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**AN APPLICATION OF KELLY'S PERSONAL CONSTRUCT THEORY
TO COUNSELLING:
A PHILOSOPHICAL AND EMPIRICAL STUDY**

**A dissertation presented in fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree
of Doctor of Philosophy
at Massey University**

**Ruth Hilary Anderson
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Abstract

Counselling is a process of interpersonal interaction in which clients increase their understanding of themselves in relation to others. Investigations of counselling and psychotherapeutic practice have traditionally focused either on the process of counselling or its outcomes (Greenberg, 1986a). More recently, however, researchers have argued that counselling research should focus upon relationships between counselling process and therapeutic outcomes (Greenberg, 1986a, 1986b; Garfield, 1990). The theory of personal constructs, elaborated by Kelly (1955), provides a theoretical framework for the study of both counselling process and its relation to in-session outcomes. This study demonstrates an application of personal construct theory to an investigation of therapeutic process and its relationship to therapeutic outcomes.

In this dissertation, the metatheoretical assumptions of Kellian theory are discussed and fundamental theoretical concepts are elaborated. In addition, the theoretical relationship between personal constructs, common constructs and social constructs in the context of counselling is described. This study also extends the work of Proctor (1985a, 1985b, 1987) to suggest a possible theoretical relationship between people's constructs and their verbal behaviour. The establishment of role relationships through verbal interaction is a further subject of discussion.

The investigation described in this dissertation involved an application of the fundamental principles and concepts of Kellian theory to a study of counselling and psychotherapeutic practice. Research participants were four therapists and eight clients. The therapists were chosen from those who described their practice orientation as largely consistent with a humanistic-existential approach to therapy. The average age of the therapists was 48.25 years and the average number of years of practice experience was 13.75 years. The average age of the clients who participated in the study was 35.25 years. For the purpose of this investigation, each therapist engaged in a single audio-taped therapeutic interview with each of two clients. Prior to engagement in therapy each therapist and each client completed a personal character sketch. Subsequent to therapy, each client was asked to indicate therapeutic interactions in the preceding counselling session which may have had personal significance. Therapists were also asked to identify in-session therapeutic events which may have had personal significance for their clients. "Laddering" (Hinkle, 1965) and "pyramiding" (Landfield, 1971) techniques were then used to elicit constructs which may have been associated with constructs indicated by participants' verbal behaviour during the course of psychotherapy.

Data analysis followed the order of data collection. Guidelines were established for the identification of role construct poles, based upon Davis, Stroud and Green (1989). In addition, a list of categories was developed for the classification of role construct pole expressions derived from the self-characterisations completed by therapists and their clients. Analysis of the therapeutic interviews involved the identification of verbal expressions of therapist and client constructions. In the third, and final stage of analysis, associations between constructs indicated during counselling and constructs indicated in the post-therapy interviews were discussed.

The outcomes of this study suggest that therapists may construe themselves with a greater diversity of role constructs than the range of role constructs used by clients in their construal of themselves. Nevertheless, there is evidence to suggest that construct commonality often exists between therapists and their clients. However, there was little similarity between constructs indicated by the content of therapists' self-characterisations, and the constructs indicated by the verbal behaviour of therapists during counselling. In contrast, the verbal behaviour of five clients during counselling indicated constructs which were similar to those indicated by the content of their self-characterisations.

A further outcome of this investigation was the identification of six levels of construing: a) client constructions, b) client superordinate constructions, c) therapist constructions, d) therapist constructions of client constructions, e) therapist constructions of client superordinate constructions, and f) therapist superordinate constructions. This study indicates that therapists' superordinate constructs, which govern their subordinate constructions, have a significant influence upon the counselling process. In particular, client construct system change may follow when therapists and their clients do not share similar superordinate constructs. However, this study suggests that therapists must have constructions of their clients' constructions which are similar to the constructions which their clients have expressed. Only under such circumstances may therapists be able to predict possible changes in clients' construct systems which may occur during counselling.

Implications are indicated for counselling and psychotherapy research, therapeutic practice and therapist education and training. This investigation provides further evidence that the character sketch, first proposed by Kelly (1955), can be used in research contexts. Moreover, when character sketches are used in conjunction with a relevant list of categories, they may provide evidence of the constructs which govern the constructions which clients express during counselling. This outcome may have particular relevance to researchers and practitioners.

A significant implication of this study is that personal construct theory may be used as a framework for the analysis of counselling and psychotherapeutic interactions in which the therapist adopts an approach to practice which is largely inconsistent with personal

construct therapy. Notably, this study demonstrates that an application of personal construct theory to therapy process research enables the identification of links between the overt verbal behaviour of therapists and their clients, and the usually inaccessible psychological processes which govern that behaviour. Interactions in the context of single counselling sessions may be described and occasions of psychological change identified. In addition, apparent links between in-session interactions and therapeutic outcomes may be demonstrated. Thus, applications of personal construct theory to investigations of counselling enable researchers to meet the objective of contemporary research: therapeutic process can be demonstrably linked to therapeutic outcomes. Importantly too, therapist educators may be able to relate student practice to possible client outcomes, thereby enhancing the educational outcomes of counsellor and psychotherapist education and training.

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Table of Contents

	ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
	TABLE OF CONTENTS	v
	LIST OF TABLES	x
	LIST OF APPENDICES	xi
	CHAPTER	
I	INTRODUCTION	1
	The Context of Psychotherapy Research	1
	Personal Construct Theory and Psychotherapy Research	3
	Elaborating Personal Construct Theory	4
	An Application of Personal Construct Theory	8
II	METATHEORETICAL ASSUMPTIONS AND THE THEORY OF PERSONAL CONSTRUCT PSYCHOLOGY	13
	Metatheoretical Assumptions of Personal Construct Theory	13
	Personal Construct Theory	15
	Personal Constructs	15
	Personal Constructs and The Process of Construing	18
	Anticipating "Events"	21
	Constructions and Behaviour	24
	Construct Change	25
	Personal Construct Theory and Interpersonal Relationships	30
	Personal Constructs, Constructions and Roles	30
	Communicating Constructions	31
	Conclusion	36
III	A THEORY OF SOCIAL INTERACTION	37
	Personal Constructions and Shared Constructions	37
	Construing Other People's Constructions	42
	Communication of Constructions and Construct System Change	46
	Construction Validation and Invalidation in Psychotherapeutic Interactions	53
	Conclusion	56

		vi
IV	SOCIAL INTERACTION AND PSYCHOLOGICAL CHANGE	58
	Constructs in the Establishment of Role Relationships	59
	Establishment of Role Relationships and Psychotherapy	64
	Construction Interaction in Psychotherapy	69
	Validation and Invalidation in Psychotherapy	72
	Validation, invalidation and Construct System Change	76
	Conclusion	79
V	METHODOLOGY AND PRINCIPLES OF ANALYSIS	81
	Details of Participants	82
	Setting	87
	Equipment	87
	Methodology	87
	Initial Therapist Interview	88
	Therapist Character Sketch	89
	The Purpose of Character Sketches	89
	Elicitation of Character Sketches	90
	Elicitation of Character Sketches in the Present Study	91
	Conditions of Elicitation	94
	Initial Client Interview	97
	Client Character Sketch	99
	Therapist-Client Interview	99
	Final Interview	100
	Understanding Clients' Experiences	100
	Units of Client Experience	102
	Procedures	103
	Details of Procedures	103
	Client Interviews	103
	Therapist Interviews	108
	Principles of Analysis	110
	Analysis of Character Sketches	111
	Expressions of Role Constructions and Role Construct Poles	111
	Units of Analysis	112
	Identification of Expressions of Personal Role Construct Poles	113
	Inter-rater Reliability	113

		vii
	Unit Categories	115
	Categories and their Application	116
	Inter-rater Reliability	117
	Summary	118
	Analysis of Therapeutic Interactions	118
	Common Constructions, Personal Constructions and Social Constructions	118
	Units of Analysis	119
	Identification of Expressions of Role Constructions	119
	Description of Construction Inter-relationships	120
	Analysis of Post-Counselling Interviews	122
	Analysis of Post-Counselling Client Interviews	123
	Analysis of Post-Counselling Therapist Interviews	124
	Conclusion	127
VI	RESULTS PART I	129
	Case One	131
	Background Information	131
	Personal Character Sketches	131
	Analysis of Psychotherapeutic Interview	136
	Analysis of Client and Therapist Post-Counselling Interviews	226
	Client Post-Counselling Interview	226
	Therapist Post-Counselling Interview	241
	Summary	251
	Concluding Comments	253
	Conclusion	253
VII	RESULTS PART II	256
	Case Two	256
	Background Information	256
	Personal Character Sketches	257
	Analysis of Post-Counselling Interviews	260
	Client Post-Counselling Interview	260
	Therapist Post-Counselling Interview	271
	Summary	282
	Case Three	283
	Background Information	283

	viii
Personal Character Sketches	283
Analysis of Post-Counselling Interviews	290
Client Post-Counselling Interview	290
Therapist Post-Counselling Interview	299
Summary	308
Case Four	309
Background Information	309
Personal Character Sketches	309
Analysis of Post-Counselling Interviews	311
Client Post-Counselling Interview	311
Therapist Post-Counselling Interview	324
Summary	344
Conclusion	345
VIII RESULTS PART III	346
Case Five	346
Background Information	346
Personal Character Sketches	347
Analysis of Post-Counselling Interviews	352
Client Post-Counselling Interview	353
Therapist Post-Counselling Interview	372
Summary	374
Case Six	376
Background Information	376
Personal Character Sketches	376
Analysis of Post-Counselling Interviews	377
Client Post-Counselling Interview	377
Therapist Post-Counselling Interview	391
Summary	399
Case Seven	400
Background Information	400
Personal Character Sketches	400
Analysis of Post-Counselling Interviews	407
Client Post-Counselling Interview	407
Therapist Post-Counselling Interview	427
Summary	433

List of Tables**Table**

	Lists of construed verbal expressions of role construct poles and their classification	
1	Therapist One	133
2	Client One	135
3	Client Two	259
4	Therapist Two	285
5	Client Three	289
6	Client Four	310
7	Therapist Three	350
8	Client Five	352
9	Client Six	377
10	Therapist Four	401
11	Client Seven	406
12	Client Eight	436

List of Appendices

Appendix

1	Consent Form for Counsellors	491
2	Counsellor Information Sheet	492
3	Consent Form for Clients	493
4	Client Information Sheet	494
5	Methodological Issues	495
6	Application to Human Ethics Committee	514
7	Initial Letter of Information to Counselling Agencies	524
8	Initial Letter of Information to Clients	526
9	Outline of Presentation to Possible Counsellor Participants	528
10	Ethical Issues and Potential Concerns - A Communication to Counsellors	533
11	Guidelines for Transcriptions	536
12	Categories Used to Classify Construed Verbal Expressions of Role Construct Poles	539

Chapter One

Introduction

The Context of Psychotherapy Research

Mahoney (1988b) submits that three assumptions underpin the practice of counselling and psychotherapy¹. Firstly, people can experience psychological change. Secondly, people can help each other to change. Thirdly, some interactions between people are more useful than other interactions in contributing to psychological change. Beutler (1990) suggests that practitioners have historically made efforts to increase their knowledge and understanding of those interactions which contribute most to psychological change. However, in the past practitioners have had to rely upon knowledge based upon professional practice experience and subjective judgement to relate the process of psychotherapy to psychotherapeutic outcomes (Beutler, 1990). Researchers, on the other hand, previously engaged in what Beutler describes as "theory-driven" research (p. 264). Theories of psychological change were used to describe therapeutic interactions. However, until recently, researchers had not operationalized the theoretical concepts derived from these theories of psychological change (Beutler, 1990). Hence, explanations of change could not be directly related to overt behaviours of therapists and their clients. Now, however, Beutler says that researchers are more commonly relating theories of change to the evident process of psychotherapy practice.

Despite recent efforts to relate theoretical concepts to observations of psychotherapeutic process, Greenberg (1986a) suggests that studies of psychotherapeutic process remain divorced from studies of psychotherapeutic outcome. He submits that studies of psychotherapeutic change processes may prove more productive. Greenberg suggests that researchers should focus upon "identifying, explaining and predicting the effects of the processes that bring about therapeutic change over the entire course of therapy" (p. 4). According to Greenberg, researchers may do this by identifying in-session changes which are associated with particular psychotherapeutic interventions. These in-session changes should

¹ Counselling and psychotherapy have been described as two similar, but different processes. A. Ivey, M. Ivey and Simek-Downing (1987) suggest that counselling is an intensive process in which counsellors assist clients to achieve their goals and function more effectively. Psychotherapy is a similar process in which therapists are concerned with psychological and behavioural change (Ivey et al., 1987). Though Ivey et al. distinguish between the two disciplines, they suggest that the terms "counselling" and "psychotherapy" are commonly used interchangeably. The writer's professional knowledge of therapeutic practice in New Zealand suggests that many counsellors in New Zealand engage in both counselling and psychotherapy. Many New Zealand practitioners who are described as psychotherapists have often trained in New Zealand counsellor education programmes. Hence, a psychotherapist's professional practice often also contains elements of counselling and psychotherapy. In a New Zealand context then, differentiation between the practices of counselling and psychotherapy is difficult. Hence, future discussion will refer to "counselling" and "psychotherapy" interchangeably and the terms "counsellor" and "psychotherapist" will be treated as synonymous.

then to be related to post-session outcomes. Greenberg suggests that researchers should then examine possible associations between post-session outcomes and the final outcomes of psychotherapy.

Garfield (1990) lends support for Greenberg's (1986a) comments in regard to psychotherapy research. He says that psychotherapy research should not focus either on process or outcome. Rather, Garfield suggests that psychotherapeutic process should be related to outcomes of psychotherapy. More particularly, Garfield submits that psychotherapy research should be directed towards studying therapeutic interactions which are directly associated with psychological change. Garfield goes on to say that, like Greenberg, he holds that the most important objective of psychotherapy research is the identification of therapeutic change processes which contribute to ultimate psychotherapy outcomes. According to Garfield, once this objective is met researchers will be able to identify process variables which will improve the efficacy and efficiency of psychotherapy. As a consequence, Garfield suggests, educational programmes for psychotherapists may be improved, and the effectiveness of psychotherapeutic practice may be enhanced.

Greenberg (1986b) asserts that all investigations of psychotherapy are guided by explicit, or implicit, theories but there is no common theory in research investigations of psychotherapy. Hence no common theoretical concepts can be operationalised. As a consequence, comparisons of findings derived from investigations into psychotherapeutic process are not possible. For this reason, Greenberg proposes a system for identifying and categorising observable phenomena in psychotherapeutic interactions. Greenberg suggests that psychotherapy may be treated as a process in which "content" and "speech acts" derive their meaning from "episode" and "relationship" contexts. In this instance, "content" refers to what is being talked about. "Speech acts" are what people do to each other by their verbal behaviour. For example, a person may "insult" another person, by his or her verbal behaviour. Greenberg suggests that "episodes" are interactions which participants in psychotherapy identify as complete. As one might expect, the nature of the ongoing relationship is the "relationship" context. For example, the relationship may be a "trusting" relationship.

Researchers who adopt Greenberg's (1986b) system of identifying and classifying observable phenomena in psychotherapy may be able to undertake valid comparisons of research findings. However, J. Martin, W. Martin, Meyer, and Slemmon (1986) submit that psychotherapy process research must identify changes in psychological phenomena as well as changes in overt therapist and client behaviour. They suggest that identification of psychological events and behavioural events enables generalisations to be made about relationships between client psychological change, and overt therapist and client behaviour. However, one might expect that psychological events cannot be readily identified. Only when a direct theoretical relationship can be demonstrated between psychological phenomena and

observable events in the context of psychotherapy can occasions of psychological change be identified. Only then may psychological change be directly related to overt therapist and client behaviour.

Personal Construct Theory and Psychotherapy Research

Kelly (1955) suggests a direct relationship between psychological phenomena and observable psychotherapeutic events. He says that people use "personal constructs" to identify similarity between present reality and previously construed reality. Personal constructs are described by Kelly (1958/1969) as "psychological guidelines" (p. 11) for identifying similarities between present reality and past reality. Identified similarities between present reality and previously construed reality, are described as people's "personal constructions." An elaboration of Kelly's (1955) theory of personal construct theory suggests that people's personal constructions may be indicated by their verbal behaviour. Words, or word combinations, in people's verbal behaviour may suggest people's personal constructions of reality. Put simply, people's verbal behaviour may indicate the way in which people perceive reality.

According to Kelly (1955), people's perceptions of reality govern their behaviour. People act in accordance with their constructions. They test the predictive validity of their personal constructions through their behaviour. This view is consistent with the epistemological position adopted by more contemporary psychotherapists (e.g., Ivey, 1986; A. Ivey, M. Ivey, & Simek-Downing, 1987; R. Neimeyer & G. Neimeyer, 1987; Mahoney, 1988b). Kelly suggests that when people construe the outcome of their actions to be consistent with their initial constructions their constructions are "validated." Similarly, when people construe the outcome of their actions to be inconsistent with their initial constructions, their personal constructions are "invalidated." Changes in the constructs which govern people's constructions, may arise when those constructs are invalidated (Kelly, 1955). In this way people may increase the predictive validity of their constructions. Kelly (1955) submits that such construct system changes may occur in the context of psychotherapeutic interactions.

Thus Kelly suggests that there is a direct relationship between people's verbal behaviour, their constructions, and the personal constructs which govern those personal constructions. As one might expect, this relationship has been usefully applied in studies of psychotherapeutic process (e.g., R. Neimeyer, 1980; Leitner, 1980, 1987; G. Neimeyer, 1987a; Proctor, 1987; Fransella, 1987). However, applications of personal construct theory in psychotherapy process research have been largely restricted to investigations of personal construct psychotherapy. Soldz's (1987) article is a rare exception. Here Soldz applies the principles of personal construct theory and psychoanalysis to an analysis of psychotherapy. In this instance, the therapist demonstrates an approach to therapy which is consistent with

an integration of the principles of personal construct therapy and psychoanalysis. The therapist does not adopt an approach to practice which is entirely consistent with the principles of personal construct therapy.

Despite the current predominance of investigations of personal construct therapy, Harter (1988) suggests that personal construct theory may offer a model of psychotherapy which has broader application. She submits that personal construct theory offers a framework for explaining the effectiveness of therapeutic interventions provided by therapists who do not engage in personal construct therapy. One might expect then that personal construct theory may be applied in investigations of psychotherapeutic process where the therapists adopt different practice orientations.

Personal construct theory then, has much to offer researchers investigating psychotherapy process. A theoretical relationship can be demonstrated between people's verbal behaviour, and their personal constructions. In addition, a theoretical relationship can be assumed between people's constructions and the psychological phenomena (personal constructs) which govern people's constructions. Importantly, Kelly (1955) suggests that people act in accordance with their constructions. People test the predictive validity of their constructions through their behaviour. In the context of psychotherapy, changes may occur in clients' construct systems following invalidation of their constructions. Thus there is a direct relationship suggested between overt therapeutic events (people's verbal behaviour) and the psychological events which may contribute to changes in clients' future verbal, and nonverbal behaviour. Significantly too, the theoretical concepts of personal construct theory have possible application beyond the context of personal construct psychotherapy. The theoretical principles and the associated concepts of personal construct theory may be applied in investigations where the therapists assume different orientations to professional practice. For these reasons, personal construct theory has been adopted as the theoretical framework for this study.

Elaborating Personal Construct Theory

Marmar (1990) suggests that any investigation of psychotherapeutic process must begin with the articulation of the theory used, the description of theoretically derived concepts, and the operationalisation of these concepts. In light of previous discussion, one might expect that elaboration of personal construct theory and description of its associated concepts would be straightforward. However, some fundamental principles and concepts of Kelly's (1955) personal construct theory have lacked adequate previous elaboration. Hence, this study examines the principle tenets of personal construct theory and elaborates some of the fundamental concepts which are derived from them.

Any study which makes reference to personal construct theory must first give consideration to the metatheoretical assumptions upon which Kelly's (1955) theory is based. Kelly says that he rejects an ontological position of realism. However, his writing suggests that he assumes the existence of a real world. This apparent contradiction in Kelly's writing will be examined. In addition, Kelly's epistemological position will be discussed.

The fundamental principle of personal construct theory which follows from Kelly's (1955) philosophical position is that people perceive similarities between present reality and previous reality. People thereby construe reality. Kelly suggests that when people construe reality they anticipate future reality. However, Kelly sometimes suggests that when people construe reality they predict future reality. As Radley (1977) indicates, Kelly's apparent interchangeable use of the terms "anticipation" and "prediction" creates uncertainty as to the purpose of construal. Kelly's elaboration of personal construct theory leaves the reader unsure as to whether people construe in order to anticipate or predict reality. This study will attempt to clarify Kelly's position. In addition, an apparent association between people's anticipations and their predictions will be discussed.

Personal construct theory also lacks clarity in its definition of key concepts. Kelly (1955) says that people's constructs are hierarchically arranged in their construction systems. He goes on to say that people use their constructs to construe reality. However, Kelly says that people may differ in their construction of reality. Kelly thus uses the term "construction" to refer to the systems which include personal constructs. In addition, he uses this term to refer to the act of construing. This study will discuss Kelly's reference to personal construction systems, personal constructs and construing, and will suggest alternative terminology which may more appropriately be used in discussion of these concepts.

In addition, this study will examine Kelly's (1955) elaboration of the concepts of "role construct," and "core construct." Kelly suggests that role constructs are those constructs which people use to construe themselves and others. He describes core constructs as those constructs which people use to construe aspects of reality as consistent with their own personalities. More recently, Leitner (1985, 1987, 1988) has suggested that some role constructs are core constructs, and that all core constructs are role constructs. The latter position is discussed, and revised descriptions of role constructs and core constructs are suggested.

An important focus of discussion in this study is the elaboration of the theoretical relationship between people's personal constructs and their verbal behaviour. Recent work by Proctor (1985a, 1985b, 1987) suggests that people's verbal behaviour may include expressions of the literal meanings of words, expressions of people's personal constructions and expressions of social constructions. People's social constructions are personal constructions which may be shared by two or more people, but not by all people who speak the same language. They are governed by social constructs. Loos and Epstein (1989) argue

that the role of a psychotherapist is to manage the therapeutic process in order that social constructs may arise in the context of psychotherapy. In this study, the theoretical relationship between the literal meanings of words, people's personal constructions, and their personal constructs will be described. In addition, the relationship between people's personal constructions and the social constructions evident in the context of psychotherapeutic interactions will be discussed. This discussion will form the basis for an elaboration of the process by which social constructs may arise in the context of psychotherapeutic interactions.

In Kelly's (1955) view social constructions may arise in the context of psychotherapeutic interactions only when therapists and clients construe each other's constructions. He adds that personal construct commonality is not necessary for people to construe others' constructions. Nevertheless, Kelly says, "commonality between construction systems may make it more likely that one construction system can subsume another" (p. 99). Duck (1982) concludes from this last comment, that Kelly assumes that the greater the personal construct commonality, the greater will be the level of understanding between therapists and their clients. In this study, further conditions which may be necessary for the communication of the personal constructions of therapists and their clients will be suggested. In addition, a process by which therapists may come to construe their clients' constructions, despite the initial absence of these conditions, will be described.

According to Kelly (1955), psychotherapeutic change occurs when therapists and their clients engage in "role relationships" with each other. People engage in role relationships when they construe each other's personal constructions. Kelly suggests that in the context of psychotherapy, therapists are likely to construe more of the other's personal constructions, than are their clients. Hence the understanding which therapists have of their clients is likely to exceed the understanding which clients have of their therapists. Nevertheless, clients are likely to engage in role relationships with their therapists.

Leitner (1985, 1987, 1988) suggests that therapists and clients who engage in role relationships with each other risk what he describes as the "terror" of role relationships. Therapists and their clients may experience emotions associated with construction invalidation. However, clients are more likely to receive invalidating evidence of constructions which they express of themselves and others. Hence clients are more likely to experience the "terror" of role relationships when they participate in psychotherapy. Therapists may express constructions which their clients construe to be invalidating evidence of their constructions. As a consequence, they may restrict any possible change which may occur in their construct systems (Harter, 1988).

Understandably Kelly (1955) and more recent personal construct theorists (e.g., Harter, 1988; Leitner, 1985, 1987, 1988; Neimeyer & Hudson, 1985; G. Neimeyer & R. Neimeyer, 1985; R. Neimeyer, 1987) maintain that therapists should avoid invalidating their clients'

constructions. Interestingly, and importantly, however, Harter (1988) suggests that therapists who have an approach to practice which is inconsistent with personal construct therapy, should also avoid invalidating clients' constructions. Their clients too, may restrict the changes which can take place within their construct systems.

Despite the possible negative outcomes of construction invalidation, Kelly (1955), and more recently Harter (1988) and Viney (1989), suggest that invalidation of clients' constructions may facilitate changes in clients' construct systems. Importantly, too, one might expect that therapists would invalidate their clients' constructions during the course of psychotherapy, though they may not intend to do so. Therapists must therefore minimise the likelihood that their interventions will limit psychotherapeutic change, while simultaneously increasing the possibility that changes in clients' constructions will increase the predictive validity of their constructions.

Kelly suggests eight therapeutic strategies by which therapists may maximise the effectiveness of their interventions. Recent studies (e.g., R. Neimeyer, 1980; Leitner, 1980, 1987; G. Neimeyer, 1987a) have empirically demonstrated a relationship between therapists' behaviour and the changes which Kelly suggests may take place in clients' construct system as a consequence of the implementation of these strategies. However, as indicated earlier, the subject of each of these studies has been personal construct therapy. Currently there is a lack of empirical evidence to suggest that therapists who engage in therapy, other than personal construct therapy, usually validate, rather than invalidate, their clients' constructions. In addition, there is a lack of empirical data to indicate how such therapists maximise the benefits to their clients of engagement in psychotherapy. The provision of such evidence would lend support for Harter's (1988) assertion that personal construct theory may provide a theoretical framework for the explanation of the usefulness of interventions provided by therapists who do not practice personal construct therapy.

There are then two purposes of this study. First, to demonstrate that personal construct theory provides a theoretical framework for the analysis and interpretation of psychotherapeutic process. Second, to demonstrate that personal construct theory provides a theoretical framework which may be used to explain the outcomes of therapeutic interventions provided by therapists who are not practitioners of personal construct therapy. In this study, conditions which may be necessary for therapists and their clients to be able to communicate with each other are identified. In addition, the process by which therapists and their clients communicate their constructions to each other will be described. Occasions when social constructs arise in the context of psychotherapy will be demonstrated. In addition, changes in clients' construct systems will be identified and therapeutic events which precede and follow these changes will be described. These changes in clients' construct systems will be studied in light of reported changes at the conclusion of each therapeutic session. Thus,

this investigation will be consistent with the first two steps of Greenberg's (1986) suggested programme of psychotherapy process research. In-session therapeutic events will be directly related to post-session outcomes. However, the relationship between in-session therapeutic events and ultimate therapeutic outcomes will not be a subject of the present study.

An Application of Personal Construct Theory

The investigation which comprises part of this study will be conducted in naturalistic settings and will conform to a case study research design. Greenberg (1986b) suggests that case studies conducted as part of psychotherapy process research should involve the study of whole therapies. However, since the focus of this investigation is upon in-session therapeutic events and their relationship to post-session outcomes, this investigation will focus only upon single therapeutic sessions each of which will usually involve a different client.

Participants in this investigation will include four therapists. Each therapist has participated in education and training to be a psychotherapist and has had a minimum of ten years practice experience. The approach to professional practice which is adopted by each therapist is largely consistent with what Ivey et al. (1987) describe as humanistic-existentialism. For the purpose of this study, each therapist will be asked to invite two of their current clients to participate in a psychotherapy interview. Thus a total of eight clients will participate in this investigation. Data for this study will be collected in the settings in which the therapists and their clients usually engage in psychotherapy.

In any psychotherapy research investigation ethical issues must be addressed prior to data collection. These include issues of confidentiality, client consent, and the availability of information derived from the data collection process. In addition, the role of the researcher in the research process must be described. In this study, all participants will receive a written outline of the associated ethical issues and an indication of the means by which I propose to address each issue. Participants will also have an opportunity to discuss any issues of concern prior to participation in the fieldwork. Discussion of the ethical issues associated with this study may have particular relevance for other similar research studies.

The methodology which will be employed in this investigation has been developed to maximise the validity of the researcher's observations and interpretations of the therapeutic process. Viney (1988) submits that research investigations which make reference to people's constructions must maximise the construct validity of the researcher's interpretations. The construct validity of a researcher's interpretations of data is maximised when the research data accurately represent people's constructions (Viney, 1988). To maximise the likelihood that collected data will be accurately representative of participants' constructions, Viney proposes a mutual-orientation model of data collection. This model requires researchers to make requests of their research participants and then to reflect their participants' responses. Thus

the researcher's reflections become apparent to the research participants. Finally, Viney suggests that participants should be invited to confirm or deny the researcher's reflections. A similar approach to data collection will be adopted in the present study.

The data collection phase of the investigation will consist of three phases. In the first phase each therapist and client will be asked to separately complete pre-therapy research interviews. Therapists and clients will be invited to confirm or disconfirm the researcher's interpretations of the participants' initial responses. Participants will also be asked to separately complete oral character sketches in this phase of the investigation. In the second phase of data collection each therapist-client dyad will participate in a scheduled single therapeutic interaction. These therapeutic interviews will take place in the settings in which the client-participants usually participate in psychotherapy.

In the third phase of data collection, each client will be asked to identify therapeutic events which may have been of particular personal significance. Each client will be asked to locate the beginning and end of these therapeutic events, in a procedure similar to that suggested by Elliot and Shapiro (1988). Clients will first be asked to describe any therapeutic events which may have been personally significant. Each client will then be asked to indicate which of these events may have had greatest personal significance. Subsequently, the audio-tape will be replayed to the client, stopping at regular intervals of 100 tape counter units to enable the client to identify the beginning and end of the episode which contains the described event. Clients will then be asked to comment upon the identified episode. In addition, "laddering" techniques suggested by Hinkle (1986) and "pyramiding" techniques suggested by Landfield (1971) will be used to elicit constructions associated with client constructions expressed during the identified episode. In each instance, I will reflect back my interpretations of what the client says and invite the client to confirm or disconfirm my interpretations. Thus the likelihood that my written interpretations of clients' responses may represent the constructions which clients express will be increased.

Each therapist will also participate in post-therapy interviews. At the conclusion of a therapeutic interaction, each therapist will be asked to describe one or more therapeutic events which may have had personal significance for the client. The therapist will then be asked to identify the beginning and end of the episode in which the therapeutic event occurred. As in the case of each client, each therapist will be invited to elaborate his or her constructions associated with those constructions which he or she expresses during the identified therapeutic episode. Again therapists will be invited to respond to my interpretations of the constructions which they have expressed. Thus the construct validity of my interpretations may be increased.

Analysis of the data collected as part of this investigation has three purposes. Firstly, to identify personal constructs which may be shared by therapists and their clients prior to

therapy. Secondly, to demonstrate the process by which social constructs may arise in the context of psychotherapy. Thirdly, to identify occasions when changes may occur in the personal constructs which govern clients' constructions.

The procedure which will be adopted for the identification of personal constructs shared by therapists and their clients, is suggested by Davis, Stroud and Green (1989). These writers indicate that character sketches of children provided by their parents may be transcribed and analysed to identify construed expressions of role construct poles. These expressions may then be classified according to a list of categories. Classification of the identified construct pole expressions enabled comparison between parental constructs. In the present study a similar approach to the analysis of the character sketches provided by therapists and their clients will be used. The unit of analysis will be defined as a construed verbal expression of a role construct pole. Expressions of role construct poles will be identified from the transcription of each character sketch. These expressions will then be classified according to a list of categories developed for this purpose.

Classification of the role construct pole expressions identified from the oral self-characterisations, will enable comparison of those constructs which therapists and their clients use to construe themselves. In addition, it will be possible to compare the constructs indicated by the content of therapist and client self-characterisations prior to therapy, with those constructs indicated by their verbal behaviour during therapy. One might expect that few of the constructs which therapists use to construe themselves will be indicated by therapists' verbal behaviour during psychotherapy. However, there may be some similarity between those constructs which are indicated by the content of clients' character sketches prior to therapy and those constructs indicated by clients verbal behaviour during therapy. Classification of role construct pole expressions derived from therapist and client self-characterisations will also enable comparison of role constructs expressed by therapists, and comparison of role constructs expressed by clients. Some commonality may be found in those constructs which therapists use to construe themselves. In addition, clients may commonly use particular constructs in the construal of themselves. The outcomes of this analysis may contribute to existing knowledge of common similarities and differences between the construct systems of therapists and clients.

Initial analysis of the psychotherapeutic interactions completed as part of this study, will involve the identification of verbal expressions of therapist and client constructions. This analysis will enable the identification of six "levels" of construction apparent in psychotherapeutic interactions. These will include: a) client constructions, b) client superordinate constructions, c) therapist constructions, d) therapist constructions of client constructions, e) therapist constructions of client superordinate constructions, and f) therapist superordinate constructions. These levels of construction will be referred to in analysis and

discussion of the psychotherapeutic process evident in the therapeutic interactions which were completed as part of this study.

For the purposes of this investigation complete analysis of each therapeutic interaction will not be undertaken. Only one interaction will be analysed completely. In the case of each of the remaining interactions, a summary of the complete interaction will be provided. However, an in-depth analysis will be provided of those episodes containing therapeutic events which therapists and their clients identify as having possible personal significance for those clients.

Initial interpretations of the process evident in the identified therapeutic episodes will be subject to researcher bias. Construct validity of these interpretations cannot be assured without reference to the interpretations of those who participated in the interactions: the therapists and their clients. However, the initial interpretations of the therapeutic interactions will be subject to possible change following confirmation or disconfirmation of these interpretations by therapists and their clients in the final phase of data collection. Hence the final interpretations of data offered as part of this study will have greater construct validity than the interpretations which are offered initially. Thus expressions of social constructions in the verbal behaviour of therapists and their clients will be able to be identified and occasions when social constructs arise in the context of psychotherapy will be able to be suggested.

Finally, analysis of the data collected as part of this study may enable the identification of occasions when changes occur in clients' construct systems in the context of psychotherapy. Importantly, these points of change may be able to be related to the preceding verbal behaviour of therapists and their clients. Thus, the methodology and procedures adopted for analysis in the present study may allow the demonstration of common patterns of therapist and client behaviour which may contribute to changes in clients' construct systems. In this way, the present study may go some way towards demonstrating that Kelly's (1955) theory of personal constructs provides a useful model for the interpretation of psychotherapeutic process. In addition the findings of this study may lend support for Harter's (1988) suggestion that personal construct theory provides a useful framework for explaining the effectiveness of therapeutic interventions which are not necessarily consistent with a Kellian approach to psychotherapy.

In summary then, the second chapter includes discussion of the metatheoretical assumptions of Kelly's (1955) personal construct theory. In addition, the fundamental principles of personal construct theory are outlined and key concepts are elaborated. In the third chapter a theory of social interaction which follows from Kelly's elaboration of personal construct theory is described. The fourth chapter discusses the contribution which Kellian theory may make to our present understanding of the process of psychotherapy. In chapter

five the methodology and procedures for analysis employed in the investigation of psychotherapeutic process are outlined and discussed.

The results of this investigation are presented in three parts. Part I of the results is contained in chapter six. Part II of the results is contained in chapter seven and Part III is contained in chapter eight. Chapter six includes analysis and discussion of the first case study which was completed as part of this study. Notably, this chapter includes a complete analysis of the therapeutic interaction between the first therapist-client dyad which participated in the investigation. Chapter seven contains an analysis and discussion of the pre-therapy therapist and client interviews, and the post-therapy therapist and client interviews, completed by the second, third and four therapist-client dyads which participated in the study. In addition, this chapter contains analysis and discussion of the therapeutic episodes which the therapist and, or client in each dyad identified as having possible personal significance for the client. Chapter eight contains information with respect to the fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth therapist-client dyads which is similar to that presented in chapter seven.

In the final chapter, chapter nine, a summary and brief discussion of the earlier chapters of the dissertation is provided. In addition, a brief outline of the methodology and procedures for analysis employed in this study is given. The findings of the investigation are summarised, and implications for psychotherapy research, psychotherapist education and training, and psychotherapeutic practice are discussed. Limitations of the methodology and procedures for analysis are also outlined. Finally, directions for future research are suggested.

Chapter Two

Metatheoretical Assumptions and the Theory of Personal Construct Psychology

Kelly (1955) initially elaborated personal construct theory to provide a rationale for what has become known as personal construct psychotherapy (Neimeyer, 1987). The principles of personal construct psychotherapy were derived from the theoretical postulates of personal construct theory. These, in turn, were derived from metatheoretical assumptions, also elaborated by Kelly in his original volumes. In recent years, the principles of personal construct theory have often been used to describe the process of psychotherapy within counselling relationships where the therapist adheres to an approach which is explicitly consistent with the principles of personal construct theory (e.g., Ravenette, 1980; Leitner, 1980; Fransella, 1985; Loos, 1991). However, Harter (1988) suggests that the theory of personal constructs may also be used to describe the process of psychotherapy in counselling interactions where the therapists use different therapeutic approaches. The position taken here is that personal construct theory may be extended to offer more than a description of psychotherapeutic practice which is inconsistent with personal construct therapy. An extension of personal construct theory may suggest a theoretical explanation of the psychotherapeutic process evident in psychotherapy which does not conform to the principles and practices of personal construct therapy. In this chapter the metatheoretical assumptions of personal construct theory and the theoretical postulates derived from it are examined. In addition, consideration is given to some of the possible implications of applying Kellian metatheory and theory in an investigation of therapist-client interactions.

Metatheoretical Assumptions of Personal Construct Theory

Kelly submits that we live in a real world but are limited in the extent to which we may know that world. Kelly says that he does not base this position on a realist view of the world. He explains:

Since we insist that man can erect his own alternative approaches to reality, we are out of line with traditional realism, which insists that he is always the victim of his circumstances. (Kelly, 1955, p.17)

Warren (1985) argues that it is a dated view of realism to assume that people are "victims of their circumstances." He suggests that a contemporary realist assumes that reality exists independent of people's comprehension of it but is not committed to the view that

people are powerless to affect their circumstances. Warren suggests that Kelly may have not rejected this view of realism had it applied at the time of his elaboration of personal construct theory. More recently, however, Warren (1991) has argued that Kelly seems to want to reject ontological realism. He adds that Kelly appears to accept only epistemological realism. According to Warren (1991), Kelly seems to assume that a person's sense experience provides that person with knowledge about a world that is real. However, Warren (1991) adds, Kelly implies that there may be aspects of that world which people are not experiencing. Warren (1991) concludes, by suggesting that Kelly could be described as an "a-realist" (p. 46). He suggests that as far as Kelly is concerned it does not matter whether a real world exists independently of a person's senses. What is relevant to Kelly, is what sense one makes of one's experiences (Warren, 1991).

Kelly (1955) may have wanted to reject ontological realism and accept epistemological realism as Warren (1991) suggests. However, Kelly indicates that he does assume that a real world exists. He says:

We presume that the universe is really existing and that man is gradually coming to understand it. By taking this position we attempt to make clear from the outset that it is a real world we shall be talking about, not a world composed solely of the flitting shadows of people's thoughts. (Kelly, 1955, p. 6)

Thus we may reasonably suggest that though Kelly may have wished to reject ontological realism, his writing implies that he adopts a position consistent with ontological realism. In addition, Kelly appears to have adopted a position which is consistent with epistemological idealism. He assumes that, despite the existence of the real world, we know only the world of our senses. Hence we cannot know whether the world we know is different from the real world.

As Warren (1991) suggests, there are difficulties associated with classifying the particular ontological or epistemological viewpoints which theorists may uphold. This is certainly the case with respect to Kelly's (1955) philosophical position. However, since future discussion refers primarily to the theory which has been derived from Kelly's stated philosophical position, we may be better to classify Kelly according to the evidence of his writing. Hence, for the remainder of this study, Kelly will be described as a theorist who accepts ontological realism and adopts epistemological idealism.

Personal Construct Theory

Personal Constructs

The principle tenet of personal construct theory which follows from Kelly's position of epistemological idealism, is that people make sense of their subjective reality by "construing" that reality. Kelly suggests that when people "construe" reality they perceive people, places, objects or events, to have features which are similar to perceived features of other people, places, objects or events. When a person construes a part of reality, the features with which the person is concerned, are related to a particular perceived "aspect," or what will later be termed, a "construct." For example, a person may perceive a particular person to have features related to a particular aspect which we will term, "sincerity." The person may be perceived to have features which are similar to other people whom that person has previously construed to be "sincere," and in contrast to features of other people whom that person has previously construed to be "insincere." It is important to point out here that while one person may perceive a particular part of reality to have certain features, a second person may not perceive that same part of reality to have the features perceived by the first person. The features being referred to here, are one's which the construer perceives a part of reality to have. The construed part of reality does not necessarily have those features which it is perceived to have. This discussion is elaborated in later discussion. Returning to previous discussion, the aspect which a construer may perceive parts of reality to have in common, is also personally perceived. It is not an aspect which other people may necessarily perceive those parts of reality to have in common. Thus, in the previous example, other people may not perceive the person being construed to have features related to "sincerity." Other people, may, instead perceive the person to have features related to a particular aspect which we might term, "kindness."

Consider an another example in which a person perceives someone to have features which are similar to perceived features of a previously construed person. The features referred to in each instance are related to a single perceived aspect. For instance, a person may describe Tom and Eric as similar, but different from Alan with respect to some aspect which all three men are perceived to have in common. We may not know the aspect which the construer perceives all three people to have in common. This aspect is personal to the construer and is described in Kellian theory, as a "personal construct." However, the construer may express the way in which he perceives Tom and Eric to be similar. For example, the construer may describe Tom and Eric as "aggressive," but describe Alan as "gentle." In this instance, the word "aggressive" indicates the similarity which the construer perceives between Tom and Eric. Similarly, the word "gentle" suggests the way in which the construer perceives Alan to be similar to, but different from, Tom and Eric. However, as indicated earlier, the aspect in which all three men are similar is not verbally expressed. That is, the personal

construct which is used to construe Tom and Eric as similar, but in contrast to Alan, is not verbalised.

At this point it is important to clarify what is meant by a "personal" construct. In the above instance, the word "aggressive" is used by the construer to express similarity between two people, Tom and Eric. The word "gentle" is used to indicate that, according to the construer, Alan has features which contrast to those features which Tom and Eric are perceived to have. However, according to the construer all three men have features related to the same particular aspect, or construct. Another person may use a similar construct to construe Tom, Eric and Alan. However, the second person may perceive Tom and Eric to have features, associated with the same construct, which are different from those which the first person perceived Tom and Eric to have. Similarly, the second person, like the first person, may perceive Alan to have features associated with the same construct, which suggest that Alan is different from Tom and Eric. However, the second person may perceive Alan to have features which are different from those features which the first person perceived Alan to have. Alternatively, a second person may use a different construct to construe similarity between Tom and Eric. In this way a personal construct can be a construct which one person uses to construe a person, object, place or event. Some people might similarly construe a similar reality using a similar construct. Other people may use a similar construct to construe a similar reality, differently. Still other people may not use a similar construct to construe a similar reality. They may use a different construct. They too, may therefore, construe a similar reality, differently. We may conclude then, that according to Kellian theory, personal constructs are constructs which not all people share. People are able to identify apparent similarities between parts of reality by using their personal constructs to construe reality. Other people may construe similar reality, similarly. However, as we have seen, this is not necessarily the case.

This discussion suggests that, as Kelly (1958/1969) indicates, a personal construct is a "reference axis" which is devised by a person for establishing a personal orientation towards events which that person encounters (p. 10). Alternatively, a personal construct can be described as a psychological guideline against which people, objects, places and events may be referred (Kelly, 1958/1969). Kelly (1962/1969) suggests that a construct enables a person to perceive two things as similar, but as different from a third, with respect to an aspect which each of the three things are perceived to have in common. He adds that things which are not relevant to the distinction which is made, are not psychologically part of the context (Kelly, 1962/1969). The implications of this comment are that, in the preceding example, Tom may have been previously construed to be "aggressive" and Alan may have been previously construed to be "gentle." When the construer, in the previous example, construes Eric, Eric is perceived to have features which are similar to those features which Tom is perceived to

have. Simultaneously, Eric is perceived to have features which are different from those features which Alan is perceived to have. The features referred to here, are all related to one particular aspect which all three men are perceived to have in common. Other people, apart from Alan and Tom, are not relevant to the process of construing Eric. Thus Kelly (1962/1969) concludes, that a construct simultaneously links and separates people, objects, places and events. But it links and separates only those things which are relevant to that which is being construed. Kelly (1962/1969) goes on to emphasise that this linkage and separation is accomplished by the same "psychological act" (p. 197). This act is the act of "construing" or, what will henceforth be termed, "construal." According to Kelly (1955, 1958/1969, 1962/1969), the description of a personal construct outlined here, suggests that personal constructs should be distinguished from the more traditional notion of a concept.

Kelly (1958/1969) suggests that a concept, is a "category of events" or the "focus of a class" (Kelly, 1958/1969, p. 10). He goes on to suggest that a concept is an indication of a common aspect which exists in parts of present reality. Kelly submits that a personal construct indicates similarities in present reality which people only perceive to exist. In this way, personal constructs are "psychological guidelines" (Kelly, 1958/1969). Moreover, Kelly (1962/1969) suggests that a concept may be used to distinguish people, objects, places and events, as different from all other objects. As indicated earlier, Kelly submits that, in contrast, personal constructs are used to distinguish some things from those other things, which have some aspect in common with those things which are construed. Kelly (1955, 1958/1969, 1962/1969) concludes then that the notions of "personal construct" and "concept," can, and should, be differentiated.

In a recent paper Warren (1990a) agrees that personal constructs, as they are described in Kellian theory, are different from the concepts to which Kelly (1955, 1958/1969, 1962/1969) refers. However, he submits that Kelly's definition of the term "concept" is akin to a classical definition of a "concept." According to Warren (1990a), classical concepts comprise sets of "defining features that all exemplars must share" (p. 10). Hence, Warren suggests that Kelly's distinction between personal constructs and concepts may be an appropriate one, given the time at which Kelly elaborated his theory. However, Warren suggests that today, Kelly's definition may be regarded as not too dissimilar to the more contemporary definition of a concept. He indicates that contemporary psychology refers to a "prototypical concept" rather than to the previously defined, "classical concept." According to Warren (1990a) a prototypical concept consists of a set of characteristic features which exemplars only "tend to have" (p. 10). Warren (1990a) elaborates:

[A prototypical concept] has a sense of tentativeness that characterises real life thinking, a sense of "approximation" that allows individual variation and interpretation. (p. 14)

Thus, we might envisage some similarity between a personal construct and the contemporary notion of a "concept." If we refer to previous discussion this similarity becomes more evident. Earlier discussion suggested that people may use different constructs to construe similar reality. Alternatively, they may use the same constructs to construe similar reality, differently. Thus people may have different interpretations, or "constructions" of events. According to Warren (1990a) the contemporary notion of a concept suggests that similar reality may be conceptualized differently. He suggests that people may differ in the way in which they group features to form concepts. Warren also implies that people may vary in the concepts which they use to group parts of reality. Thus, Kelly's definition of a personal construct, and Warren's definition of a concept, each allow for variation in the way in which people interpret their subjective reality. Hence, Warren's (1990a) suggestion that a personal construct approximates a contemporary notion of a concept is a reasonable one. However, despite apparent similarity between personal constructs and concepts, Warren (1990a) suggests that a personal construct and a concept may not be one and the same. He suggests that if we assume people use concepts to make sense of reality, we cannot know how those people will think next. In contrast, Kelly's definition of a personal construct suggests that if we assume that people use personal constructs to make sense of reality, we can anticipate how they may make sense of future similar reality. Thus, Warren concludes that there is a difference between the way in which concepts and constructs may be applied in an effort to understand how people identify similarities and contrasts in reality. Hence, he concludes that we may not be able to presume that concepts and personal constructs are analogous. The distinction between concepts and personal constructs which Warren describes, becomes more evident as we consider the way in which people use constructs in the process of construing.

Personal Constructs and The Process of Construing

Having distinguished personal constructs from concepts, we turn now to examine how people make sense of their subjective reality by the use of personal constructs. As we have seen, Kelly argues that people make sense of their reality by "construing" that reality. In Kellian terms, people construe reality by "applying" personal constructs to those people, objects, places or events which are to be construed. Earlier discussion suggested that when people construe, they use personal constructs to identify parts of subjective reality as similar to other parts of previously construed reality. Simultaneously, people use the same constructs to distinguish these parts of reality from other parts of reality. As suggested earlier, parts of

reality are construed as similar to, or different from, other parts of reality on the basis of the features which those parts of reality are perceived to have. Thus, returning to the earlier example, the construer concerned perceives Tom and Eric to have similar features related to some aspect. Alan is perceived to have different features related to the same aspect. Tom and Eric may be described as similar, according to the construer, because each is perceived to be, "aggressive." However, Alan may be described as different from the two other men, according to the construer, because he is perceived to be "gentle." Kelly might describe the three men as linked because each man is perceived to have features associated with a single construct. However, two of the three men, Tom and Eric, are separated from the third man, Alan. Tom and Eric are separated from Alan since they are perceived to have different features from those which Alan is perceived to have. However, since all three men are perceived to have features associated with a particular aspect, or construct, we describe the men as "elements" of the construct concerned. Thus we may say that construing is the process by which a person perceives similar features, related to a single aspect, in some construct elements, and simultaneously perceives these features to be in contrast to features related to the same aspect, perceived in some other construct elements.

Understandably, perhaps, Kelly (1955) describes personal constructs as being "dichotomous." By this he means that personal constructs refer to two sets of elements. Each element within each set of elements, has features similar to the other elements within the same set. However, the features of elements in one set of elements, contrast with those features of elements in the other set of elements. According to Kelly (1955), when one construes a part of reality, one perceives that part as having features which are similar to the previously perceived features of one set of construct elements, and as in contrast to the previously perceived features of the other set of construct elements. So that, for example, if A and B are what we might commonly describe as men, and C is what we may commonly describe as a woman, something which we might commonly call, "gender" could be perceived as an aspect of A, B and C. The reader should note that in this example "gender" is a word which is commonly used to denote a construct which many people have in common. In later discussion such common constructs will be distinguished from the previously described "personal" constructs. A common construct is virtually indistinguishable from a concept except that in this thesis, the term "construct" is reserved for a theoretical notion within personal construct theory. Hence reference to a common construct is more appropriate here. Returning to the previously mentioned example, "gender" denotes the construct used to construe three people: A, B and C. In this example, the two men, A and B, are perceived to be alike with respect to gender, but different from the woman, C. The construct used to construe the three people, is an aspect in which two people are perceived to be alike, but in contrast to a third person. All three people are perceived to have features related to this

particular aspect. According to Kellian theory then, all constructs which are employed in the construction of parts of reality refer to ways in which those parts may be similar to, or different from, other parts of reality with respect to some aspect which those parts of reality are perceived to have in common.

Kellian theory suggests that the interpretation which a person has of an event is determined by the construct used to construe that event. For example, let us suppose that a particular personal construct is used to construe an event. Again, as indicated earlier, unless it is our own construct, we may not know how to refer to this construct. That is, we may not know what aspect, elements of the construct have in common. However, a particular construct can at least be suggested by reference to the words which are used to describe each of the two sets of construct elements. Let us assume, for the moment, that a particular construct, denoted as "good-bad," is used to construe a particular event. If perceived features of the event are perceived as being like perceived features of previous "good" events but unlike perceived features of previous "bad" events, the event will be construed as "good". In this instance, we say that the word "good" expresses the "construction" which the person has made of the construed event. The expressed construction indicates the similarity of the event with respect to one set of construct elements. It also implies the dissimilarity of the event with respect to another set of construct elements. The elements from which the construed event is differentiated, are suggested by the way in which the construct used to construe the event was denoted earlier. In this instance, we might expect that the construed "good" event is distinguished from previously construed "bad" events.

It is important to indicate that people may vary in the constructs which they use to construe events. However, according to Kellian theory, irrespective of the constructs which people may have, some events cannot be construed using some constructs. For instance, to return to the example above, events other than that event which was initially construed, may be construed as "good" by the construer. However, some events will not be able to be construed to be either "good" or "bad." According to the range corollary of personal construct theory, constructs have a "limited range of convenience" (Kelly, 1955, p. 68). That is, personal construct theory suggests that personal constructs can be applied only to a restricted range of elements. This makes sense if we consider that not all events may be perceived as having features associated with the particular construct, "good-bad." We might then reasonably expect that some events could not be construed using this particular construct. Hence, not all constructs can be used for the construal of all events. In the next section we examine the contribution which Kellian theory suggests constructs make to people's understanding of present, and future, reality more closely.

Anticipating "Events"

According to Kelly, the process of construing, described above, enables people to anticipate events. In the construction corollary of personal construct theory, Kelly suggests that people anticipate events by "construing their replications" (Kelly, 1955, p. 50). Kelly provides an illustration of this position when he discusses the way in which a person may construe a particular occurrence which we commonly call, a day. He says:

Consider a day. Concretely, today is not yesterday, nor is it tomorrow today. Time does not double back on itself. But after a succession of time man is able to detect a recurrent theme in its ever flowing process. It is possible to abstract the recurrent theme in terms of the rising and setting of the sun. Moreover, the same theme does not recur when time is segmented in other ways. Thus, the concept of a day is erected along the incessant stream of time – a day which is, in its own way, like other days and yet clearly distinguishable from the moments and the years. (p. 53)

Here Kelly suggests that people are able to anticipate events since people may perceive features which they perceive in future subjective reality, to be similar to features they perceive in present subjective reality. Hence, present reality, and future reality may be able to be similarly construed. The parts of subjective reality which may be construed as similar to parts of present reality, are what Kelly describes as, "replications" of present events. Of course, again we must keep in mind that Kelly's references to "events" imply reference to what we might more commonly describe as people, places, objects and events. Landfield and Leitner (1980) lend support for the position taken here. They suggest that when Kelly states that people anticipate events by construing their replications, he suggests that a construction which a person has of another person, "implies the unstated expectation that the person will possess those same characteristics tomorrow" (p. 5). They add:

The feelings of doubt that most of us experience when someone we know suddenly changes give testimony that our person perceptions have anticipatory implications. If we were not anticipating regularities in behaviour, why should we become upset about sudden change? (Landfield & Leitner, 1980, p. 5)

These comments by Landfield and Leitner suggest that when we construe a person, we expect to be able to similarly construe that person in the future. Thus we may say that a person has anticipated reality if that person has construed present reality to be similar to previously construed reality.

