.80</td>
<td>8.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assimilator</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>36.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pooled St.Dev = 12.86

There is a problem with the fourth group (Assimilator). The single Assimilator was therefore not used in the above analysis.
Reflection

After analysis it would appear that learning style makes no statistical significant difference to the individual’s personal response characteristics, i.e. their level of empathy. Contrary to expectations the Convergers, with their preference for dealing with tasks rather than with people, appear to score the highest on the initial assessment but saw the smallest increase when the assessment is repeated some nine months later.

The course did not attract as many Assimilators, as only three trainees, who commenced the course, fell into this category, and only one remained after nine months. Numbers are too small to test statistically and I wonder does this reinforce the view that the Assimilator may not be overly interested in personal counselling, and would prefer to follow their own conceptual model? It is also interesting to note that the one remaining Assimilator showed the second highest degree of improvement.

Considering the question of the relationship between personality profiles and personal learning styles, it appears that there is no such relationship. The four temperaments were all represented in the Converger, the Diverger, and the Accommodator groups, and with only three Assimilators each person represented a different temperament.

So, if the temperament and/or learning style of the counsellor, which we have studied, make little or no difference, what does make the difference? After nine months of training I would contend that, contrary to some opinions, it is training and experience that makes the difference. This will be dealt with in the next segment.
PLEASE NOTE

The greatest amount of care has been taken while scanning the following pages. The best possible results have been obtained.

If temperament factors or learning styles make little difference to the effectiveness of the trainee counsellors, then I would pose the question, does experience make a difference?

In order to test this possibility I conducted a three months training course in 'Couples Therapy', with ten participants being counsellors with two or three year's experience in the practice of counselling, and nine trainee counsellors, who had not commenced counselling.

After two months of the course they each conducted a role-play marital interview, and were assessed by the trainer as well as by their peers. This assessment was based on each assessor providing marks, on the basis of one to ten, for using the various skills which had been taught during the course. The following tables indicates the results of this experiment.

### Table 13

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Counsellor Initials</th>
<th>Experience</th>
<th>Temperament</th>
<th>Assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M.A.</td>
<td>3 y.</td>
<td>S.P.</td>
<td>81.75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.C.</td>
<td>3 y.</td>
<td>N.T.</td>
<td>73.25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.D.</td>
<td>2 y.</td>
<td>S.J.</td>
<td>73.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T.H.</td>
<td>2 y.</td>
<td>N.T.</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P.L.</td>
<td>2 y.</td>
<td>S.J.</td>
<td>79.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.P.</td>
<td>2 y.</td>
<td>S.J.</td>
<td>73.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.S.</td>
<td>3 y.</td>
<td>N.F.</td>
<td>79.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K.W.</td>
<td>2 y.</td>
<td>N.F.</td>
<td>68.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D.W.</td>
<td>2 y.</td>
<td>N.T.</td>
<td>63.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Average** 71.81%

### Table 14

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trainee Initials</th>
<th>Experience</th>
<th>Temperament</th>
<th>Assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E.F.</td>
<td>Tr.</td>
<td>N.F.</td>
<td>44.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J.H.</td>
<td>Tr.</td>
<td>N.F.</td>
<td>73.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D.H.</td>
<td>Tr.</td>
<td>S.P.</td>
<td>56.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R.J.</td>
<td>Tr.</td>
<td>N.F.</td>
<td>49.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Y.O.</td>
<td>Tr.</td>
<td>S.P.</td>
<td>77.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J.P.</td>
<td>Tr.</td>
<td>S.P.</td>
<td>53.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K.S.</td>
<td>Tr.</td>
<td>N.F.</td>
<td>61.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J.D.</td>
<td>Tr.</td>
<td>N.F.</td>
<td>69.75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H.A.</td>
<td>Tr.</td>
<td>N.F.</td>
<td>70.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Average** 61.65%

**Reflection.** Analysing the difference between the means of the groups with a Mann-Whitney U Test gives a value associated with p<.02. (two tailed test). From this small experiment it appears that prior experience does make a statically significant difference in the trainees ability to use affective counselling skills.
Training and Counsellor Effectiveness: Experiment 2.

Taking an example of the contrast between individuals who have received some training in counselling skills, according to their response to this question, and those who have received no training at all, yet attended a presentation on crisis counselling. I applied the assessment which was used with the trainee counsellors, detailed above, to a group of thirteen people. Five of whom had received some training, and eight had not. The result was as follows:-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Counsellor Trained</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A.</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D.</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E.</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Non-counsellor Trained</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F.</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G.</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H.</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I.</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J.</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K.</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L.</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Average: 57.3%  26.12%

The mean score for those who had been trained is 57.3% and for the untrained group it is 26.12%. Furthermore the two distributions have no overlap - no untrained person scores higher than 34% and no trained person scores lower than 37%. It is not surprising therefore that a Mann Whitney U test is highly significant at p< .002 (two tailed test).

This reinforces the premise that training does make a statistically significant difference in the personal response characteristics of the individual trainee counsellor.
4.10. Interview With Carmel M.

Statistics can never tell the full story. Action research contends that validity is to be found in the personal experience of those involved in a project. I therefore decided on conducting an interview with one of the counsellors who had completed the last training course.

Carmel M. is a member of my research team, and in the last meeting (No.4) she raised the idea of the necessity of exploring the inner life before embarking on the task of discovering the externals of life.

I decided to add another research method by conducting an in-depth interview with Carmel, in which there would be no preconceived or structured questions. The interview would revolve around the topic of conversation already raised in the last research team meeting (p.73), which focused on the need to explore the inner life.

Noel C.: Carmel, what do you consider needs to be the main focus in counselling?

Carmel M.: I would agree with Carl Jung, who saw the one basic problem for people in the second half of life, of finding religious meaning for life.

Noel: What do you mean by religious?

Carmel: For me this means Christian spirituality which is very attentive to the centrality of the self, and the fostering of that self - so it has to pay attention to our stages of development, to our growing awareness of self, to passages in our life, to crises in our growth, to our search for God and human wholeness.

Noel: And the problem?

Carmel: Because our spirituality is rooted in experience, we find that some of the major events which have shaped our lives have been sad, perhaps devastating, and these events may be considered as destructive forces. So darkness mars what could have been a beautiful and pain-free story.

Noel: Would you like to expand on this darkness?

Carmel: John of the Cross called this the 'dark night', and Constance Fitzgerald called it 'Impasse'. I believe that it is something which comes uninvited and blocks our inner life as well as our relationships. In my work at the hospital I find a number of people whose lives have been shattered, who no longer have their former security to hang on to, and who cry out for meaning in it all.
Noel: Do you mean that we have to experience the dark before we can perceive the light?

Carmel: Well, yes. This crisis or impasse is a point where there is no out - it is unavoidable suffering like an imprisonment. Everyone in our human condition will be called to this experience in some way.

Noel: Is there meaning in the darkness?

Carmel: In reality there is a call in this event to a new vision. But it feels like less commitment and less love precisely because everything seems to be falling apart and we can feel only our weakness. There doesn’t seem to be any chance of going backward or forward, but just being trapped in the experience.

Noel: So what is the benefit of the darkness?

Carmel: Darkness is the place where the ego dies and true unconditional love for others is set free. It is the transition to loving with all your heart, soul, mind and strength. Moreover it is the birthplace of a vision of life and hope that cannot be imagined on the other side of darkness.

Noel: So there is purpose in going into the dark side?

Carmel: Going through the darkness is moving from the ego to the self, a painful time of growth. We need to contemplate the darkness, for gazing into the darkness produces the virtue of patience which is so often won only at great price. It is an affirmation of the self as a centre of being deep inside drawing us to maturity. This contemplation can awaken a new sense of growth and a new direction in life.

Noel: How has this affected your life Carmel?

Carmel: In my experience of the dark night, I felt inwardly devastated, a failure, useless and abandoned by everyone. I remember a dream. I was being stalked by members of the SWOS squad, all dressed in black. In my terror I was looking down the barrel of a rifle when I distinctly heard the words - "the enemy is within."

Noel: And...?
Carmel: I found meaning in this dream. It was no good blaming `them', for what they were doing to me. The enemy was within, in the way I was blocking the recognition of my own shadow and integration with deeper layers of my self which were calling out for my attention.

Noel: So the darkness can lead to another beginning.

Carmel: Only if the path into the unknown and the unpredictable is freely taken. It is important to realise that it is in the very experience of darkness and joylessness, in the suffering and withdrawal of accustomed happiness that this transformation is taking place. Transfiguration does not happen at the end of our journey, it is happening now.

Noel: So we need both.

Carmel: Death and resurrection fit together like the Yin/Yang symbol. This can also be seen in the sunrise and sunset image. So darkness and light interplay and give way to each other. There is a call in this darkness to hand over our whole being to the spirit of Jesus and let the new vision slowly break through so that a brand new understanding of the self will dawn.

Noel: You're saying that the real journey is within.

Carmel: Yes, and we need images for this spiritual journey. St. Teresa gives us the image of the `Interior Castle'. It is entered by the soul, the heroine of hero of the story, who begins a wonderful, if at times difficult journey through the castle, were the King lives. Carl Jung has a similar scheme of the structure of the psyche. He taught that we have to work down through many layers with courage and humility - often with great suffering. He even built himself a circular home, the tower of Bollingen, in an effort to centre himself in deeper areas of the self.

Noel: So what do you see as the goal for the journey?

Carmel: Jung saw this as individuation. We are moving towards the individuality to which God called us when he created us - we are becoming free, joyful and spontaneous persons God is fashioning us to be. The darkness and the pain helps us to centre in the deepest layers of our self where God is waiting to meet us and cherish us more completely.
We need to do away with words like 'failure' or 'mistake' in our lives - everything that happens can be useful for leading us on this journey inward. The more we are aware of our own journey the more we become useful guides for others.

Noel: Would you care to expand on this idea of a journey?

Carmel: The first phase of our spiritual experience is an outer journey to collective consciousness, and the second phase is an inner journey to the unconscious. Outer preoccupations which are active in our earlier years and which control our thinking, give way to an inner orientation, whose main task is letting go. In patient endurance of the crises and sufferings of our lives a deeper centre of being is emerging. Though this is a crisis for the ego, which is literally cracking up, there is much more to be gained than in more tranquil phases.

Noel: Do you mean that the ego has to go?

Carmel: No, the ego slowly adjusts to a new and nourishing relationship with the Self. The experience of alienation within one's ego and the dark night give way to the dawn of the emerging Self. As our healing takes place at the centre, the butterfly of our new life is being set free.

Noel: Carmel, thank you.

This interview has raised an important question. If I am to pursue the idea of developing an approach which explores the inner life of the client, have I moved away from a counselling concept and into the realms of therapy? Is there a vital difference between these two terms? In the next section I will consider this question.
4.11. Is this a Course in Counselling or in Therapy?

As I encounter the research team's reaction to this proposed training course, and I reflect upon the proposed concepts involved, a major theme has emerged which needs addressing. Is counselling, and therefore counsellors, different to psychotherapy, and therefore different to therapists? Or, is it possible that I am addressing the same concepts with inter-changeable words?

The British Association for Counselling defines counselling as:

The skilled and principled use of a relationship to facilitate self knowledge, emotional acceptance and personal growth, as well as the optimal development of personal resources. The overall aim is to provide an opportunity to work towards living more satisfying and resourceful lives. (British Ass. for Counselling 1989. p.1.)

While psychotherapy has been described as:

A form of treatment for mental illness and behavioural disturbances in which a trained person establishes a professional contact with the patient (client) and through definite therapeutic communication attempts to alleviate the emotional disturbance. (Freedman 1985. p.2601.)

The above definition does not seem to fit the general conditions of counselling, as I have presented it, for it would appear that therapy is more focused on revolutionary change, i.e. a fundamental change of mind or character. Whereas counselling appears to be focused on evolutionary change, i.e. the workings of the self actualising force, sometimes referred to as 'Physis'.

'Physis' is an interesting notion symbolising the hidden power of nature which has encapsulated the power and energy of the unconscious. This concept is based on the mythological tale of Nous, the creative spirit of the cosmos, who became infatuated with Physis - matter, and was enticed into her sweet embrace and chained with bonds of love.

The task of the seeker is a psychological one. He or she must liberate the psyche and discover the inner reality of the Self, instead of projecting the unconscious inner life onto the world 'out there', i.e. onto the people and situations that make up the external world. Martin (1990) suggests that Physis needs to be freed from the negative projections of spirit, which would perceive her as dangerous, seductive and devouring. Matter or the world around us is not a prison, but an essential companion of the journey of life.

Rogers (1967), in his book on therapy, talks about the human being, the client, learning to become more fluid, changing and learning. The same conditions as counselling is described above.
The Australian Association of Marriage and Family Counsellors have argued the merits and demerits of these two concepts for many years, and recently a proposal was made to change the name to Therapists instead of Counsellors. They came to the conclusion that a counsellor’s main task concerns enabling and facilitating whereas a therapist’s main task appears to be more concerned with intervention, treatment and reconstruction.

Perhaps the recent comment made in the Journal "Employee Counselling Today" Vol 3 1991, is more to the point.

Theoretical differences between schools of approaches is far less important in terms of successful outcome of counselling or psychotherapy, than the quality of the relationship between counsellors and clients.

Costa (1991) writes in "Counsellor Education and Supervision" that the ability to respond in an intuitive spontaneous manner and the counsellor's use of self as a person are the necessary conditions that determines a successful therapeutic experience.

In both of these passages the terms counsellor and therapist appear to be used interchangeably. Perhaps when all is said and done, the real difference comes from 'intentionality' i.e. not what is done by the workers, but how the workers think of their work. In other words, their own personal construct.

Reflection.

From a soft systems framework, counselling is what we believe it is; the concept that we construct which makes meaning for us. From my perspective, I believe that counselling takes place when the relationship between the counsellor and the client is such that the client is enabled to make the necessary changes and experience transformation. Others may call this process 'therapy'.

In this section on 'Encounter; it appears that temperament and learning style makes no significance difference to the potential effectiveness of a counsellor, although the ability to exhibit warmth and caring does seem to have a positive relationship to certain temperaments, i.e. the intuitive feelers.

Reflecting on the results of these encounters, it seems that the ability to learn and adapt, encouraged by the methodology of self directed learning, has had a more effective benefit to the progress of the individual counsellor.

Is the use of counselling methods, created by a wide range of theorists and therapists, providing sufficient scope for each counsellor to select his/her unique eclectic approach? Or is it possible that Fabry (1968) is right when he suggested that as the person and the situation are constantly changing, so the meaning which has to be addressed is also changing?

The research team has emphasised the importance of the self awareness of the counsellor and the essential task of removing the blockages within the psyche of the counsellor. This theme was taken up by Carmel M. in her interview, when she drew attention to the vital task of exploring the 'inner life'.

The team developed this same theme in their next meeting (No.4.), where they explore the need for counsellors to be exposed to a particular counselling approach through the personal experience, or awareness, of that approach, before developing the necessary skills for using that counselling method with others.

Is it possible that, with the exception of the course on 'Individuation', all of the counselling methods described in this curriculum take an objective view of the personal needs of the client and provides a prescription for dealing with such issues? Is there a possibility that the 'old way is crumbling and the new has not yet sufficiently articulated itself?' (Skolimoski 1994) This is a question which will need to be addressed as this research evolves.
Chapter 5 Evaluation.

5.1. Introduction

As multiple methods of research are able to add multiple layers of understanding to an inquiry, I will now turn to the use of evaluation as another method of validating my findings. According to Reinharz (1992) evaluation research is used to evaluate the effectiveness or otherwise of different types of action required to meet specific needs or to solve problems.

Wadsworth (1991) takes this same approach when she states that ‘doing an evaluation is actually doing a piece of research on other people’s evaluations of things’.

Having planned a methodology for the training of individual and marital counsellors, and having moved past the development of acquiring knowledge to the acquisition of more knowledgeable action in the training of counsellors, I now need to discover the value or worth of this program.

Can I now assess what has occurred and measure this against what was supposed to have occurred? In the spirit of collaborative action research, it will be essential that the evaluations are conducted by those involved in the project, and not by people outside of the program. These evaluations are moved from the normal statistical procedures where questions and answers can be tabulated with independent variables compared with dependent variables and descriptive statistics used to validate the results.

As my methodology is based on the self-direction of the trainees, I have moved the evaluation of this training away from a concern with external validity, toward a more naturalistic and case-study basis. (Grezian and Raulin 1989). In order to do this I have relied on the use of the ORID evaluation aspect of the Top Focused Conversation Method. (Spencer 1989). This kind of evaluation considers the Objective view, which seeks to draw out the facts about the experience of the trainees. e.g. ‘What was the key learning component?’ The Reflective view seeks to discover the emotional response of the trainees to their experience. e.g. ‘What aspect of the course did you like, or dislike?’ The Interpretive view allows the trainees to consider the meaning and value of the specific course being evaluated. e.g. ‘What was irrelevant or uninteresting?’ The final step is the Decisional, which allows the trainees to decide what decision is necessary or what action is required. e.g. ‘What application will this training have for your counselling?’

It is from this perspective that the opinions of the trainees themselves were considered to be the best validation of the strengths and the weaknesses of the training course. Or, to put it another way, Braw, Sheldon and Gaffney (1992) suggest that evaluation can identify elements of a program which are working well and highlight those areas that require change or improvement.
Evaluation will provide further information to back up the previous statistical information which showed that the experience of training provided significant and major shifts in empathy.

It will also indicate whether the curriculum is appropriate in providing the choices necessary for counsellors to develop their own eclectic approach to counselling individuals and/or couples.

Evaluation will also assist in the accountability of the researcher to the stakeholders i.e. the agency, the marriage counselling organisations, and the most important group, the trainees. It is this last group, the trainees, who were involved in the evaluation, both as collaborators, and in the true sense of participatory action, as researcher and researched.
5.2. Evaluation of the Various Training Courses.

5.2.1. Evaluation of the Self Awareness Training Segment.

This segment of the training was conducted over a three month period, and was undertaken by 30 trainees who were given a questionnaire on completion of the course. The results were tabulated and are shown below.

In answer to the question, ‘What aspect of the course did you like the best?’ (Reflective) there were a variety of answers, many overlapping.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning</th>
<th>Ratings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>learning about myself</td>
<td>7 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the assignments</td>
<td>5 o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the challenge to reveal myself</td>
<td>3 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>all of it</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>keeping the personal journal</td>
<td>2 o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the group interactions</td>
<td>2 o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the text book</td>
<td>2 o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>increased awareness</td>
<td>2 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>learning that I am equal to others</td>
<td>1 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the end result - a whole new life</td>
<td>1 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>discovering inner strength</td>
<td>1 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>self examination of the hidden emotions</td>
<td>1 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>process skills</td>
<td>1 o</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From these answers it would appear that 16 trainees, marked as * immediately above, saw the benefits of the course residing in their own personal awareness while 12 trainees, marked o above, saw the benefit being attached to their association with others or with the 'props' of the course.

In answer to the question, ‘What aspects of the course did you like the least?’ (Reflective), replies were as follows.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nothing disliked</th>
<th>Ratings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>nothing was disliked</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the assignments</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the pain involved in self growth</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the hidden memories</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>course at the wrong time of year</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>requirement to read the text book</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dependence on the text book</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>not enough meetings of the group</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the hard work involved</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>not enough examples</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>personal counselling</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the dedication required</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>keeping up with the assignments</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>material too close to the bone</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>learning to accept my behaviour</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reflection. Perhaps the most important finding is that 6 trainees (20%) could find nothing negative in the experience. What is also interesting is that aspects which appear as positives also appear as negatives; increasing awareness and insights are worthwhile but cost in terms of psychic pain; learning, acceptance of self is not all sweetness.
Looking at the components of this Self-Awareness course, the trainees made the following interpretive comments.

**The Text Book.**

- it was excellent 11
- it was useful 9
- didn’t like it 2
- it was too restrictive 1
- it was hard to understand 1
- needed more group discussions 1
- should be a pre-course reading 1
- a good tool for examining emotions 1

**The Assignments.**

- were helpful 20
- was hard work 2
- taxing on the emotions 2
- deadlines were difficult to keep 1
- did not like the assignments 1

**Personal Counselling**

- it was helpful 20
- it was difficult 3
- I didn’t have a good counsellor 1
- I didn’t do it 1
- difficult outside of the agency 1

**Personal Journal.**

- it was helpful 19
- it was difficult 2
- it became a chore 1
- it has become part of my life 1
- I didn’t keep it up 1

**Meetings.**

- were helpful 14
- didn’t remember the events 8
- it was very supportive 1
- the meetings were sufficient 1

**Reflection:** At this early stage of the training it appears that some two thirds of the trainees were willing to conform to the structure of the program without questioning. Does this suggest a lack of self-awareness? From the comments received it seems that over half of the trainees recognised the importance of self-awareness and the need for personal growth.

In planning another course I would need to re-examine the use of the text book and the assignments, which were based on the text book. More regular meetings of the trainees with open discussions and encouraged sharing could be a helpful addition.
5.2.2. **Evaluation of the Basic Counselling Skills Training Course.**

This component of the training course was conducted over a six month period, and, although it was attended by 30 trainees, only 26 completed the evaluation, as this was held some weeks after the completion of the course. This gap allowed the trainees time to reflect upon their experience. Comments received to the first question may be divided into three categories.

1. **What was the key learning component?** (Objective)

   **Growth-Centred**
   - learning about myself
   - dealing with my own unresolved stuff
   - I can take charge of my own life
   - the counsellor needs counselling

   **Skill-Centred**
   - the understanding of empathy
   - learning about the ‘meta-story’
   - listening skills
   - challenging skills
   - probing skills
   - the developing of various skills

   **Process-Centred**
   - learning to take the client deeper
   - learning to become ‘client-centred’
   - learning to focus on process instead of content
   - learning how the process works

2. **What was irrelevant or uninteresting?** (Interpretive.)

   - nothing was irrelevant
   - it was all new and relevant
   - the live-in weekend
   - I was ill-prepared
   - The Egan workbook
   - irrelevant comments by others

3. **What would you have liked to have seen included?** (Decisional).

   - more counselling practice
   - more role-plays
   - more modelling by leader
   - more supervision of group work
   - more positive and negative feedback
   - a need for more self-awareness
   - an overview of other basic skills
   - Tapes by Egan (Author of textbook)
   - the course was good as it was
   - more emphasis on action dynamics

\[\text{106}\]
4. Any comments on the following aspects of the course. (Interpretive)

(i) The Timing

- it was great
- it was good
- it was reasonable
- too close to the beginning of the course
- it was a bit rushed
- there is a need to re-cap the basic skills at the end

(ii) The importance of this segment

- this kind of grounding is essential
- it lays the basis for all others
- the basis of effective counselling
- it was invaluable
- it was vital
- it was extremely important
- great for skill practice
- without this segment the rest of the course is wasted
- it gave an overall picture
- I wouldn’t mind doing the whole course again

(iii) Comparison to other segments of the training.
(This question was asked after most of the trainees had completed five separate Electives.

- this was the foundation for all the others
- this was a necessary pre-requisite for all the others
- it was more interesting than most others
- it contains more skill practice than others
- it was too drawn out
- it re-infused other training
- it was more stressful because of the concentration required
- it was very heavy going
- it was an easy way to learn basic skills

Reflection

As the ‘Egan’ skills are based on the work of such writers as Rogers (1961) and Carkhuff (1987), they were able to present a thorough grounding in basic counselling skills, and this has been validated by the positive comments of the trainees in their evaluation. The area of discontentment was perceived in the need for more actual practice, modelling and feedback from the trainers.

In repeating such a course there will need to be more emphasis on explaining and demonstrating the process involved in learning and adapting these basic skills to the personal experience of the individual trainee counsellor, in order to avoid the risk of clonning, referred to in the Introduction.
5.2.3. **Evaluation of the Training on Crisis Counselling.**

This was the first occasion on which the trainees were exposed to independent learning, as each person had to research, prepare, and present their own material on a specific aspect of crisis counselling. Topics were self-selected, and presentations were varied. Some delivering papers on their own, others worked in pairs while others provided videos, or, on some occasions, guest speakers who shared from their personal experience. This Elective was attended by 24 trainee counsellors. The evaluation contained such questions as:

1. **What was most helpful? (Interpretive).**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>the informative presentations</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>doing my own research</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the role plays, which enabled practice</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the guest speakers - personal experience</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I learnt from doing</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the personal effort of the trainees</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the use of the videos</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the open discussions</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>this course was not helpful</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. **What was least helpful? (Interpretive).**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>some of the lectures</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>incorrect or outdated information</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the presenters reading from notes</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the talk on gender difference</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>supper broke the sequence</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the lack of role plays</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>there was no counselling application in a number of sessions</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>there was a lack of current information by some presenters</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. **What was new, or unusual? (Objective)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>the session on A.D.D.</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the session on blended families</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the session on HIV and AIDS</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>learning from the experience of others</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the ability of trainees to present</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the grieving associated with retrenchment</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>people sharing past hurts</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the session on mid-life transitions</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the application of independent studies</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. **What was the key learning experience for you?** (Objective)

- appreciation of each person’s capabilities: 2
- acceptance of the different situations: 2
- a crisis, can take different forms: 1
- different counselling techniques are required: 1
- I gained insight into life’s situations: 1
- personal experience is different for each person: 1
- I learnt how to deal with different crises: 1
- I became aware of the support available: 1
- this is experimental learning: 1
- I learnt how basic skills work: 1
- individual participation was excellent: 1

5. **What application will this training have for your counselling?** (Decisional)

- it gave me extra knowledge: 5
- an appreciation for different problems: 4
- helped me consider the broader picture: 3
- an understanding of the client’s picture: 2
- gave me a basis for developing my resources: 2
- made me realise the need for actual practice: 2
- people in a crisis could have other unresolved issues: 1
- need for a wide experience in working in this field: 1
- I want to specialise in child abuse work: 1
- gave me a clear direction for the future: 1
- it reinforced the non-judgemental approach: 1
- need for sensitivity in working in this field: 1

**Reflection**

As an experiment in self-directed learning I believe that the comments made above about the training are overwhelmingly positive and show that the trainees saw this segment of the training course as successful. Expectations were high and disappointment was expressed in presentations which lacked practice in counselling skills, or were poorly delivered.

Only one person expressed disappointment in the course, while the vast majority of the trainees saw this kind of training as valuable. This material suggests that the requirements for the next training segment will need to include more self-direction and open sharing. The comment which summarised the objective for this training segment was expressed in the words of one trainee, 'I learnt from doing'.
5.2.4. Evaluation of the Transactional Analysis Training.

This elective was attended by 28 trainees, who worked through the various concepts of T.A. in 3 hours per week over 12 weeks and during the last three sessions they were encouraged to work through a Life Script with another trainee as the counsellor. I have taken a representative response to the questions of the evaluation, as these comments seem to summarise the majority of the replies.

Comments

1. In what way have you gained a new or different perspective on relationships as a result of your knowledge of T.A.? (Objective)

I am more aware of which part of me, i.e. ego state, is working and which part of the person to whom I am interacting with is working and I can interact accordingly.

2. What were you pleased or displeased about in the training? (Reflective)

It was extremely interesting.

There was a lot of information crammed into a very short space of time. There was insufficient time to practice or to use the Life Script.

3. What is your key learning from this experience (Objective)

Recognising which ego state a person is interacting from.

4. What is your action plan for using this material? (Decišional)

It will assist me in my personal and professional relationships. When I have studied it more and feel confident in using it, I will then use it in my counselling work. At the moment I will use this method in my daily life recognising and interacting with the different ego states of other people.

Reflection.

In many ways this course on Transactional Analysis was one of the most popular segments of all of the Electives available having been attended by 28 trainee counsellors.

All trainees completed an evaluation of the course, but owing to a misadventure all but one of the evaluation forms were unfortunately mislaid, or, to put it another way, they were lost. However, on the basis of the verbal comments received from the trainees, I believe that this one completed form is a good description of the general opinions of all trainees.

In repeating this course it would be helpful to conduct the training on Gestalt Therapy in conjunction with Transactional Analysis, as both are usually used together in the actual counselling interview.
5.2.5. Evaluation of the Course on Individuation.

This course was a departure from the usual counselling methods used by counsellors in most agencies or private practice. This course was based on the psychology of Carl Jung, and focused on assisting the client to explore the inner life, and take responsibility for his/her own actions. The process also involved the trainee counsellor exploring his/her own inner life. Twenty (20) trainees attended.

1. How do you rate the effectiveness of this training? (Interpretive)

![Histogram showing the effectiveness rating of trainees]

Diagram No. 4. A Histogram of the rating scale for Individuation.

2. What was the main learning component for you? (Objective)

- aspects of self
- the way we project our weaknesses onto others
- discovering the influence of the unconscious
- learning about the anima and animus
- wholeness through self acceptance
- an in depth understanding of Jung
- the effect of the unconscious on life
- the validation of my own learning
- aspects of the Shadow
- the value of understanding opposites
- clarifying the place of the ego and the Persona
- the wonder of becoming individuated

3. What is your intention for follow-up work? (Decisional)

- reading relevant material
- understanding dream work
- to discover more about myself
- my desire to learn and use sandplay therapy
- I need more role play practice
- making connection within my psyche
- further work on the Shadow and on my projections
All ratings were above average and the modal rating was 8 - a high level of effectiveness, while 25% of the group gave it a maximum rating. The results are very satisfactory.