Kelly (1955) goes on to suggest that people construe parts of reality to "predict and control" their circumstances. In this latter statement, Kelly is suggesting that the adoption of this position overcomes the limitations of ontological realism. As indicated earlier, Kelly suggests that ontological realists hold that people are "victims of their circumstances." However, as demonstrated previously, Kelly's view is inconsistent with the more contemporary view of ontological realism (Warren, 1985). Hence, we might presume that Kelly's statement that people construe events to predict and control their circumstances, has little relevance here. However this is not the case. Kelly's comments do have some relevance in present discussion.

As indicated earlier, Kelly (1955) submits that people anticipate events by construing their replications. Now Kelly suggests that people construe in order to predict and control their circumstances. From these two statements we might suggest that Kelly uses the terms "anticipation" and "prediction" interchangeably. However, Radley (1977) argues that interpretation of Kellian theory requires the reader to have two separate and different notions of "anticipation" and "prediction." He goes on to say that Kelly uses the noun "anticipation" to refer to "tacit knowledge from which we attend towards other things which we cannot specify" (p. 225). In contrast, "prediction" refers to "those things which a person has in his awareness, and towards which he is attending" (Radley, 1977, p. 226). Radley adds that the "things" referred to in the previous statement are "particulars about which [a person] can be explicit in his expectation of what may happen" (p. 226). So, for example, a navigator may expect an island to be in a particular part of the ocean when he has charted the island's position on a map. Or a person may specify characteristics of his or her, as yet unseen, partner. Radley suggests that, in such instances, the people concerned would be able to express the constructions of what it is that they predict. However, in the first example, the construction which the navigator expressed would not be a construction of the particular island in the ocean. Similarly, in the second example, the construction which the person may express would not be a construction of an actual person. Thus Radley implies that the process of prediction is not the process of construing. If we construe a part of reality as similar to a previous part of reality, we have anticipated the present reality. In addition, if we anticipate a part of reality now, we anticipate that we may similarly construe a future part of reality. As Kelly suggests, our present constructions, are our anticipations. However, our anticipations are not our constructions of future reality. We have not yet construed it. Nevertheless, we may predict reality on the basis of our constructions. As Radley suggests, we may articulate a construction of future reality, without first having construed it. Kelly (1955) provides an example which appears to illustrate this position. He says:

When one abstracts replicated properties in the events he has already experienced, it becomes possible for him to chart events to come in terms of these same properties. A navigator who has never been to the North Pole may yet know its coordinates so well that he can predict the event of his arrival there. In a sense he does not conjure up the event itself, but rather its properties. Sure enough, twenty-nine days after he makes his prediction he does experience an event having all the predicted properties, - time, declination of the sun, and so on -- all occurring in conjunction with each other. (Kelly, 1955, p. 121)

As Radley (1977) says, Kelly may have used the terms "anticipation" and "prediction" interchangeably. However, the above extract suggests that Kelly may have implied reference to two processes which are separate and similar, but different from each other. A person anticipates that present reality is similar to previous reality when one construes that present reality. In addition, when one construes present reality, one anticipates that some part of future reality will be able to be construed as similar to that present reality. Thus, as indicated earlier, one's constructions are one's anticipations. However, one may also use one's constructions to predict what people, objects, places or similar events, may make up future reality. These predictions are not constructions. However, one's predictions are based upon one's constructions. It is apparent that people can indeed predict events, and presumably people, objects and places, by construing present reality. Thus we might expect that, as Kelly suggests, people may construe reality to predict future reality.

As indicated earlier, Kelly (1955) says that people construe present reality not only in order to predict future reality but also to control it. According to Kellian theory, one might expect people to control reality through their behaviour. We may assume too that people's behaviour follows from their constructions. Thus people will act in accordance with their constructions and thereby influence reality. However, this is not the interpretation which Kelly expected of his theory of personal constructs. Kelly submits that people control reality by construing. People control reality since they are able to anticipate how they may construe parts of future reality which are perceived to have features similar to perceived features of previously construed reality. Kelly does suggest that people's actions may change the reality of which those people are a part. However, Kelly suggests that behaviour is not the means by which people control their reality. According to Kelly, people control reality by construing. Nevertheless, according to Kelly, people's behaviour has an important role to play in the process by which people construe "events."

Constructions and Behaviour

Kelly (1955) says that people's behaviour does not follow their constructions. Later, he adds: "Behaviour is man's independent variable" (Kelly, 1958/1969, p. 36). Thus Kelly (1955, 1958/1969) implies that people's behaviour is separate from their constructions. As the above discussion suggests we might expect that, in Kellian theory, people's actions would follow from their constructions. However, if we return to earlier discussion, we read that people anticipate future events by construing present events. People may have previously construed events which are similar to those events which they currently construe. As indicated in a previous section of this chapter, people construe events using existing constructs. These constructs include elements perceived to be similar to those people, events, places or objects which one currently construes. When some part of reality is construed, that section of reality is perceived to have features similar to the perceived features of elements at one end ("likeness end") of a dichotomous construct, but in contrast to perceived features of elements at the other end ("contrast end") of the same construct. Those events which have been previously construed are the elements of the construct used to construe the current event. A construct arises when a person perceives similarity between two parts of reality, but perceives those two parts of reality to be contrast to a third part of reality. All three parts of reality are perceived to have features related to a particular aspect. It is this aspect which may be described as a "personal construct." So that in a previous example, the reader will recall, A, B and C were each perceived to have features related to a particular aspect which was described as "gender." It is important to add that a construct arises when a construer perceives all three parts of reality to have a particular aspect in common. The parts of reality concerned here, are not assumed to possess a particular aspect in common. Similarly, when a construct arises, the construer also perceives two of the three parts of reality to have common features related to that aspect. In addition, of course, the construer perceives a third part of reality to have contrasting features related to that same aspect. Again the apparent similarity between Kelly's definition of a personal construct, and the contemporary definition of a concept suggested by Warren (1990a) becomes evident. People may select those features of reality which they group together. They may also select the particular construct which they use to construe that reality. To return to previous discussion, we can see that when one construes present reality, one's existing constructs govern the initial construction which one has of this reality. Kelly (1955) suggests that people act on the basis of their constructions. At first glance, this statement may appear to be contradictory to the statement that people's actions do not follow from their present constructions. However, if we revise Kelly's statement to say that a person acts on the basis of that person's previous constructions, the second statement can follow. In other words, a person may perceive a part of reality to be

similar to an element of an existing construct. The construction which one has of that part of reality is determined by the construction which one has of a similar previous part of reality.

Now a person may act on the basis of the way in which that person initially construes a part of reality. However, as indicated previously, that person's actions are influenced by the constructions which that person has of previous similar realities. In this way the person's existing constructs influence present behaviour. However, the point that Kelly is wanting to make is that people's behaviour is used to test whether people's existing constructions are adequate. More accurately, Kelly's comments suggest that people ascertain, what might be described as, the "predictive validity" of their constructions through their behaviour. They ascertain whether their constructions of present reality, which follow from their existing constructs, are "valid" constructions. Over simplifying the position, a person determines whether he or she is justified in retaining a particular current construction of present reality. Does the initial construction, enable the construer to predict future reality? Thus, Kelly (1966a/1970) suggests that people's behaviour may be described as their "principal instrument of inquiry" (p. 260). This point is taken up again in the next section of this chapter. However, at this stage we can conclude that people's constructs influence their constructions. In turn, people's constructions govern people's behaviour, in relation to a particular part of reality. However, as indicated above, people's behaviour is the means by which people test the predictive validity of the constructions which they have made of previous similar people, events, objects or places.

As we have seen a person's behaviour is governed by that person's existing constructs and the constructions which follow. Hence, in one way we may say that behaviour is a dependent variable. However, previous discussion suggests that a person's initial constructions of current reality are governed by the constructions which that person has made of previous similar reality. Hence, in another way, we may say that a person's present behaviour is independent of that person's constructions. Kelly (1955) suggests that a person's behaviour may also be regarded as an independent variable because people's constructions may change following people's actions. Thus, as Kelly (1958/1969) suggests, it is not unreasonable perhaps, to suggest that behaviour should be regarded as an independent variable.

Construct Change

Kelly holds that people's knowledge of their subjective reality is gained through their constructions. According to Kelly, people construe present reality as similar to parts of previously construed reality. In this way people make sense of current subjective reality. However, Kelly suggests that people's constructions do not remain unchanged. He maintains that people's present constructions are subject to "revision or replacement" (Kelly, 1955, p. 15).

It is this position which Kelly describes as his philosophical position of "constructive alternativism." The theoretical implications of this position were hinted at in the previous section. As indicated earlier, Kelly (1955) suggests that people anticipate parts of reality by construing their replications. According to Kelly, when people have construed parts of reality as similar to other parts which they have previously construed, they test the predictive validity of their constructions by acting in accordance with them. Kelly suggests that people determine whether their constructions have predictive validity. He goes on to suggest that when people have determined the validity of their constructions, changes in the constructs which each person has, may take place. Alternatively, Kelly might suggest that people's "construct systems" would be subject to revision. As the reader might expect, according to Kellian theory, a "construct system" is the group of psychological entities, termed "personal constructs" which each person has. Returning to previous discussion, Kelly's epistemological position places limitations upon the meaning of validity. Hence, there are certain conditions which must apply before a person's constructions may be said to be predictively valid, or predictively invalid. It follows that, according to Kellian theory, there are also certain conditions which must apply if changes to a person's constructs are to take place, following that person's behaviour.

Kelly (1955) says that people can know only their subjective reality which they come to understand through their constructions. Hence, we might expect that it is only people's constructions which will suggest whether the constructions of those people have predictive validity. This position is consistent with the one which Kelly advances in his elaboration of personal construct theory. Kelly suggests that people construe the outcome of their actions which follow from their initial constructions. That is, as discussed earlier, people act "as if" their constructions are valid. They must then construe whether their constructions were valid in the first instance. We might say that people construe the appropriateness of their initial constructions in light of what transpired when they acted according to those constructions. However, as will become evident, the process by which one assesses the validity or invalidity of one's constructions is not as simple as the previous statement might suggest.

According to Kelly (1955), a person's constructions of the outcome of that person's initial constructions, is the validating evidence of that person's initial constructions. Thus he defines "validation" as "compatibility (subjectively construed) between one's prediction and the outcome he observes" (p. 158). Similarly, "invalidation" represents "incompatibility (subjectively construed) between one's prediction and the outcome he observes" (Kelly, 1955, p. 158). However, Kelly's definitions require some brief discussion in light of previous comments made here, before they appear strictly consistent with Kellian theory. In each definition, the reader should realise that the "prediction" which Kelly refers to, is the person's initial construction. The "observed outcome" which Kelly refers to in the preceding definitions

seems to refer to a construction which a person has of a particular event. In this instance, the event is one in which the person has acted according to that person's constructions. The event is not "observed" in the strict sense of the meaning of the word, "observed." Rather the event is construed. Thus, to return to Kelly's initial definition of "validation" and "invalidation," we might conclude that "validation" is "construed compatibility between one's initial construction and one's construction of the event in which one has acted according to one's constructions." Similarly, "invalidation" is "construed incompatibility between one's initial construction and one's construction of the event in which one has acted according to one's constructions."

At this stage, it is important to stress that according to Kelly, a person's constructions are valid when that person construes compatibility between that person's initial constructions and that person's constructions of the events in which that person has acted. Other people do not validate, or invalidate, a person's constructions. Rather, a person's constructions of that person's constructions of others' behaviour may be validating evidence of the person's initial constructions. However, a person's initial constructions are not described as having been validated, or invalidated, unless that person construes his or her constructions to have been invalidated. We may, of course, construe our constructions of other people's constructions as validating or invalidating evidence of a person's constructions. However, again, we cannot say that the person's constructions are validated, or invalidated, unless that person somehow indicates that this is the case.

This discussion suggests that one must assume that one's constructions are valid, unless one construes otherwise. However, this is not to say that personal construct theory suggests that all people's constructions have equal predictive validity. Personal construct theory allows variation in the predictive validity of people's constructions. For example, as may have become apparent during previous discussion, two people may construe similar realities. However, these two people may have different constructions of their similar realities. Each person may construe his or her constructions of reality to be valid. However, if each person was able to have a similar construction of a similar reality, each person may construe one construction as having greater predictive validity than the other. This is an important point, as it suggests that people do not necessarily know how another person construes a similar reality. If, as in the example above, two people construe a similar reality, both people may construe their respective constructions of that reality to be valid. Hence, we must assume that their constructions are valid. However, if both people could share a similar construction of reality, one person may construe the other's construction as having greater predictive validity than that person's own initial construction. Thus we may say that two people may each have a valid construction of a similar reality. However, one person may have a construction of that reality which could be construed by both people as having a greater predictive validity than the other person's construction of that reality. Nevertheless, a person

cannot construe one construction as having greater predictive validity for that person, than another construction, unless a certain condition applies. That person must be able to construe reality in the way in which the other person construes that same reality.

As the reader might expect, this discussion has important implications for therapist-client relationships. Clients may construe their constructions of their respective realities to be valid. In addition, therapists may construe their constructions of similar realities to be valid. In the context of a counselling interaction, therapists may be able to construe their clients' constructions. This possibility is examined in some detail later, and in greater depth in the following chapter. Returning to present discussion, therapists may construe their clients' constructions of similar reality to be less "valid" than their own constructions. However, previous discussion of Kelly's (1955) definition of "invalidation" and "validation" suggests that only a client can describe that client's constructions as predictively valid, or predictively invalid. Nevertheless, if a client was able to construe reality similarly to the way in which the therapist construes a similar reality, that client may construe the client's initial construction of reality, to have less predictive validity than the therapist's construction of that same reality. Again the description of a client's construction as being predictively valid, or predictively invalid, can be offered only by the client. Similarly, of course, only a therapist is in a position to say whether that therapist's constructions are predictively valid, or predictively invalid.

It was suggested earlier that when people's constructions are invalid, people may revise their initial constructions. However, as becomes apparent in later discussion, people may not choose to revise their constructions though their constructions have been invalidated. Nevertheless, Kelly (1955) suggests that people will increase the predictive validity of their constructions if they revise their constructions. This point follows from previous discussion. A person's constructions of present reality may be invalid. This means that the person may have construed another person, an object, a place or an event, using an existing construct. However, use of the particular construct to construe present reality may not have given rise to a construction which proved valid. We might expect then that the person concerned here, could increase the predictive validity of that person's constructions of similar reality by reconstruing that reality. The person may have a more predictively valid construction of reality if that person now applies a different construct in the construal process, and construes reality as having features similar to different construct elements. Understandably, in Kellian theory this process, which follows invalidation or validation of one's constructions, is known as "reconstrual." As we might expect the revised construction of present reality is known as a "reconstruction."

Discussion to this point suggests that one can expect diversity in the constructions which different people have of similar realities. One can also expect variation in the constructions which a single person may have of similar realities. A person's constructions

of reality at one point in time may be valid. Kellian theory suggests that at another point in time, that person's constructions of that previous reality at the previous original point in time, are no less valid. However, as we have seen a person's similar constructions of similar reality in a future point in time, may not be valid. The person may need to use constructs to construe that future reality which are different from those which were used to construe the previous similar reality. As was suggested earlier, this may mean simply that the person concerned will use an existing construct which is different from that which was used previously. Alternatively, as will be demonstrated later, a person may first need to revise that person's construct system in some way. Such a revision may give rise to new constructs which may be used in the construal of reality which is similar to that which was construed in the first instance. Thus a construer may reconstrue a particular person, object, place or event, using a construct from the construer's existing construct system. Alternatively, a construer may reconstrue reality using a different construct from that which previously existed within the construer's construct system. However, regardless of whether one reconstrues reality using an existing construct, or a new construct, previous valid constructions of similar reality, remain valid. Nevertheless, a reconstruction of present reality may have greater predictive validity than a previous valid construction of similar reality. Again the points made here have importance for the analysis and discussion of counselling interactions. We can conclude that therapists must assume that their clients' previous valid constructions of their realities remain valid. However, reconstructions of present similar realities may have greater predictive validity (for their clients), than those clients' previous valid constructions.

We may conclude that opportunities for people to increase the predictive validity of their personal constructions are essential if people's constructions are to retain predictive validity. As we might expect, Kelly (1955) suggests that interpersonal relationships provide an important context within which people may increase the predictive validity of their constructions. According to Kelly, interpersonal relationships provide contexts within which validating evidence, and invalidating evidence, is provided and construct system change may take place. More particularly, we might expect that the interactions which take place within the context of interpersonal relationships would provide opportunities for the provision of validating evidence and invalidating evidence, and possible construct system change. If this is the case, we might reasonably expect that counselling interactions too, would include opportunities for construction validation and invalidation, and provide occasions for changes in people's construct systems to occur. However, before we examine the process by which people's constructions may be validated or invalidated within the context of personal interactions, we must first understand the process of human interaction as it is elaborated in Kellian theory. In the next section then, the relationship between constructs, constructions and

people's verbal behaviour is examined. In addition, the process by which people may communicate their constructions to others is discussed.

Personal Construct Theory and Interpersonal Relationships

Personal Constructs, Constructions and Roles

Previous discussion suggests that people may have similar personal constructs, and similar constructions of similar realities. However, they may have different personal constructs and construe similar realities differently. Alternatively, of course, people may have similar constructions of different realities. In short, people do not necessarily have similar construct systems. Neither do they necessarily have similar constructions of similar realities. Nevertheless, Kelly submits that people are able to communicate their personal constructions to others through a process of social interaction. Kelly further suggests that construct system change may follow from the communication of people's constructions during social interaction.

Kelly (1955) describes the process of social interaction as one in which people play "roles" in a social process involving other people. In the sociality corollary of personal construct theory, Kelly states that a person may play a role in a social process to the extent that the person construes the "construction processes" of others (p. 95). From this comment we may conclude that a person plays a social role when that person construes the "construction processes" of others. In addition, we may perhaps assume that some people may play more of a social role than others. Some people may be able to construe more of other people's "construction processes" than others can construe. However, to have a better understanding of the process of social interaction, as explained in Kellyian theory, we need to examine Kelly's notion of a role more closely.

As indicated earlier, Kelly (1955) suggests that a person plays a role in a social process by construing others' "construction processes." However, we are unable to have direct access to other people's "construction processes" (Leitner, 1988). We cannot construe the process by which a person perceives features of reality, as similar to perceived features of some construct elements, but in contrast to perceived features of other construct elements. Fortunately, Kelly's later description of a role suggests that we may be more flexible in our interpretation of Kelly's initial definition of a role than we have been thus far. Kelly (1955) says:

A role is a psychological process based upon the role player's construction of aspects of the construction systems of those with whom he attempts to join in a social enterprise. In less precise but more familiar language, a role is an ongoing pattern of behaviour that follows from a person's understanding of how the others who are associated with him think. (p. 97)

The above description of a role suggests that we may assume that a role is a person's behaviour which follows that person's constructions of another person's constructions. This later definition suggests that a person does not need to construe the construction processes of another person to play a role involving that other person. The first person needs only to construe the constructions of that other person.

As previous discussion indicated, a person's construction arises from the use of a personal construct to perceive features of reality which are similar to perceived features of some previously construed parts of reality, and in contrast to perceived features of other previously construed parts of reality. Other people do not have direct access to the construct which a person may use. Neither do they have access to the features of reality which are perceived to be similar to, or in contrast to, features of the construct elements. However, previous discussion suggests that a person may be able to indicate to others, the similarity which that person perceives between features of the present event, and features of previously construed events. For example, the reader will recall the earlier instance, in which Eric was construed. Tom and Alan were elements of a construct used to construe Eric. Tom was perceived to have features similar to features which Eric had previously been perceived to have. The construer was able to indicate the similarity between Eric and Tom by describing Eric as "aggressive." As demonstrated earlier, the word "aggressive" in this instance, indicates the similarity between Eric and Tom. The word is also said to indicate the construer's construction of Eric. Thus we can see that people's verbal behaviour may provide the vehicle by which people may convey their personal constructions to others. People may then play a role in a social process by construing the constructions expressed in people's verbal behaviour. However, before examining this possibility further, we must give consideration to whether people's constructions may be conveyed only through their verbal behaviour.

Communicating Constructions

Kelly (1955) suggests that there are two types of constructs: constructs which are not verbally symbolized and verbally symbolized constructs. For the sake of simplicity these will henceforth be respectively referred to as "nonverbal constructs" and "verbal constructs." Kelly says that nonverbal constructs are used for construing physiological processes such as digestion or glandular secretion. However, he goes on to suggest that people are not aware of the constructions made using nonverbal constructs. One might speculate that by this comment Kelly means that people cannot construe the constructions which they make using nonverbal constructs. According to Kelly, nonverbal constructs are not indicated by any verbal expression. Neither are they indicated by any other type of expression. We might reasonably suggest too, that the constructions which might be made using nonverbal constructs, would not be indicated in any way. Certainly we would not expect that such

constructions would be indicated by any verbal expression. Thus, it seems reasonable to conclude that people cannot construe the constructions they make using nonverbal constructs. In contrast, one might expect that people can construe their own constructions when those constructions can be verbally expressed. Hence, it becomes reasonable to suggest, as Kelly does, that people are not aware of those constructions which they make using nonverbal constructs.

Above discussion suggests that Kelly's definition of nonverbal constructs precludes communication of constructions made using nonverbal constructs. We might expect then that other people would be unable to construe the constructions which people make when they use nonverbal constructs to construe events. This comment has important implications for discussion of counselling interactions. We might conclude from present discussion, that therapists cannot construe the constructions which clients make using their nonverbal constructs. Neither can clients construe the constructions which their therapists make using their nonverbal constructs. Hence, we might expect that therapists and their clients can play roles in a social process involving each other, only when they construe constructions which each other makes using different constructs. Since Kelly has referred to only two types of constructs, we might expect that the only constructions which therapists and their clients may construe are those constructions which are made using verbal constructs. Hence, the remainder of this section is concerned with the way in which people may express their constructions through their verbal behaviour.

Kelly (1955) suggests that people include words and phrases as elements within the context of their personal constructs. According to Kelly, the words and phrases are included as "like" elements, or "contrast" elements, in the context of a particular construct. Thus, Kelly suggests that a person may have a construct in which two people, whom he describes as Mary and Alice, are "like" elements. A third person, Jane, may be an "unlike," (contrast) element in the context of the same construct. Kelly asks the reader to assume that the construer introduces the word "gentleness" as one of the "like" elements. In this instance, "gentleness" indicates the similarity which the construer perceives as existing between Mary and Alice. According to Kelly, "gentleness" also indicates the construct of which it is an element. This statement makes sense if we recall previous discussion of the process of construing. Earlier discussion indicates that when a person construes a part of reality, that person perceives features in that part of reality which are similar to perceived features of some elements in a particular construct. Those same features are also perceived to be in contrast to features of other elements in the context of the same construct.

In the previous instance, a person may construe Mary to be "gentle." The word "gentle" conveys the construction which that person has of that part of reality which has been described as Mary. The word "gentle" simultaneously indicates that perceived features of

Mary are perceived to be similar to perceived features of "like" construct elements, but in contrast to perceived features of "unlike" elements of the same construct. "Gentle" then implies a contrasting end, or what Kelly terms a contrasting "construct pole." Thus the single word, "gentle," conveys the notion that there are two groups of construct elements. The elements of each group are similar to other elements in the same group. However, the elements of each group are different from elements in the other group with respect to a particular aspect which all elements have in common. In the above example, then the word "gentle" conveys the similarity between Mary and existing construct elements. The word "gentle" also indicates that there are two perceived contrasting sets of construct elements. Mary is perceived to be similar to one set of construct elements, but to be in contrast to the other set of construct elements. In addition, the word "gentle" indicates that there is an aspect which Mary, and existing "like" and "contrast" elements, are perceived to have in common. Thus, as Kelly suggests, the word "gentle," in this instance, can be said to indicate the personal construct which the construer has used to construe Mary. However, it is important to say that the word used to indicate the construct employed to construe Mary, in this instance, must be differentiated from the construct itself. In this instance, the word "gentle" expresses the similarity between Mary and other construct elements. It is therefore an expression of the construer's construction. In addition, as previous discussion has indicated, the word "gentle" indicates the construct which is used to construe Mary. However, the word "gentle" is not, itself, a construct.

We might reasonably expect that words cannot be included within the context of personal constructs, unless those words have something in common with, or in contrast to, existing construct elements. As we have seen earlier, Kellian theory indicates that people include parts of reality in the context of their personal constructs by first perceiving some features of that reality to be similar to perceived features of existing elements. We might expect then that people include words and phrases within the context of their personal constructs by engaging in a similar process. People must perceive some similarity between the words and phrases which are to be included as elements, and the existing construct elements. More accurately, of course, people must construe the meaning of the words and phrases which they include as construct elements, as conveying the similarity which they perceive between construed reality and existing construct elements.

We might expect people not to make an arbitrary choice of words for inclusion in their constructs. Different words must be construed by people as having different meanings. Of course, we commonly understand this to be the case. We also commonly understand that identical words are construed as having similar meanings by different people. As Kelly (1955) suggests we may assume that words have common public meanings. Previous discussion suggested that words can indicate personal constructions. Now, present discussion suggests

that words also indicate public constructions, or what we might describe as, "shared" constructions, or "common" constructions. Assuming that this is the case, we may expect that a person who includes words as elements within a construct context, construes the shared construction expressed in that word, to be the similarity which the person perceives between like elements of a particular construct. Thus a person may construe a part of reality using a particular construct. That person may verbally express a construction of that reality. The word or phrase used to express the person's construction, expresses not only the person's construction, but also a common construction. The reader should note that, in this instance, the personal construction and the common construction may not be identical. Indeed the two constructions indicated by the particular word or phrase, are more likely to be, at least somewhat, dissimilar. A personal construct arises when a person perceives parts of reality to have some perceived aspect in common. The person perceives two parts of reality to have features with respect to that aspect, which are similar. Simultaneously, the person perceives a third part of reality to have features with respect to that aspect, which are in contrast to the features of the first two parts of reality. According to Kelly, people are likely to differ in the aspect which they perceive similar parts of reality to have in common and different people may perceive similar reality as having different features with respect to some particular aspect. Thus, the personal constructs which people have may be dissimilar. In contrast, as previous discussion suggests, the constructions which have been described as "common," or "shared," constructions, are ones which more than one person has.

This suggests that when people express their constructions, they express their personal constructions and shared constructions. Previous discussion suggested that a person may play a role in a social process involving others, when that person construes the personal constructions of those others. Hence we can conclude that a person cannot play a role in a social process by simply construing the common constructions conveyed by a people's verbal behaviour. A person can play a role in a social process only if that person construes others' personal constructions which are implied by their verbal behaviour.

Kelly (1955) does not provide a detailed description of the process by which people may construe others' construction processes when they are engaged in a social interaction. However, Tshudi and Rommetveit (1982) offer some comments which may prove helpful in describing this process. They suggest that when two people engage in a verbal interaction, a state of "intersubjectivity" may be achieved. Tshudi and Rommetveit suggest that such a state is achieved when some aspect of reality is brought into focus by one participant and attended to by both participants. Thus we might expect that a state of "intersubjectivity" is achieved when one person verbally expresses his or her personal construction, and a second person construes the first person's verbally expressed construction. If the second person acts in accordance with that person's constructions of the first person's constructions, Kelly might

describe the second person as playing a role in a social process involving the other. Now, of course, in this example, the second person's construction of the first person's construction need not be similar to the construction which the first person expressed. Tshudi and Rommetveit suggest that when the second person's construction of the first person's construction is similar to the construction which the first person expressed, a different state is achieved. They describe this state as a state of "shared social reality."

According to Tshudi and Rommetveit (1982), a state of "shared social reality" is essential for communication between people. This becomes understandable if we return to previous discussion. Earlier commentary shows that people may not construe the personal constructions which other people express in their verbal behaviour. Instead people may construe the common constructions indicated by their behaviour. A further possibility, suggested by earlier discussion, is that people may construe others' personal constructions. However, they may then have constructions of others' personal constructions which are different from the personal constructions which were initially expressed in the verbal behaviour of those others. In such an instance, a state of intersubjectivity might be said to be achieved. However, we cannot say that a state of shared social reality is attained.

Summarising present discussion then, we may say that, as indicated earlier, verbal interactions provide a context in which people may play roles in a social process. People may construe the personal constructions which others express verbally. However, a person may have a construction of another person's construction which is dissimilar to the construction which that person expressed. In such an instance, a state of intersubjectivity is achieved. However, a state of shared social reality is not achieved. As indicated earlier, Tshudi and Rommetveit (1982) suggest that a state of shared social reality is essential for communication to take place. Thus, we may conclude that one is unable to communicate one's personal constructions if others' constructions of those constructions, are different from the constructions which were initially expressed. Thus, it becomes apparent that one's personal constructions can be communicated to another person only if that other person is able to construe those constructions. This statement implies of course, that there are certain conditions which must pertain if a person is to be able to construe another's personal constructions. These conditions are the subject of discussion in the following chapter. However, clearly, at this point we may conclude that people can communicate their personal constructions given that others' constructions of those constructions are similar to the constructions which were initially expressed. In addition, one might expect that other people's constructions may validate or invalidate our constructions. This possibility is examined more closely in a later chapter.

Conclusion

From this chapter we may conclude that, according to Kelly (1955), people know the world only through their constructions. People perceive similarities between parts of present reality and parts of previously construed reality. In this way people may be said to construe reality. Kellian theory suggests that people behave in accordance with their constructions. They then construe the outcome of the event in which they have acted according to their initial constructions. People may construe their initial constructions as having been validated or invalidated. In the event that people construe validating evidence of their constructions, they may revise their construct systems, and reconstrue that part of reality which they initially construed.

According to Kelly, interpersonal relationships are contexts in which validating evidence and invalidating evidence of one's constructions is often provided. As a consequence, interpersonal relationships are contexts in which construct system changes often take place. More particularly, as argued earlier, the verbal interactions between people provide opportunities for construct system change. In this chapter we have examined the process by which people may communicate their constructions during the course of verbal interactions. Discussion has suggested that people can communicate their constructions only if others are able to construe the constructions which are verbally expressed. As indicated previously, in the next chapter we consider the conditions necessary for people to construe others' constructions. In the third chapter we examine the nature of the validating evidence and invalidating evidence found in the context of personal interactions. We also examine the contribution which people's constructions may make to the process of construct system change.

Chapter Three

A Theory of Social Interaction

Kelly (1955) believes that the theory of personal construct psychology provides a basis for a theory of social interaction. He suggests that a theory of social interaction which is derived from Kellian theory will be concerned not only with the social constructions which people may have of reality. According to Kelly, such a theory will be concerned also with the process by which people are able to construe how others construe reality. Kelly suggests that the process by which people are able to construe others' constructions, plays an important part in human interaction. Indeed, Kellian theory suggests that people may play roles in a social process with others only when they construe others' constructions. However, people may play roles in a social process involving others, but they may not be able to communicate with others. That is, others' constructions of people's constructions may not be similar to the constructions which people express. This chapter discusses the theoretical explanation of human interaction, offered by Kelly, in more depth than was possible in the previous chapter. In addition, the conditions necessary for people to be able to construe others' constructions, according to the theory of personal constructs, are examined. Finally, the possible place of interpersonal communication in the elaboration of valid personal construct systems, is considered.

Personal Constructions and Shared Constructions

People construe reality by perceiving features of present reality to be similar to perceived features of previously construed reality. In this instance, the features referred to are perceived to be associated with a particular aspect which present reality, and previously construed reality, are perceived to have in common. Simultaneously, perceived features of present reality, related to the perceived aspect, may be perceived to contrast with perceived features of some other previously construed reality. For example, Jo may construe another person, Sandra, to be like a third person, Jane, whom Jo has construed previously. Simultaneously, Jo may construe Sandra to be in contrast to Toni, whom Jo may also have construed earlier. Jo may perceive all three women to have a particular aspect in common. Other people are unlikely to know what this aspect is. However, for the sake of discussion the aspect which Sandra, Jane, and Toni are perceived to have in common may be expressed as, "competence." As indicated above, Sandra and Jane are perceived to be alike. Perhaps Jo might describe both women as "talented." Since Sandra and Jane are construed to be alike, Jo must perceive Sandra to have features related to "competence" which are similar to features related to the same aspect, which Jo previously perceived Jane to have. Similarly, since

Sandra and Toni are construed to be in contrast to each other, we might expect that Jo perceives Sandra to have features related to "competence," which are in contrast to those features related to "competence" which Jo perceived Toni to have. In this case, Jo might describe Toni as "inept." Thus, the construct which is expressed in the word "competence," refers to two groups of people who may be construed by using the same construct.

The sets of people, places, objects or events, which are construed by using a particular construct are described by Kelly as "elements." In the case of the previous example, then, there are two contrasting groups of elements. One group of elements may be described by Jo as "talented." The other group of elements may be described by Jo as "inept." In this case the elements in each set of elements have similar features related to the aspect, or personal construct, expressed in, "competence." However, the features of elements in one set of elements, which are related to "competence," contrast with those features related to "competence" which the elements in the other set are perceived to have. Thus, as indicated earlier, a personal construct is a psychological guideline which is used to group parts of reality which are perceived to be similar, but in contrast to other parts of reality. When parts of reality are construed, features of present reality are perceived to be similar to features of one group of previously construed construct elements. Those elements to which present reality is perceived to be similar are elements at the "likeness" construct pole. Those elements to which present reality is perceived to be in contrast, are elements at the "contrast" construct pole. The process by which parts of reality are simultaneously perceived to be similar to some construct elements, and in contrast to others, may be described as "construal." The outcome of construal is, of course, what has been previously described as a "construction."

In this example, the construction which Jo has of Sandra, is expressed in the word, "talented." In this instance, Jo may have construed the common construction which the word "talented" conveys, to indicate the similarity which Jo perceives between elements at one construct pole. Since Sandra was perceived to be similar to other elements at one construct pole, Jo might express the similarity which she perceives between Sandra and the other elements by use of the word "talented." As indicated previously, "talented" is a word which indicates a particular common, or shared construction. In the case of the example above, "talented" is also a word which expresses the personal construction which the construer has of Sandra. Similarly, the word "inept" is a word which indicates a shared construction, and a personal construction, which the construer has of Toni.

People may similarly construe similar reality. Thus, in the example above, other people may construe the person described here as, Sandra, similarly to the way in which Jo construes Sandra. Hence Jo and others may have similar personal constructions of Sandra. Jo and others may also similarly express their respective constructions of Sandra. Others too, may describe Sandra as "talented." Now previous discussion suggests that the words

"talented," and "inept," indicate shared constructions, in addition, to personal constructions. The words which people use to express their constructions are ones which those people construe as indicating the similarity which they perceive between some construct elements. More accurately, the shared constructions indicated by words which people use, indicate the perceived similarity between elements in groups of construct elements. Thus, returning to the earlier example, we might expect that when people use the word, "talented," or the word, "inept," to express their constructions, they are expressing identical shared constructions and similar personal constructions. However, this is not necessarily the case. Certainly, if people express their constructions using the word "talented," as in the previous example, they may be said to be expressing the same common construction. Similarly, if people express their constructions using the word "inept" they may be said to be expressing another common construction. However, if people describe similar reality as "talented," or "inept," they are not necessarily expressing similar personal constructions. This comment is elaborated in the following discussion.

A person's construction may, as suggested in the earlier example, be expressed verbally. Thus, in the above example, Jo may express a personal construction of Sandra in the word "talented." This word indicates the perceived similarity between that part of reality described as Sandra, and previously construed parts of reality. However, a word used to express a personal construction indicates more than simply the perceived similarity between present reality and a part of previously construed reality. A word or phrase used to express a personal construction also suggests the perceived dissimilarity between present reality and a construed part of previous reality. More particularly, it suggests that there are two groups of construct elements. The first group of elements includes elements which are perceived to have features which are similar to the perceived features of present reality. The second group of elements includes elements which are perceived to have features which are in contrast to the perceived features of present reality. The similarity between present reality and the first set of construct elements may be indicated by a word, or phrase. So, in the earlier example, the similarity between Sandra and one group of construct elements is indicated by the word "talented." Of course, in this instance, the word "talented" also indicates the similarity between the previously construed elements which are perceived to be similar to Sandra.

Returning to previous discussion, a verbal expression of a personal construction may not explicitly indicate the perceived dissimilarity between presently construed reality and previously construed construct elements. In addition, the verbal expression of a personal construct may not explicitly indicate the perceived similarity between those elements which are perceived to be in contrast to presently construed reality. Thus the word "talented" in the earlier example, expresses the perceived similarity between Sandra and some other previously construed parts of reality. The word "talented" also implies the perceived dissimilarity

between Sandra and some other previously construed parts of reality. That dissimilarity may not be expressed. Simply, Jo may indicate that Sandra is similar to a previously construed person (Jane) when Jo describes Sandra as "talented." However, Jo may not explicitly indicate that Sandra is unlike another previously construed person, Toni, whom Jo construes to be "inept." Thus, as indicated earlier, the word "talented" indicates the similarity between Sandra and parts of previously construed reality. The word "talented" may also be Jo's only indication of those elements to which present reality is perceived to be in contrast. In this way the word "talented" may be said to indicate the construct which Jo uses to construe Sandra. Thus, referring back to earlier discussion, the word "talented" may be said to denote a common construction and a personal construction. Present discussion suggests that, in addition, the word "talented" may be said to indicate the personal construct which is used to construe present reality. In summary then, people's verbal behaviour, may be said to contain expressions of people's common constructions and people's personal constructions. People's verbal behaviour may also indicate the constructs which those people use to construe reality.

At this point, it is important to differentiate between people's common constructions, and people's personal constructions. Words and phrases may indicate common constructions, and may be used by people to indicate the similarity which they perceive between present reality and previously construed parts of reality. We might then expect that if people use the same words to express their constructions of reality, that they have similar constructions of that reality. However, this is not necessarily the case. To return to the previous example, the word "talented" indicates the similarity between elements which are perceived to be similar to Sandra. However, the word "talented" does not explicitly indicate the similarity between elements which are perceived to be dissimilar to Sandra. We might expect that if the word "talented" simultaneously indicated the similarity between elements like Sandra, and the similarity between those elements unlike Sandra, we would be able to construe that aspect which both sets of elements had in common. That is, the word "talented" would then imply the construct which Jo used to construe Sandra and Toni, in the previous example. However, the word "talented" indicates only the similarity between those elements similar to Sandra, and does not explicitly indicate, or imply, the personal construct used to construe Sandra. Nevertheless, "talented" implies that there are two sets of previously construed elements. Hence, there is some aspect which separates and links the two sets of construct elements. However, we do not know what that aspect may be. In the case of the example referred to here, the aspect which two groups of construct elements have in common has been described as "competence," only for the sake of simplicity in discussion. However, we do not necessarily know the aspect which construct elements are perceived to have in common.

We could assume the elements of a person's constructs have a particular aspect in common if that person verbally expresses a construction of reality. However, previous

discussion suggests that we may be incorrect in our assumption. Similar words or phrases used to express people's personal constructions, may suggest that people's constructions of reality are similar. However, we cannot assume from the word or phrase used to express a construction, that a particular construct was used in the construing process. People who express constructions similarly, may use similar, but different, personal constructs to construe reality. Hence, people who express their constructions similarly do not necessarily have similar personal constructions.

In the previous chapter, a "personal construction" was defined as the similarity which a person perceives between present reality and previously construed reality. A construction also implies the dissimilarity which a person perceives between present reality and previously construed reality. Thus, a verbal expression of a personal construction indicates the similarity between present reality and one group of construct elements. A verbal expression of a personal construction also indicates the dissimilarity between present reality and a second set of construct elements. Thus, one person may construe her reality using a particular personal construct containing two sets of construct elements. For example, that person may express the similarity she perceives between a part of reality and elements in one group of construct elements in the word, "frightened." This word is an expression of a common construction. In the present example, the expression of this common construction, is used to indicate the similarity which the construer perceives between a part of present reality and parts of previously construed reality.

In this example, a second person may construe his reality using a particular personal construct. The second person too, may express the similarity he perceives between elements in one group of construct elements using the word "frightened." Thus, in this instance, the word "frightened" expresses a common construction, and two different separate personal constructions. Each person has used the same word, expressing the same common construction, to express her or his different personal construction. In each case, the similarity between present reality and previously construed reality is indicated by the word, "frightened." We might then expect that each construer perceives his or her present reality, and the realities which they have separately construed previously, to have similar, but not identical, features. Thus, we can say that two people who express their personal constructions similarly, may share a similar, but not identical perception of the similarity between their present realities and their previously construed realities. However, only in this way may we say that the constructions of two construers may be at all similar.

In the instance described above, each construer has a group of construct elements which contrast with the construct elements to which present reality is construed to be similar. However, the similarity between the elements in the two contrasting groups of elements may be differently expressed. Thus, the first construer may express the similarity she perceives

between the contrasting group of construct elements in the word, "confident." The second construer might express the similarity he perceives between the contrasting group of construct elements in the word, "calm." Thus the construct of the first construer may be indicated in the expression, "frightened-confident." The construct of the second construer may be indicated in the expression, "frightened-calm." Since the constructs of each construer are expressed differently, we may conclude that the word "frightened" does not explicitly indicate, or imply, a common aspect which each construer perceives two contrasting groups of construct elements to have in common. Thus, as argued earlier, people who express similar personal constructions, may share a similar, but not identical, perception of similarity between present reality and some parts of previously construed reality. However, they do not necessarily share a similar perception of the aspect which present reality and parts of previously construed reality have in common. Neither do they necessarily share a perception of a particular dissimilarity between present reality and some parts of previously construed reality with respect to some common aspect. Hence, when people express their constructions similarly in their verbal behaviour, they may express similar common constructions. In addition, people may express a similar, but not identical, perception of similarity between present reality and some parts of previously construed reality. However, they might not express similar personal constructions.

Construing Other People's Constructions

Kelly (1955) suggests that people play a role in a social process involving others when people act according to their constructions of others' constructions. Hence, people can play a role in relation to others, only if people construe the personal constructions of those others. People may construe others' constructions, and hence engage in roles with others, if those others can express their constructions verbally. However, others can be said to have communicated with people only if people's constructions of others' constructions are similar to the constructions which those others have expressed. In this section we discuss the conditions which are necessary for people to construe others' constructions. Later we examine the conditions necessary for people to be able to have constructions of others' constructions which are similar to the constructions which those others express.

People may share common constructions, but they may have different personal constructions. People's verbal behaviour may include expressions of common constructions and personal constructions. Indeed, as argued previously, the same words or phrases which are used to indicate particular common constructions may be used to indicate particular personal constructions, for people may use similar words or phrases to express similar personal constructions. However, alternatively, people may use similar words or phrases to express different personal constructions. Thus, when people express their personal

constructions using similar words or phrases, we may not know whether they express similar constructions. However, Kelly (1955) suggests that if we wish to play a role in a social process involving others, we do not need to know whether those others express their personal constructions similarly to the way in which we express our constructions. We need only construe others' personal constructions and act in accordance with our constructions. However, not every person can play a role in a social process involving others, as becomes apparent in the following discussion.

People can play roles in relation to others, only if people can construe the verbal expressions which those others use to express their personal constructions. We might expect that people can construe the verbal expressions of others only if people have included the words or phrases which those others use, in the context of their personal constructs. That is, people may construe the personal constructions which others express verbally only if people use the same words or phrases which others have used, to express their own constructions. Those same words and phrases must be used by people to indicate the similarity which they perceive between some construct elements. Now, this does not mean that people can construe the personal constructions which others express verbally, only if people and those others share similar personal constructs. Provided people and others use the same words and phrases to express their constructions, people may perceive similarity between the verbal expressions which others use to express their constructions, and the verbal expressions which people use to express their own constructions. Since these words and phrases are expressions of people's constructions, we might expect that people will construe others' constructions to be similar to their own constructions. We might perhaps, further expect that people's constructions of others' constructions would be similar to the constructions which those others expressed.

As argued earlier, people's personal constructions may be similarly expressed but the personal constructions which are indicated by people's verbal behaviour may be different. Thus, a person may construe another person's verbal behaviour as an expression of that other person's construction. The first person may construe the second person's construction to be similar to a construction which the first person might make using a particular personal construct. However, the two people may express only similar, but not identical, perceived similarity between their respective realities and previously construed elements. The aspect which the first person perceives present reality and "like" construct elements to have in common, may be different from the aspect which the second person perceives that person's reality and "like" construct elements to have in common. Hence, the construction which the first person construes the second person to have expressed may be different from the construction which that other expresses. Thus, people may play roles in a social process involving others, if people construe the verbal behaviour of those others as expressions of the personal constructions of those others. In addition, people must act in accordance with their

constructions of the personal constructions which those others have expressed, if they are to play roles in a social process involving those others. However, people may play roles in relation to others but people and others may not share similar constructions of those others' constructions. Hence, people and others may engage in roles, but they may not always be able to communicate with each other.

This discussion lends support for Kelly's (1955) position that personal construct commonality is not necessary for people to engage in roles with others. However, as Landfield (1971) and Duck (1982) suggest, and as will become apparent in the following discussion, construct commonality is a necessary condition for communication. The reader will recall from the previous chapter that a "shared social reality" is essential for communication (Tshudi & Rommetveit, 1982). A prerequisite of a shared social reality is that people must be capable of having constructions of others' constructions which are similar to those constructions which those others express. Kelly suggests a way by which people may construe others' constructions as those others might construe their constructions. He says: "Commonality between construction systems may make it more likely that one construction system can subsume another" (Kelly, 1955, p. 99). In this comment, Kelly refers to commonality of people's personal constructs. Kelly implies that people and others may have similar constructions of others' constructions, if they have similar personal constructs. Duck (1982) lends support for this argument. He says: "One assumes that Kelly is wanting to say that, as the degree of commonality increases and as the breadth, depth, extent increase, so, too, does the degree of understanding and so also does the basis for engagement in social processes" (Duck, 1982, p. 232). Returning to previous discussion, we might expect that people who have similar personal constructs will be able to communicate with others. Such people may be able to communicate with others, since those others may have constructions of people's constructions which are similar to the constructions which people express.

People may have similar constructs which arise out of their similar perceptions of similarity and difference in parts of their respective realities. People may perceive parts of their respective realities to have a similar aspect in common. They may also perceive a similar similarity between some parts of their respective realities with respect to that aspect. In addition, these same people may perceive other parts of their respective realities to be similarly in contrast to the first parts of their respective realities. They may perceive a similar difference between the first parts of reality and the contrasting parts of their respective realities. In this way, similar constructs may arise within the construct systems of different people. However, people are likely to test out their constructions through their behaviour. That is, people may act in accordance with their constructions and thereby test the predictive validity of their constructions. People may construe the outcome of their actions and subsequently revise their constructs. In this way people's constructs may change. Thus two

people who may have once had similar constructs, may now have constructs which are dissimilar. Similarly, of course, two people who may once have had dissimilar constructs, may now have similar constructs.

Kelly (1955) describes the process by which people construe parts of reality and then revise their constructions, as people's "experience" (p. 73). He goes on to say that "to the extent that one person employs a construction of experience which is similar to that employed by another, his psychological processes are similar to those of the other person" (p. 90). Thus Kelly suggests that people construe reality similarly if they have similar constructs which have arisen from their construal and reconstrual of their different realities. This conclusion has important implications for therapeutic interactions. We might for example, expect that a therapist and a client may have had different life experiences but as a consequence of the way in which they have perceived their respective realities over the years, they may now share similar personal constructs. Similarly, of course, a therapist and a client may have had similar single experiences, such as an occasions when they were each physically abused. However, the therapist and client may have perceived their respective realities differently and may now have few personal constructs in common.

Returning to earlier discussion, Kelly (1955) suggests that the likelihood of people construing the constructions which others verbally express, similarly to those others, is greater the more personal constructs which people and those others have in common. Commonsense tells us that this must be so, since people who have many personal constructs in common with others, are more likely to have constructs which are similar to others' personal constructs, than people who have few personal constructs in common with others. People who have similar personal constructs to the constructs which others use to construe reality, are likely to have constructions of others' constructions which are similar to the constructions which those others express. Of course, we might expect that people's ability to construe others' constructions would be reduced if people and others did not use similar verbal behaviour to express their similar constructions. Nevertheless, people who have perceived reality similarly, are likely to have constructs in common and hence be able to construe each other's constructions similarly. This discussion too, has important implications for therapist-client interactions. Present discussion suggests that therapists and their clients are more likely to have similar constructions of clients' constructions if therapists and their clients have shared personal constructs. Hence, one might expect that greater communication of personal constructions would take place within therapeutic interactions, if therapists and their clients share similar personal constructs. In the next section we examine the process by which people may communicate their personal constructions.

Communication of Constructions and Construct System Change

The previous section suggests that there are two conditions necessary for communication of one's constructions. First, one must be able to express one's constructions verbally. Second, those people with whom one is attempting to communicate one's constructions, must have similar personal constructs. The likelihood of one being able to communicate one's constructions to others, is increased if similar verbal behaviour is used to express one's own constructions and the constructions of others. Of course, it is likely that people who attempt to communicate with others will have some personal constructs in common with those others. It is likely too, that people will verbally express some constructions, similarly. However, we may expect that few people, if any, will have all constructs in common. Furthermore, though people may have some constructs in common with others, it is unlikely that each person will similarly express the constructions which follow from the use of these constructs to construe reality. Thus we may expect that in verbal interactions, communication of some constructions may take place initially. However, some constructions may not be able to be communicated in the first instance. A person may not be able to communicate personal constructions to others because those others do not have constructs which are similar to the constructs which the person uses to construe reality. Alternatively, others may have constructs which are similar to those which the person has, but the person and others may not similarly express the constructions which follow from the use of their respective personal constructs. Under such circumstances, the person and others may not similarly construe the constructions which the person expresses in that person's verbal behaviour. Consequently, a person may not be able to communicate that person's personal constructions. Thus, as indicated earlier, communication of some personal constructions may take place in the context of verbal interactions, but communication of other personal constructions may not, at least in the first instance, be possible.

Earlier in this chapter, and in the preceding chapter, discussion implied that communication in verbal interactions, may be desirable so that people can maintain the predictive validity of their personal construct systems. Previous discussion suggests that others' constructions may be validating evidence, or invalidating evidence, of people's constructions. Others may provide validating evidence, or invalidating evidence of people's constructions without first construing the personal constructions of those people. However, we might expect that in some verbal interactions, such as counselling interactions, there would be occasions when there would be a greater likelihood of others being able to provide validating evidence, or invalidating evidence, of people's initial constructions. We might, for example, expect that a person who plays a role in relation to a second person, may be able to express constructions which the first person construes to be consistent with the constructions which the second person expressed. Thus the first person may be able to provide, what that

person construes to be validating evidence of the second person's constructions. Similarly, the first person, might be able to provide what that person construes to be invalidating evidence of the second person's constructions. Of course, only the second person can determine whether the first person provides evidence which validates, or invalidates, the second person's constructions.

The likelihood that one person will provide evidence which validates a second person's constructions may be increased if the first person and second person share similar personal constructs. Under these circumstances, the first person may have constructions of the second person's constructions which are similar to the constructions which the second person expresses. That is, the second person may be able to communicate his or her constructions to the first person. Under these circumstances, the first person may be in an even better position to express constructions which the first person construes to be consistent with the constructions which the second person has expressed. Thus the first person may be more likely to provide evidence which the second person construes as validating the second person's constructions. Similarly, of course, the first person may be more likely to be able to provide evidence which the second person construes as invalidating the second person's constructions. This discussion is taken up again later in this chapter. For now, however, present discussion suggests that communication of people's constructions may be important if others are to be able to predict the outcome of the expression of their constructions of people's constructions with much predictive validity.

In counselling relationships we may reasonably assume that communication of therapist and client constructions is particularly important. The likelihood that a therapist may have a "valid" prediction of the possible outcome of her constructions of a client's constructions may be increased if the therapist and the client share similar personal constructs. In this instance, I am referring to the validity of a prediction, rather than to the validity of a construction. Hence, the word "valid" is used here in a somewhat different sense from the way in which it has been used previously. We might expect that a therapist's prediction would be "valid" if the therapist construed consistency between the outcome of having acted according to her constructions, and her initial prediction. A therapist may then predict the outcome of acting according to her constructions. The therapist may go on to express a construction which she predicts will validate her client's personal constructions. In such an instance, the therapist's prediction of the outcome of the expression of her of the client's constructions, may be valid. The client may construe the therapist's constructions to be validating evidence of the client's constructions. Under circumstances similar to those described above, the therapist may also be able to express constructions of the client's constructions, which the client will possibly construe as invalidating evidence of the client's constructions. Thus, it is possible to conclude that therapists may be able to control the

possible outcome of their constructions if therapists and their clients share similar personal constructs.

People may initially be able to communicate only some of their personal constructions to others. However, Kelly (1955) suggests that there may be some opportunity, at least in some verbal interactions, for people to communicate more of their constructions to others. In the discussion which follows we examine the process by which people may increase the number of personal constructions which they can communicate in verbal interactions. Quite simply, discussion from this point examines Kelly's explanation of the process by which people may increase the level of interpersonal understanding which exists in the context of verbal interactions.

Kelly (1955) says that the process of communication is the verbal expression of one's constructions in the hope that another person may express a similar construction. Kelly does not elaborate upon his use of the word "hope" in his description of communication. However, we might perhaps assume that Kelly is referring to the possibility that a person may express her construction to another person. Simultaneously, the first person may predict the outcome of her expression of her construction. She may predict that the second person will express a construction of the first person's construction which is similar to that construction which the first person expressed. However, verbal expression of one's constructions, while predicting that others' constructions will be similar to those which one expresses, cannot be communication. If we return to discussion in the preceding chapter we read that a state of "shared social reality" (Tshudi & Rommetveit, 1982) must exist before communication can be said to have occurred in a verbal interaction. A state of shared social reality can be said to exist only when a person's construction of a second person's construction is similar to the construction which the second person expressed. Thus, communication may be described as the process by which one person expresses a personal construction which is construed by a second person to be similar to the construction which was expressed. This description of communication is different from the one offered by Kelly and cited earlier. However, the description of communication suggested here, is consistent with Kelly's (1955) later elaboration of the process of communication. Returning to the description of communication proposed earlier, we may say that communication has taken place when two people similarly construe the expressed construction of one of those two people.