Reflection.

On the whole the responses of the questionnaire show that this course led to a reinforcement of the self directive learning approach as trainees were led to discover the power of their own inner self to withdraw their projections from others and to accept personal responsibility for the direction of their life.

Unlike self directive learning a Jungian approach to Individuation looks at the obstacles which can hinder self direction, and the resources which can strengthen the will. From the comments it is clear that the trainees gained a lot from this course for their own individual journey, and it remains to be seen how much this training will be used by the trainees as they commence counselling, using their preferred methods.

Perhaps the effectiveness of this course could be summed up in the words of one trainee, who said, 'The course was for me an acknowledgement of the deeper me, and the part of me which relates so well with certain types of people'. Or, to quote another trainee, 'The course made me aware of how much my lack of wholeness is tied up with my tending to transference'.

28 trainee counsellors completed this segment of the training, and as these skills were concerned with the personal relationships of the trainees themselves, the evaluation was also directed toward the personal application of these skills, which focused on the ability of the trainee to communicate with his/her companions and partners.

1. Have these skills been personally helpful? (Interpretive)

26 answered in the affirmative and 2 in the negative. Reasons given were:-

- it helped me to communicate and share with my family
- it highlighted the way we listen and talk to each other
- the emphasis on the empathic skills
- the clear approach to conflict resolution skills
- it gave me new ideas of creative ways to resolve conflicts
- the quality of our relationship has increased
- I haven’t used the skills, only talked about it
- the realisation of how I act in conflict
- I am now aware of how I speak to others
- it reinforced previously learnt dialogue
- it taught me how to stand up for myself
- has enabled me to pick up on other’s feelings
- provided more self-disclosure
- taught me how to avoid a heated argument

2. Have these skills created or made worse any family problems? (Objective)

4 answered ‘yes’, 22 said ‘no’, and 2 did not respond. Reasons given were:-

- I was frustrated without the opportunity of using the skills
- in using the skills, my partner withdrew
- other family members became tired of my practising
  (Other trainees did not provide an answer to this question)

3. What did you like the best? (Reflective)

- the balance which is encouraged between the couple
- this approach helps people to help themselves
- it provided clear uncomplicated communication skills
- the role plays
- how the skills build upon one another
- how the skills unlock the blockages
- I liked the flexible structure
- these skills really work in real life
- this approach empowers clients
- this is a skill that can be taught
- the client can become independent of the counsellor
- the integration of information and skill practice
- at first the training seemed aggressive, the benefits came later
- the problem solving
4. *Would you like to see changes in this course?* (Decisional).

11 answered in the affirmative, 16 in the negative and 1 did not respond.

To the question, ‘What changes would you suggest?’ the following replies were given.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suggestion</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We needed to have more practice</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>there is a need for more supervised practice</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>this course needed a longer period of time</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>there was a need for more practical experience to practice</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a need for a more in-depth training program</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a shorter course</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>an opportunity to see a full counselling session demonstrated</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Reflection**

From the comments made in this evaluation it appears that the trainee counsellors saw this course as an opportunity for growth and development in their personal relationships, as well as an opportunity for skill learning. This reinforces suggestions made by the Research Team, that a more effective method for training counsellors could be the exposure of the trainee to the experience of the specific counselling method before being involved in the skill learning segment of that method.

As this course was based on a psycho-educational approach to counselling it lent itself to a more directive method of teaching clients the specific communication skills involved in Relationship Enhancement. To each question in the evaluation, trainees spoke of their own application of this method, e.g. ‘it helped me to communicate and share with my family’, and ‘the balance which is encouraged (in this approach) between the couple’.

It was interesting to note that just on 39.3% of the trainees stated that they would like to see changes in the program, and those comments related more to the need for the opportunity for actual practice of the skills, than to any other factor.
5.2.7. **Evaluation of the Course on Systems Practice.**

This segment of the training was only available to trainees who had successfully completed the Personal Counselling aspects of the training, which covered two years, and required each trainee to submit a video of a counselling interview for assessment. 24 of the trainee counsellors were accordingly involved and these were joined by 4 other counsellors, who had not been previously involved in this training segment. Therefore 28 people completed the evaluation at the completion of the course.

Evaluation questions were as follows:

(i) **What aspect of this course did you like the best?** (Reflective)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>involvement in the role plays</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the externalising approach</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>understanding the patterns of a system</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the introduction to the different models</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the Genograms</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the presentations</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>working in small groups</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>different approaches through ‘hands on’ experience</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the video re-enactments</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reframing the client’s situation</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the variety of approaches used</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>learning about family paradigms</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the input and the feedback</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the assignments</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the introduction to Systemic therapy</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(ii) **What aspects did you like the least?** (Reflective)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I enjoyed all aspects</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>some presentations were too long or too dry</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>there was not enough role plays</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the triangulations</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the lack of de-roling</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the Armstrong material (manual on Family Therapy)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>some of the homework</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>homework not related to the presented theory</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>having to give my own presentation</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the course was not long enough</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>having to do role plays without preparation</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(iii) **How does System Practice compare with other methods?** (Interpretive)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comparison</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>this course provided the whole picture instead of a part</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>more than other methods, it externalises the problem</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Systems practice can be used in any context</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>it’s another tool to be used as appropriate</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>it is much more directive than other methods</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>it is very different - I feel daunted</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>it gives me a sense of relief and excitement</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>it overlaps other methods although it seems more flexible</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>it provides a total overview of counselling</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
NOTE

The following page(s) missing from original.
5.3. Overall Evaluation of the Personal Counselling Training.

31 trainee counsellors completed this evaluation after completing two years of training, having been exposed to the two Core subjects, and having the opportunity of being exposed to multiple Electives, as well as being involved in separate Independent studies of their own choice. As explained earlier this method was chosen in order to assist the trainees to develop their own eclectic approach to counselling individual clients.

(i) Rate the helpfulness of the various training courses which you have undertaken, in order to make you an effective counsellor. (Interpretive.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Rated At</th>
<th>By Number Who Completed this Unit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individuation</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bereavement Counselling</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic Skills</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict Resolution</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gestalt Therapy</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship Enhancement</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transactional Analysis</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inner Child</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crisis Counselling</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rational Emotive Therapy</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Couples Therapy</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-dependence</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One trainee listed ‘Art Therapy’ and gave it 100%. He/she was the only one involved in doing this course, which was held outside of the agency.

Table No. 18 Helpfulness of various courses

(iii) Which approach was the most helpful in your personal growth? (Interpretive).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approach</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individuation</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transactional Analysis</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gestalt Therapy</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic Counselling Skills</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship Enhancement</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inner Child</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rational Emotive Therapy</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bereavement Counselling</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art Therapy</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(iii) Which approach would you use in your counselling? (Decisional).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approach</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gestalt Therapy</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transactional Analysis</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic Counselling Skills</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship Enhancement</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individuation</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rational Emotive Therapy</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bereavement Counselling</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inner Child</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What counselling approaches do you believe that you have missed out on? (Objective).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Therapy</th>
<th>Votes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gestalt Therapy</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandplay Therapy</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rational Emotive Therapy</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dream Work</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inner Child</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bereavement Counselling</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict Resolution Skills</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art therapy</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narative Therapy</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Logotherapy</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychodrama</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reality Therapy</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transactional Analysis</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crisis Counselling</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Couples Therapy</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comment on the helpfulness or otherwise of providing the availability of multiple choices in counselling methods. (Interpretive).

Six trainees replied in the negative, with comments like:

- it meant you missed out on some courses you wanted to do
- multiple choices wasn’t helpful
- it is too early to comment

Twenty one trainees replied in the affirmative, with the following comments:

- it provides different ways of understanding yourself and your client
- having a variety of electives gives you more options
- it shows that different approaches are available, not just one way like Oliver Twist, ‘I’d have liked more’
- it is important to have varied skills to draw on
- choices give good exposure to varied techniques
- different approaches work with different clients
- electives create a broader choice
- it depends on the concerns of the client as to which method works best
- it gives a choice of tools
- it allows me to be more flexible in my work with clients
- I can do the course that I consider the best for me
- the range of choices allows for the differences of individual clients and their needs, and the ways in which we need to counsel

Reflection

One outstanding point of contrast was the evaluation that ‘Individuation’ was ranked first as the most helpful course in the trainee’s ability to become an effective counsellor, and also in the trainee’s personal growth, yet it falls into fifth place as an approach which the trainees would use in their counselling. I wonder if this reinforces the comment by the Research Team that personal experience needs to come before skill learning.
NOTE

The following page (s) missing from original.
5.4. **Participatory Action Research Team Meeting No. 5.**

Present: Pat L; Pat C; Kevin S; Alan A; Michael P; Barry F; Noel C.

The aim for this session was to evaluate the evaluations of the trainees, and to follow up the ideas expressed in the last Team meeting.

Alan A: The motivation of the trainee certainly has to be there and I believe it’s true that the method plays a secondary part. I think that the client would be completely unaware of whatever method is being used. If basic empathy is not present then no method will work well.

Noel C: Perhaps the motivation of the trainee is also linked with the trainee’s self-awareness. In my earlier survey of the marriage counselling agencies in Australia I found that very few agencies include self-awareness in their training course.

Kevin S: That takes the risk out of the counsellor’s own ‘bogie man’ catching him/her unaware while they are counselling others.

Noel C: I don’t believe that any counsellor is without personal issues and difficulties which could interfere with their counselling, unless they have become aware of these issues, and aware of their own strength and ability to deal with those issues.

Pat L: There is also the danger of the counsellor considering him/herself as the ‘expert’ as they gather multiple counselling methods to their repertoire. They can then believe that they have to teach the client the ‘right way’.

Kevin S: This becomes advice giving and not counselling.

Noel C: So, are you saying that if a trainee believes that he/she has all of these skills, then they act on the belief that they also have the required expertise?

(There was some discussion about the minimum requirement for trainees having three counselling interviews with a counsellor outside of the training program, and then role-playing within the training course).

Pat C: I guess that the main point is for the trainee to learn how to be empathic with others, regardless of who the ‘others’ would be.

Noel C: Can we follow up on the idea already expressed, that the method is less important than the motivation and the attitude of both the client and the counsellor? Is there also a sense in which Carmel’s thought that the real action lies in the inner life, rather than in the outer life, is worth following up? How can we move the client into considering their inner struggles? How can we link this up with the material obtained from the evaluations?

Pat L: I think that a lot of the evaluations were ‘self’ based, rather than ‘skill’ based. It seems that the trainees were saying that each counselling method was a means for learning about ‘me’. I would hope that the counsellor would not go into an interview with the preconceived idea of ‘fixing’ the client. Rather, it is a journey that both would be taking together.

Pat C: After a few weeks of counselling, some clients appear to be making little progress, so a particular counselling method is required to help them to remove the blockages, so that they can move on, and surely it is a realistic expectation on the part...
of the counsellor that the client will move on.

Noel C: To realise their potential.

Pat C: Counselling needs to be kept alive. The counsellor has to be prepared to take risks, to try out new ideas.

Noel C: So if the counsellor doesn’t take risks, then the client may not take risks.

Pat C: How would the client know if the counsellor was taking risks?

Barry F: What is a risk for the counsellor? Failure or losing face?

Pat C: If the client breaks down, how will I handle it? How can I help this person to look deeper?

Pat L: All clients are different, so it is great to have multiple methods which might work better with some clients than with others.

Noel C: Like Barry said before, it’s good to have more than a spanner in your tool kit.

Barry F: Perhaps an adjustable spanner?

Alan A: In order to conduct four or five interviews in a row, I need to use different methods, for my own sake - to keep me alert.

Pat L: So we’re saying that counsellors need to have a range of methods available.

Noel C: This is what this course has been about - to provide multiple methods so that the counsellor can then develop his/her own eclectic approach. It was also interesting to note that the trainees commented in their evaluations that personal growth was rated as high or higher than the skill learning component.

Alan A: I think that the idea of using a 'contract' in the learning process is very helpful. It provides a structure for the learning. What do we want to learn, and for what purpose?

Michael P: That sounds like reality therapy. What is the practical purpose for learning anything? We need to look at the question of what causes people to change? What is the motivating factor? Is it the pain of living an unfulfilled life? Control theory talks about our core values, and core beliefs, and core attitudes, being our driving force. Our behaviour is the result of our values being realised or frustrated. Advertisers spent thousands of dollars in getting people to make changes in their values and in their attitudes, and they succeed.

Noel C: Is there a readiness for the individual to make those changes? Perhaps he/she has to discover that what he/she is currently doing is not working.

Alan A: Is this a matter of moving from ‘doing’ to ‘being’.

Noel C: Many clients only want to deal with the issues at hand, but there are some who are motivated to go further, to go deeper. If so, are we, as counsellors, ready to take them deeper?

Michael P: It comes down to freedom to make choices. Do they really want to go
further?

Pat L: I wonder what is the difference between what they felt before and what they feel now, when they are ready to make some changes? Does the first part of the journey need to be satisfying, so that makes me feel good - how much better can I feel if I continue?

Noel C: What is the client looking for, or what are we looking for? To be the self that I'm meant to be?

Michael P: Our main problem is that we were born to imperfect parents, so we grow up as a dysfunctional person. If our concept of self is scarred, then when do we gain the insight that change is possible? A new self could emerge.

Reflection.

From the discussion, it appears that there is an endorsement for the provision of an eclectic approach, where the counsellor could have the availability of a number of counselling methods, provided that the method was not seen to be an essential ingredient in the counselling process.

There was a reinforcement for the concept that the personal life of the individual counsellor, with his/her values, attitudes and motivation would be the main element in helping the client to make the necessary changes within their life in order to realise their own potential.

There was also the idea expressed by the team that counsellors would need to be personally prepared to take the client to a deeper level, if that was the desire and motivation of the client. This would be a joint journey, where client and counsellor together would enter the depths of the inner life, and explore together for the hidden treasure.

Perhaps, when all is said and done, the most effective preparation for the trainee counsellor would be their own experience of moving from a shattered concept of the self, to the realisation of wholeness within their own life. The trainees are also saying, in their evaluations, that an effective way of learning this process would be through the modelling of the trainer. So experience comes before learning, and experience is gained through self-awareness, and involvement. This would suggest that it is not the training program which is important, but the training process.
5.5. **Concluding Remarks.**

Having outlined a number of therapeutic methods, and having presented some of these methods to the trainees involved in an individual and marital counselling training course, I now pose the question, ‘Is there a particular method which provides a better opportunity for effectively helping a client to make changes in his/her life?’

Research carried out over the past few years by Miller (1994) Dawes (1994), Lambert (1992), and also by Duncan (1992), would suggest that the answer is ‘no’. Miller states that thirty years of clinical outcome research have not found any one theory, model, method, or package of techniques to be reliably better than any other. Lambert found that they all worked equally well.

It would appear that the claims made by various authors of the models are made in an effort to influence the primary consumers - the counsellors, not the clients. The use of jargon is also used to justify the claim of uniqueness.

Miller suggests that it is the similarities rather than the differences between the various methods which account for much of the change experienced by the client. Duncan extracts four common factors, or core ingredients which underlie the effectiveness of counselling.

(i) The client’s expectation.

Once an appointment has been made, the client’s expectation for change increases. Hope is also raised with the reputation of the counsellor, rather than his/her counselling methods.

(ii) The counsellor’s expectation.

It would appear that, regardless of the method used, the counsellor prepares the client to accept self-responsibility and take some action to help themselves. Lambert has found that clients are, on the whole, unaware of the counselling method being used, and regard any techniques as unnecessary.

(iii) Client-counsellor relationship.

Lambert estimates that this factor contributes over 30% to the successful outcome of counselling. This bonding between the counsellor and the client is more likely to occur when the counsellor is perceived as empathic, genuine, and respectful. (Miller 1995) These are the very qualities which Carl Rogers (1965) considered as ‘core conditions’ for effective counselling.

(iv) Client involvement.

Lambert found that this was the single most potent factor in counselling outcome. Change cannot occur without the client’s full participation and involvement.

Miller in his research has found that self-help programs have worked just as well, in cases of anxiety and depression, as counselling conducted by trained counsellors. Dawes has also discovered that counselling conducted by minimally trained counsellors has achieved the same results as that conducted by highly trained, and highly paid, professionals.

The research team also emphasised the importance of the counsellor’s expectations.
and the client's motivation. Counselling methods take a secondary place to the inner power of the counsellor who has learnt to deal with his/her own complexes, and is empowered to connect with the client at both a conscious and an unconscious level. Stein (1982) goes as far as to suggest that individuation involves the transformation of the 'counsellor' as well as the client.

There is a sense in which the motivation of the client activates the growth promoting process of the client's inner life. The most damaging risk is for the counsellor to interfere with the process and damage the client's potential growth.

Yet the counsellor is involved with the process, and if this intrusion is to become a catalyst for insight and not for interference then the counsellor will need to be committed to his/her own exploration of the inner life. Perhaps this is the missing ingredient which lies behind the comment in the final evaluation of the personal counselling course (5.5.) that 'Individuation' was ranked the highest in helpfulness and personal growth, but fell to fifth place in the approach which trainee counsellors would use in their own counselling.

There has been an expressed need, reinforced by the research team, that awareness and experience must come before skill learning. So we come back to the most important ingredient in the training and preparation of individual and marital counsellors - their own inner life, or subjective experience.

Guggenbuhl-Craig (1982) maintains that counsellors have a bad habit of talking about the inner life instead of experiencing it. This appears to have been endorsed in the survey which I conducted with the Marriage Counselling Agencies throughout Australia. Very few agencies provide a segment on self-awareness within their training programs.

Perhaps the most effective way of training counsellors will be the introduction of a subjective process which will be personally experienced by the trainees in a dual capacity of client and counsellor. This could include regular supervision during the training period. The process of transformation requires the trainee counsellor to concentrate upon his/her own subjective development, before he/she is free to focus on the development of the client.

Perhaps the next training course would need to be one in which the trainee counsellor is engaged as a pilgrim on a journey of self-discovery. Just as the trainer needs to model the process for the trainees, so will the counsellor need to model the process for the client, as they both explore the depths of the inner life together.
Chapter 3. An Overview of the Training Curriculum for Individual and Marital Counsellors.

I have taken the symbol of the blossoming of the rose, in order to describe this process, as this flower has been regarded as a symbol of the soul, or the inner self, for hundreds of years in both the East and the West. The transformation of the client through the counselling process is paralleled in the dynamic visualisation of the rose, of its transition and development from the closed bud to the fully opened bloom.

When the clients first presents for counselling, it is likely that their inner being, the Self, is concealed, confined, and enveloped by their shadow and hindered by the obstacles in their life. Steps required for the unfolding of the bud, (the Self) are as follows.

Level 1. The Grafting.
Level 2. The Unfolding.
Level 3. The Nurturing.
Level 4. The Pollinating.
Level 5. The Blossoming.

3.1. a. The Overview.

Within a transformative perspective, individuals are empowered to discover their own direction and formulate their own values. The Action research team proposed a specific framework which enables the counsellor the freedom to use whatever counselling method he/she found workable and suitable to his/her temperament and individual interest.

At the same time it must not be overlooked that counselling with each individual client or couple calls for a combination and alteration of various methods according to the needs of the client. This allows an eclectic approach with the emphasis on the process rather than on the content of the training curriculum.

Level 1. The Grafting.

Our closed bud will need to be grasped gently, and for this we will need to develop a relationship of mutual trust and respect. Our influence on the client will be strong because of the situation and we will need to eliminate through personal awareness and training, those aspects of this influence which might be harmful or create an extra obstacle for the client.
If we believe, as does Rogers (1961) and Maslow (1968) that behind every pathological facade of symptoms and disorders there is an aspect which remains positive and effective, then it will follow that we will address this better part with a spirit of confidence, trust, and appreciation.

This is the essence of unconditional acceptance, which conveys our trust in the client's ability to marshal certain positive, constructive forces within him/herself. This initial stage of 'grafting', or joining with the client, demands a great deal of patience, attention, and interest, on the part of the counsellor, as well as time.

This is also an essential aspect of the transformative learning process. New values, new truths, new beliefs, have to be grasped, gently but firmly, before they can take 'hold'. Accordingly, the following components of this curriculum are focused on this process.

**Level 2. The Unfolding.**

This stage has its beginning in its prototype, the confessional. There is a need for the client to open up and face the dark, or disturbing side of his/her life. So often when the individual becomes aware of problems the first reaction is usually one of repression, 'If I don't face it, I can pretend that it's not there'.

Sometimes the very gentleness of the counsellor can prevent this 'unfolding' experience. The client may never open up to the possibilities of a new or renewed life. How does the counsellor open the client up to his/her potential wholeness? There are many methods and they all lead to the rediscovery of an ancient truth, catharsis or inner cleansing is an essential element to this unfolding experience.

This is also another step in the process of transformative learning. Leaving the old for the new is not easy. It will involve a struggle.

**Level 3  The Nurturing.**

After the unfolding come the gentle drops of psychic and emotional refreshment, which makes growth possible. However, there are two immediate dangers to be faced at this stage of the counselling process.

* The client may discontinue the counselling with the belief that the catharsis is an end in itself; and/or
* The client may feel so bound to the counsellor through this act of confession that either he/she or the counsellor may not be willing to sever the attachment.

How can we nurture the client without creating a dependent relationship? We may have to deal with a new symptom, a formation of a dependence on the part of the client. This process of transference is an unconscious one and the counsellor, who has appeared in the role of a parent, or mother-confessor, will need to be careful that he/she is aware of any counter-transference that may occur.

The counsellor will need to nurture the client through this period until insight occurs and personal responsibility is accepted. Insight brings knowledge and ideas for handling life’s issues. Carl Jung (1966) suggests that man believes that he alone moulds these ideas, but in reality they mould him and make him their unwilling mouthpiece. However, if nurturing is overdone this can leave the client an intelligent but still incapable individual.

The progressive stages of transformative learning require the learner to move from being under the direction of others to accepting responsibility for self chosen goals. At this point the learner needs to be empowered and encouraged in making such a transition.

**Level 4. The Pollinating.**

At this stage in the counselling process we come to realise that no confession and no amount of nurturing will make the ill-formed tree grow straight. It must now be trained. e.g. To gain insight into the need to communicate effectively will not help the individual to actually communicate unless he/she is able to learn some communication skills. The individual is not likely to learn those skills unless motivated to do so.

The pollinating process will be helped through the learning of a number of specific skills. e.g. Gestalt therapy; Transactional Analysis; Psychosynthesis; Relationship Enhancement, to name a few. But what works for one person does not necessarily work for another. A good rule of thumb is that a counselling method must work for the counsellor personally before it can work for the client.

Looking back on my own transformative journey, I realise how important it was for me to learn new methods which were based on my new value that the power is within. I had the potential, the resources had to come through my learning and commitment. New ideas were beginning to emerge.
Level 5. The Blossoming.

What is this transforming experience? It is as if something within is opening up, as the inner barriers to growth start to disappear. This experience has been described as 'creative inspiration', 'a transfigured vision', 'an insight', 'liberation', and 'a realisation of the human potential'. Old patterns of dysfunctional living are being replaced by an increase of self-worth and a personal evaluation. As Ferrucci (1982) puts it, this is a birth into a new and wider world full of unsuspected possibilities.

I have to remember that the needs and necessities of individual clients vary. What sets one free is for another, a prison. In counselling two primary factors come together in the process - that is, two persons, neither of whom is a fixed and determinable unit. The meeting of these personalities, counsellor and client, is like the contact of two chemical substances. If there is any reaction, transformation of the client and of the counsellor can result.

There is a sense in which the counsellor is as much in counselling as is the client. Both are part of the psychic process, and both are equally exposed to the transforming influence. To work on him/herself with an equal concentration as he/she works with the client is no small achievement.

This transforming experience is like the blossoming of a beautiful rose. The client not only opens up to the new possibilities, but the client can now contribute to the good of the world. It is as if their fragrance spreads out and infiltrates the darkest corners, revealing the shadow side of life as a friend and not as an adversary.

If transformative learning has an influence in this training course, then the end result will see some of the trainees become the trainers, and some of the clients enrolling in the next training program.

The preceding pages have dealt with the counselling process at the level of metaphor and myth. What follows are the practical concrete aspects of the training/learning function which have to be dealt in light of the action research group and the trainee's carefully evaluated Plan, Action and reflection.
Plan
My plan is to provide a summary of the core competencies and the electives which could be made available through our Agency or as an independent study through external sources. Having presented a proposed overview, expanded details will be included in the Appendix, in which I will express some of my personal concerns, culled from my experience and study in the specific subject.

Action
As I am conducting a training program in counselling skills and methods concurrent with this research, I will have the opportunity to apply theory to practice.

Reflection
The training group will evaluate each module in the course, and the research team will reflect on the positives and negatives of each segment. It is through reflection that I have come to realise that this proposed curriculum is but part of the total process, and not the pivot point of my research. Hence, the bulk of the curriculum is now included in the Appendix (Volume 2).

This process took place between August and October, 1994, and the proposals were the result of the joint effort of both the team members, and my own research and inquiry.

Vision
By using participatory action research my aim is to design a training program for suitably selected individuals which will enable them to develop their own unique, self directed framework of choices among available options useful for individual and marital counselling. This will be accomplished through the following goals.

(i) To create a curriculum which reflects current theoretical concerns, and a systemic approach to inter and intra personal issues.

(ii) To develop core subjects which are considered essential for the development of effective counsellors.

(iii) To provide a range of counselling methods which cater for the various temperaments of the trainee counsellors.

(iv) To encourage the trainees to exercise self direction and personal responsibility in selecting their electives.

The next pages, Section 3.1 - 3.16, give a somewhat extended outline of the subjects of the curriculum. However as mentioned above Volume 2 of the thesis gives a much more detailed level of explanation of curriculum content.
Introduction to Electives.

Electives represent the core of this approach to the training of counsellors. Electives allow for the differences in temperament, trainee interests and personal motivation to be expressed in the specific set of counselling skills, and theoretical orientation, chosen by the trainee counsellor to meet the needs of the specific client/counsellor relationship.

The availability of electives will help to prevent the cloning of trainees, so instead of the duplication of one particular counselling method, as presented by the trainer or agency, we can have a variety of methods available as a result of the heterogeneity of the electives undertaken by the trainee counsellors.

Applying this methodology to individual and marital counselling is a practical expression of the principles of social ecology, where multiple theories and methods as used in the interest of human services. This also avoids, or even solves, the dilemma of being caught in a bond between using a psychodynamic or a systemic approach.

One major problem in encouraging an eclectic approach is the possible stress created for supervisors, as they endeavour to assist and support counsellors in the use of skills with which they may not be familiar. This will require supervisors to place more emphasis on the process of counselling, instead of on the content of the counselling sessions.

Clients, like counsellors, come to counselling with a wide variety of needs, motivation and temperaments, so the methods available will need to address these various needs. There are three main levels of counselling approaches which will be covered in the available electives.

(i) **The Cognitive Level.**

The cognitive level refers to the immediate, practical needs of the client in his/her search for down to earth solutions to the presenting problems. There are many situations where a crisis occurs which requires a cognitive, easy to understand, action program.

(ii) **The Meta-Cognitive Level.**

Frequently the presenting problem is not the real issue, we need to seek for the underlying, or meta-cognitive, problem. The counsellor will tease out the way that the client feels about his/her feelings, or how they think about the way that they think. What lies behind the surface?
(iii) **The Epistemological Level.**

What is the client’s frame of reference, or meaning perspective? If change is to occur which creates a paradigm shift, then the client will need to be encouraged to re-examine his/her current life’s philosophies. This is where the client takes personal responsibility for the direction of his/her own life.

The Three Levels of Available Electives.
3.1. Core Competency of Self Awareness
(see section 3.1. in the Appendix)

If the counsellor is not to be emotionally swamped and overpowered by the pathology of those who come for help, then the training program will need to commence with the trainee's introspective understanding of his/her inner conflicts, strengths and weaknesses. This would need to be done in such a way that the emphasis would be on the constructive strengthening of the trainee's self-concept, ego strength and personal awareness.

Self-awareness would be introduced through the use of:-

(i) Journaling
(ii) Personal counselling
(iii) Self therapy

Concerns: There could be danger of the trainee becoming over introspective, and then disregarding the resources available externally.

There is also the danger of the trainee becoming so aware of his/her own dysfunctions, that these could be transferred onto clients later on.

Know Thyself

Learning starts with me

What are my resources?

Stop before you start.
3.2. Core Competency of Basic Counselling Skills.

I have taken and adapted the recognised co counselling skills as proposed by Gerald Egan (1990) as the base for providing the basic skills. These skills did not originate with Egan, for they have been culled from such writers as Rogers (1967, 1983); Carkhuff (1987); Bandura (1986); Heppner (1988); and the learning cycle of Kolb (1985).

Egan provides a wide range of possible interventions and action strategies which can be used by the client, with the counsellor's help, in formulating action plans. These interventions include:-

(i) Physical and emotional attending.
(ii) Active listening.
(iii) Empathic responding.
(iv) Probing skills.
(v) Clarifying.
(vi) Challenging.
(vii) Advanced empathy.
(viii) Immediacy.
(ix) Paradoxical challenge.
(x) Goal setting.
(xi) Action strategies.

(see section 3.2. in Appendix for explanations)

Concerns. I wonder if there is a danger of the counsellor rushing into 'action strategies' too quickly, without allowing the client to move at his/her own pace.