Kelly (1955) suggests that a person who verbally expresses a personal construction is aware when others have a personal construction of that person's construction which is similar to the personal construction which that person expressed. Similarly, Kelly suggests that a person may be aware when others do not have a construction of that person's construction which is similar to the construction which that person expressed. More accurately, of course, Kelly suggests that people may construe others' personal constructions to be similar, or

dissimilar, to those personal constructions which people have expressed. This position follows if we consider previous discussion in which it was suggested that people can construe others' constructions, provided people and those others use similar words and phrases to express their constructions. Thus we can say that people may construe others' personal constructions as similar, or dissimilar, to the personal constructions of those people, provided people and others use similar verbal behaviour to express their personal constructions.

Kellian theory suggests that a person may construe another person's construction of the first person's construction to be different from the construction which the first person expressed. Under these circumstances the first person may express what Kelly describes as "contextual elements." As the term "contextual element" implies, a contextual element is an element within the context of the personal construct which the person uses to construe a particular person, object, place or event. Kelly (1955) describes the "context" of a construct to be all the elements to which the construct is usually applied. Thus we might expect that a "contextual element" is one of the elements which may be perceived to be similar to other elements of a particular construct.

Up to this point discussion has suggested that elements can be only the people, objects, places, or events which are construed. However, Kelly's organizational corollary suggests that personal constructs are hierarchically arranged within people's construct systems. Hence Kelly suggests that people's personal constructs may be elements of other personal constructs. Thus people's construct systems may include two types of construct. First, "superordinate constructs" that include other constructs as elements, and second "subordinate constructs" which are included as construct elements within the contexts of "superordinate constructs." Kelly suggests that there are two ways by which constructs may be included within the context of superordinate constructs. One subordinate construct pole may be included as an element of one superordinate construct pole. The second subordinate construct pole will then be included as an element of the second superordinate construct pole. Thus, for example, a person's construct system may include a construct which has two groups of elements. The similarity of the first group of elements might be expressed in the word, "excited." The similarity of the second group of elements might be expressed in the word, "depressed." As argued earlier, the aspect which all elements may have in common may not be expressed. However, for the sake of discussion we may indicate the construct by use of the expression, "excited-depressed."

In this instance, the person's construct system may include a second construct. This construct may be described similarly to the first construct, for example, as "happy-miserable." In this example, the group of "happy" elements in the second construct may include all "excited" elements from the first construct. In addition, the group of "happy" elements may include elements not construed using the first construct. Similarly, the "miserable" elements

in the second construct may include all "depressed" elements in the first construct plus some elements not construed by the first construct. In this instance, then the first construct is said to be subordinate to the second construct. In practical terms, the construer may describe someone who is "excited" as a "happy" person. In this instance, the word "excited" is an expression of a construction made using a subordinate construct. Hence, the word "excited" is an expression of a "subordinate construction." Similarly, in this instance, the word "happy," is an expression of "superordinate construction." Returning to the example, the construer may similarly describe a "depressed" person as someone who is "miserable." Here, the word "depressed" is an expression of a subordinate construction, while the word "miserable" is an expression of a superordinate construction. The construer may, of course, describe other people as "happy" people. For example, the construer may describe "contented" and "warm" people as "happy" people. Similarly, other people, other than "depressed" people, may be described as "miserable."

Kelly describes a second way by which one construct may be included within the context of another construct. He suggests that one entire construct may be included as an element of one group of elements of a superordinate construct. Thus, he says that a construct, which he describes as "intelligent-stupid" may be included as an element of the construct "evaluative-descriptive" (Kelly, p. 57). In this instance, the construct "intelligent-stupid" may be included as an element of the construct pole whose elements are described as "evaluative." However, as will become evident in later chapters, here we are primarily concerned with the first way by which constructs may be said to be included as elements of other constructs.

To return to earlier discussion, Kelly suggests that people may construe others' superordinate constructions. People's constructions of others' superordinate constructions may be different from the superordinate constructions which those others have expressed. Previous discussion suggested, that to increase interpersonal understanding under these circumstances, others may express "contextual elements." More accurately, others may express subordinate constructions if people's constructions of others' superordinate constructions are different from those constructions which were initially expressed.

Kelly (1955) does not explicitly state the advantages of people expressing subordinate constructions in verbal interactions. However, he implies that people may come to have superordinate constructions which are similar to the constructions which others have expressed when they construe others' subordinate constructions. This follows if we consider that a person, Sally, may express a superordinate construction in a verbal interaction with another person. The other person, Jenny, may construe Sally's verbally expressed construction. She may then express her construction of Sally's previous construction. Sally may construe Jenny's construction to be dissimilar to the construction which Sally expressed. Hence Sally may express a subordinate construction of her initial construction. Jenny may

now construe the subordinate construction which Sally expresses verbally. Again, Jenny may express her construction of Sally's construction. Sally may construe Jenny's construction of Sally's subordinate construction to be similar, or dissimilar, to the subordinate construction which Sally expressed. So the process will continue.

In this example, the more subordinate constructions which Sally expresses, the greater will be the likelihood that Jenny will have some constructions of Sally's constructions which will be similar to Sally's constructions. Thus, we might expect that Jenny may eventually have a number of subordinate constructions of Sally's constructions which are similar to the constructions which Sally expressed. If this is the case, we might also expect that Jenny may construe her constructions of Sally's subordinate constructions. More particularly, we might expect that Jenny will perceive her constructions of Sally's constructions to have some aspect in common. Jenny may perceive some of her constructions of Sally's constructions to be similar with respect to that aspect. Simultaneously, Jenny may perceive other constructions which she has of Sally's constructions to be dissimilar to the first group of constructions, with respect to that same aspect. In this way a superordinate construct may be said to arise.

In another example, a person, Lucy might construe the subordinate constructions of a second person, Tania. Lucy may then construe the constructions which she has of some of Tania's subordinate constructions. As in the previous example, Lucy may perceive some of her constructions of Tania's constructions to have some aspect in common. Lucy may perceive similarity between some of her constructions of Tania's constructions with respect to this aspect. Simultaneously, Lucy may perceive dissimilarity between some of her constructions of Tania's constructions, with respect to some aspect which those constructions are perceived to have in common. She may, for example, construe some of her constructions of Tania's constructions as suggesting that Tania construes some people to be "fair." Lucy may construe other constructions which she has of Tania's constructions as suggesting that Tania construes some other people to be "unjust." Now, for Lucy, someone who is not "fair" may be "prejudiced." Thus she may have a construct which we might describe as "fair-prejudiced."

In the instance described above, Lucy may have a second construct which enables her to construe people as either "reasonable" or "unjust." This second construct we might describe as "reasonable-unjust." However, in the example being discussed here, Lucy perceives her constructions of Tania's constructions to have a particular aspect in common. This aspect is different from either of the two aspects implied in the expressions "fair-prejudiced" and "reasonable-unjust." The aspect which Lucy perceives her constructions of Tania's constructions to have in common, links and separates two separate groups of Lucy's constructions of Tania's constructions. As indicated previously the similarity between elements of one group of constructions is expressed in the word "fair." The similarity between elements of the other group of construct elements is expressed in the word "unjust." Thus,

a new construct has arisen in Lucy's construct system. This construct is indicated in the expression "fair-unjust."

The reader will recall that in this example, Lucy construed Tania's subordinate constructions. That is, Lucy construed those constructions which Tania made by using constructs which are subordinate to another, superordinate, construct. Lucy's new construct is a construct which has arisen from Lucy's constructions of Tania's subordinate constructions. We might expect then that Lucy's new construct will be similar to the superordinate construct with which Tania's original subordinate constructions were associated. Thus Lucy and Tania may now be able to share a similar construction of the superordinate construction which Tania may have expressed earlier in the verbal interaction. In this way then, new constructs may arise in people's construct systems which are similar to the constructs in other people's construct systems. In this way too, people may come to be able to construe the superordinate constructions with which those constructions are associated.

As we might expect this discussion has important implications for therapeutic relationships. The advantage of therapists and clients having similar constructs may be that they will be able to similarly construe the constructions which each other expresses in any therapeutic interaction. In some instances, therapists' constructions of their clients' constructions may not be similar to the constructions which their clients express. Similarly, of course, clients' constructions of their therapists' constructions may not be similar to the constructions which their therapists express. Kelly (1955) submits that clients may enable therapists to eventually construe their initial constructions by expressing constructions made by using their subordinate constructs. Previous discussion suggests that therapists may perceive similarities and differences in the subordinate constructions which their clients express. Hence, new constructs may arise within therapists' personal construct systems. These constructs may be similar to those superordinate constructs from which clients' subordinate constructions are derived. Thus therapists may come to be able to construe the superordinate constructions which their clients express within the context of therapeutic interactions. As a consequence, communication of clients' constructions may take place and the likelihood that therapists can predict the probable outcome of their constructions of their clients' constructions is increased. Of course we may expect that therapists may engage in a process similar to the process described above, to enable their clients to construe their therapists' constructions.

At this point we may examine the possible implications of being able to construe another person's personal constructions similarly to that other person. In any verbal interaction a person's constructions of another person's verbalised constructions may provide validating evidence, or invalidating evidence, of the first person's constructions. In addition, if two people share personal constructs, the likelihood that one person can provide validating

evidence of the second person's constructions, is increased. Each person may be able to express constructions which each construes to be consistent, or inconsistent, with the other's constructions. We now need to examine this statement more closely. People who have similar constructs may construe each other's constructions similarly. Hence, each person may have a predictively valid construction of the possible outcome of expressing constructions of the other person's constructions. However, we must not make the mistake of assuming that people who have predictively valid constructions of each other's constructions, necessarily have similar personal constructions of particular people, objects, places or events.

For example, a person, Scott, may have a construct which we might express as "rigid-nonconforming." A second person, Malcolm, might have a similar construct which may also be expressed as "rigid-nonconforming." In a verbal interaction, Scott may describe a friend Tom, as "non-conforming." Malcolm may construe the construction which Scott expresses. Understandably, we may expect Malcolm to have a construction of Scott's construction which is similar to the construction which Scott expressed. However, Malcolm may not perceive Scott to be similar to other people whom Malcolm has construed to be "non-conforming." Instead, Malcolm may perceive Tom to be similar to people whom he has previously construed to be "rigid." Alternatively, of course, Malcolm may construe Tom to be neither "rigid" nor "non-conforming." Tom may be perceived as not having any features related to the particular aspect which "rigid" and "non-conforming" people have in common. This comment has important implications for therapeutic interactions. It suggests that a therapist and a client may share personal constructs. Under such circumstances, the therapist may be able to express a construction of the client's construction, which is similar to that construction which the client expressed. Hence the client may be able to construe the client's construction as validated by the therapist's construction. However, the therapist and the client may not necessarily construe similar parts of reality, similarly. That is, they may have dissimilar constructions of similar parts of reality. In the next section, the importance of construction validation and invalidation in psychotherapeutic interactions, is discussed in some detail. However, in-depth discussion of construction validation and invalidation in therapeutic interactions is reserved for the following chapter.

Construction Validation and Invalidation in Psychotherapeutic Interactions

Kelly (1955) suggests that a person can play a role in a social process involving another, only if that person acts according to the constructions which that person has of the other person's constructions. Thus, we might expect that in interactions where people play roles in relation to each other, people construe each other's constructions and act in accordance with their constructions of those others' constructions. According to Kelly, a psychotherapeutic interaction is an example of an interaction in which people may engage in

roles with each other. Most importantly however, Kelly suggests that therapists must engage in role relationships with their clients. In psychotherapeutic interactions we may expect clients to express their constructions. Therapists may then construe their clients' constructions and act in accordance with their constructions of their clients' constructions. In this way therapists may be said to play roles in a social process involving their clients. Therapists may test the predictive validity of their constructions of their clients' constructions through their verbal behaviour. Clients may construe therapists' constructions of the clients' constructions to be dissimilar to the constructions which those clients expressed. In which case, clients may express constructions which are subordinate to the first constructions they expressed. Clients may do this while predicting that their therapists will eventually come to share the construct which governed the initially expressed construction. Therapists, of course, may construe their clients' subsequent constructions to be invalidating evidence of therapists' initial constructions. As a consequence therapists may revise their constructs and subsequently revise their initial constructions.

At this point, we need to be conscious of the dynamic nature of a verbal interaction. We may expect that when a therapist construes the outcome of the therapist's construing, the therapist construes the constructions expressed in the client's verbal behaviour which follows the expression of the therapist's initial construction. The client's verbal behaviour may include an expression of a subordinate construction. Hence, the therapist may almost simultaneously construe the therapist's first construction as invalidated, and construe a new client construction. The therapist's revised construction may then be a construction of the client's subordinate construction, rather than yet another construction of the first construction which the client expressed. Of course, the client's construction may be invalidating evidence of the therapist's initial construction. In which case, the therapist may express simply, a revised construction of the initial construction which the therapist expressed. At this stage, it is important to reiterate a point made earlier. Here I have suggested that clients' constructions may be validating evidence, or invalidating evidence, of therapists' constructions. However, the reader must remember that therapists alone, can determine whether their clients' constructions validate or invalidate therapists' constructions. Similarly, of course, only clients can determine whether their therapists' constructions validate, or invalidate clients' initial constructions. The definitions of validation and invalidation provided previously allow for no other conclusion. In the following discussion we examine the process by which therapists' constructions may validate, or invalidate, clients' constructions more closely.

As we might expect, and as becomes evident in later chapters, clients' verbal behaviour within psychotherapeutic interactions contains many expressions of clients' constructions of themselves and others. Hence, discussion hereon focuses primarily upon the way in which therapists' constructions may provide validating evidence, or invalidating

evidence, of clients' constructions of themselves and others. Let us consider a therapeutic interaction in which a client, Claire, may express a construction of herself. Claire expresses what may, for the moment, be described as a, "self-construction." A therapist, Alice, may express her construction of Claire's construction. Alice's construction may be validating evidence, or invalidating evidence, of Claire's self-construction. Claire's self-construction may be validated, or invalidated. Previous discussion suggests that if Alice's construction is invalidating evidence of Claire's self-construction, Claire may revise her self-construction and hence reconstrue herself. Thus, Alice's expression of her personal construction in the context of the therapeutic interaction, may have a part to play in bringing about change in Claire's personal construct system. This process is discussed in more detail in the following chapter. However, the reader may realise that Claire may construe other constructions which Alice may express as validating evidence, or invalidating evidence, of Claire's constructions. For example, Claire may construe Alice's constructions of Claire's constructions to be Alice's constructions of Claire. Hence, Claire may construe Alice's constructions to be validating evidence, or invalidating evidence, of Claire's self-constructions. Thus, the way in which a therapist's constructions may contribute to client construct system change becomes evident. However, once again it is important to reiterate that in the case of the therapeutic interaction between Alice and Claire, only Claire can construe Alice's constructions as invalidating, or validating, Claire's constructions. Similarly, of course, only Alice may construe Claire's constructions to be validating evidence, or invalidating evidence, of Alice's constructions.

The likelihood of people being able to predict the possible outcome of their constructions of others' constructions, is greater the more constructs those people and others share. Hence, a person may predict her constructions will validate a second person's constructions. The likelihood that the first person's prediction of the possible outcome of her constructions will be "valid" is greater, the more constructs the first person and the second person share. As in an earlier instance, the word "valid" applies to the validity of the first person's prediction. A person's predictions may follow from that person's constructions. However, predictions are not synonymous with constructions. Hence, the word "valid" is used differently here to the way in which it has been used when I have been referring to the validity of a person's constructions. Again, a person's prediction may be said to be "valid" if that person construes similarity between that person's initial prediction and the outcome of that person's actions which have followed from her constructions.

To return to previous discussion, we may expect that a person's prediction of the possible outcome of her constructions of a second person's constructions, will have greater validity, the more constructions the first person and second person have in common. This follows since people who have similar personal constructs may construe each other's constructions similarly. This may be the case particularly if people use similar words or

phrases to express the constructions which they make using the constructs which those people have in common. Hence, as indicated earlier, there is a greater likelihood that a person will be able to express a construction which the second person may construe as validating that second person's construction, if the first person and the second person share similar constructs. Nevertheless, as will become apparent in the following chapter, construct commonality need not be more usually associated with validation of another person's constructions.

In conclusion, people and others may share constructs which they use to construe similar reality. However, people may also have different constructs which they may use to construe similar reality. People may use the constructs which they and others share, to construe the constructions of others. Thus people may have constructions of others' constructions which are similar to the constructions which those others express. Consequently, people may have predictively valid constructions of the possible outcome of their constructions of others' constructions. Discussion has indicated that the likelihood that people will be able to provide validating evidence of others' constructions is increased when people and others share similar constructs. Thus, people may have greater control over the outcome of their constructions of others' constructions, the greater the number of personal constructs which people and others share. In the next chapter, the relationship between construct commonality and establishment of role relationships is examined more closely. In addition, consideration is given to the conditions necessary for psychotherapists to promote change within their clients' construct systems.

Conclusion

Discussion in this chapter indicates that people may play roles in relation to others by construing the constructions of those others. However, people need not share personal constructs with others in order to engage in a role with them. Discussion has demonstrated that communication can take place between people and others only when people can similarly construe the constructions which those others express. In this chapter, I have argued that people can similarly construe the constructions which others express, only when people and those others share similar constructs. However, discussion suggests that people may share constructs with others, but they may not similarly construe reality. In therapeutic interactions, therapists may share some personal constructs in common with their clients, but therapists may be unable to construe some of their clients' constructions. Therapists may be able to construe only the subordinate constructions of their clients. However, therapists may be able to perceive similarity and difference with respect to some aspect, in their clients' constructions. Hence, new constructs may arise in therapists' construct systems which enable therapists to have constructions of their clients' constructions which are similar to the constructions which

their clients express. Discussion suggests that irrespective of whether therapists and their clients share personal constructs, therapists' constructions may validate, or invalidate, clients' initial constructions. Similarly, clients' constructions may validate or invalidate therapists' initial constructions. Finally, discussion in this chapter has indicated that therapists may have personal constructs which are similar to their clients' constructs. These may have arisen during the course of a therapeutic interaction. Discussion suggests that if this is the case, therapists may be able to provide validating evidence of their clients' constructions. Of course, therapists may also provide evidence which is likely to be construed by their clients as invalidating their clients' constructions. As indicated earlier, the next chapter examines the relationship between construct commonality and construction validation, and invalidation, in more depth. In addition, the place of construction validation and invalidation in therapeutic interactions is considered, and the implications of construction validation and invalidation, are discussed.

Chapter Four

Social Interaction and Psychological Change

The theory of personal constructs suggests how people may predict and control reality. Kellian theory also suggests how people may change the way in which they predict and control that reality. According to Kelly (1955), we predict and control reality by construing present reality as similar to parts of reality which we have previously construed. However, Kelly suggests that our future constructions can be predictively valid only if we revise our present constructions upon construing evidence which suggests that those constructions are predictively invalid. Here the reader is reminded that, according to Kellian theory, only construers can decide if the constructions which they have of people, objects, places and events, are predictively valid. Kelly submits that people should revise those constructs which they used to make their initial constructions when those constructions are invalidated. He goes on to suggest that people should subsequently reconstrue the reality which was initially construed. In this way, Kelly proposes, people may have constructions of their respective realities, which are predictively valid.

When people engage in verbal interactions with others, the verbalised constructions of those others may validate, or invalidate, the constructions which people have of themselves or others. In addition, others' constructions may validate, or invalidate people's constructions of places, objects and events which people have previously construed. However, personal construct theorists (e.g., R. Neimeyer & G. Neimeyer, 1985) suggest that interpersonal interactions are primarily important as the contexts in which people's understanding of their interpersonal experience is extended. According to R. Neimeyer and G. Neimeyer, people may increase their understanding of interpersonal experience only by playing roles in relation to others. Thus people play roles in a social process involving others in order that people may be better able to predict and control their interactions with other people.

People play roles in relation to others when people act in accordance with their constructions of others' personal constructions. Kelly (1955) submits that people test the predictive validity of their constructions through their behaviour. We might then assume that when people play roles in relation to others, people test the predictive validity of their constructions of others' constructions. People can play roles in relation to others only when people are able to construe the constructions of those others. People's constructions of others' constructions may not always be similar to the constructions which those others express. However, people may revise their constructions of others' constructions. People may revise their constructions after they have acted in accordance with their constructions of others' constructions and construed the outcome of their behaviour. In this way the predictive validity

of people's constructions of others' constructions may increase. Thus people may be better able to enter into "role relationships" with those others in the future. That is, people may be better able to construe those others' constructions and act in accordance with their constructions of those others' constructions. People may also enhance their understanding of interpersonal experience by increasing the predictive validity of their constructions of others' constructions. More accurately perhaps, we might expect that people's future constructions of their interactions with all other people will be more predictively valid, if people revise their present constructions of others' constructions when their initial constructions have been invalidated. In this chapter, the above discussion is extended and the process by which role relationships are established and maintained is discussed. In addition, this chapter examines the process by which construct system change may take place within role relationships in general, and within psychotherapeutic relationships, in particular.

Constructs in the Establishment of Role Relationships

Kelly (1955) submits that people engage in role relationships when people act in accordance with their constructions of others' constructions. In earlier discussion the constructs which are used to construe others' constructions have not been distinguished from other constructs which are used to construe different parts of reality. However, Kelly suggests that the constructs which people use to construe others' constructions may be distinguished from those constructs which are used to construe parts of reality other than the constructions of others. Kelly (1955) describes the constructs which are used to construe others' constructions as people's "role constructs" (p. 178). We may then describe the constructions which people make using their role constructs as people's "role constructions." Kelly (1955) suggests that when we construe others' constructions we use that part of our construct system with which we construe our own constructions. He says that "our constructions of our relations to the thinking ^{and expectancies} of certain other people reach down deeply into our vital processes" (Kelly, 1955, p. 909). Kelly (1955) adds: "Through our construction of our roles we sustain even the most autonomic life functions" (p. 909). From these comments we may assume that the constructs which we use to construe others' constructions, also govern our constructions of ourselves. Thus, we might expect that when we construe another person's constructions, we construe those constructions in relation to our previous constructions of others' constructions and in relation to our own constructions of ourselves. As Stringer and Bannister (1979) suggest Kelly (1955) holds that the person is "only constituted in relations with others" (p. xiv).

Kelly's (1955) discussion of the constructs which people use to construe others' constructions, is not confined to reference to "role constructs." Kelly refers also to people's use of "core constructs." Core constructs are described as those constructs which "govern a

person's maintenance processes – that is, those by which he maintains his identity and existence" (Kelly, 1955, p. 482). Kelly (1955) continues: "A person can use them [core constructs] to see a wide variety of known events as consistent with one's own personality" (p. 482). Of course, in this instance Kelly's use of the word "see" may be understood to imply, "perceive," as it has been used in previous discussion (Chapters Two and Three). Kelly suggests that the systematic arrangement of a person's constructs "characterizes" a person's personality (p. 56). We might speculate then, that a person's personality includes that person's constructions of his or her own constructions. Thus returning to Kelly's later description of core constructs, it is reasonable to conclude that core constructs are used to construe "events" as consistent with one's constructions of one's own constructions. Button (1985) suggests that this is a reasonable assumption. He suggests that a person's core constructs govern that person's belief about that person. Button (1985) adds:

Core constructs are, thus, of direct relevance to the notion of Self. In construct theory the "self" is in many ways no different from any other element, i.e. it is "constructed," it needs to be anticipated and it is capable of various interpretations. It is likely, however, that we will have a lot more invested in those constructs which are central to our view of ourselves. (p. 21)

Kelly suggests that our views of ourselves are governed by those constructs with which we construe others. Thus, returning to Kelly's descriptions of core constructs we might suggest that a person can use core constructs to perceive a wide variety of others' constructions, which have been previously construed, as consistent with one's constructions of one's own constructions. A person's core constructs are then constructs which a person uses to construe others' constructions in relation to one's constructions of one's own constructions. As the reader will note, Kelly's descriptions of core constructs, appear to be synonymous with his description of role constructs. Core constructs, like role constructs, are used to construe others' constructions in relation to our constructions of our own constructions. Thus Kelly implies that all core constructs are role constructs.

Kelly (1955) suggests however, that role constructs are not necessarily core constructs. Nevertheless, Leitner (1985, 1987, 1988) lends support for the argument that all core constructs are a type of role construct. He suggests that a person's "core role constructs" are those constructs which "'govern a person's maintenance processes – that is, those by which he maintains his identity and existence'" (Kelly, 1955, p. 482, cited in Leitner, 1985, p. 85; Leitner, 1987, p. 39, and in Leitner, 1988, p. 254). The reader will recognise Leitner's definition of core role constructs as being identical to Kelly's (1955) definition of core constructs. Leitner (1985, 1987, 1988) thus suggests that some role constructs, which he describes as "core role

constructs," are core constructs. He leaves open the possibility that some role constructs are not core constructs by referring to "core role constructs," rather than to simply "role constructs." In addition, Leitner implies that all core constructs are a particular type of role construct. They are "core role constructs."

To ascertain whether Leitner (1985, 1987, 1988) holds to the position that only some role constructs are core constructs, we need to examine Leitner's (1985) discussion relating to the establishment of role relationships. Leitner (1985) says:

To establish a role relationship with me, you must understand my core role constructs, the most central aspects of my being. In other words, in a role relationship, you come to know me intimately. Now, my role constructs which you are coming to understand, are the same constructs that govern my forming role relationships. (p. 85)

In this extract Leitner (1985) first suggests that others establish a role with a person when those others construe the person's "core role constructs." However, others cannot construe a person's constructs. Others can construe only a person's constructions. Thus we may reinterpret Leitner's statement to mean that when a person establishes a role relationship with a second person, the first person construes the second person's "core role constructions," rather than the second person's core role constructs. Nevertheless, such an interpretation still suggests reference to "core role constructs" which may govern a person's "core role constructions." In addition, of course, the revised interpretation of Leitner's (1985) comment, again suggests that some role constructs are not core constructs.

If we return to the earlier extract, we see that Leitner (1985) suggests that people's core role constructs are those constructs which govern a person's establishment of role relationships with others. However, Kelly (1955) suggests that the constructs which govern a person's establishment of role relationships, are people's role constructs. The functions of core role constructs and role constructs are analogous. Thus, Leitner implies that core role constructs and role constructs are one and the same.

As indicated previously, Leitner (1985, 1987, 1988) lends support for the earlier argument that all core constructs are role constructs. In addition, Leitner (1985) holds that all role constructs are core constructs. Thus, it is possible to conclude from previous discussion, that all core constructs are role constructs, and from present discussion that all role constructs are core constructs. The word, "core," as it is used by Kelly (1955), and Leitner (1985, 1987, 1988), may refer to the importance of those constructs which are used to construe others' constructions when people engage in role relationships. Role constructs, or as they may alternatively be termed, core constructs, are those constructs which govern a person's

construction of that person's own constructions. They also govern that person's constructions of others' constructions.

Role constructs and core constructs are synonymous. However, role constructs may be distinguished from other personal constructs which Kelly (1955) describes as "peripheral constructs." Kelly suggests that "peripheral constructs" are those constructs which can be changed without major changes having to be made to the construer's "identity" (p. 483). Kelly goes on to say that peripheral constructs "may be relatively objectively applied, since they permit the person to make judgements without involving himself deeply" (Kelly, 1955, p. 483). Here Kelly suggests that peripheral constructs are distinguishable from role constructs. He suggests that unlike role constructs, peripheral constructs are not used to construe one's own constructions. Those constructs which are used to construe one's own constructions are those constructs which are also used to construe the constructions of others. It is possible to conclude then that peripheral constructs are constructs which are used to construe those parts of reality other than one's own constructions or the constructions of others. Kelly suggests that peripheral constructs are not used to construe others' personal constructions as consistent with one's own constructions. Hence, according to Kellian theory, there are two primary types of personal construct: a) role constructs and b) peripheral constructs.

People's constructs may be subject to changes as people construe the outcome of events in which they have acted in accordance with their constructions. Thus role constructs and peripheral constructs are subject to change following people's construal of the outcomes of events in which people have acted. However, changes in people's role constructs may have more serious implications than changes in people's peripheral constructs. Changes in a person's role constructs may mean that person must change the way in which that person construes his or her own constructions. Simply, changes in a person's role constructs may mean a change in the way in which that person construes that person. However, as will become evident in the following discussion, changes in some role constructs may have more significant effects upon a person's construct system than changes in other role constructs may have.

According to the organisation corollary of personal construct theory, people's constructs are hierarchically arranged. That is, some constructs are superordinate to other constructs. Those constructs which are superordinate to other constructs are termed, "superordinate constructs." As we might expect, those constructs which are subordinate to superordinate constructs, are termed, "subordinate constructs." Kellian theory suggests that role constructs, and peripheral constructs are hierarchically arranged into superordinate constructs and subordinate constructs. Thus we may assume that superordinate role constructs are superordinate to subordinate role constructs within a person's construct system.

Similarly, of course, superordinate peripheral constructs are superordinate to subordinate peripheral constructs.

Changes may occur in a person's role constructs or in a person's peripheral constructs. The nature of those changes will be discussed later in this chapter. To return to previous discussion, however, Hinkle's (1965) work suggests that superordinate constructs are more resistant to change than subordinate constructs because they have more "implications" than subordinate constructs (Fransella & Bannister, 1977; G. Neimeyer & R. Neimeyer, 1985). That is, superordinate constructs may include more than one subordinate construct as construct elements. Hence, we might expect that changes in a person's superordinate constructs may mean changes in the way in which a person construes all those people, objects, places or events, which that person may construe using the subordinate constructs associated with those superordinate constructs. On the other hand, changes in people's subordinate constructs may affect only the way in which people may construe elements of those subordinate constructs.

When a person engages in a role relationship, she acts according to her constructions of another person's constructions. As indicated earlier, the first person tests out the predictive validity of her constructions of the second person's constructions. The first person may construe the outcome of her constructions. As a consequence, the first person may revise her constructions of the second person's constructions. However, the constructs which a person uses to construe another's constructions are the same constructs which that person uses to construe her own constructions. Hence, changes in those constructs which a person uses to construe another person's constructions, may also mean changes in the constructions that the first person has of her own constructions.

The role constructs which a person uses to construe another person's constructs, may be superordinate role constructs, or subordinate role constructs. Earlier discussion suggests that superordinate role constructs include other (subordinate) role constructs as elements. Hence revision of a superordinate role construct will mean a possible change in many of the constructions which a person may make using those subordinate role constructs which are associated with the revised superordinate role construct. On the other hand, changes in a subordinate role construct may affect only those constructions which a person may make using the revised construct. Hence, changes in a person's role constructs will mean a change in the constructions which that person has of that person. However, revision of a person's superordinate role constructs, may mean more changes in that person's self-constructions, than would follow from revision of that person's subordinate role constructions.

Kellian theory suggests that role constructs and peripheral constructs are subject to change. However, only changes in a person's role constructs have implications for the way in which that person may construe his or her own constructions in relation to the constructions which others express. The greatest change in a person's constructions of that

person's own constructions is likely to occur when changes occur in that person's superordinate role constructs. It is for this reason that a person's superordinate role constructs are said to be "resistant" to change (G. Neimeyer & R. Neimeyer, 1985). It is for this reason too, that G. Neimeyer and R. Neimeyer (1985) suggest that psychotherapy should give attention to changing people's superordinate role constructs, rather than to changing only their subordinate role constructs. They suggest that changes in a client's superordinate role constructs may produce more "durable therapeutic change" than changes in a person's subordinate role constructs (G. Neimeyer & R. Neimeyer, 1985, p. 331). However, as will become apparent later in this chapter, therapists' attempts to bring about changes in clients' constructs, may have further implications which have not, as yet, been discussed. We turn now to consider the process by which people may establish role relationships and thereby create the context in which construct system changes may take place.

Establishment of Role Relationships and Psychotherapy

Discussion to this point suggests that we establish role relationships in order to increase our ability to predict and control our interactions with other people. In addition, we might expect that, according to personal construct theory, people must engage in role relationships if people are to maintain valid personal constructions of their own constructions. G. Neimeyer and R. Neimeyer (1985) lend support to this view. With reference to Bannister and Agnew (1977) they comment:

Bannister & Agnew (1977, p. 99) have clarified the relationship between personal identity and interpersonal relationships by observing that 'the way in which we elaborate the construing of the self must be essentially those ways in which we elaborate our construing of others, for we have not a concept of self, but a bipolar construct of self-not self.' For Kelly and like-minded thinkers, personal identity is fashioned by discerning consistent patterns of similarities and differences between oneself and others. These similarities and differences represent the "role constructs" by which we relate ourselves to and distinguish ourselves from others in our social environment. (p. 328)

It is reasonable to conclude that a person engages in role relationships to increase the predictive validity of her constructions of the constructions of others, and thereby to increase the predictive validity of that person's constructions of her own constructions.

Kelly (1955) indicates that people increase the predictive validity of their personal construct systems by "elaborating" them. We might expect then that when people engage in role relationships they may "elaborate" their construct systems. According to Kelly, people

elaborate their construct systems when those systems are "defined" and "extended." Kelly suggests that people's construct systems are defined when people become more and more certain about fewer things. He suggests that people's personal construct systems are extended when there is an increase in the number of elements which their constructs may be used to construe. Thus, to return to previous discussion, we may expect that the construct systems of people who engage in role relationships with others, may be said to be defined, when people can construe some of their own constructions, or some of others' constructions, with greater predictive validity than previously. We may expect that the construct systems of people who engage in role relationships may be said to be extended, when changes in their construct systems enable them to construe a greater number of others' constructions as similar to, or different from, other previously construed constructions. In this case, a person's previous constructions may be constructions of his own constructions, or constructions of other people's constructions. Alternatively, perhaps, people's construct systems may be said to be extended when people use their existing constructs differently to construe their own constructions or other people's constructions. People may perhaps be able to change the way in which they use their existing constructs to construe a greater number of their own constructions and others' constructions as similar to, or different from, other constructions which they have previously construed.

According to Duck (1979), definition of people's construct systems usually precedes construct system extension. Duck suggests that construct system "definition" occurs when people construe others' constructions as validating evidence of their constructions. He adds that "extension" of people's construct systems takes place when others' constructions are able to be construed as additional elements within people's existing construct systems. Duck (1979) does not explain how people may come to be able to construe others' constructions, which they have previously been unable to construe, using their existing constructs. However, we may perhaps speculate that the process of construct system extension may be analogous to the process described in the previous chapter (Chapter Three) in which a therapist construed similarity and difference between her constructions of a clients' subordinate constructions. In that instance, discussion suggested that the therapist acquired a construct similar to that superordinate construct which governed her client's original construction. Extension of people's construct systems may be an analogous process. First people's constructions of others' constructions may be validated. Hence, definition of people's construct systems may follow. Subsequently, people may construe similarities between their constructions of others' constructions. In this way people may come to have superordinate constructions of their constructions of others' constructions. These superordinate constructions may be similar to those constructions which others previously expressed. In this way, we may say that people's construct systems are first defined and subsequently extended.

This description of construct system extension appears to be consistent with the description suggested by Neimeyer and Hudson (1985). In their article, Neimeyer and Hudson do not explicitly define "extension." However, they suggest that people may extend their construct systems when "sociality" is enhanced. According to Kellian theory, "sociality" is said to exist, when people's constructions of others' constructions are similar to those constructions which those others express. Thus, Neimeyer and Hudson (1985), go on to suggest that people's construct systems may be extended when people and others have "common" systems of understandings (p. 137). To return to previous discussion, it is reasonable to conclude that validation of people's constructions precedes those changes to people's construct systems which are described as construct system definition and extension. Thus when people engage in role relationships, construct system definition and extension may follow when those people construe others' constructions as validating their constructions of the constructions of those others.

However, as Duck (1979) implies, construct system definition and extension may take place in interactions where people do not engage in role relationships with others. Kelly (1955) suggests that a psychotherapeutic interaction may be an example of such an interaction. He suggests that a psychotherapeutic interaction is a context in which the construct systems of two people may be defined and extended, though only one person may engage in a role relationship with the other. According to Kelly, clients' construct systems may be elaborated in the context psychotherapeutic interactions, though clients may not engage in role relationships with their therapists. However, personal construct theory suggests that clients' construct systems can be elaborated only if therapists engage in role relationships with their clients (Kelly, 1955, 1965a; Landfield & Leitner, 1980; R. A. Neimeyer, 1987; Guthrie, 1991).

In the event that clients and therapists engage in role relationships with each other, Kelly (1955) says that they are likely to differ in the extent to which they are able to construe each other's constructions. Simply, Kelly suggests that the number of client constructions which therapists may be able to construe, may be greater than the number of therapist constructions which clients are able to construe. In addition, Kelly, and more recently Leitner (1985), suggest that the extent to which therapists may understand their clients, may be greater than the extent to which clients understand their therapists. Here Kelly implies that some of therapists' constructions of their clients' constructions, may be similar to those constructions which their clients expressed. In comparison, Kelly suggests that fewer of clients' constructions of their therapists' constructions, may be similar to those constructions which their therapists expressed. Thus, clients may be better able to communicate their constructions within psychotherapeutic interactions, than their therapists. Nevertheless, communication of client constructions and some therapist constructions may be desirable in psychotherapeutic interactions.

Therapists may predict the outcomes of their interventions with greater predictive validity if they have constructions of their clients' constructions which are similar to those constructions which their clients express. Put another way, therapists may be better able to predict changes in their clients' construing following expression of therapists' constructions, if therapists have constructions of their clients' constructions which are similar to those constructions which their clients express. This follows if we recall the distinction between people's "predictions" and people's "constructions." According to the theory of personal constructs, people may predict reality on the basis of their constructions. That is, people may articulate constructions of future reality without first having construed it. When people construe present reality, people anticipate future similar reality. More particularly, people anticipate that present reality will be similar to previously construed reality. In addition, when people construe present reality, people anticipate that they may similarly construe future reality. Thus people's constructions are their "anticipations," not their "predictions."

Radley (1977) offers a definition of a "prediction" which is particularly useful for drawing the distinction between one's constructions and one's "predictions." Radley (1977) says that a "prediction" refers to "those things which a person has in his awareness, and towards which he is attending" (p. 226). He adds that the "things" towards which a person attends, are "particulars about which [a person] can be explicit in his expectation of what may happen" (p. 226). To return to earlier discussion then, we might expect that therapists who are able to construe their clients' constructions, may predict those changes in the construct systems of their clients, which may follow from therapists' interventions. On the basis of therapists' constructions of their clients' constructions, therapists may predict changes which may occur in their clients' constructs, following therapists' interventions. Of course, when therapists engage in role relationships with their clients, therapists' interventions are the verbal and non verbal behaviours which follow from therapists' constructions of their clients' constructions. However, primary attention is given to the verbal expression of people's constructions and the interaction of those constructions which are verbally expressed, in this study. Hence discussion hereon will be concerned solely with the verbal expression of therapists' constructions and clients' constructions.

From this discussion we may suggest that therapists who engage in role relationships with their clients may anticipate the constructions which their clients verbally express. Simultaneously, therapists may predict the outcomes of their behaviour which follows from their constructions of their clients' constructions. Therapists may then act in accordance with their constructions. The outcome of therapists' constructions will include the verbal (and non verbal) expression of their clients' constructions. Therapists may construe their clients' constructions as validating evidence, or invalidating evidence, of their initial constructions. In addition, clients' constructions may suggest the predictive validity, or otherwise, of

therapists' predictions. It is important to reiterate however, that therapists' predictions are not therapists' constructions of present reality. Therapists' predictions are constructions of future reality which may be articulated. Therapists' predictions are not similarities, with respect to some aspect, which therapists perceive between some part of present reality and some parts of previously construed reality. Rather, therapists' predictions are the similarities which therapists expect they may perceive between reality which has yet to be construed and previously construed reality. To return to earlier discussion, clients' constructions may then, validate, or invalidate therapists' constructions of their clients' constructions. They may also validate, or invalidate therapists' predictions of the outcome of therapists' interventions.

Changes in clients' construct systems are more likely to be similar to the changes which their therapists predict, if therapists' constructions of their clients' constructions are similar to those constructions which their clients express. We might expect that the likelihood that changes in clients' construct systems will be similar to changes which therapists predict will be increased still further if therapists are able to communicate their constructions to their clients. That is, we may expect that changes in clients' construct systems would be more likely to be similar to changes which therapists predict, if clients' constructions of their therapists' constructions are similar to those constructions which therapists express. Thus, as suggested previously, communication of both client constructions and therapist constructions may be desirable in the context of psychotherapy.

In his description of psychotherapy, Kelly (1980) lends some support for the position that therapists should be able to communicate their constructions to their clients. He says:

Psychotherapy takes place when one person makes constructive use of another who has offered himself for that purpose. The professional skills of the therapist, as well as much of his repertory as an experienced human being, are brought into the transaction. He offers as much of both as he thinks can be used. But it is the client who weaves them into the fabric of his own experience. (Kelly, 1980, p. 21)

Kelly is suggesting that psychotherapists express their constructions during therapeutic interactions. According to Kelly, these constructions may be able to be used by clients during psychotherapy. Thus Kelly implies that clients should be able to construe therapists' constructions. In a more recent comment, Adams-Webber (1979) suggests the importance of communication in psychotherapeutic interactions. He comments that the primary function of the psychotherapist, according to personal construct theory, is "to assist his client in formulating theories deriving and testing hypotheses, evaluating the results of his own experiments and revising his hypotheses in the light of the data" (Adams-Webber, 1979, p. 3). One might presume that therapists cannot purposefully fulfil the function suggested by

Adams-Webber unless clients' constructions of therapists constructions, are similar to those expressions which therapists express. Hence, communication of therapists' constructions in the context of psychotherapeutic interactions, may be as important as communication of clients' constructions.

One might expect, however, that responsibility for communication of therapists' constructions rests with therapists rather than with clients. Clients may increase their therapists' understanding of them, by expressing constructions which are made using clients' subordinate constructs. Therapists' too, may increase the likelihood that clients' constructions of their therapists' constructions will be similar to the constructions which therapists express. They may do this by expressing more subordinate constructions. However, we may expect that therapists will be better able to communicate their constructions, if the constructions which therapists express follow from their constructions of their clients' constructions. Simply, therapists may be better able to communicate their constructions to their clients if therapists engage in role relationships with their clients. Clients' constructions of therapists' constructions may then, more possibly be similar to those constructions which their therapists express. However, though Kelly suggests that clients may engage in role relationships with their therapists, we can expect that clients may often not engage in role relationships with their therapists. Clients may not always act in accordance with their constructions of their therapists' constructions. However, therapists should always act in accordance with their constructions of their clients' constructions. Moreover, it is desirable that therapists' constructions of their clients' constructions will be similar to the constructions which their clients express. With this in mind, discussion in the following section focuses upon the interaction between therapists' and clients' constructions in the context of psychotherapeutic interactions.

Construction Interaction in Psychotherapy

Kelly (1955) suggests that "psychotherapeutic movement," or what has been described here as, psychotherapeutic change, occurs when:

A man starts questioning for himself what his immediate objectives may be and is thus led to initiate actions that challenge whatever previous notions he may have held as to what his limitations were. This is the first step in redefining his potentialities. He sets out to be what he is not. (p. 20)

In the above extract, Kelly implies that the primary purpose of psychotherapy is to facilitate changes in a client's role constructs which enable the client to construe himself or herself differently. More recently, Leitner (1985) has offered a more succinct description of

psychotherapy. He says that therapy "attempts to allow the client to develop new ways of relating" (p. 95). People's role constructs are those which they use to construe themselves and others. Thus, Kelly's (1955) comments and Leitner's (1985) comment above indicate that, as suggested earlier, the primary goal of psychotherapy is to increase the predictive validity of clients' role constructions.

Duck (1979) suggests that people develop relationships by first seeking validation of their constructions and thereby definition of their construct systems. He suggests that subsequently, people will seek opportunities for their construct systems to be extended within the relationship. Thus we may speculate that therapists and clients will seek to validate their personal constructions at the beginning of a psychotherapeutic relationship in order to elaborate their respective construct systems. Subsequently they may seek opportunities for extension of their construct systems. Neimeyer and Hudson (1985) share Duck's (1979) view that relationship development is characterised by construct system definition through validation, followed by construct system extension. They also lend support for the view that psychotherapeutic relationships develop as therapists first validate, then extend their clients' constructions. Thus, as suggested previously, we may expect that interaction of therapists' and clients' role constructions during psychotherapy will be accompanied by first definition, and then extension, of that part of clients' construct systems which include their role constructs.

Clients may not however, engage in role relationships with their therapists. That is, clients may not act according to their constructions of their therapists' personal constructions. Nevertheless, clients may construe the common constructions which are expressed in their therapists' verbal behaviour as validating evidence, or invalidating evidence, of clients' role constructions. As indicated earlier, that part of clients' construct systems which includes clients' role constructs may be defined if clients construe the common constructions expressed in their therapists' behaviour, as validating evidence of clients' role constructions. However, changes in clients' construct systems are more likely to be similar to those changes which therapists predict, if clients engage in role relationships with their therapists. Simply, we might expect that psychotherapy will be a less haphazard affair, if clients too engage in role relationships in the context of psychotherapeutic interactions.

Not unexpectedly, then, Kelly (1965a/1969) says that therapists should encourage their clients to construe their therapists not as mediators of stimuli or responses, but as construers. Thus Kelly (1965a/1969) suggests that therapists should encourage their clients to engage in role relationships with them. However, when clients engage in role relationships with their therapists, they risk experiencing what Leitner (1985) describes as the "terror" of role relationships (Leitner, 1987; R. A. Neimeyer, 1987). According to Leitner (1985) the "terror" that people risk experiencing is the conglomeration of emotions which Kelly (1955) describes

as "anxiety," "threat," "fear," "hostility," and "guilt." Leitner (1985) says that people become anxious when they construe the outcomes of their constructions to be invalidated. At this time, Leitner suggests people are aware of parts of reality that lie outside the application range of their constructs. It is this awareness which Leitner and Kelly describe as "anxiety." Thus we might perhaps more accurately describe anxiety as the emotion which is associated with consistent invalidation of one's constructions despite repeated revision of one's construct system and reconstrual of previously construed reality. Then a client who engages in a role relationship with a therapist may experience anxiety perhaps, when that client construes his or her role constructions as consistently invalidated despite repeated revision of the client's constructs.

Kelly (1955) suggests that "threat" is experienced when people are aware of imminent comprehensive changes in their role constructs. More precisely perhaps, we might say that people experience "threat" when changes in people's superordinate role constructs are necessary for them to have valid constructions of reality. Kelly suggests that a client may experience threat in a therapeutic interaction. A client may experience threat when she construes her therapist as expecting her to act in a way in which she no longer wishes to act. More accurately, we may say that a client may experience threat if she construes the therapist's constructions of the client's constructions, as invalidating evidence of the client's superordinate role constructions. Kelly goes on to suggest that people may experience "fear" rather than "threat," if changes are necessary only in subordinate role constructs.

Kelly (1955) and Leitner (1985) suggest that people who engage in role relationships may also experience "hostility." According to Kelly, "hostility" is the emotion which people experience when they continue to try to change reality to provide validating evidence of their constructions despite repeated invalidation of those constructions. Finally, Kelly (1955) and Leitner (1985) refer to "guilt" as one of the possible outcomes of engaging in role relationships. According to Kelly (1955), "guilt" is "the perception of one's apparent dislodgement of his core role structure" (p. 502). Kelly goes on to suggest that "guilt" may be experienced when people construe the outcome of their actions as invalidating their constructions of themselves. Simply, people experience "guilt" when they construe their behaviour as inconsistent with their role constructions.

Returning to earlier discussion, there is apparent risk involved in clients engaging in role relationships with their therapists. Clients may experience, anxiety, threat, fear, hostility or guilt. Similarly, of course, there are risks associated with therapists' involvement in role relationships with their clients (Leitner, 1985). Nevertheless, as indicated earlier, Kelly suggests that clients and therapists should engage in role relationships with each other. Discussion in the next section focuses upon the way in which therapists may minimise the likelihood of their clients experiencing "terror," and in particular, the emotions of "anxiety,"

"threat" and "fear." In addition, discussion in the following section considers ways in which therapists may, at the same time, maximise the likelihood of client construct system change.

Validation and Invalidation in Psychotherapy

Earlier discussion suggests that the predictive validity of clients' role constructions may be expected to increase when clients' role constructions are validated. Duck (1979) holds that validation of clients' role constructions will be followed by construct system definition. Simply, clients will be assured of the predictive validity of their role constructions. Following definition of clients' construct systems, clients' construct systems may be extended. Clients' construct systems may be extended following clients' construal of similarity between some of their constructions of their therapists' constructions. Clients may come to share constructions which are similar to those of their therapists. In this way clients' construct systems may be extended. However, the above discussion suggests that in some circumstances, clients' constructions may be invalidated in the context of psychotherapeutic interactions. As a consequence, Kelly suggests that clients may experience "anxiety," "threat," "fear," "hostility" or "guilt." Kelly adds that if clients experience the emotions which Leitner (1985) has described as the "terror" of role relationships, clients' construct systems may be neither defined nor extended.

As one might expect from this discussion, Kelly (1955) suggests that therapists should minimise the possibility that clients will experience excessive "anxiety," "threat" or "fear." This position is supported by more contemporary personal construct theorists (e.g., Harter, 1988; Leitner, 1985, 1987, 1988; Neimeyer & Hudson, 1985; G. Neimeyer & R. Neimeyer, 1985; R. Neimeyer, 1987). Harter (1988) elaborates:

Experiences that attack the integrity of the [construct] system itself, by virtue of being so alien as to be inscrutable or by challenging the basic assumptions, or core role constructs by which the client orders experiences, may actually impede the elaboration of new constructs. The threat and anxiety produced by demands for massive reconstruction¹ for the explanatory system, in the absence of suitable alternative structures, may result in protective maneuvers ... to prevent disconfirmation of the current [construct] system. (pp. 353-354)

This extract suggests that clients who may have their constructions invalidated by their therapists' constructions, may act to prevent any changes in their construct systems. More

¹ Harter's use of the term "reconstruction" suggests that this term refers to the process described here as "reconstructing," or more appropriately, as "reconstrual." Should "reconstruction" be referred to in the context of present discussion, it will refer to the construction of events which follows reconstrual of previously construed reality. In the context of this study, reconstruction refers to that which follows the process of reconstrual. It does not refer to the process of reconstrual.

particularly, Harter suggests, that clients may feel anxious if they construe their role constructions to be consistently invalidated by their therapists' constructions, despite repeated revisions of clients' role constructs. Clients may also feel threatened, if they must change their superordinate role constructs in order to retain the predictive validity of their role constructions. Harter suggests that in each instance, clients may act to prevent their constructions from being further invalidated. She goes on to propose that people prevent further invalidation of their constructions by either "constricting" or "distorting" their construct systems. The process of "distortion" to which Harter refers, is more commonly described by personal construct theorists (e.g., Kelly, 1955; Button, 1985) as "dilation."

Kelly (1955), and more recently Button (1985), suggest that people who constrict their construct systems reduce any construed incompatibility of the outcomes of their constructions and their initial constructions. Kelly adds that people who constrict their construct systems deal with one issue at a time and do not accept potential relationships between different events. Thus we might expect that people who constrict their construct systems do not perceive similarity between constructions they may have of different parts of reality. Hence, superordinate constructions, which might include these constructions, do not arise. Kelly (1955) suggests that constriction is evident in psychotherapeutic relationships when clients insist that their therapists keep to a "sharply delimited version" of their problems (p. 477). In contrast, Kelly suggests that people dilate their construct systems when they perceive similarities between personal constructions which people previously perceived to be unrelated. Thus in psychotherapeutic relationships, Kelly suggests that dilation follows when clients, who have experienced invalidation of their constructions, construe everything which happens to them as potentially related to their problems. It is reasonable to conclude then that regardless of whether clients may constrict, or dilate their construct systems following invalidation of their role constructions, construction invalidation, in the context of psychotherapy, is undesirable. More particularly, we may assume that invalidation of clients' role constructions is undesirable since clients will limit any changes which may occur in that part of their construct systems which includes their role constructs. Hence, psychotherapeutic change may not take place.

Kelly (1955) suggests that under some circumstances invalidation of some clients' constructions may be desirable. He adds that invalidation is the "normal basis of abandoning" use of a particular construct (Kelly, 1955, p. 500). Later, Kelly (1955) goes on to say that invalidation may be used in psychotherapy to help clients find just where their construct systems "break down" (p. 500). However, invalidation cannot be used in psychotherapy in the way in which Kelly suggests. The reader will recall, from earlier discussion, that therapists may predict the outcome of the expression of their constructions. That is, therapists may predict the outcome of those interventions which are based upon the constructions which

therapists have of their clients' constructions. Simply, therapists may predict that their clients' constructions will be invalidated (or validated) by the constructions which therapists express. However, only clients can determine whether their constructions are validated or invalidated. Clients may construe their constructions as validated, or invalidated, when they have construed the outcome of the events in which they have acted according to their constructions. Thus clients may construe the roles and the constructions of their therapists, as validating evidence, or invalidating evidence, of clients' constructions. However, therapists have no way of knowing whether their clients will construe therapists' interventions as validating, or invalidating, clients' constructions. This said, therapists who have constructions of their clients' constructions which are similar to those constructions which their clients express, may predict the outcomes of their interventions with some accuracy. Therapists may, for example, expect that clients will construe their constructions to be invalidated by their therapists' constructions. In this instance, therapists' expectations may prove to be correct. There must, of course, remain an element of doubt. Clients may not construe their constructions to be invalidated despite therapists expectations to the contrary. Thus to return to earlier discussion, therapists may not use invalidation in the way in which Kelly suggests. However, therapists may express constructions which they expect will be invalidating evidence of their clients' constructions. Kelly (1955) suggests that invalidation in psychotherapy may be used to demonstrate to clients where their construct systems "break down" (p. 500). The reader may note that this comment follows from the earlier stated position (Chapter Two) that people's constructions of their respective subjective realities are valid, if people construe them to be valid. However, two people may have different constructions of similar reality. Each person may construe that person's constructions to be predictively valid. However, one person's construction of that reality may have greater predictive validity for the second person, if the second person was to share the first person's construction of that reality. Hence, in a psychotherapeutic interaction, a client may construe a construction of reality which that client has, to be predictively valid. A therapist may construe a different construction of similar reality which that therapist has, to be predictively valid. In addition, the therapist may construe the outcome of the client's construction of that reality as "invalidating" the client's construction. Of course, as indicated earlier, only the client may construe the client's construction of reality as validated, or invalidated, by the outcome of that client's behaviour. Hence, in the strictest terms, the client's construction is not invalidated, despite the therapist's construction to the contrary. Nevertheless, since the psychotherapist construes the client's construction to be "invalid," the therapist may attempt to provide evidence which the therapist predicts the client will construe as invalidating evidence of that client's construction. Thus to return to Kelly's earlier statement, psychotherapists may provide evidence which they predict will be invalidating evidence of their clients' constructions. Therapists may do so if

they construe their clients' constructions as "invalidated" by the outcomes of clients' constructions.