I am also concerned that some counsellors could become reliant of the sequence of the skills without being creative enough in using their intuition to work within the client's framework.
3.3 Core Competency of Systems Practice.

This segment would be introduced before the Couples counselling commenced, and in fact would act as a introduction to the marital work. It would therefore be provided after the personal counselling electives.

According to Satir (1967) the marital relationship is the axis around which all other family relationships are formed, so the ‘couple’ become the ‘architects’ of their family system. It is when that system breaks down, or becomes dysfunctional, that intervention in the system is required.

As systems can exist in ‘hard’ forms, where functions and boundaries are fairly fixed, and also in ‘soft’ forms, where the connections between the various parts are more fluid, so family systems theory will need to move from a consideration of the hard system approach of Minuchin (1974) to the soft systems approach of Satir (1967), Hoffmann (1981) and Papp (1983).

Proposed concepts for consideration:

(i) Structural Therapy.
(ii) Forming the Therapeutic System.
(iii) Restructuring the System.
(iv) The Cybernetics of the Family/Marital System.
(v) Symptom Typologies.
(vi) Family Paradigms.
(vii) Pathological Ambivalence.
(viii) Balance Theory.
(ix) The Management of Conflict.
(x) The Systemic Model.

(An expansion of these topics is found in Section 3.3. of the Appendix).

Concerns In considering the system there is the possibility of overlooking the personal needs of the individual members of the system.

There is also the risk that the emphasis of the counselling will be focused externally on the connections and inter-relationships between the family members, and in the process, miss out on the meta messages and the psychic influences of the unconscious.

Within an agency which offers crisis counselling, addressing contemporary social issues becomes an essential strategy which cannot be over-looked. Self-fulfilment is frequently restrained by the environment and social factors which are part and parcel of our society.

There are many issues which undermine the confidence of the client and would need to be confronted within a counselling session. The trainees were encouraged to brainstorm the social factors which could be involved, and they developed the following list.

(i)  Domestic violence/abuse/sex.
(ii) Separation/Violence.
(iii) Adolescence.
(iv) Addictions.

Each factor would need to be considered at various levels.

(i)  Legal.
(ii) Psychological.
(iii) Cultural.
(iv) Gender.
(v)  Life cycle.
(vi) Family development.
(vii) Discrimination.
(viii) Health.
(ix)  Power.

(Detailed explanations of these issues are to be found in Section 3.4. of the Appendix).

Concerns. Where the personal values of the counsellor are at variance with those of the client, there is a real risk of the counsellor imposing his/her values, or manipulating the client into a position of conformity, or else opposing the client and the client’s self-chosen direction.

There is also the possibility that the counsellor could become so caught up in the external issues, that he/she might overlook the meta-problems which lie behind the surface.

Imposed Restraints

[Diagram showing the concept of imposed restraints with external factors and circumstances]
Cognitive Level

3.5. Behaviour Modification Therapy

B.M.T. is based on a general theory developed from studies of learning in animals and humans. From these a number of broad principles have developed, e.g. the concept that behaviour which is rewarded will be repeated. In counselling, principles of providing positive reinforcement are used for the purpose of changing unadaptive behaviour. (Mackay 1985)

The idea of 'buying favours', considered unethical, was replaced by 'contingency contracting', in which a written agreement is made by the clients in order to make specific positive behavioural requests. B.M.T. is also used to modify inappropriate beliefs, which in turn affects behaviour.

Intervention techniques used in counselling include the following:

(i) Behavioural Analysis.
(ii) Increasing existing awards.
(iii) Increasing positive behaviours.
(iv) Interpersonal skills training.
(v) Training in problem-solving skills.
(vi) Contingency contracting.
(vii) Cognitive restructuring.

(Explanations for these techniques are to be found in section 3.5 in the appendix).

Concerns. In many ways B.M.T. encourages the counsellor to become an educator in teaching new skills, and hence creates a position of power and one upmanship for the counsellor.

There is also the risk that clients could be encouraged to dismiss their own or their partner's emotional needs.

Follow the rules.

Change behaviour.

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3.6. Reality Therapy

William Glasser, (1984) the founder of R.T. takes Behaviour Modification a step further when he states that behaviour is made up of what we do, what we think, and what we feel. On the basis of that concept Reality Therapy places the emphasis on the personal responsibility of the individual for choosing his/her personal behaviour. The reality is that we have a choice, and the better the choice, the more we will be in control of our lives.

Within counselling, clients are gently, yet firmly, led to face the reality of their situations, and to accept responsibility for the direction of their own life. Reality therapy is based on the belief that there are five basic needs, the fulfillment of which brings satisfaction and the blockage of these brings dissatisfaction and distress.

(i) The need to Survive.
(ii) The need to Belong -
     to Love, Share and Co-operate.
(iii) The need for Power.
(iv) The need for Freedom.
(v) The need for Fun.

(Section 3.6 in the Appendix expands these concepts).

Concerns Facing the reality of a situation may also include accepting the reality of a situation which can not change and over which the individual has no responsibility. e.g. physical handicaps.

There is also the possibility that the counsellor could concentrate on helping the client to change behaviour and even change beliefs, and disregard the need for the transformation of attitudes, which can control beliefs and behaviour. Change may not last without the counsellor's intervention.
3.7 Crisis Counselling

More often that not, individuals will present for the counselling because they are no longer able to contain the emotional stress caused by the specific crisis situation in their life. A crisis can occur due to external circumstances, lack of internal resources, and/or transitional changes experienced by the client.

Dealing with a crisis requires a more directive and behavioural approach, as the counsellor considers the two-fold need of the client.

* The problem itself - which is seen as a threat or actual attack, or perhaps a loss.

* The inability to cope which increases the client's tension.

Specific crisis situations may include:-

(i) Bereavement.
(ii) Midlife Transitions.
(iii) Child Abuse.
(iv) Aids.
(v) Retirement.
(vi) Retrenchment & Redundancy.
(vii) Ritual Abuse.
(viii) Attention Deficit Disorder.
(ix) Domestic Violence.

(Comments on these situations are contained in section 3.7. of the Appendix).

Concerns I wonder if some counsellors could become so involved in the actual event of the crisis, that they forget the emotional needs and stress of the client?

On the other hand, there could be a danger of counsellors being so intent on uncovering the underlying problems, that they give little attention to the presenting crisis, which is causing the stress.

**External Pressure.**

![Diagram: Crisis, Retirement, A.D.D., Grief, Aids, D.V., Turning Point, Mobilisation]
Meta - Cognitive Level.

3.8. Client - Centered Therapy.

Client centered therapy was one of the first counselling approaches which moved away from the cognitive approach where the power was invested in the counsellor. Client centered therapy was developed by Carl Rogers (1965) who changed the emphasis from the use of intervention skills, and focused more on the attitude, or what he called the 'basic operational philosophy' of the counsellor.

Can the counsellor develop and maintain a positive attitude toward the worth and significance of the individual client? This attitude is to be conveyed through the use of empathic responding skills, which treats the client with unconditioned and non-judgemental positive regard. It is essential that the counsellor allows the client to be what he/she is - honest or deceitful, infantile or adult, despairing or over-confident.

In a client centered approach some of the main elements will need to include:-

(i) Self acceptance.
(ii) Unconditional acceptance of the client as a person.
(iii) Positive attitude.
(iv) Empathic responding.
(v) Congruence.

(Further comments are found in section 3.8. in the Appendix.)

Concerns. Although client centered therapy claims to be completely non-judgemental, yet there is a tendency for the counsellor to respond more empathically to positive statements than to negative statements.

There is also the possibility of the client remaining in a depressed, self-defeating frame of mind without being challenged to consider other available alternatives.

Unconditional Acceptance.

In the Client's Steps.
3.9 Gestalt Therapy

Gestalt Therapy perceives problems in living as a difficulty in relating and communicating, and not as an indication of pathology. At a meta-cognitive level it is an existential approach to helping clients look behind the surface to discover wholeness through combining an awareness of what is, and the personal behaviour of the individual in the present moment of time.

Fitz Perls (1975), the founder of Gestalt therapy, suggests that clients, and their counsellors, need to work through three levels of `isms'.

(i) About-ism, which evades involvement and responsibility, by talking `about' the problem.

(ii) Is-ism, which perceives the world, and our problems, as it is - not as we want or wish it to be.

(iii) How-ism, which understands and accepts events by the `how' not the `why'.

Gestalt therapy is concerned with the process of `centering' i.e. the reconciliation of opposites, so that they no longer waste energy in useless struggles.

Five layers of neurosis are confronted in counselling.

(i) The phony layer.
(ii) The phobic layer.
(iii) The impasse.
(iv) The implosive layer.
(v) The explosive layer.

(Section 3.9. in the Appendix enlarges this subject.)

Concerns: There could be a danger of some counsellors experimenting with double chair work, in order to reconcile the opposites, but leaving the client feeling more reinforced in their internal conflicts.

As Gestalt therapy lends itself to `doing your own thing', then counselling with one individual may well interfere with a committed relationship.

Discovering the Hidden Parts.

Top Dog

Under Dog.

Owning the Hidden Parts.
3.10. Transactional Analysis

Eric Berne (1964) developed the concept of the human personality as consisting of three main Ego states - The Parent - The Adult and the Child. In many ways T.A. was an extension of psycho-analysis, and as a form of counselling T.A. uses a systems approach in dealing with the troubles people get into with other people and their inability to form satisfactory relationships with others.

Inter - personal relationships are referred to as 'transactions' and so much depends on which Ego state the transaction comes from, and which Ego state in the other person responds.

Counselling consists of providing a background for the client to understand the theory of T.A. and then proceeding to take a Life Script of the client to ascertain the injunctions and the counter injunctions received by the client's Ego states, and then to offer the client the opportunity of changing the script through the client's re-decisions.

Aspects of T.A. include:-

(i) Structural Analysis.
(ii) Transactional Analysis.
(iii) Positional Analysis.
(iv) Time Analysis.
(v) Game Analysis.
(vi) Script Analysis.

(Details of these aspects are to be found in section 3.10 in the Appendix).

Concerns. As Transactional Analysis lends itself to an educational approach, there is a temptation for the counsellor to assume the position of the educator and neglect the counsellor role.

There is also the possibility of the client becoming so aware of the Ego states that the partner could be accused of relating from their critical parent or their adaptive child, and so encourage the game of one upmanship, instead of assuming personal responsibility for his/her own transactions.
The Epistemological Level

3.11. Logotherapy.

Viktor Frankl, the founder of logotherapy, parted company with the then current approaches to psychotherapy, as he saw them as being over concerned with the instinctual drive, and the power of the counsellor. In essence logotherapy is concerned with finding meaning in life. Frankl (1973) believes that meaning must be specific and personal and can only be discovered by the individual him/herself.

Frankl calls the present human dilemma of aimlessness, an 'existential vacuum', which individuals try to fill through excesses. Symptoms of this dilemma are:-

(i) Anticipatory anxiety.
(ii) Fatalist attitude.
(iii) Collective thinking.
(iv) Fanaticism.

Logotherapy proposes five main aspects of meaning which would need to be addressed in counselling.

(i) The meaning of Life.
(ii) The meaning of Suffering.
(iii) The meaning of Love.
(iv) The Ultimate Meaning - Supra Meaning.

(Section 3.11. in the Appendix expands these concepts).

Concerns. As logotherapy depends on the client adapting to a new perspective of personal meaning, there is a real danger of this meaning being imposed by the counsellor, instead of being discovered by the client.

There is also a risk of the counsellor confronting the client for his/her irrational, or non-spiritual beliefs and attitudes, instead of patiently working through the blockages with the client's participation and co-operation.

Discovering Meaning.

The Unknowable.

Through Transcendence.
3.12. **Individuation.**

Individuation is concerned with the inner world of the client, and with making conscious, or objective, the subjective, or unconscious, world. Jacobi (1972) believes that only the person who sets foot on the inward journey and courageously follows it to the end, will be in a position to take the outward way without fear.

Adapting this theory to marital counselling, the concept of ‘togetherness’ becomes misleading. What is needed is for each person to discover his/her identity through ‘individuation’ and then to relate to each other as two whole human beings, not as halves looking for their completion.

Counselling from a Jungian perspective contrasts greatly to other therapeutic orientations. The counsellor needs to be aware of his/her own unrealised expectations, ego deflation or inflation, and frustrated transference and/or counter-transference. Supervision will need to focus on the inner work, or unconscious complexes, of the counsellor, rather than on the ‘case’.

Aspects of this approach will include:-

(i) Unconsciousness.
(ii) Projection.
(iii) Opposites.
(iv) Self awareness.
(v) A working relationship.
(vi) The Shadow.
(vii) The Persona.
(viii) Complexes.
(ix) The Animus and the Anima.
(x) Individuation.

(An expansion of these aspects is to be found in the Appendix section 3.12.)

**Concerns.** As in-depth therapy through the use of Jungian psychology requires the therapist to undergo extensive personal counselling, especially through the symbolic interpretation of dreams and other unconscious material, I wonder if there would be sufficient time available for such personal counselling in a training course limited to two or three years.

I am also concerned about the extra demands which would be placed on the need for extensive supervision of counselling using an individuation approach which unearths the unconscious complexes and projections of the client, and also of the counsellor.

Opening
the door to
the Depths.
Specific Marital Counselling Approaches

All counselling approaches can be used with couples, yet there are a number of specific methods which apply directly to the marital system. I will describe three such methods.

A Cognitive Approach

3.13. Relationship Enhancement

This is a psycho-educational approach, originated by Bernard Guerney, who considers that 'communication problems' are the major cause of marital breakdown. Like their parents, who were early models, most couples simply lack the knowledge and skills to communicate honestly. Guerney takes a different approach to the usual counselling methods, as he encourages the couple to become active participants in the counselling process. Guerney (1977) believes that personal relationships with other people are at the heart of everything we do and are virtually inseparable from the stresses and anxieties of life. So instead of the counsellor counselling the couple, they are taught the necessary communication skills, and are encouraged and empowered to become the counsellor for each other.

The theory underlying this approach is a combination of other therapies, and elements are taken from Rogers, Bandura, Skinner and Harry Stack Sullivan. Objectives are self-understanding, greater mutual understanding, and a high level of need satisfaction for the couple. These objectives are achieved through the use of nine sets of communication skills.

(i) Expressive Skill.
(ii) Empathic Skill.
(iii) Mode-switching Skill.
(iv) Facilitative Skill.
(v) Conflict Resolution Skill.
(vi) Self-change Skill.
(vii) Other-change Skill.
(viii) Generalisation Skill.
(ix) Maintenance/skill.

(An explanation of these skills are detailed in Section 3.13 of the appendix).

Concerns: Empowering clients through the teaching of communication skills would be extremely difficult in short term counselling and considering that the normal client contract is less than two months, in our agency, I wonder if the objectives can be realistically achieved?

Even though one of the essential concepts of this approach is based on the empowerment of the client, yet the counsellor remains in a powerful position by being the teacher/educator of the client.
3.14 Object Relations Therapy

In contrast to Relationship Enhancement, Object Relations Therapy uses the therapeutic relationship, rather than skills, to bring about change in the lives of clients. Sheldon Cashdan (1988) has drawn on the work of Malaine Klein (1981), Kernberg (1976), Mahler (1975), and Kohut (1971) in order to adapt object relation theory to a therapeutic approach. Within this context 'Objects' stand for human beings, and 'object relations' refer to relationships with others which might be internal or external, fantasied or real.

Although O.R.T. grew out of psychoanalysis, the two are now incompatible with each other. Cashden (1988) believes that clients do not suffer from 'symptoms' but from 'contact disturbance'. The main problem is the individual's inability to meaningfully engage in sustained and/or gratifying relationships.

This theory considers:

(i) The Developmental phases of life.
(ii) Maternal Splitting.
(iii) Preservation Splitting.
(iv) Self Splitting
(v) Identity Splits. - which covers -
    a. Dependency.
    b. Power.
    c. Sexuality.
    d. Ingratiation.

Counselling will need to concern itself with -

(i) Engagement.
(ii) Projective Identification.
(iii) Confrontation
(iv) Termination

Concerns. This approach places the counsellor in the vulnerable position of being the recipient of the client's projective identifications and manipulations. This will require a higher than normal ego strength on the part of the counsellors. Will this increase the risk of counsellor burn-out?

As O.R.T. relies on the use of counter-transference as a valuable aspect of the counselling process, it will be essential for counsellors to understand the concepts involved in both transference and counter-transference, and I wonder if there has been sufficient time allowed for these concepts to be fully understood?
An Epistemological Level of Marital Counselling.

3.15. Ego Analysis or Couple Therapy.

Daniel Wile (1981) moves past the usual psychoanalytic, behavioural, or systemic systems of counselling, and comes close to a social ecologist's perspective by advocating a method of collaborating with the client, and, like Relationship Enhancement, Ego Analysis becomes a partnership between the counsellor and the client. In this aspect it also applies the concepts of transformative learning.

Wile takes the viewpoint that problems should be incorporated within the relationship instead of being a goal for resolution. Troubled partners are viewed as being deprived of the minimal satisfactions which make a relationship livable, instead of being seen as pathological. Couples are reminded that they are doing the best they can with the information and conditioning which they received early in life, and what they are doing is not working. The couple is helped to develop a relationship about their relationship, and to move beyond romantic love to understanding and liking each other.

Aspects of this approach include:-

(i) Clarifying each partner's position.
(ii) Taking each partner's side.
(iii) Developing a shared perspective.
(iv) Incorporating problems into the relationship.
(v) Incorporating fantasies into the relationship.

(Section 3.15. in the Appendix expands these concepts.)

Concerns. Working at an epistemological level, where couples are encouraged to develop a relationship about their relationship, is a difficult concept to grasp. There may not be many couples who could work at this level. A number of counsellors may also be out of their depth.

I am also concerned that this approach does not touch on the important aspects of sexuality or spirituality. Would it be possible to provide marriage counselling without exploring these aspects of the marital relationship.

Although there are possibly hundreds of counselling methods or therapies available, I have selected the above mentioned fifteen Core and Elective counselling approaches, as a range of available choices for trainee counsellors to select from. These Electives have been selected to represent the three levels of therapies as already described.

As the process of counselling will change as the client moves from focusing on external symptomatic concerns to a more proactive focus on the development of coping strategies, self esteem and self worth, so the methodology used by the counsellor will also change in order to meet these changing needs. There is also a sense in which the personality or temperament of the client will need to be taken into account when the counsellor selects the specific counselling approach to be used.

It is my hope that counselling will become a truly collaborative effort between counsellor and client in which the more appropriate method will be used which works best for both counsellor and client. This can only be possible if the client has been given the freedom and the empowerment to react to whatever counselling method is being used.

It also requires the counsellor to be empowered to be flexible enough to change methods according to the perceived needs of the client, and this will only be possible if the counsellor has had the opportunity to develop multiple approaches of counselling.

This approach, which has been advocated in this thesis, reflects something of the concepts of Macnab (1991) who states that when we accept that counselling is a joint activity between the counsellor and the client, and involves a collaboration and integration of the therapies, the process drastically changes. This approach, of freedom of choice, is also at the heart of transformative learning.
Chapter 6. Communications.

6.1. Introduction.

In a counselling agency good communication needs to be one of the essential characteristics of everyone involved, yet there is always the danger of the painter having the worst painted house in the street. Action research that is not shared ceases to be true action. The findings of this research will need to be shared before it can have any impact. Or, as Reason (1988) would say, 'Analysis is not enough. I must now start telling people what it means and how I have understood what we have been through'.

Wadsworth (1991) suggests that communication serves three main purposes in action research.

* It enables the researcher to check out whether what he/she thinks people are saying is what they are really saying. In other words, to discover the meta message behind the immediate communication.

* It also enables him/her to sound out their theories, and to obtain the reactions of others to those theories.

* Having shared ones findings with others, enables one to obtain the understanding regarding others to the research, and therefore to obtain their support for the research results.

(i) Communicative Channels for Facilitating Action.

Keeping others informed has been a constant activity which has mainly been achieved through the participatory action research team. After each meeting, which is tape recorded, it has been important to get the transcripts to the participants as quickly as possible, with a summary of current research findings.

As I am applying theory to practice in the conduct of a totally new training course for personal and marital counsellors within the context of a counselling agency, I have supplied a monthly report to the committee responsible for all counselling activities.

Both of these situations have also provided the essential feedback which is required for good communication. Comments received have enabled me to clarify and modify my research, on an ongoing basis.
The process of communication which flows both ways, between researcher and researched, increases the amount of output which is available for further research. Any inquiry worthy of its name is dependent on a dialogue between persons. (McNiff 1988) This process was commenced about two months after the training started. Output requires:-

* The involvement of others. Action research is research with, rather than on, other people. My colleagues and trainees have been participants, observers, and validators of the inquiry.

* Keeping others informed. This research has not been conducted behind closed doors but has aimed at constant and open communication. Trainees, as well as the research team, have been kept informed throughout the whole process.

* Feedback. I have found that all participants in this research have willingly made constructive comments once they have seen that their opinions have been valued and incorporated within the findings of the research. Trainees were encouraged to comment on each aspect of the training on an on-going basis.

After the course had been completed it was important for me to communicate to a wider field and to seek their comments, both negative and positive. I therefore prepared a report and forwarded it to the 41 Lifeline counselling centres throughout Australia. The following was the actual report which was forwarded to these 41 Centres.

6.2. The Report.

(i) Motive.

Lifeline Newcastle is a counselling agency which has offered individual and marital counselling to its clients since its inception in 1966. This service was provided by staff members who had been professionally trained by one of the recognised marriage counselling agencies within NSW.

Moving from one full time staff counsellor, this service was provided by five part time contract counsellors, who had also been trained by other agencies. Over seven years ago when I took up the position of Director and provided supervision to these counsellors, as I am an accredited supervisor with A.A.M.F.C. (Australian Association of Marriage and Family Counsellors.) I assessed that these counsellors were effective in individual counselling, but their initial training had failed to provide a solid base in relationship counselling.
I therefore provided two courses on relationship issues. One on Couples Therapy, or Ego Analysis, (Wile 1981) as Wile calls it, and one on Relationship Enhancement Skills, (Guerney 1991) as I am Australia's only accredited trainer of this method.

Providing two options for marital counselling had an empowering effect on the counsellors, as they now had choices in their work with clients. By this stage the demand for face to face counselling had greatly increased, and an increasing number of our telephone counsellors were desirous of improving their competency in counselling and could not afford the high fees being charged for training by the other agencies.

As our agency now had their own trainer and supervisor plus a demand for counselling services, both individual and relationship focused, and an increasing number of well motivated individuals who wanted to improve their counselling skills, the question became, why not provide this training within our agency?

(ii) Methodology

In contrast to most counselling training programs which endeavour to reproduce the standard counselling approach used by the agency or trainer, I have introduced a training program based on the methodology of transformative learning. (Mezirow 1991)

This would enable the trainee to break away from the bonds of dependency on set agendas, and the prescribed theories of the trainer, and accept responsibility for their choice of counselling methods. The trainee, as an adult learner, can use personal initiative and motivation, and feel at ease with the method of their choice, that fits in with the trainee's temperament and personal learning style.

A methodology based on transformative learning allows for a progressive construction of meaning perspectives, and a gradual movement from being a dependent learner to a self directed learner.

On the basis of my earlier work with the five contract counsellors in our agency, I believe that such a methodology will be empowering for all of the trainees, and their development of an eclectic approach to their counselling, (using the term eclectic in its strict sense as choosing the best, based on a greater knowledge of which therapeutic method is likely to be most effective for a particular client.) This will also be empowering for the clients, whose needs and situation will be considered paramount in the choice of a counselling method used by their personal counsellor.
(iii) **Material.**

We now need to consider the components of the system advocated by this methodology. What is needed to provide such a complex operation as an eclectic training program for individual and marital counsellors?

In order to arrive at some possible answers to this question I have relied on the feedback provided by the participatory action research team. They have suggested that we need to provide some basic core training programs and then offer a range of electives, two of which would be selected by personal counsellors, and four by those who completed the marital counselling segment. Allowing for free choice by the trainees, the course would also encourage independent studies, which could be taken up outside of the agency. eg. not all of the subjects listed in the proposed curriculum would be conducted by the agency.

The research team also suggested that the training would need to be provided on a progressive basis from subjects which are easier to digest to the more complex subjects.

**Proposed Curriculum**

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A summary of these subjects is contained in Chapter 3 of the thesis, and would be available in separate format to the counselling agencies receiving this communicated material.
6.3 Feedback from Lifeline Centres.

41 Lifeline Centres throughout Australia were contacted and supplied with the report, outlined in 6.2. Within one month 9 replies were received, which is 22% of the total, and about average for Lifeline Centres replying to any survey. However, these 9 replies came from five Australian States, and covered Centres ranging from Perth to Cairns.

Some two months later I contacted the other 31 Centres which had not responded, and after another month I had received another 6 replies, making 15 responses in all, or 37% of Centres contacted. This is a significant number of responses upon which to draw some possible conclusions about the effectiveness of an eclectic training course as perceived by other Lifeline Centres.

(i) Replies in answer to the question, 'What is your overall impression of the curriculum?' (interpretive - this follows the evaluation model discussed on p. 102.

Positive. (Using positive evaluative terms.)

- Good.
- Very thorough.
- Seems good to me.
- It's certainly eclectic and hangs together well.
- I particularly like the range of therapies being incorporated in the curriculum, which allows the counsellor to accept responsibility for choice.
- I like the way the curriculum is open ended and encourages personal initiative.
- A very well thought out approach, one which allows for individual suitability.

Conservative / Objective.

- A comprehensive approach to a difficult subject.
- Covers a lot of ground.
- A broad coverage.
- It is indeed an increasingly complex design.
- Comprehensive.

Uncategorised

- We don't have anyone able to offer a legitimate evaluation.
- It might be so ambitious in its breadth that it ends up being quite overwhelming for counsellors.
(ii) **What counselling methods do your face to face counsellors use?**

(Objective)

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Table No. 16 Counselling Methods used by Lifeline Centres.

**Comment.** Table No. 16 shows that of the 14 counselling centres that replied, the methods of face to face counselling that they used varied a great deal from centre to centre. Three appear to be using no known counselling method (Nil), though this is hard to believe in this day and age. The rest use between 2 and 6 methods each, with 3 or 4 methods being the most common answers.

Of the 14 categories of counselling the most popular methods, in use in 4 centres, are Crisis Counselling and Client Centred therapy, though Gestalt, Systems, Behaviour Modification, Solution focused and Personal Problem Solving show three replies each.

It is clear from this Table that training in the Centres is a fairly hit and miss affair. No individual therapy method or combination of therapy methods is common. rather we see individual centres using unique combinations.
(iii) **What methods in this curriculum appeal to you?** Interpretive.

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**Table No. 17** Counselling methods which appealed to Lifeline Centres.

* Re. Centre K. Despite the fact that they state they used 'Nil' counselling methods and stated that 'Nothing' in the curriculum appealed they are included because they help to create a balance by showing that not all centres were impressed with the proposed curriculum.

**Comment.** Table No. 17 shows that when asked what methods appealed in the new curriculum, there is a broad lack of agreement about this also. The 4 centres that said, 'Every one' (C.D.G.I.) are the centres which already use an average or better number of face to face counselling methods, though another centre (H) which says 'nothing' appeals, uses 4 counselling methods also.

Overall there appears to be no relationship between the number of methods used and the number of methods which appeal. The use of options for trainees is endorsed by three centres as is also the teaching of Transactional Analysis, but it is surprising and somewhat alarming that only two centres would endorse the use of Core Competencies.
(iv) **If you were to conduct a face to face counselling course, what aspects of this curriculum could be helpful?** Decisional.

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<th>Method</th>
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* 'our' refers to the training given in the centre that answered.

Table No. 18  Aspects of the Curriculum which could be helpful to Lifeline Centres.

**Comment.** Table No. 18 shows that once again it is disturbing that Basic Skills is nominated by only three centres as 'helpful'. However five centres see all of the curriculum as helpful. (Two say 'All' and three say 'All not covered by our training') The remainder choose between one and five methods.

(v) **Any other comment.** Objective.

Eleven of the respondents did not add comments, and the other four respondents provided extensive notes, which I will now endeavour to summarise, and add a brief commentary.

* It is important to give recognition of prior learning.

Com.  This is provided for in 'independent studies' which allows the trainee to develop their own preferred method.
* First year trainees work with second year trainees, at our Centre, as a team in their counselling practice.

Com. This sounds like a good experimental method of learning.

* The summary looks like an educational overview of some major models/theories of counselling.

Com. The various methods or models of counselling are presented within an experimental educational framework. Trainees learn the theory through input, discussion and role play practice.

* Are there no good tertiary courses available?

Com. Within N.S.W. there is no tertiary course in counselling skills which encourages experimental learning at an undergraduate level, and where such course are available at a post graduate level there is often a bias toward one form of therapy.

* To train counsellors in any one or two methods thoroughly would take two to three years, so why the other ten plus methods?

Com. This wide range of methods allows for self directed choice. trainees are not expected or are they encouraged to select more than two to four electives in which they will train. A wide range allows for personal choice and personal motivation.

* Why include Behaviour Modification and Individuation - except for historical 'how things can go wrong tract' purposes?

Com. Different methods work for different clients, and different methods are more effective when used by different counsellors. If a client is concerned about the need for changing present behaviour, then BMT works well, whereas if a client is concerned about the health of their soul or the inner life, then Individuation will take them on that inner journey.

* What's going on here?

Com. A good question. To quote Francis Macnab (1991) 'Effective therapy should evolve from the already developed therapies, by working toward an integrative collaboration of therapies, organised to be applied to specific problems or conditions'.
* There is no reference made to the development of attitudes or consideration given to the relationship being forged between counsellor and counsellee.

Com. In many ways my summary of the curriculum does not need to include these aspects, although 'attitudes' would be covered in the course on Self Awareness, and Client Centred Therapy has a lot to say about the relationship between the counsellor and the client. I also realise that Client Centred Therapy is an elective and may therefore be excluded from the methods selected by a number of the trainee counsellors.

* Could such a wide range of counselling methods encourage the emergence of clever technicians rather than sensitive counsellors?

Com. This is a danger which will need to be watched, regardless of the range of methods available.

* The document lacks notes on the development of spirituality in counselling, although the last page hints at the need.

Com. 'Spirituality' is not a method of counselling, but is certainly a crucial element for some counsellors, as it reflects their personal values and meaning perspective. The course on 'Individuation' can be seen as a spiritual journey, as the counsellor and the client seek the meaning of life together.

* There is no reference to the qualities of trainers, that I believe is an essential element in skills training.

Com. This is a valid point. The summary may not be the place to explore this issue, but it will need to be examined.

* The notes give no indication of how assessments would be made in any of the theoretical approaches to measure trainee competency.

Com. Again, I do not think that this belongs to a summary of counselling methods, but it is a valid point which will need to be addressed.

* Over the years my experience has been that time involved in training and appropriate supervision of volunteer face to face counsellors has been more than what our smaller staffed services can bear.
Com. This is a good point. I have worked on the concept that it is better to train twelve people to do the work than to do the work of twelve people. In our Centre this has been a gradual process over the past eight years, moving from four marriage counsellors, who had been trained outside of the agency in supervisory skills, who then supervised the new trainee counsellors, as they gained experience and expertise to assist in the training of new trainees.

* I recognise that fewer and fewer of the professionally, funded Marriage Counselling services are offering training programs and maybe the time has come when Lifeline will be forced to do the training 'in house'.

Com. I agree, but even when the other agencies are offering training courses I have found that they provide a narrow range of counselling skills, which reflects the bias of the agency or trainer, and does not allow the trainee to select his/her own preferred methods. Hence my proposed curriculum.

* I would like to see suggested criteria for the selection of trainers and supervisors.

Com. A good idea. This would require another inquiry into the most effective methods of selecting and training trainers and supervisors, which my curriculum does not aim to cover.

* I'm uncomfortable with introducing specific styles eg Gestalt Therapy, as these are best left to the specialists.

Com. The possibility of 'Independent Studies' allows the trainees to go outside of the agency to obtain such specialised training.

* I would like to see the following aspects of training covered.

Criteria for the selection of counsellors.
Training requirements for face to face counsellors.
Content of the training program.
Guidelines for working as a counsellor after accreditation.

Com. These aspects are not covered in a summary of the counselling methods available in the curriculum, but they are aspects which deserve consideration, and most are covered in the bulk of the thesis anyway.

* There is a risk of counsellors becoming a Jack/Jill of many trades, and achieving a low level of competence in any one of them.
Com. This is a real risk. My preference is for the trainee to select only one or two electives plus the Core subjects, and master these approaches, instead of dabbling in everything available.

* There is typically a trade-off between depth and breadth and the need to limit training to the hours that an agency / counsellors can invest in training.

Com. Each agency or Lifeline Centre would have to cut their cloth according to the material available. This is where prior training, independent studies and external studies would be very useful.

* This curriculum provides a means by which counsellors can find their way around a very disparate field of theory and practice.

Com. A very positive comment.

* Perhaps the epistemological and meta-cognitive levels need to provide the foundation for teaching any specific techniques or competencies.

Com. This is a very helpful comment, and worth considering. The idea of starting with the Inner Journey Therapy lends itself to this change of direction.

* A surprising exclusion is Narrative Therapy.

Com. This is covered in Systems Practice, although it is only one aspect of using a systemic approach to marital or family counselling.

* A further inclusion which might be important are some of the 'basics' in managing face to face counselling sessions, eg initial contracting with clients, limit setting, confidentially and the limits of this, record keeping, ethics and awareness of legal issues.

Com. Some of these topics are covered in the course on 'Social Issues', while the bulk of these concerns are left to the supervisor to work through with the counsellor.


Feedback from Lifeline counselling centres has been carried out within a dialogical - dialectical context, where each respondent has been allowed to make his/her claim to truth, as perceived by the individual him/herself.
This approach allows a subject like 'communications' to be kept within an interpersonal framework, where validation of a concept is through the process of dialogue. McNiff (1992) suggests that this avoids the empirical - objectivist framework, where truth can only be validated through factual evidence, which is susceptible to reification.

Perhaps the most obvious conclusion to be drawn from the data obtained from Tables No.16 - 18, is the lack of agreement between agencies about (a) what is done and (b) what in the proposed curriculum can be positively evaluated or decided as 'helpful'. The agencies appear to be in disarray and the training can be seen to be fragmented and idiosyncratic.

In considering the value of this feedback to my research, I need to use personal understanding in order to look at the personal understanding of the respondents. Positive feedback reinforces my propositions and critical or negative feedback allows me to re-examine my propositions, as shown in the diagram below where negative feedback results in reassessments in a self critical loop. With positive feedback I can go straight to recommendations or action.

Diagram No. 5 Self critical feedback loop.
(i) **Proposal.** To provide a number of core and elective counselling methods which will allow trainee counsellors to develop their own eclectic approach to counselling individuals and couples.

(ii) **Positive Feedback** came from nearly half of the respondents who assessed this proposal as 'very thorough' or 'a comprehensive approach to a difficult subject'. The same number were neutral but not negative, providing a more objective statement.

(iii) **Negative Feedback.** Although this came mainly from one respondent, yet there were a number of other comments which were also constructively critical. eg. 'There is no reference made to the development of attitudes' and 'Such a wide range of counselling methods may encourage the emergence of clever technicians'.

The main issues which will need addressing are as follows.

* The importance of prior learning.
* Does the course contain too many options?
* The development of attitudes.
* The relationship between the counsellor and the client.
* How do you encourage sensitive counsellors rather than clever technicians?

* The qualities of the trainers.
* The need for competency assessments.
* In a crisis counselling agency, such as Lifeline, cognitive counselling methods should be sufficient. (An implied concern.)
* Could the stepping stones be reversed?

(iv) **Re-assessment.** It would appear that most of these 'issues' could be addressed by paying more attention to the personal preparedness of the trainee counsellors. What is their level of self awareness, their subjective understanding of their own characteristics and abilities?

It may well be true that crisis counselling agencies may not require counsellors to acquire a broad range of counselling skills or methods, and the time and energy available may be more constructively used in concentrating on a few approaches which may be more effective for the purpose of providing short term crisis work. However, this leaves the larger question unanswered.
Would it not be better for Lifeline Centres to extend their range of available services in order to meet the expressed needs of the community in which they operate?

I will now give serious consideration to the development of a new praxis, where the theory of self development and self awareness can be put into the practice of training selected individuals to become effective counsellors.
Chapter 7. An Introduction to a New Praxis.

7.1. Introduction.

Having considered the provision of an eclectic approach to the design of multiple methods of counselling in a training program for personal and marital counsellors, I will now address the question, 'Is there a better way?'

Having considered the theory and methodology used in the provision of this eclectic approach to training, I will now briefly review that process in answering the above question. The methodological approach used is expressed diagrammatically as follows.

![Diagram](image)

Diagram No. 7. A New Praxis

(i) Current Situation.

The proposed training program has now become an actual training course, and the concept has been shared with 43 Lifeline counselling centres throughout Australia, as mentioned in Chapter 6.
(ii) Frame of Reference.

My original hypothesis that the trainee's temperament and/or learning style would make a difference to their effectiveness or otherwise, as a counsellor, has not been substantiated by this inquiry, so it has been necessary to consider other variables which could make the difference. The research team has proposed the development of the trainee's inner life, or the exploration of subjectivity, as the essential variable for assisting counsellors to become effective.

(iii) Methodology.

The methodology which I had chosen for this training course was 'Transformative Learning' based on the work of Mezirow (1991) who provides a strong argument for learning to be perceived as a progressive construction of meaning perspectives or frames of reference, which can be transformed through experience, reflection, maturity and growth.

(iv) Application

Trainees have been encouraged to move from being dependent to independent learners. To take responsibility for their own learning and the selection of electives and independent studies which would match their temperament and learning style. This process of becoming self-directive has been a gradual one. The training process encouraged the trainees to become self-directive learners as they set their own goals and standards.

(v) Improved Situation

If it is correct that the personal qualities of the counsellor have more bearing on the effectiveness of the counselling process, than the skills used, and these qualities do not innately result from the individual's temperament or learning style, then my question must be, 'what are the conditions which could effect the effectiveness of the counselling process?'

Could the answer lie in the personal experience and personal awareness of the counsellor as he/she explores the inner life and becomes conscious of the unconscious strivings of the psyche? If this is the case then the trainee counsellor would need the opportunity to design his/her own unique discovery of the subjective life. I will now inquire into this possibility.
7.2. An Alternative Methodology

Having considered an eclectic approach to the training of individual and marital counsellors, I will now address the possible weakness of such an approach and reflect on an alternative methodology in working with clients within a counselling context.

The weakness of an eclectic approach;

* Sufficient time is not available for a thorough understanding of any one specific method.

* Trainees can become confused with multiple electives.

* Most of the electives available deal with the presenting problems of the client and could fail to unearth some of the underlying issues.

To put this last point another way, is there a danger that counselling is more inclined to take an objective view of issues and neglect the subjective perspective? Bugental (1986) suggests that our subjectivity is our true home, our natural state, and our necessary place of refuge and renewal.

Subjectivity is another way of referring to the psyche, or soul, which has been described as that inner, separate, and private realm in which we live most genuinely. (Bugental 1986)

The idea of moving past an objective view of reality to a subjective perspective is not new. Some 2,000 years ago, Jesus Christ challenged his followers with the concept that a spiritual pursuit holds more value than material gain. 'What good will it be for a person if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul?' Matthew 16: 26; Bible.

Meister Eckhart, a 13th. century monk, condemned by the Catholic Church for his unorthodox views, considered the main purpose of man's search for meaning was to discover God within our own being. 'Each of us should be a heaven in which God dwells.' (Fox 1981)

Matthew Fox expands this theme in the development of creation spirituality, in which he draws attention to the idea that God became man so that man could become God. (Fox 1983) Fox is concerned with encouraging the ever expanding possibilities of the human being rising above the mundane and discovering his/her creative energy. Fox was recently , (1992), silenced by the established church for his unorthodox views.
Saint Teresa, a 16th century Nun, saw the journey of life, not as an external discovery, but as a journey inward to what she called the 'Interior Castle'. She pictures this Castle containing seven stages, or mansions, which is entered by a door of prayer and meditation.

Each stage will develop self knowledge, until the centre is found, which contains the King, or God within. St. Theresa makes it clear that this mystical journey is not meant to be followed in detail but in essence. She considered mystical experience to be within the reach of all true seekers. (Peers 1946)

The idea of discovering meaning in the subjective is not confined to religious mystics as Viktor Frankl, a Jewish psychiatrist, who experienced the attempt to dehumanise the human person at Auschwitz by the Nazis, contended that the meaning of life is found in the realm of the trans-subjective. This is to be found in ideals, values, and attitudes. Human existence is not authentic unless it is lived in terms of self-transcendence. (Frankl 1969)

This search for meaning in subjectivity is an age old endeavour, although neglected in recent years with our over emphasis on the objective. The Gnostics, who existed before the time of Christ, and are considered by some to have exerted a covert influence on the teaching of Jesus, were interested in one thing above all else - the experience of the fullness of being. Gnosticism is not a set of doctrines, but a mythological expression of an inner experience - the Inner Journey. (Hoeller 1989)

The Gnostics were concerned with transformation, which results in a natural, inner experience, rather than a faith in any external source. In other words, the Gnostics were not so much concerned about objectivity, but subjectivity, the transformation of the mind, with its natural consequence - a changed attitude toward the objective world. Almost a forerunner to Mezirow's concept of transformative learning.

The Gnostics, however, found that the establishments of accepted values of the objective world were utterly insufficient in meeting our deeper spiritual needs. The established Church opposed Gnosticism, mainly because the Gnostics could not accept the authority or dogma of the Church, and insisted that each individual person must discover their own spiritual direction.

Gnosticism went underground, until it was rediscovered by Carl Jung, who saw in Gnosticism a particularly valuable expression of man's universal struggle to regain wholeness. (Hoeller 1989) Jung developed this emphasis on the inner life, or the unconscious, as he termed it.

In many ways Carl Jung went beyond the concept of subjectivity when he suggested that our subjective experience is only part, and even an incomplete and inadequate part of the whole.
Jung proposed that, within the unconscious, there is another personality, an inner 'Thou' whom he named the 'objective psyche'. (Whitmont 1978) This objective psyche contains all of our potential creativity and personal meanings.

From a Buddhist perspective, which predates Christianity by some 2,000 years, it is necessary to admit the possibility of some view of the world other than the conventional one. (Watt 1957) This is a search for another form of knowledge other than the rational and objective.

The way of Zen is concerned about the totality of our psyche functioning, which is not centred in the activity of the mind with its rational and conscious thinking processes, but rather in the duality of subject and object. Every aspect of life is dependent on every other aspect. Up without down is impossible, good without bad is unachievable. Every jewel contains the reflection of all the others. (Watts 1957)

Buddhism, as I understand it, would take this dual approach of objectivity and subjectivity to reach an enlightened state, and then discard this means to an end as a pilgrim would discard the raft which took him/her across a stretch of water. It is no longer required, or, as Edward Conze (1988) puts it, attachment to emptiness is a disease as much as attachment to existence.

To ask, 'What is the true way?' is like asking which way do the birds fly? The pilgrim loses interest in motives which are compounded of self interest and a and a misguided belief in the reality of objectivity or subjectivity. If there is no need to make positive statements about life, then negations also lose their meaning. In other words, the way of truth, as strictly empty, cannot be denied. (Conze 1988)

According to Brand (1990), Habermas, a present day philosopher, proposes that the weakness of positivism is one sided observation of sociology from an external, or objective, perspective. Sociology needs to be observed and explained not merely from the outside, but it needs to be understood from the inside.

Habermas has protested against the idea that rational procedures can only be legitimately concerned with observable and quantifiable aspects of reality. (Brand 1990) He believes that, in the long run, only sense impressions (subjectivity) could be decisive in the quest for truth. Habermas actually argues for a different concept of rationality, one which includes our inner states and feelings. This does not discount rationality but broadens it to include the human being's subjective knowledge.
Applying this concept of subjectivity to the task of counselling I would contend that it is not a matter of taking either a subjective or a objective perspective of dysfunctional behaviour or personal and marital stress, but taking a objective and a subjective viewpoint. Or, as Frankl (1978) puts it, a trans-subjective frame of reference.

Clients do suffer from difficult situations in life, and the adverse circumstances in which they are placed, which calls for a counselling method which deals with the objective issues involved. However, if the client is left there, it could be a little like bandaging a sore arm - the poison may be left inside.

From a systems perspective it is not possible to consider one aspect of the whole without giving attention to every other aspect. However, as subjectivity has been largely neglected by most counselling methods, I intend to re-focus on the inner world of the client, within a context which will move from an objective approach to a subjective perspective, and then the spiral will come back to the objective as clients apply their new insights into the practical affairs of everyday life.

There is a sense in which the counsellor is in therapy as much as the client. If the client is to develop insight and experience a process of personal, psychic, and inter-personal growth, then the model for such a growth would need to come from the counsellor, as Bandura (1966) suggests. Perhaps Woog (1995) is right when he proposes that a diatropic relationship is required between two people, counsellor and client, in order to generate energy through dialogue.

In a trans-subjective approach to counselling, which I am calling 'Inner Journey therapy', there is a need for both the counsellor and the client to proceed from an objective understanding of current issues, to a subjective appreciation of psychic functioning, and then to move back again to an objective application of the transformative experience.

The following diagram indicates this process. In Step 1. the focus will be on objective issues using a refined application of basic counselling skills. The client's unconscious or inner experience may be outside of the client's awareness at this stage, which is why it is put in as a dashed line. In Step 2. the counselling would move into the realm of the inner life of self awareness.

The subjective becomes much more conscious (therefore shown as a complete line) and links are made between the two views of the world. The objective gains a conscious subjective dimension (as shown by the arrows) and in so doing self awareness begins the process of self transformation -Step 3.
Diagram No. 8. The Trans-subjective Process.
7.3. A Synopsis of Inner Journey Therapy.

Within the context of transsubjective counselling it is important that we look past, but not over-look, the tendency to perceive the problems of life as symptomatic deviations from a desired normalcy. Instead, we can start to see life's obstacles and failures, not as 'faults' needing correction, but as signals pointing to a deeper understanding and a potential so far unrealised. Whitmont (1978) goes as far as to suggest that an 'illness' can become a source of renewal when it pressures us into another life meaning.

As we invite expansion we start to think and to live not merely symptomatically, but also symbolically. However, the symbolic experience is not something made by us, it is something that happens to us.

Making this step of expansion is not an easy one, for the Western mind has over stressed abstract, rational thought. The emotional and intuitive sides have been neglected, and relegated to a position of lesser importance. But we cannot leave the trap until we know we are in it. (Ferguson 1980)

For too long we have been caught up in a masculine concept for acquiring knowledge, where we meet competitive challenges, seek honour and recognition and focus on concrete principles of rational thought. If a problem exists, then there must be a cause, and there must be a cure. As this does not happen in practice, counselling will need to seek another way. The way of the feminine, which, according to Sullivan (1989) involves trying out, moving randomly and without direction, being open to what might come up, letting events affect one, and responding to the unexpected, may be just such a cure or indeed as we look we may find other ways.

Experience shows that clients tend to construct their world on the basis of early conditioning, personal reactions and beliefs, values and attitudes acquired over the course of a lifetime. That world will then be communicated as if it were the real and only world, and everyone else should understand that same world. A common problem for a number of counsellors is that they pretend that they know exactly what the client is talking about instead of assisting the client to expand and explain.

How then can we encourage the client to describe their world and their experience of that world?
NOTE

The following page (s) missing from original.
This is the journey within. Objectivity is concerned with the outer world, and in this sense it is occupied with bringing into consciousness, or making objective, the subjective, or the inner world. This inner journey is one of 'soul-making,' for literally, psyche means 'soul' or 'life-force,' or the principle.

It is not always easy for the client to break away from the tendency to believe that the only meaningful reality is what is visible, concrete, and externally demonstrable. What we cannot accept is 'projected' onto other people or things, so that long before riots in the street begin, the fight starts in the soul, with the person proceeding to throw stones through the windows of the mind.

Within the psyche of the client there seems to be an almost limitless store of remembered information and experience. This is known as the personal unconscious. This aspect of our life never sleeps or lies dormant. It waits for the opportunity to communicate with the conscious part of the client, and this can be activated through an understanding of dreams, active imagination, mood swings, and projections, to name a few. More on this later.

The personal unconscious stores away all impressions, thoughts, and perceptions in order for the conscious mind to function in the present. It also represses certain information because it could be too painful or traumatic for the conscious mind to deal with. However, the longer it is repressed, the more likely it is to cause trouble.

As well as being a storage place for information and experience, the unconscious mind also thinks, evaluates, and rationalises. There is a sense in which the unconscious has the capability for perceiving the true perspective on a situation. It almost seems as if there is a much wiser person inside, than the conscious one who is often impulsive, easily confused and easily led astray.

It seems that more is stored within the human mind than that which can be explained by the personal experience of the person. Jung calls this the inherited portion or the collective unconscious. Something akin to the instinct in birds which direct them in their immigrationary flights, where they follow the same routes taken by the same species of birds for thousands of years.

If we can learn to be still, to become unattached to the objective, then our unconscious might have a chance to create, to combine its contents into totally new thoughts and creative ideas that were never before a part of the conscious mind. (Mambert and Foster 1973). The counsellor will need to start expanding the client's awareness into the realm of subjectivity.
We are now beginning to learn that intra and inter-personal relationships do not develop naturally without effort. Even the once unquestioned interactions between mother and babe are now known to be the outcome of a delicate, fragile process of early socialisation that can easily be disrupted if the proper conditions to nurture the process are not present. (Guerney 1984)

Individuals, including counsellors, need some assistance to increase their self awareness, their self expression, and their interpersonal skills. Can blockages be removed without awareness and understanding?

In the transsubjective process, which I am calling Inner Journey Therapy, we are entering into an unknown territory. Carl Jung (1966) once said that the investigation of the psyche is the science of the future. This process is concerned with the inner world, and it is aimed at making objective, or known to consciousness, the subjective world of the individual - counsellor and client. This inner discovery is one of soul making, for the present condition of humanity appears to be loss of soul.

Although the territory to be explored is vastly unknown, and each individual must make his/her own discovery, yet this realm which invites exploration has been mapped by a number of people, and I will propose another 'map' which has been influenced by such people as Carl Jung, Robert Assagioli and Meister Eckhart.

Diagram No. 9 A Psyche Map.
The above is a diagram which represents the psyche with its many layers of psychic development, from the cellar of the unconscious, to the roof top of the Higher Self. This diagram represents the pattern of wholeness, expressed symbolically. It is 'as if' our life were like the floors of a building, entered at the state of Ego awareness, descending to the depths of the unconscious life, and then ascending through the various layers in order to discover the real Self, and then to transcend to the Higher Self.

This is an attempt to describe the inner journey in the form of analogies or parables, which aims to assist the individual to live, not merely symptomatically but also symbolically. In accepting this image as an 'as if' representation of a reality that has existence and transcends our conscious understanding, we may acquire the ability to comprehend a different dimension of existence. (Jacobi 1959)

Now for a brief description of the journey. We commence with Ego consciousness, with its constant inflation and deflation cycles. This is also the opportunity for the pilgrim (client or counsellor) to come to grips with his/her personality functions and attitudes. For those who enter this process with a split or damaged ego, the task of coming to grips with the question 'Who am I?' is a struggle, which can easily be denied or avoided through a counsellor's false reassurance and need to comfort.

The next part of the journey is the descent into the unconscious realms of the psyche. Unlike Freud's concept of the unconscious being the cesspit for all of the repressed material from the conscious life, Jung believes that the unconscious also contains the inspirational gems which form part of our creativity.

The unconscious is also the container of our complexes eg. mother complex, power complex, etc. The energy of the complex can either work for us or against us, depending on our awareness, and willingness to own our own complexes, without projecting these onto other people or objects.

Emerging from the unconscious the pilgrim enters again the realm of the Ego, but this time with the intent of strengthening the Ego, as an essential requirement for the continuing journey. Although the pilgrim has emerged from the unconscious, yet the unconscious remains a constant friend or foe, depending on the strength of the complexes and also of the Ego.

As complexes have their origin in the Archetypes, they will present themselves, as archetypal influences, or, as Assagioli (1964) prefers to call them 'sub-personalities'. eg. The sub-personality, commonly called the critic, can work havoc with the self esteem of the person, unless he/she gains control of this inner critic. These sub-personalities, like the complexes, will remain a constant companion, acceptable or unacceptable, throughout the whole of life.
As the pilgrim continues the journey he/she will contact the Shadow, the archetype which represents all the unacceptable characteristics and qualities of the individual. The Shadow usually emerges in dreams, and will appear as the same sex as the dreamer, and will be engaged in unacceptable behaviour. eg. the burglar may dream about giving his money away to the poor.

The Shadow may also reveal itself in the sudden mood swings and unexplained outbursts of the individual. Under normal conditions the pilgrim would rather deny or repress the Shadow side of his/her life, and portray a more acceptable presentation, known as the persona. Unmasking the persona, and befriending the Shadow is a very difficult, yet essential part of the inner journey.

The next encounter could be with the Archetype called the Anima, the contrasexual characteristics of the male, or the Animus, the contrasexual characteristics of the female. So many men and women fall in love with an image, instead of the real flesh and blood person, who possesses both strengths and weaknesses.

This image is the ideal companion who could be the hero, or the rapist, the virgin or the whore, depending on the expectations of the individual, as well as their early conditioning. Wholeness will only be attained when the Anima/Animus is accepted as an essential aspect of the person him/herself.

We now move to the awareness of, and identification with, the real Self, the pure centre of awareness. Self realisation is the pivot point on the pathway to individuation. This point is the place of creative change, of transformation in the fullest sense of the word. This is not a movement from the practicalities of life, it is the acceptance of tension, the ability to hold out in the midst of psychic disorder, that promotes this possibility of new psychic change. The individual pilgrim is no longer imprisoned in the over sensitive world of the Ego. He/she can now participate in the world of personal choice, freedom and authentic identity.

The pilgrim continues the inner journey and is confronted with the need to emotionally detach him/herself from the pressures and demands of the various sub-personalities, roles and commitments. 'I have a hand, but I am not my hand. I have a role, but I am not my role. I have a mask, but I am not my mask'.
Having discovered the Self the individual is now able to detach him/herself from the anxieties of secondary concerns. This is what Jesus meant when he said, 'take no thought for tomorrow'. Detachment does not mean to be unconcerned, it means that we can transfer our energy to the task at hand, and having completed that task we can detach ourselves from it, and move our energy back into the centre - our Self.

I am reluctant to say that this next step brings us to the top or the end of our journey, for there is a sense in which the inner journey is circular. We end up where we began. However, the Higher Self is found once we have discovered the ability to detach ourselves from the objective concerns. The Higher Self is what Jesus referred to when he said that the Kingdom of God is within. This is the transcendent Self or the image of God which is within, not without. This is our connection to the cosmos, to the transpersonal realms of life. Perhaps this is the discovery we need before we transcend life as we currently know and experience it.
7.4. **Trialling a Trans-Subjectivity Workshop.**

Having looked at the theory of Trans-subjectivity counselling and the need for the counsellor to experience the same journey as the client is expected, or encouraged, to take, a week-end workshop was arranged in which the trainee counsellors would have the opportunity to personally experience part of the journey into the inner self. 24 trainees were involved and their evaluation of this workshop is as follows:-

(i) **What was the main learning component for you?** (Objective)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Component</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>learning about sub-personalities</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>personal awareness</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>meditation</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the sharing which took place in the group</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the personal work done in the small groups</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the application of Gestalt therapy</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>realising that my different parts can integrate</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am 'me' - the essence</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>we have archetypes but we are not archetypes</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the use of symbolism</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nurturing the playful child</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>having experienced inner work, I am more confident to use this method in counselling</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>how gestalt therapy can help my inner child</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can change the script</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(ii) **What was new, unexpected, or unusual?** (Interpretive)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>New Component</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>the modelling of Gestalt therapy</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>being aware of sub-personalities in their diversities</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the faith, trust and openness of the group</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the relaxation throughout the experience</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the diversity of the group</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>this technique of counselling was unexpected</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the personal struggle</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the archetypes</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>allowing the inner child to play</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the whole concept of working with sub-personalities</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the open interactions</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the depth of the pain</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the range of approaches used to overcome resistance</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>it was more gentle than I expected</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>meeting my inner child</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(iii) **What application would you use for your counselling?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Application</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>the gestalt work with double chairs</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>working with the client’s sub-personalities</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>encouraging the transcendent self</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>listening to my inner voice</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>using my new found strength in individuation</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>relying on my hunches</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>use of symbolism</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>use of active imagination</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individuation</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>more work with my own inner child</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What is your intention for follow-up? (Decisional)

more work with my sub-personalities
I need more counselling myself
I need more workshops or retreats on this subject
I need to practice with others on the skills
work with a Jungian approach
remove the whip from the ‘Driver’
not too sure
to listen more intently to myself and the client
to research this concept
to meet as a group for support
to work on my ‘hurt’ child
more work on Gestalt therapy
to dialogue with my hidden emotions
to nurture myself
to withdraw from the training course
to continue the journey

Overall, how would you rate this experience? (Interpretive)

The most obvious result shown in the histogram is the extremely high rating given to the course, by most individuals. The modal score is 10 and 17 of the 24 participants scored it as a 9 or 10. Nobody gave it less than 7. Clearly a most satisfactory result.

Diagram No. 10 A Histogram of the Rating for a Trans-subjectivity Workshop.

Reflection.

Comments made in this evaluation appear to reinforce comments made by the Research team - that personal experience of a counselling method needs to come before the trainees are taught the necessary skills of that method.

In the workshop on trans-subjectivity an emphasis was made on the discovery of sub-personalities, a term used to express the influence of the archetypes as they express
themselves through the ego of the individual. As there are many archetypes so here are many sub-personalities, and work with these was carried out through the use of Gestalt Therapy, including double-chair work. Hence the assessment of 'Gestalt' being assessed as the top method of counselling.

The demonstration of this method by four group leaders, who were experienced counsellors, appears to have made a useful impression, and this, coupled with the counselling involved, seems to have laid the foundation for further trans-subjectivity counselling.

This evaluation also indicates, from the comments made, that the majority of those present saw this workshop as an extension of their self awareness, with a smaller number viewing the workshop as an opportunity for skills learning.