At this point, the difference between relationships such as friendships, which Duck (1979) discusses, and partnership relationships such as those which Neimeyer and Hudson (1985) describe, becomes evident. Kelly (1955), Duck (1979) and Neimeyer and Hudson (1985), argue that relationships, including psychotherapeutic relationships develop as people's construct systems are first validated by others' constructions, and thereby defined, and then extended. In this way people's construct systems will become more "comprehensive" (Neimeyer & Hudson, 1985) and people will be able to construe more parts of reality than they have previously been able to construe. In addition, Neimeyer and Hudson (1985) suggest that people will have an increased their understanding of others if their construct systems have been first defined and then extended. However, as indicated previously, psychotherapy is not a social relationship which has as its primary purpose the increase of interpersonal understanding. Rather, psychotherapy is a process by which clients increase the predictive validity of their role constructions of others, through their relationships with their therapists. Therapists must increase their understanding of their clients in order for therapists to predict the outcome of their interventions. In this way therapists may control, at least in part, the process by which the predictive validity of clients' constructions is enhanced through the process of psychotherapy.

We may expect too, that clients' construct systems must be defined and extended by construction validation, during the course of psychotherapy. In this way clients may increase the predictive validity of their constructions of their therapists' constructions. As a consequence the likelihood that changes in clients' construct systems will be similar to those changes which are predicted by their therapists, will be increased. However, as becomes apparent in the following section, validation may serve an additional purpose, other than that of defining and extending clients' construct systems. For now, however, we need to return to the earlier discussion which centred upon the purpose of invalidation in psychotherapy. As indicated previously, the suggestion that invalidation may be an important part of psychotherapy, may distinguish psychotherapeutic interactions from other more common social interactions. While doubtless invalidation occurs in the context of other interactions, Kelly (1955) suggests that it is only in psychotherapeutic interactions that one participant may purposefully attempt to invalidate the others' constructions, in order to promote construct system change. In the next section, the contribution which validation and invalidation of clients' constructions may make to construct system change, is discussed.

Validation, Invalidation and Construct System Change

The contribution which a therapist makes in a psychotherapeutic interaction is different from the contribution which a person makes in another kind of social interaction. A therapist may increase the level of understanding between herself and a client. However, the function of a therapist is to "assist his client in formulating theories, deriving and testing hypotheses, evaluating the results of his own experiments and revising his hypotheses in the light of the data" (Adams-Webber, 1979). Simply, the function of a therapist is to assist clients to increase the predictive validity of constructions those clients have of themselves and others. Therapists may construe the constructions which their clients presently have of themselves and others as "invalid." Kelly (1955) suggests that therapists may therefore create opportunities in which clients too, may construe their constructions as invalid. However, there are risks involved in invalidating clients' role constructions. Indeed, Kelly (1955) and contemporary personal construct theorists (e.g., Harter, 1988; Leitner, 1985, 1987, 1988; Neimeyer & Hudson, 1985; G. Neimeyer & R. Neimeyer, 1987; R. Neimeyer, 1987) suggest that therapists should avoid invalidating clients' role constructions. Thus, Kelly's suggestion that invalidation of clients' role constructions may prove useful in psychotherapy, appears to be contradicted by his assertion that invalidation in psychotherapy may prove risky. To clarify Kelly's position, we need to return to his discussion of validation and invalidation in the context of psychotherapy. In addition, we need to refer to more recent investigations which have been made into the function of validation and invalidation in psychotherapeutic interactions.

As one might expect, Kelly (1969b/1970) suggests that validation may define a person's construct system. In addition, Kelly suggests that definition of a person's construct system may be followed by extension of that system. Kelly (1969b/1970) comments:

A confirmation gives one an anchorage in some area of his life, leaving him free to set afoot adventuresome explorations nearby, as, for example, in the case of a child whose security at home emboldens him to be the first to explore what lies in the neighbour's yard. (p. 18)

We might expect then that in psychotherapeutic interactions, clients' initial role constructions may be validated by their therapists' role and their therapists' constructions. The above extract suggests that, as a consequence, clients may attempt to construe more of their therapists' constructions. Clients may thereby extend their understanding of their therapists, and their understanding of others. However, one might reasonably expect that therapists' constructions would not validate all of their clients' role constructions. Moreover, one might expect that therapists may construe some of their clients' constructions as "invalid." Hence,

therapists may not choose to affirm clients' continued use of those constructs which clients use to make the "invalid" constructions. Indeed, this would seem a reasonable course of action on the part of therapists, if therapists are to enable their clients to engage in more effective role relationships with others.

Now, however, we are again in the position, of asking how therapists may both validate, and invalidate, clients' constructions. Earlier discussion suggests that therapists should avoid invalidating clients' role constructions. Indeed, Harter (1988) suggests that interventions that validate a clients' constructions may contribute more to the enhancement of the predictive validity of clients' construct systems than, interventions which invalidate clients' constructions. Kelly (1966b/1970) lends support to this position when he says: "Confirmation [of one's constructions] may lead to reconstruing quite as much as disconfirmation – perhaps even more" (p. 18). However, Kelly (1955) suggests that invalidation of people's role constructions may prove useful in psychotherapy, provided therapists' constructions of their clients' role constructions are similar to those constructions which their clients' express. Thus, once again we see the importance of therapists' constructions of clients' constructions being similar to the constructions which clients express. Kelly (1955) suggests that therapists must be able to predict the possible outcome of providing evidence which they predict may invalidate their clients' role constructions. Simply, Kelly (1955) states: "The therapist needs to know pretty much just what kind of personal wager he is asking his client to make before he precipitates him into an experiment" (p. 500). Thus, drawing on previous discussion and Kelly's (1955) comments, it is possible to conclude that invalidation in psychotherapy may prove useful if changes take place only in clients' subordinate role constructs. The reader will recall that changes in these constructs have few implications for changes in the way in which clients use their constructs, compared with the changes implied if clients' superordinate constructions are revised. In addition, invalidation of clients' constructions is more likely to contribute to positive changes in clients' construct systems, if therapists' constructions of their clients' constructions are similar to the constructions which their clients express.

Invalidation of clients' constructions may be followed by revision of clients' constructs and subsequently, by reconstrual of the reality which was construed previously. We might then expect that invalidation of clients' subordinate role constructions will be followed by revision of clients' subordinate role constructs. Thus clients may reconstrue their initial constructions of their therapists' constructions. Of course, clients may also reconstrue the way in which they construe themselves and others. Nevertheless, the changes which may take place in clients' subordinate role constructs, following construction invalidation, will remain consistent with the superordinate role constructs of the client.

Previous discussion suggests why it may be important that revisions in clients' construct systems are consistent with clients' existing superordinate role constructs. Changes which may be inconsistent with clients' existing superordinate role constructs, may lead clients to feel "threatened." Indeed, any invalidation of clients' constructions may be followed by clients' experience of one of the emotions which Leitner (1985, 1987, 1988) describes collectively as, "terror." Thus we may expect that "anxiety," and possibly "fear," may precede even revision of subordinate role constructions. Hence, we might expect that despite the possible advantages of invalidation in the context of psychotherapy, clients would avoid any engagement in a context in which they may construe their constructions to be invalidated. However, the comments of Mancuso (1977), Mancuso and Adams-Webber (1982) and, McDonald and Mancuso (1987) suggest that this may not be the case. They submit that clients may, instead, be "motivated" to change their constructions if they encounter invalidation of their constructions. Mancuso (1977) comments:

A person's processes – his conduct – are directed toward those events which are incongruent with the internalized structures against which information has been monitored. Resolution of discrepancy occupies the major part of a person's life activity. (p. 65)

These comments are, of course, consistent with the fundamental assumption of personal construct theory. According to Kelly (1955), a person's "psychological processes are channelized by the way in which he construes events" (p. 46). Thus we may expect that though clients may experience "anxiety," they may direct their psychological efforts to revising their construct systems to ensure that they increase their ability to predict and control reality. It is for this reason then that psychotherapists engage in role relationships with their clients and provide opportunities for clients to engage in role relationships with them. Only by engaging in role relationships with their clients, may therapists play a part in increasing the predictive validity of their clients' role constructions.

Thus construction validation serves an important function in all relationships. Validation of people's constructions is followed by definition of their personal construct systems. In turn, definition of people's construct systems is followed by extension of their construct systems. Hence, people increase their understanding of others. In the context of psychotherapy, invalidation of clients' constructions may also be important. Invalidation of clients' constructions may be a precursor to construct system change. Hence, invalidation of clients' role constructions may be necessary in the context of psychotherapeutic interactions, if clients' constructions of others are to retain their predictive validity. Nevertheless, there are risks associated with construction invalidation. Clients may experience "anxiety," "threat,"

"fear," "hostility" or "guilt" when their constructions are invalidated. For this reason, previous discussion suggests that therapists should avoid invalidation of people's superordinate role constructions. Therapists may minimise the possible negative effects of invalidation, by invalidating only the subordinate role constructions of their clients. Later chapters provide examples of psychotherapeutic interactions in which therapists and their clients have engaged in processes of validation and invalidation similar to those described here, in an effort to increase the predictive validity of clients' constructions. In addition, the chapters which follow include elaboration of the discussion contained here and in the previous chapters (Chapters One, Two and Three).

Conclusion

This chapter demonstrates that psychotherapeutic relationships are similar to other social relationships in most respects. Therapeutic relationships and other social relationships are established when people engage in role relationships with others. People engage in role relationships with others by using their role constructs to construe the constructions of those others. Discussion has indicated that these constructs are identical to what Kelly (1955) describes as "core constructs." However, role constructs have been distinguished from a second type of construct which Kelly describes as "peripheral" constructs. According to earlier discussion, role constructs and peripheral constructs are hierarchically arranged. Thus it is reasonable to conclude that people's construct systems comprise superordinate, and subordinate, role constructs, and, superordinate, and subordinate, peripheral constructs. However, people use only their role constructs to engage in a social process involving others.

All role relationships are established as people's constructions are validated by others' constructions. In this way, people's construct systems are defined and may be subsequently extended. However, there is a significant difference between psychotherapeutic relationships and other social relationships in which people engage in roles with each other. Participants in psychotherapeutic interactions are primarily concerned with increasing the predictive validity of clients' constructions of others. Therapists and clients are not primarily concerned with extending clients' construct systems to increase the understanding which clients may have of their therapists. In order to increase the predictive validity of clients' constructions of others, therapists may provide opportunities for clients to experience invalidation of their constructions. Of course, invalidation may occur within the context of other social interactions too. However, invalidation of people's constructions, may serve an even more important function in psychotherapeutic interactions. Nevertheless, discussion in this chapter has indicated that therapists should avoid invalidating clients' constructions as much as possible. Certainly, therapists should avoid invalidating clients' superordinate role constructions. Thus psychotherapy is a process in which therapists predict the outcome of their interventions

based upon their constructions of their clients' constructions. The greater the similarity between therapists' constructions of their clients' constructions and the constructions which their clients express, the greater may be the control which therapists may have over the psychotherapeutic process. Nevertheless, psychotherapy must always be a process in which clients alone choose the outcomes of their interactions. Only if clients engage in the psychological process of construing, revising their constructs, and reconstructing, may the predictive validity of their construct systems be increased.

In the following chapter the methodology which has been used in this study to investigate the process of psychotherapeutic interactions is described. Later, the theoretical concepts which have been discussed here, and in earlier chapters, are illustrated in the practice of four psychotherapists and in the behaviour of their clients. As analysis of each case proceeds, the theoretical description of psychotherapy provided in Chapters Two, Three and Four, is itself defined and extended.

Chapter Five

Methodology and Principles of Analysis

The theory of personal constructs suggests that psychotherapists must engage in role relationships with their clients if psychotherapeutic change is to take place. Therapists engage in role relationships with their clients by construing the personal constructions which their clients verbally express. According to Kellian theory, therapists contribute to psychotherapeutic change during psychotherapeutic interactions by validating their clients' verbalised constructions. Following validation clients' construct systems may be defined and later extended. Previous discussion (Chapters Two and Three) suggests that invalidation of clients' constructions by psychotherapists may also be important if psychotherapeutic change is to occur. However, Kelly (1955) submits that clients who engage in role relationships with their therapists, may experience anxiety, threat, or fear when their constructions are invalidated. Simply, clients may experience, what Leitner (1985, 1987, 1988) describes as, the "terror" of role relationships if their personal constructions are invalidated. Hence we might expect that therapists must be able to influence the possible outcome of their interventions. Therapists must be able to maximise the likelihood of positive psychotherapeutic change while simultaneously minimising the likelihood that their clients will experience the "terror" of role relationships.

It was shown in Chapters Two and Three that the likelihood of positive psychotherapeutic change occurring is greatest when therapists and their clients share similar personal constructs. Therapists and clients who have similar personal constructs may similarly construe each other's constructions. However, therapists and clients are more likely to share constructions of each other's constructions if they use similar words to express their constructions. Earlier discussion (Chapter Three) indicates that therapists who have constructions of their clients' constructions which are similar to the constructions which their clients express, are able to predict the possible outcome of their interventions. Hence, therapists may be able to control the possible outcome of their interventions. That is, therapists may be able to express constructions which they predict will validate, or invalidate, their clients' constructions. Therapists may thereby influence the possible outcome of their interventions. However, earlier argument (Chapter Three) suggests that the predictions which therapists have of the outcomes of their interventions, may have greater validity if clients engage in role relationships with their therapists. The possibility that therapists' constructions of their clients' constructions will be valid is greater still if clients' constructions of their therapists' constructions are similar to those constructions which their therapists express.

Hence, psychotherapy is likely to be most effective when therapists and clients share constructions of each other's constructions.

This study investigates the process of role enactment in eight single psychotherapeutic sessions. More particularly, this study examines the process by which therapists and their clients, come to share similar constructions of clients' constructions. In addition, the contribution of construction validation and invalidation to changes in clients' construct systems is examined.

Details of Participants

As indicated earlier, four therapists and eight clients who had been engaged in long-term counselling participated in the study. At the time of data collection, each of the four counsellors was engaged in providing individual counselling to each of two of the eight clients.

Demographic information was provided in structured interviews conducted prior to therapists participating in counselling interviews with their respective clients. The initial interviews were structured to provide research participants with an opportunity to give written or oral answers to the questions asked. In some instances, therapists and clients gave written responses to questions. Usually, however, I completed the forms and read back the respondents' answers to ensure that I had accurately recorded the information given.

I also kept a written record of additional information which was given to me prior to, during, and, or after the data collection phase of the research. When this information is considered to be relevant it is included here.

Therapist One (Anne)

Anne is a female practitioner aged 43 years. At the time of interviewing she was engaged in private practice and employed as a lecturer in a counsellor education programme. Her education as a counsellor included training as a marriage guidance counsellor under the direction of the New Zealand Marriage Guidance Counsellors' Association (now, MG). She had 12 years experience as a counsellor.

Anne describes her practice orientation as influenced by principles of Rogerian client-centred therapy. However, she describes her counselling interventions as being particularly consistent with transactional analytic approaches to psychotherapy. In addition, Anne indicates that her practice reflects principles of systems theory, cognitive psychology, behavioural psychology and psychodrama.

Client One (Beth)

Beth is a woman aged 36 years, who initially self-referred for counselling with Anne. Beth initially sought therapy because she felt depressed. She described the counselling session

which was to follow as one of a series of counselling sessions. Prior to her interview with Anne, Beth said that she hoped to gain some further "insights" into her life from her participation in the forthcoming session. She also hoped to understand why she had reached a point in her life where she was so unhappy. Perhaps of interest, this client had read extensively about the process of psychotherapy.

Client Two (Alex)

Alex is a man aged 40 years, who initially self-referred for counselling with Anne. Alex had been seeing Anne for counselling "on and off" for a period of approximately two years. At the time of interviewing, this client was practising as a counsellor. He had been receiving professional supervision from Anne prior to seeking counselling from her.

Alex described the forthcoming counselling interview as one of a series of counselling sessions during which he was continuing in "a process" that he had been involved in for some time. He added that his engagement in counselling was part of a long-term project to get a close relationship "working." Alex described the counselling process as a "catalyst" to this process. He had a "couple of things" which he wished to raise in the forthcoming counselling session but did not elaborate upon this statement.

Had Anne not contacted Alex to participate in the counselling session on the day when the researcher visited, Alex said he would not have attended counselling for three to four weeks. Alex reported that his most recent counselling session had been ten days prior to the time of interviewing.

Therapist Two (Bruce)

Bruce is a male practitioner aged 45 years. At the time of interviewing, he was engaged in practice within a community counselling agency. Bruce had previously been a school counsellor. He received his initial counsellor education at a New Zealand university. Subsequently, he engaged in training as a family therapist and has attended various counsellor education workshops. Bruce describes these workshops as referring to the family therapy narrative model or solution-based therapy. He had 11 years experience as a counsellor.

Bruce describes his practice as eclectic with a "leaning" towards "solution-based narrative" approaches.

Client Three (Claire)

Claire is a woman aged 42 years. She was initially referred to the agency for counselling following a suicide attempt. She added that she had been suicidal several times prior to her referral to the agency. Following her suicide attempt, Claire's general practitioner referred her to hospital. Hospital authorities subsequently referred her to the counselling

agency in which Bruce is engaged in counselling practice. Claire reported that she had participated in approximately eight counselling sessions with Bruce.

Claire said that she visited her counsellor on the day of the interview, to find out "what is wrong." She added that she had been molested when she was younger and attributed at least some of her current problems to this experience. In the forthcoming session, she hoped to overcome, what she described as, "a block wall."

Claire presented as very nervous and agitated. When I initially spoke with her, she became tearful. I asked her if her involvement in the research was contributing to her distress.

Claire replied that her distress had no apparent external cause. She added: "It's just me." However, she went on to say that perhaps the cause of her distress was what Bruce had said in the previous session: "You have the body of a 42 year old but the mind of a person in her 20's." Claire added that she had reached a "block wall." She said that she had talked previously with others about her past but that this time she had "come up against a wall." She said however, that she wanted to "get over this hurdle." Claire added that despite the number of counselling sessions (eight) which she had participated in with Bruce, it takes a long time for her to trust people.

Claire appeared agitated throughout the initial research interview. She seemed to find it difficult to complete the character sketch which she was asked to complete prior to the counselling session. Claire said that it was hard to know what positive things others might say about her. She appeared more relaxed towards the latter half of the interview prior to the counselling session.

Client Four (Ken)

Ken is a man aged 22 years. At the time of interviewing, Ken was also an outpatient at a hospital-based clinic for those with eating disorders. Ken said that hospital authorities had suggested that he attend the counselling agency in which Bruce is engaged in counselling practice. Ken was told that the hospital could not offer services similar to those offered at the counselling agency. He described himself as a self-referred client of the counselling agency.

Ken described the counselling session which was to follow as one of the weekly appointments which he has with Bruce. Five days prior to the research interview, Ken had completed what he described as a mood evaluation at the hospital clinic which he was attending regularly. He intended to discuss this event in the forthcoming counselling interview as he said he was "freaking out" about it.

Ken described himself as wanting to continue being "a little bizarre." Bruce later described Ken as an "anorexic." This client was being treated at an eating disorders clinic at the time of interviewing.

Therapist Three (Susan)

Susan is a female therapist aged 54 years. At the time of interviewing, Susan was engaged in counselling practice at a penal institution. In addition, she was employed as a lecturer in a counsellor education programme. Her education as a counsellor, included training as a marriage guidance counsellor under the direction of the New Zealand Marriage Guidance Counsellors' Association (now, MG). In addition, she is an experienced practitioner of transactional analysis. Susan added that she had attended a number of other courses relevant to counselling practice. She did not elaborate further. Susan had 16 years experience as a counsellor.

Susan described her counselling practice as primarily eclectic though she frequently employs techniques associated with a transactional analytic approach to therapy.

Client Five (David)

David is a man aged 33 years. At the time of interviewing David was in prison. The research interviews and subsequent counselling interviews took place in the penal institution.

David indicated that he had established a counselling relationship with Susan because he had felt "safe" with her in his initial interview (see researcher's notes). He had also felt encouraged by her. David added that he had received counselling prior to meeting Susan so that he had known what to expect and had felt comfortable from the time of first meeting her. David described himself as self-referred (see researcher's notes).

David said that he had come to see Susan at the time of interviewing, because he had received "positive feelings" from her and had wanted to talk to her about something. He did not elaborate.

David expected the counselling interview to involve more clarification and "probing" which he described as "doing the most good." In addition, he expected to develop more understanding of himself.

Susan indicated that all prisoners had an initial interview with the counsellor, irrespective of whether they requested such an interview. Of possible relevance, is that prisoners' participation in counselling is regarded very positively by prison authorities (D. Burns, private communication, 1992).

Client Six (Frank)

Frank is a man aged 27 years. At the time of interviewing Frank was in prison. The research interviews and subsequent counselling interviews took place in the penal institution. Frank said that he had initially participated in counselling because he had had a lot of problems through drug use which he needed to "sort out" (see researcher's notes). He described himself as self-referred.

Frank said that he had made an appointment to speak with Susan on the day of interviewing because he was soon to have a weekend home leave. This was only the second home leave he had had since beginning his current term of imprisonment. Frank also indicated that there were other things which he wished to talk about. He did not elaborate.

Frank described his expectations of the forthcoming counselling session as being to receive a boost in confidence.

As stated previously, Susan indicated that all prisoners had an initial interview with the counsellor, irrespective of whether they requested such an interview.

Therapist Four (Audrey)

Audrey is a female practitioner aged 51 years. Audrey is currently engaged in practice within a community counselling agency. Her education as a counsellor included completion of a Diploma in Social Work and completion of advanced training in transactional analysis. At the time of interviewing Audrey said she was training for certification as a clinical transactional analyst. She indicated that she had attended a number of counselling skills courses since 1973. Audrey had 16 years experience as a counsellor.

Audrey described her counselling practice as primarily influenced by principles of transactional analysis and cognitive behavioural approaches to psychotherapy. She added that her practice is however, often eclectic.

Client Seven (Joan)

Joan is a woman aged 37 years. Joan indicated that she had initially entered a counselling relationship with Audrey to receive some "healing" from the effects of sexual abuse as a child. She had received a recommendation to attend the counselling agency from a health professional.

Joan said that she had made an appointment to see Audrey at the time of interviewing to continue the "healing" process. She expected that the forthcoming interview would involve further increases in self-knowledge and further release of previously suppressed emotions. Joan anticipated that the session would result in more healing.

Joan presented as a person who was very supportive of her counsellor. She indicated that she got panicky if she found that Audrey was not at the agency.

Client Eight (Kay)

Kay is a woman aged 45 years. Kay indicated that her initial reason for participating in counselling had been to clear some of the "debris" which surrounded her last close relationship. She had, at that time, wanted some understanding of what had happened.

However, Kay's initial engagement in counselling had, according to her, led to "much more." Kay described herself as self-referred.

Kay said that her appointment with Audrey at the time of interviewing, was one of two which she would have during that week. She was engaged in bi-weekly counselling sessions. On this particular occasion she wanted to examine something more deeply. She did not elaborate on this comment.

Kay expected that the forthcoming counselling interview would provide her with an opportunity to become clearer about what she described as her "inherited patterns of behaviour." She also expected that she would take more responsibility for herself during the counselling interview. Kay added that she regarded her reluctance to accept responsibility for herself as "at the bottom of it all."

Setting

All interviews were conducted in the agencies or institutions where therapists usually engaged in counselling with the clients who participated in this research. Interviews with the researcher were usually conducted in the rooms where clients received counselling. All counselling interviews, which followed each initial research interview, were conducted in the rooms where clients usually received counselling.

Equipment

An audio-tape recorder and 90 minute chrome audio-tapes were used to record some research interviews.

Methodology

The methodology which I chose for this study had to enable me to acknowledge the professional obligations which the therapists who participated in this study had towards their clients. In addition, I needed to be sensitive to the verbally expressed psychological needs of clients who participated in the study. Hence the methodology used needed to be as non-intrusive as possible. In addition, I had to be able to respond, if necessary, to the needs of client-participants, without jeopardizing the validity of data being collected. In discussing the methodology employed in this research project, any reference hereon to counsellors or therapists, should be read as reference to therapist-participants. Similarly, any reference to clients hereon should be read as reference to client-participants. The procedures followed in the present study, for each group of participants, can be divided into four stages: initial interview, completion of character sketch, therapist-client interview, and final interview.

Initial therapist interview

The initial interview with therapists consisted of:

- i) An outline of the research process
- ii) Completion of the consent form (Appendix 1)
- iii) A brief structured interview (Appendix 2).

In the outline of the research process the following topics were discussed:

- .the purpose and possible outcomes of the project
- .the methodology to be employed with full information given as to their role in the research
- .the researcher's role in the conduct of the research
- .any information or materials which may arise from the study
- .the uses to which such information or materials may be put
(reference was made to the possible use of such information and materials in discussions with supervisors and other professional colleagues, in completion of the doctoral thesis and in possible academic presentations and/or publications)
- .ownership of the information and materials produced in the course of fieldwork
- .research reports which they will receive subsequent to completion of the research.

Though all this information was contained in the initial letter of information given to therapists, I discussed these topics briefly to ensure that therapists were fully informed about the research process. In addition, I gave therapists an opportunity to ask any questions which they may have wished to ask about the project.

The consent form was explained to each psychotherapist. In addition, therapists were given an opportunity to ask questions about the form. When therapists had given their consent to participate in the project, the consent form was signed and dated by the research participants and the researcher.

As indicated previously, therapists were asked to provide some demographic information in an initial structured interview. The therapist interview schedule, is provided in Appendix 2.

Therapists were asked to provide their name, age, and details of their training. They were also asked to indicate the number of years they had been practising as a therapist. Finally, they were asked to describe their practice orientation with possible examples given.

As suggested earlier, therapists were given an opportunity to provide written responses to the questions contained in the information sheets. However, most choose to give oral responses to verbal prompts given by the researcher. These responses were recorded in

writing by the researcher. Upon completion of this part of the interview, I read the recorded responses to the therapists to ensure that I had an accurate record of the answers they had given.

Therapist character sketch

When a therapist had completed a therapist information form, the therapist was invited to complete what Kelly (1955) describes as a character sketch of himself or herself.

The purpose of character sketches.

Kelly (1955) submits that the object of a character sketch is, "to see how the client structures a world in relation to which he must maintain himself in some kind of role" (p. 324). He adds:

The client is invited to lay down only those constructs with respect to which he identifies himself; not those which are irrelevant to the character of himself. Constructs which have to do with the way he solves arithmetic problems or repairs his car are not sought, except as he may choose to report them as being in some fashion related to a proper characterization of himself. (p. 325)

In this comment Kelly implies, but does not state, that when people are being asked to provide a character sketch, they are being asked to indicate their "role constructs." However, earlier discussion (Chapter Three) suggests that more accurately, Kelly is suggesting that people express their role constructions when they complete character sketches. Kelly expects people to express their role constructions, not the constructions which they may make using their peripheral constructs. Fransella and Bannister (1977) lend support to this conclusion. They suggest that character sketches focus particularly upon people's role constructions.

One of the objectives of this study is to investigate a possible relationship between how counsellors and their clients construe themselves prior to a counselling interview, and changes which may take place in clients' construing in the context of therapist-client interviews. Kelly's (1955) description of the data provided by character sketches suggests that character sketches given by participants in this study may indicate some of the ways in which they construe themselves. That is, research participants may indicate their role constructions when they complete character sketches of themselves. It is for this reason then that participants in this project were asked to complete personal character sketches.

Elicitation of character sketches.

Kelly (1955) suggests that psychotherapists should elicit by saying:

I want you to write a character sketch of (for example) Harry Brown, just as if he were the principal character in a play. Write it as it might be written by a friend who knew him very intimately and very sympathetically, perhaps better than anyone ever really could know him. Be sure to write in the third person. For example, start out by saying, "Harry Brown is...." (p. 323)

A similar prompt was used in this study to elicit character sketches from therapists, and their clients. Hence Kelly's comments with respect to the above prompt are of particular relevance here.

According to Kelly (1955), the above prompt encourages people to use their constructs to construe themselves. Kelly submits that the term "sketch" in the above verbal cue suggests that the response should include "structure" rather than "detailed elements" (p. 323). Kelly does not elaborate upon what he means by this statement. However, we could reasonably assume that Kelly is suggesting that when the verbal prompt is given, respondents are being asked to express only their superordinate role constructions. They are not being asked to express their subordinate role constructions.

Kelly (1955) submits that asking people to respond from the perspective of a third person encourages respondents to give a more complete view of themselves. Respondents are to make themselves more plausible (Kelly, 1955). Kelly indicates that the second sentence which begins, "Write it as it might have been written by a friend....," has been designed to provide people with the opportunity to see themselves in relation to others. He says that the "wholeness of the character sketch is important, rather than that the client should attempt to pick out certain things to confess or that he should attempt to catalogue his faults (p. 323).

According to Kelly (1955), the word "intimately" in the second sentence of the verbal prompt, has been chosen to indicate to respondents that they are being asked to give more than a superficial description of themselves. The term "sympathetically" has been used to indicate to respondents that they are to consider themselves acceptable (Kelly, 1955). According to Kelly, people completing character sketches are not asked to indicate what they are not or what they "ought to be" (p. 324). Kelly adds:

Some clients will feel, out of a respect for realism, that they are required to write a self-incriminating or threatening description of themselves. The term "sympathetically" helps unfreeze such a client from the paralysis that sometimes

accompanies the feeling of threat, and often lets him get on with the writing of the character sketch.

(p. 324)

The phrase "perhaps better than anyone ever really could know him" in the second sentence of the verbal prompt was chosen by Kelly to imply that respondents have permission to provide a description which is not necessarily similar to that which a friend might actually provide.

Respondents are not provided with a physical or social context in which they should locate their self-description by the words of Kelly's (1955) original prompt. Kelly suggests that respondents are not provided with such a context because they choose those contexts in which they construe themselves as distinguishable from others. According to Kelly, the contexts chosen by respondents will also indicate the contexts within which those respondents feel most secure about elaborating their personal constructs.

Kelly (1955) describes the structuring of his original verbal prompt as particularly important because it minimises the threat which frankness may pose for respondents. Kelly's subsequent comments suggest that here Kelly is referring to the meaning of the term "threat" as elaborated within the context of personal construct theory and discussed in a previous chapter. Kelly is suggesting that by structuring the prompt as he has done, respondents do not experience a need to change their role constructs in order to retain predictive validity of their construct systems. In other words, respondents are not being asked to construe themselves differently from the way in which they may usually construe themselves.

According to Kelly, most respondents should be able to construe themselves "intimately" and "sympathetically" without experiencing a need to change their constructs in order to do so. However, Kelly does acknowledge that people can experience threat when asked to construe themselves in this way. Some people, as in the case of one respondent (Claire) in the present study, do not construe themselves "sympathetically." That is, some people do not construe themselves to be what may commonly be termed, "acceptable." Hence, changes in the role constructs of such people would be necessary for those people were to construe themselves as acceptable. It is for this reason that some people may be threatened when they are asked to complete character sketches of themselves.

Elicitation of character sketches in the present study.

The procedure which was followed in this study closely approximates that suggested by Kelly (1955). However, as indicated earlier, the provision of character sketches did not, in this case, constitute part of the clinical interviews completed for this study.

Therapist character sketches were elicited using the following verbal prompt:

Could I ask you to tell me about (respondent's name) just as if he/she were the main character in a play. Try to speak as a friend who knows him/her very intimately and very sympathetically, perhaps better than anyone ever really knew him/her. Don't forget to speak as (respondent's name)'s friend. For example, you could start out by saying (respondent's name) is...."

The prompt used in this study is a slightly modified version of that suggested by Kelly. The phrase "could I ask you to tell me about...." replaces "I want you to write a character sketch of...." The modified opening phrase was used in preference to Kelly's opening as it suggests that what follows is an invitation, rather than a command. There is an implication that the research participant can choose whether to respond. However, Kelly makes the point that use of the term "character sketch" in the verbal prompt permits respondents more "latitude" in using their construct systems than does use of terms such as "self-description" (p. 323). I possibly provided participants with less discretion about what information they provided by not asking them to provide character sketches, than may have been the case had I used Kelly's original prompt to elicit character sketches. Hence, the omission of the term "character sketch" in the verbal prompt used to elicit character sketches here, will need to be considered in the analysis and discussion of data relevant to this thesis.

There is a second significant difference between the verbal prompt used by Kelly (1955) and that used in the present study. As indicated previously, Kelly suggests that clients should write their character sketches. The verbal cue used in this research project invites respondents to "tell" the interviewer about themselves. Respondents' oral replies were audio-taped, and their responses were transcribed, with respondents' written informed consent. The reasons for asking respondents to provide verbal responses are discussed in later discussion. However, it must be acknowledged that asking counsellors and their clients to provide oral self-characterisations, is a significant departure from Kelly's suggestion that respondents be asked to provide written self-characterisations. Research participants may have provided more comprehensive and detailed character sketches had they been asked to write them in advance of the interview. As suggested later however, there remains an element of doubt as to whether the character sketches provided would have been an accurate reflection of respondents' verbally represented constructions.

In the first sentence of the verbal cue used for the present study, the word "principal" in the first sentence of Kelly's original prompt has been substituted by the word "main." I referred to a person being a "main" character in a play in an attempt to make the language used in the present study accessible to all research participants.

The second sentence of Kelly's (1955) initial prompt has also been modified in the verbal prompt used here. Kelly said: "Write it (the character sketch) as it might be written

by a friend who knew him very intimately and very sympathetically, perhaps better than anyone ever really could know him." The change to: "Try to speak..." in the second sentence is appropriate given that a verbal expression of a person's self-characterisation is expected. However, the tense of the second sentence of Kelly's verbal prompt has been altered in the version of the prompt used in this study. As indicated earlier, Kelly regards the phrase "perhaps better than anyone ever really could know him," as freeing a person from having to respond in a way in which someone they know might respond. Nevertheless, an alternative construction of Kelly's reference to "a friend who knew him (the respondent)... perhaps better than anyone could know him," is possible. A respondent may construe Kelly's prompt to be referring to a particular friend who is now no longer geographically or, perhaps emotionally close, to that respondent. Hence, to avoid any possible confusion, each participant was asked to express his or her role constructions from the perspective of someone who is currently a friend. In this way I hoped to elicit participants' present role constructions.

Certainly there is a possibility that research participants may respond from the perspective of a particular person if they are asked to respond to the verbal prompt given earlier. Kelly (1955) suggests that this would be a undesirable outcome of the invitation to provide a self-characterisation. However, I hoped that the addition of the phrase "perhaps better than anyone ever really knew him/her" might prompt a respondent to speak from the perspective of an imaginary friend. Thus I hoped that the outcome of using the modified version of Kelly's prompt to elicit character sketches would be consistent with the outcome which Kelly considered appropriate.

As indicated previously, reference to "a friend" was retained within the modified prompt. Research participants were asked to respond from the perspective of a friend. They were not asked to express their self-characterisations either from their own, or someone else's, perspective. From previous experience in eliciting self-characterisations, this aspect of Kelly's invitation appears to be one of the most important aspects to retain in any modified version of his original prompt. Two years prior to the data collection phase of this study I had asked a group of 15 students who were completing a counsellor education course in a New Zealand university to provide personal character sketches. When the students had completed their character sketches, they expressed how "safe" they felt in engaging in the process. They attributed their "sense of security" to being asked to describe themselves from the perspective of a friend. In Kellian terms, asking research participants to respond from the perspective of a friend may reduce the likelihood of respondents experiencing "threat." Nevertheless, as indicated previously, this is not necessarily the case.

The final two sentences of the modified version of Kelly's original prompt, are a further attempt to express a request rather than a demand. Such an approach is, of course, consistent with statements made earlier to participants in this research. In these earlier

statements I indicated that all research participants could withdraw from the research process at any stage. In addition, the statement: "Don't forget to speak as (respondent's name)'s friend" was again an attempt to make the language used in the research process accessible to all participants. Kelly's (1955) reference to "the third person" assumes that people understand the common construction expressed in the words "the third person." Such an assumption cannot reasonably be made in the process of this study.

Finally, it will be evident that I took account of Kelly's (1955) suggestion that those invited to provide character sketches should not regard themselves as being constrained by references to any one physical or social context. In this study counsellors and their clients were given the opportunity to choose the contexts in which they expressed their verbal constructions of themselves.

Conditions of elicitation.

Kelly (1955) submits that psychotherapists should not ask their clients to provide character sketches of themselves until a considerable degree of rapport has been established with the clients. Hence, Kelly suggests that the introduction of character sketches as part of the therapeutic process probably should not take place until after a number of psychotherapeutic interviews have taken place. Fransella (1981) invites a client to provide a self-characterisation at the conclusion of the client's first interview with her but Davis, Stroud and Green (1989) suggest that character sketches should not be introduced as part of a research process until such time as a relaxed, respectful and trusting relationship has been established between interviewer and interviewee.

In the case of this study, therapists (and their clients) were asked to provide character sketches of themselves following completion of preliminary information sheets. There was little opportunity to establish rapport between myself and therapists in this study other than when therapists provided preliminary demographic information. However, it is likely that there was a greater degree of trust and respect between myself and the therapists who participated in the research than existed between myself and the clients who were involved in the study. I had personal and/or professional contact with all the therapists involved in the study prior to carrying out the research. However, I had neither known of, nor met, any of the clients involved in the research project prior to meeting with them to conduct and record the research-related interviews.

In contrast to Kelly (1955), Davis et al. (1989) asked participants in their study to provide oral self-characterisations. They suggest that writing is a burdensome activity for the people with whom they work. Davis et al. comment that their research participants are frequently from deprived families and have poor educational backgrounds. They therefore suggest that writing is a difficult activity to ask their research participants to engage in.

Participants in the present study were also asked to provide oral character sketches of themselves, rather than written character sketches. There were three reasons for asking participants in this project to complete verbal self-characterisations. Firstly, my experience as a counsellor suggested that, as Davis et al. (1989) indicate, therapists and their clients may regard writing character sketches as burdensome. Writing is more time-consuming than talking and demands more careful attention be given to the way in which one expresses oneself. More importantly however, a client may regard writing a character sketch as an activity which is associated with a feeling of inadequacy. Writing about oneself requires knowledge as to how to express one's verbalised thoughts in writing. Speaking about oneself requires knowledge only of how to speak.

Given the aforementioned educational background of the therapists who participated in the research, it is likely that the therapists involved in this study would have had few negative reactions to being asked to write about themselves particularly. However, I could not presume that the clients who were to participate in this study would have similar educational backgrounds to their therapists. Moreover, even if they had, clients seek counselling with the knowledge that counselling involves the use of spoken language. It is therefore reasonable to assume that the clients who participated in this study, had some confidence in their ability to speak about themselves. However, prior to conducting and recording the research interviews for this study, I could not assume that the clients who participated in the project possessed a similar degree of confidence in their ability to write about themselves.

There was an important second reason for asking participants in this study to provide verbal, rather than written self-characterisations. Earlier discussion suggests that clients may be more limited in their ability to express themselves in writing, than they are in their ability to express themselves verbally. Should this be the case, written responses to the initial cue to elicit character sketches from clients, may contain less information than would be contained in their verbal responses. If participants had been asked to give their responses in writing, clients' responses may have been limited by their ability to translate their verbally represented constructions into written expressions of those constructions. Certainly, therapists might have been asked to provide written character sketches. However, consistency in the way in which character sketches were elicited was essential for later analysis and comparison of therapist and client character sketches.

A third reason for asking therapists (and their clients) to respond verbally to a given prompt is that the provision of a verbal response is less time-consuming than the provision of a written response. In each instance, the therapists involved in the study were voluntarily giving their time to participate in the research project. Nevertheless, any time spent not engaged in counselling, was an expense to their respective employers. Hence, the

maintenance of goodwill with respect to the therapists and their agencies was dependent upon the research process taking as little time as was reasonably possible. Clients too, were voluntarily giving their time to the research project. It was also reasonable to assume that all clients involved in the study were preoccupied with their thoughts related to the subject of their forthcoming counselling interviews. Hence, it was important that clients received access to their counsellors as soon as possible. There were also time constraints imposed by therapists' scheduling of their clients which meant that clients had to attend their counselling interviews at the appointed times. Thus a research procedure which required minimal time commitment on the part of participants, was certainly desirable in this study. Asking therapists and their clients to provide verbally expressed character sketches, rather than written character sketches, was an example of such a procedure.

As suggested earlier, therapists (and clients) could have been asked to provide written character sketches prior to my meeting with them to conduct and record the research interviews. However, under such circumstances, I would not have had first-hand knowledge of the way in which this phase of the research process had been carried out. Moreover, it is unlikely that I could have confidently assumed that each character sketch had been carried out by the research participant concerned without assistance from, or consultation with, another person.

In summary, there were some positive outcomes of asking research participants to complete oral self-characterisations. Nevertheless, there are some subsequent disadvantages associated with the analysis and interpretation of character sketches which were completed orally. These disadvantages are discussed later.

Davis et al. (1989) suggest that the characteristics of a research interviewer and his or her interactions with an interviewee can affect the way in which people respond to invitations to provide self-characterisations. It is highly likely that respondents in this study were similarly affected by my personal characteristics and my interactions with them. Indeed, this section of the report must take such a possibility into account if the theoretical position developed earlier is to have application to the data collected. Kellian theory suggests that research participants may play a role in a social process involving researchers. That is, participants may act according to their constructions of the constructions which researchers express. In the case of the present study then, participants' responses to the verbal and nonverbal cues which I gave to them may well have followed from their constructions of my personal constructions. It was therefore important that during this phase of the study, I conveyed few, if any expectations as to the responses I might receive from participants. I did however, provide minimal encouragers such as "Mm-mm," "Yes," "Oh," to participants as they gave their self-characterisations. It is likely that respondents would have construed my

responses as affirming what they were saying. As will be evident later, this possibility must be taken into account in any subsequent analysis of collected data.

Unlike the interviewers in Davis et al.'s (1989) study, I did not interrupt respondents as they completed their character sketches. To have done so would have meant that there would have been a marked lack of standardisation in the research interviews. I did however, provide a prompt when respondents appeared to have completed their self-characterisations, as did the interviewers in Davis et al.'s study. This was usually a version of the question: "Is there anything else you would like to add?" In addition, I sometimes expressed the same phrases which respondents had expressed previously, to prompt the respondents to continue.

In conclusion, the elicitation conditions which applied in this study differed in some respects from those conditions which Kelly (1955) suggests should apply when one is eliciting character sketches. There is nevertheless, a similarity between those conditions which applied here, and those conditions under which research participants completed self-characterisations in Davis et al.'s (1989) study. Notably, in the present study, research participants were asked to provide character sketches of themselves at the time of the research interview. The audio-tapes of the elicited self-characterisations were subsequently transcribed. Research participants in this study did not have an opportunity to give prior thought to how they would express their self-characterisations. In addition, participants did not have an opportunity to present written character sketches.

Initial client interview

The initial interview with clients consisted of:

- i. An outline of the research process
- ii. Completion of the consent form (Appendix 3)
- iii. A brief structured interview (Appendix 4).

Stages i) and ii) of my initial interviews with clients were identical to stages i) and ii) of the initial therapist interviews. In the outline of the research process the following topics were discussed:

- .the purpose and possible outcomes of the project
- .the methodology to be employed with full information given as to their role in the research
- .the researcher's role in the conduct of the research
- .any information or materials which may arise from the study
- .the uses to which such information or materials may be put
(reference was made to the possible use of such information and materials in discussions with supervisors and other professional colleagues, in completion of the doctoral thesis and in possible academic presentations and/or publications)

.ownership of the information and materials produced in the course of fieldwork
.research reports which they will receive subsequent to completion of the research.

As indicated previously, clients were also asked to provide some demographic information in an initial structured interview. The client interview schedule, is provided in Appendix 4. Clients were asked to provide their name, age, and reasons for initially seeing the therapist. They were also asked to indicate whether they had been referred to the therapist or the counselling agency and if so, by whom. In addition, clients were asked their reasons for coming to see the therapist. I anticipated that clients' reasons for coming would influence the content of the counselling session. It was possible too, that clients' comments at the conclusion of the counselling interview, would refer to their initial reasons for coming to see the therapist.

In the initial interview clients were also asked to indicate what they expected "to happen" during the forthcoming counselling session. This phrase was vague in order to provide an opportunity for clients to choose how they would respond. I anticipated that clients' responses might refer to the reasons for them initially seeking counselling. I expected that some reference would be made to clients' previously stated reasons for coming to counselling on the day of the research interviews. I also expected that clients' responses to this last question would be based, at least in part, upon previous experiences which clients had of being counselled by the therapist who was involved in the research. However, I must acknowledge that my expectations were based upon the personal meanings which I give to the words I used in designing these questions. Clients may not have construed the final two questions in the client information sheets in the same way as I did. Indeed, clients' responses suggested that in some instances, at least, clients did not interpret the final questions of the interview schedule as I had expected.

Clients, like therapists who participated in this study, were given an opportunity to provide written responses to the questions contained in the interview schedules. However, most clients choose to give oral responses to the verbal prompts provided. These responses were recorded in writing by the researcher and clients given an opportunity to indicate whether the recorded responses were an accurate representation of what they had said.

It is important to note that the initial client interviews provided me with the first opportunity to meet clients whom therapist-participants had selected to participate in the study. I had asked the therapists contributing to the study to invite clients to participate who, in the therapists' professional judgement, they considered would be unharmed by the research process. The occasion of the research interviews then provided me with the first opportunity to establish rapport with the client-participants. The theoretical position adopted here suggests that all participants' responses were likely to have been influenced by constructions

which participants had of me throughout the data collection phase of the research. Since I had not previously met those clients who participated in this research, I tried to ensure that I was sensitive to the clients' expressed psychological needs. At the time of interviewing, most, if not all, client-participants had come to the place where the fieldwork was to be conducted, primarily for counselling. I could have unwittingly contributed to any distress that these clients may have experienced if I had not attempted to be sensitive to the psychological needs of those clients who participated in the research study.

Client Character Sketch

The procedure used for this stage of the research process was identical to that used in my interviews with the therapists who participated in the project. Hence, no further details are provided of this stage here.

Therapist-client Interview

At the conclusion of each set of initial interviews and self-characterisations, each therapist and client pair participated in a therapeutic interview. Each therapeutic interview had been previously scheduled by the client's therapist in response to a request from the client. However, the clients who took part in the study, had agreed to participate in the project prior to my arrival at the place where they were to receive counselling.

Each therapist-client interview was taped using an audio-cassette recorder with a 90 minute cassette. There were two advantages of this item of equipment which were of importance in this phase of the data collection. Firstly, the recorder was able to record a dialogue using an internal, rather than an external, microphone. Secondly, the recorder was able to automatically rewind to allow the recording of a full 60 minute counselling session without a person needing to turn the tape to permit recording on both sides of the tape. Both attributes of the recorder used here proved advantageous as the process of recording each interview was not as intrusive as it could otherwise have been.

In order to record a counselling interview each therapist was asked to put the audio-tape recorder, with a 90 minute cassette tape inside, in a position which enabled the recording of the dialogue between therapist and client. Therapists were asked to press the "play" and "record" buttons on the machine at the start of each interview, and to press the "stop" button on the recorder at the conclusion of an interview. Therapists did not, however, need to divert their attention from their clients during counselling.

As will become evident in later chapters there were some problems associated with the use of this audio-tape recorder. Despite careful instructions to therapists with regard to the use of the recorder, not all therapists involved in the study placed the recorder in positions which enabled the conversation of both parties to be recorded. In addition, not all clients

spoke clearly. For example, one client (Claire) had a speech impediment. Another client (Ken) spoke very quietly and frequently had his hand over his mouth in the research interviews. The poor sound quality of his contributions in the preliminary, and final, research interviews, suggests that he also spoke quietly, and with his hand over his mouth, in the counselling interviews.

Difficulties which clients had in expressing themselves at times during the data collection phase are understandable given that few, if any of those clients who participated in the research, had taken part in previous similar studies. Though I had given clients written and oral indications of what would take place during the course of the research, clients had not previously participated in similar research projects. In addition, we can reasonably expect that clients involved in this study were often expressing thoughts and feelings which they usually kept private, or expressed to only a few close associates. Some clients may not have felt confident in the expression of these thoughts and emotions within the context of the study. Any lack of confidence in such expression, may have been evident in speech which was recorded at a low volume. Given this brief discussion, one might reasonably expect that similar problems would have been associated with the recording of clients' speech irrespective of the recorder used.

Final interview

Understanding clients' experiences.

One of the aims of the present study is to demonstrate the place of construction validation, and construction invalidation, in client construct system change. In order to do this points of client psychological change within therapeutic interactions must be identified. As Elliot and James (1989) indicate client experience can be studied from three different perspectives. They suggest that the perspectives of clients, therapists and nonparticipant observers can contribute to our understanding of client experience. According to Elliot and James, each of these perspectives has strengths and weaknesses. They suggest that clients have "privileged access" to certain areas of the counselling process, including the "felt quality" (Elliot & James, 1989, p. 445) of the relationship, and their immediate reactions to therapeutic interventions and events. Elliot and James add that where information about meaning of therapy is sought, clients may be the only accurate source of information. This statement certainly holds true if the meaning of therapy refers to clients' constructions of the counselling which they receive. Clients are more likely to be able to express constructions which are similar to those constructions which they have previously expressed, than others.

Elliot and James (1989) go on to suggest that clients can also provide contextual information which will clarify the meaning of a psychotherapeutic experience. They suggest that clients can indicate the beginning and end of personal psychotherapeutic experiences.

In addition, Elliot and James submit that clients can identify links between their experiences that might not be observable to others.

Clients may however, be imperfect sources of information (Elliot & James, 1989). According to Elliot and James clients may not be conscious of, or may not remember, particular therapeutic events. In Kellian terms, clients may not be able to express their previous constructions of previous reality. Elliot and James go on to suggest that clients' reports may be biased by such factors as preexisting beliefs and ideas and situational cues. However, previous discussion (Chapter Two) suggests that clients' constructions of therapeutic events must be accepted as comprising accurate expressions of clients' constructions. These constructions, of course, follow from clients' use of their pre-existing constructs to construe events. Hence, the suggestion by Elliot and James that clients' reports may be biased by clients pre-existing beliefs and ideas, is consistent with the theoretical position adopted here. Other people may construe what takes place in therapy differently. However, others cannot know better than the client, how a client construes a particular therapeutic event.

Therapists make up the second group of people whom Elliot and James (1989) suggest may have useful perspectives upon clients' therapeutic experiences. Elliot and James submit that therapists have access to client nonverbal cues which, in the case of audio-taped interviews, observers may not. In addition, Elliot and James, writing in a North American context, suggest that therapists have detailed knowledge of client backgrounds and are trained in careful description of psychological states. Hence, they submit that therapists may be able to infer client experiences which clients may be unwilling, or unable, to express. Of relevance to the present study is that few professional therapists in New Zealand are trained in what Elliot and James describe as the "careful description of psychological states" (p. 446). New Zealand-trained therapists however, often have some familiarity with different psychological states through their professional practice. Hence, they too, may be able to infer client experiences not expressed by clients.

Nonparticipant observers comprise the third group of people whom Elliot and James (1989) suggest can provide impressions of therapeutic processes. Elliot and James suggest that one of the primary advantages of referring to observers' perspectives is that observers can make repeated or multiple observations. They add that direct reports of client experiences may not be possible. Under such circumstances observers' descriptions may have relevance. Elliot and James conclude their discussion of client experiences by suggesting that an ideal research strategy would use multiple perspectives. That is, researchers should refer to the perspectives of clients, their therapists and the perspectives of nonparticipant observers.

The present study refers to the perspectives of clients and their therapists, to gain a better understanding of clients' therapeutic experiences. In addition, reference is made to the perspective of the researcher. More accurately, reference is made to the verbally expressed

constructions of the participants, and the researcher, in an effort to understand clients' experiences. In addition, the constructions of clients, therapists and the researcher are referred to here, in an attempt to understand the process of psychotherapy.

Units of client experience.

Elliot and James (1989) propose three units of client experience which may be studied: 1) the whole process (all counselling sessions); 2) single sessions, and 3) in-session events. The previously outlined purposes of the present study suggest that a focus upon single sessions and in-session events may be appropriate here. A detailed study of single sessions may provide evidence of the predictive validity of the theoretical description of counselling offered earlier. In addition, a study of single sessions and in-session events may provide evidence of a relationship between the outcomes of single sessions and particular in-session events. The in-session events which are studied may be occasions when clients identify themselves as having experienced significant psychological change. If this is the case, evidence may be provided which demonstrates the contribution which validation and invalidation of clients' constructions may make to changes in clients' construct systems. Thus, by studying single sessions and in-session events, a relationship may be demonstrated between validation and invalidation of clients' constructions, and single session outcomes.

Elliot and Shapiro (1988) suggest that research which focuses upon in-session events which clients identify as points of significant change, will ultimately have more practice relevance than research which attempts to link process with outcomes across entire counselling interventions. They submit that research within an "Events Paradigm" (p. 141) has four features: 1) focus upon clinically significant change events; 2) simplification by confining investigation to "relatively homogenous classes of significant event (e.g., insight events)" (p. 141); 3) description of therapeutic sequences within sessions, and 4) the development of "'clinical microtheories'" (p. 141) as a clinical goal.

According to Elliot and James (1989) there are three major advantages of studying in-session events. Firstly, they suggest that client experiences can be related to what takes place within a counselling session. For example, transcriptions of audio-taped interviews could be related to clients' stated experiences of particular in-session events. Secondly, Elliot and James submit that clients can provide information which may increase our understanding of the effects of particular therapeutic interventions. Thirdly, clients' reports are not "contaminated" by events subsequent to therapy. In contrast, we might reasonably expect that clients' reports, made sometime after one or more counselling sessions, would be influenced by their experiences both during, and subsequent to, each counselling session.