Overall it seems that trans-subjectivity counselling is a concept worth developing.
7.5. **Participatory Research Action - Team Meeting No.6.**

Present: Carmel M; Pat C; Michael P; Kevin S; Peter O; and Noel C.

On this occasion the team reinforced the concept of providing a training program which would allow the counsellor to develop his/her own methodology based on the provision of Core and Elective modules of counselling methods.

However there is still the need to prepare the trainee counsellor to take the client deeper in the exploration of the inner life, or the subjective world of the client’s experience, if that is the expressed need of the client.

Carmel M: However, a lot of clients don’t always realise that there are different methods of counselling available.

Noel C: In fact when clients are asked what methods their counsellors have used, they usually reply that the counsellor didn’t use any methods. I think that that is a good comment about effective counselling.

Kevin S: There are times when the counsellor would need to change methods if there was a resistance to a particular approach.

Noel C: I would like to think that would be the case, but some counsellors, with a ‘Judging or Organising’ personality may be inclined to work out their agenda for the session, and then stay with it, regardless of the client’s willingness or readiness to co-operate.

Michael P: The personality of the counsellor plays an important role in the choice of the counselling method. It’s a learning and a growing process for some counsellors to become adaptive. Although I still find the concept of exploring the inner life a little difficult to grasp.

Carmel M: Perhaps many clients are unaware that there is an inner life to be explored.

Pat C: We’ve been conditioned to consider reflection and meditation as a waste of time. We should be out ‘doing’ something. Counsellors talk a lot about ‘action plans’. Perhaps we are really exploring our own inner life when we assist the client to go deeper.

Noel C: The client’s journey becomes the counsellor’s journey as both explore the inner depths together.

Peter O: It seems that there is a balance going on between the objective and the subjective experience of both the counsellor and the client.

Carmel M: Do you mean that it is growth for both of them?

Peter O: Although the counsellor is usually aware of his/her objective dimension of the counselling experience, yet there is a subjective experience within the close relationship of counsellor and client. What does it mean to interact with this person? To feel the emotions of this person’s experience?
Carmel M: Is there a danger of the client looking to the counsellor as being a kind of 'guru', and therefore becoming dependent on the counsellor's knowledge and strength?

Noel C: To explore the inner life, it seems that one of the first steps is to strengthen the 'ego' of the client, so it ceases to remain a dependent ego, or a withdrawn ego. A strong ego is no longer being led by the counsellor. Perhaps a better word would be guide, or companion, instead of counsellor.

Peter Q: Perhaps it is a matter of helping the client to own and name his/her own experience, as they learn to own their own emotions.

Carmel C: This sounds as if we need to help the client to develop their self-esteem, in order for them to believe in their own journey and to believe in their ability to take that journey.

Noel C: So do we need to be patient - to deal with the presenting needs - the present crisis, before going deeper? Perhaps many clients do not want to go further - or, it could be that the counsellor is not prepared to take the client further than the opening to the cave. The underground is left unexplored.

Kevin S: I guess that most clients come to counselling because of a particular crisis in their life, and that is where help is needed. I suspect that most clients are not really interested in the spiritual life.

Carmel C: Or - does it begin with a crisis, and the crisis becomes a trigger point for going deeper? Is the counsellor alert for the meta-message?

Pat C: The pain might open the door.

Noel C: Do we also recognise that a crisis can be a symptom of something else? Is the crisis a turning point?

Michael P: Perhaps we need to ask - what's next? What is the hidden agenda?

Kevin S: Is the counsellor the first aid attendant, or do we have the time available to take the client further?

Pat C: There could also be the danger that it is the counsellor's own need to take the client further. If the counsellor pushes the client then it is the counsellor's issue which needs to be explored. And maybe that particular client would not come back if that is the way they have been treated.

The team spent some time discussing the way in which trainee telephone counsellors are confronted to self disclose, and the danger of self-awareness being imposed instead of allowing the trainee to come to this awareness themselves.
Reflection

There was a strong endorsement for the establishment of a counselling methodology which would allow and encourage counsellors to become self-directive in the development of their own eclectic approach to counselling clients.

This sense of trainee empowerment was extended to the client by allowing the client to deal with their presenting issues or crisis, and then having the choice to go deeper if they wish. However this option is also conditional on the counsellor’s willingness and preparedness to take the client deeper. Just as the client needs to develop ego strength, so does the counsellor, in order to avoid destructive transference and/or counter transference.

It could be that the exploration of the inner life is one of the best methods for preparing individuals to become effective counsellors.
7.6. Participatory Action Research Team Meeting No. 7.

To commence with, Noel C. explained the progress made to date of the project of developing a training course for individual and marital counsellors. The concept which appears to be emerging is the need to place the emphasis on the personal experience of the trainee of a specific counselling method. Process is more important than content, e.g. in the evaluation of the various core and elective courses, individuation was ranked first as a method which was personally helpful, but fifth as a method which could be used by the trainees in their counselling. Was this because the theory of individuation was taught but the experience was lacking?

Carmel M. made the point that individuation was more than a method of counselling, it was a name given to an analysis, a life’s journey. It helps the counsellor to listen to the symbolic language of the client, and there again the counsellor would have to understand the symbolism of their own life first.

Pat C: Surely this is not something that could be used with every client, not everyone would be ready for such a journey. There would have to be a desire, a motivation.

Noel C: If the counsellor was on his/her own journey of exploring the inner life, or the subjective realms of the psyche then they would not be afraid if and when the client needed a guide for their exploration.

Pat C: Therefore they would have to be people who knew what it was all about.

Noel C: So is the search for subjectivity one of the best methods of preparation for counselling, even if it is never used in counselling?

Pat C: So it is not simply another method of counselling, although it could be.

Michael P: I see it as the outcome, a higher order goal of any good counselling method. The integrated person who has come to terms with both the outer and the inner. I think that my two years of training was an important part of my journey. I can recognise changes that have taken place in my life as a result of that journey. I’ve always saw individuation like self-actualisation, the pinnacle that we aim for.

Pat L: But not all clients are ready for that.

Pat C: Some may be frightened by the prospects.

Kevin S: Perhaps some people will never reach this point or this understanding. They may be quite happy as they are, and even when they come to counselling it is not to explore the inner life. But if I look at what motivates me to do counselling then I have to say it is to know me better, and even if I’ve made that discovery then I’m in a better position to help others.

Noel C: While trainees are learning the various methods of counselling they are, at the same time, discovering their own inner life and inner strength.

Carmel M: While I’ve been learning these other counselling methods I’ve been discovering myself and this has opened up other dimensions in my life. In working with others I’m now more sensitive to their mythological dimensions. My antenna is out for the possibility of the hidden cry, the inadequacies of the inner life. I can’t push it, but I’ve got to be ready.
Kevin S: The client may know it as self-awareness, the name doesn't matter.

Noel C: Surveys have shown that clients are normally unaware of a specific method being used by the counsellor but they are aware of the relationship between themselves and their counsellor.

Michael P. then discussed some of the later work of Dr Scott-Orr, who uses a spiritual approach in his therapy, and points out the need for the client to re-discover faith in his/her life. This led to a general discussion about separating spirituality and religion and the perceived lack of spiritual depth which lies behind most of the presenting problems of clients.

Noel C: So if we don't provide an opportunity for clients to explore the spiritual dimension of life we are denying them an important part of their journey.

Carmel M: A lot of their crisis lead them into the depths. They're working out their own spirituality through the crisis.

Kevin S: They don't really want answers, certainly not dogma, but opportunities.

Michael P: Counselling is really providing the opportunity for the client to discover him/herself, and such a discovery must contain both the objective and the subjective.

Noel C: So is there a sense in which we are helping the client to discover the turning points in their life? The first one being the movement from the perception of problems being located in the external circumstances of life, to the discovery that the real problems are internal. Later on, some clients may take the next turning point of discovering the deeper realms of the unconscious or the subjective.

Pat L: However, most clients are inclined to stay with the externals, especially if these can be resolved, or they have not reached their mid-life. Individuation may well be the goal of the counsellor but not of the client. But the counsellor can plant the seed.

Noel C: So we end up with a reinforcement of the need for the counsellor to have the experience him/herself.

Reflection

Like self directive learning, the personal choice of counselling methodology, this journey into the realms of the inner life must also be self directed. In this session team members struggled with the concept of using subjectivity or individuation as a separate counselling method, for clients or for counsellors.

This inner journey was seen as a choice for the counsellor, perhaps a helpful, if not essential, choice, but allowance must always be made for the client's right of choice. Is the client ready for such an exploration? This raises the question of whether the client is ready, or even, does the client have a choice of what counselling methods are used by the counsellor anyway? Does the client have that right?

The team raised the need for the trainee counsellor to have the opportunity to personally experience any method of counselling before using that method with clients, or even before learning the theory of that method. This opens up the whole area of effective preparation of a counsellor through self-awareness in the broader sense. The subjective realms of the inner life, and the discovery of the inner Self, the image of the Divine within.
7.7. Concluding Remarks

Instead of an alternative approach to counselling clients, my proposed new praxis is an alternative method for preparing individuals to become counsellors.

If the counsellor is to be a guide for the journey to be taken by the client, and if that journey is to include an exploration of the inner life, and hidden depths of the client's soul or psyche, as well as the quest for objective realism, then the counsellor will need to be familiar with the territory being explored.

Does this mean that the counsellor has already discovered that elusive Self, the gold not made with hands, the panacea of all ills? Hardly, for the counsellor is also a fellow pilgrim on the same journey, but with the additional awareness that the impact of his/her example or modelling can become a great motivator for the client.

But, is Self awareness, or Self discovery, the goal for our subjective quest? There are people, like Young-Eisendrath (1995) who does not believe in a Self - only selves. Perhaps the real quest is not to be found in a universal Self that unfolds through an exploration of the inner life, but recognising and understanding one's own divided nature, the 'multiples of subjectivity that compete for control'. (Young-Eisendrath 1995)

Be that as it may, it still remains the consensus of the research team members that the main focus in equipping the trainee to become an effective counsellor is to be found in the willingness of the trainee to undergo the same process which would be required of the client.

There are a number of counselling agencies, e.g. Lifecare, who insist that supervision is not so much a matter of case work, but helping the counsellor to examine his/her personal reactions to the client's situation. Object Relations Therapy goes a step further by reframing counter-transference from a negative reaction on the part of the counsellor to a positive reaction, which can be fed back to the client to understand what effect his/her actions are having on other people.

In both cases the counsellor needs to be fully aware of his/her emotional and psychic reactions and be willing to self-disclose this understanding. This brings us back to the concept, emphasised in this alternative, or is it, additional approach, that one of the most effective segments in the training of a counsellor is to be found in the counsellor's self-discovery and self awareness.
Chapter 8  Review.

8.1. Introduction.

Having considered the various components of this project, I will discuss the results which are to be validated. The methodological approach which included transformative learning and participatory action research requires an interactive, dialectical logic (Reason 1981) to develop the idea of validity.

Transformation has occurred not only in the trainees, but in myself, as trainer and researcher. In summing up this work I will state the antecedents for producing a comprehensive training program in order for there to be more broadly trained and therefore more effective eclectic counsellors.

The antecedents, which I propose, are:-

(i) Empowerment of the counsellor through self-directed choice and transformative learning opportunities.

(ii) Utilising the strengths of the counsellor's temperament and learning style.

(iii) The counsellor's self awareness, which would be later expanded through the use of Inner Journey therapy.

The process of this approach can be diagrammed as follows:-

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Antecedents  Curriculum  Effective Counsellors  Satisfied Clients
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Diagram No. 11 Process of the Training Program.

Considering these antecedents, or constructs, in closer detail, the following concepts have emerged through this study.

(i) Empowerment of the Counsellor.
The main focus used in the development of the training curriculum has been an eclectic methodology of counselling approaches, in which the trainees have had the freedom to select from the various electives available whatever methods appeal to them. This was discussed in Chapter 3.

On the basis of the evaluations provided by the trainees, (Chapter 5), I believe that trainees have been empowered through such a choice, and this concept has been reinforced through the introduction of a transformative learning methodology and the use of a participatory action research team in formulating the curriculum. The theoretical rationale for this was provided in Chapter 1.

(ii) The Counsellor's Temperament and Learning Style.

Contrary to earlier expectations, research of the relationship between the counsellor's temperament, and learning style, do not appear to be a positive predictors for the overall effectiveness of counselling practice. Chapter 4 covered this area.

However, on the basis of the choice of electives by the trainees, I would suggest that the understanding of temperament and learning style reinforces the need to provide an eclectic approach to the planning of a training curriculum, which becomes innovative and creative, in its concern to cater for the individual, rather than the collective, needs of the trainees. This was discussed in Chapter 4.

(iii) The Counsellor's Self Awareness.

Chapter 7. and Sections 1.8; and 3.1. have described the importance of the counsellor's self-knowledge, self-awareness and self-discovery being a prerequisite for the counsellor's effectiveness in assisting clients to make the same discovery.

Transformative learning does not occur without self examination, and self examination cannot take place without self awareness. I have made a case for using Inner Journey therapy as one way, and perhaps a most effective way, for achieving this aspect of the total process. Chapter 7. provides details of this aspect.

Using an interactive, dialectical logic to validate this thesis, I now turn to the participatory action research team for their comments. This will be followed by the trainees' own evaluation of the effectiveness of using an eclectic methodology in learning counselling skills.
8.2. The Vision Recaptured.

Reviewing the vision which motivated this project, (Chapter 1), I can report that not only in theory, but in practical application, I have now developed a training program for individual and marital counsellors which has enabled and empowered them to create their own unique, self-directed framework of counselling methods and techniques.

The original goals have also been fulfilled, and this thesis has outlined the methodologies used in order to make this possible. The accomplished goals are:-

(i) A curriculum has now been produced which can be used for training programs in Lifeline Centres throughout Australia, either in part or in whole. Choice is always available.

(ii) This curriculum now contains four Core, or essential subjects, two of which are needed for individual counselling, one for marital counselling and one for either or both.

(iii) Unlike formalised training programs provided by most other agencies, this curriculum allows for a wide range of electives which can be selected by the individual trainee, especially to suit their own temperament.

(iv) Then main emphasis, throughout this training program, has been the empowerment of the trainee, by encouraging him/her to exercise self direction and personal choice, in selecting his/her own counselling methods. This training program does not produce clones of the trainer.

If research within the paradigm of participatory action is to have meaning, then that meaning is to be found, not just in the knowledge obtained from that research, but in the action which results from that research. I believe, on the basis of this thesis, that my research has resulted in such an action, the sharing of power and the ownership of the information gained, with the trainees, which has produced a new approach to the training of individual and marital counsellors.

Or, as Reinharz (1992) suggests, 'passionate research is communal rather than hierarchical'. (p.182)
8.3. Participatory Research Action - Team Meeting No.8.

As this would most likely be the last official meeting of the team, team members discussed the overall concept of providing multiple counselling methods for trainee counsellors, as well as the proposal of providing a self awareness component based on the 'Inner Journey'.

Noel C: When we consider the proposal, contained in the new praxis, do you think that the inner journey could become part of the preparation of trainees for training, or is it something that infiltrates the whole training program?

Pat C: Some people are just not concerned about the inner journey, and it seems that one respondent even saw this aspect as counter-productive in counselling people. If an eclectic approach allows for self directed choice of counselling methods, then how can you make the inner journey an essential, or core component? Where is the choice?

Noel C: Or, is the inner journey an essential part of self awareness?

Carmel M: Self awareness is the inner journey. This seems to be a thread running right through the whole course. Explore your own life before daring to explore another's life within a counselling context. This adds a spiritual dimension.

Noel C: I am not suggesting that the exploration of the inner life is a counselling method, but rather a method of self awareness for the trainee counsellor, and if the trainee is not prepared to look inward, are they ready to be a counsellor?

Pat C: This sounds as if your bias toward the inner journey is coming out, and if you're saying that counsellors have to be concerned about their inner journey, then are you open to the self directed choice of the trainee?

Jacquie A: Can this strong emphasis be justified?

Pat C: Most Lifeline Centres are concerned with counselling which focuses on the current crisis or presenting problems, and are less likely to be concerned with the inner life. This was shown in the strong negative response by one of the Lifeline Centres.

Michael P: Could the objection come from the words rather than from the experience?
Pat C: I doubt it.

Noel C: In an earlier survey I have found that an increasing number of marriage counselling agencies have deleted self awareness from their training programs, and this is specially so where counsellors are not agency trained. From another aspect I have found that the majority of agencies, with the exception of those in Victoria, insist on their counsellors using a systemic approach. In Victoria the emphasis appears to be on the psychodynamic approach.

Pat C: Could the same thing be said about this training program? It appears to be an eclectic approach, yet you seem to be steering the trainees toward the exploration of the inner journey, and I guess that is acceptable if it can be validated.

Noel C: What I am proposing is an eclectic approach, where counsellors have a range of counselling methods available, so not only can they select the one which suits their own temperament and learning style, but they can also take recognisance of the client's needs and temperament.

Pat C: It might also be possible that the counsellor could select the counselling method which makes them seem 'good' in the eyes of their peers.

Carmel M: So the inner journey is the backdrop to whatever counselling method is chosen.

Jacquie A: How does psychosynthesis fit into the overall plan?

Noel C: It does not appear as a separate method, although it could have been included. Nevertheless, ideas from psychosynthesis have been included in the inner journey.

Carmel M: Even without a knowledge of counselling methods, your unconscious will compel you to sort out what is appropriate as you become more real in the counselling / client relationship. The knowledge, coupled with intuition, makes you more aware of how best you can help the client to discover his/her own answers.

Jacquie A: So you're saying that self-awareness becomes a shared experience?
Noel C: The overall design of this training program allows counselling to take place at three levels. The cognitive, which deals with the immediate crisis, the meta-cognitive, which considers the under-lying problems, and the epistemological level, which deals with the person’s values, attitudes and basic beliefs.

With most crisis counselling centres the presenting problems have to be dealt with and this is mainly carried out at the cognitive level. e.g. if a person has a sore toe, they do need to have the toe attended to, and afterwards they may become aware that the greater problem is the resentment which is held against the person who caused the sore toe. This may well do them more harm than the actual sore toe.

Perhaps it is true that most of our counselling is aimed at fixing sore toes, or making the person feel better, but we move into the meta-cognitive level once we consider the resentment held by this person. To put the same situation into an epistemological level we would need to look at this person’s belief system. Did he/she believe that they deserved having their toe stepped on?

Effective counselling will need to keep these three levels in mind when counselling a specific client. "Where are the real needs?"

Michael P: Yet this requires a certain level of competency on the part of the trainee. Is it possible to achieve this level within a couple of years? This requires a very effective, insightful and skilful counsellor. Even experienced counsellors, with a heavy case load find it difficult to take clients through these three levels. This sounds very difficult.

Noel C: Do you think that another option would be to take trainees through the first, cognitive, level, and the allow them to be involved in crisis or welfare counselling, under supervision, before coming back in twelve months time, to do some more training at the second level?

Kevin S: This sounds good, but the danger lies in the trainee counsellor, in their year of practice, only dealing with 'sore toes'. If the client recognises that more is needed, then is he/she passed onto a more experienced counsellor? Would it not be better for the client to stay with the counsellor whom they could trust?

Noel C: So the relationship is more important than the method?

Michael P: Knowing our limitations and when to make a referral is vital. We need the generalist who has a broad range of counselling methods, but we also need the specialist.
Kevin S: Within our system, the telephone counsellor is the GP and the more extensively trained face to face counsellor becomes the specialist, who must also recognise his/her limitations.

Alan A: It's also important for the counsellor to be sensitive in knowing when the client is ready to go deeper.

Kevin S: Yet a counsellor can't wait until they have acquired more skills before they start to counsel, or else we would all be waiting forever and perhaps training forever. There is a time to move away from theory and move into practice.

Noel C: What practice, is now the question to be addressed. I wonder what you think of the idea of providing a range of counselling methods within the training which could enable the trainee to select the electives which would suit his/her temperament? Is there an advantage in encouraging an eclectic approach? This could enable a team approach where internal referrals could assist the client to work with the counsellor who is skilled in dealing with the specific needs of that person. This would require the counsellor to recognise his/her own strengths and limitations.

Pat C: Perhaps it's more important for the counsellor to recognise his/her own degree of comfort in working with a particular client, rather than what's more comfortable for the client. An eclectic approach sounds like a smorgasbord, but you have to make it clear that trainees don't have to have something from every dish. Too many trainees have tried to be involved in every elective available.

Michael P: We mustn't forget that the effectiveness of counselling comes more from the relationship than it does from the method used.

Pat C: That statement has to be validated.

Michael P: What kind of person do you want to have as a counsellor at the end of the training?

Alan A: Does this require an assessment of the results of the counsellor's work?

Noel C: Temperament, or learning style appears to make little difference to the effectiveness of the counsellor, but this research does show that training and experience makes a difference. It also seems, from the experience of the trainees, that the Sensate Judging temperament appears to be a stronger motivator for learning than other temperament styles.
Michael P: It seems to me that trainees need to be involved in self-awareness, then to select the specific counselling style or method which suits their temperament, and then to train in that method in order to become proficient. This does not mean that the weaknesses should not be confronted and strengthened.

Pat C: Is it possible that an over emphasis on methods does not allow the counsellor to play their hunches?

(This was followed by a general discussion of how the individual team members have found that following their hunches has proved to be very effective in their own counselling work.)

Reflection.

In this final meeting of the action research team, there is an increase in the critiquing of the total project. This shows that team members have developed as reflective practitioners, as they are well involved in the task of counselling, ranging from trainee to experienced practitioner.

The team has demonstrated their concern for improving the current situation of training counsellors, and have been willing to adopt a flexible trial and error approach to a shared task.

The concept of validation was raised by two team members, and will need to be addressed. In traditional research it is fairly easy to justify a claim that a particular practice has or has not, been improved, as this is done through performance indicators and data analysis. Action research has to justify its claims by demonstrating the validation of evidence through the professional actions of the trainees, involved. McNiff (1992) states that our validation lies in our inter-subjective agreement of the nature of improvement, and whether that improvement has in fact taken place.

The best way to validate the training curriculum and program in the future will be to ask the trainees themselves, and to videotape a trainee conducting a counselling session, and have it assessed by someone outside our agency. The assessment of the current curriculum is given in many sections of this thesis.

Returning to the ideas expressed in the team meeting, I will need to give consideration to the following questions.
* How does the inner journey fit into the training program? Is it a counselling method or an aspect of the development of the self awareness of the trainees?

* Are the three levels, or aspects, of counselling methods an essential aspect of the core and elective subjects?

* Does the provision of a range of counselling subjects lead to confusion, rather than to clarity?

* Is it preferable to allow counsellors to specialise in specific forms of counselling which enables clients to choose their counsellors?

* Would it be more empowering for trainee counsellors to specialise in counselling methods which match their temperaments?

* What kind of person is an effective counsellor?

**Comment.**

These are important questions, and many of them need to be the subject of further research. However, I am now discovering that action research, unlike traditional research, is more concerned with finding the right questions than the right answers.

I commenced this inquiry with the resolve to see things in a more integrated way than the often fragmental methods used by agencies in my survey. Surely there was another way to train counsellors which would empower them to choose the kind of counselling methods which would work best for them rather than being 'trained' to be clones of the trainer?

If I believe in the empowerment of myself and of others, then these questions will need to be left open. I must resist the struggle to return to the familiar, the trusted frameworks that have worked in the past. I am now left with questions which will need to be shared, questions which will enable the dialogue to continue.

I recognise that in this last meeting of the team, there were a number of negative comments. Perhaps the team is now beginning to question the validity of an eclectic training program, and this could well be an important part of the process of transformative learning for them. New ways which are being proposed by myself, will need to be questioned and personally transformed if they are to have any meaning to the team members themselves.
So instead of taking the negative comments personally I have seen them to be an essential part of this whole process. This reaction is one which I have developed in recent years, as previously I would have become defensive in my comments.

8.4. **Reactions of the Trainees to the Counselling Training Program.**

The most effective way of validating this project, from a perspective of participatory action research, is to ask the trainee counsellors themselves to evaluate the effectiveness or otherwise of their involvement in a multiple choice counselling training program. The following comments were made in a questionnaire administered two weeks after the last session of the course, to the 21 trainees who completed this course. The questionnaire was filled in anonymously.

(i). **What are the advantages of having multiple choices in the use of counselling methods?**

The trainees replied as follows:-

I am better equipped for different situations.

I have a variety of methods to use in different situations.

Different personality types will be able to hear through different modes of presentation.

The flexibility will help me to focus on the most helpful strategies.

To be able to use what method is appropriate for each client.

I would like to develop the skill of one particular method and use this well.

Multiple choices allows flexibility within the counselling.

A choice of counselling methods allows me to develop my own style.

This allows me to be more flexible and more client-centred.

This is essential. A broad scope allows an individual approach.

There were certainly plenty of choices.
Allows for flexibility in being able to choose when, and what method is needed.

I seem to have a great bag full of possible choices.

Multiple choices allows for multiple clients.

I'm thrilled there's no one way and that's the right way.

It allows a wider range of tools to draw on.

A larger tool bag to draw upon.

Allows diversification.

Covers a broad area of different and varied issues.

Provides a great number of choices and allows flexibility.

Enhances the chances of being effective.

**Comment.** What stands out in the answers to this section is the uniformity of the replies. Of the 21 individuals 20 explicitly saw the advantage of the variety of methods as providing them with a more flexible approach to their counselling, a greater number of choices so that methods can be tailored to clients' individual needs, which one trainee said, 'enhances the chances of being effective.'

The sole individual who commented on his/her wish to 'develop the skill of one particular method' was in fact not answering the question. It seems, to me, that there was broad acceptance of the value of the breadth of training which provided the opportunity for the trainees to develop their own eclectic approach.

**(ii). What are the disadvantages of having multiple choices?**

Four trainees saw no disadvantages. Other replies were as follows:-

I know a bit about a lot of methods but not a lot about very many.

I'm not confident enough to use some that could be useful.

Borrowing a little of each method and not specialising in any particular method.
I need one main structure, then the different methods can fill out and enhance the structure.

It takes time to develop a personal style involving so many methods to choose from.

Multiple methods are not a disadvantage, just a challenge.

I do not feel confident in any one technique.

It can sometimes be confusing in choosing what to do,

A little confusing as to 'what' is 'which' method.

Too many spanners for one nut.

We scratched the surface of techniques.

Digesting the sheer amount of information available.

Comment. Four trainees gave no answer to this question. In The other 17 cases different aspects came under criticism. Three criticised the shallowness of the approach due to the breadth which was praised before as an asset. This is perhaps reflected in the personal comments that reflect a lack of confidence in applying what was learnt. (2 trainees), and some confusion in future application to counselling (3 trainees).

Two trainees commented on the intellectual challenge of the diverse methods taught and one makes this point indirectly by commenting that it will take time to develop a personal style from this diversity. Only one trainee prefers a different model of a 'main structure' which he/she can 'fill out and enhance with different methods'.

Responding to these comments I might consider whether the confusion and lack of confidence could be met by melding the theory with a later period of supervised practice where such feelings can be dealt with in the practical situation of actual case work. Experience is needed to match the theory before an appreciation of an eclectic approach to counselling can be realised.
Reflection.

There are some very valid points made by the trainees which reinforce the comments made by the research team and the respondents from the Lifeline Centres. e.g. The need for trainees to be grounded in one specific method before expanding into the various methods available, and developing a more eclectic approach.

I am inclined to forget that it has taken me many years to develop my skills in the various counselling methods which I have advocated and made available in this training course, not to mention the long process of transformative learning required.

From my own personal history I was introduced to counselling skills through a two year course which focused on Client-Centred therapy, and coming from a fairly rigid background, it took the two years for me to change some of my basic attitudes which was necessary before I could learn and use the client centred approach.

Learning skills is one thing, but changing attitudes is another meaning perspective which has to evolve and this takes time. Perhaps it is right to say that there is a need to provide a solid grounding in one Core method before trainees could be expected to expand their knowledge and experiment with other methods. They have the rest of their lives to do this.

8.5. Concluding Remarks.

As I bring this thesis to a conclusion I will return to my own transformative shift from a rigid to a flexible view of humanity, by quoting from the Bible and applying this passage to the changes carried out in the training of individual and marital counsellors. In this process I am moving away from a fundamentalist interpretation to a more liberal and analytical hermeneutics. This process reflects my own transformative change.

Leviticus chapter 18, v's 3 - 4; 'You must not do as they do in Egypt, where you used to live, and you must not do as they do in the land of Canaan, where I am bringing you. Do not follow their practices. You must obey my laws and be careful to follow my decrees, I am the Lord your God.'
The first step is one of moving away from the past - do not do as they do in Egypt, where you used to live. Johnson (1986) suggests that we must risk releasing the images of the past which we have held as absolutes, if life is to continue as something creative.

This thesis has proposed moving away from the old methods of training counsellors, where limited and preset agendas are used in order to bring about conformity to the agency's or trainer's mind set. Leaving the old ways is not an easy task for either trainer or trainees, yet it is an essential one if progress is to be made in transformative learning.

The next step is the discipline of refusing to jump ahead - you must not do as they do in the land of Canaan, where I am bringing you. Throughout this research many great ideas have been proposed, a number of which have been outside of the focus of this inquiry. It is tempting to take up these challenges and move in new directions. But not yet. One step at a time means staying with the current inquiry of the development of an open, inclusive, self directed training program for individual and marital counsellors.

The most important transformative shift, for me over the past few years, has been the recognition that God is within, not without. My inner Self reflects the image of the God within, and knows which way to take. 'You must obey my laws and follow my decrees'. Whitmont (1978) suggests that the Self expresses a central guidance system which is directed toward conscious experience. While Jung (1977) refers to the Self as the centre, which is the goal for life. In many ways the Self, as the central guidance system could be viewed as the archetype of an inner authority which governs outer as well as inner reality.

This is the whole aim of transformative learning, to be self directed, and self contained. Surely this is also the aim of effective counselling, to assist clients to take responsibility for their own lives, to decide on their own direction, and to discover their own resources. Effective counsellors will therefore create an environment which makes this discovery possible,
NOTE

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I have also learnt that I cannot exist in a vacuum. I am part of a system which allows other people's actions and reactions, experiences and reflections to have a bearing on my experience. Winter (1989) suggests that our judgements need to be reliant on complex interpersonally negotiated process of interpretation, if they are to have any practical effect on others. I have learnt to be aware of this process, and to extend the concepts of participatory action research into my everyday life.

I have also learnt that asking the right questions is more important than believing that I have found the right answers. As every aspect of life is still evolving, and I am part of that evolving process, I am now learning to transform my claims and judgements into process questions.

Although this list could be vastly extended, I will add one more valuable change which has occurred for me, which is a natural follow on from the last point. Although there are no rigid answers, there are a number of alternative outcomes for any inquiry. I have learnt to look for the available options in any given situation.

(ii) As a result of insights gained, and experiments completed, what changes have I made in my counselling practice?

The main change which has occurred is my attitude toward the client, the person or persons who present for counselling. Instead of assuming that I know what's best for that person, or persons, I now work in collaboration with them and see counselling as a joint effort.

The client's viewpoint is essential for an understanding of the situation, or problem, which is the focus of the counselling. Also essential is the client's awareness of varied interventions available for obtaining desirable outcomes.

The direction of the counselling, including the methods used, are interpersonally negotiated. Although there are times when differences of perspectives between myself, as counsellor, and the client, do occur, this is no longer viewed as a potential conflict, but as an opportunity for an understanding of the differences, and a re-interpretation of the contradictions between the differences.

Collaboration has become a strength of my counselling approach. Information, from whatever source, is no longer seen as data to be collected and stored, but as a set of resources for creating other possibilities. The collaborative process within my counselling now acts as a challenge to my own assumptions or subjective bias.
(iii) What will now be my future direction as a researcher, and as a trainer?

As I have already mentioned, this research has left me with a number of unanswered questions, which have aroused my interest and have presented me with some new challenges. e.g.

* Does temperament and/or learning style have a long term effect on the effectiveness or otherwise of counsellors?

* As the majority of marriage counselling agencies have deleted self awareness from their training programs, how then does this effect the effectiveness or otherwise of the trained counsellors?

* Would clients prefer to work with a counsellor who used a collaborative approach, which allowed them to experience a choice of methods, or with a counsellor who worked from their own preferred model?

* What would be the outcome of a training program for counsellors if participants were given full responsibility for designing and implementing their own training program?

I will now conclude with the question -

* How can I ensure that the findings of my present research project are implemented?

Theory has little impact without practice in the training of counsellors. My findings and the practice of training counsellors cannot be or remain distinct entities, because theory has little impact without practical application, and both need to merge into one whole.

I believe as I reflect on the overall findings of this research project, that the issues raised are important additions to the theory and practice of training counsellors. Therefore I am determined to implement these findings and to continue to research the issues.
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AN INNOVATIVE APPROACH TO THE TRAINING OF PERSONAL AND MARITAL COUNSELLORS.

Volume 2.

Noel C. Cathcart.
October 1996

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Appendix 1.

Samples of Responses to Counselling Situations.

The following responses indicate the skill used, and according to the amount of personal warmth and caring conveyed by the response, a rating was given on the basis of seven experienced counsellors’ response to this situation. The samples given were provided by trainees and non counsellors as a response to the client’s statement.

Client: My mother always said that I would amount to nothing, and I guess she's right.

A 10 response = Empathy.
"It sounds as though you are feeling really worthless."

A 9 response - Empathy with content.
"You feel really down because it seems as though your mother’s prediction for you might be coming true."

A 8 response = Empathy with probing.
"You feel unsuccessful and perhaps you believe you’re Mum’s right?"

A 7 response = Reflection.
"Sounds like things aren't going too well for you at present."

A 6 response = Support.
"I'm sure that you can rise above this upset."

A 5 response = Challenging.
"Your mother’s statements ring pretty strongly for you?"

A 4 response = Probing question.
"In what way has your life been going wrong?"

A 3 response = Change of direction.
"Your mother probably didn't mean it and anyway why not try to change your life now. What's some of the good and positive things that's happened to you?"

A 2 response = Non-probing question.
"Why do you feel this may be true? Do you like yourself?"

A 1 response = Advise giving.
"Well we all have to make our own way in life and our mothers and others may have said that because of her own life. It's really up to us."
Appendix 2.

Samples of Responses to Counselling Situations in on-going Sessions.

The following responses indicate the skill used in a follow up interview, using the same situation as in Appendix 1. Again, the rating scale was determined by seven experienced counsellors.

Client: I think I’ve been strongly influenced by my mother. She used to rule the whole family, if not by force then by emotional blackmail.

A 10 response = Empathy with probing.
"You sound afraid of her strength. What do you mean by force or emotional blackmail?"

A 9 response = Advanced empathy.
"You mother robbed you of self esteem in childhood. Tell me how that ties you up right now."

A 8 response = Empathy with content.
"You felt very threatened by your mother’s influence in the past and this is still affecting you now."

A 7 response = Probing.
"Could you tell me about ruling the family by force and by emotional blackmail."

A 6 response = Challenging.
"You believe that in the past you have been dominated by your mother. What are you going to do about this understanding now?"

A 5 response = Empathy.
"Being dominated can really leave a person feeling helpless, can’t it?"

A 4 response = Reflection.
"You feel as though you have been controlled by a dominating mother."

A 3 response = Assurance and/or Support.
"Your mother’s influence is strong. She’s been able to rule the whole family."

A 2 response = Non-probing question.
"Could you tell me more about your mother?"

A 1 response = Advise giving.
"Don’t let your mother dominate you. You need to stand up for yourself."
Appendix 3.

An Outline of a Curriculum for the Training of Individual and Marital Counsellors.

When this thesis was first planned, I had proposed making the development of the Training Curriculum the major focus. However, with the emphasis on the various methodologies for the theory and practice of the creation of the training program, the actual curriculum became a secondly concern.

A brief outline of the curriculum is contained in the body of the thesis, as Chapter 3, so the description of the various courses is now contained in the Appendix.

The training course required trainees to complete two Core subjects and two Electives in order to be accredited as Personal Counsellor, and marital Counsellor were required to complete the four Core Subjects and three Electives.

This allowed trainees to select their own subjects according to their interest, motivation, temperament and learning style. Personal choice is one way of empowering trainees to take responsibility for their own life, and the counselling methods which suit them the best. This choice also prevents the trainer cloning trainees during the training process.
3.1; Core Competency of Self Awareness.

The art of counselling or helping others to understand themselves and discover their own strengths and resources implies the ability of the counsellor to maintain his/her own internal strengths so as not to be emotionally swamped and overpowered by the pathology of those who come for help.

Training is an opportunity for trainee counsellors to grapple with personal issues that could affect their ability to deliver services to clients, Gerald Egan goes as far to suggest that it is essential for counsellors to understand their own assumptions, beliefs, values, standards, skills, strengths, weaknesses, idiosyncrasies, style of doing things, foibles, and temptations, and the way in which these will permeate the counsellor's interactions with clients. (Egan 1990)

Karen Horney warns the would be counsellor about the neurotic need of the compulsive character to seek and even crave for affection and power. These very driving forces can attract many people to become involved in counselling in the first place. (Horney 1945.) Guggenbuhl-Craig believes that many people in the helping profession can actually do more harm than good when they delude themselves that they are operating only from selfless motives instead of the more influential motive of power. (Guggenbuhl - Craig 1982.)

Training in self-awareness can not only strengthen the trainee's ability to deal with his/her own inner conflicts, but this segment can also act as a self-assessment and a self-selection process. Three sections would be involved in this theme.

3.1.1; Journaling
With the use of a book like 'The New Diary' by Tristine Rainer (1978), trainees would have a private psychological tool which could be used to express feelings without inhibition, and to recognise and alter self-defeating habits of mind as well as discovering and accepting the 'self' which is the real person.

3.1.2; Counselling.
With a personal counsellor of the trainee's choice, the trainee could explore in depth his/her own personality. inner conflicts and unresolved issues, as well as observing an experienced counsellor in actual practice.

3.1.3; Self Therapy.
Trainees would have the use of the text book 'Self-Therapy' by Muriel Schiffman (1967) which provides techniques for personal growth and trainees would be encouraged to work through this material over a three month period.
* Support the client's frame of reference.
* Facilitate dialogue.
* Focus attention on core issues.
* Prevent advise giving.
* Pave the way for stronger interventions

3.2.4; Probing

Probing assists the client to talk about specific experiences, behaviours, and feelings, instead of generalising or excusing current behaviour. Suggestions for the use of probes include the following:-

* Keep clients focused on relevant and important issues.
* Always use open-ended questions.
* Do not engage in question and answer dialogue.
* Probing needs to be followed up with empathy, not another probe.
* Probing is needed to help clients clarify problems, identify blind spots and formulate plans.
* Probes must stay with the subject being discussed.

3.2.5; Clarifying

Clarity is needed to expand the statement of a problem into the specific behaviours which constitute it. Discovering the specific behaviour helps the client to discover more definite goals for future action.

3.2.6; Challenging.

The skill of challenging is used to help clients-

* To own their own problems and opportunities.
* To state their own problems and opportunities.
* To re-examine faulty perceptions.
* To face discrepancies, distortions, evasions, games and excuse making.
* To confront self-limitations and self-defeating internal dialogue.
* To take positive action.
3.2. Core Competency of Basic Counselling Skills.

This segment is based on a text book by Gerald Egan 'The skilled Helper' (1990) which is currently used by a number of counselling agencies as a basic text. Egan's revised model places less emphasis on general counselling skills and more on the issue of client action. This approach provides a wider range of possible interventions and actual strategies which can be used by the client for formulating action plans. Egan believes that problems occur when clients have accumulated sufficient unused opportunities for growth and development.


3.2:1; Physical and emotional attending

Simply being with another person is extremely important. Counselling demands a certain intensity of presence, which is conveyed through non-verbal behaviour and attentive presence.

3.2:2; Active Listening

This includes:-

* Listening to and understanding non verbal behaviour,

* Listening to and understanding verbal messages.

* Listening to and understanding the context of the client's life and experience.

* Listening to and understanding the client's perceptions, distortions and dissonance.

3.2:3; Empathic responding

Empathy is the ability to perceive the client's world through their eyes and to convey that understanding of their own feelings, experiences and behaviour. Empathy can provide the following effects.
* The establishment of rapport
* Encourage self-exploration
* Check out perceptions.

* Support the client’s frame of reference.
* Facilitate dialogue.
* Focus attention on core issues.
* Prevent advice giving.
* Pave the way for stronger interventions

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* To confront self-limitations and self-defeating internal dialogue.
* To take positive action.
3.2:7; Advanced Empathy

This skill is used to help the client uncover the meta cognitive meaning behind the presenting issue or problem. As Rogers (1980) puts it, advanced empathy involves sensing meaning of which the client is scarcely aware. Advanced empathy can take a number of forms, including

* Making the implied explicit.
* Identifying themes.
* Connecting issues and building bridges between feelings, experiences, and behaviours.
* Moving from the past to the present.
* Accepting personal responsibility for existing problems.
* Sharing hunches with clients.

3.2:8; Immediacy

This refers to the ability to explore with the client what is happening in the relationship with that person in the present moment of time, rather than being stuck in past unresolved issues. This skill includes -

* Personal responses or self - involving statements.
* Keeping the focus on the relationship rather than the transaction.
* Here and now immediacy.

3.2:9: Paradoxical Challenge.

This skill enables the counsellor to reframe the client's problem as a strength rather than as a weakness. e.g instead of viewing depression as a failure, it is seen as a normal reaction to distressing events. As Egan (1990) puts it, 'Paradoxical reframing' takes the client out of a pressure-cooker atmosphere.

3.2:10; Goal Setting

To make it possible for clients to move from their present scenario of a problem situation, to the preferred scenario of self-fulfillment, the counsellor will need to assist the client to set realistic goals. Goals will need to be -
* Stated as preferred outcomes.
* Clear and specific enough to motivate action.
* Measurable.
* Realistic i.e under the control of the client.
* Relevant to the original problem and contributing toward its solution.
* Consistent with the client values.
* Realistic in its time frames.

3.2.11; Action Strategies

Having set the goals the client may need help to choose the best strategies, design an action plan, and then implement it. Questions which could be raised include -

* Are the strategies clear and specific?
* Are the strategies capable of moving the client toward their stated goal?
* Are the strategies realistic?
* Are they powerful enough to be effective?
* Has the client developed his/her own action strategies?
* Are they consistent with the client's own values?
3.3. Core Competency of Systems Practice.

Although the segment of Basic Skills can be and is often adapted to a marital context, yet there remains a need for an understanding of the marital system. With this in mind trainees would be encouraged to use a systemic approach in their marital counselling work.

According to Virginia Satir (1967) the marital relationship is the axis around which all other family relationships are formed, so the 'couple' become the architects of their family system. 'It is when that system breaks down, or becomes dysfunctional, that intervention in the system is required.


Proposed concepts for consideration:-

3.3.1 Structural Therapy

Within this approach, which is closely akin to a hard system, it is important to consider the interactions of the individual within the context of significant life relationships. According to Minuchin (1974) the purpose of therapy is to modify the present, not to explore and interpret the past. In order to do this it is essential to understand the family system which is organised around the support, regulation, nurturance, and socialisation of its members.

3.3.2 Forming the Therapeutic System

Like action research the counsellor works within the family system and not outside of it. In joining the family or the couple the counsellor needs a capacity to adapt and especially to work with the family's tempo of communication. This structure covers the following considerations.

* Understanding the preferred transactional patterns and the available alternatives.

* Evaluating the system's flexibility.
* Examining the system’s sensitivity to the needs of individual members.

* Reviewing the family life context, its sources of support and its reaction to stress.

* Examining the family’s development stage.

* Exploring ways in which the ‘Identified client’s symptoms are used for the maintenance of the family’s preferred transactional patterns.

3.3.3 Restructuring the Family

A dysfunctional family or system will need restructuring and this will require dramatic interventions that create movement towards functional goals. The counsellor’s task is to move the family system toward planned changes, and this will require the following steps.

(i). Actualising Family Transactional Patterns.

As this may be outside of the family’s awareness the counsellor will need to:

* Encourage the family to enact instead of describing.

* Assist the family to experience their own transactions.

* Create communication channels.

(ii) Marking Boundaries.

The family will need to create a flexible interchange between each person’s autonomy and their interdependence.

(iii) Escalating Stress

When the family is stuck the counsellor will need to help them to experiment with alternative ways of relating. Sometimes the stress has to be highlighted in order to develop implicit conflict.
(iv) Assigning Tasks.

Tasks can be used to dramatise family transactions and to suggest needed changes. Assigned tasks can assist the restructuring of the system.

(v) Utilising Symptoms.

The symptoms of an individual member are usually the expression of a contextual problem. It is often useful to exaggerate the symptom and then to shift the focus onto the family, where the symptom can then be relabelled.

(vi) Manipulating Mood.

As emotional feelings are often used to manipulate distance within the family, the counsellor can exaggerate the family's moods in order to trigger the required changes.

(vii) Support, Education, and Guidance

When these functions are missing in a family the counsellor will need to model and encourage these functions throughout the process of restructuring the family's transactional patterns.

3.3.4 The Cybernetics of the Family/Marital system.

Having considered the 'morphostasis' of the system, the functional constancy of the family system, we now turn to the 'morphstasis' of the way in which the system needs to change its basic structure.

How can we help the family to move beyond its homeostatic plateau where rigidity gives way to flexibility, where entrenchment can move to freedom, and dependency to independency.

This means helping the family or marital system to break away from its self-defeating cycles of helplessness and symptomatic behaviour. This approach will frequently include supporting the 'scapegoat' or the so-called deviant in his/her effort to break away from a dysfunctional structure.

3.3.5 Symptom Typologies.

Hoffman (1981) suggests that an important aspect of family therapy is to focus on the interactions, verbal and non-verbal, in an attempt to link communication style with the dominant type of system within the family. Three modes of interaction are suggested:
Symmetrical, Complementary and Reciprocal.

There appears to be a continuum from the too tightly connected to the too loosely connected family system which presents symptoms requiring intervention.

Chaotic - Disengaged - Flexible - Structured - Enmeshed - Rigid.

* Chaotic - Confused communication, unclear boundaries and avoidance of power issues - Sociopathic behaviours.

  * **Disengaged** - relative absence of strong connections - few routines or ceremonies - appearance of not caring.

  * **Flexible** - Willing to adapt to developmental stages - movable boundaries - open to new possibilities.

  * **Structured** - Firm boundaries, with overtly explained guidelines and requirements.

  * **Enmeshed** - change is resisted and connectedness is characterised by interlocking. Differentiation of family members does not exist. 'the two shall become one'.

  * **Rigid** - unmovable boundaries - psychotic disturbances which can lead to the breakdown of boundaries, as the only way out, and a chaotic condition.

If even one person in an emotional system can remain detached, then tension can resolve itself, so the counsellor can perform the task of ‘detriangling’ the triangle by remaining still and not reacting.
3.3.6 **Family Paradigms.**

The beliefs and values of a family are the emergent property of family experience. Problems occur when the family paradigm is unable to adapt to changing circumstances. Many different categories can be used to describe family paradigms or beliefs, and Reiss (1971) proposes the following.

(i). **Consensus - sensitive.** Holds the belief that the family must maintain a closed and uninterrupted agreement at all times. The environment can be perceived as threatening and dangerous. Their 'pseudomutuality' confirms the quality of enmeshment.

(ii). **Interpersonal distance - sensitive.** Are well attuned to the environment and external influences, but not sensitive to those who are close. They frequently behave as though it would be a mistake to accept suggestions from close family members.

(iii). **Environment - sensitive** - contains the belief that both family members and the environment can provide valuable information and support. A family member can make decisions individually or jointly, depending on the situation.

Paradigms can change, and it is the task of the counsellor to create an environment where a paradigm shift could occur. Sometimes a family breakdown has to occur before an opportunity is created for its own self-healing potential to be realised.

3.3.7 **Pathological Ambivalence.**

Expanding on Bateson's (1978) double bind theory, which states that a family member may find him/herself in a bind when faced with a predicament of having to choose between two conflicting set of instructions, and then being punished for choosing sides, it is my premise that a marital couple is faced with the same ambivalence of divided loyalties between the partner and work or social interests. This can also occur when a choice has to be made between parents and partner and siblings or children, and also between conflicting values and beliefs.
Ambivalence becomes an emotional strain when a person has to interact with someone who is both an opponent and a coalition partner. In the extreme this can result in schizophrenic behaviour. Haley (1977) calls this situation the 'perverse triangle', and adapting it to a marital relationship it would contain the following characteristics.

* It contains two persons from the same level (partners) and one from a different level (work)

* It will involve a coalition of two (husband and workmate) who are on a different level against the left-out-one (wife)

* The coalition against the third person must be kept hidden (excuses, denials).

3.3.8 Balance Theory.

This is based on the premise that a state of inconsistency on the part of one family member creates discomfort which a person will attempt to correct.

This idea is closely related to the principle expanded by Carl Rogers (1965) that the human organism has a natural tendency towards growth and development. Going back a little further we find people like Carl Jung (1953) who insisted that the answer to personal problems lies within the self of the individual.

Balance, however, is not synonymous with harmony, and a functional relationship does not mean that partners will necessarily be in agreement. Balance is not only concerned with personal relationships, but it is concerned with the manner in which partners relate to the beliefs, values and attitudes of their spouse.

3.3.9 The Management of Conflict

Overt or covert conflict between family members frequently results in the symptomatic behaviour of another member of the family. Where the conflict is covert, the persons involved are unable to deal directly with each other so they do this through a third person (a child) who feels forced to take sides, so a polarisation between the conflicting pair appears.
This polarisation often takes an authoritarian versus permissive line, so the more protection is offered to a third party the more it is countered by an increase of punishment by the other. Frequently the third party plays his/her part in maintaining and intensifying the conflict, and too often this person becomes an unwitting sacrifice in order to absorb the conflict.

On goal of counselling will be to disengage the third party (usually a child) from his/her position between the parents, so that the parents, as the architects of the family, can be directly confronted with their own conflicts.

3.3.10 The Systemic Model

This approach, commenced by a group of family therapists in Milan, relies on the use of the paradox and the counter-paradox. It is a way of viewing the victim, or the identified client, as the one who maintains the balance in a dysfunctional family by his/her symptomatic behaviour. The counsellor will ask the family to continue with the problem rather that try to fix it.

The counsellor will endeavour to understand the internal and external politics and functions of the family. An 'hypothesis' is proposed which gives meaning to the present difficulty, and this becomes the theme for the counsellor to follow in the interview. It also gives meaning to the current dysfunctional behaviours.

An essential characteristic of the counsellor is his/her stance of 'neutrality' i.e. the ability to maintain an impassive, if respectful, attitude during counselling.
3.4. Social Issues

From a cognitive perspective counselling will need to address contemporary social issues which impact upon marriage and family life. This segment of the training will only allow for an introductory understanding of this subject and trainees would be encouraged to pursue these topics in more detail.

3.4.1. Human Development

Following Erikson's (1963) stages of human development from the cradle to the grave, gives the counsellor an insight into the various points in the life cycle which presents possible problems or crisis which would need to be negotiated.

(i) Trust versus Mistrust - the first year of life - the fear of abandonment can interfere with later relationships.

(ii) Autonomy versus Doubt - second year of life - self-concept develops through positive or negative reinforcement. Over protection and restrictions can damage the self-concept.

(iii) Initiative versus Guilt - three to six years of age - importance of role models and consistency. Purpose and direction can be encouraged or discouraged.

(iv) Industry versus Inferiority - from the sixth year through to puberty. The foundation for social skills are now being developed which can have repercussions in later relationships.

(v) Identity versus Confusion - the period of adolescence in which direction and values are being self regulated. Disorganisation can leave the individual confused about who he/she is, where they are going in life, and what they want.

(vi) Intimacy versus Isolation - early adulthood - this is the time for commitment - to career, a marriage, a family. Early experience can damage or enhance these commitments.

(vii) Generativity versus Self-absorption - middle adulthood - the challenge of mid-life is either satisfaction from a constructive contribution to society, or frustration and depression from a wasted life.
(viii) Integrity versus Despair - old age - this is a time for reflection and fulfillment or reflection and despair. So much depends on how each stage is negotiated and integrated.

3.4.2. Sexual Functioning

As sexual desire and orientation is largely an individual preference, so is sexual functioning, which may be conditioned by the person's background, life experience, influences, expectations, aspirations, attitudes, stimuli and methods of communicating.

Feelings of self-worth and an acceptance of body shape and size also play an important role in sexual functioning, and the question of normality will also need to be discussed. Where dysfunction occurs in a sexual relationship, the counsellor may need to consider the following factors.

* The role of early or later traumatic experiences.
* Belief systems about what is normal in sexual behaviour and function.
* Discomfort regarding passion.
* Fear of losing control.
* Fear of intimacy.
* Fear of pleasure.
* Generalised anger at members of the opposite sex.
* Anger at one's own partner.
* Dislike for partner's technique, needs, attitudes or habits.

Sexual functioning has a psychological as well as a physical base, and both would need to be considered in counselling.

Physical issues involve - erection, ejaculation, orgasm and physical pain. Psychological issues involve - desire, turn-ons, fantasies, sex roles, anger, anxiety, guilt, past traumas, and sexual identity.
Sexual counselling will need to include -

* Giving information about the way in which sexuality functions both as a physical and emotional entity.

* Giving the individual permission to express sexuality in ways he/she is comfortable with.

* Developing communication links with the partner about sexual likes and dislikes, needs and feelings.

* Clarifying the goals of sexual interaction and relationships.

* Examining and changing belief systems that interfere with sexual pleasure and functioning.

* Resolving old emotional wounds.

3.4.3. Legal Issues and Family Law Matters.

A marriage counsellor cannot be expected to provide legal advice but he/she will need to become familiar with current practice in order to make effective referrals. These issues will include -

Separation. A twelve month period of separation is taken from the day on or both partners leave the marriage (not the home) and must be complete at the time of filing for a dissolution of marriage. As long as couples treat each other as husband and wife, regardless of sexual relations or living conditions, the separate and apart provisions may not apply.

Divorce. The only ground for divorce is 'irretrievable breakdown of the marriage' where the parties have been living apart for twelve months and there is no likelihood of them getting back together again. Either party can apply for a divorce, no matter who left the marriage or whether or not the other party wants the divorce.
The Family Home. Regardless of whose name the house is in, a member of a marriage is entitled to live in the family home unless there is a court order requiring a party to leave. Even when the home is in the husband's name only, the wife can be given all or part of the house depending on needs and who is caring for the children. If the home is in both names it cannot be sold unless both parties agree.

(iv) Property. The court always considers the broader picture when making determinations about entitlements, in that each partner has contributed during the course of the marriage and has therefore earned a share in the property. The division of property can occur before a divorce, depending on needs.

(v) Custody. The needs of the child, including access to both parents, is usually considered before the needs of the parents, so the court will usually not grant a divorce unless suitable arrangements have been made for the welfare of the children.

These include:
* Where and with whom will they live.
* Their progress at school.
* Their health.
* How often they see the non-custodial parent.
* How much the custodial parent earns.
* The amount of maintenance being paid.

(vi) De facto Relationships. The broad principle governing rights of de facto partners are similar to those applying to married people under the Family Law Act. However, they come under the State and Territory laws.

(vii) The Place of Counselling. The court system would prefer the couple to make their own arrangements regarding all of the above matters, and this is where counselling can play an important role. There is also a place for counselling both partners as they face the grief, anger and resentment of losing a role and rediscovering their single status and identity.
3.4.4 Affairs

Because our culture places a strong emphasis on 'romantic love' as the basis of a relationship, then flight of fancy or physical attraction can easily lead one partner into an extra-marital affair, when their present partner does not maintain the initial interest.

With the widespread availability of contraceptives, sexual relations have taken on a more recreational role, and therefore sex itself has been removed from a committed relationship. Sexual gratification is seen as an individual right, rather than as a mutual expression of commitment.

Because 'affairs' can be fairly brief or impermanent sexual encounters, they can result in a lack of emotional investment, feelings of guilt and blame, and psychological disequilibrium. This leaves counselling with the challenge of dealing with the hurts, anger and frustrations of broken trust, jealousy and half-hearted commitment which have to be addressed. The past relationship is not possible to re-capture, but a renewal of the relationship with a new contract is possible.

3.4.5 Gender Issues

In our society differentiation among its members on the basis of sex, i.e. treating men and women in different ways and expecting different patterns of behaviour form them has become the norm.

Sex roles are learnt in the course of the socialisation process, so to be feminine is said to be emotionally supportive, gentle, expressive of feeling, material and intra-familial. While to be masculine is said to be self-reliant, competent, independent, paternal, and extra-familial. Men are expected to be more interested in sexual gratification than romantic involvement.

Although this does not necessarily imply that one sex is superior yet in practice sexual differentiation is normally translated into sexual inequality. So certain rights and opportunities have been denied to women on the basis of a social assumption that the talents and potentials of the sexes are different in many aspects. Unfortunately many couples who present for counselling bring this assumption with them.
This structural inequality of the sexes is now being vigorously challenged, and what was once regarded as an unalterable fact of life is now viewed as nothing more than a cultural product of our society.

While it is true that men and women differ from one another anatomically, genetically, and hormonally, and although hormonal differences do have some influence on personal behaviour, yet this influence seems a minor one. The main differences seem to be socially conditioned. As Karl Marx points out, both the dominant and the subordinate groups in any situation of structured social inequality tend to accept the ideology that legitimates the system. (Lange 1994)

Some proportion of marital disharmony stems from role and gender confusion, especially as couples try to meet the demands of today’s society with its changing values and blurred distinctions of role requirements. These factors must not be over-looked by the counsellor.
Introduction to Electives.

(The following is a repeat of the comments made in Vol. 1. p’s 49 & 50, and it is provided for the purpose of giving a context for the descriptions of the electives.)

Electives represent the core of this approach to the training of individual and marital counsellors. Electives allow for the differences in personality styles and temperament, plus the expression of personal motivation within a specific set of counselling skills, and theoretical orientation, chosen by the trainee counsellor to meet the needs of the specific[. client/counsellor relationship.

The availability of electives will help to prevent the cloning of trainees, so instead of the duplication of one particular counselling method, as presented by the trainer or agency, we can have a variety of counselling methods available as a result of the heterogeneity of the electives undertaken by the trainee counsellors.

Applying this methodology to individual and marital counselling is a practical expression of the principles of social ecology, and transformative learning, where multiple theories and methods are used in the interests of human services. This also avoids, or even solves, the dilemma of being caught in a bind between using a psychodynamic or a systemic approach, as social ecology lends itself to using a range of theories and methods for creating a social environment.