The previously discussed practice relevancy of in-session event research and the advantages attributed by Elliot and James (1989) to studies of in-session events, suggested that

I would be justified in using a methodology consistent with an events paradigm. Importantly too, such a methodology has construct validity in the present study since it permits the researcher to make reference to the verbalised constructions of all research participants. For these reasons then the methodology employed in the present study was largely consistent with the Events Paradigm outlined by Elliot and Shapiro (1988). The procedures adopted focus upon points of significant change within single counselling sessions which are identified by clients. This study also considers points of client change identified by therapists. Possible relationships which may exist between points of client change, identified by clients and therapists, and the process of psychotherapy, are also examined. In addition, this study provides a description of therapeutic sequences both within identified in-session events and prior to, and after such events.

Procedures

The procedures followed in this phase of the present study are similar to those outlined by Elliot and Shapiro (1988) in their discussion of a method for studying significant therapy events. Elliot and Shapiro propose a method which enables clients to make tape-assisted recollections of counselling sessions. They suggest that the advantage of such a method is that researchers can access clients' intentions, feelings and the immediate impact of interventions upon clients. However, Elliot and Shapiro indicate that there are practical limitations in any method which requires clients to review tapes of entire counselling sessions. Hence, they propose a method which overcomes these limitations. The method used in this phase of the present study is based upon Elliot and Shapiro's (1988) method. However, the procedures adopted here are not entirely consistent with Elliot and Shapiro's method for studying significant events. Unlike Elliot and Shapiro's research project, this study is not an investigation of those interventions which clients considered most helpful. Rather, this study focuses upon those in-session events which clients associate with significant personal psychological change.

Details of procedures

Client interviews.

1. As indicated previously, the methodology employed in this study was designed not only to be valid for the collection of data but also to be sensitive to the needs and interests of the research participants. Hence at the beginning of the final interview with each client I asked the following question:

"How did you feel about the session?"

This was not a question designed to elicit a response for data-collection purposes. Rather this question was designed to engage clients after their counselling sessions by asking them to express their feelings about the experience they had immediately prior to meeting with me. In addition, asking this question and responding to clients' responses, enabled me to keep clients engaged while rewinding the audio-tape of the preceding counselling interview.

2. Each client was then asked the following question:

"Can I ask you to describe any points in the session when you felt something significant took place for you?"

Some elaboration of this question was provided if clients seemed uncertain as to the meaning of the question. Usually this question was elaborated by a question such as: "Can I ask you to describe any points in the session when you gained a better understanding of yourself?"

Admittedly, the theoretical position adopted here suggests that all questions may have been construed somewhat differently by all participants. The reliability of the methodology used here, is limited. In the case of the question above, there is no way that I can be certain that clients described points in the interview where "significant personal psychological change" took place. Previous chapters have referred to points of psychological change as being occasions when people revise their construct systems and reconstrue events. However, there are understandably major difficulties associated with translating this theoretical concept of psychological change into language which enables a researcher to ascertain whether such change has taken place for another person. There are even greater difficulties associated with attempts to elicit details from clients as to where, in a previous counselling interview, such changes may have occurred. Assuming that clients can identify such occasions, there is also a strong possibility that clients will not agree as to what constitutes "significant psychological change." Hence, this and all other aspects of the final client (and therapist) interviews, has limited construct validity.

Elliot and Shapiro (1988) asked clients to write a brief account of "the most helpful event" (p. 144) in a particular session. In this study, clients could also have been asked to provide a written account of in-session events which were significant for them. However, some clients may have been limited in their ability to express their thoughts in writing. In addition, there were time constraints upon all the interviews I had with clients and their therapists. Hence, clients were asked to respond orally to this question. I recorded these responses in writing.

3. Each client was then asked the following questions in the order given here:

"At which one of these points did the most significant change take place for you?"

"Can you tell me why that point in the interview was so significant?"

Again, if an elaboration of either question was necessary, this was provided. Just as question 2, above, could have been construed differently by clients, these questions too, may have been construed differently by respondents.

4. I then said:

"I'd like you now to help me find the beginning of the point in the interview where that significant change took place."

5. Following the above instruction, I followed a method suggested by Elliot and Shapiro (1988) for tape-assisted recall. I wound the audio-tape of the previous counselling session forward, stopping at regular intervals of 100 tape counter units to play enough of the audio-tape to enable the client to determine whether the significant event had been located, was yet to come, or had been passed.

Once some part of the significant event had been located, the audio-tape was rewound, if necessary, to locate the point at which the client construed the beginning of the significant event occurred. I noted the tape counter numbers and key words before playing the relevant section of the tape to the client. During the playback of the section I recorded words and phrases which I considered may have relevance later in the research interview. At the point at which the client said the event had concluded, I stopped the tape, again noting the counter numbers and key words.

6. At the conclusion of the client-identified significant event on the audio-tape, another tape was added to the audio-tape recorder. This second tape was used to record the client's responses to the following question:

"Is there anything about this piece of the interview that you hadn't recalled earlier but which seems important to you now?"

7. The interview continued with me asking questions about words or phrases expressed by the client during the previously played event. The questions asked at this point, followed procedures first used by Hinkle (1965) and Landfield (1971) and used more recently by Walker (1988).

Hinkle suggested that if personal constructs are hierarchically arranged, as Kelly (1955) suggests, superordinate constructs may be elicited by asking questions such as, "why would you prefer ... as opposed to...." This procedure is termed "laddering." Adams-Webber (1979) provides a useful example of this technique. He suggests that a person A, might ask another person B, why he prefers to be "outgoing" rather than "reserved." In this case, the words "outgoing" and "reserved" are words which B has previously used. Adams-Webber suggests that such a question usually elicits another construct which is superordinate to the first construct. So, in this case, Adams-Webber suggests that B may say that people who are "outgoing" are more "interested in others," as he construes himself to be. On the other hand, B may say that "reserved people," tend to be "wrapped-up in themselves," which he does not construe himself to be. According to Adams-Webber, in this example two constructs have been elicited. These are expressed in the words "outgoing"- "reserved" and "interested in others"- "wrapped-up in themselves."

Landfield (1971) outlined a different procedure for eliciting subordinate constructs. He proposed that subordinate constructs could be elicited by a procedure called "pyramiding." This technique involves asking questions such as, "what kind of person is ...?" and "what kind of person is not...?" For example, Landfield suggests that a person A, might ask another person B, "what kind of person is not an open guy?" Person B may respond by saying, "a closed one." Person A may then ask B, "what more can you tell me about an open guy?" Person B may say, " he is willing to listen to you." To elicit the second pole of the second verbalised construct, A may ask B, "what kind of guy doesn't listen to you?" Person B may reply by saying, " somebody who is not interested in you." Landfield suggests that this process can be repeated in order to elicit more constructs subordinate to the initial construct expressed in the words: "open guy-closed one."

More recently, Walker (1988) employs laddering and pyramiding techniques to examine Kelly's (1955) verbalised constructions of the relationship between construing individuals and other people. In the present study these techniques are also used together.

The words and phrases which I had recorded earlier when listening to a section of the audio-taped counselling interview, were the key words and phrases used to elicit further constructs from clients. I construed the chosen words and phrases as ones which would enable me to elicit constructs which might have relevance in the analysis of the counselling interview. In addition, I thought that the chosen words and phrases may have relevance in the analysis of those sections of the counselling interview which clients (and their therapists) regarded as significant for the clients.

At this point of the client interview then, I said:

"During the interview, I noticed...."

The above introductory statement was followed by me asking such questions as:

"Why would you prefer to...as opposed to...? (laddering)

and

"What kind of person is not a..?"

"What kind of person is a..?"

"Can you tell me something about a..?"

"How do you know if something is a..? (pyramiding)

Needless to say, this was a difficult procedure to carry out well, as will be discussed later. Moreover, a major limitation of this procedure was that the words and phrases chosen as the basis for eliciting constructs in this way, were construed by me, not the client-participant, as relevant.

8. If there was an opportunity, steps 3 to 7 were repeated with respect to a second segment of the audio-taped counselling interview, in which the client indicated that a significant change had taken place for him or her. Few clients however, identified more than one significant point of change. In addition, if a second event was examined, it was one in which the client considered there had been a personal change which was less significant than that which occurred in the first event.

9. Finally, the following questions were asked:

"Are there any comments you would like to make about the process we have been engaged in?"

"Do you have any questions or concerns that you would like to raise at this point?"

Both questions were designed to give clients an opportunity to comment upon their participation in the research project, and to make any recommendations to me about the procedures which I had followed. In addition, I wished to provide clients with an opportunity to ask any questions or express any concerns which may have arisen during the course of their participation in the study.

10. I concluded each interview by expressing my thanks to clients for their participation in the study.

Therapist interviews.

The procedure followed for the final interviews with the therapist-participants was similar to that followed for the final client-participant interviews.

1. At the beginning of the final interview with each therapist I asked the following question:

"How did you feel about the session?"

As in the case of the preceding client interview, this question provided me with an opportunity to engage the research participants at a personal level before asking questions more directly related to the subject of the study.

2. Each therapist was then asked the following question:

" Can I ask you to describe any points in the session when you thought something significant may have taken place for your client?"

This question was designed with the intention that respondents might have constructions of the question which would be similar to that construction which I expressed in the verbal content of the question. However, as indicated in the previous section, questions such as question 2 above, may not be particularly useful as means of eliciting people's constructions of occasions when significant psychological change may have taken place for themselves or others. The responses of therapists who took part in this study illustrated this problem. The first therapist who participated in the study, T1, responded to question 2 above, by suggesting three possible types of events which may have been significant for a client: 1) events which may have been identified by the client as personally significant; 2) events which the therapist may identify as having had possible therapeutic significance for the client and, 3) events which the therapist may identify as having had significance for him or her. Though T1's response to the second question was unexpected, I continued my interview with T1 and explored each of three types of events which she had identified. The data collected from this interview proved to be of considerable importance to this study.

The responses of some other therapists to this second question also departed from the type of response which I had expected. All therapists identified events in the audio-tape when significant personal changes may have taken place for their clients. However, some therapists also identified occasions in which they considered changes took place for their clients which the therapists considered to be therapeutically significant.

A point worth noting here, is that despite my intention to be detached in the process of collecting data, I had difficulty in remaining personally uninvolved in this part of the research process. Often the segments of the audio-taped counselling interview which therapists identified as significant (for their clients or themselves) were similar to the segments identified by their clients as significant for them. I had anticipated that there may be some concurrence of views based upon my research and practice experience. However, I was cautious in my assumptions, particularly given that some research (e.g., Elliot and James, 1989) suggests that therapists and their clients may have different perspectives with regard to counselling interactions. In addition, other experienced therapists whom I had spoken to prior to beginning the data-collection phase of the study, were sceptical as to whether clients could identify any occasions within counselling sessions when they had experienced personal psychological change. These therapists also did not expect clients and therapists to have similar views about points of significant therapeutic client change. Nevertheless, most therapists who participated in the study were keen to know whether events which they considered were significant for their clients, or personally or professionally significant for them, were similar to events which clients had identified as personally significant. Hence, when a therapist who participated in this study appeared to share the view of his or her client as to what aspect of a counselling interview was significant, I often unwittingly affirmed the therapist's comments.

3-7. The questions which followed were identical to those asked in steps 3 to 7 of the final client interview, outlined previously. In some instances, however, time constraints, imposed by the therapist's schedule, prevented me from following steps 3 to 7 with respect to therapist-identified events, which were different to those which clients had identified as significant for them. This was a particularly disappointing aspect of this study as I considered that some important information could have been derived from investigating these events further. In some instances then, steps 3-7 were omitted.

8. This step was followed if I had been able to follow steps 3 to 7 with respect to a therapist-event which was different to the one which the therapist's client had previously identified as significant for him or her. I also followed this step if steps 3-7 had been omitted.

I rewound, or wound forward the audio-tape of the relevant therapist-client interview to the beginning of the event which the therapist's client had identified as being the event in which he or she had experienced "significant personal change." The segment of the tape containing the event was then played back to the therapist. During this time I recorded words and phrases which I considered may have relevance later in the research interview.

9. Each therapist was then asked the following questions in the order given:

"Can I ask you to describe what was taking place here..?"

"What changes, if any, do you think may have been taking place for your client at this time..?"

"What changes, if any, were taking place for you during this part of the session..?"

The word "changes" in each of the two questions above, referred to "psychological changes." This implicit meaning of the word was made explicit to therapist-participants at the time of the research interview.

The above questions were followed by the following question and subsequent comment:

"Can I ask you a little bit about your interaction with your client? During the interview I noticed..."

The above question and comment preceded the use of laddering and pyramiding techniques as detailed in step 7 of the final client interview.

10. Finally, the following questions were asked:

"Are there any comments you would like to make about the process we have been engaged in?"

"Do you have any questions or concerns that you would like to raise at this point?"

11. I concluded each interview by expressing my thanks to therapists for their participation in the study.

Principles of Analysis

During the fieldwork of this study, data was collected from three sources. Research interviews conducted with four therapists and eight clients prior to therapists and clients engaging in psychotherapy provided the character sketches which comprised the first source of data. The therapeutic interviews conducted between the therapists and their clients provided the second source of data. The final source of data for this study was provided by the research interviews conducted subsequent to the counselling sessions between therapists

and their clients. In the following discussion the principles used in the analysis of collected data are elaborated and discussed. First, analysis of the character sketches completed by therapists, and their clients, is considered. Second, the process by which the transcription of a single therapeutic interview may be analysed is described. Finally, analysis of the post-therapeutic interviews is discussed.

Analysis of Character Sketches

Russell (1989) proposes a model of investigative decision-making which he suggests should be applied in the analysis of data related to counselling process research. According to Russell his model of decision-making suggests that: a) language texts are interpreted according to implicit or explicit theories; b) units, categories, descriptions of data and explanations of data should be consistent with the rationale linking theories of process and language; and c) units and categories chosen for data analysis are not only methodologically significant but are also theoretically significant since these structure what is observed. It is this model which informed the development of the analytical procedure used in the analysis of transcribed self-characterisations in the present study. Hence, in the following section the relationship between people's oral language and the theoretical position elaborated earlier will be discussed. In later sections, the units of analysis will be described and the categories used in the analysis of transcribed sketches indicated. The units of analysis will be shown to be consistent with the relationship already demonstrated between people's oral language and the theoretical position elaborated previously. The categories will be shown to have wide application across all units identified from the transcribed character sketches. Hence the selected categories too, may be assumed to have relevance in the analysis of data collected in the present study.

Expressions of role constructions and role construct poles.

Kelly (1955) says that when people complete character sketches of themselves (self-characterisations) they express their role constructions. People's role constructions are the similarities which people perceive between present reality and parts of previously construed reality. People perceive present reality to be similar to those parts of previously construed reality which comprise the elements of a "like" construct pole. When similarity is perceived between people and elements of a "like" construct pole, the constructs used to construe present reality are described as "role constructs." The constructions which follow from the use of these role constructs are in turn, described as people's "role constructions." Now the similarities which people perceive between themselves and elements of "like" role construct poles, or others and elements of "like" role construct poles, are also the perceived similarities of existing

elements of the "like" role construct pole. Thus expressions of people's role constructions are also expressions of the similarities between elements of "like" role construct poles.

Expressions of role constructions may then be described as suggesting those elements which comprise single role construct poles. They do not explicitly indicate elements of single role construct poles. However, expressions of people's role constructions suggest those elements which make up the role construct poles containing elements which are similar to presently construed reality. Thus, to return to a previous example (Chapter Three), Jo may construe similarity between Sandra and a person, Jane, whom Jo construed previously. Jo may express the similarity which she perceives between Sandra and Jane in the word, "competent." In this instance, the word, "competent" is an expression of Jo's role construction. The word, "competent" also expresses the similarity between Jane and other previously construed elements which make up the "like" role construct pole. Thus the word "competent" refers to those other people who are elements of one pole of the role construct which Jo uses to construe Sandra. The word "competent" then is an expression of Jo's role construction. In addition, the word "competent" is an expression of the "like" pole of that construct which is used to construe present reality.

Thus, to return to previous discussion, character sketches which people may complete of themselves, include expressions of people's role constructions. In addition, people's self-characterisations include expressions of construct poles which are "like" poles of those constructs which people use to construe themselves in relation to others. Put another way, people's self-characterisations also include expressions of those role construct poles which contain elements to which people perceive themselves to be similar. Analysis of people's self-characterisations then involves identification of expressions of those personal construct poles containing elements to which people construe themselves to be similar. In short, analysis of people's self-characterisations involves identification of expressions of people's role construct "like" poles. Discussion in the two following sections outlines the process by which these expressions may be identified.

Units of analysis.

Following from the above discussion, the unit of analysis for the present study is "the verbal expression of a personal role construct pole." This unit is defined as:

A transcribed utterance which describes:

- a. a feeling of the speaker
- b. an attribute of the speaker
- c. inferred behaviour by the speaker.

Identification of expressions of personal role construct poles.

Kelly (1955) does not provide an explicit list of instructions for therapists or researchers who may wish to identify expressions of construct poles from written or transcribed character sketches. Nevertheless, Kelly does suggest a procedure for initial analysis of self-characterisations which is similar to that outlined by Davis, Stroud and Green (1989). In a recent article, Davis et al. (1989) suggest that construct poles of research participants can be identified by following instructions with respect to a transcribed character sketch which are similar to those provided below.

The following instructions have been adapted from Davis et al. (1989) and have been used in this study to identify expressions of role construct poles.

1. List separately any word or phrase describing the research participant, his or her feelings, experiences or inferred behaviour.
2. Do not repeat a description which is given more than once in identical, or almost identical, words, in the list. Indicate how many times each description is given in identical, or almost identical, words (if more than once), in parentheses after the description.
3. Descriptions that are thought to be similar in meaning by the reader but expressed in different words by the research participant, should be listed separately.
4. Do not include qualifying adjectives or adverbs unless these are necessary to convey the apparent meaning of a word or phrase. For example, in the case of the phrase, "lots of fun" the complete phrase is listed. However, in the case of the phrase, "fairly driven," only the word "driven" is listed.
5. When two descriptions are implied, but only one is stated, the two descriptions should be written separately. Omitted words are indicated by use of three ellipsis points (...). For example, Bruce (T2) says that he is "wanting and becoming to be clearer." In this instance, the role construct poles should be written as:

"wanting ... to be clearer"

"becoming to be clearer."

As indicated previously, these guidelines for identifying role construct poles from people's self-characterisations are consistent with Kelly's theory of personal constructs and the theoretical position underpinning this study.

Inter-rater reliability of the application of guidelines used to identify role construct poles.

In the present study there was an inter-rater reliability of 85.2% in the application of these guidelines to the analysis of four transcribed character sketches. The range of reliabilities obtained from the application of the above guidelines to the four character sketches was 78.7% - 95.6%.

The measure of inter-rater reliability obtained for the application of the above guidelines to the analysis of four character sketches was calculated in a manner similar that proposed by Miles and Huberman (1984). First, transcriptions of the self-characterisations of the research participants were numbered in the order in which they were completed. Second, a table of random numbers was used to select four transcribed character sketches. Third, the initial guidelines were trialled and modified twice after discussion with the second rater. After each modification both raters separately identified expressions of role constructs from transcriptions of the four character sketches. The initial inter-rater reliability across the four character sketches was 71%. Following modification of the guidelines, and the third completion of the process, the inter-rater reliability of 85.2% was obtained.

Miles and Huberman (1984) suggest that inter-rater reliability should be calculated using the following formula:

$$\text{reliability} = \frac{\text{number of agreements}}{\text{total number of agreements plus total number of disagreements}} \times \frac{100}{1}$$

However, this formula is used to calculate the inter-rater reliability of the categorisation of a set number of identified items. This formula may be applied when each rater is categorising the same number of items. Raters may agree or disagree as to which category any one item is allocated.

In the case of the present study, raters applied the previously detailed guidelines to the identification of expressions of role construct poles from transcribed character sketches. Raters disagreed in each of two ways. First, the two raters could identify similar, but not identical, words as expressions of role construct poles. Second, one rater could identify a

particular word, or combination of words, as an expression of a role construct pole. However, the other rater may not identify a similar, let alone an identical, word or word combination, as an expression of a role construct pole. Hence, the number of construct poles which one rater might identify from a single character sketch, might differ from the number of construct poles which the other rater identified from the same character sketch. For this reason, Miles and Huberman's (1984) formula for calculating inter-rater reliability was adapted for this part of the present study. In the case of the present study, the inter-rater reliability of the application of guidelines used to identify expressions of role construct poles was calculated using the following formula:

$$\text{reliability} = \frac{\text{total number of agreements}}{\text{total number of agreements plus total number of disagreements and total number of additions}} \times \frac{100}{1}$$

This modified formula allowed additional construct pole expressions to be included in final calculation of inter-rater reliability.

Unit categories.

Transcriptions of people's self-characterisations contain expressions of people's role constructions and expressions of their role construct poles. The words used to express people's constructions and their role construct poles are common to all people who speak the same language. However, as argued previously, people may not similarly construe the constructions which are expressed within people's verbal behaviour. That is, people may not construe present reality as similar to similar previously construed elements but in contrast to similar previously construed other elements. Simply, people may not similarly construe the aspects which others perceive some parts of previously construed reality to have in common. Of course, the elements of others' single constructs are in contrast to each other with respect to these aspects.

From this discussion we may assume that my constructions of a research participant's verbal behaviour, will not necessarily be similar to the construction which that participant expressed. In addition, I may construe a participant's verbal behaviour as an expression of a pole of a particular role construct. However, the construct to which the person's verbal behaviour refers, may be different from that which I have identified. For example, a participant may express a role construct pole in the word, "driven." I may construe the construct referred to in the verbal expression to be one which the research participant uses to construe people whom she perceives have "aspiration" in common. However, the construct

to which the construct "driven" refers, may be used by the participant to construe people whom she perceives to have "commitment" in common.

The theoretical position adopted in this study, suggests that possible discrepancy between my constructions of the constructs which participants use to construe themselves and others, and the constructs which people do use, cannot easily be overcome. However, possible discrepancy between my constructions of the constructs which people use, and the reader's constructions of the constructs which people use, can be, at least partially, overcome. Discrepancy between my constructions and the reader's constructions, can be partially overcome by categorising those units of analysis which have been identified in the first stage of analysis. For this reason then, unit categories were developed for use in the present study.

As one might expect, the unit category used in the present study is defined as:

a verbal expression of the researcher's construction of similarities between identified expressions of role construct poles.

However, it is important to add that the categories used in the present study were developed only to allow some commonality between my constructions and those of the readers. There is no intention here, of suggesting a necessary identity between a unit category used in the present study, and a construct which a participant may use to construe herself and others. In the next section the application of categories developed for use in the second stage of analysis is discussed.

Categories and their application.

In this study, a unit category is described as:

an implicit aspect of a person, or an implicit aspect of a person's behaviour, to which some identified role construct poles commonly refer.

The categories used in the analysis of the identified role construct poles are given in appendix 12.

The categories were developed in what Miles and Huberman (1984) would describe as an "inductive" manner. Following transcription of self-characterisations completed by the research participants, expressions of role construct poles were identified. These were then grouped according to similarities which I perceived between them. Those construct pole expressions which I construed to refer to a common aspect of a person, or a common aspect of a person's behaviour, were grouped together. Those aspects which I perceived role construct poles in single groups to have in common, were then expressed in single word

nouns. These single word nouns were the categories in which I was able to group identified role construct poles.

Inter-rater reliability of the application of codes
used to classify expressions of role construct poles.

In the present study the inter-rater reliability of the application of category codes used to classify identified role construct poles from five character sketches was 86.7%. The range of reliabilities in the application of the category codes was 79.3% - 90.9%.

The measure of inter-rater reliability obtained for the application of category codes used in the present study, was obtained in a manner similar to that suggested by Miles and Huberman (1984). The initial list of categories was developed. Miles and Huberman suggest that initial lists of category codes are often subject to revision. This was the case in the present study. The original list was revised many times before a final version was developed. This list was then subjected to double-coding.

A table of random numbers was again used to identify the character sketches and the associated lists of role construct pole expressions, to be used in the double-coding process. Each rater was then given copies of the transcribed self-characterisations and copies of the associated lists of identified role construct poles. In addition, both raters were given a list of the categories. The initial inter-rater reliability of the application of this list, was 75%. However, after one modification of the initial list and discussion between the two raters, the inter-rater reliability was increased to 86.7%.

The inter-rater reliability was calculated by using the formula suggested by Miles and Huberman (1984). As indicated earlier, Miles and Huberman suggest that the following formula be used to determine the inter-rater reliability of the application of category codes:

$$\text{reliability} = \frac{\text{total number of agreements}}{\text{total number of agreements plus total number of disagreements}} \times \frac{100}{1}$$

In this case a disagreement was identified as a different classification of the same role construct pole expression, by each of the two raters.

As becomes apparent in later discussion, there were difficulties associated with the application of some categories. Nevertheless, the list of categories proved useful and important in subsequent discussion of the data arising from this study.

Summary

In summary the transcriptions of the self-characterisations which research participants completed were subjected to two stages of analysis. First, personal role construct poles were identified from the transcribed character sketches. Second, the identified role construct poles were classified according to the category codes given in appendix 12. In the next section the process of analysing therapeutic interactions is discussed.

Analysis of Therapeutic Interactions

The therapeutic interactions between therapists and their clients which were completed as part of the fieldwork for the present study were transcribed in accordance with the instructions for transcription given in Appendix 11. The first therapeutic interaction which was completed during the fieldwork was then analysed in the manner described in the following discussion. An explanation for the analysis of only one therapeutic interaction is provided in a later chapter.

Analysis of the therapeutic interaction between Anne and Beth involves identification of expressions of common constructions; identification of expressions of personal constructions, and identification of expressions of social constructions which arose within the context of the therapeutic interaction. In particular, expressions of personal role constructions, and social role constructions are identified. That is, primary attention is given to the identification of expressions of those constructions which Anne and Beth use to construe themselves and others.

Common constructions, personal constructions and social constructions.

The reader will recall that in the context of this study, "common constructions" are those constructions which people commonly construe particular words, or combinations of words, to express. "Personal constructions" are those constructions which people may have which may not be shared by others. As indicated previously (Chapters Two and Three), personal constructions may be expressed by words which express common constructions. Thus, people's verbal behaviour may include expressions of common constructions and expressions of people's personal constructions.

Therapists and clients may share similar personal constructions. These similar personal constructions are then termed "social constructions." A therapist and a client may share similar social constructions prior to engaging in a therapeutic interaction. Alternatively, social constructions may arise in the context of the therapeutic interaction. Like personal constructions which are not shared, social constructions may be expressed using words or word combinations. These words, or word combinations, may be expressions of common

constructions. In this study then, expressions of common constructions, expressions of personal constructions and expressions of social constructions, have relevance.

Units of analysis.

The basic unit for analysis of therapeutic interactions is then, "a construed verbal expression of a construction." This unit is described as:

A transcribed utterance which comprises a noun, adjective, adjectival phrase or clause, or an adverbial phrase or clause.

In the analysis of therapeutic interactions, there are no restrictions upon which expressions are identified. Though primary attention is given to expressions of role constructions, expressions of constructions made using peripheral constructs (peripheral constructions) are also identified. Hence there are no restrictions upon the linguistic subjects which may be implicitly, or explicitly referred to in the context of an utterance. The linguistic subjects of utterances identified in discussion may be the speaker, other people or particular objects, places, or events.

Referring back to the definition of the unit of analysis provided above, the reader may expect that any expression of a construction identified in the analysis of therapeutic interactions may include other constructions in its context. For example, in the therapeutic interaction subject to complete analysis, Beth says:

I've always felt so isolated in my life with Geoff and felt so unhappy in my job when I was trying so hard to emulate what a man would do. (T1-C1: 35-37)

In this extract, the phrase "I've always felt so isolated in my life" may be described as an expression of Beth's construction of herself. However, this single construction includes expressions of at least two further personal constructions. Beth construes herself as feeling "isolated." In this instance, the word, "isolated" expresses another of Beth's role constructions. The word, "life" also expresses a particular construction which Beth has of a particular entity. Thus, as indicated earlier, an expression of a single construction may include expressions of a number of other constructions.

Identification of expressions of role constructions in therapeutic interactions.

People's verbal behaviour may include expressions of more than one construction. However, in analysis of therapeutic interactions for this study, expressions of those constructions which are construed to be most relevant to the interactions are identified. In this

instance, relevancy of a particular construction expression is determined by construal of the linguistic context in which the construction is expressed. As indicated earlier, attention in this phase of analysis is focused upon expressions of common, personal, and social, role constructions. In addition, attention is given to the interaction of personal constructions and the process by which social constructions arise in the context of the therapeutic interactions. Hence, those expressions primarily identified within transcriptions of therapeutic interactions are those role construction expressions which are construed to be the subjects of the therapeutic interactions. These may be expressions of constructions which a therapist or a client may elaborate. Alternatively, they may be expressions of constructions which a therapist expresses and a client construes, or constructions which a client expresses and a therapist construes. Lastly, the expressions which are identified may be expressions of constructions which I, as the researcher, construe to be of relevance to discussion of the therapeutic interaction. These comments are illustrated in the analysis of the therapeutic interaction between Anne and Beth which follows in the Chapter Seven.

Description of construction inter-relationships.

As indicated previously, analysis of a therapeutic interaction involves examination of the interaction between the therapist's constructions and the client's constructions. Earlier discussion suggests that expressions of people's constructions can be classified according to the object of construal. A person's construction is described as a peripheral construction if the object of construal is an object, place or event. The same person's construction is described as a role construction if the object of construal is the person or others. However, in a verbal interaction, people's constructions may be further classified according to the object of construal.

In a verbal interaction, an expression of a person's construction may be classified as an expression of:

1. a construction of the person, people, an object, place or event
2. a construction of a common construction expressed in the other's verbal behaviour
3. a construction of the other's personal construction
4. a construction of the person's construction (superordinate construction)
5. a construction of the other person's construction of that person's construction (construction of other's superordinate construction).

The examples which follow illustrate the way in which expressions of constructions in therapeutic interactions can be described according to the above descriptors.

1. Construction of person.

In the following example, Ken expresses his personal construction of himself:

I sort of -- I think it's a, just today -- I'm a better person I think than when I was last here. Whereas usually I'm always -- a bit better than the worse times -- I mean there's still worse times but I'd rather talk about the better times for once. (T2C4: 435-438)

2. Construction of a common construction expressed in the other's verbal behaviour.

In the following extract Anne construes the common construction expressed in the word "payback" by Beth. In her response to Beth, Anne indicates her construction of the common construction which Beth may have expressed. Beth says:

I made no demands on my parents and I thought that's really what you did to get -- somehow, somewhere I think along the line, I think it had to do with the Catholic church, that the meek will inherit the earth, that kind of thing. I think it's somewhere along the line that you think that somehow there'll be a payback for all of this. Somehow being the good dutiful daughter there'll be a payback for all of this, you know. (T1C1: 399-405)

Anne responds:

What would be the reward? (T1C1: 406)

3. Construction of other's personal construction.

Prior to the following extract, Anne has tested the predictive validity of her construction of Beth's personal construction. In this extract, Anne expresses her construction of Beth's personal construction. Beth says:

Yeah, and that's the big thing -- that -- you know -- to be a man you're independent. (T1C1: 60)

Anne replies:

Don't need anybody. (T1C1: 61)

4. Construction (superordinate construction) of the person's construction.

In the following extract, Anne expresses two superordinate constructions. Each construction is Anne's superordinate construction of her constructions. The constructions which are elements of Anne's superordinate constructions, are Anne's constructions of Alex's constructions. Anne says:

So I see what you meant when you said before, "I can't win a verbal battle" and I was puzzled on, 'cos I thought you don't want to know here, you don't seem to, have trouble with words, but what you have trouble with is fighting. (T1C2: 405-407)

5. Construction of the other person's construction (superordinate construction) of that person's construction.

In the following extract, Kay imagines her sister present. She says:

I'll have to tell you [her image of her sister] that I'm not prepared having come this far to compromise on the truth. I can't take responsibility of your feelings and I can't play the old game. I am not even sure that I've ever been able to play the game anyway. But I certainly am not prepared to play it now. (T4C2: 409-412)

Reflecting on these comments, later, Kay expresses her superordinate construction of those constructions she has expressed previously. She says:

It feels like there's this great big person inside saying "Don't be so black and white, compromise even if it's not the truth, be more flexible" and there's this other small voice saying, "Bullshit, I will not compromise on the truth." But I can learn to be more flexible.

Audrey responds, and as she does so, expresses her construction of Kay's superordinate construction expressed in: "I can learn to be more flexible."

So you'll pick your moment. Is that what I hear you say? (T4C2: 427)

Analysis of Post-counselling Interviews

The third phase of the analysis associated with this study involved a more in-depth examination of episodes in the context of therapeutic interactions than was possible in the second stage of analysis. As the reader will recall from previous discussion (Chapter Four)

first the client, and then the therapist, were interviewed subsequent to each therapeutic session. Hence, there were two sets of interviews to be analysed in this phase of analysis.

Analysis of Post-counselling Client Interviews

Order of analysis of post-counselling client interviews.

Analysis of the post-counselling interviews follows the same pattern as the interviewing process. Analysis includes an in-depth analysis of the therapeutic episode which the client identifies as having personal significance. Thus the order of analysis is as follows:

- i. Client response to the therapeutic interaction
- ii. The client-identified episode of significance
- iii. Significance of the client-identified episode
- iv. Analysis of the client-identified episode.

i. Client response to the therapeutic interaction.

Client responses to the therapeutic interaction are briefly discussed, with specific reference made to words and phrases used by the client. In some instances these words and phrases are used as the basis for laddering and pyramiding further constructions. As indicated previously (Chapter Five) these constructions may be associated with verbalised constructions in the selected episode of the counselling interaction.

ii. The client-identified episode of significance.

The episode which the client identifies from the audio-tape of the counselling interview is transcribed in full in accordance with the instructions given in Appendix 11. In some instances, an additional section of the transcribed therapeutic interaction may be included to aid analysis of the selected episode. However, any additional section is clearly identified during the course of analysis. Parentheses included in the transcribed episode enclose additional parts of an excerpt within an episode.

iii. Significance of the client-identified episode.

Any apparent relationship between the client's constructions, expressed in the context of the post-counselling interview, and the constructions which the client and therapist express in the therapeutic interaction, is discussed. In particular, analysis comments upon verbal interchanges between the therapist and the client within the selected episode, which the client identifies as having significance. The reasons for the significance of the exchanges are discussed, and occasions when the therapist may have validated or invalidated the client's constructions are examined.

Following from this discussion, expressions of the client's constructions of the process evident in the selected section of the counselling interview, are identified. These constructions are examined in the light of constructions expressed in the therapeutic interaction. In this instance, the client's constructions usually refer to the contribution which the client construes the therapist may have made in the counselling interaction. Of particular interest at this stage, are any apparent links between clients' constructions of themselves and others, expressed in the counselling interaction, and clients' constructions expressed in the context of the post-counselling interviews. Where possible, constructions expressed within the post-counselling interview, and possibly associated with constructions expressed in the counselling interaction, are represented diagrammatically.

iv. Analysis of the client-identified episode of significance.

Analysis of the therapeutic process is primarily concerned with examining the therapeutic process evident within the identified episode more closely than is possible in the second phase of analysis. Here exchanges which were identified as significant in the first part of the post-counselling interview are considered in more detail. At this stage particular attention is given to the interaction between personal constructions; evidence of common and social constructs, and occasions when a client may construe expressions of a therapist's constructions to be validating evidence or invalidating evidence of the client's constructions.

Laddering and pyramiding of client constructions also enables further identification of constructions possibly associated with constructions expressed in the therapeutic interaction. Again, where possible, these are represented diagrammatically. The identification of these constructions has importance in a later stage of analysis when therapist constructions, expressed in the counselling interaction and post-counselling interview, are examined in light of constructions expressed by the client.

Analysis of post-counselling therapist interviews

Order of analysis of post-counselling therapist interviews.

Analysis of the post-counselling therapist interviews follows the same pattern as the interviewing process. In some instances, the client-identified episode and the therapist-identified episode are similar or identical. In such instances, only the client-identified episode is subjected to analysis. When the episodes which the client and the therapist identify as significant, are identical, a second therapist-identified episode may be analysed, in addition to the episode selected by the client and therapist. A therapist-identified therapeutic episode which is different from the client-identified episode will be analysed only if time permitted the location of the beginning and end of the episode, and discussion of the extract. The reader

will recall that time constraints were sometimes imposed upon the data collection process by therapists' commitments to their agency, or other clients.

The order of analysis of the post-counselling therapist interviews is as follows:

- i. Therapist response to the therapeutic interaction
- ii. The first therapist-identified episode of significance
- iii. Significance of the first therapist-identified episode
- iv. Analysis of the first therapist-identified episode
- v. Therapist comment with respect to the client-identified episode
- vi. The second therapist-identified episode of significance
- vii. Significance of the second therapist-identified episode
- viii. Analysis of the second therapist-identified episode.

The process of analysis applied to the data collected from the post-counselling therapist interviews is similar to that applied to the transcripts of the post-counselling client interviews. Hence, less detail is provided in the following discussion than was provided earlier in discussion of the analysis of the transcripts of the post-counselling client interviews.

i. Therapist response to the therapeutic interaction.

Therapist responses to the therapeutic interaction are briefly discussed with reference made to words and phrases used by the therapist. In some instances words and phrases used by the therapist are used as the basis for laddering and pyramiding further therapist constructions. Such constructions may be associated with constructs indicated in the therapeutic episodes which the client and, or therapist, identify as being of particular significance to the client, or therapist.

ii. The therapist-identified episode of significance.

The episode which the therapist identified from the audio-tape of the counselling interview as having particular significance for the client is transcribed in full. Similarly, any episodes which the therapist identifies as having significance for different reasons, are transcribed in full. In some instances, an additional section of the therapeutic interaction may be included to aid analysis of the selected episode. Any additional section is clearly identified during the course of analysis. Again parentheses are used to enclose additional words of an excerpt within an episode.

iii. Significance of the first therapist-identified episode.

Analysis begins with discussion of any apparent relationship between the therapist's constructions, expressed in the context of the post-counselling interview, and the constructions which the therapist and client express in the counselling interaction. In particular, analysis comments upon exchanges within the selected episode, which the therapist identifies as having significance. The reasons for the significance of the exchanges will be discussed, and occasions when the client may have validated, or invalidated, the therapist's constructions will be examined.

Following from this discussion, the therapist's constructions of the process evident in the selected section of the counselling interview are identified. These expressed constructions are then examined in the light of verbalised constructions contained in the therapeutic interaction. Of particular interest at this stage, are any apparent links between therapists' constructions of their clients, expressed in the counselling interaction, and therapists' constructions of themselves and others expressed in the context of the post-counselling interview. Constructions expressed within the post-counselling interview, and possibly associated with constructs indicated in the counselling interaction, may be represented diagrammatically.

iv. Analysis of the first therapist-identified episode of significance.

Analysis of the therapeutic process at this stage is primarily concerned with examining the therapeutic process evident within the identified episode more closely than is possible in the second phase of analysis. Here exchanges which were identified as significant in the first part of the post-counselling therapist interview are considered in more detail. At this stage particular attention is given to the interaction between personal constructions; evidence of shared and social constructs, and occasions when therapists may construe expressions of client constructions to be validating or invalidating evidence of their constructions.

Laddering and pyramiding of therapist constructions also enables further identification of constructions possibly associated with constructs indicated in the counselling interaction. Where possible, these are represented diagrammatically.

v. Therapist comment with respect to the client-identified episode of significance.

Analysis involves discussion of the therapist's constructions of the counselling interaction and the client's constructions of the interaction expressed earlier in the post-counselling client interview. In addition, analysis comments upon the interaction between the therapist's constructions, and the client's constructions, which are expressed within the counselling interaction. In particular, instances are identified when the constructions which therapists express in the counselling interaction, may be construed as similar to those

constructions which clients express in the same interaction. Finally, occasions when therapists construed expressions of clients' constructions as validating, or invalidating, evidence of their constructions are examined.

vi. The second therapist-identified episode of significance.

As indicated earlier, in some instances, therapists identified additional therapeutic episodes which were of significance either for their clients, for themselves, or for both the therapists and their clients.

As in the case of the first therapist-identified episode of significance, the second episode is transcribed in full. Again, additional exchanges between a therapist and a client may be included prior to, or after, each episode to aid analysis. Parentheses may also be included for the purpose described earlier.

vii. Significance of the second therapist-identified episode.

Analysis at this stage is similar to analysis at the same stage, for the episode which the therapist identified as having greatest significance for the client.

viii. Analysis of the second therapist-identified episode.

As one might expect, analysis of the second episode is similar to that for the first episode. Following from analysis at this stage, attention may be given to similarities or differences between the episode which the therapist regarded as having greatest significance for the client, and this episode.

Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the purpose of the present study. In addition, the methodology employed in this study has been outlined and the procedures used to collect data have been described. Issues of validity relevant to the methodology employed, and ethical issues associated with the application of the research design and associated methodology to a study of therapist-client interactions are discussed in Appendix 5. Discussion has indicated some of the evident strengths and weaknesses of the methodology used in the present study. However, extended discussion of the strengths and limitations of the methodology described here is reserved for the final chapter in this report.

This chapter has also included a description and discussion of the process of data analysis applied in the present study. There are three distinct phases of analysis used here. In the first phase, the self-characterisations completed by research participants are analysed. This phase of analysis includes the identification and categorisation of verbally expressed role construct poles. In the second phase of data analysis common constructions, personal

constructions, and social constructions are identified. In addition, the interaction between the constructions of therapists and their clients is examined and the process by which social constructions arise in the context of therapy is discussed. In the final phase of data analysis, the constructions which therapists and clients express during the course of psychotherapy, are examined in the light of therapists' and clients' constructions of the psychotherapeutic process in which they have engaged.

In the following three chapters data collected using the procedures described here are analysed and discussed in light of the theory developed earlier (Chapters Two, Three and Four). In a later chapter (Chapter Nine) this discussion will be related to the methodological procedures and the process of analysis developed here. In particular, as indicated earlier, the strengths and limitations of the procedures used in the present study will be examined in this later chapter.

Reliability: A note for future research

Percentage agreement reliability which has been used as an indication of inter-rater reliability has limitations. These limitations have been described by Cohen (1968), Hartmann (1977), and Kratochwill and Wetzel (1977). The most significant limitation of percentage agreement reliability is that it includes agreement which can be accounted for by chance (Cohen, 1968). Sources of error which have relevance in the present study include the inclusion of units of analysis which are different from those which were originally identified, or the assignment of expressions of role construct poles to particular categories in error (random error). Alternatively, raters may use a different definition of the unit of analysis from that which was originally decided upon or consistently use a different category definition in the assignment of expressions of role construct poles to categories (systematic error).

Calculating inter-rater reliability using Cohen's (1960) kappa (k) would enable the presentation of a measure of inter-rater reliability which took account of chance. For this reason, I would suggest that in any future research inter-rater reliability for the application of the unit of analysis described here and application of the list of categories (Appendix 12) be calculated using Cohen's kappa. This is calculated as follows:

$$k = \frac{p(o) - p(c)}{1 - p(c)} \quad \text{where } p(o) \text{ is the proportion of agreement, and } p(c) \text{ is the proportion of agreement accounted for by chance.}$$

The final figure is the proportion of rater agreement after agreement which can be attributed to chance has been removed (Cohen, 1968).

Cohen, J. (1960). A coefficient of agreement for nominal scales. Educational and Psychological Measurement, 20, 37-46.

Cohen, J. (1968). Weighted Kappa: Nominal scale agreement with provision for scaled disagreement or partial credit. Psychological Bulletin, 70 (4), 213-220.

Hartmann, D. (1977). Considerations in the choice of interobserver reliability estimates. Journal of Applied Behaviour Analysis, 10, 103-116.

Kratochwill, T. R. & Wetzel, R. J. (1977). Observer agreement, credibility, and judgment: Some considerations in presenting observer agreement data. Journal of Applied Analysis, 10, 133-139.

Chapter Six

Results Part I

The purpose of the fieldwork which was conducted as part of this study was to provide data which was illustrative of the theoretical discussion offered in the first four chapters of this report. In particular, it was hoped that the collected data would illustrate:

1. The earlier described theoretical relationship between common constructs and common constructions, and personal constructs and personal constructions.
2. Interaction between the personal constructions of therapists and those of their clients.
3. The derivation of social constructs in the context of personal construct interaction.
4. The theoretical relationship between personal construct commonality and validation and invalidation, of client and therapist constructions.
5. The contribution of construction validation and invalidation to construct system change.

The methodology employed in this study was initially developed for in-depth studies of each of the eight therapist-client dyads which comprised the study sample. The first case study is provided in this chapter. The data collected as part of this study was analysed in three phases. First, the self-characterisations of the therapist (Anne) and the client (Beth) were analysed to identify verbal expressions of role construct poles. These role construct pole expressions were then classified according to the category codes provided in Appendix 12. Second, the complete transcription of the psychotherapeutic interview between Anne and Beth was analysed. During this phase verbal expressions of common constructions, personal constructions, and social constructions, were identified. In the final phase of analysis, the post-therapy interviews completed by Anne and Beth were analysed and discussed in light of the first two stages of analysis. The results of each of these three phases of analysis, completed with respect to the first case study, are presented in this chapter. In addition, extensive discussion is provided of the results of analysis in this chapter.

Completion of the above three phases of analysis with respect to the first case study, indicated that the results of the second phase of analysis had less validity than the results of the final phase of analysis. Elaboration of this comment is reserved for later in this chapter and in the following chapter. Moreover, completion of the third phase of analysis provided sufficient data to fulfil the objectives of study. For these reasons then, only the first and third phases of analysis were completed for each of the remaining seven therapist-client dyads

which participated in this study. Chapters Seven and Eight provide the results of analysis completed with respect to the remaining seven cases. Chapter Seven includes the results of analysis completed with respect to Cases Two, Three and Four. Chapter Eight includes the results of analysis completed with respect to Cases Five, Six, Seven and Eight. As in the case of the present chapter, Chapters Seven and Eight include extensive discussion of the results of analysis with respect to each case. A summary and brief further discussion of all the results which have contributed to this study is reserved for the final chapter (Chapter Nine).

Case One

Therapist (Anne) Client (Beth)

As indicated earlier, the results of this first case study have been subject to three phases of analysis. First, the self-characterisations of the therapist and client are analysed. Second, the complete transcription of the psychotherapeutic interview is subject to analysis. Third, the post-therapy therapist and client interviews are analysed in light of the results of the first two phases of analysis. It is important to note that while emphasis is given to linkages between the first two phases of analysis and the final phase of analysis, apparent linkages between the first and second phases of analysis are also highlighted here.

Background Information

At the time of interviewing Anne was 43 years of age. She was engaged in private practice and employed as a counsellor educator. Anne's education as a counsellor includes training under the direction of the New Zealand Marriage Guidance Association (now MG). Anne had had 12 years experience as a counsellor. She described her practice orientation as Rogerian but said that her counselling interventions were particularly influenced by transactional analytic approaches to psychotherapy. In addition, Anne commented that her practice reflects her knowledge and understanding of systems theory, cognitive psychology, behaviour psychology and psychodramatic approaches to psychotherapy.

Beth was 36 years of age at the time of interviewing and initially referred herself to Anne for psychotherapy because she was depressed. The therapy session which is the subject of discussion here, was described by Beth as one of a series of sessions that she had been having with Anne. Immediately prior to the interview, Beth commented that she hoped that the interview would help her understand why she had reached a point in her life when she was so unhappy.

Personal Character Sketches

The first phase of analysis involves the identification of verbal expressions of role construct poles and the classification of these according to category codes provided in Appendix 12.

Transcript of
Character Sketch
of Therapist 1 (Anne)

T: Where Anne's the main character? She's--she's likely to have a leading role and ... being sympathetic is the hard bit. OK, I'll think of someone. Anne enjoys centre stage and does it very well. She's--she's very intelligent and thoughtful and likes understanding issues ... and ... she's also warm and caring of people. She is a bit impatient with woolly thinking and so sometimes she gets a bit offside with people and can intimidate people. She's very reliable and ... conscientious and ... works too hard.... She takes responsibility.... Has a hard time, when she makes mistakes and gets things wrong. Is fairly driven, likes fun, a real party girl, a dancer. **** Oh yes, she's a problem-solver.... She ... likes to think strategically, kind of takes things on, doesn't suffer very long in silence, like as soon as she gets feeling that something's going wrong she'll want to do something about it.... And another way that she sometimes gets offside with people is by being quite, sort of vehement and stroppy and won't-- ... I mean sounds quite powerful.... Was it that kind of character?

R: Yeah.

A: Yeah.

R: Anything you'd add?

A: Oh, she's a bit impatient, that's all I guess.

TABLE 1

List of construed verbal expressions of role construct poles and their classification

The following is a list of construed verbal expressions of role construct poles, presented in the order in which they appear in the transcription of Anne's character sketch. These are categorised according to categories listed in Appendix 12.¹ Numbers indicate the number of occasions in the character sketch in which some construct poles were expressed.

Construct pole	Category
Likely to have a leading role	Role
Enjoys centre stage	Pleasure
Does it ... well	Competence
Intelligent	Intellect
Thoughtful	Intellect
Likes understanding issues	Intellect
Warm	Affect
Caring	Supportiveness
Impatient (x2)	Tolerance
Gets ... offside (with people) (x2)	Affinity
Can intimidate	Supportiveness
Reliable	Responsibility
Conscientious	Responsibility
Works ... hard	Responsibility
Takes responsibility	Responsibility
Has a hard time	Pleasure
Makes mistakes	Integrity
Gets things wrong	Integrity
Driven	Aspiration
Likes fun	Pleasure
Party girl	Role
Dancer	Role
Problem solver	Intellect
Likes to think strategically	Intellect
Takes things on	Initiative
Doesn't suffer ... long in silence	Tolerance
Gets feeling that something's going wrong	Integrity
Will want to do something	Initiative
Vehement	Certainty
Stroppy	Tolerance
Sounds ... powerful	Verbal behaviour

¹ Material from the original transcript may be added to transcribed words or phrases. Such additions are made if the apparent meanings of the verbally expressed construct poles are enhanced by such additions. Material added, in context, is indicated by parentheses. For example, in the table above, the phrase "with people" is added in parentheses, to the phrase "gets offside" to enhance the apparent meaning of Anne's verbal expression.

A cursory glance of the table above suggests that the personal constructs which Anne uses to construe herself and others can be classified as associated with 14 of the possible 21 categories used in the present study. However, Anne expresses more constructions associated with intellect (16%) and responsibility (13%) than constructions associated with role, pleasure, tolerance, and integrity (each 10%). In addition, Anne expresses constructions associated with supportiveness and initiative (each 6%) and competence, affect, affinity, aspiration, certainty, and verbal behaviour (each 3%).

Transcript of
Character Sketch
of Client 1 (Beth)

B: Well Beth is lots of fun and kind of mischievous [sic], rather sharp-tongued but witty, a kind of a – a frightened indirect person, has difficulty sometimes facing situations that she thinks are conflict situations, or the result of someone being angry or some sort of conflict arising. Likes to have fun but is quite solitary, that makes kind of a conflict, makes her feel sometimes like she's lonely, and at this stage in her life is a bit lost. Involved in a marriage that she's not particularly happy with and is grieving the loss of her mother.

R: Is there anything you would want to add?

B: No, I don't think so.

TABLE 2

List of construed verbal expressions of role construct poles and their classification

The following is a list of construed verbal expressions of role construct poles, presented in the order in which they appear in the transcription of Beth's character sketch. These are categorised according to the categories listed in Appendix 12. Numbers indicate the number of occasions in the character sketch in which some construct poles were expressed.

Construct pole	Category
Lots of fun	Sociability
Mischievous [sic]	Responsibility
Sharp-tongued	Verbal behaviour
Witty	Intellect
Frightened	Affect
Indirect	Initiative
Has difficulty	Certainty
Likes to have fun	Pleasure
Solitary	Affinity
Lonely	Affinity
Lost	Affinity
Involved	Commitment
Grieving	Affect

A cursory glance of the table above suggests that the constructs with which Beth construes herself can be classified as associated with 10 of the possible 21 categories used in the present study. However, Beth expresses more constructions associated with affinity (23%) than constructions associated with affect (15%), and sociability, responsibility, verbal behaviour, intellect, initiative, certainty, pleasure and commitment (each 8%).

Analysis of Psychotherapeutic Interview

In the second stage of analysis of the therapeutic interview between Anne and Beth, shared constructs of therapist and client are identified; the interaction of personal constructions within the context of the interview is discussed and the process by which social constructs derive from a process of negotiation within the context of verbal interaction is described.

Beginning

The interview begins with an episode in which the therapist and the client acknowledge that they have shared in an unusual experience immediately prior to the therapeutic interview. The researcher had asked each participant to provide a self-characterisation, in accordance with the procedure outlined earlier (Chapter Five) before engaging in the scheduled psychotherapeutic interview discussed here. Reference to a shared experience immediately prior to a therapeutic interview is, of course, unusual and in this case, is purely a function of the participants contributing to a research programme.

1 T: Sometimes I'm inclined to think I am being a counsellor and I still haven't got over
2 my performance anxiety.

3 C: No, I was not too terribly concerned. I was a bit caught offguard when she started
4 the tape and said, "Could you just give me a description of yourself as if you were
5 describing a friend."

6 T: Yes.

7 C: And that sort of caught me offguard. And actually when I started talking I thought
8 you really could go on and talk for half an hour about something like that.

9 T: Yes, it's a good question.

10 C: Yes.

11 T: Well, if I start sounding like someone that you're not familiar with I hope you'll tell
12 me.

13 C: OK, I will.

Anne begins by expressing her anxiety to Beth about needing to perform well (1-2). Beth too, expresses initial anxiety about participating in the initial part of the study (3-5, 6). However, Beth's construction of the task she was asked to complete is expressed as something that "you really could go on and talk for half an hour about" (7-8). Anne's construction of Beth's verbalised construction is expressed in her response (9). By expressing the affirmative "yes," in her response, Anne suggests that she construes herself and Beth to have a similar construction of a shared experience. Anne construes the research task which she construes Beth to be referring to as "a good question." Anne concludes this episode with an expression of a construction of herself as someone that might, in the future, sound like a person who is unfamiliar to Beth (11-12). In this statement, Anne expresses her construction of herself as someone whom Beth may construe as unfamiliar to her.