One major problem in encouraging an eclectic approach is the possible stress created for supervisors, as they endeavour to assist and support counsellors in the use of skills with which they may not be familiar. This will require supervisors to place the emphasis of their supervision on the process of counselling, instead of the content of the counselling.

Clients, like counsellors, come to counselling with a wide variety of needs, motivation and temperament styles, so the methods available will need to address these various needs. There are three main levels of counselling approaches which will be covered in the available electives.
*The Cognitive Level.*

This refers to the immediate, practical needs of the client in his/her search for down to earth solutions to the presenting problems. There are many situations where a crisis occurs which requires a cognitive, easy to understand, action program.

*The Meta-Cognitive Level.*

Frequently the presenting problem is not the real issue. We need to seek for the underlying, or meta-cognitive, problem. The counsellor will need to tease out the way the client feels about his/her feelings. or how they think about the way they think. What lies behind the surface?

*The Epistemological Level.*

What is the client's frame of reference, or meaning perspectives? If change is to occur which creates a paradigm shift, then the client will need to be encouraged to re-examine his/her current life's philosophies.
Cognitive Level.

3.5. Behaviour Modification.

A behavioural approach to counselling was first introduced by Joseph Wolpe (1958), who defined Behaviour Modification Therapy, or BMT for short, as the use of experimentally established principles of learning for the purpose of changing unadaptive behaviour.

In the early development of BMT a successful marriage was considered one in which both partners were both regularly rewarding each other for desired behaviour with the result that these responses would continue to occur regularly, to the satisfaction of both.

Knudson (1978) considered that this idea of buying favours from one’s partner was superficial, even unethical. A more acceptable method was introduced, known as ‘contingency contracting’. The idea was for the counsellor to assist the couple to produce a written agreement which sets out specific positive behavioural requests from each partner, together with the rewards which can be expected on completion of each task.

BMT has now moved into the task of helping couples to make sense out of their collective problems, and to tackle the task of modifying inappropriate beliefs and perceptions, as well as achieving behavioural change. The major component in the nature of marital problems is considered to be the unresolved expectations of the couple and the tension and stress which follows.

Mackay (1985) goes as far as to suggest that a successful relationship is one in which both partners are sufficiently flexible to be able to adjust their expectations and behaviour so that any change occurring in the life or behaviour of one or both partners does not lead to a decrease of their satisfactions with each other.

Interventions techniques used in counselling includes the following:-

3.5.1. Behavioural Analysis.

The counsellor looks for the subtle ways in which each partner’s cognitive and behavioural responses interact. What is it that maintains the maladaptive response? The clients, being involved in this process, are enabled to perceive their problems in a more objective manner.
3.5.2. **Increasing Existing Rewards.**

Couples are introduced to an exercise called ‘reciprocity awareness’. Each partner is asked to write down ten ways in which they please their partner on a regular basis, and another ten which they receive. The lists are exchanged and discussed.

3.5.3. **Increasing Positive Behaviours.**

Increasing positive behaviours is based on another exercise called ‘catch your partner doing something nice’. This helps each partner to give precise feedback to each other and at the same time trains them in the use of positive reinforcement. Mackay (1985) suggests that it is the regularity of positive feedback, provided with repeated demonstrations of approval which increases the desired responses.

3.5.4. **Interpersonal Skills Training.**

As interpersonal skills can be learnt like any other specific skill, the counsellor will:

* Demonstrate the required response by modeling.

* Encourage the client to practice the skills under simulated conditions - commonly called ‘behaviour rehearsal’.

* Provide precise and immediate knowledge of the results through feedback.

3.5.5. **Training in Problem - Solving Skills.**

The counsellor follows a structured process by:

* Directing the client to define the problem.

* Generating strategic options through brainstorming.

* Considering alternative tactics, and

* Implementing an agreed course of action.
3.5.6. **Contingency Contracting.**

Contingency contracting is a written agreement, which needs to be explicit, realistic and fair to both people involved, in which each partner specifies the particular rewards which will be given when one partner behaves in a way that has been respectfully requested by the other.

3.5.7. **Cognitive Restructuring.**

Many BMT researchers such as Margolin and Weiss (1978) and also Goldfried (1974) believe that our behaviour is based on our personal beliefs, and as beliefs and attitudes are learnt and are dependent variables they can be modified and restructured.

* The counsellor would explain to the client or couple how beliefs and emotional reactions are linked in such a way that the couple's current distress would be due to the way in which they interpret each other's behaviour in terms of their own personal beliefs.

* The counsellor would then encourage the couple to analyse past difficulties with a view to understanding the irrational beliefs underlying the dissatisfaction.

* The counsellor assists the couple to develop a more adaptive 'self-talk', which can enable them both to cope more effectively with the present stress in their relationship.
3.6. **Reality Therapy (R.T.)**

William Glasser, the founder of R.T. believes that all behaviour is made up of what we do, what we think, and what we feel, and we can therefore choose our personal behaviour, even though we may blame others for it. The reality is that we have a choice, and the better the choice, the more we will be in control of our lives. Glasser (1964) goes as far as to suggest that if we believe that things are hopeless, then we are choosing the misery which we are feeling.

Applying this theory to the practice of marriage counselling, clients are gently, yet firmly, led to face the reality of their situation, and to accept responsibility for the direction of their own life. Within the context of marital counselling it is not unusual for the counsellor to ask each person, 'What is it that you are doing to make this marriage unhappy?' and also 'What are you prepared to do to make this relationship work?'.

Reality Therapy is based on the belief of Glasser that there are five basic needs, the fulfilment of which brings satisfaction, and blockages of these needs bring dissatisfaction and distress.

3.6.1. **The Need to Survive.**

Although the 'old brain' as Glasser calls it, deals with survival needs unconsciously, like regulating blood pressure, yet the 'new brain', the cerebral cortex, can consciously control these same survival needs. Glasser believes that this 'new brain' is the seat of our awareness, the source of our voluntary behaviour, and the origin of all we have learnt, and as such we alone have the control.

3.6.2. **The Need to Belong, to Love, Share and Co-operate.**

The need for friends, closeness and love is as important as the need to survive. How these needs are met is the personal decision of the individual. Belonging is a choice.

3.6.3. **The Need for Power.**

Glasser believes that the need to compare ourselves with others, with the desire that we will come off best, as well as the self-esteem achieved when we get others to obey us, is a very powerful driver. However the need for belonging and the need for power are often in conflict. eg. people, on the whole, marry for love, but once married they are often driven by the need for power and then struggle to take control of the relationship. Balance is not easy to obtain or to maintain.
3.6.4. The Need for Freedom.

Many writers refer to the human drive for freedom, and R.T. makes a strong point of the need to incorporate freedom as an essential aspect of the reality of the fulfilled life.

Glasser (1984) refers to the freedom to choose how we live our lives, and how we express ourselves, as a basic human need. However, it is not always easy to balance our need for freedom with our need for belonging. R.T. would emphasise that we alone are in control of the balance.

3.6.5. The Need for Fun.

The need for fun in our lives is one of our great neglected needs, and many relationships grow empty because fun is neglected or taken for granted.

Glasser believes that we create 'pictures in our head' of the way in which we believe our basic needs will be satisfied, and it is the task of R.T. to help clients to create a realistic picture based on their own power of control and personal responsibility.
3.7. Crisis Counselling

A crisis may occur due to external situations, lack of internal resources and/or transitional changes experienced by one or both partners. A crisis situation requires a more directive and behavioural approach. As the word 'crisis' is derived from a Greek word meaning 'decision' or more broadly 'turning point' then we will need to approach a crisis as a emotional significant event or radical change of status in a person's life.

Crisis counselling has to look at the two-fold need of the client-

The problem itself - which is felt as threat or actual attack.
The inability to cope, which increases the client's tension.

The greater the client's sense of tension, the more overwhelmed the client may feel. Counselling will need to enhance the client's ability to cope as this is much more important than concentration on the problem or actual crisis. Counselling can help the client perceive the crisis as a normal part of life, and not as a pathological state.

3.7.1. Our Perception of the Crisis

After the client's emotional state has been acknowledged and accepted, the client will need to be assisted in gaining a realistic perception of the transitional state in which they find themselves.

(i) The crisis is usually initiated by some hazardous event. It can be from an external stressful blow or some less bounded internal pressure. It may be a single catastrophic occurrence or a series of successive mishaps which build up a cumulative effect.

(ii) The impact of the hazardous event disturbs the client's homeostatic balance and puts him/her into a vulnerable state. In order to regain equilibrium the client goes through a series of predictable phases.

   The client attempts using a customary repertoire of problem solving mechanisms - with an accompanying rise in tension.
   The upset increases and the client needs to mobilise new, emergency methods in an effect to cope or else becomes immobilised.
(iii) If the problem continues and is not resolved, avoided or defined, tension rises to a peak which can bring about a turning point, during which self-correction devices no longer work and the client enters a state of disorganisation. This is the state of active crisis. This active crisis is followed by an emotional reaction, experienced as -

A threat, which elicits a heightened level of anxiety.

A loss, which is expressed through feelings of depression, deprivation, or mourning.

The client needs to understand their reaction to the crisis as a realistic struggle in his/her current life. Not a illness or a pathological experience. The present crisis may also re-activate earlier unresolved or partially resolved conflicts which causes the client to respond to the current situation in an inappropriate way.

Intervention will aim at providing a multiple opportunity to

Resolve the present difficulty.

Rework the previous struggle.

Break the linkage between the two.

3.7.2. Specific Common Crisis Situations

There are some crises which occur so often that their course has been well charted and the counsellor needs to be aware of these. e.g.-

(i). Bereavement

Kubler-Ross (1983) suggests that clients who suffer grief and loss will usually experience either anger, bargaining or depression when they come for counselling. There is a need to uncover these emotions and to encourage the clients to express and accept the current emotions. The counsellor will need to validate these feelings, and support the client through the various stages of grief, i.e., denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance.
Although there is no time frame for each of these stages, there could be a problem if the client becomes stuck in one stage, and is unable to move on. Helping the client to set goals and to discover new coping strategies is the task for counselling.

(ii). Mid-life Transition

As life unfolds in observable sequences e.g. Erikson's Intimacy verses Isolation, then each stage can be marked by a crisis - a crucial period of increased vulnerability and heightened potential. Mid-life is the Midpoint or halfway mark. It is the end of growing up and the beginning of growing old.

Pilgrim and O'Dea (1994) suggests that counselling strategies will need to address the following.

* Anxiety. The client can experience loneliness with the loss of youthfulness, and ambitious desires. Denial and avoidance can be used as a way of coping, but this simply distorts reality.

* Frustration. This can turn to anger for the less confident client, and can be turned inward, resulting in depression, for the inactive person. It is vital that energy is now directed inward, in the search for meaning and personal fulfillment.

* Positive Feelings. During this period of transition it is important that the counsellor assists the client to discover the positives. Playfulness and humour are good coping strategies.

* Competence and Control. This can come from making the journey within, and the discovery of resources which are activated by the self, and not imposed from the external environment.

* Social Supports. Although strength comes from within, yet the client needs to research the social supports which are, or could be, available. Sharing with others is not only another resource, but it strengthens the interpersonal skills of the client.
(iii). Child Abuse

This is not confined to minorities, the poor, or the psychotic. Child abusers are usually ordinary people caught in situations that are beyond their control. Carantinos (1990) proposes a number of possible causes for child abuse.

* Immaturity. Parents may be too young to cope. They may not tolerate frustrations well, and have little control over their impulses. Actions seem to 'happen' without thought and can induce feelings of guilt and remorse.

* Inability to cope. Parents who react adversely when faced with stress and frustration - new friends - no social contact - dependent on drugs or living in sub-standard conditions. Important to consider practical concerns.

* The World of Abnormal Rearing, or W.A.R. Abused children often become abusing parents.

* Poor Maternal Bonding. For many and varied reasons a mother may even resent her child and then blame herself for her inadequacy.

* Alcohol and Drugs. A study at the Royal Children's Hospital in Melbourne has shown that one in five child abuse cases were related to alcohol.

* The wrong Sex. Unrealised expectations can result in resentment and angry outbursts.

* Unwanted Pregnancies. When a child is born as a result of an accident, social pressure or rape, the mother can feel cheated or trapped.
* Despised spouse. Following marital conflict, or divorce a child may well remind the parent of a partner who is now despised.

* The counsellor needs to remember that his/her role is to listen, accept and comfort the child, not to undertake an investigation into the details.
(iv). **Aids.**

In counselling a client with a H.I.V. disease it is important to realise that -

* Everyone in this situation does not invariably have a psychological or social problem.

* The 'family' also needs help, and this includes the client's biological and social relationships.

Stage 1. Uncovering emotions.
Stage 2. Discovering resources.
Stage 3. Recovering control.

(v). **Retirement**

This is a major economic, social, and psychological event, whether it is welcomed or feared. This is an important transition in the life-cycle, and both pre and post retirement counselling can be helpful in achieving positive changes.

Aspects which will need to be addressed are - idleness, boredom, lack of social activity, and fear of sexual inadequacy, change of lifestyle and frequently marital tension. Freedom and independence are qualities to be achieved.

(vi). **Ritual Abuse**

This involves severe physical, sexual and psychological abuse which occurs in a ritualised setting or performed in a ritualised way. These situations are not supernatural acts but need to be recognised as part of a continuum of the human capacity for cruelty. (O'Donovan 1994)

In counselling victims of ritual abuse, the counsellor may need to start on his/her own feelings of shock, disbelief, anger, and a sense of powerlessness. O'Donovan (1994) suggests some pointers for workers
• Ritual abuse is a community responsibility, and counsellors should not work in isolation. Support and supervision is essential.

• Issues of safety and control for the clients are important.

• Be sensitive to the feelings of powerlessness.

• Accept all statements as the truth as the client understands it.

• Collecting evidence is not the counsellor’s role.

The fear of retribution from the cult needs to be taken seriously.

(vii). Retrenchment and Redundancy

These are the people who have been made unemployed through no fault of their own, but as a result of the economic down turn of their previous business or profession. Clients are more likely to present with problems of not having adjusted socially, financially, emotionally, or psychologically to their change in lifestyle.

Identity and self-worth are so closely related to work and productivity, that being denied work means a loss of identity and self-worth. Counselling will need to take into account the pain, anger and unresolved guilt of those who have been made redundant or retrenched.

(viii). Attention Deficit Disorder

What is now referred to as ADD was once known as hyperactivity, minimal brain dysfunction, learning disability, impulse disorder or Werner Strauss Syndrome. ADD involves several symptoms:

Inattention; Impassivity; Difficulty delaying gratification. Over arousal; Non compliance. The ADD child often has difficulty with rules and self-restraint, and will become a significant negative force in the home and the school.

According to Rees (1994) it is now considered that ADD is most often generated by an hereditary biochemical imbalance in the brain, and not by over-protective parents or poor diet.
Although there appears to be no cure for ADD, yet several strategies can be effective, and these include medication as well as firm and kind directions and discipline at home and at school. However, clients are usually the parents, who have to deal with their guilt and anger as well as self and other blame. Self-concept rebuilding is an important aspect of the counselling.
**Meta-Cognitive Level.**

### 3.8. Client-Centred Therapy.

This was developed by Carl Rogers (1965) who moved away from placing an emphasis on the cognitive skills of the counsellor, and focused more on the attitude, or ‘basic operational philosophy’ of the counsellor. Rogers believed that the essential element was the attitude held by the counsellor toward the worth and significance of the individual client. The development of this attitude requires the counsellor to confront him/her with the following questions.

* Can I be perceived by the client as trustworthy, dependable and consistent?

* Can I communicate what I am unambiguously?

* Do I honestly experience warmth, caring, liking, interest and respect toward my client?

* Am I strong enough to be separate from my client?

* Am I secure enough within myself to allow the client to be what he/she is - honest or deceitful, infantile or adult, despairing or over-confident.

* Can I enter fully into the client’s world of meaning and feeling to see these as he/she sees them?

* Can I free the client from the threat of external evaluation? (Rogers 1969)

In a client centred approach some of the main elements include.

### 3.8.1. Self-Acceptance.

This methodology starts with the counsellor, not the client. Does the counsellor understand and accept his/her own strengths and weaknesses? Only through the development of the counsellor’s self-worth can the counsellor prevent his/her own maladjustments, emotional biases, and blind spots interfering with the counselling process.
3.8.2. Unconditional Acceptance of the Client

As Rogers (1969) put it - the more deeply I rely upon the strength and potentiality of the client, the more deeply do I discover that strength'. The Client must be free to explore whatever direction he/she decides upon, without direction from the counsellor. The counsellor's task is to create an environment of acceptance for the client's right to make his/her own decisions.

3.8.3. Attitude

The counsellor accepts the client as a co-worker on the task of discovering the meta problem, and in this way the client is treated as an equal. It is this attitude which enables the counsellor to follow the client's line of thought without control or imposed direction.

3.8.4. Empathic Responding.

From a Client - Centred point of view, empathy is more than a counselling technique, it is related to the counsellor's ability to create a non-threatening, accepting atmosphere in which the counsellor can perceive the client's situation from the client's viewpoint. The counsellor will need to be comfortable within him/herself so that internal stimuli does not prevent his/her empathic response.

3.8.5. Congruence.

The counsellor is not playing a part, not presenting a facade, or fulfilling a role. It is essential that the counsellor be what he/she is - unified, or integrated, or congruent person. The counsellor will not be seen as an evaluator of the client, but as the one who provides the conditions under which self-direction of the client may take place.

Although Client-Centred counsellors believe that their way is the best way for not not imposing the counsellor's values, goals, and standards on the client, yet Barker (1984) points out that clients soon learn which behaviours are acceptable or unacceptable, even in that supposedly accepting situation.
3.9 Gestalt Therapy

At a meta-cognitive level Gestalt therapy is an existential approach to perceiving problems in living as a difficulty in relating and communicating, and not as an indication of pathology. To bring about a 'gestalt' means creating a whole system of internal balance instead of internal conflict between the parts.

Fagan (1972) suggests that the main values in living, for which clients strive to obtain, include the following:-

Spontaneity, sensory awareness, freedom of movement, emotional responsiveness, and expressiveness, enjoyment, ease, flexibility in relating, direct contact and emotional closeness with others, intimacy, competency, immediacy and presence, self-support and creativity.

Making this discovery is what Gestalt therapy is all about. This approach seeks to combine the awareness of what is, and the personal behaviour of the client in the present moment of time. In order to achieve this state of wholeness, or gestalt, Fitz Perls (1975) the founder of Gestalt therapy, suggests that we confront three basic concepts.

* Aboutism - which allows us to talk about things, gossip about ourselves, or others, talk about our clients or about our problems. Aboutism is based on non-involvement.

* Isism - which looks at and perceives the world as it is, as we are - not as we want or wish it to be. Through this concept we no longer have to explain anything by its past history, but accept it through its very existence.

* Howism - which is the gestalt approach of understanding the existence of an event by the way it comes about - by the how, not the why.

Counselling assists the clients to become fully aware of each actual experience in their life, and in the process of doing this, blockages will need to be confronted. Common ones being 'repression' and 'projection'. We block awareness when we start to explain our situation, get into schizophrenic flights of ideas, maintain the status quo, or manipulate others by being helpless, playing stupid or asking questions.
When the struggle is allowed to continue we end up being stuck and developing a neurosis. Perls (1975) describes five layers of neurosis, which would need be be confronted during counselling.

(i) The phony layer, where we play games and act 'as it', which means we endeavour to live up to a concept or fantasy, instead of being who we are.

(ii) The phobic layer, which contains the various phobias which replace the real self. This is a rejection of who we are.

(iii) The impasse, where we are caught in a bind of wanting to move in two directions at the same time, and ending up with a feeling of being stuck, or deadness.

(iv) The implosive layer, where energy is released internally and depression frequently results.

(v) The explosive layer, in which all the pent up energy can be released. Fagan (1972) suggests that there are essentially four types of explosion; explosion into joy; into grief; into orgasm; and into anger.

Gestalt Therapy endeavours to lead clients through these layers so that the client can discover his/her real self, which means owning and not denying the various parts.
3.10. **Transactional Analysis.**

Transactional Analysis, or T.A. as it is known, developed from the work of Eric Berne (1964) who considered it to be an extension of psychoanalysis. As a form of therapy or counselling T.A. works within a systems approach dealing with the troubles people get into with other people and their inability to form satisfactory relationships with others.

There are a number of aspects which together make up the total system of transactional analysis.

3.10.1. **Structural Analysis.**

As an individual is made up of many aspects to his/her personality, and one part may well deceive another part, then it is important to understand these various parts. Berne (1964) suggests that each individual is made up of three different ego states, frequently pulling in different directions.

The Parent part sets limits, gives advise, disciplines, protects, makes rules about life should be. The Parent has two aspects - the Critical Parent, who judges, and criticises, and the Nurturing Parent, who is concerned with protecting and nurturing.

The Adult part, which figures out the world by looking at the available information. this part computes, stores memories, and uses information to make decisions. The Adult is unemotional and is concerned with 'what fits'. Adult does not necessary mean 'mature'.

The Child part is what you were when you were very young. There are many 'children' inside us from the past, and these children, or Child, has the same feelings and ways of behaving as we had when a child. There are two main parts to the Child - the Adaptive Child, who may be angry, rebellious, frightened or conforming, trying to please the internal Parent. There is also the Natural Child, who can be natural, loving, spontaneous, creative, carefree, adventurous or joyful.

3.10.2. **Transactional Analysis.**

In T.A. terms a transaction is not only a stimulus or communication from one person to another, but comes from one ego state to a related response from a specific ego state in another person. Transactional Analysis becomes a method of examining this social intercourse and determining which part of the multiple - natured individual is being activated. There are three main levels of transactions.

(i) Parallel, or complementary, where transactions are exchanged from one ego state to the same ego state of the other and no real difficulties occur. Or else a transaction could be sent from one ego state of one person to a different ego state of another, and the response comes from the activated ego state.
(ii) Crossed, where transactions are returned from a different ego state to the one used for sending the message. eg. Parent to Child. 'You're wonderful when you do what I tell you'. Parent to parent. 'I really like it when you allow me to have a say in my own life'.

(iii) Ulterior, where surface transactions appear complementary, but at an ulterior level there is a different message. eg. 'Now I've got you'.

3.10.3. Positional Analysis.

There are four basic positions which individuals can take in their relationship to themselves and to other people.

(i) I'm O.K. You're O.K. The healthy position.
(ii) I'm O.K. You're Not O.K. The distrustful position.
(iii) I'm Not O.K. You're O.K. The depressed position.
(iv) I'm Not O.K. You're Not O.K. The sick position.

3.10.4. Time Analysis.

As we need to be with people in order to obtain strokes (a T.A. word meaning positive or negative reinforcement) we will then use our time to affirm our basic position.

(i) Withdrawal, which can be positive when used for renewal or meditation, but negative when used for avoidance.

(ii) Rituals, which is a fixed way of behaving toward others/ eg. 'How are you?' 'Fine thanks'.

(iii) Activities, which are programmed or spontaneous actions between people. eg. work, sport, culture.

(iv) Pastimes, which are usually pleasant ways of exchanging strokes, filling in time, and getting to know people.

(v) Games, which are unconscious, and usually not funny. They start as parallel transactions and end up with a sudden unpleasant emotional reaction. eg. 'Kick me'.

(vi) Intimacy, which results from the mutuality of two people involved in a shared relationship.
3.10.5. Game Analysis.

According to Claude Steiner (1976) a game is an ongoing series of complementary, ulterior transactions progressing toward a well defined, predictable outcome. These games are not fun, as they are basically dishonest. Hundreds of games have been identified and it is important for the counsellor to understand when games are occurring in a relationship, so they can be confronted.

3.10.6. Script Analysis.

Games appear to be segments of larger, more complex sets of transactions called 'scripts'. The child decides what he/she is going to be or do in life, usually based on the injunctions and counter injunctions, or messages, received from parents, or parent figures. This is the 'script'.

Berne (1976) suggests that a script is an ongoing life plan formed in early childhood under parental pressure. If this is so then it has a psychological force which can propel the person toward his/her destine, almost regardless of the person's own free will.

Script analysis is the method of uncovering these early decisions and as Muriel James (1977) suggests, using potency, permission and protection to assist the client to re-write the script.

Diagram: Script Injunctions and Counter-Injunctions.
The Epistemological Level of Counselling.

I now turn to two counselling approaches which aim at assisting the client to make a change in his/her frame of reference, or meaning perspective. A change in behaviour or emotional feeling is not enough if the basic beliefs and attitudes remain the same. Is there a way in which the counsellor can encourage the client to re-examine his/her current life’s philosophies?

3.11. Logotherapy.

Viktor Frankl, the founder of Logotherapy, parted company with the current approaches to psychotherapy, as he saw them as being too one-sided in their focus on the instinctual drive, and their over reliance on the power of the therapist. Logotherapy is concerned with making individuals conscious of their personal responsibility and discovering an awareness of spiritual realities.

'Spiritual' in this context refers to the specifically human dimension, and is concerned with finding meaning in life. Frankl (1973) believes that meaning must be specific and personal. A meaning which can be made only by this one person alone.

Frankl calls the present human dilemma, an 'existential vacuum' which individuals endeavour to fill through excesses, eg over-drinking, over-eating, over-working, over-sexing; but to no avail. Symptoms of this dilemma are as follows.

* Anticipatory anxiety, which prevents planning or action. The individual lives from one day to the next without hope.

* Fatalist attitude, in which the individual feels him/herself to be the helpless victim of outer circumstances or inner conditions over which he/she has no control. The client feels pushed, so allows him/herself to drift through life.

* Collective thinking, where the individual submerges him/herself in the masses, and simply goes along with public opinion, without questioning.

* Fanaticism, which results in rigid beliefs and thought patterns, where the individual's own opinion is valid. However there is a sense in which he/she does not have opinions, the opinions have him/her.

These symptoms can be traced back to the person's fear of personal responsibility, escape from freedom, and lack of personal meaning. Logotherapy proposes four main aspects of 'meaning' which would need to be addressed in counselling.
3.11.1. The Meaning of Life.

In dealing with clients who lack meaning, who feel like 'displaced persons', the counsellor would ask, 'Have you considered suicide?' This is in order to prompt the client into exploring his/her reasons for living.

Discussion would then move to the area of human freedom: Not freedom from, but freedom to. A freedom to accept responsibility, and re-assess goals. The 'pleasure principle', like happiness, cannot be a goal to achieve, but the result of accepting responsibility for personal attitudes and personal values. In other words, it is not what we do in life that matters, but how we do it.

Logotherapy encourages the client to regard his/her life as something unique, with every situation in life as occurring only once. So every person, at any given moment, can only have one single task. Meaning is found in that task. At that moment of time, and it is discovered in the manner in which we tackle that task.

It follows that life proves to be basically meaningful, even when the client experiences disappointment, discouragement, or even an impoverished existence. What is significant is the client's attitude toward an unalterable fate. Values are intrinsically linked to finding meaning in life.

* Creative values - realised in creative action.
* Experiential values - realised in personal experience.
* Attitudinal values - realised in our attitude toward life and life's fate and tasks.

3.11.2. Meaning of Suffering.

As attitudinal values give meaning to life, so 'situational' values give meaning to suffering. Human life can be fulfilled not only in creating and enjoying, but also in suffering. Frankl (1973) suggests that in the manner which a person takes toward the unalterable situations of life, and assimilates these difficulties, there follows an incalculable multitude of value-potentialities.

Joseph Fabry (1968) commented that Frankl was able to speak from personal experience, as he was interned by the Nazis, who had the power of life and death, but Frankl learnt that although he could not change his circumstances, he could change his attitude toward those circumstances.

3.11.3. The Meaning of Love.

Frankl believes that loving and being loved are essential to finding personal meaning. He comments that as a human person he becomes for the one who loves him indispensable and irreplaceable without having done anything to bring this about. (Frankl 1973)
There is a sense in which no change can take place in the life of a client unless an atmosphere conducive to change is created. This atmosphere is created within the quality of a relationship with another person. Leslie (1965) suggests that it is only when the unprotected self of the counsellor meets the exposed self of the client that an encounter that is truly therapeutic can take place. Love is still the answer. Matthew Fox once said (workshop notes 1987) that to live fully we need to fall in love at least three times a day.

3.11.4. The Meaning of Work.

The meaning of life is not something to be questioned, but to be responded to, for we are responsible to life for what we do with that life. This response cannot be given in words, but in acting, by doing. Logotherapy assists the client to accept personal responsibility, which means gaining an awareness of a concrete personal task, a 'mission'.

The actual task or work is not the important factor, but the attitude that we bring to the task. Not 'what' but 'how'. Frankl (1973) expresses this idea by saying that it is not the work itself which makes the person indispensable and irreplaceable, but the work gives the person the chance to be so.

3.11.5. The Ultimate Meaning or Supra-Meaning.

Frankl (1970) suggests that the counsellor is frequently confronted with philosophical questions rather than emotional conflicts. In searching for the 'Nooo-dynamics' of life, the counsellor has to dare to enter the spiritual dimensions of life within human existence. In fact, the human person finds life meaningless if he/she denies or represses his/her relationship with ultimate meaning. (Fabry 1968)

This is not a matter of finding 'the answer', but an answer which may bring personal fulfilment. Our uniqueness is found in our freedom to respond uniquely to our understanding of the purpose for our individual life. This will include our relationship with the unknowable (Fabry 1968), our dialogue with transcendence, and as a consequence, our relationship with other humans.

This approach is concerned with the inner world and with making objective, or conscious, the subjective, or unconscious, world. Jacobi (1972) states that 'the person who sets foot on the inward way and courageously follows it to the end, will be able to take the outward way equally fearlessly'.

Relating this viewpoint to marital counselling, the concept of 'togetherness' where partners complement each other and share their joint journey, is misleading. What is needed is for each person to discover his/her own identity through 'individuation', and then to relate to each other as two whole human beings, not as halves looking for their completion.

Counselling from a Jungian perspective contrasts greatly to other therapeutic orientations. The counsellor needs to be aware of his/her own unrealised expectations, ego deflation or inflation, and frustrated transference and/or counter-transference. So supervision will not directly focus on the 'case' but on the inner work, or unconscious complexes, of the counsellor, as they have been activated by the client. Aspects of this approach will include such aspects of the theory as the following.


As everything about ourselves for which we are not conscious, is likely to be projected onto another person, it is understandable that when the couple first meet, there will be either an attraction or an instant dislike, depending on what is being projected. Sharp (1992) suggests that as we assume that the world is as we see it, then we see in others both our worst features and our own undeveloped potential.

With a negative projection there is a scapegoating of the other and we end up tarring them with our own feathers. As we do not like to face our own complexes, so we project them onto others, and marital problems are often seen in the partner, rather than owned by the client. Mambert (1968) goes as far as to say that 'projection is the transference of the characteristics of a figure within one's own unconscious onto another person'.


To act or react from our unconscious instincts is to behave in an unconscious manner. Sharp (1992) even suggests that a man driven by his penis is unconscious. The unconscious contains far more than the cesspool of rejected conscious material, as Freud would have us believe, but it also contains the clear - spring of future development and growth. (Whitmont 1978)
As we live in two worlds - the physical or conscious world without, and the invisible, unconscious world within, then the problem remains that while ever the unconscious world is hidden, its forces are felt as sudden surge of emotion, such as inexplicable joy or irrational anger. These forces can suddenly invade the conscious mind and interfere with a stable relationship.

It is the task of counselling to help partners to become aware of these unconscious influences and to raise them to consciousness where they can work for us instead of against us.

3.12.3. Opposites.

I am not the same as my partner and my partner is not the same as me, and I cannot expect him/her to be so. The opposite I find in my partner I must discover in myself. Jung (1954) states that 'in order to be conscious of myself, I must be able to distinguish myself from others'. Opposites are encountered every day - e.g. masculine and feminine, subject and object, active and passive. them and us. The problem is that we identify with one side and project the other side onto another person, usually our partner.

Reuniting the opposites is not viable in the outer world although in marriage, we mistakingly try - "the two shall become one". The real synthesis needs to take place within one's own psyche. Sanford and Lough (1988) state that 'since a man's feminine side is an aspect of the unconscious most men are unaware of it, even though it profoundly affects his life and personality for better or for worse'.


Becoming conscious depends on how much we know about ourselves. Sharp (1992) suggests that it is not possible to understand what is happening for your partner, or for your relationship until you know what's happening in yourself. Self - realisation is the starting point for individuation.

The Self in Jungian terms refers to the very centre of our psyche - the Christian ideal of the 'Kingdom of God' that is within you. Jacobi (1962) states that 'the more we become conscious of ourselves through self knowledge, the more the layer of the personal unconscious will be diminished. Although the Self has always been present, it has to be discovered as the centre of creative change.

Counselling helps the client to move away from 'participation mystique' i.e. not knowing where the 'subject' myself ends, and the 'object' partner begins.
3.12.5. A Working Relationship

As we can only be relatively conscious of our own motives, needs and attractions, there will always be something of ourselves that we are likely to project onto the other person. Between what is desirable and what is unattainable in a relationship, we need to discover what is workable. Sharp (1992) goes so far as to suggest that psychological maturity is found in our willingness to forsake perfection.

Many 'mid-life' couples face discord when the wife refuses to be the object of the husband's projections and will not be dominated by his emotional needs. With second hand values many men have a low tolerance for the wife's new found independence. Young - Eisendrath (1987) proposes that partners can be helped in counselling to change their assumptions, expectations, projections, and fantasies about each other and then discover that they can relate more effectively.

3.12.6 The Shadow

The Shadow is said to contain all the hidden or unconscious aspects of yourself, both positive and negative, that you have either repressed or have not been aware of. Jung (1968) states that the shadow is merely somewhat inferior, primitive, unadapted and awkward, it is not wholly bad.

Jocobi (1962) sees the shadow as a split off part of our being, which never the less remains attached to us 'like a shadow'. When we confront our shadow we realise that whatever is wrong in our relationship is really within ourselves, and only when we learn to deal with our own shadow, and not our partner's, we will have done something constructive for the relationship.

3.12.7 The Persona

The Persona is the conventional mask which we portray to the world. The person we sometimes think, or wish, we were. The persona is what we show to the outside world, which is usually the ideal aspects of ourselves. Sharp (1992) recognises that the main problem in identifying with the persona is that we come to believe that's all we are.
Unfortunately the individual becomes so involved in the role of the persona that other sides of his/her personality become hidden. Sometimes the individual may even try to project their persona onto their partner, with unfortunate consequences. Counselling needs to assist the client to strip away the pretense and reveal the authentic individual. You can fall in love with a persona, but it's a shell, so you cannot relate to it. (Sharp 1992)


Behind the fatal attraction that takes over when you 'fall in love' is a compulsion that indicates that in the background, in control, are the complexes. Jung (1954) describes complex as 'interfering with the intentions of the will and disturbing the conscious performance.

Jacobi (1959) believes that complexes are behind every disturbance which occurs in our personal life as well as in our relationships. Complexes develop from birth, and are dependent on our particular experiences in the world. e.g. if our experience of our personal mother was good, then we would develop a positive mother complex. But if we didn't get what we wanted, we may develop a negative mother complex. With a negative mother complex a man may be e.g forever suspicious of woman in general.

We need to make our complexes conscious. It is how we learn to live with our complexes that count. Sharp (1992) suggests that when we get to know our complexes, we have a better understanding of who we are and therefore we have more control over what is expressed.

3.12.9. The Animus and the Anima

From a Jungian perspective the Anima is the unconscious feminine side of the man, and the Animus is the unconscious masculine side of the woman. What they are like, how they function, is mostly influenced by the parent of the opposite sex. To quote Jung again, 'all the life which the parents could have lived, but of which they thwarted themselves, is passed onto the children in substitute form'. (1971) to become the Animus or Anima.
We experience our contrasexual components through another person and we become attached to that person of the opposite sex who represents the hidden qualities in our own unconscious. Emma Jung (1957) suggests that the Animus behave as if they were inner personalities and exhibit the characteristics which are lacking in the outer, conscious, personality.

Until a couple can recognise the difference between themselves and their Anima and Animus, there is no possibility of a close, psychological relationship. Facing and owning our ‘inner partners’ is another task of the counselling process.

3.12.10. Individuation.

This means breaking the symbiotic bond which commonly binds couples together. It means finding your own unique path in life, which isn’t always compatible with ‘togetherness’. But on the other hand individuation enables you to relate to others from a position of personal integrity. (Sharp 1992)

Individuation is a process that makes unconscious material available to consciousness, where it can be assimilated into the personality of the individual. As Jacobi (1965) puts it, 'individuation is the realisation that the greater personality is potentially in every individual'.

This process is gradual, transforming, and risk - taking, and it continues throughout life. It is moving away from living according to other people’s values, or even being controlled by one’s own complexes, to a personally fulfilling and self-actualising existence. Only when I find myself can I truly reach out to others.

In counselling the client needs to move away from the question, 'Why are you doing this to me'? and pose the question, 'Why am I reacting in this way'? Sharp (1992) suggests that individuation helps us to say to our partner, "I love you as you are. Not for what you give me, not for what I want you to be, but as you are now."
Specific Matrilial counselling Approaches.

Although all counselling approaches mentioned so far are applicable to working with couples, yet there are a number of specific counselling methods which apply directly to the marital system. I will briefly describe three such methods, under the three levels mentioned above.

A Cognitive Approach.


This is a psycho-educational approach to marital counselling, originated by Bernard Guerney Jr., who considers that 'communication problems' are the major cause of marital breakdown. While most couples want to a better job at maintaining marital harmony than their parents did, yet their training was through the parents' example and early modelling. Like their parents they simply lacked the knowledge and skills to communicate honestly. Other marital difficulties can also arise from the couple's family history, emotional blocks, faulty handling of emotional issues, and poor self-concept.

These difficulties need a different therapeutic approach than the available methods. In Relationship Enhancement the couple is considered as active participants in the counselling process. Instead of the counsellor counselling the couple, they are taught the necessary skills, and encouraged to become the counsellor for each other. Guerney (1977) believes that personal relationships with other people are at the heart of everything we do and the stresses and anxieties of life are components of these.

R.E. has its main focus on the enrichment or enabling of the couple to deal with their own relationship instead of relying on the counsellor. Instead of starting a session with a negative, "What is your problem?" sessions are commenced with a positive, "What is your power?"

The theory underlying this approach is a combination of other therapies, and elements are taken from Rogers (1965), who claimed that clients progressed thorough personal insight; Bandura (1986), who claimed that clients progressed through the examples and models provided by others; Behaviour Modification Therapy, which made the claim that progress was the outcome of positive reinforcement; and Harry Stack Sullivan (1953), who placed great emphasis on learning through our interpersonal relationships.
Objectives are greater self understanding, greater mutual understanding, and a high level of need satisfaction for the couple. To help the couple reach these objectives, clients are taught nine sets of communication skills, which can be used for decision making, problem solving, and/or gaining greater understanding of a specific issue.

Skills taught are as follows:

(i) **Expressive skill**, which helps the client to assert his/her own viewpoint, in a way that will minimise the other’s defensiveness and maximise their co-operation.

(ii) **Empathic skill**, which helps the client to gain a greater understanding of the emotional and interpersonal needs of their partner, as they reflect back both the content and the feeling of the message received.

(iii) **Conversive, or Mode switching skill**, which enables the client to move appropriately between being the speaker and being the listener. This skill assists the client and the couple to avail unnecessary and damaging side tracts.

(iv) **Facilitative skill**, which helps the client to train their partner in such a way that the self image, psychological well being, and interpersonal relations of both partners will be improved.

(v) **Conflict Resolution skill**, which helps the couple to develop creative solutions to problems and to attain agreement on problems which are mutually satisfying.

(vi) **Self Change skill**, which is aimed at assisting the client to implement changes in attitudes, feelings, and behaviour within their own life.

(vii) **Other Changing skill**, which is aimed at assisting the client to help others, especially the partner, to make changes that the other desires to make, and not those that are imposed.

(viii) **Generalisation skill**, which helps the client to use these newly acquired skills in everyday life, and in general relationships.

(ix) **Maintenance skill**, which helps the client or couple to maintain these skills over long periods of time.

It is the counsellor's task to teach these skills, to model them by his/her own behaviour, and to positively reinforce the constructive use of the skills by the client or the couple. The counsellor will need to display impartiality and fairness to both partners, and then to work toward motivating and inspiring the clients to acquire the necessary attitude and skills by linking them to the client's important life's goals.

The end result of this approach is that the couple do not rely on the counsellor to resolve their problems, but they learn to rely on their own acquired skills for such resolution. Guerney (1982) believes that the way that an educator delivers services to the public provides a model far superior to the way of the physician when it comes to psychological services. I would add that this would be the case if the counsellor were to use a self directed approach within the learning program.
A Meta - Cognitive Approach

3.14. Object Relation Therapy

In creating a therapy which looks at the underlying or meta problems of a couple's disharmony, Sheldon Cashdan (1988) has drawn upon Object Relation theory including the work of Melaine Klein (1981), Otto Kernberg (1976), Margaret Mahler (1975), and Heinz Kohut (1971), in order to formulate a counselling approach which used the therapeutic relationship, as well as the skills, to bring about change.

Within this context 'objects' stand for 'human beings' and 'Object Relations' refer to relationships with others which might be internal or external, fantasised or real.

Although O.R.T. grew out of psychoanalysis, yet the basic premises of both differ in so many ways that the two are now incompatible with each other. According to Cashdan and supported by Kaiser (1965) clients do not suffer from 'symptoms' but from 'contact disturbance'. The main problem is the individual's inability to meaningfully engage in sustained and/or gratifying relationships. (Cashdan 1988) This method considers the following aspects.


Issues of lovability and acceptability are important issues for O.R.T. for this tension brings a deep pervasive split in interpersonal consciousness, and this can be traced through the developmental phases of the client's life.

(i). Maternal Splitting

Splitting beings with the infant's primitive division of the world into satisfying and unsatisfying sensations. e.g. Fullness is good, emptiness is bad. Although the wish of every child is that its primary object of gratification, the mother, will meet its every need - yet mothers, like everyone else, get tired, impatient, and frustrated, (Cashdan 1988).

(ii). Preservation Splitting.

The child needs to preserve the presence of the mother and will ever internally capture her and invest her with powerful expectations of availability. Without her presence issues of abandonment will arise.
(iii). **Self Splitting**

After engaging the mother in imaginary conversations, the child moves into inner dialogue with a host of others, including 'imaginary companions'. These others are incorporated into a sense of what ultimately becomes a sense of the self. Depending on these new 'selves' and their reliability, the child comes to regard his/herself as either 'good' or 'bad'.

(iv). **Identity Splits**

One aspect of a fulfilling life, and therefore a concern for counselling, is the individual's ability to feel secure about his/her own identity which enables the person to reach out to others and form meaningful relationships. Cashdan (1988) suggests that relationships are critical for psychological survival. This premise would have the full support of Harry Stack Sullivan.

However, disruptions in self-worth and self-identity can quickly become disruptions in relationships, and the danger is that individuals will then form relationships which reinforce their own pathology. Cashdan (1988) proposes four main ways in which 'projective identification' can take place.

* **Dependency**

This occurs when one partner acts helpless and frequently asks the other's assistance. Somehow they believe that the success of this relationship depends on their ability to convince others they cannot exist without their help.

* **Power**

The overall purpose behind this projective identification is to create a relationship where the partner is forced to take a subservient role. Issues of power and control predominate.
* **Sexuality**

This can range from flirtatiousness and suggestive dress to blatantly seductive come-ons, and is designed to induce an erotic response in the partner, on the basis that they can only relate through sexual behaviour. Cashdan (1988) believes the unspoken assumption in these relationships is that sex is the glue that holds everything in working order.

* **Ingratiation**

Self-sacrifice and hard work is aimed at gaining appreciation in the person toward whom such endeavours are directed. It is as if the person is saying to their partners, 'You don't appreciate how much I do for you. I try so hard to make things easy for you'.

**Counselling Interventions.**

3.14.2. **Engagement**

As with most forms of counselling, emotional linking which conveys empathic understanding is considered essential to engage the client in a 'therapeutic relationship'. Therapy, where the client can be confronted, only begins when the engagement phase of counselling is successful. Possible relationship issues in this approach could be:-

(i). **Projective Identification**

As therapy progresses and the client's relationship pathology begins to emerge, the counsellor will find him/herself being drawn into the client's projective identifications. When the counsellor becomes angry or irritated, or sexually aroused, then counter-transference is taking place, and unlike other forms of counselling, Object Relations Therapy view counter-transference as a valuable, even necessary, part of the counselling process.
Counter-transference is used as a means of the counsellor responding consciously to his/her own reaction. According to Cashdan (1998) this means

* Allowing yourself to emotionally respond to the meta communication.

* Using this information as a means of identifying the client's pathology.

At a deeper level most clients know that their way of dealing with their relationships is unproductive, if not destructive, and the counsellor has the task of bringing this out into the open where it can be dealt with.

(ii). Confrontation

Having acknowledged the client's projective identifications, the counsellor needs to confront these in a direct and forceful manner, by

* Refusing to conform to the meta communicative demand.

* Confronting the client's habitual way of structuring relationships.

(iii). Termination

Concluding counselling will mean dealing with issues of separation and helping the client to function as an autonomous human being. This is a time for reflection, for re-considering all that has occurred during the counselling process, and making sense out of the new behaviours and renewed relationships.

By using counter-transference positively the counsellor provides the client with clear information about the way they have been perceived by others and what it is like to be the recipient of their projective identifications and manipulations. Cashdan (1988) goes as far as to say that this could well be the first time in the client's life when he/she can experience what it is like to interact with another person without being defensive or having to resort to manipulations.
An Epistemological Level of marital Counselling.

3.15. Ego Analysis, or Couple Therapy.

Moving past the usual psychoanalytic, behavioural, or systemic systems of counselling, Daniel Wile (1981) believes that most counsellors are like the usual conflict between labour and management, arguing, quarrelling, threatening and confronting over the advantages and disadvantages of the various methodologies of counselling.

In a way Wile is close to a social ecologist's perspective when he advocates a method of collaborating with the clients, and, like Relationship Enhancement, Ego Analysis becomes a partnership between counsellor and client. Problems are incorporated within the relationship instead of being a goal for resolution. Troubled partners are viewed as being deprived of the minimal satisfactions which make a relationship viable.

The Objectives of this approach are as follows -

* Moving the clients past romantic love to liking and knowing each other.

* Moving past disappointment with the partner to the acceptance of differences.

* Moving past conflict to couple communication.

* Moving beyond frustration to fairness and equality.

* Moving beyond boredom to self direction within the relationship.

* Moving beyond isolation to commitment and co-creation.

(i) The Couple's Map.

Most couples commence their relationship based on the idea of romance. This is the vision of how it is supposed to be - the illusion of unity. Romantic love is maintained by one partner becoming a 'by-passer' - overlooking all imperfections, in order to retain the vision. However, the 'non-by-passer' cannot disregard the imperfections and will soon disregard the good times in the relationship.

Another aspect of the 'map' is reactive love, in which the feeling of intimacy comes and goes, increases and decreases, depending on what is happening in the relationship at the moment. Being sensitive to the undercurrents in the relationship is constructive, but being over sensitive becomes destructive.
Another pattern is what Virginia Satir (1972) calls the placaters and the distracters. These are the partners who are careful about saying or doing anything which upsets the other. This has been called a "Devitalised Relationship" or the 'Silent Marital Discord'.

This situation, left unchanged, can turn to 'Mutual Withdrawal' where each feels un-acknowledged, mis-understood, or betrayed by an unreasonable, provocative, insensitive or selfish partner. In this pattern one partner often responds by endeavouring to approach and the other responds by withdrawing.

Wile (1981) suggests that counselling will need to help the couple to incorporate their conflicts into the relationship rather than trying to negotiate and compromise.

(ii) **Maintaining Uninterrupted Focus on the Couple Interaction.**

Relationship problems are viewed as -

* Understandable reactions to present circumstances.
* Special sensitivities to common couples issues.
* Distorted expressions of ordinary adult needs.

Counselling maintains the focus on the couple's current interactions, and in this role the counsellor becomes the "Gate-keeper" - encouraging and clarifying the communication flow between the partners.

(iii) **Clarifying Each Partner's Position.**

The initial task is to develop each partner's position on the issues that divide them, for frequently individuals are unable to embrace their own positions fully. A major problem facing many couples is their inability to accept and express important feelings and to have them acknowledged by the other.

Couples will feel in greater control of their relationship once their feelings and their position has been acknowledged by the counsellor and to some extent, by the partner.

(iv) **Taking Each Partner's Side.**

Counselling will need to move beyond simply clarifying each partner's position, and actively defending or even justifying those positions. However counsellors will need to take the side of both partners simultaneously.
As the issue to which each partner is sensitive often has an historical significance, counselling will need to consider the ways in which the partner's parents responded to such issues. The specific response being used by a partner will be seen as the best method which that person has learned to deal with the particular issues - even though it is ineffective.

(v) Developing a Shared Perspective.

Wile (1981) proposes that the counsellor needs to move into the task of helping the partners establish a two-person observation post from which they can view their relationship.

At this stage in the counselling the focus will need to be on the process level rather than the content level. Partners will need to develop a new form of interaction where they can stand back from the immediate situation and observe their issues together. Once partners can develop the ability to view their relationship from a joint perspective, it may then be possible for them to have ongoing discussions about their current relationship.

Partners are now able to experience their relationship in new ways. They now have options. e.g.

- They can act on their usual perceptions and have their usual fight.
- They can act on their new knowledge of their partner's situation and take the other's behaviour less to heart.
- They can act on their new knowledge of their own situation and feel less desperate and violated.
- They can act on their new knowledge of the overfall situation and start co-operating with each other.

(vi) Incorporating Problems into the Relationship.

Wile (1981) suggests that it is not the problems which divide couples, but the partner's intolerance for their problems and their own desperate attempts to eliminate them that may cause most of the difficulty. Counsellors will need to help couples to stand back from the problem and incorporate them into the relationship. There is a sense in which effective counselling is not that of solving problems, but to enable the partners to have their problems.
Even Freud suggested that problems must be seen as an enemy worthy of the client’s mettle, a piece of his/her personality. Too frequently problems are judged as helpful or detrimental, instead of being viewed dynamically as understandable and, in their own way, rational.

Within an intimate relationship, trying to solve problems often causes them, whereas being able to have problems often solves them. Counselling, in this approach, is not aimed at assisting couples to solve or eliminate their problems, but it aims at enabling the couple to acknowledge and tolerate the problems, and then to incorporate them into the relationship.

(vii) Understanding Personality Differences.

Couples are different from each other in fundamental ways, but unfortunately many partners find this hard to accept, so they conclude that these differences are either temporary manifestations of madness, badness, stupidity or sickness. The conclusion made by many partners is that it is their task to correct these flaws in the other person - an impossible task.

Counselling will need to help couples to understand and accept these differences in personalities, and then to prize those differences. So instead of seeking to change the other, they might learn to preserve and even nurture those differences.

There are a number of theories about understanding personality, and the system which I would propose using is the Myers Briggs Typology Indicator, or M.B.T.I. for short.

(viii) Incorporating Fantasies in Relationships.

Although most counselling approaches would discourage the use of fantasies on the basis of facing couples with the reality of the here and now experience, yet Wile (1981) proposes that it is not the fantasies which cause problems but the concealment of those fantasies. behind the irritability, or the breakdown of communications may well be an unexpressed fantasy wish.

Once fantasy wishes are given full expression they can become less preoccupying. There is also the possibility that gratifying the fantasies can result from a non defensive discussion.

What is needed is the ability to look beyond the fantasy and to discover the meta-communication. What is the fantasy saying about the person and the relationship? Can the expectations and therefore the disappointments be shared, even if the partners will never become the prince charming or the princess beautiful.

The goal for counselling is not to deprive the partners of their wishes and fantasies, but to provide them with a perspective from which they can jointly observe those fantasies.

The overall goal to this method of counselling is not to renounce wishes, end fighting, force compromise, and solve problems, but to enable the couple to incorporate their fantasies, arguments and differences into their relationship.
3.16. **Concluding Remarks**

Although there are possibly hundreds of counselling methods or therapies available, I have selected the above mentioned fifteen Core and Elective counselling approaches, as a range of available choices for trainee counsellors to select from. These Electives have been selected to represent the three levels of therapies as already described.

As the process of counselling will change as the client moves from focusing on external symptomatic concerns to a more proactive focus on the development of coping strategies, self-esteem and self-worth, so the methodology used by the counsellor will also change in order to meet these changing needs. There is also a sense in which the personality or temperament of the client will need to be taken into account when the counsellor selects the specific counselling approach to be used.

It is my hope that counselling will become a truly collaborative effort between counsellor and client in which the most appropriate method will be used which works best for both counsellor and client. This can only be possible if the client has been given the freedom and the empowerment to react to whatever counselling method is being used. It also requires the counsellor to be empowered to be flexible enough to change methods according to the perceived needs of the client, and this will only be possible if the counsellor has had the opportunity to develop multiple approaches of counselling.

This approach, which has been advocated in this paper, reflects something of the concepts of Macnab (1991) who states that when we accept that psychotherapy (counselling) is a joint activity between the therapist (counsellor) and the person, and involves a collaboration and integration of the therapies, the process drastically changes.
AN INNOVATIVE APPROACH TO THE TRAINING OF PERSONAL AND MARITAL COUNSELLORS

NOEL C CATHCART.

A thesis submitted in fulfilment for the requirements for the degree of Master of Science (Honours) at the University of Western Sydney, Hawkesbury. Faculty of Health, Humanities, and Social Ecology.

Noel C. Cathcart.
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PLEASE NOTE

The greatest amount of care has been taken while scanning this thesis,

and the best possible result has been obtained.
Declaration

I, Noel Cathcart, certify that the work embodied in this thesis is the result of original research and has not been submitted for a higher degree to any other University or Institution.

Signed ____________________________

Noel C Cathcart
October 1996
AN INNOVATIVE APPROACH TO THE TRAINING OF PERSONAL AND MARITAL COUNSELLORS

ABSTRACT

Noel C Cathcart, June, 1996

This thesis contends that trainee counsellors are disempowered when they are expected to conform to the patterns provided by the trainer or agency. Empowerment results from the encouragement of the trainee to develop his/her own eclectic approach to their counselling, and this is only possible if a range of elective training programs are made available. This thesis also contends that no one agency or trainer is in a position to provide such a range of counselling approaches, and trainees should be motivated to use the services of other agencies, as well as being involved in independent studies.

This inquiry proposes that one of the most effective foundations for the development of effective counsellors is the active encouragement of the trainee’s self-awareness and the exploration of the trainee’s inner life. If the success or failure of counselling depend on the ability of the counsellor to create an environment in which the client can explore his/her own issues, then it requires counsellors who have been empowered to make this discovery for themselves.

This thesis also shows the author’s own transformational journey, from a directed learner to a self-directed learner, and this paradigm shift in his own life has become the motivating force for empowering others to move into a position where they can exercise their own choices, and be empowered through participatory and transformative learning approaches.

The thesis is developed in stages, outlined below.

1. The first stage contains an explanation of my vision for developing an innovative approach to the training of personal and marital counsellors, and is followed by an overview of the various methodologies used.

2. The next stage is a consideration of the present state of the art, during which I conducted a small research of the current marriage counselling agencies' approach to training. The result of this research shows, on the whole, that training requirements and provisions operate in a narrower frame of possibilities than the approach proposed here.

3. The third stage was the development of a praxis, where theory could be applied to practice. A newly commenced training course provided the opportunity to test out the various training approaches proposed. A research team was formed and the team's discussions are recorded through the thesis.
4. Following proposals made by the research team, the thesis moves on to provide an outline of 15 different counselling approaches, which could be available for the trainee's personal selection. An underlying tension in the approach is the conflict between providing a breadth of approaches and engaging each approach in sufficient depth to generate a grounded understanding.

5. With a training course in progress I was able to test the relationship between the counsellor's temperament and learning style with their effectiveness as counsellors. This assessment was followed by an evaluation of the trainee's responses to the various counselling approaches offered during the training course.

6. The next stage saw an extension of the inquiry, as other Lifeline counselling centres throughout Australia were asked to evaluate the concept of this new approach and to provide information about their own training course and training requirements. The result of this inquiry shows that most of the training available appears to be fragmented and idiosyncratic.

7. The thesis moves into a consideration of a new praxis, which had emerged as a result of my own continuing transformative process and the strong proposals being made by the research team. Self awareness becomes the focus of this new proposal, which is strongly based on Jungian psychology.

8. The last stage of this thesis moves into a review and reflection of the results and findings of my inquiry, and concludes with more unanswered questions than I commenced with.
Acknowledgments

The completion of this thesis would not have been possible without the help of a number of people, and I would take this opportunity to acknowledge their active assistance.

Firstly, I am indebted to my partner of forty years, Patricia June Cathcart, for without her encouragement and support my perseverance would have wavered by the time I was half way through this project. Pat also did some proof reading for me.

Next comes my two consultants, Graham Bird, from the University and Pat Loftus, Clinical Psychologist. Both of these people have become mentors as well as consultants. They have encouraged me, challenged me, and many times despaired of me, but through it all they have persevered. Graham frequently confronted me with the need for maintaining a subjective perspective, while Pat saw the need to objectify my intuitive assumptions.

Being caught in a pull from two different directions enabled me to formulate my own perspective, and I am reminded that it takes the polarisation of both positive and negative charges to create a new energy charge. Hopefully this is what occurred for me.

During the period at Hawkesbury when I completed the Master of Applied Science degree, I was privileged to have Robert Woog as my consultant. Robert was undergoing his own transformative shift from positivism to constructivism, and the modelling which he covertly conveyed provided an example for my own transformative change. Robert increased my interest in exploring my own epistemological framework, and acquiring an incentive for creating an empirical base for my inquiry.

I would also add a note of appreciation for the environment of the Hawkesbury culture. When I first attended Hawkesbury, for the purpose of obtaining a Graduate Diploma in Social Communication, I discovered that I had actually obtained far more than I had expected. Hawkesbury became the motivation for self directed learning, participatory action research and the application of systems practice. Hawkesbury played an important role in my own transformative learning process.

Last, but certainly not least, I would acknowledge my colleagues at work for their patience with me as I struggled with the experimentation of applying theory to practice within my work environment. I am specifically indebted to Dianne Nader and Cherie Simone, for their assistance with typing in the early stages of developing this thesis.
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