Shared Constructs and Personal Constructs

In the second episode Anne and Beth discuss a book which they have each read.

14 T: Well thank you for lending me this book.

15 C: It's a good book isn't it. I really enjoyed it.

16 T: I haven't read it all. I read the first part pretty – in more detail.

17 C: I thought the first two chapters were sort of – I felt, the best.

18 T: Yes. I think I can see why it means something to you, but I'd be interested to know
19 what's important for you.

In this brief episode Anne and Beth discuss their opinions of the book and in so doing express a number of constructions made by employing peripheral constructs, rather than role constructs. Beth however, construes herself as having "really enjoyed" (15) the book. Previous discussion suggests that since Beth has construed herself, she has used a role construct to make her construction. A construction which is made by using a role construct may

reasonably be described as a "role construction." Hence, in this instance, the phrase "really enjoyed" may be described as an expression of a role construction.

In her concluding comment (18-19) Anne expresses two constructions of Beth's constructions. Firstly, Anne construes the constructions which Beth has expressed (15, 17). Anne's construction of Beth's verbalised constructions is expressed in the phrase "it means something to you" (18). Secondly, Anne suggests that she is able to construe how Beth construes the constructions which she has previously expressed verbally (15, 17). Anne construes herself as sharing Beth's construction of Beth's previously verbalised constructions. She comments: "I think I can see why it means something to you" (18). Anne suggests that she may be able to perceive features from the content of the book which are similar to those perceived by Beth. In so doing Anne may construe features of the content of the book as similar to parts of reality which she and Beth have previously similarly construed. Anne continues, to say that she construes herself as keen to know, or in Kellian terms, to construe, what is important for Beth (18-19).

Beth must construe Anne's verbalised construction "what's important for you" (18-19) before responding to Anne. This is an instance in which the construct used by Beth to construe Anne's verbalised construction, must be similar to that used by Anne in making her initial construction. That is, there must be some commonality of constructs. Anne and Beth must have some shared constructs. Anne and Beth must share the construct implied by the verbalised construction, "what's important for you."

As argued earlier, expressions of shared constructs may be included as elements within the context of personal constructs. In such an instance, the shared constructs may be construed as indicating the similarity between previously construed persons, events or entities with respect to a particular construct. Shared constructs may be expressed verbally to indicate the construed similarity between currently construed persons, events or entities, and persons, events or entities which have been previously construed using particular personal constructs. Referring again to the extract above, quite simply, Anne and Beth will possibly construe different parts of the content of the book as "important" for Beth. Anne and Beth will possibly have included the shared construct indicated by the word "important" as an element within different personal constructs.

Superordinate and Subordinate Constructs

In the next episode, it becomes clear that Beth construes what's important for her to be the construed similarity between parts of the content of the book and previously construed events.

20 C: I think probably the parts like leaving home and the facing -- the facing shame. I
 21 thought, because I think the thing about facing shame is sort of the ultimate thing
 22 of looking at your own self esteem or lack of it. I felt -- I felt over the last few
 23 months that that was something that I had a real problem with.

24 T: Right.

25 C: Like you called it your "pathological critic", I just call it beating up on myself.

26 T: Yes, right.

27 C: And I think that -- that sort of hit home.

The reader will recall that, according to personal construct theory, we can invite people to express their constructs which are subordinate to other (superordinate) expressed constructs, by using a "pyramiding" technique (Landfield, 1971). We can elicit subordinate constructs by asking people questions such as, "how do you know if something is important for you, or "what is a thing that is important for you like?" or "what is important for you?" More recently, Walker (1990) has used this approach to identify subordinate constructs in text. Applying similar principles to those suggested by Landfield, we may also identify subordinate constructs within the context of therapeutic interview transcriptions. Imagine for a moment, what Beth's response may have been if the therapist had asked Beth: "What's important for you?" Beth's response to this question is suggested within her opening comment in the episode above. Beth's opening comment (20-23) suggests that Beth construes construed similarity between parts of the book and previously construed events as important for her. The therapist might now ask Beth: "What parts of the book do you construe as similar to previous events?" Beth's possible response to this question is also suggested in her first statement in the extract above. Beth might respond to this question, by saying: "The parts like leaving home and the facing shame" (20).

Beth's response (20) to Anne's earlier statement (18-19) suggests that "the parts like leaving home" and "the facing shame" express constructions which have been made using subordinate constructs. The verbalised constructions indicate those aspects in which parts of the book contents are abstracted as similar to previously construed events. Beth's comment suggests that she construes construed similarity between the book contents and previously construed events using a superordinate construct. This superordinate construct is, in turn, an element of the construct, expressed by the phrase, "what's important for you." Construed

similarity between the book contents and previously construed events is construed by Beth as important for her.

Imagine if we were now to ask Beth the question: "How do you know if someone is "facing shame'?" Beth's response would possibly be similar to, "they would be looking at their own self esteem or lack of it." Beth suggests that "facing shame" (20, 21) is "sort of the ultimate thing of looking at your own self esteem" (21-22). Put another way, "sort of the ultimate thing of looking at your own self esteem" is construed by Beth as "facing shame." The construct used to construe events as "facing shame" can be described as a superordinate construct, within Beth's construct system. In addition, the construct used to construe events expressed by "sort of the ultimate thing of looking at your own self esteem" can be described as subordinate to the previous superordinate construct.

In the latter part of her initial comment above, Beth implies that she has "had a real problem" (23) with "the ultimate thing of looking at [her] own self esteem or lack of it" (21-22). In the phrase "had a real problem," Beth expresses a construction of herself. Previous argument suggests that the construction she expresses must have been made by using a role construct. Hence, we may apply the term "role construction" to Beth's self-construction. Beth construes herself as having difficulty with "the ultimate thing of looking at [her] own self esteem or lack of it." The verbal expression "the ultimate thing of looking at your own self esteem or lack of it" is, in this case, an expression of a construction which Beth makes by using a peripheral construct.

Beth's second comment in the episode above, appears to be a further verbal expression of Beth's construction of "the ultimate thing of looking at your own self esteem or lack of it" (21-22). Earlier discussion suggested that Beth construed "the ultimate thing of looking at your own self esteem or lack of it" as "facing shame." In her second statement Beth suggests that she construes "facing shame" as "beating up on myself" (25). The phrase "beating up on myself" is an expression of a construction made using a construct which is superordinate to that used to construe events as "facing shame."

In the preceding excerpt, Ann's construction of "facing shame" is construed by Beth as "your 'pathological critic'"(25). Beth acknowledges that she and Anne differ in their verbalised constructions of what Beth construes to be a similarly construed event. Anne acknowledges Beth's comment (26). Beth concludes this episode with the comment "that sort of hit home" (27). One might speculate that in this comment Beth is suggesting why the construed similarity between parts of the book and her previous experiences is important for her. The reason is "that [the similarity] sort of hit home." Walker (1990) submits that superordinate constructs in text may be identified using the technique of laddering suggested by Hinkle (1965). By asking a question such as "why is that important for you?" superordinate constructs may be identified. If we apply this same technique to the transcription discussed

here, Beth's final comment may be described as an expression of a construction made using a construct which is superordinate to that implied in the expression, "what's important for me." Thus, within this brief extract Beth has expressed superordinate and subordinate constructs.

Role Constructs

In the following episode, Beth continues to discuss the book which was introduced as a topic early in the interview. However, a little way into the episode, discussion includes a second book, The Girl Within.

27 C: (And I think that -- that sort of hit home.) And the other thing about it that I
28 thought was really interesting, and that really comes out in the introduction is her
29 whole idea about the difference between women's lives -- lives and men's lives and
30 the whole difference in goals, that men have this sort of straight line goal towards
31 independence and women, it doesn't seem to be able to have explained women's
32 development.

33 T: Right.

34 C: And there's just more of a sort of circular or a relation and that really hit, hit home
35 because I felt so much like that maybe is why. I've always felt so isolated in my life
36 with Charles and felt so unhappy in my job when I was trying so hard to emulate
37 what a man would do, this strive for independence, had no friends, just moving up,
38 just achievement-oriented, and felt so lonely and so empty.

39 T: Right.

40 C: And I thought that was the first time I'd ever read a book. Now since then I've
41 found another book that I'm reading now called The Girl Within that talks about the
42 same thing. It was the first time I'd ever read anything about that, that there was
43 in fact a group of women, not even just women, but people looking at women's
44 development and that you don't necessarily -- it's not right -- there's nothing crazy
45 about feeling out of place in the other sort of -- you know -- role. It just doesn't
46 seem to explain women's lives anyway. So I thought that was, that really a -- hit
47 home with me.

48 T: Right.

At the beginning of this extract, Beth introduces a different aspect of the book content to that which was discussed in the previous episode. Beth begins by discussing the author's description of the difference between women's and men's lives. A role construction which is referred to often in subsequent episodes is expressed in the phrase "men have this sort of straight line goal towards independence" (30-31). Here Beth refers to her construction of men as self-sufficient.

Within this episode, Anne exhibits a primarily Rogerian approach to psychotherapy. She uses what A. Ivey, M. Ivey, and Simek-Downing (1987) would describe as minimal encouragers (33, 39, 48) to provide affirmation to her client but does not interrupt the verbal "flow" of what her client is saying.

In the latter part of the first statement (30-31) and in the second statement (34-35), Beth has not completely expressed her constructions. In her first statement Beth has begun to comment upon what the first writer has said about women but concludes by saying, "it doesn't seem to be able to have explained women's development" (30-31). Beth follows this comment with the statement: "And there's just more of a sort of circular or a relation and that really hit, hit home because I felt so much like that maybe is why" (34-35). Repeated listening to the audio tape of this section of the tape suggests that this sentence is accurately transcribed. However, since Beth's constructions are not fully verbally expressed, construal of Beth's constructions within this section of the extract is difficult.

Beth goes on to express a number of self-constructions in her second statements. In the verbalised constructions, "isolated" (35), and "had no friends" (37), Beth indicates her relationship with others. She expresses the emotion associated with her lack of relationships with others, in "unhappy" (36), "lonely" (38) and "empty" (38). The reader may note that Beth's reference to herself as being "lonely," is the first reference to one of the thirteen construct poles expressed within the context of Beth's selfcharacterisation. In her characterisation sketch, Beth described herself as being "lonely."

Returning to the psychotherapeutic interview, Beth explains that the occasions when she felt unhappy were when she was "trying so hard to emulate what a man would do" (36). In the phrase "trying so hard to emulate" she expresses her aspiration to do what she construes a man would do. Again she construes men as striving for "independence" (37). Beth adds that in trying to emulate what a man might do she was "just moving up" (37) and was "achievement-oriented" (38). Beth indicates that she has demonstrated competence and has aspired to achieve, just as she construes men do.

Contrasting Construct Poles

As the episode continues, Beth introduces the topic of the second book, The Girl Within. In the second part of her comment (44-45), Beth's verbal behaviour expresses a

construction which indicates a contrasting pole to a previously expressed construct pole. Returning to Beth's first comment (27-32) we can describe Beth as having the commonly shared construct which may be expressed by "men-women." Beth may also be construed as having a personal construct which might be expressed by the words, "men's roles-women's roles." Parenthetically, I am not referring here to Kelly's notion of role as engagement in the construal of other's constructions. Rather I am referring here to the traditional notion of role as the part one plays in relationships with others. Beth's comments (30-31, 37) suggest that Beth construes people as fulfilling men's roles when they are striving for independence. She does not however, elaborate her construction of women's roles. That is, she does not express what she construes a woman's role to be. Nevertheless, Beth provides a forthright expression of her construction of being a woman trying to emulate a man. She says that "there's nothing crazy about feeling out of place in the other sort of ... role" (44-45). She suggests that a woman need not feel as though she is crazy if she feels out of place in a man's role. One may speculate that Beth is refuting a construction which she construes someone other than the therapist to have expressed. Beth construes someone else as having expressed the construction that there is something crazy about a woman feeling out of place in a man's role. Beth however, construes the content of the book as providing what Kelly would describe as validating evidence of her construction that there is nothing crazy about a woman feeling out of place in a man's role. For the second time in the interview, Beth suggests that the construed similarity between the content of the book and previously construed events is important for her because it "hit home" (46-47) with her.

Verbal Behaviour and Verbalised Constructions

In the next episode, Beth elaborates her construction of the book contents as important for her. She also introduces her partner as a topic in the interaction between herself and the therapist.

49 C: And maybe to a certain extent I felt like it validated my feelings of loss and isolation
50 from being so far away from my family and those sorts of things that in fact Charles
51 wasn't always right. He always says to me that you've just grown and matured so
52 much since you've been away from your family.

53 T: As if – as if that meant – that meant more like him.

54 C: Well yeah, more independent. That independence was something that you have to
55 strive for. I think in some respects it is, and you have to have your own identity,
56 but to do it all alone, you know.

57 T: It's the male idea of independence.

58 C: And you know, yeah.

59 T: It's about going solo.

60 C: Yeah, and that's the big thing – that – you know – to be a man you're independent.

61 T: Don't need anybody.

62 C: Yeah. And in fact – like when he was having I think his only lonely time in our
63 marriage and he had a personal crisis and all was after – was really not based on
64 my reaction and the birth of Sally. My reaction to his relationship that he had had,
65 and it was the only time in our marriage I remember him being at all reflective.
66 And it was really very painful because he'd only ever be reflective with me and a
67 lot of it was back onto this relationship and I had a brand new baby and it was
68 really awful, but it was the only time I remember him being at all sort of self-
69 reflective. And he talked then about – that we had allowed ourselves to get so
70 isolated. And so I don't probably think it works for men either, really.

71 T: [Laughter.] No.

72 C: You know – they just do it and that's really their goal, and I think maybe some men
73 feel comfortable with it, but I suspect it's not even working, doesn't really ever work
74 for them either. Those things, I think about that book, made the biggest impact on
75 me.

76 T: Yes. It makes sense of the struggle you've been having with your job and being
77 driven towards being successful and being torn and ***.

In her initial statement Beth indicates that she construes the book contents as validating her "feelings of loss and isolation" (49). Implicit in Beth's construction are her constructions of herself as lost and isolated. This is possibly the second reference to one of the personal constructs indicated in her personal constructions as part of her self-characterisation. In the research interview prior to her participation in this therapeutic interview, Beth expressed her construction of herself as "a bit lost."

To return to the psychotherapeutic interview, Beth construes the book contents as compatible with her feelings of loss and isolation. She construes the book as providing validating evidence of the constructions which she has of herself. Beth goes on to construe herself as being isolated because she is so far away from her family (50). Her construction of herself as being so far away from her family is an expression of a construct superordinate to that which is used to construe herself as isolated. The reader can verify this assumption in a similar manner to that suggested earlier, by imagining posing the question "why are you so isolated?" Beth's statement (50) suggests that she would respond by saying: "Because I'm so far away from my family."

Within the first sentence, Beth expresses her construction of her partner: "Charles wasn't always right" (50-51). Here Beth suggests that she does not always construe Charles's constructions as predictively valid. Beth concludes her initial comment in this episode by reporting that Charles construes her as having grown and matured since she has been away from the family (51-52).

Anne's first comment (53) in this extract, is one in which Anne expresses her construction of what Beth has said (51-52). There are two possible constructions of Anne's comment which the reader may make. We may construe Anne's comment as suggesting that Anne construed Beth's statements (50-52) as if they were expressions of shared constructions. Anne's verbally expressed construction would then be her personal construction the common constructions expressed in Beth's verbal behaviour. Alternatively we may construe Anne's comment as an expression of her personal construction of the personal construction which Beth has expressed in her verbal behaviour. We cannot be certain of which of these two suggested constructions of Anne's verbal behaviour is valid. However, one further comment can be made about Anne's initial statement in this episode. This is the first example of Anne expressing her constructions of either the common constructions expressed in Beth's verbal behaviour or her verbally expressed personal constructions.

It is important to point out at this stage that a differentiation is implied in current discussion between a person's verbal behaviour and a person's verbally expressed constructions. Previous discussion suggests that constructions may be verbally expressed when a person abstracts similarity between current people, events and entities and previously construed people, events and entities, with respect to some aspect. Words indicate the perceived similarity between those things currently construed and those things which have been construed previously. As argued earlier, words may be included as elements of shared constructs and hence be used to express perceived similarity between current and previously construed people, events and entities with respect to a particular shared construct. However, words, indicative of shared constructions, may also be included as elements of personal constructs. Thus spoken language may include expressions of constructions made with

personal constructs and shared constructs. A person who construes the spoken language of another, may construe either constructions indicative of shared constructs, or constructions which are indicative of the speaker's personal constructs. A person who construes another's spoken language as indicative of only shared constructs is described here as **construing** the verbal behaviour of that other.

A person who construes another's spoken language as indicative of the other's personal constructs is described as a person who is **construing** the other's verbally expressed personal constructions. As the reader will recall, the theory of personal constructs suggests that only by **construing** others' constructions may people engage in a role relationship with others. Moreover, argument in previous chapters (Chapters Three and Four) suggests that role relationships are essential if psychotherapeutic relationships are to be associated with client psychological change. Returning to the interview which is the subject of discussion here, we may have in Anne's initial comment (53), the first evidence in this episode of the therapist engaging in a role relationship with her client.

Towards Social Constructions

Beth responds to Anne's comment (53) by expressing what might be described as partial agreement: "Well yeah" (54). She adds, "more independent" (54). We might tentatively conclude that Beth does not appear to construe Anne's expressed construction (53) as identical to her own construction of what her partner says to her (51-52). Beth goes on to express her construction of what Charles says to her in the words: "That independence was something that you have to strive for" (54-55). So there are then two constructions of what Beth reports Charles as saying to her. Beth construes Charles as saying that independence is something you have to strive for. Anne construes Beth's reported comments as, "as if that meant ... more like him" (53). Beth goes on to discuss how she construes "independence."

Beth comments that she thinks that in some respects independence is something that you have to strive for. The reader will recall that in an earlier extract, Beth expressed her construction of men as striving for independence. Beth suggests in her second comment in this episode (55) that striving for independence is not an activity which she construes as being restricted to men. She implies that she construes independence as something women too have to strive for.

Towards the conclusion of her second comment in this episode, Beth expresses her construction of what men do. Beth construes men as having to "do it [strive for independence] all alone" (56). Anne again expresses her construction of Beth's verbalised constructions in: "It's the male idea of independence" (57). Beth continues, suggesting, by her acknowledgement of Anne's statement, that she and Anne may now share similar constructions of Beth's verbalised constructions. Beth comments: "And you know, yeah" (58).

In her next comment, Anne expresses her construction of the personal construction expressed by Beth in the phrase, "but to do it all alone" (56). Anne appears to construe Beth's expressed construction of the male idea of independence as being "about going solo" (59). Beth expresses agreement with Anne's verbalised construction. She goes on to express her construction of men: "To be a man you're independent" (60).

In her next comment (61) Anne expresses her construction of Beth's personal construction which was expressed in "to be a man you're independent." The process evident in Anne's comments (57, 59, 61) suggests that Anne may be elaborating her construction of Beth's personal constructions. She may be doing so in an attempt to express a construction similar to that which is expressed by her client. This process might be described as:

- a) Anne construes Beth's verbalised personal constructions;
- b) Anne's construction is expressed (57);
- c) Beth responds (58) following her construction of Anne's verbalised construction;
- d) Anne construes Beth's verbalised construction (58) as validating or invalidating evidence of Anne's previously expressed verbalised construction (57);
- e) Anne revises her initial construction and expresses her new construction (59);
- f) Beth expresses her construction of Anne's construction and expresses her own construction of her earlier expressed constructions in: "To be a man you're independent" (60);
- g) Anne construes Beth's new construction and expresses her construction of Beth's verbalised construction: "Don't need anybody" (61).

Beth's subsequent response (62-70) suggests that Anne's previous statement, "don't need anybody," most closely approximates Beth's personal construction of what she earlier reported her partner to have said to her (51-52). Beth construes her partner, Charles as construing her as more independent. Beth construes her partner as construing people who don't need anybody as "independent." Through a process of construal and reconstrual a social construct has been derived within the context of the therapeutic interaction. Beth and Anne have a similar construction. They can have a similar construction only if they share a similar construct. Interestingly, and importantly, at this stage of the interview, the therapist is the participant in the interaction who has had to revise her previous constructions, or express alternative constructions, in order to negotiate a social construction with her client.

As demonstrated previously, Beth construes men as "independent." She construes Charles as construing those who don't need anybody as those who are "independent." However, Beth does not appear to construe men as those who don't need anybody. Rather, Beth suggests that she construes men as people who do need people. In the largest excerpt (62-70) in this episode, Beth recounts an event in which she construed her partner as having had "his only lonely time" (62) in their marriage and as having "had a personal crisis" (63). Towards the conclusion of the excerpt, Beth reports that Charles said that they had allowed

themselves to get so isolated (69-70). Beth concludes by saying: "So I don't think it works for men either, really" (70). Beth does not express her constructions very explicitly. However, one might reasonably assume that she construed Charles's experience to be similar to her own. She seems to have construed her partner as being sad and struggling while he was alone. Thus Beth seems to construe men as not, not needing anybody, but as needing people.

Anne provides another minimal encourager (71) before Beth continues. In the next statement Beth simply reexpresses her construction that men cannot be independent (72-75). Nevertheless, Beth expresses the possibility that she construes some men as feeling comfortable with striving towards self-sufficiency (72-73). Beth concludes this comment by expressing a superordinate construction of what she has said about the second book. She says: "Those things, I think about that book, made the biggest impact on me" (74-75). She construes the constructions which she has expressed in regard to the book as having the biggest impact on her.

Anne concludes: "It makes sense of the struggle you've been having with your job and being driven towards being successful and being torn and ****" (76-77). In this case, two concurrent constructions of the phrase "makes sense" are possible for the reader to make. Firstly, this phrase may be an expression of Anne's personal construction of Beth's previously verbally expressed construction (74-75). Secondly, this phrase may be construed as an expression of Anne's personal construction of the constructions which Beth expressed verbally earlier in the interview, in relation to the impact which the book had on her. The latter part of Anne's statement includes expressions of Anne's personal constructions of Beth's previously verbalised constructions. These expressions include, "the struggle you've been having" (76); "driven towards being successful" (77), and "being torn" (77).

Contextual Elements

In the next episode, Beth discusses what Anne construes as Beth's "struggle" with her job.

78 C: Yeah, and why I liked my job, I think, the first two years I was there, why I enjoyed
79 it so much was because there was – I worked with a group of people where it was
80 very much a kind of a team and a group thing and it was very much an enjoyable
81 place to work. I remember my son coming down a couple of times after school and
82 he said, "Everybody's always laughing, it's so fun at your office" and it was. It was
83 complete – the whole atmosphere had changed dramatically when I came back in
84 here later, which I think was one of the reasons, apart from not enjoying the work -
85 - was one of the reasons why I felt – I just – you know – it was part of the reasons
86 why I hated it so much. But that too, I found that I liked that sort of – It's being

87 my own self within a group, I found it very comfortable. Like I didn't participate
88 with the kind of larger social things, but I could sort of hear it going on outside my
89 office and it allowed me to be in there, to be sort of on my own working, but
90 knowing that there was something that you could join into, a greater thing, you
91 know. And I liked that. And I realised that I've been thinking about it over the last
92 few days since I've been reading this book called "The Girl Within". People talking -
93 - it goes on with the same thing in that book too about women in relation to other
94 people and how much more comfortable I feel if I can be kind of on my own within
95 a larger group.

96 T: Right.

97 C: Maybe it comes from just sort of the way I was -- you know -- raised in a larger
98 family.

99 T: I was going to say, is that what it was like in the family?

100 C: Yeah. You could be on your own but there were always people -- you always could
101 hear people in another room. You could always hear someone practising the piano,
102 and it gave you a real sense of security even though you were alone. And I think
103 that was one of the reasons why I enjoyed so much the first two years on my job
104 and hated it so much when I came back when it was very much a solitary -- a
105 solitary environment, and working within a team of people who nobody wanted
106 anything to do with anybody else. And I found it was so hard.

107 T: It makes sense. Suddenly, you were in an office, but the door was shut.

108 C: Yes, the door was shut, nobody wanted you to come into their doors. I mean I used
109 to shut my door a couple of years ago. I would go in and shut my door and I could
110 hear -- I could hear what was going on -- I could hear it outside. I had a very
111 gregarious, loud secretary and I just adored her. And that all had changed you see
112 when I went to work for people who, they didn't want to have fun, they were very
113 critical and it was really awful. And that made a big difference to me, a huge
114 difference. I mean, I don't know whether or not had I been within the same
115 environment but had taken on work -- work that I didn't enjoy very much, but
116 whether I would have had such awful feelings about the place as I had.

117 T: Yes.

118 C: And anyway, yeah, because – I mean – you know being on that sort of achievement
119 track and then also being all alone made it sort of doubly difficult I think.

120 T: So has anything happened since you were last here that you wanted to raise with
121 me? What's important today?

In the previous episode, Anne expressed her construction that the book being discussed by herself and Beth made sense of the struggle which Beth was having with her job (76). Beth's expression of affirmation ("Yeah") (78) following Anne's statement (76) suggests that Beth construes Anne as having a construction of the book which is similar to her own. In the first sentence of this episode, Beth implies use of a construct which is similar to that used by Anne. Beth says: "Yeah, and why I liked my job" (78). This statement follows immediately after Anne's comment that the book "makes sense" of the struggle Beth has been having with the job. Implicit in Beth's comment (78) is Beth's construction that the book also "makes sense" of why she liked her job in the first two years she was there. Beth then suggests that she has two constructions of the book contents. First, she, like Anne, construes the book contents as making sense of the struggle she has been having in her job. Second, Beth construes the contents of the book as making sense of why she once liked her job.

In the episode above, Beth elaborates her construction of what she describes as "an enjoyable place to work" (80) and her construction of a place which she construes as in contrast to "an enjoyable place to work." Beth construes an enjoyable place to work as a place where there is a group of people where it is very much a kind of team and a group thing (79-80). Upon closer examination, we can extract three constructions made using constructs which are subordinate to the construct used to construe the place of work as "enjoyable." Using the pyramiding technique described earlier, we may imagine ourselves asking Beth, "what is an enjoyable place like?" Beth's response would be similar to "there is a group of people." Then we might ask, "what is this group of people like?" to elicit constructions made using constructs which are subordinate to the construct used to construe the presence of a group of people. Beth may respond to this question by saying, "it is very much a kind of team." She may also respond by saying "there is a group thing."

Though Beth refers to the changes in her place of work here, for the sake of simplicity we will, for the moment, follow Beth's constructions of herself as enjoying her job. Beth says that when she is in an enjoyable place of work, she is "being my [her] own self within a group" (86-87). The construct used to construe "being my own self within a group" may be construed as superordinate to two implicit subordinate constructs. The constructions made

using these constructs, are expressed in the separate statements "being my own self" and "within a group."

In the sentence which follows (87-90), Beth expresses constructions which have been made using constructs which are subordinate to the construct indicated in the phrase "being my own self in the group" (87). This action is consistent with Kelly's comment that a client will have difficulty communicating with a therapist if the therapist cannot construe the constructions made using constructs which are subordinate to a client's superordinate construct. In this instance, the client, Beth, communicates constructions made using constructs which are subordinate to those used to make the previously expressed superordinate construction, "being my own self in the group." By so doing, Beth indicates the subordinate constructs which are elements of a more superordinate construct. These subordinate constructs are what Kelly (1955) describes as the "contextual elements" (p. 41) of the superordinate construct. Kelly maintains that clients have to express many contextual elements before they can construe their therapists as expressing predictively valid constructions of their clients' expressed constructions.

Upon reviewing Beth's verbally expressed constructions (87-90), we can identify expressions of constructions which are made using contextual elements of the previously mentioned superordinate construct. Referring to the above extract, Beth says, "I didn't participate with the kind of larger social things, but I could sort of hear it going on outside my office and it allowed me to be in there, to be sort of on my own working, but knowing that there was something that you could join into, a greater thing" (87-90). The phrases "didn't participate," "the kind of larger social things," "could sort of hear it," "going on," and "outside my office" are all expressions of constructions included within the previous sentence. Constructs used in making these constructions are contextual elements of a superordinate construct. They are constructs which are subordinate to a superordinate construct.

The constructions expressed by Beth (87-90) are expressions of Beth's constructions of previous actions, events, and places. She construes these constructions as "allowed me to be in there, to be sort of own my own working, but knowing that there was something you could join into, a greater thing." We might suggest that by saying, "I didn't participate with the kind of larger social things, but I could sort of hear it going on outside my office," Beth has made reference to actions, events and places which may have been similarly construed by Anne had she been able to construe those actions, events and places. The personal constructs which Beth and Anne would be likely to use to construe those actions, events and places may be similar. One might expect that Anne's construction of Beth's verbally expressed constructions (81-82), would be similar to the personal constructions which Beth has expressed. Anne, too, may express a construction similar to "allowed Beth to be in there, to be sort of on her own working, but knowing that there was something that she could join into, a greater thing."

Beth may therefore have increased the likelihood of Anne making predictively valid constructions of Beth's construction expressed in "being my own self within a group." She has done so by expressing the contextual elements of that construct which she uses to construe herself as "being my own self within a group."

Validating agents

Beth goes on to link what she is saying with her constructions of the content of the book, The Girl Within (84-85). She concludes her first comment in this excerpt by saying that she feels less anxious if she can be "kind of on her own" within a larger group (94-95). This statement suggests that "comfortable" may be a construction made using a construct which is superordinate to that which Beth uses to construe herself as "being my own self within a group."

Anne acknowledges what Beth has said (96) before Beth continues: "Maybe it comes from just sort of the way I was – you know – raised in a larger family" (97-98). In this statement Beth is construing her constructions of herself as being "comfortable" within a larger group. Her constructions imply the use of constructs which are superordinate to those constructs used thus far. Simply, Beth is trying to make sense of her own constructions. Beth's use of "maybe" at the outset of her statement (97), suggests that Beth is experimenting with her construction. For the moment she is construing her previously expressed constructions as coming from just sort of the way she was raised in a larger family (97-98). Since Beth expresses this construction within the context of a psychotherapeutic interaction, we may assume that she may construe her verbalised construction as validated or invalidated by her subsequent constructions of Anne's verbalised constructions. For example, if Beth construes Anne's verbalised constructions as validating her constructions, Beth may construe her construction as having predictive validity.

Beth may not of course, construe Anne as providing validating evidence of her constructions. This is an important point in discussion of psychotherapeutic interviews. One might reasonably expect that, as previous discussion has suggested, a therapist would always play a role in providing validating or invalidating evidence of clients' constructions. However, Landfield (1988) suggests that this may not always be the case. He submits that a person may construe other people to be "validating agents" (p. 242). Such agents are the people whom we listen to as we make decisions and as we evaluate the outcomes of our decisions (Landfield, 1988). In some cases, Landfield argues, people are their own validating agents. They do not construe validating evidence as being provided by others. Returning to the interview under discussion, we have no reason to assume that Beth does not consider Anne to be a validating agent of Beth's constructions. However, this brief discussion does suggest that psychological change can occur only within the context of a therapeutic

relationship in which the client construes the therapist as a validating agent of his or her personal constructions.

Extending a Construct's Range of Convenience

Anne responds to Beth's brief statement (97-98): "I was going to say, is that what it was like in the family?" (99). Here Anne expresses a question which implies reference to her personal construction of what Beth has said. Anne does not appear to have construed what Beth makes of her constructions. Anne has construed Beth's verbalised constructions as "what it was like in the [Beth's] family." We might speculate that Anne may have construed Beth's verbalised constructions as similar to events which Anne has previously construed with respect to a construct indicated by "Beth's family." Alternatively, Anne may have construed Beth's verbalised constructions as similar to events which she has previously construed as "family." In either case, Anne is seeking validating evidence or invalidating evidence of her construction of Beth's personal constructions. Two important points are apparent with respect to Anne's question. Firstly, Anne's personal construction is implicit, not explicit, in the question. Secondly, Anne may not have construed Beth's personal construction of those constructions which Beth expressed in her first lengthy comment (78-95).

The importance of Anne's question (99) is that Anne has invited Beth to construe her experience as "what it was like in the family." We may assume that Beth and Anne share the constructs needed to similarly construe the constructions expressed in "what it was like in the family." Beth's response: "Yeah. You could be on your own but there were always people - - you always could hear people in another room" suggests that this was the case. Beth has responded to Anne's question by expressing her constructions of being in the family. In the comment (100-106) there is evidence that Beth has construed her experience in her family as similar to her experience in her job. Both experiences are apparently construed as having features which are similar with respect to particular aspects. Beth suggests that both at work and in her family, she could be on her own but know that there were other people near by. As Beth continues in her construal of her experience in her family, Beth indicates a superordinate construction of having people nearby. Beth says: "It gave you a real sense of security" (102). Beth then expresses her constructions of the first two years in her job: "I think that was of the reasons why I enjoyed so much the first two years on my job" (102-104).

We may perhaps reasonably assume that Beth construes herself as having enjoyed the first two years in the job, because she could be alone in her job but have people nearby. Beth construes being alone but with people nearby as giving her a "real sense of security." Beth has construed being in her job (102-104), using a construct which she usually applies to being in her family. In Kellian terms the "range of convenience" of Beth's construct is extended. Here the term "range of convenience" means simply those events which may be construed

using a particular construct. According to Kelly, a construct is convenient for construing only a finite range of events. However, the number of events which may be construed using a particular construct may be increased. That is, the range of convenience of a particular construct may be extended. G. Neimeyer (1987) submits that a psychotherapist may encourage a client to apply a construct to a wider range of events. The therapist may encourage the extension of the existing range of convenience of a client's constructs by "importing constructs into anxiety-provoking areas from better structured domains" (G. Neimeyer, 1987b, p. 31). In practical terms, as we have seen in the example discussed here, a therapist may tentatively express a construction of a client's verbalised constructions. The therapist may not similarly construe the object of the client's construction. That is, the therapist may have a second construction of the client's experiences. This construction may be a construction which is different from the first construction which the therapist expressed. That is a therapist's construction of a client's construction may be similar to the construction which the client expresses. However, the therapist may construe the object of the client's construing, differently from the way in which the client construes that person, place, object or event. ^{The} therapist's construction may differ from a client's construction of his or her experiences.

It is difficult to construe the personal construction expressed within Beth's comment: "Maybe it comes from just sort of the way I was -- you know -- raised in a larger family" (97-98). However, one may reasonably assume that there is some difference between the constructions expressed within this statement and the construction expressed by Anne in her response. Anne says: "I was going to say, is that what it was like in the family" (99). Beth suggests that she may feel comfortable being kind of on her own within a larger group because she was raised in a larger family. Anne asks if Beth could be kind of on her own within the family. Thus, as suggested earlier, Anne invites Beth to construe being in her job using a construct which she might use to construe herself in relation to her family. Anne thereby provides an opportunity for the range of convenience of Beth's constructs to be extended.

Elaborating Contrasting Constructions

To return to previous discussion, Beth construes being alone within a larger group as contributing to her sense of security. When Beth was in her family and when she was in "an enjoyable place to work," she had a "real sense of security." Beth contrasts her experience within the family and within an enjoyable workplace in her later comments. Within the sentence: "And I think that was one of the reasons ... nobody wanted anything to do with anyone else" (102-106), Beth expresses the opposite pole of two constructs. In the first two years on her job, Beth "enjoyed" her job. When she came back to it, she "hated" it. "Enjoyed"

and "hated" appear to be expressions of constructions of opposite construct poles. Beth describes her workplace in the first two years, as "an enjoyable place" (80-81). In contrast, Beth describes her workplace when she came back as, "a solitary environment" (104-105). "An enjoyable place" and "a solitary environment" may be described too, as expressions of opposite construct poles.

Beth seems to elaborate her construction of her former workplace as "a solitary environment" in the latter part of the sentence (105-106). Though Beth does not explicitly describe a solitary environment, her comment that she was working "within a team of people who nobody wanted anything to do with anybody else" (105-106) suggests that a solitary environment is a place where nobody wants anything to do with anybody else. In contrast, according to Beth in "an enjoyable place to work" there is "very much a kind of a team" and "a group thing" (80).

Anne's response (107) to Beth's discussion of her workplace (100-106), includes an expression of Anne's personal construction of what Beth has said: "It makes sense" (107). Anne construes what Beth had said as making sense to Anne. Anne continues: "Suddenly, you were in an office, but the door was shut" (107). In the latter sentence, Anne has expressed her construction of Beth's verbalised construction. Interestingly, Anne has expressed her construction as an analogy. Beth responds having construed Anne's response (107) as an analogy: "Yes, the door was shut, nobody wanted you to come into their doors" (108). Beth has construed the personal construction expressed in Anne's statement. In the sentences that follow, Beth again contrasts the enjoyable workplace with the solitary environment. She says that she went to work for people who "didn't want to have fun, they were very critical" (112-113). The reader might recall that in Beth's earlier character sketch, Beth described herself as a person who is "lots of fun" and as a person who "likes to have fun." In this interview Beth construes those she worked with most recently, as not wanting to have fun. We might reasonably assume that "likes to have fun" and "don't want to have fun" are opposite poles of the same construct. Simply put, Beth does not construe those she worked with recently as similar to herself.

It is difficult to make sense of Beth's final comment in the excerpt (108-116). We can speculate that Beth may have had similar "awful feelings" for her first workplace had she taken on work which she didn't enjoy much. We cannot easily construe the personal significance which this suggestion may have for Beth. Neither can we construe Anne's constructions of what Beth has said from Anne's single word response: "Yes" (117).

Beth concludes this episode of the interview, with her construction of her previously stated constructions: "And anyway, yeah, because – I mean you know being on that sort of achievement track and then also being all alone made it sort of doubly difficult I think" (118-119). In this statement, Beth has returned to her earlier comment that she was "just

achievement-oriented, and felt so lonely and empty" (38). Anne changes the topic of the interaction in her response to Beth (120-121). Anne says: "So has anything happened since you were last here that you wanted to raise with me? What's important today?" (120-121).

A number of constructions of the passage (107-121) are possible. Beth may have construed Anne as wishing Beth to focus upon a different topic. Hence Beth may have presented her constructions (118-119) as a summary of what she had said thus far, with the intention that Anne would construe the earlier topic as concluded. Alternatively, Beth may have wished to conclude the topic and intended Anne to construe her verbalised constructions as a closing summary of her constructions. Of course Beth may simply have been providing her construction of her constructions thus far. Anne may have expressed a construction of the topic as one which needed to be concluded, in either her previous verbal, or her nonverbal, behaviour. Alternatively, Anne may have construed Beth's expressed constructions as final expressions of Beth's constructions relevant to the topic. Needless to say, many other constructions of the events in lines (107-121) are possible. Regardless, however, we can conclude that Anne construes the previous topic as concluded, and that she construes additional topics as being the subject of the remainder of the psychotherapeutic interaction.

Limitations of Verbal Behaviour

In the next episode, Beth construes her current relationship with members of her family.

122 C: No, I don't think anything's really changed. I've had some very bad days about my
123 mother, just sad days. I've – it's just really hard. I feel like sometimes, like I
124 wonder whether or not my family will lose its sort of centre. I don't know if they
125 will.

126 T: Like your mother was right in there.

127 C: Well she was the hub. You could call my mother and she would tell you news
128 about everybody.

129 T: Oh, right.

130 C: And the kids would call her, and some of my sisters and brothers would probably
131 call her. Everybody would call her at least maybe once a week. None of them lived
132 in the same town you see. They would call her maybe once a week, sometimes
133 some of the sisters twice a week, and it's so inexpensive to telephone in the United
134 States that if you just want a recipe, just call up like you're calling across town.

135 T: Right.

136 C: So there was a real close connection by the telephone. And I could call say once a
137 month and get all the news. My father really didn't do that. I mean he would get
138 on the phone and say "Hello" and maybe listen for a few minutes and then hang up.
139 And so I have this feeling like I've kind of lost the centrepiece of my family which
140 I think is difficult. Like I've tried to call my Dad in the last few days just because
141 I've promised myself I'd call him once every other week just to keep in contact.
142 And he's never there. I'm sure he's off fishing or doing something, which is really
143 good, but you do feel like you lost contact.

144 T: Right.

145 C: And the others – there's a sister in my family who I really am the closest to, and
146 who's probably not one of the people in the family that everybody would call, so
147 she would not ever form a hub. You know, so I feel that kind of a loss, like I've
148 been kind of flung off. My mother would write me letters, and just have a piece of
149 information about everybody, you know, just run down this list of things that she
150 talked to this person and they're doing this and their kids are doing this. It's much
151 more difficult to keep up with a lot of people

152 T: Yes, right.

153 C: Ten other people if you don't have that kind of a hub.

154 T: If you haven't got the hub then what does that mean for you?

155 C: Well I feel like I lose contact. It's very hard to keep up contact because I can't call
156 them.

157 T: Right.

158 C: I can't call them all.

159 T: Right.

160 C: It's just too expensive.

161 T: Yes.

162 C: And when I do call them, like I called one of my sisters because she had rung me,
163 and I called her back, and I ended up talking to her like for 45 minutes. Well that
164 would just cost me a fortune.

165 T: Yes.

166 C: I'll get a phone bill for a couple of hundred dollars for that. And just, I just can't
167 do it. And so I feel so cut off. I think that's been hard.

Beth's opening remark in this episode (122) suggests that there is no problem which Beth wishes to present for counselling. In response to Anne's question: "So has anything happened since you were last here that you wanted to raise with me? (120-121), Beth says: "No, I don't think anything's really changed" (122). At this point it is perhaps appropriate to remind the reader that the therapeutic session which is the subject of discussion here, is one of a series of regular counselling sessions which Beth has been having with Anne. Beth indicated prior to the audio-taped session that she hoped the session would help her understand why she had reached a point in her life where she was so unhappy.

Previous discussion suggests that Kelly recognised the limitations of verbal behaviour as a means of conveying people's constructions. For example, Kelly says that counselling clients may not be able to convey their personal constructions by simple verbal statements. They may need to express elements of those constructs used to make their verbalised constructions, before therapists can provide predictively valid constructions of their clients' constructions. Researchers, like therapists, must construe what have been described as the "contextual elements" of people's constructs which are expressed in people's verbal behaviour. In addition, researchers must construe the verbal context in which people's verbal behaviour occurs. As indicated earlier, words which surround verbally expressed constructions are often, themselves, expressed constructions. By construing these, and the expressed constructions with which they are associated, we may construe the meaning which others give to their verbal behaviour. Thus we may increase the predictive validity of our constructions of transcribed verbal behaviour.

Returning to discuss the beginning of the above episode from the transcribed interview, we may reasonably suggest that Beth is grieving for her mother. Little of the context of the interview, thus far, indicates that Beth is referring to her mother's death. However, we can approach interpretation of this section of the interview with the advance knowledge provided in Beth's self-characterisation. Prior to this interview, Beth had said that

she was "grieving" the loss of her mother. It would not be unreasonable then to suggest that Beth's remark, "I've had some very bad days about my mother" (122-123), validates our earlier constructions of Beth as grieving the loss of her mother.

Beth continues, "I've – it's just really hard" (123). In this comment Beth is expressing her construction of the loss of her mother. Beth suggests that she is feeling very sad. However, Beth does not explicitly refer to herself in this statement. We would need to construe the element of Beth's construction as "Beth" if we were going to say that Beth is sad. As argued above, it would be reasonable for us to construe "Beth" as the element of Beth's constructions. However, the possibility of our constructions being predictively invalid is reduced, if we construe explicit verbal behaviour, rather than our constructions of implicit verbal behaviour. Hence, "really hard" is construed to be an expression of a peripheral construct pole.

Incompatible Constructions

In the sentences that follow in the excerpt (122-125), Beth comments: "I feel sometimes, like I wonder whether or not my family will lose its sort of centre. I don't know if they will" (123-125). At this point we may suggest that Beth is construing her mother as the centre of her family. However, as argued previously, we must construe explicit verbal behaviour, if we are to maximise the predictive validity of our constructions of transcribed verbal behaviour. Nevertheless, Anne construes Beth's verbal behaviour (122-125) as including an expression of Beth's construction of her mother as the centre of the family. Anne expresses her construction of Beth's construction in: "Like your mother was right in there" (126).

Beth responds to Anne's suggestion that her mother was right in there, by describing her mother as "the hub" (127). In the sentence that follows, Beth explains that someone could telephone her mother and she would tell that person news about everybody. Thus Beth expresses her construction of her mother as someone you could call and she would tell you news about everybody. Someone you can call and get the news about everybody is construed by Beth as "the hub." Beth's mother is thus an element of the construct which Beth expresses in the phrase, "the hub." Anne responds to Beth's statements (127-128) by saying simply "Oh, right" (129). We might expect that Anne is expressing her understanding of Beth's statement. Anne too, may construe Beth's mother as the hub of Beth's family. To construe Beth's mother thus, Anne must include Beth's mother as an element within the context of a construct similar to that which Beth uses to construe her mother. Anne too, must construe the features of Beth's mother as similar to other people whom she might construe as "hubs." Kellian theory suggests that Anne may construe Beth's mother using an existing construct or a new construct. As we read through this episode however, it appears more likely that Anne construes Beth's mother using a new construct. Until Beth introduced the possibility of construing her mother

as "the hub," Anne does not appear to have construed Beth's mother in this way. Later in the interview (154) Anne expresses a construction of Beth's mother which is similar to Beth's construction of her mother. Anne too, refers to Beth's mother as a "hub." Thus a social construct appears to have arisen within the context of the therapeutic interaction. Beth and Anne similarly construe Beth's mother as a "hub."

Importantly, personal construct theory suggests that people may include a new construct within their construct system which can be used to provide a construction of a person, event or place which is incompatible with another possible construction of that same person, event or place. Thus, in the example discussed above, Beth's mother may be included as an element in the context of more than one of Anne's constructs. One construct may lead Anne to construe Beth's mother as "a hub." Another construct may be used to construe Beth's mother in a way which is seemingly incompatible with a construction of Beth's mother as "a hub." This is an important point, as here we are suggesting that psychotherapists may express new constructs (social constructs) which enable them to share their clients' constructions of particular people, events or places. However, therapists may continue to construe those same people, events or places in a way which is inconsistent with the way in which their clients construe those people, events or places. Constructions of similar people, events or places, made using social constructs and personal constructs may be seemingly incompatible.

As the therapeutic interview between Anne and Beth continues, Beth indicates that members of her family would phone her mother often (130-134). Following a minimal encourager from Anne (135), Beth says: "So there was a real close connection by the telephone" (136). The word "so" in this case suggests that what follows is a construction of the previous set of statements (130-135). The previous comment includes the elements of a superordinate construct which is expressed in the construction, "a real close connection by the telephone" (136).

Beth construes her father as acting differently from her mother: "He would get on the phone and say 'Hello' and maybe listen for a few minutes and then hang up" (137-138). Beth does not construe her father as acting as the hub of the family. Her construction of this construction is that she has "lost the centrepiece" (139) of her family. The word "centrepiece" seems to indicate a construct used to provide constructions similar to those which may be made using the construct which Beth used previously to construe her mother as "the hub." Beth goes on to provide further contextual elements of the construct used to construe herself as having "lost the centrepiece" of the family. Beth comments: "Like I've tried to call my Dad in the last few days I'm sure he's off fishing or doing something, which is really good, but you do feel like you lost contact" (140-143).

Again Anne provides a single word response (144) to Beth's comment. As Beth continues to discuss the loss of the centrepiece of her family, Beth explains what she construes

"a hub" in her family to be. She says: "There's a sister in my family who I really am the closest to, and who's probably not one of the people in the family that everybody would call, so she would not ever form a hub" (145-147). Beth suggests that a person who is a hub must be someone who everybody would call. Beth construes someone who everybody would call as "a hub." "Someone who everybody would call" is an expression of a construct which is subordinate to the superordinate construct expressed in the phrase "a hub." Thus Beth expresses a further subordinate element of her construct. Beth construes her sister as not being able to ever form a hub. Hence, Beth again construes herself as having lost something: "So I feel that kind of a loss" (147). In the latter part of this extract Beth again says that her mother would provide information about everybody: "My mother would write me letters ... that she talked to this person and they're doing this and their kids are doing this" (148-150). This statement may be construed as a further expression of earlier mentioned contextual elements of the construct which Beth has expressed in "the hub."

This extract provides a very good example of Beth's "elaboration" of her construct system. Before discussing this assertion, it is appropriate to make brief mention of Kelly's uses of the term "elaboration" in his discussion of personal construct theory. Kelly suggests that elaboration of clients' construct systems enables therapists to understand the psychological framework within which problems have arisen and within which they are currently sustained. We may conclude then that elaboration is the verbal expression of those hierarchically arranged constructs which make up a person's construct system. Within the context of the interview under discussion here, Beth elaborates that part of her construct system used in the construal of her mother. Beth comments that "it's much more difficult to keep up with a lot of people" (150-151) without the hub. Anne elicits the expression of a superordinate construction when she asks: "If you haven't got the hub then what does that mean for you?" (154). Beth responds: "Well I feel like I lose contact" (155).

In the sentence that follows Beth construes the possibility that she might maintain contact with members of her family rather than her mother or other members of the family. Beth says: "It's very hard to keep up contact because I can't call them" (155-156). Beth construes her construction "I can't call them" as, "very hard to keep up contact." Anne continues to provide only minimal responses to Beth (157, 159, 161). However, Beth explains that she can't call every member of her family because "it's just too expensive" (160). Beth expresses this statement differently in her next comment (162-164). Beth concludes this episode by saying that she feels "so cut off" (167). She adds her construction of feeling that way in, "I think that's been hard."

Circumspection, Pre-emption and Control

In the next episode Beth introduces a further construction previously mentioned within the context of her self-characterisation. Beth discusses her anger at not having another ten years with her mother before she died.

166 C: (I'll get a phone bill for a couple of hundred dollars for that. And just, I just can't
167 do it. And so I feel so cut off. I think that's been hard.) Plus I guess I just feel like
168 I'm just kind of angry that I didn't have another ten years with my mother which
169 is what I thought I would have. So that's –

170 T: What would you hope you were going to do over the next ten years?

171 C: Well I kept thinking that somehow I would get back there, and I wouldn't be back
172 maybe where she was, but that I would go back to having – we had a really lovely -
173 - and it's just like losing a good friend that you've allowed yourself to lose contact
174 with.

175 T: Right.

176 C: I think that's sort of what I feel like. You know that – you regret having lost the
177 contact. I had that year where I kept in pretty close contact but I had allowed
178 myself to really lose contact with her, you know, over the course of about six or
179 seven years, thinking that I was growing up, you know, so you – you know – you
180 lose contact with those people, you know. But in fact

181 T: Like you were showing – you know – you you didn't really need her.

182 C: Yeah, yeah. And I don't really think I did need her, maybe I didn't realise that she
183 was the one person in my life that you could always count on if you need a
184 sympathetic ear. And to allow yourself to lose contact with people like that. You,
185 I just always assumed I'd be able to reestablish it, and then now I won't.

186 T: Yes.

187 C: And so I think that's been hard.

This episode begins when Beth says: "Plus I guess I just feel like I'm just kind of angry that I didn't have another ten years with my mother which is what I thought I would have" (167-169). To this point in the interview, Beth has expressed a number of constructions which she associates with the loss of her mother. In particular, Beth has said that she feels as though she has lost contact with her family as a consequence of her mother's death. In this episode, Beth adds that she is angry because she did not have as long with her mother as she thought she would have. Beth is engaged in a process of discussing alternative constructions of the loss of her mother. This process is described by Kellian theorists (e.g., Button, 1985) as the process of "circumspection."

Kelly suggests that circumspection is followed by "pre-emption" in which a person chooses a single construct which, when used to construe a particular person, event or place, will provide only two alternative constructions. According to Kellian theory pre-emption is followed by "control" in which a person selects one of the two possible construct poles to construe the person, event or place. The construct pole which is chosen is that which enables the greatest possibility of "extension" or "definition" of the construct system. In earlier discussion (Chapter Four) construct system extension was described as changes to the construct system which enable the construal of places, events or people which have been unable to be construed previously. In the same chapter, construct system definition was described as an increase in the predictive validity of the existing construct system.

The circumspection-pre-emption-control (CPC) cycle described in Kellian theory has important implications for psychotherapy (Landfield & Leitner, 1980). Kelly suggests that therapists may halt the process of circumspection which their clients engage in. A therapist may ask a question which may prompt a client to settle pre-emptively upon a single construct to construe a particular person, event or place (Kelly, 1955). Personal construct theory suggests that the client may then express a single construction of the person, event or place being construed. The therapist is thus able to control the elaboration of the client's construct system. Kelly cautions therapists however, who attempt to control the elaboration of their clients' construct systems. He suggests that clients may act on the alternatives they have been prompted to choose. Hence, Kelly suggests that therapists should encourage clients to elaborate other alternative constructions.

In the above excerpt from the interview between Anne and Beth we can construe Anne as prompting Beth to choose pre-emptively between her constructions of the loss of her mother which she has expressed thus far. In the extract (166-169) Beth has made reference to two superordinate constructions of the loss of her mother. Beth feels "cut off" (167). She also feels "angry" (168) because she didn't have another ten years with her mother. Anne does not express her constructions of Beth's verbalised constructions. Rather Anne indicates that she has construed only the common construction expressed in Beth's verbal behaviour. Anne

responds to Beth's comment (166-169): "What would you hope you were going to do over the next ten years?" (170). Previous discussion suggests that Anne is prompting Beth to choose one of her previously expressed constructions of the loss of her mother. We might reasonably suggest too, that Anne's earlier brief responses to Beth's statements, have enabled Beth to engage in circumspection. However, personal construct theory suggests that choices and decisions are necessary if people's construct systems are to retain predictive validity (Button, 1985). Anne's response (170) may then prove useful in prompting Beth to progress from circumspection to pre-emption. It is important to say however, that Kellian theory suggests that people who complete the CPC cycle may engage in a further process of circumspection. If a construer's initially chosen construction of a particular person, event or place is not predictively valid the construer may reconstrue the object of the construction. A different construct to that selected earlier may need to be selected for this purpose. Hence the construer may again engage in circumspection.

Returning to the psychotherapeutic interaction between Anne and Beth, the reader will notice that Beth responds only briefly to Anne's question (170). Beth and Anne appear to have a shared construction of Anne's question since Beth begins to express her constructions of what she hoped that she would be doing over the next ten years. Beth replies to Anne in her statement: "Well, I kept thinking that somehow I would get back there, and I wouldn't be back maybe where she was, but that I would go back to having--" (171-172). One might expect that by eliciting what Beth hoped to do over the next ten years had her mother been alive, Anne would be able to construe Beth's constructions of not being able to spend time with her mother over the next ten years. Thus we may construe Anne as having made an attempt to get Beth to elaborate part of her construct system. The part of Beth's construct system which may be elaborated includes the superordinate construct which Beth uses in her construal of herself. Beth uses this construct to construe herself as not having another ten years with her mother. It is important to say at this point, that this theoretical analysis of the interaction between Anne and Beth does not assume a similar conscious analysis of the therapeutic process on the part of Anne or Beth. The analysis being described here serves only to provide a theoretical explanation of the process of psychotherapy. Analysis does not assume knowledge of the cognitive processes of either participant in the therapeutic interaction. We can only construe what those processes may be.

Interestingly, Beth does not complete her expressions of her constructions of what she hoped to do over the next ten years had her mother lived (171-172). Rather Beth expresses another construction of her mother's death: "It's just like losing a good friend that you've allowed yourself to lose contact with" (173-174). Anne has not succeeded in getting Beth to express her constructions of what she hoped to do over the next ten years had her mother lived. After a brief response from Anne (175), Beth says: I think that's sort of what I feel like.

You know that you regret having lost the contact. I had that year where I kept in pretty close contact but I had allowed myself to really lose contact with her, you know...." (176-178). Beth goes on to suggest that she allowed herself to lose contact with her mother because she construed herself as "growing up" (179).

Anne expresses her constructions of Beth's verbalised constructions (176-180) in her statement: "Like you were showing – you know – you you didn't really need her" (181). Anne is construing the constructions which Beth has of her past behaviour. Beth responds by saying that she didn't really think that she did need her mother (182). Anne and Beth appear to share a similar construction of "need" in this instance. We may describe that construct which is indicated by "need" as a construct shared by Anne and Beth. Beth adds that she didn't realise that she could "count on" her mother if she needed "a sympathetic ear" (182-184). As will become evident shortly, we too, need to attempt to make sense of Beth's constructions at this point. We might construe Beth as construing herself as not needing her mother. However, Beth construes her mother as someone whom she could "count on" if she needed someone.

Beth seems once again, to be expressing regret at having lost contact with her mother. She comments: "And to allow yourself to lose contact with people like that. You, I just always assumed I'd be able to reestablish it, and then now I won't (184-185). After a brief response by Anne (186), Beth concludes by expressing her construction of her previously expressed constructions: "And so I think that's been hard" (187).

Providing Validating Evidence

In the next episode of this interview, Beth construes her relationship with members of her family.

188 T: Yes. So it's a bit like you'd moved away to get a bit removed and you were
189 preparing to move back in a new way. *** I'm not saying dependent, but still
190 enjoying the way in which she provided that kind of –

191 C: Well I don't know -- I think that, the thing is it's funny -- I feel sometimes like I
192 didn't really depend on them. Like something about my life, and I've thought about
193 this a bit the last week or so. You remember when I came in one of the things that
194 was really hard for me was just that I don't feel like there was anybody in my life
195 that I ever felt -- including my parents -- that I ever felt were actually really
196 involved in my life, gave me any encouragement to sort of figure out what was me.
197 And I still feel that way about them -- it's although sometimes when I feel those
198 feelings now I somehow feel but -- like you're speaking ill of the dead -- you know -

199 - and you feel so awful. I still feel that way, and so I often felt as I was growing up
200 that the way to prove that you were a good daughter was to never ask for anything.
201 I never asked for anything and I got to a certain point from them. I always paid my
202 debts – like there were a lot of kids in my family who would borrow money from
203 my parents as they got older and never pay it back. And that was just part of being
204 a kid, but I never did that. I always paid it back and I always felt like there should
205 be some sort of recognition for that, but there never was, that this was the daughter
206 who always – you know – she never required anything fresh, she always paid her
207 debts.

208 T: * Was reliable –

209 C: Yeah – you know.

210 T: And responsible, you were responsible.

211 C: Yeah. I always paid – I think that was one of the reasons why I got married, was
212 that I would no longer – then I wasn't a responsibility at all. I had just got married
213 and I was making my own way, and I never really got me. I don't really feel like
214 I was ever really dependent on them. In a way I wish that I had had that
215 opportunity or that they had said that, "Yes, you can depend on us." I don't think
216 I ever got that. So sometimes maybe – I don't know whether or not I feel like now
217 I'll have nobody that I can really depend on. And if I turn into a complete basket
218 case my mother would have come and bailed me out. I know that because she
219 bailed out other people in my family.

220 T: Right.

221 C: I mean she did some pretty remarkable things with other people, some of the other
222 sisters and brothers in my family who got into situations where they really needed
223 her, desperate situations. And I never got into anything like that.

224 T: You always managed.

225 C: I always really managed. And I guess I feel like maybe now I've lost the
226 opportunity to –

227 T: Fall over –

228 C: And now this stage in my life is the first time where I have felt like now I'm openly
 229 saying I can't manage, I can't do it, and then she's gone. So anyway, I think that's
 230 been hard.

In the opening statement of this episode (188-190) Anne expresses her constructions of Beth's verbalised constructions which were expressed in an extract in the preceding episode. Regrettably a small amount of the audio-tape is inaudible. However, we may construe Anne's second statement as referring to Beth's relationship to her mother. Anne says: "**** I'm not saying dependent, but still the way in which she provided that kind of – (189-190). In this comment, Anne indicates her construction of Beth's earlier construction of herself as not really being dependent upon her mother (182). Nevertheless, Anne construes Beth as having enjoyed something which her mother provided. Here Anne anticipates Beth's construction of Anne's verbalised construction. Anne anticipates that Beth may construe Anne's construction of Beth as "dependent." By saying "I'm not saying dependent," Anne is attempting to provide Beth with evidence that such a construction would be invalid. Of course, as argued earlier, should Beth construe Anne's construction of her as "dependent," she may not construe Anne's denial as evidence of the invalidity of her construction.

Beth responds to Anne's statement (188-190) by saying that she "didn't really depend on them" (191). To this point, Beth has not expressed a construction of herself as not being dependent upon others. However, here Beth appears to have construed "dependent" as similar to her previously expressed construction, "need" (182). Both "dependent" and "need" however, have been introduced by Anne. One might expect however, that Beth would use these words in the expression of her constructions only if she construed the shared constructs implied by these words, as indicating the similarity between herself and others which she construed. "Dependent" and "need" are expressions of constructions which are made using constructs which Anne and Beth share. However, "dependent" may be included in the construct context of different personal constructs. When Anne refers to someone as "dependent" she may be expressing a different personal construction to that which Beth expresses when she refers to someone as "dependent." Similarly, Anne and Beth may express different constructions when they refer to someone as "needing" someone. However, as is the case in all psychotherapeutic interactions, Anne and Beth can only construe the constructions which the other expresses in her verbal behaviour.

Returning to the extract above, Beth discusses her construal of herself as not dependent upon her parents. She has not responded to Anne's construal of Beth as enjoying the way Beth's mother provided her with something. In the sentences which follow, Beth

explains why she construes herself as not really depending upon her parents. Beth says: "I don't feel like there was anybody in my life that I ever felt – including my parents – that I ever felt were actually really involved in my life, gave me encouragement to sort of figure out what was me (194-196). Beth construes people who are "involved in her life" as those who give her encouragement to sort of figure out what is her. This becomes important when reference is made later to Beth's response to the counselling interview. In the following sentence (197-199), Beth construes feeling as though no-one was involved in her life as "speaking ill of the dead" (198). When Beth construes herself as speaking ill of the dead she "feels so awful." "Feels so awful" is an expression of a construction made using a superordinate construct.

As Beth continues, Beth suggests that she construes "good daughters" as having parents involved in their lives. We have little evidence to suggest the validity of our construction that Beth construes only good daughters as having parents involved in their lives. There are doubtless other constructions of Beth's comments. However, the construction offered here may have predictive validity in light of Beth's subsequent comments. Beth says: "So I often felt as I was growing up that the way to prove that you were a good daughter was to never ask for anything" (200). Beth construes someone who never asks for anything as "a good daughter." Beth goes on, "I never asked for anything and I got to a certain point from them" (201). Beth had tried to prove herself to be a good daughter. Beth also construes herself as someone who paid back her debts (201-202, 206-207) and never required anything fresh (206).

Anne responds to Beth's comments by construing her verbalised constructions: "Was reliable –" (208) and, "responsible" (210). This episode illustrates a therapist's attempt to express constructions which her client will construe as validating the client's previously expressed constructions. Two conditions must be satisfied for Anne to be able to validate her client's constructions of herself. Firstly, Anne's constructions of Beth's self-constructions must be similar to Beth's self-constructions. We might expect then that Anne and Beth must have similar personal constructs which may be used to construe Beth. That is, each person must be able to construe Beth as similar to other people with respect to the same aspect. Secondly, Anne and Beth must have similar words indicating similar constructs, included in the context of those personal constructs which each uses to construe Beth. However, a therapist cannot be certain that a client will construe the therapist's expressed construction as validating the client's construction. Hence, Anne cannot be certain that Beth will construe Anne's verbalised constructions as validating Beth's constructions of herself.

Beth continues to express her role constructions of herself. She construes herself as having not been a responsibility at all because she got married (211-212). Beth concludes by expressing a similar construction to that which she expressed previously (191-192). Beth

comments: "I don't really feel like I was ever really dependent on them" (213-214). Beth goes on however, to express her construction that she wishes that she had the opportunity to be dependent upon her parents (214-215).

As Beth continues, she says, "I don't know whether or not I feel like now I'll have nobody that I can really depend on" (216-217). Here Beth appears to be testing the predictive validity of a construction which she may not have expressed previously. Earlier discussion suggests that in this instance, Beth may construe herself as the validating agent of her construction. Landfield (1988) submits that people may attribute the role of primary validating agent to themselves or others.

He suggests that people who attribute responsibility for the provision of validating or invalidating evidence to themselves, may be said to attribute the role of primary validating agent to themselves. In contrast, a person who says, "I know my father is always right" attributes the role of primary validating agent to another person, in this case that person's father (Landfield, 1988). In the case of the excerpt discussed here, Beth expresses a construction of her feelings. Kellian theory suggests that Beth can validate her construction only when she construes the outcome of acting upon her construction. If she construes her feelings as being that she now has nobody that she can really depend on, do her feelings validate her construction? Does Beth construe her feelings as validating her construction that she feels like now she'll have nobody that she can really depend on? Needless to say, we have no basis upon which to construe people as having construed their constructions as validated if they attribute responsibility for the provision of validating evidence to themselves.

Beth concludes this excerpt by expressing her construction of her mother as someone who would have come and "bailed her out" (217-218). Beth's construction follows from her subordinate construction expressed in, "I know that because she bailed out other people in my family" (218-219). Anne gives a minimal response (220) before Beth expresses a further construction of her mother (221). Reflecting on a previous excerpt (201-207) and the latter part of the current excerpt beginning "some of the other sisters and brothers....(221-223), we might suggest that Beth has expressed contrasting poles of role constructs used to construe herself and others. Beth's brothers and sisters would borrow money as they got older and never pay it back (202-203). In addition, Beth's brothers and sisters got into situations where they really needed their mother (221-223). Beth construes such situations as "desperate situations" (223). In contrast, Beth always paid her debts and never got into "desperate situations."

Again Anne construes Beth's constructions of herself: "You always managed" (224). As in an earlier instance, Anne may be construed as offering a construction which Beth may construe as validating evidence of her self-construction. In this case, Beth's self-construction is expressed as, "I never got into anything like that" (223). However, a point worth noting is that according to Kellian theory, Anne too, will be seeking validating evidence of her

constructions. Thus, in this instance, Anne must construe Beth's response as indicating that Beth has construed Anne's verbally expressed construction (224), as validating evidence of the construction which Beth has expressed verbally earlier (223). Presumably only then will Anne's construction of Beth's construction be validated.

Interestingly, Beth again responds to Anne's construction using a word used by Anne to express her construction. Previously Anne had said that Beth always "managed" (224). In response Beth says: "I always really managed" (225). Beth appears to have construed Anne as having validated her earlier verbalised construction (223). Beth continues to tentatively construe herself as having lost the opportunity to depend on her family. She says: "And I guess I feel like maybe now I've lost the opportunity to –" (225-226). Anne responds (227) by expressing her construction of Beth's unverballed construction (226). Notably, Beth does not include Anne's phrase in her next comment, unlike other occasions in this episode. Instead, Beth construes herself using the opposite pole of an already expressed construct. Earlier Beth construed herself as having "always really managed" (225). Now, she construes herself as not being able to manage (229). Beth has changed her construction of herself from being similar to people whom she construes "manage," to being similar to those whom she construes "can't manage." In Kellian theory, the construct system change which has taken place is described as a "slot change" (G. Neimeyer, 1987b). Simply, one may construe oneself as similar to two people, A and B, and different from a third person, C, with respect to some aspect. One may subsequently construe oneself as similar to C, but different from A and B with respect to that same aspect. In such an instance, there is said to have been a slot change within the construer's construct system. Returning to the interview under discussion, a single element, in this case, Beth, is now an element of a construct pole which is opposite to that pole of the construct which Beth previously used to construe herself.

Beth concludes this episode by again expressing her construction of her construed experience: "So anyway, I think that's been hard" (229-230).

Construct System Change

In the following episode Beth construes her experience of being unhappy and expressing her feelings to her parents.

231 T: So -- So it's really that you couldn't -- if she'd been there then you could have
232 really fallen over, she might have been able to pick you up.

233 C: I think she probably would have, or she would have tried to. I don't know. It's like
234 I didn't really even give her a chance before. She was not the kind of person -- it's
235 like one of my brothers-in-law said, "Your family doesn't like losers." And I really

236 don't know whether or not as an adult she would have picked me up. She certainly
237 picked up some of my -- I think she would have -- only because she -- maybe had
238 a tendency to sort of infantilise kids in the family. I mean -- maybe she would have
239 picked it up -- picked us up -- I mean picked me up, I think she would have. I
240 don't know if I would have -- would have ever gotten up the courage to ever be that
241 vulnerable with her because I remember talking to her say in June and um -- or in
242 May, and for the first time in my life saying to my parents on the phone that I was
243 just terribly unhappy and that I just didn't really know what to do.

244 T: Yes.

245 C: And they were there, but I didn't really get -- they used to call me at work so it was
246 very hard to talk to them because even when you're in an office with your door
247 closed the offices really have walls that are paper thin and I always felt very
248 uncomfortable. And to talk to them like that, it would have made me very teary
249 and I just didn't feel like I could be that way in my office that had a big glass thing
250 up in the foyer.

251 T: This is being a bit contained and grown up.

252 C: Yes, and at home when they would call me we and would have one phone, in the
253 kitchen. So there was never any privacy to actually talk to somebody. So -- So I
254 don't know. I feel like maybe if I'd had a chance that I'd finally in my life sort of -
255 - was working through things, and I never really got to the other side of it. But I
256 know it's not just me. There are other sisters, sisters who have really bad
257 relationships with my mother and who had sort of been working through those, and
258 they have a lot of regrets, that they couldn't have gotten to the other side of it, and
259 that somehow it hadn't been made better, or somehow they couldn't have had a
260 different relationship. But that's hard. It's hard to all of a sudden get to a point in
261 your life where you're feeling for the first time like you are vulnerable and then not
262 to have the person that you felt probably would have saved you there -- you know.
263 So anyway that's been hard.

264 T: Yes, you're really on your own.

Anne begins this episode by expressing her construction of Beth's previously expressed constructions. Anne comments: "So -- 'So it's really that you couldn't -- if she'd

been there then you could have really fallen over, she might have been able to pick you up. Beth earlier construed her mother as being able to "bail her out" if she turned into a "basket case" (217-218). At the conclusion of the previous episode Beth construed herself as being unable to "manage" (229). She can no longer be independent. In addition, Beth construes her mother as no longer being there (229). We may construe Anne's response in two ways. Firstly, Anne may have construed Beth's present construction of her different previous constructions. Secondly, Anne may have expressed her own construction of Beth's previous constructions. In each case, of course, Anne is expressing her constructions. What is different in each case, is the object of construal.

In the first instance above, Anne would construe Beth's construction. The reader may recall previous discussion in which the point was made that people can express seemingly incompatible constructions. Nevertheless, of course, what must be made clear is that all constructs which a person employs must be consistent with the superordinate constructs in a person's construct system. Thus, Anne may employ a construct which is similar to the construct which Beth uses to make her construction. Anne may use this construct in her construal of Beth's construction. However, Anne may use a second construct which is dissimilar to construe Beth's construction of her constructions. That is, Anne may use a second construct to construe Beth's superordinate construction. The construct which Anne uses may be dissimilar to the construct which Anne uses to construe Beth's subordinate construction. Anne's second construct may enable her to offer a construction of the constructions which Beth has expressed previously, which is different from Beth's construction of her previous constructions. Alternatively, of course, Anne's construction of Beth's previous constructions, may be identical to Beth's superordinate construction.

What is important in the excerpt being discussed here, is that Anne has offered a construction which Beth may construe as validating evidence, or invalidating evidence, of her superordinate construction. As argued in an earlier chapter (Chapter Three), invalidation may prompt changes in a person's construct system. Thus, in this instance, should Beth construe Anne's statement as invalidating Beth's present construction, Beth may revise her previous constructions. In the sentences which make up Beth's response to Anne, there is evidence that Beth construes Anne's construction. However, she remains uncertain as to whether she, like Anne (231-232), construes herself as being able to "fall over," if her mother had been there.

In her response to Anne, Beth initially vacillates between two constructions of her mother. Beth says: "I really don't know whether or not as an adult she would have picked me up" (235-236). Then Beth says: "I mean -- maybe she would have picked it up -- picked us up -- I mean picked me up, I think she would have" (238-239). In the latter statement Beth concludes that her mother would have picked her up. However, Beth construes Anne's construction of Beth as different from her own self-construction: Beth is uncertain whether

she shares Anne's construction of her as having been able to fall over if her mother had been there. Beth comments: "I don't know if I would have – would have ever gotten up the courage to ever be that vulnerable with her" (239-241). As on earlier occasions, Beth proceeds to express contextual elements of her self-construction (242-250).

Hostility

In the statement which follows that discussed above there is evidence that Anne has provided her construction of Beth's verbalised constructions. Anne comments: "This is being a bit contained and grown up" (251). Importantly, Anne has not apparently attempted to construe what Beth may make of her reluctance to be "teary" in her office when her family phoned. That is, Anne has not construed Beth's superordinate construction. Rather, Anne has invited Beth to construe what Anne said and to respond to it. Beth responds affirmatively (252) to Anne's comment, but her subsequent comments (252-263) suggest that Beth does not construe herself as "being a bit contained and grown up." Indeed Beth goes on to suggest that she is seeking validation for a contrasting construction of herself. She comments: "It's hard to all of a sudden get to a point in your life where you're feeling for the first time like you are vulnerable and then not to have the person that you felt probably would have saved you there" (260-262). A personal construct theorist might suggest that Beth is continuing to strive for validation of her self-construction from Anne despite construing Anne's comments as invalidating evidence of that construction. Kelly would suggest that Beth is displaying "hostility." She appears to be continuing to seek validating evidence despite her construction of Anne's verbal behaviour as invalidating evidence of her self-construction.

Anne does not respond directly to Beth's construction of herself as "vulnerable." She construes Beth's construction of herself as not having the person who would have saved her there. Anne says: "Yes, you're really on your own" (264). As indicated earlier, there are many constructions which one may have of the dialogue being discussed here. In some instances, there are equally acceptable alternative constructions, as in the case of Anne's final comment in this episode. We may construe Anne's comment as including her construction of what Beth makes of her constructions. Alternatively, Anne's comment may be Anne's construction of Beth's constructions. Regardless, as will become apparent in the next episode, Beth appears to offer validating evidence of Anne's final construction expressed in this excerpt.

Metaphorically Expressed Constructions

In the next episode, Beth elaborates her earlier expressed construction of herself as someone who may not have the courage to be vulnerable (240-241).

265 C: I shouldn't feel that way because there are people, you know, brothers and sisters,
266 who have said, "Look, don't worry about it. If you have to come back we've got an
267 extra bedroom here – you can come back – you can stay – you can get on your
268 feet." But for some reason, and I don't know whether if I felt any differently about
269 my mother, for some reason I just feel this constraint, like it's this thing of showing
270 too much weakness or something.

271 T: Yes. I notice that you do that even now, that you start to cry and then you pull
272 yourself up again.

273 C: Yes, I do that. I just thought of that myself.

274 T: Yes. Like you're only allowed to be about, I don't know, ten. You're not allowed
275 to be three.

276 C: Yes. That's true. I don't know – it's sort of this thing of kind of letting go – I don't
277 know.

278 T: What do you think would happen if you did?

279 C: I don't know. I don't think anything would happen. I mean, when I'm on my own
280 or, when I was grieving for my mother, I could just openly cry and everybody
281 accepted it.

282 T: Yes.

283 C: You know. But maybe in grieving for myself or lack of self is not quite as accepted
284 – you know – the whole thing maybe of becoming completely vulnerable. I don't
285 know.

286 T: I was wondering what stops you --

287 C: I don't know – I don't know. I think sometimes I feel like maybe if I - I wonder
288 whether or not there is a strong person inside, and that if you cry and you cry too
289 much that all you'll be is this whinging crybaby and there won't be any sort of
290 strong person to sort of sweep it up and continue on.

291 T: Yes.

292 C: Maybe that's all -- what I think it would seem like, I don't know.

293 T: It does seem like that.

294 C: Yes.

Beth begins the episode by responding to Anne's construction of Beth as being on her own. As indicated earlier, Beth seems to validate Anne's construction (265-268). However, therapists and their clients seek validating evidence for their constructions. Here, I have implied that the therapist (Anne) may construe the client's (Beth's) response as validating evidence of her previously expressed constructions. However, we must not overlook the possibility that initially Beth sought validating evidence of the personal constructions which were expressed in her comments in the previous episode. In the preceding episode, Anne construed Beth as being on her own (264). Beth may have construed Anne's expressed construction as validating Beth's previous self-construction. Anne, in turn, may construe her construction of Beth's previous self-construction as validated by Beth's comment: "I shouldn't feel that way..." (265). If we apply our common constructs in the construal of Beth's comment (265), we can reasonably construe that Beth construes herself as currently feeling on her own. She and Beth share a similar construction of Beth.

In the latter part of Beth's first comment in this episode, Beth construes herself as feeling constrained. Beth says: "For some reason, I just feel this constraint" (269). She construes herself as being unable to display any lack of dependence (269-270). Anne responds by making an observation of Beth's behaviour: "Yes. I notice that you do that even now, that you start to cry and then you pull yourself up again" (271-272). Anne has construed Beth as "feeling this constraint." Beth too, construes herself as "feeling this constraint" (273). Anne goes on to express her construction of Beth's verbalised constructions. She comments: "Like you're only allowed to be about, I don't know, ten. You're not allowed to be three" (274-275). As Anne makes this statement, she may be said to be acting in what R. Neimeyer (1980) describes as "metaphoric mode" (p. 82). Neimeyer submits that Kelly did not refer to the use of metaphor in his explication of personal construct theory. However, he suggests that a person who is operating in metaphoric mode is "importing a construction used to interpret one domain of experience in order to structure another, perhaps underdimensioned domain in a new way" (R. Neimeyer, 1980, p. 82). Returning to the subject of analysis here, Anne may be described as using a construct, usually used to construe different events, to construe Beth's expressed constructions. However, we could perhaps extend Neimeyer's explanation of the

use of metaphor in therapy. We might suggest that metaphoric expressions of constructions may more likely be similarly construed by the construer and the person who construes the construer's expressed constructions. Anne and Beth will possibly similarly construe Anne's verbally expressed construction (274-275).

Beth responds by suggesting that she too, construes herself acting as though she is only allowed to be ten not three (276). In the final sentence of the extract (276-277), Beth does not complete her verbal expression of her construction: "I don't know -- it's sort of this thing of kind of letting go -- I don't know" (276-277). Anne invites Beth to construe what would happen if she did "let go" (278). Anne's invitation to Beth to construe herself as "letting go" is what personal construct theorists would describe as an attempt to "loosen" Beth's construing. Kellian theory suggests that therapists may facilitate construct system change by inviting their clients to change their usual ways of construing others. In this case, Anne is inviting Beth to construe herself as "letting go," rather than as "not letting go."

Beth's response to Anne's invitation suggests that she construe herself as "letting go," though perhaps not easily. She says: "I don't know. I don't think anything would happen" (279). However, Beth goes on to discuss her experiences of being sad (279-281). Anne provides a brief response (282) before Beth continues. In her subsequent comment (283-285) Beth tries to make sense of her construction of herself as not being able to be vulnerable. Beth construes her self-constructions: "But maybe in grieving for myself or lack of self is not quite as accepted -- you know -- the whole thing maybe of becoming completely vulnerable"(283-284). Here Beth is testing out her construction of grieving for herself, or lack of self, as not being "accepted." Beth's use of the word "maybe" suggests that she is uncertain of the predictive validity of her construction. Does she refrain from letting go because she construes grieving for herself, or lack of self, as not "accepted?" As in an earlier instance, only Beth can provide the validating evidence for her construction.

Anne does not appear to construe Beth's verbalised construction of why she does not become vulnerable. Rather, Anne asks an implicit question which follows from her construction of the reason for Beth not being vulnerable. Anne says: "I was wondering what stops you --" (286). To respond, Beth must first construe herself as being prevented from displaying her vulnerability. She must then construe what it is that stops her from being vulnerable. Beth does both. In her response (287-290) she uses the second person pronoun to express her constructions. However, we can reasonably assume that here Beth is indirectly referring to herself. From Beth's statements (289-290) we may conclude that Beth construes herself as a person who may be a "whinging crybaby" if she cries too much. She also construes herself as possibly not having a "strong person" inside to carry on. Anne does not attempt to express her construction of what Beth has said. However, at this point we might reasonably conclude that Beth construes her fear of being a whinging crybaby without a

strong person to carry on, as preventing her from being vulnerable. The episode concludes with Beth expressing her construction that being vulnerable would seem like being left as a "whinging crybaby" (292). Anne's response (293) suggests that she too, construes Beth as a "whinging crybaby" when Beth is vulnerable.

Threat

In the episode which follows Anne encourages Beth to be vulnerable.

295 T: I'd like – I'd like to encourage you to become a crybaby.

296 C: But that's just like this pathological critic inside, I think of as this kind of whinger,
297 this frightened little girl. And I keep wondering whether or not, that's in there but
298 is there another person in there. Is there another part of myself who's not that way?

299 T: Yes.

300 C: Who's happy and has a sense of self. Because at this stage I'm just – I'm just not
301 sure there is, you know. I have all these ideas about moving ahead with my life
302 and I somehow feel constrained to do them. And I wonder if I feel constrained
303 because I still can't find myself.

304 T: How do you think ****?

305 C: I just don't know. I don't know. B __ says that I'm just too reflective. He just finds
306 being around me so utterly depressing. He just wants it all to go away.

307 T: Sounds like part of you that agrees with him.

308 C: Well I think that's right. I keep thinking that there has to be sort of a bottom to all
309 of this, when you find something that sort of says right, now we're ready to move
310 on. I don't seem to be able to find that. I feel like I'm just going around in circles
311 sometimes.

312 T: The sense I have is that it's not so much – well I suppose it is like going around in
313 circles – but that you start feeling that feeling and then you pull yourself up again
314 and so you actually don't reach the bottom, you don't know what the bottom's like.

315 C: Yes.

316 T: And so you don't actually get down there enough to –

317 C: To let it go.

318 T: To let it go. It's – my idea is that if you could somehow let it go –

319 C: But I don't know how. I just don't know how to sort of get down there and just dig
320 this stuff out.

321 T: It's deep there.

From the preceding episode, we may tentatively assume that Beth construes someone who is vulnerable as someone who cries. Someone who cries too much is construed by Beth as someone who is a "whinging crybaby." Beth's verbalised constructions suggest that Beth does not want to construe herself as a "whinging crybaby." Beth has implied that she construes her fear of construing herself as a "whinging crybaby" as preventing her from being vulnerable. In the opening statement of this episode Anne invites Beth to be a "crybaby" (295). Beth responds by saying: "That's just like this pathological critic inside, I think of as this kind of whinger, this frightened little girl" (296-297). The reader may recall that earlier in the interview Beth construed herself as having a real problem "facing shame" (20-23). She construed "facing shame" as "beating up on myself" (25). However, she construed Anne as construing "facing shame," as Beth's "pathological critic" (25). Beth again refers to Anne's construction, "pathological critic" (296). Now, however, Beth construes Anne's "pathological critic" as "this kind of whinger, this frightened little girl." Beth's comments suggest that Beth construes people who beat up on themselves as "having whingers inside." "Whingers," according to Beth, are "frightened little girls." A "crybaby" is construed by Beth as a "whinger," and hence as "a frightened little girl."

Beth resists construing herself as a frightened little girl and again expresses her tentative construction of herself as having someone, or something else, inside, other than a frightened little girl. She says: "I keep wondering whether or not, that's [a frightened little girl] in there but is there another person in there. Is there another part of myself who's not that way?" (297-298). Some therapists would describe the process occurring at this point (296-297) as an example of "resistance." However, personal construct theorists (e.g., R. Neimeyer, 1987) would describe the psychological process reflected in Beth's comment as a continuation of Beth's attempts to construe herself using her existing constructs. Personal construct

psychologists might add that Beth may be able to construe herself as a "crybaby" only if she changes those constructs which she currently uses to construe herself in some way. Such changes may necessitate changes in more superordinate constructs which cannot easily be changed.

We may also describe what is happening here in terms of the theory developed earlier in this study. Beth appears to have a single construct with which she can construe herself as "having the potential to be a strong person" or as being a "crybaby." She cannot construe herself as being a crybaby and also as able to be a "strong person." Beth does not explicitly express the two poles of the construct she uses to construe herself at this point. However, we might suggest that the first of these construct poles is expressed in statements such as, "I wonder whether or not there is a strong person inside " (297-288). The second construct pole may be expressed in the phrases, "whinging crybaby" (289) "whinger" (296) and "frightened little girl" (297). We might further suggest, that Beth prefers to construe herself as able to be "strong." Personal construct theory suggests that Anne's suggestion that Beth act as a crybaby may be construed by Beth as "threatening."

Kelly (1955) submits that an event is threatening if construal of the event necessitates major changes to a person's construct system. To return to the extract with which we are concerned, if Beth becomes a crybaby she must construe herself as a crybaby. She cannot do otherwise. However, as indicated earlier, she may be able to become a crybaby only if she ceases to construe herself as having the potential to be a "strong person." She may do so only if she changes some of her superordinate constructs. Such changes may have significant consequences in how Beth construes other events. Hence Beth's apparent resistance to being a crybaby becomes understandable.

In Beth's following comment, Beth elaborates her construction of a part of herself which is not a frightened little girl. She construes this part of herself as being "happy" and as having "a sense of self" (300). Beth again expresses her construction of herself as having the ability to be a strong person (301-302) but she again construes herself as constrained. She says: "I have all these ideas about moving ahead with my life and I somehow feel constrained to do them. And I wonder if I feel constrained because I still can't find myself" (301-303). In the previous episode we read how Beth construed herself as possibly being constrained because grieving for her lack of self is not "accepted" (283-284). In this episode too, she suggests that she is constrained because she cannot "find herself." However, unlike in the previous episode, Beth does not refer to herself as "grieving" for her "lack of self."

Anne does not attempt to construe Beth's verbalised constructions. Rather, Anne simply responds to Beth following her construction of what Beth has said. As in previous instances, Anne may construe the common constructions expressed in Beth's verbal behaviour. The constructions which Anne uses to construe the common constructions expressed in Beth's

verbal behaviour may be different from those constructs which Anne uses to construe the personal constructions which Beth expresses in her verbal behaviour. However, we have no evidence to suggest how Anne construes Beth's verbal behaviour. We, have only Anne's partially evident question to suggest that Anne did not construe the personal constructions expressed in Beth's verbal behaviour. Instead Anne asks a question which follows from her personal construction of the common construction expressed in Beth's verbal behaviour. Anne responds to Beth's comments by presumably asking what Beth's partner thinks of some aspect of what Beth has previously said. Complete transcription of Anne's response (303) is not possible.

Beth responds to Anne's question (303) by stating that Beth's partner, Charles, says Beth is "just too reflective" (304). She goes on to express her construction of Charles construction of being around her: "He just finds being around me so utterly depressing" (305-306). Beth continues, to suggest that Charles "wants it all to go away" (306). We can construe the constructions expressed within the latter sentence (306). However, our construction of "it" is unlikely to be construed by Beth as predictively valid. "It" is an example of a word which is often used to express constructions which can be construed from a person's previous verbal behaviour or from the surrounding physical context. The shared construct expressed in "it" often refers to something which can be construed by the speaker and others. However, others can construe "it" only if the speaker has previously expressed the contextual elements of the construction expressed by "it." Alternatively, the element which is construed as "it" must be present within the surrounding physical context and able to be construed by the speaker and others. Within the context of psychotherapeutic interactions therapists often construe "it" as synonymous with their construction of their clients' previous verbalised constructions. Researchers too, usually construe references to "it" as synonymous with their constructions of previous verbalised constructions. Thus, in the instance above, we can speculate as to what Beth is referring when she says that Charles "just wants it all to go away" (306). However, the number of constructions possible suggests that should we express a particular construction, we are unlikely to have expressed a construction which Beth would construe as predictively valid. In this instance, the therapist proceeds without indicating that she has construed what Beth means by "it." We too, can proceed to discuss the interview without being preoccupied with construing Beth's construction. Nevertheless, this discussion demonstrates the point made earlier, that people are limited in their ability to construe others' constructions, by the extent to which those others use verbal behaviour to communicate their constructions.

Anne responds to Beth's comments by suggesting that Beth may agree with her partner. She comments: "Sounds like part of you that agrees with him" (307). Here Anne has clearly presented her construction of Beth's construction of what she has said previously

("Charles says that I'm just too reflective" (305). Beth suggests that she construes Anne's comments to be validating evidence of Beth's constructions. She too, construes herself as "just too reflective." She says: "Well I think that's right" (308). Beth goes on to suggest that she feels as though she is just going around in circles sometimes (310-311). Within this statement Beth seems to have expressed a construction of herself which is superordinate to a construction expressed in her previous comments (308-310). Beth says that she keeps thinking that there is a "sort of a bottom to all of this" (308-309) but she doesn't seem to be able to find it (310). Searching for a sort of bottom to all this and not being able to find it is construed by Beth as feeling like she is "just going around in circles." Within this excerpt "sort of a bottom to all this" seems to have a personal meaning which is not easily construed. However, Beth elaborates her expressed construction to suggest that she construes "something that sort of says right, now we're ready to move on," as a "sort of a bottom to all of this." Here, it is worth noting that the verbal expression of Beth's superordinate construction appears to be incompatible with Beth's verbal expression of the subordinate construction from which it is derived. Commonly, we do not describe going around in circles as searching for something at the bottom. Of course, as argued earlier, we should not expect Beth's personal use of spoken language, to be similar to others' use of oral language. Hence, we might reasonably expect differences in Beth's verbal behaviour, and Anne's possible verbal behaviour had she expressed personal constructions similar to those which Beth expresses.

Invalidation and Reconstrual

As indicated earlier, in psychotherapeutic interactions, therapists must be able to offer constructions which their clients will construe as validating evidence of their constructions. Unless therapists can construe their clients' constructions in a way which their clients construe to be valid, therapists will not be able to choose whether they provide evidence which may validate, or invalidate, their clients' constructions. Consequently therapeutic outcomes will become more unpredictable than might otherwise be the case. Therapists cannot be certain as to whether their clients will construe their therapists' constructions as providing validating or invalidating evidence. However, therapists doubtless have a greater likelihood of construing their clients' responses if therapists can construe their clients' constructions in a way which their clients might construe as valid. If therapists are able to validate their clients' constructions, they will possibly construe their initial constructions of the outcomes of therapeutic interventions, as having greater predictive validity than might otherwise be the case.

Referring again to the interview being discussed here, Anne, in her response (312-314) to Beth appears to construe Beth's construction of herself feeling like she is going around in circles. However, Anne does not similarly construe Beth's verbalised construction of herself

as searching for the bottom and not reaching it. Anne does not construe Beth's construction of herself to be "like going around in circles." Rather, Anne appears to have a different construction of Beth's verbalised construction (308-310). Anne comments: "The sense I have is that it's not so much – well I suppose it is like going around in circles – but that you start feeling that feeling and then you pull yourself up again and so you actually don't reach the bottom" (312-314). Initially, Anne indicates that she has a construction of Beth's construction of herself as searching unsuccessfully for the bottom, which is different from Beth's. Anne then appears to provide validation of her client's verbalised construction. Anne comments: "Well I suppose it is like going around in circles" (312-313). However, Anne goes on to suggest that her client does not feel like she is going around in circles. Rather Anne says that Beth starts "feeling that feeling" (313) and then she pulls herself up again so that Beth does not reach the bottom. Anne concludes by saying that Beth does not know what the bottom is like (314). In this instance, Anne has, at least partially, refuted Beth's suggestion that she feels like she is going around in circles. She has then expressed a different construction of Beth's experience of searching unsuccessfully for the bottom of "all this."

As indicated earlier, Beth may construe herself, or her therapist as the validating agent of her constructions. If Beth construes Anne to be the validating agent of her self-constructions, then Beth may construe Anne as having provided invalidating evidence of her construction of herself as "going around in circles." Anne construes Beth as not "going around in circles" and has a construction of Beth (313-314) which is different from Beth's construction of herself. As we have seen earlier, Beth may continue to express the construction for which she has received invalidating evidence. That is, Beth may become "hostile." Alternatively, as appears to happen here, Beth may revise her initial construction. Following Beth's revision of her initial construction, Beth's construction of herself may be similar to Anne's expressed construction of Beth.

Beth briefly affirms (315) Anne's previous construction (313-314) after which Anne continues to elaborate her construction of Beth (316). Anne says: "And so you don't actually get down there enough to –" (316). Anne is continuing to express her construction as an analogy. Earlier argument suggested that metaphoric expression of constructions enables others to more readily understand our constructions. Analogical expressions of constructions presumably have similar advantages. They are more likely to be similarly construed by clients and their therapists than other word combinations which may have more specific personal meaning. As Anne continues to elaborate her construction, it becomes clear that while Anne is using word combinations which may be similarly construed, her construction differs from Beth's construction. Beth and Anne share a similar, but not identical, construction. Beth interrupts Anne (317) to finish Anne's previous statement (316). So the complete expression of Beth's construction might be similar to, "I don't actually get down there enough to let it go."

Anne's subsequent comment (318) suggests Anne revises her initial construction, perhaps having construed Beth's addition (317), as invalidating her initial construction. Now Anne too, construes Beth as not actually getting down there enough to let it go. Anne and Beth now share a similar construction of Beth. That is, each person uses a similar construct to construe Beth's construction of herself as searching unsuccessfully for the bottom of "all this." They thus share a "social construct." Thus through a process of construal, invalidation, and reconstrual the construct systems of counsellor and client have undergone change. The provision of invalidating evidence, by the counsellor in particular, has preceded construct system change.

In summary, this episode indicates that Beth construes herself as constrained. Earlier, Beth suggested that she could not express her vulnerability. Beth cannot be vulnerable and maintain her belief that she can be strong. She wants to move ahead and to be less reflective, but she cannot find what she construes to be "myself." As the episode continues, Beth suggests that she wants an end to feeling depressed. But she cannot find the bottom to "all this." In personal construct terms, the construct which Beth uses to construe herself as "going around in circles" is superordinate to that used to construe herself as unsuccessfully seeking the bottom to all this. Personal construct theory suggests that Beth can change her superordinate construction of herself, only given that changes occur in those subordinate constructs which are elements of the superordinate construct. Simply, Beth's verbalised constructions suggest that only when Beth construes herself as having got to the bottom of all this, will she cease to construe herself as "going around in circles." The constructions Beth has expressed suggest too, that at that point Beth may cease to construe herself as depressed.

Anne goes on to suggest a way in which she construes Beth may act to bring about changes in her constructions of herself. Anne says: "It's – my idea is that if you could somehow let it go–" (318). Thus Anne provides a statement which follows from her construction of how changes in Beth's construct system may occur. However, Beth expresses her construction of Anne's suggestion: "But I don't know how. I just don't know how to sort of get down there and just dig this stuff out" (319-320). Thus Beth construes Anne's verbalised construction as requiring her to construe herself differently. Beth construes "letting it go" as requiring her to know how to "let it go." However, Beth does not construe herself as knowing how to let go. What Beth construes Anne as suggesting would require a change in a superordinate role construct in Beth's construct system. In Kellian terms, Anne's suggestion to Beth is "threatening." Anne construes Beth's response as suggesting that the course of action she proposed (318) requires a significant change to Beth's construct system. Anne says: "It's deep there" (321). Using expressions of shared constructs, Anne conveys her construction of Beth's response to Anne (319-320).

Anger

In the next episode, Beth elaborates a construction of herself as not being vulnerable.

322 C: I think I keep these feelings of having to stay -- an outward semblance of strength.
 323 I feel like I have to do it -- like there're things that I ought to do -- I'm supposed to
 324 do. I suppose it has something to do with just people in my family, or my parents,
 325 not really liking weakness, or saying certain things were weak. Like I remember the
 326 comments of my father, was that people who needed to see -- be under psychiatric
 327 care or needed some sort of a counselling relationship were somehow weak. Or
 328 look at my parents' marriage, which during the whole last fifteen years that I was
 329 at home was an absolute shambles really, and with my mother moving into sort of
 330 a transition stage in her life and wanting to throw off all the drappings of a sort of
 331 middle class motherhood thing, and my father caught in a ____ practice that he
 332 didn't like and put him under a lot of pressure. And their marriage was really in
 333 a shambles. They never reached out for any help. I kept thinking about that. It
 334 was very strange Anne. When I was back in the States my Dad was talking to one
 335 of my brothers who was going into a medical practice, and my Dad was talking
 336 about how he -- this was the first time I'd ever heard this -- how he'd hated his last
 337 fifteen years of practice. And I sat and thought as I was coming home when did
 338 those fifteen years occur? He retired the year I got married. So it was the last -- I
 339 don't know -- I was about 23 --so it was from the time I was about eight. And I
 340 kept thinking I thought he was such a distant cold person, he was caught in a
 341 practice that he hated. And he could have done something about it. My parents
 342 relationship was not a happy relationship, but they could have done something
 343 about it, and they never did. They never reached out. I mean my mother did, my
 344 mother went off on her own and joined a women's support group, but they didn't
 345 do anything about their marriage. We were the ones living in the marriage.

346 T: Yes.

347 C: That was having such a bad time. And they still never let on. All we saw was my
 348 mother's anger and my Dad distant. But somehow that, I think, for them sort of
 349 some kind of, almost a mirage -- I don't know what I want to call it -- of strength.
 350 They didn't reach out for any help therefore they weren't weak. I have that feeling
 351 very much about my family -- that they just didn't. Because I get angry when I
 352 think about that now. I get really angry that they didn't try to resolve it because we
 353 were home then and were -- really our development was quite neglected. I was

354 dropping courses at college that I should not have -- parents didn't even know.
355 They didn't even care. And when people made comment -- other authority figures
356 in my life -- made comments quite correctly about my development, my parents
357 would fight about it. So there was never anything done.

358 T: They were too distracted.

359 C: Yeah, like the headmaster pointed out to my parents, she should not be dating a
360 man four years older than her. She's 14, she shouldn't be dating an 18 year old --
361 it protects her. She shouldn't be doing that at this stage in her life. And he was
362 right. And of course, my mother who couldn't stand this guy anyway, but my Dad
363 -- but my Dad agreed with him so my mother immediately took the opposite side,
364 and of course nothing was done. So in a way my self development was not
365 developed -- self was not developed in any way because everybody else was too
366 busy trying to shore up their own lives.

367 T: So you know that staying strong actually wasn't that good.

368 C: No. It makes me angry that they didn't do something about it.

369 T: What do you wish they'd done?

370 C: I wish that they had seen a marriage counsellor.

371 T: Right.

372 C: I wish that they had sorted out, I wish that my father had gone into another practice
373 where he wasn't alone, so that he wasn't at the hospital. I mean I would see him
374 go for days without seeing us, so that he was gone at 5.30 in the morning and home
375 at 7.30 at night. And then just completely emotionally distracted all the time. I
376 wish that he'd been able -- that we'd been able to take time, and had he gone in and
377 made the sacrifice to be independent and gone into a practice with some other ____
378 (father's colleagues) he wouldn't have had that. He would have had other people
379 to share his calls with and to share all that stuff, and he refused to do it. And I
380 wish that my mother and Dad had gone to marriage counselling and tried to learn
381 to talk and got some warmth back in their marriage rather than all of that coldness,
382 so that they could have worked through those things and focused on us. Because

383 they weren't. That's what I wish. I wish that they had done those things. It makes
 384 me kind of angry that they didn't because they sacrificed us. They really sacrificed
 385 our own development to their own sort of egos – Or their inability to be reflective
 386 on their own lives and on their – on what they were doing with their kids.

In this episode Beth elaborates a construction of herself using a construct which is superordinate to another construct. The other construct is that construct which Beth expresses when she says that she starts to feel that feeling and then pulls herself up again so that she doesn't reach the bottom. The reader will recall that Anne expressed this construction of Beth (313-314) in the previous episode. As the previous episode continued, Beth appeared to revise her initial construction of herself as "going around in circles." She construed herself as Anne construed her. In the episode which follows the one to be discussed here, Beth elaborates her construction of herself as being unable to let "it" go (319-320).

Previously Beth has construed herself as somehow feeling constrained (302). She subsequently construes herself as feeling the feeling and pulling herself up before she reaches the bottom. In the first comment in this episode, Beth appears to elaborate her construction of herself as feeling constrained. The construct used to construe herself as feeling constrained seems to be superordinate to that construct which Beth uses to construe herself as resisting reaching the bottom. Beth now construes herself as having responsibility for her inability to express her vulnerability. However, she indicates that she construes herself as having to refrain from expressing her vulnerability. She provides the reason, for not expressing her vulnerability. Hence, as indicated earlier, we may say that contained within Beth's verbal behaviour is an expression of a construction which Beth makes using a superordinate construct. Beth comments: "I think I keep these feelings of having to stay – an outward semblance of strength. I feel like I have to do it -- like there're things that I ought to do – I'm supposed to do" (323-324). Beth construes herself as having to retain an outward appearance of strength.

As Beth continues, she elaborates a further construction made by using a construct which is superordinate to that construct which Beth uses to construe herself as having to retain an outward semblance of strength. Beth does not explicitly express the construction of herself which she makes by using a superordinate construct. However, she expresses a construction, made by using a subordinate construct, which might be expressed as, "my parents never reached out for help." In addition, Beth expresses many contextual elements of the subordinate construct expressed in the latter construction. These are the descriptions of Beth's parents, their relationship and their actions (325-345).

Following Anne's expression of a minimal encourager (346), Beth goes on to indicate her construction of her parents' construction of their actions. Beth construes her parents as

having a construction of themselves as "not weak." According to Beth, her parents construed themselves as "not weak" because they didn't reach out for help (350). Beth's construction of her parents' actions is that her development, and the development of her siblings, was "quite neglected" (353). When Beth construes her construction of her parents' actions, Beth gets "angry" (351).

We have discussed Kelly's references to "hostility" and "threat" but we have not discussed references to "anger." McCoy (1977) suggests that anger is the emotion which is associated with hostility. Anger is "an awareness of the invalidation which leads to hostile behaviour" (McCoy, 1977, p. 118). Returning to the extract we are concerned with, we might venture to suggest that Anne construes her parents as having needed to resolve their unhappy relationship (352). However, her parents acted in ways which suggested that they did not construe themselves as needing help. They did not seek help. Beth may have construed her parents as providing invalidating evidence of her constructions. However, in the present counselling interview, Beth seeks validation of her construction of her parents as needing help. Despite the invalidating evidence she may have construed her parents as having provided, Beth insists upon construing them as needing help. McCoy might suggest that Beth is also aware that she must continue to seek validating evidence for her construction of her parents, or change her construction because it has been proven predictively invalid.

As we read the extract (347-357), it becomes apparent that if Beth construes her parents as not having needed help, she must change her construction of herself. Within this excerpt, Beth has not yet expressed the implied construction which she has made with the most superordinate of her role constructs referred to here. However, she has suggested that she construes herself as having to maintain an outward semblance of strength (322). She construes herself as having to maintain an outward appearance of strength because of something to do with people in her family, or her parents, not liking weakness or the expression of weakness (324-325). If Beth were to change the construction she has of her parents as trying to remain "strong" rather being weak, she may have to change her construction of herself. She might no longer be able to construe herself as having to maintain an outward semblance of strength. McCoy would suggest that Beth is angry because she is aware that her construction has been invalidated. She is now engaged in hostile behaviour. Beth is continuing to seek validating evidence for a construction for which she has thus far received invalidating evidence. If she does not do so, she may have to change a superordinate role construct.

In her response to Beth, Anne expresses her construction of Beth's comments about her parents. Anne comments: "They were too distracted" (358). The elements of the construct which Anne uses to make the construction expressed here (358), are her constructions of how Beth construes her parents' actions. Anne has construed what Beth makes of her parents'

actions. Anne has then made a construction using her personal constructs which are not necessarily similar to Beth's. She may, or may not, express a similar construction to Beth's construction of her parents' construed actions.

In the extract which follows (359-366) Beth suggests that Anne has expressed a construction which is similar to her own construction of her parents' actions. Anne has expressed another construction which appears to have been made using a social construct. As Beth continues she provides further contextual elements of her construction. She concludes by expressing a construction similar to that previously expressed by Anne (358). Beth says: "So in a way my self development was not developed – self was not developed in any way because everybody else was too busy trying to shore up their own lives" (364-366). Here Beth's construction which is expressed as "everybody else was too busy trying to shore up their own lives," is made using a subordinate construct. A superordinate construct is used to construe the implications of everybody shoring up their own lives. The construction made in this case is expressed in "So in a way my self development was not developed."

On the basis of Anne's construction of the constructions which Beth has expressed thus far, Anne construes Beth as knowing that staying strong wasn't good (367). Beth responds by suggesting that Anne has offered a valid construction of Beth's construction. Beth adds again that she is angry that her parents didn't do something (368). Anne's response to Beth is presented in the form of a question: "What do you wish they'd done?" (369). As in previous instances, Anne's constructions of what Beth has said may be different from what Beth makes of her expressed constructions. However, Anne has not expressed her constructions here. She does not seek validating evidence of her construction. Rather, she asks Beth a question which may presumably provide Anne with more contextual elements upon which she can base her constructions. Beth responds by simply saying: "I wish they had seen a marriage counsellor" (370). After a minimal encourager provided by Anne (371), Beth continues to elaborate her desire to have her parents see a marriage counsellor. Beth concludes by saying that she construes her parents as having "sacrificed" the development of her and her siblings (384-385).

Construct System Hierarchy and Construct Change

In the next episode, Beth explains the effect of her parents not seeking help in their relationship and neglecting her development. As earlier, Beth elaborates her construction of herself as having been unable to be vulnerable.

387 T: You had to grow up too soon?

388 C: Well I don't know if I felt like I grew, I think I did. I think I just went and tried to
389 find a sense of self somewhere else. My problem was that I think I tried to find my
390 sense of self through men. They were always older than me and I think that I tried
391 to find it that way, and it doesn't work. I mean I realise it doesn't work. I think it
392 all started to kind of fall apart after Charles had that relationship. I knew that he
393 didn't look on me. I'd always thought that he'd looked on me as something special
394 and that crumbled, and I think that whole sense of self – I mean – I think it, I'm not
395 getting it from Charles any more and I think I finally felt that I completely lost it
396 when I came back here and my job was unhappy and my job was not good and my
397 marriage was unhappy. I wasn't happy with Charles. Then I had a complete lack
398 of self because all the things that I had built my self up in were – had sort of
399 crumbled around me. So now it's really it's kind of a question of trying to find **.
400 I made no demands on my parents and I thought that that's really what you did to
401 get – somehow, somewhere I think along the line, I think it had to do with the
402 Catholic church, that the meek will inherit the earth, that kind of thing. I think it's
403 somewhere along the line that you think that somehow there'll be a payback for all
404 of this. Somehow being the good dutiful daughter there'll be a pay back for all of
405 this, you know.

406 T: What would be the reward?

407 C: I don't know. When I think about it I'm just trying to think what would be the
408 reward. I mean –

409 T: What would you like to be written in the ****

410 C: Sort of what do I think that she would have thought? She never gave me any
411 trouble. There were so many other people in our family who gave her trouble.
412 Well, there weren't many, but there were some who really, I think, did tax her. I
413 think I gave her trouble at one stage in my life, but I don't know. Because now
414 when I think about it none of those things really count – you know – that she
415 didn't get any trouble. Children are supp - naturally give their parents trouble. I
416 don't know, I still, sometimes when I think about it I think that it would have been
417 nice if she'd been able to write, that we'd been able to remain good friends,
418 something like that. Because we were good friends. But I don't know what I was
419 thinking the payback was going to be, you know, I really don't. You know, I don't
420 know.

This episode begins with Anne testing her construction of what Beth makes of her previously expressed constructions. Anne says: "You had to grow up too soon?" (387). This is an instance however, in which Beth does not construe Anne as having offered a valid construction of Beth's construction. Beth replies: "Well, I don't know if I felt like I grew, I think I did" (388). Beth goes on to elaborate her earlier construction of herself as having a lack of self (283). Beth says that she searched for a sense of self elsewhere (388-389), presumably other than in her family. She adds that she searched for her sense of self through men (390). Beth construes her search for her sense of self through men as a "problem" (389). She construes this search as a problem because it "doesn't work" (391). Thus we have a hierarchy of constructions which suggest a particular hierarchical arrangement of personal constructs. Beth construes herself as having a lack of self. Her superordinate construction is that she searched for her sense of self with men. Superordinate to this construction is Beth's construction of her search as not working. Beth's superordinate construction of the latter construction is that she had a problem.

Beth goes on to express her construction of when she lost her "sense of self." She construes herself as having begun to lose her sense of self when her partner "had that relationship" (392). Beth continues, to say: I'd always thought that he'd looked on me as something special and that crumbled, and I think that whole sense of self – I mean – I think it, I'm not getting it from Charles any more and I think I finally felt that I completely lost it" (393-395). Here, Beth is referring to her partner's provision of invalidating evidence of Beth's verbalised construction of herself as being as "something special." She indicates that her construction of herself was invalidated, when she says "that crumbled." As we continue to analyse Beth's verbal behaviour it appears that Beth construes her construction of her partner, as regarding her as something special, to be her "sense of self." According to Beth, her partner provides her with her sense of self. In Kellian terms, we may say that this in instance in which Beth's partner is the validating agent of her self-construction. Prior to Charles having a relationship, Beth construed herself as having a sense of self. She construed herself as having a sense of self because she construed Charles as looking upon her as something special. That is her construction of Charles looking on her as something special is expressed in the words "having a sense of self." So long as Beth construes Charles as regarding her as something special, Beth's construction of herself as having a sense of self is validated. Beth ceases to construe her construction of herself as valid, when she construes Charles as no longer regarding her as special.

As Beth continues to elaborate her construction of having a sense of self, she suggests that her construction is dependent upon how she construes other events in her life. Beth comments: "I think I finally felt that I completely lost it [self] when I came back here and my job was unhappy and my job was not good and my marriage was unhappy" (395-397). Beth

construes herself as having completely lost her sense of self because her job and her marriage were unhappy. Presumably then, Beth has a sense of self when she construes her job and her marriage as being not unhappy. (The opposite pole of the construct which Beth uses to construe her job and marriage as unhappy is not expressed within the context of this episode.) Beth's constructions of her job and her marriage are made with constructs which are subordinate to the construct which Beth uses to construe herself as having a sense of self. Beth construes things like her marriage and her job as things that she has built herself up in (398). Interestingly, Beth's use of words expresses well the hierarchical arrangement of her personal constructs. The construct which Beth uses to construe herself as having a sense of self, is superordinate to those constructs used to construe things such as her job and her marriage as unhappy. Her job and marriage are elements of this second construct. In this instance, changes in how Beth construes her job and marriage, have implications for how she construes herself. Thus, as Kellian theory suggests, changes in the way in which one construes places, events or entities, using peripheral constructs, can affect the constructions which one makes using one's core constructs.

Towards the end of Beth's first statement (388-405), Beth suggests that she construes herself as being a special person if she is a "good dutiful daughter" (404). As this episode continues we can begin to understand why Beth has described herself as feeling "constrained" and unable to be "vulnerable." Beth construes people that are good dutiful daughters as being thought of as "something special." When Beth is construed as "something special" she has a sense of self. So long as Beth construes good dutiful daughters to be looked on as something special, she will continue to act in the way in which she construes a "good dutiful daughter" to act. Beth's comments towards the end of this excerpt suggest that Beth continued to act as a good dutiful daughter. "I made no demands on my parents and I thought that that's really what you did to get -.... I think it's somewhere along the line that you think that somehow there'll be a payback for all of this. Somehow being the good dutiful daughter there'll be a pay back for all of this, you know" (399-405). Beth made no demands upon her parents. Hence she construed herself as "a good dutiful daughter." However, according to Beth's construction system, good dutiful daughters are "looked on as something special." Beth, however, no longer construes herself as being regarded as something special within her job or marriage. Though Beth construes herself as having been a good dutiful daughter, she no longer receives validation for herself as "something special." Beth's construction of herself as being "something special" has been invalidated.

Hence, as we have seen, she has lost her "sense of self."

Anxiety

Anne construes Beth's construction of herself as a good dutiful daughter. Beth suggests that if she is a good dutiful daughter she will be looked on as something special. However, she indicates that her parents did not validate her construction of herself as something special. Anne's question (406) may follow her construction of the word "payback" in the sentence: "Somehow being the good dutiful daughter there'll be a payback for all this, you know" (404-405). Here I am suggesting that Anne may not be able to construe the elements of the verbalised construction, "payback." Hence, she may not be able to construe the personal meaning the word "payback" expresses for Beth. However, Anne does not invite Beth to elaborate the contextual elements of the construct used in the construction which is expressed as, "payback." Rather, Anne asks Beth to indicate her construction of what the "payback" might be. Anne asks: "What would be the reward?" (406). This is a simple instance, in which Anne has construed the shared meaning, rather than the personal meaning which is conveyed by the word "payback." The shared meaning is, of course, a construction made by using a shared or "common" construct. We call such a construction a "common construction." Simply, shared constructions are the common meanings of words. Anne has construed the common meaning of the word used by Beth to convey her construction. This construction, indicated by the word "payback," is an element of one of Anne's personal constructs. Here Anne uses this construct to construe Beth's verbal behaviour. She conveys her construction of Beth's verbal behaviour in the word "reward." This is Anne's construction of the shared construction conveyed by Beth's verbal behaviour. Anne does not construe the personal construction which is conveyed by Beth's verbal behaviour. However here, at this point in the interview (406) Anne asks Beth to indicate an element of the construct which she would use to construe something as a "reward." Anne asks Beth what she construes to be a "reward?"

Beth's response to Anne's question (406) suggests that Beth is uncertain as to what would constitute "the reward." Beth can construe Anne's verbalised construction. She knows what Anne is asking. However, Beth cannot express her construction of what "the reward" would be. Beth replies: "I don't know. When I think about it I'm just trying to think what would be the reward" (407-408). Beth has been asked to construe her construction of a reward. However, she is unable to do so. In this case, Kelly (1955) might suggest that Beth is demonstrating "anxiety" (p. 495) Within the context of Kellian theory "anxiety" is the term applied to recognition that what one is attempting to construe lies outside the range of convenience of one's construct system. This term is not easily understood since, as Kelly submits, people, places, events or entities which we attempt to construe, cannot be construed at all if they are not elements of one's construct system. More recently, R. Neimeyer (1987) has suggested that anxiety arises when we confront events which we are unable to anticipate

or control. However, there remains a question as to how a person can be in a position of confronting events while not being able to construe them.

To return to the interview between Anne and Beth, it is apparent that Beth construes the verbalised personal construction conveyed in Anne's question (406). However, Beth is unable to construe her own construction of the reward referred to by Anne. It may be that Beth does not have a personal construction of a reward. So Beth can construe the construction which Anne has expressed. However, Beth may not have included the common construction indicated by the word "reward" as an element within the context of a personal construct. Beth may not have construed other entities, or events, as rewards. Thus, anxiety may, in this case at least, be described as the recognition that one can construe some aspect of reality to be a particular person, event, place or entity. To do so, one may use a common construct. However, one may not have included the common construct within the context of a personal construct. Hence, one may be unable to elaborate a personal construction which includes the particular common construct within its context. Thus, we might suggest that anxiety is the recognition that one can construe an aspect of reality using a common construct, but that one cannot elaborate a personal construction of that person, event, place or entity. The reader will recall that a common construct is a personal construct which more than one person commonly has. A construction made using a common construct has been described as a "common construction." In contrast, a personal construct which is not commonly shared, is used to make what has been described as a "personal construction." If, as suggested above, one cannot elaborate a personal construction, one cannot express the elements from which the construct used to make the personal construction is derived.

To return to the interview, Anne apparently construes Beth's anxiety. She asks a different question from that asked earlier (409). Regrettably we can only speculate as to what was conveyed by Anne. It would seem that Anne asked Beth what she would like her mother to have written on her epitaph. This question follows from Anne's construal that Beth would construe something which her mother said as "the reward" for being a "good dutiful daughter."

Beth responds by first testing her construction of Anne's verbalised construction: "Sort of what do I think that she would have thought?" (410). She adds: "She never gave me any trouble" (410-411). If we return to Beth's earlier statements (399-405) we may suggest that Beth construes making no demands on her parents as "never giving any trouble." She construes those who never give any trouble of course, as good dutiful daughters. As Beth continues, she expresses constructions made using the opposite pole of the construct she uses to construe people as never giving any trouble. She says, "There were so many other people in our family who gave her trouble." So, according to Beth, people either never give any trouble or they give trouble.

As Beth continues, we can see that Beth has continued to try to construe the "payback" which she said she thought she would get for being a "good dutiful daughter." In the process of doing so, however, Beth appears to reconstrue what may have been a previously unexpressed construction. She says: "Now when I think about it none of those things really count -- you know -- that she didn't get any trouble. Children are supposed to naturally give their parents trouble" (413-415). Previously Beth suggested that not giving parents any trouble was important. Good dutiful daughters don't give any trouble. As a consequence, they should receive a payback. Beth has reconstrued her construction that never giving parents any trouble is important. She now suggests that children naturally give parents trouble. Beth has used the same construct to make her new construction as she used previously. However, she has used the opposite pole of the construct to make her new construction. As indicated earlier, the change which has been made is described as a slot change and is one of the most simple consequences of therapeutic intervention suggested by personal construct theory (G. Neimeyer, 1987b).

Reading further, we can see that Beth continues to seek validation for her construction that her mother should have given her something. She comments: "I don't know, I still, sometimes when I think about it I think that it would have been nice if she'd been able to write, that we'd been able to remain good friends" (415-18). The previous paragraph suggests that there has been a change in a subordinate construction. Children do not have to be good dutiful daughters. However, there has been no change in the more superordinate construction that Beth should have received something from her mother. Nevertheless, Beth continues to be unable to express her construction of what form the payback might take: "But I don't know what I was thinking the payback was going to be, you know, I really don't. You know, I don't know" (418-420).

Superordinate Construing

In the next episode there is further evidence that Beth's superordinate constructions remain unchanged.

421 T: Could it have been that you scored top, were no trouble?

422 C: Yeah. It could have been. Maybe that's why she and me were such good friends.

423 I think that could be true. I mean, although you know I thought we were such good

424 friends but yet there's just some of the sisters of mine who had caused here so much

425 trouble kept in closer contact than I did. They didn't allow the contact to lapse over

426 the last four or five -- the last ten years the way I did.

427 T: Right, so it's a ***

428 C: Maybe they had a more normal relationship you see.

429 T: More open.

430 C: More open, yeah, because they'd been able to show their vulnerability and say "I
431 need you, you have to bail me out."

432 T: I've had brothers and sisters that I've often wondered what it's like to be the good
433 one in the family who's the one, like the prodigal sibling.

434 C: You see, I wasn't really always the good one.

435 T: No?

436 C: I went through that stage when I was in high school of being really bad.

437 T: Ah, ha.

438 C: You know, it was very short lived, like three years, but they all remember that -- all
439 my brothers and sisters -- how bad you were, when in point of fact -- well
440 sometimes I used to get this feeling of self-satisfaction, that I'm just in such a normal
441 relationship and these guys are such dings, you know. That they're just shaking my
442 head, how could they do this, that sort of thing. And being able to kind of have the
443 perfect kids and that kind of thing. You never, every now and then I would get that
444 sort of feeling of self-satisfaction. But it really wasn't even that much.

445 T: What, compared to the others, you were relatively straight.

446 C: Yes. I think one of the reasons why I never really got much was that I married, but
447 I married somebody who -- and he was really a lot like my Dad, but he's not -- he's
448 not successful. And that was always another kind of pre-requisite for my mother,
449 I think, was that either you or you through your husband are financially successful.
450 So I didn't really make it like some of my other sisters did who married a lot of
451 money.

452 T: Right.

453 C: And that kind of thing.

454 T: Yes.

455 C: So I wasn't always -- I wasn't necessarily the perfect one. There were so many of
456 us, that each one I suppose had their --

This episode begins with Anne expressing her construction of Beth's construction of the "payback." She says: "Could it have been that you scored top, were no trouble?" (421). Anne is suggesting that the payback for Beth in being a good dutiful daughter is that she scores top and is no trouble. Interestingly, Anne's comments suggest that Anne is construing Beth as validating her own verbalised constructions. That is, Anne indicates that Beth is the validating agent for her own constructions. Beth is hesitant in her response, but appears to construe Anne's comment as a valid construction.

Beth goes on to speculate that she and her mother may have been "such good friends" (422) because Beth gave no trouble and scored top. As Beth continues, she begins to construe disadvantages in having been good and being such good friends with her mother. Beth begins to use increasingly more superordinate constructs to construe her relationship with her mother. She begins by saying that her sisters had given more trouble than she had (424-425). Yet they managed to keep in closer contact (425). Beth may have construed people who were good as keeping in close contact with her mother. However, she is now revising that initial construction. Though she was good, she did not keep in as close contact with her mother as her sisters did. Anne's response (427) is partially inaudible and hence not fully transcribed. Beth continues: "Maybe they had a more normal relationship" (428). Beth is now applying the construct which she uses to construe relationships as normal, to the construed relationship which her sisters had with her mother. She is testing the validity of her construction that people who cause trouble for her mother but maintain close contact, have normal relationships with her.

Anne expresses her construction of a "more normal relationship": "More open" (429). As in earlier similar instances, this phrase may be an expression of Anne's construction of Beth's verbalised construction. Anne may have construed Beth's construction using a personal construct which is similar to the personal construct which Beth uses to make her initial construction. "More open" may then be an expression of a social construction. Alternatively, this phrase may be an expression of Anne's construction of Beth's superordinate construction of Beth's initial construction. A further interpretation is that Anne may have expressed her

personal construction of the common construction expressed in Beth's verbal behaviour. In which case, Anne's verbal behaviour, expresses Anne's construction without reference to Beth's personal construction. As we read on, we may conclude that Anne has expressed a construction which Beth construes to be consistent with Beth's personal construction. From the context of the interaction a social construction has arisen which is expressed in the word "open." Beth goes on to acknowledge the validity of Anne's expressed construction and to elaborate her construction of an "open" relationship. She comments: "More open, yeah, because they'd been able to show their vulnerability and say 'I need you, you have to bail me out'" (430-431). Beth then construes an open relationship as one in which people can show their vulnerability and ask people to help them.

Constellatory Constructs

Anne again expresses her construction of Beth as the one who "scored top." She comments: "I've had brothers and sisters that I've often wondered what it's like to be the good one in the family who's the one, like the prodigal sibling" (432-433). Beth's response (434) suggests that she construes Anne's comment to be invalidating evidence of Beth's self-construction. Beth becomes "hostile," in a Kellian sense, and expresses a construction of herself which is different from that offered by Anne. Beth says: "You see, I wasn't really always the good one" (434). Importantly we see evidence here of the client ceasing to elaborate her earlier construction (430-431) and now becoming hostile in an effort to continue to receive validating evidence from her therapist. We have no way of knowing whether Anne is able to offer validating evidence of Beth's self-construction. Regardless, however, here she offers invalidating evidence of her client's expressed construction. Beth does not construe herself as having been the "good one."

At this point there seems to be a significant difference in Beth's previously expressed construction of herself as a "good dutiful daughter" and Anne's expressed construction of Beth as "the good one in the family." Beth has elaborated her construction of herself as a good dutiful daughter to suggest that she construes herself to have been "good," but that others have not recognised that she has been "good." She has a superordinate construction which might be expressed as "good dutiful daughters are looked on as something special." Beth expected her husband and her parents to do something in response to her being good. The construct which Beth uses to make her superordinate construction, is an example of what Kelly (1955) would describe as a "constellatory construct" (p. 155). According to Kellian theory, a constellatory construct is one which determines how else an element may be construed. Kelly suggests that an example of a constellatory construct is that which is indicated in the statement: "'Anything which is a ball must also be something which will bounce'" (p. 155). Thus, if something is construed as a ball it must also be construed as

something which bounces. Similarly, to return to the previous example, Beth has suggested that people who are construed as "good dutiful daughters" are looked on as "something special." Kelly contrasts constellatory constructs and "pre-emptive" constructs with "propositional" constructs. "Pre-emptive" constructs, enable only a single construction of an element. For example, Button (1985) suggests that people may pre-emptively construe an event which we commonly construe as a "fire." People with a pre-emptive construct indicated by the word "fire" will have only a single construction of the event. This construction will always be expressed as "a fire." In contrast, a "propositional" construct allows more than one construction of a single person, event, place or entity. So that a particular person may be construed as a woman, a teacher, a mother, and a wife. As Button suggests Kelly does not propose that people should have only propositional constructs within their construct systems. However, Kelly suggests that propositional thinking allows people to be less susceptible to possible invalidating evidence.

Invalidating Evidence and Hostility

To return to the interview currently being discussed, as indicated earlier, Beth appears to have a constellatory construct within her construct system which is expressed in the statement: "Good dutiful daughters are looked on as something special." Beth construes herself as good. Therefore she expects that others will regard her as something special. However, they do not. Since one cannot be a good dutiful girl unless one is looked on as something special, Beth's construction of herself as good is constantly being invalidated. At this point in the interview, Beth has demonstrated to Anne that her construction is constantly being invalidated. Yet Beth has no other construction of herself with which she may replace her present construction.

At this point in the episode, Anne does not seem to share the above construction of Beth's psychological process. She does not seem to construe Beth's implicit construction ("Good dutiful daughters are looked on as something special") as constantly being invalidated. Instead Anne construes Beth's construction as validated. Anne suggests that she construes Beth as being regarded as something special. She demonstrates hostility in the face of invalidating evidence. Anne thus invalidates Beth's construction that she was not considered to be something special by her mother. Beth now seeks to validate her construction that she was not always looked upon as something special. As indicated earlier, she comments: "You see, I wasn't really always the good one" (434). As Beth continues, she indicates an occasion when she was "bad." She says "I went through that stage when I was in high school of being really bad" (436). Beth goes on to suggest that she felt "self-satisfied" because she was in a "normal relationship" (440-441) rather than in a relationship with men who were "such dings" (441). Two apparently equally valid constructions could be made of Beth's comment: "And

being able to kind of have the perfect kids and that kind of thing" (442-443). It is unclear whether Beth is suggesting that she, or her sisters, could have the "perfect kids." We might speculate at this point that Beth construes herself as having tried to be good, though she wasn't always so. She tried to be good because good daughters are looked on as something special. She wasn't looked on as something special, yet she construes herself to have been a good girl, despite some earlier occasions when she wasn't. Notably, Beth's comments (442-443) indicate what Beth means when she says that someone is "good," or the opposite of "good:" "bad." Beth has now demonstrated to Anne the difference between the construction which Anne conveys by "good" and the construction which Beth expresses in the word "good." This is important to Beth, as Anne's suggestion that Beth is the "good one" is construed by Beth as invalidating her construction of herself as not receiving praise.

Anne too, seems uncertain how to construe what Beth has said (438-444). Anne tentatively expresses her construction of what Beth has said: "What, compared to the others, you were relatively straight." Beth agrees and begins again to elaborate reasons for not being regarded as "good" despite her construction of herself as being "good" (446-451). That is, Beth begins to construe the constructions which she has expressed earlier. She concludes that she didn't "get much" because she didn't marry someone who was financially successful. She suggests that she construes her mother's construction to be that daughters who marry men who are financially successful, receive praise. Beth ends this episode by reiterating that she wasn't the "perfect one" (455). She has attempted to provide invalidating evidence of what she construes Anne's construction to be of her.

Construing Self and Others

In the next episode, Anne tries to get Beth to construe the implications of what she has said thus far.

457 T: Are you going to have to find yourself or compare yourself with the others?

458 C: Well, I would hope not. I don't think so. When I think about me, and trying to
 459 think about -- you know -- who I am and what I want, there are some things that
 460 I do compare. I don't think I can help it because I think it was something -- I've got
 461 to get around it -- but I think it was something that my mother used to do a lot --
 462 was that -- she sort was born in a town and grew up in a town, had certain friends
 463 in the town, they all had money. And some of them had a lot more money than
 464 others. And she -- I remember a lot when I was a kid -- her talking about that kind
 465 of stuff. I think that she would just sort of let things drop. So I think -- I think

466 sometimes I do think about that in comparison to my brothers and sisters, that some
467 of them are just so much more financially set up than I am.

468 T: It's still important?

469 C: Well, I do think that financial security is important. I don't think a lot of money is
470 really important, but I think financial security is.

471 T: Yes.

472 C: I just think that comes from just sort of being in that point in my family where --
473 these are the other things that happened during those last 15 years of my Dad's
474 practice -- was that until then he'd never saved any for retirement. So I remember
475 my mother talking about that a lot, you know, about how there isn't any money to
476 retire, you've got to educate all these kids and they're all at college, and how are we
477 going to set aside any money for retirement, and all of this stuff. And so I think
478 that that makes me feel insecure.

479 T: What would be enough?

480 C: Oh, I don't know. I mean I just -- to be financially secure I don't know what's
481 enough any more. I don't. I don't think you need a lot but I think you need to feel
482 like you've got your retirement going, that you've provided for it. So I suppose I
483 compare myself to my brothers and sisters in that respect.

484 T: So you've got an idea there, to be secure you need to have a retirement plan.

485 C: Well, yeah. Yeah.

486 T: Ah, ha. But apart from that you don't really need to compare yourself.

487 C: Well, no, I don't think so. Sometimes I compare myself to some of my sisters who
488 I think have made better choices of mates, of partners, in the sense that they're in
489 relationships with people who are much more open and more willing to be intimate
490 with each other and to deal with problems either together in counselling or alone
491 in counselling. People who are more like them than my husband is like me. And
492 I -- I wonder why I ended up choosing Charles, that sort of thing. But apart from

493 that I don't know that I really compare myself too much with them. I wonder
494 sometimes why in a family there are people who do some things and people do
495 others.

Anne begins the episode by asking Beth what she construes as her psychological task (457). Does she construe herself as having to find herself or does she have to compare herself to others? Anne may have asked this question, following a construction that Beth was expressing constructions which were unconnected. Beth responds by saying that she hopes not (458). Nevertheless, Beth indicates yet again that her constructions of others affect how she construes herself. Personal construct theory suggests, of course, that this is understandable. People use role constructs to construe others and to construe themselves. People may construe themselves as similar to some people and different from others with respect to some aspects. Those aspects in which people are similar to, or different from others, are indicated by the words used to express people's constructions. In therapeutic relationships, clients will often refer to others but not to themselves when they are discussing their own thoughts and feelings. However, though we use our role constructs in our construal of ourselves and others, we do not need to express our construction of others when we are discussing ourselves. Indeed, personal experience suggests that therapists are often placed in the position of having to construe clients' constructions of themselves on the basis only of clients' expressed constructions of others. Needless to say there is a likelihood that therapists will offer constructions of their clients' constructions which their clients will construe as invalid. Earlier discussion has already indicated that there are risks associated with therapists having invalid constructions of their clients' constructions. Hence, therapists may endeavour to encourage clients to express their constructions of themselves, rather than their constructions of others. Returning to the interview, Anne seems to be trying to encourage Beth to express her constructions of herself, rather than her constructions of others, as she asks her question (457).

Notwithstanding the preceding discussion, from our analysis of Beth's constructions it is evident that Beth has a sense of self when she construes others as construing her as "something special." Beth's construction of herself as having a "sense of self" is invalidated when people do not look upon her as something special. As the interview has proceeded Beth has been expressing reasons for no longer being regarded as something special. Others have received what she has not. Beth has attempted to construe the differences between herself and others. Her verbal behaviour suggests that she has done so in order to make sense of why her construction that good daughters are something special, is predictively invalid. She is testing out her constructions of others in order to receive evidence from Anne of the validity or invalidity of her self-constructions. However, Anne has not yet acknowledged that this is

the purpose of Beth's verbal behaviour. Beth tries to explain: "When I think about me, and trying to think about – you know – who I am and what I want, there are some things that I do compare" (458-460).

As the episode continues, Beth evidently construes Anne as referring only to Beth's previous comparison of herself and her sisters based upon the financial success of their husbands (446-451). Beth says that she makes such comparisons because she construes her mother as having compared the financial status of herself and others. Beth comments: "And she – I remember a lot when I was a kid – her talking about that kind of stuff. I think that she would just sort of let things drop" (464-465). Interestingly, here Beth is suggesting that she construes herself as similar to her mother with respect to her concern about how "financially set up" she is. Anne tests her construction that Beth's construction of her financial status is still important to Beth. She says: "It's still important?" (468).

Elaborating Only Contextual Elements

In her next comment, Beth indicates that she does construe "financial security" as important (469). However, according to Beth, "a lot of money" is not really important (470). In addition, we may comment here that "financial security" and "a lot of money" express two different constructions made by Beth. After a brief affirmation from Anne (471), Beth continues. In the excerpt which follows (472-478), Beth indicates that she feels "insecure" (478) when she recalls her mother having talked a lot about not having enough money to retire. Anne's response (479), like other questions, seems to follow a construction which Anne has of what Beth has said. However, in this instance, it is difficult to construe the construction which may have preceded Anne's question. However, the construction expressed in Anne's response is readily construed. Anne is simply asking Beth what she (Beth) considers sufficient money to construe herself as "not insecure."

The construct which Beth uses to construe people as "financially secure," does not include a particular amount of money as an element. Beth states: "Oh, I don't know. I mean I just – to be financially secure I don't know what's enough any more. I don't. I don't think you need a lot but I think you need to feel like you've got your retirement going, that you've provided for it" (480-482). Beth concludes this excerpt (480-483) by expressing her construction that she makes comparison between herself and her siblings with respect to their financial status.

In her next comment, Anne expresses her construction of a superordinate construction and a subordinate construction. She says: "So you've got an idea there, to be secure you need to have a retirement plan" (484). Anne suggests that Beth construes "people who have a retirement plan" as being "secure." "Have a retirement plan" is an expression of a construction which is subordinate to the superordinate construction which is expressed as "secure." Beth

responds affirmatively (485) to Anne's statement (484). However, it is worth noting that Beth is now using subordinate rather than superordinate role constructions. Instead she is elaborating constructions made using subordinate role constructs, rather than superordinate role constructs. We might speculate that this shift in focus follows a change in the way in which Anne is interacting with her client. In her recent comments Anne does not appear to have construed what Beth's constructions of those constructions which she has expressed. Simply, Anne does not seem to have construed Beth's superordinate constructions. Nor has she invited Beth to express her superordinate role constructions. However, earlier Anne construed what Beth made of her expressed constructions (e.g., "So you know that staying strong actually wasn't that good" (367)). Anne also tested out her constructions of Beth's verbalised constructions (e.g., "You had to grow up too soon?" (387)). Now, however, Anne is testing out her constructions of the elements of Beth's constructions. She is particularly concerned with the contextual elements from which Beth's constructions are derived. This is evident from comments such as, "What would be enough?" (479) and, "To be secure you need to have a retirement plan" (484). Previous discussion suggested that therapeutic interactions involve the facilitation of client construct system change by the therapist. Clients usually seek counselling because their core constructs no longer have predictive validity. That is, they no longer construe the evidence of their role constructions as validating their constructions. In the case of this interview, Beth's construction of herself as a good dutiful daughter has been constantly invalidated. She therefore construes herself as having "lost her sense of self." One might expect that Beth's therapist would attempt to facilitate a change in Beth's superordinate role constructions in order to enable Beth to construe her self-constructions as valid. However, at this point in the interview, Anne appears to be inviting Beth to express constructions which she makes by using subordinate constructs.

In this episode Anne does not seem to be attempting to facilitate changes in Beth's superordinate role construct system. The reader will recall from previous discussion that personal construct theory suggests that construct system changes may occur when clients construe their constructions as invalidated. However, the occurrence of construct system change is conditional upon superordinate constructs being sufficiently "permeable" to include new subordinate constructs within their contexts. Kelly describes a construct as "permeable" if construct elements which are not yet construed using the construct, are able to be construed. Thus, as argued previously, changes in the way in which Beth construes herself are conditional upon her new constructions being compatible with the superordinate constructions she has of herself. If new constructions cannot be construed by Beth's use of her superordinate constructs, the superordinate constructs must, according to Kellian theory, be "loosened." Kelly suggests that "loosening" involves clients experimenting with making different constructions of events from those which they usually make. Clients are then asked

to construe the evidence of their constructions. Kellian theory suggests that clients' constructs may change if clients receive validating evidence of their alternative constructions. Provided those changes admit new elements to be construed, the superordinate construct which is used to make those alternative constructions, may be regarded as being "permeable." Returning to the example of Beth and Anne's interaction, Beth has a superordinate construction which might be expressed as "good dutiful daughters are something special." She cannot change the constructions which she has of herself using her subordinate constructs, until such time as her superordinate construct is "loosened." She cannot, for example, construe herself as able to be vulnerable, since good dutiful daughters do not give any trouble. They are not vulnerable. Of course, only good dutiful girls can expect to be looked on as something special. Importantly too, Beth must be a good dutiful girl as it is only when she is regarded as something special that she has a "sense of self." However, at this point of the interview, Anne is preoccupied with Beth's expression of her subordinate role constructs. As indicated above, Anne is not facilitating the expression of Beth's superordinate role constructions. Neither is she facilitating change in Beth's superordinate role constructs.

The reader will recall that Beth tested her construction of Beth's hierarchical arrangement of constructions (484). Beth responds briefly, before Anne continues: "Ah ha. But apart from that you don't really need to compare yourself" (486). Here Anne tests her construction of Beth's construction of her verbalised constructions. Though Beth agrees, her verbal behaviour suggests that she provides invalidating evidence of Anne's construction (487-494).

Constructions and Emotions

In the next episode, Beth returns to her earlier discussion of having lost contact with her mother.

495 T: Coming back to Mum, I realise we're kind of going in various directions here,
496 what's what's left unfinished?

497 C: With my mother?

498 T: Yeah.

499 C: I don't know whether it's something that's left unfinished, so much as that I feel like
500 I'm going to have to get over feeling bad at having lost a relationship – bad at never
501 having another additional ten years that I just assumed I would have with her.
502 Having lost that I have to get over that sort of feeling of loss. I don't know that I

503 ever will, I just think time will just sort of make it recede just the way it makes any
504 sort of grief recede somewhere in where you can deal with it and it doesn't pain
505 you ****.

506 T: Right.

507 C: I think that's how they wanted anything. This feeling of regret at having allowed -
508 - at having been away for so long during the last ten years before she died – of not
509 being there for the various family reunions and, you know, missing a lot of family
510 weddings and that sort of thing. And she was the only one who was really vocal
511 about, you know, "I wish you could be here." The others would just say, "Oh I wish
512 you could be here but, you know, I understand." And I think that for her she just
513 could not understand why I was there, why I was here, and I couldn't really either
514 because from about the time that Charles was born which was – we'd been here
515 about three years – I wanted to go home. I was ready to move back to the States.
516 And then it was really a question of being here because Charles couldn't get back
517 there.

518 T: Yes.

519 C: You know. And I remember my mother finally saying to me, I think in May or June
520 of this year, "I can't believe you would stay when you're just so unhappy."

521 T: So you could never get her to understand, after all you had to say to her you
522 weren't that sure about being here either.

523 C: No, no.

524 T: So she's tapped into your own –

525 C: Those feelings of terrible uncertainty. And then, of course, as she was was saying
526 to me at Christmas or – I can't remember when she said it, "If you don't come back
527 here you will never see me again. If you leave you will never see me again."

528 T: Right.

529 C: You know, I feel like it's all just come true. I feel like some –

(End of side one.)

530 C: bad for not being there – for not having made the decision that I – that I – that I
 531 felt inside like I wanted to make – and that I wasn't strong enough to just say to
 532 Charles, "Look, you can't get back, get yourself back there. I'm going back. I'll
 533 figure something out". Why didn't I have the strength to do it, why I stayed just
 534 because I felt afraid to do it on my own. And I've sort of lost that chance and lost
 535 her in the process. I feel like I kind of cut her off. I quit writing to her and stuff
 536 over the years, and I was here because I would be so, every time I would write to
 537 her it would be, you know, all I'd want to say is that I really really wanted to come
 538 back but I couldn't do it alone. And I never could say that to her. I didn't feel like
 539 I could say it to her. So I just didn't write it. I just didn't write. And then I
 540 allowed myself to just lose contact because it was all just too painful trying to look
 541 at why can't you do it on your own. He is not going to do it for you. Why can't
 542 you do it on your own? It's only really been in the last year that I've kind of had
 543 to come to that. I've had to come to that, you know, face really openly this thing
 544 that he's not going to do it for me. And I haven't been able to do it on my own.
 545 And it's like it's too late.

546 T: Were you hoping she might help you?

547 C: Oh, I don't know. I don't know if I was hoping she would help me or just that she
 548 would be there because she is – she was a really strong ally of her children. She
 549 would take her own children's side over any spouse, over any grandchild, over
 550 anything. She would take your side, as long as she thought you were fighting. I
 551 don't think she knew what to do with weakness, you know, because when I did tell
 552 her – when I did sort of in May and June tell them how I felt, I didn't – I didn't feel
 553 like she knew how to deal with it. She just made me more depressed, by telling me
 554 about the death about one of my professors that I'd been really close to, you know.
 555 I thought, "God, I don't need this."

Anne's comments (495-496) suggest that for the first time she has expressed her construction of the interaction process. She says: "Coming back to Mum, I realise we're kind of going in various directions here, what's what's left unfinished" (495-496). Beth responds: "With my mother" (497). She has tested her construction of Anne's incompletely expressed construction. Anne responds affirmatively (498). Beth continues: "I don't know whether it's something that's left unfinished, so much as that I feel like I'm going to have to get over

feeling bad at having lost a relationship – bad at never having another additional ten years that I just assumed I would have with her" (499-501). In the first part of her response (499) Beth construes Anne's expressed construction to refer to something which Beth has not yet expressed. Beth does not construe that something to be "something that's left unfinished." Rather, Beth suggests that she construes that something as "feeling bad." Beth indicates that she must "get over" "feeling bad." She feels bad because she construes herself as having lost a relationship and as not having a further ten years with her mother. Beth construes this "feeling bad" as "a sort of feeling of loss" (502). In turn, Beth construes this feeling of loss as a "sort of grief" (504). Beth goes on to analogically describe what will happen to her construction of herself as having a feeling of loss (502-503).

After a brief minimal encourager from Anne (506), Beth continues (507-516). She elaborates her construction that her family wanted her to stay in New Zealand. However, she construes her mother as wanting her to return to the States (United States of America) (511). In addition, she construes her mother as not being able to understand why Beth did not return to America. Beth construes herself as sharing this construction of herself with her mother. Beth couldn't understand why she didn't return to the United States (513). After a brief response from Anne (517), Beth describes an event involving her mother. Beth reports her mother as having said that she couldn't believe Beth would stay when she was so unhappy (518). Beth construes this event as her mother not understanding why Beth did not return to America.

Anne expresses two constructions of Beth's verbalised constructions. The first construction is expressed in the statement, "So you could never get her to understand" (520). The second construction is expressed in the statement, "You weren't that sure about being here either" (520-521). By her response (522), Beth expresses her construction that Anne has validated the constructions Beth has expressed. Anne now expresses her construction of what Beth may have made of the two constructions indicated above. Anne comments: "So she's tapped into your own --" (523). Anne does not complete the expression of her construction, before Beth interrupts. This is an instance in which Beth has construed the construction which Anne has expressed. Beth construes this construction as an expression of Anne's construction of Beth's construction. Anne has construed what Beth makes of her constructions. Beth completes the expression of her construction (524). Beth's construction is then expressed as, "She has tapped into those feelings of terrible uncertainty." The reader will recognise that according to the definition of role constructs given earlier (Chapter Four), "feelings of terrible uncertainty" cannot be categorised as a "role construction." However, we may construe a role construction as implicitly expressed in Beth's statement (524). Beth construes herself as feeling "terribly uncertain." Beth's self-construction is expressed in the phrase, "terribly uncertain."

Beth continues, to express a construction of an event in which her mother was involved. She says: "And then, of course, as she was saying to me at Christmas or – I can't remember when she said it, 'If you don't come back here you will never see me again. If you leave you will never see me again'" (524-526). In this instance, Beth has described an event. However, she has not indicated how she construes her constructions of the event. The constructs which Beth has used to construe the event are those which are shared by Beth and Anne. Beth has not indicated what her constructions of her constructions of the event. She has not expressed those constructions which she makes using superordinate personal constructs. However, she goes on to say: "You know, I feel like it's all just come true" (528). Beth does not say what sense she makes of what her mother says. However, she indicates that she construes similarity between her constructions of what her mother said, and her constructions of her experience.

Regrettably a section of the dialogue between Anne and Beth is omitted. Nevertheless, the excerpt (530-545) which follows the omitted section suggests that Beth previously expressed a number of self-expressions. Beth feels bad because she was not "there" (530). Her construction of herself not being there is made with a construct which is subordinate to that which she uses to construe herself as "feeling bad." At this point it is worth noting, that, as suggested previously, Kelly proposed a restricted view of emotion. Kelly's writing and more recently that of McCoy (1977), suggest that emotion is an awareness of shifts or confirmations in a person's construct system and is therefore an outcome of construal (Miall, 1989). Kelly submits for example, that "fear" is an awareness of imminent incidental change in one's core constructs. More accurately, we may describe "fear" as the awareness of imminent changes in one's subordinate core, or role, constructs. In the context of Kellian theory "fear" is distinguished from "threat," which was defined and discussed previously. "Threat" is the awareness of an imminent change in one's superordinate role constructs.

Miall (1989) proposes, what he describes, as a view of emotion which is alternative to that offered by Kelly (1955) and supported by McCoy (1977). Miall submits that emotion indicates a self-related concern. He adds:

Emotion is the constructive anticipation of evolution or change in the construct system relating to the self; such emotion-based anticipations are active to a greater or lesser degree at all times, presetting the perceptual systems and directing attention. (Miall, 1989, p. 190)

In part, this model seems consistent with Kellian theory. One construes a particular person, event, place or entity. One may then construe changes as necessary in one's construct system as a consequence of this construction. The construction of the necessary outcome of the initial

construction may be described as "fear" or "threat," depending upon whether changes in subordinate or superordinate constructs are construed as necessary. This second construction must be made using superordinate constructs. Of course, one may act according to the second construction to avoid changes in the construct system. In this way, one's "emotion-based anticipations" influence our construing. However, one's emotions do not, as Miall seems to suggest, precede one's initial constructions. Provided we accept this point, Miall's model provides a view of emotion which seems consistent with Kelly's explanation of emotion. Miall also offers a model which is useful for interpreting Beth's expressed constructions.

When Beth says that she "[feels] bad" (530) she expresses a superordinate construction of her expressed construction of an event: "not being there." As Beth continues she indicates that she construes herself as not having been independent enough to leave. She says that she "wasn't strong enough" (531) and "didn't have the strength to leave" (533). Beth stayed because she "felt afraid to do it on my [her] own" (534). This latter expression indicates another of Beth's self-constructions. She felt "afraid." Here Beth expresses anxiety about "going back" (532). The reader may recall that Beth also indicated that she felt anxious, in the context of the character sketch which she completed prior to the counselling interview.

As Beth continues she elaborates part of her construct system. She says that she didn't write to her mother (539). She expresses her construction of not having written as having "cut her [her mother] off" (535). She regards this action as having "lost her [her mother] in the process" (534-535). In her elaboration of another set of constructs, Beth indicates that "not writing" was the action which followed from her construction of herself as being unable to say that she really wanted to go back but that she couldn't do it alone (537-538). In the same excerpt, Beth goes on to suggest that it was "too painful" trying to "look at" why she couldn't go back on her own (540-541). Beth expresses what may be described as her superordinate construction of having to construe something which she has already construed. To return to our earlier discussion of "emotion" as a concept within personal construct theory, we might reasonably suggest that Beth is expressing an emotion here too. The reason becomes apparent in the sentences that follow. Beth comments: "I've had to come to that, you know, face really openly this thing that he's not going to do it for me" (543-544). This is perhaps a further instance where, in Kellian terms, Beth has felt "threatened." Previously she construed her partner, Charles as not, "not going to do it" for her (541). To make discussion easier, we will say here that Beth construed her partner as "going to do it for her." She suggests that so long as she maintained this construction, she could continue to construe herself as not strong enough to make a decision on her own, but construe herself as able to get back. Had she previously construed Charles as "not going to do it for her" she would have had to construe herself as not being able to get back. Alternatively, she would have to have revised her construction of herself as "not strong enough" and construed herself as not, "not strong

enough." Construing her partner as "not going to do it" for her, had implications for changes in one of two superordinate role constructs. Should changes have occurred in either construct previously, Beth would have doubtless had to reconstrue other self-constructions. Hence, she may have construed any possible change in her construction of her partner as threatening.

Now Beth has revised her previous construction of Charles. She indicated earlier that she construes herself as unable to show her vulnerability. She has to be strong. Yet in this excerpt Beth says that she was not strong enough. We have evidence here that should Beth show her vulnerability she will construe her behaviour as validating evidence of herself as "not strong enough." She could maintain this construction so long as her construction of Charles as going to take her back, was predictively valid. However, presumably her construction was invalidated sufficiently often to warrant a change in Beth's construction. Now, perhaps, she cannot maintain her construction of herself as "not strong enough" because if she does so she must construe herself as having caused herself to lose contact with her mother. However, Beth also construes changing her construction of herself now, as not affecting her superordinate construction of herself as having lost her mother. Beth cannot change her superordinate construction, irrespective of whether she construes herself as "vulnerable" or "strong." The importance of Beth's construction of herself as having lost her mother, becomes evident. Previously, Beth might have reconstrued herself as "being there" had she been first able to construe herself as strong enough. Now, irrespective of her construction of herself, Beth cannot have a further ten years with her mother.

Anne tests her construction of a construction which Beth may have been expressing in the previous excerpt (530-545): "Were you hoping she might help you?" (546). Beth's response (547-555) suggests her dilemma. She was not "strong enough" to return to America. Hence she could not get back. However, she could not express her vulnerability. Had she done so, she believes that her mother would not have been there. So long as she maintained her construction of herself as not strong enough her mother would not "be there" for her.

Interactive Validation

In the following episode, Anne becomes more active in the interaction.

- 556 T: Can you see why you didn't go back to --?
- 557 C: Well I think one of the reasons I didn't go was because I was afraid to go alone. I
 558 was afraid. I wanted to go. I was really pushing at Charles to get a job back there,
 559 really hounding him to get a job back there. But I mean, I'm a capable person, I
 560 could have done it myself, but I didn't. I didn't. I didn't.

561 T: I don't think your mother suspected that she says to you "I don't understand why
562 you're so unhappy, why don't you come back" as if she could provide something
563 for you but then says to you, "But don't be weak."

564 C: Mmm. Well she didn't say that, but you got that impression.

565 T: Right. So it feels to me there's a bit of "come – come – come and I'll look after you
566 but stand up."

567 C: Mm, Mm. Oh it's definitely true.

568 T: So you're getting two different messages.

569 C: Yeah. I mean I'd seen how hard it was for some of my other sisters who were
570 trying to make a go of their lives on their own. And they didn't get a lot of
571 financial help or support from my parents.

572 T: Yes.

573 C: I don't think it was easy for them.

574 T: Right.

575 C: And I think it made me afraid -- afraid to do it alone even though I'm in a much
576 better position than they were at that time when they were basically unskilled and
577 uneducated. But you know, I just found it so hard. But to somehow think that
578 Charles was going to do it or that Charles was going to save my life, it's just -- it's
579 just -- it's just not right. I mean it's not right to even put it down on Charles. I
580 know that's not. But the thing is is that, but I kept thinking also that really, you
581 know, that's sort of a deal we entered into when we got married, you know. He
582 married a very very young woman and I was -- and I married an older man. He
583 married somebody who was quite complacent and I married someone who was
584 quite controlling. And so -- so it's not like you can't expect somebody like that to
585 do it for you, you know. But it makes -- it fills me with a lot of regret, that I didn't
586 sort of pick myself up and go and do it. Even though, I unders -- I mean I see what
587 you're saying, and I understand that that was true -- that it -- I wasn't sure that the
588 help would be there if I went. Or I knew if I went I would really -- it would really

589 pretty much be on my own because they really, you know – I didn't feel like I got
590 a lot of support from them all along.

591 T: Right and it sounds like by then you'd also got an idea about yourself which is "I'm
592 the one who looks after myself, I'm the one who can function."

593 C: Mm, yes. And going back there, of course, you'd be making trouble, you'd become
594 one of the troublesome ones.

595 T: That's right, so it's like you wouldn't get your ** reward.

596 C: Whatever that reward is, whatever that reward is. I don't know. I'm sure it must
597 be tied up to some very rigid Catholic upbringing.

598 T: Well if you didn't have a Catholic view of this world it sounds like you're going to
599 need forgiveness.

600 C: Oh, I don't think the Catholic church gives much forgiveness, Anne.

Anne begins this episode by asking Beth to construe why she didn't go back. She says: "Can you see why you didn't go back to __?" A question such as this is commonly regarded as a closed question since most people would suggest that the question necessitates only a "yes" or "no" response. This question suggests that Beth has construed why she didn't go back to the United States. Anne has not construed Beth's reason for not returning home. Instead she appears to have expressed her superordinate construction of Beth's comments. In her response, Beth repeats her earlier statement (533-534) that she didn't go back, because she was "afraid" to go alone. She goes on to suggest that she is now angry that she didn't go back alone. "I'm a capable person, I could have done it myself, but I didn't. I didn't. I didn't" (559-560). The reader may recall that "anger" has been defined as "an awareness of the invalidation which leads to hostile behaviour" (McCoy, 1977, p. 118). In this case Beth may well be angry because the construction which she has of herself as "capable" is incompatible with her construction of herself as not having gone back. A "capable person" "could have done it." In this instance, Beth construes one self-construction as invalidating evidence of another construction.

In her next comment, Anne repeats what Beth has said, and expresses her constructions of Beth's expressed constructions. Anne comments: "I don't think your mother suspected that she says to you 'I don't understand why you're so unhappy, why don't you

come back' as if she could provide something for you but then says to you, 'But don't be weak'" (561-563). Anne has extended her construct system to be able to construe Beth's constructions. The constructs which Anne uses to construe Beth's constructions have arisen within the context of the interaction. Constructs which arise in this way have been described earlier as "social constructs." Beth responds to Anne by construing the literal meaning of Anne's comment rather than the construction which is expressed. Beth says: "Well she didn't say that, but you got that impression" (564). Anne's expressed construction (563) has not yet been validated. Hence she expresses the same construction differently in her next comment (565-566). Beth suggests that this time she construes Anne's comment as validating evidence of her construction. She indicates the validity of Anne's expressed construction (567). This is a further instance in which Anne can construe her construction of Beth's construction as validated only if she construes Beth as having indicated the validity of Anne's construction. To do so, Beth must construe Anne's verbalised construction as validating evidence of her construction. Anne must then construe Beth's verbalised construction, as validating evidence of her construction of Beth's initial construction. Anne expresses her construction of her previously expressed construction: "So you're getting two messages" (568). Subsequently, Beth elaborates the contextual elements of her similar construction.

Contrasting Constructions

Beth suggests that she construes her mother as not supporting members of her family when they were "vulnerable" (569-571). Hence, we might assume that she construed her mother as unlikely to have been supportive of her if she was vulnerable. Beth makes sense of her construction and says that she was "afraid to do it alone" (575). Interestingly, Beth returns to her earlier discussion in which she was elaborating her construction of herself as being afraid to go back, and being responsible for having lost contact with her mother. We may conclude that Anne has attempted to facilitate a change in the way in which Beth construes herself. Beth construes herself as not having been strong enough to return to America on her own. Anne construes Beth differently. Anne's comments suggest that she construes Beth as not having wanted to go back to the United States. However, Beth's return to her elaboration of her previous self-construction indicates that Anne and Beth do not share the same superordinate construction.

In the excerpt (575-590) Beth alternates between the two constructions which she has of herself. She sometimes construes herself as similar to people whom she construes to be "strong." At other times she construes herself as similar to people who are "vulnerable." This is an important part of the therapeutic process, as by so doing Beth is able to test the predictive validity of two different constructions. In the past she has received validating evidence of her construction of herself as "vulnerable." More recently in the interview, there

is evidence that Beth wishes to construe herself as similar to people who are elements of the opposite pole of a construct which might be indicated by "vulnerable-strong." At this point, Beth elaborates her constructions of herself and her partner and in so doing indicates the contrasting construct poles. She construes herself as having been "a young woman" (582). In contrast, her husband was "an older man" (582). She goes on to express her construction of herself as "quite complacent" (583). In contrast, her husband was "quite controlling" (583). She construes people who are "quite controlling" as people whom you can expect to "do it for you" (584). However, Beth again expresses emotion when she construes her failure to return to her parents (585-586). At the conclusion of the excerpt 581-590, Beth indicates that she does not share Anne's apparent construction that Beth didn't want to go back (586-590).

As the episode continues, Anne expresses her construction of what sense Beth makes of her constructions. She says: "Right and it sounds like by then you'd also got an idea about yourself which is, 'I'm the one who looks after myself, I'm the one who can function'" (591-592). Beth agrees (593) before expressing her construction of what it would be like to return to the United States. She suggests that if she had gone back she would have been "making trouble" (593). Beth adds that she would become "one of the troublesome ones" (594). The reader will recall that Beth construes "good dutiful daughters" as "not giving any trouble." Since Beth construes herself as a good dutiful daughter, we might expect that she would not engage in any behaviour which might result in her having to revise her construction of herself.

Anne apparently recalls Beth's earlier elaboration of her construct system. Previously, Beth had said that she construed good dutiful daughters as receiving a payback. Anne had earlier expressed her construction of Beth's verbalised construction as good dutiful daughters can expect to receive a "reward." In this excerpt, Anne construes Beth as again expressing her earlier constructions: "That's right, so it's like you wouldn't get your **reward" (595). As previously, Beth is unable to express her construction of the "reward." She says: "Whatever that reward is, whatever that reward is. I don't know" (596). Again Beth suggests that she construes the "reward" as in some way connected to her constructions of her "Catholic upbringing." In less colloquial terms, Beth is suggesting that she could use constructs which she applies in the construal of "Catholic" events, to construe something as a reward. Previously Beth suggested that she construes some events using a construct similar to that which she construes members of the Catholic church as using to construe events. The reader may recall that Beth said: "I think it had to do with the Catholic church, that the meek will inherit the earth, that kind of thing....You think that somehow there'll be a payback for all of this" (401-404). Beth implied that following from the superordinate construction that the meek should inherit the earth, good dutiful daughters should receive a payback. However, in the episode being discussed here, Anne demonstrates that she does not have a construction of Beth's constructions which Beth would construe as valid. Anne comments: "Well if you

didn't have a Catholic view of this world it sounds like you're going to need forgiveness" (598-599). Anne construes the Catholic church as providing forgiveness. In addition, she construes Beth as "needing forgiveness." Anne expresses her constructions of Beth's verbalised constructions. She does not construe what sense Beth makes of her constructions. Beth responds only to her construction that Anne construes the Catholic church as giving forgiveness. She says: "Oh, I don't think the Catholic church gives much forgiveness" (600).

Fear

In the next episode, Beth responds to Anne's suggestion that wanting forgiveness may be important to Beth.

601 T: But who do you want forgiveness from?

602 C: Yeah, oh, it's funny that you should say that because -- like -- sometimes I think I
603 wish I had gotten my mother at some stage to just say, "I understand how difficult
604 it is to free yourself" because, you know what, I'm sure that she stayed with my
605 father not purely out of love, but more out of dependency. She says that she found
606 a basic love there, but I just -- I just find that so, I find that rather unusual. I really
607 do. I'm sure, I wish somehow that she had been more open and honest with me
608 about -- about relationships and that sort of thing. I don't think I had that openness
609 and honesty with her.

610 T: What would she have said if she could to you?

611 C: I think that she would have said that it's hard to break free of dependencies, that
612 it's hard to --

613 T: ** dependent?

614 C: Of her dependence on my father -- that there were many times that she was
615 unhappy with him, but that she was financially dependent on him because she
616 never really -- once she'd had all those children she never really had time to make
617 her own way in the world and she was used to living at a certain level, you know,
618 a certain financial level -- and she was not -- she was afraid to forego it. Afraid to
619 be on her own.

620 T: So why does she expect you to do what she couldn't?

621 C: I don't know. They had unrealistic expectations of what their kids could do. They
622 really did you know. She expected us to always do well. I mean she just expected
623 it, you know. And you could call her after you would do so well in an exam or do
624 so well in something and, "Well, I didn't expect anything less, would you have
625 expected differently?"

626 T: Ohhh.

627 C: You know. And she would say -- I remember one of my sisters saying, "I wish she
628 wouldn't say that. She never did this, she never took a medical school exam, she
629 doesn't know how hard it is." You know, but I think that was her way of saying,
630 "You are all just so bright and you are all just so smart" and that kind of thing. But
631 she should have said that.

632 T: I'm proud of you.

633 C: Yeah

634 T: Aren't you wonderful.

635 C: Yeah.

636 T: Aren't you clever.

637 C: Yeah. She never, the only time I remember her saying something like that was
638 when I got quite an honour that nobody else in the family had gotten at that time.
639 And to hit nine and never have got it --and also something she wanted and never
640 got, and that was -- she was so excited, she was so pleased and that was quite
641 special. But that's the only time I remember it being anything about her ever saying,
642 "Oh you got it. I'm so excited. I can't believe it." I didn't get that, you know I
643 wanted it so badly and I never got that," but that's the only time I ever remember
644 that. You know, so I think they expected us to be strong and smart and when you
645 expect -- just expect people to be that way you don't give them any encouragement
646 because you think "Well, that's the way they're supposed to be." you know, and I
647 don't think that kids naturally are that way, you know. I mean, neglected children
648 become neglectful people.

In the first sentence of this episode, Anne asks a question which appears to follow from her construction of Beth as wanting forgiveness (601). In order to respond to Anne's question, Beth must first construe herself as wanting forgiveness. She must then construe an agent of that forgiveness. As suggested earlier, the constructions which Beth and Anne express in the word "forgiveness" may not be identical. Doubtless, however, these constructions will be similar since forgiveness has a commonly construed meaning, in addition, to possible dissimilar personal meanings. Beth's response to Anne (602-609) suggests that Beth construes her mother saying, "I understand how difficult it is to free yourself" (603-604) as "forgiveness." Beth goes on to indicate that she construes her mother as having stayed with her father because she was "dependent" (604-605). The reader will recall that earlier Beth said that she (Beth) was not sufficiently independent to have gone back to the United States. Thus Beth has suggested that she uses the same construct to construe herself and her mother. She construes her mother and herself similarly with respect to one aspect. However, in another aspect, Beth suggests that she construes her mother and herself as different. The reader may recall that previously Beth implied that she is "open" in contrast to her husband (488-491). Now, Beth suggests that she construes her mother, like her husband, as having not been "open." Beth comments: "I wish somehow that she had been more open and honest with me about – about relationships and that sort of thing. I don't think I had that openness and honesty with her" (607-609). While Beth has not expressed the contrasting pole of the construct she uses to construe herself and others, she implies that she has a construct which may be used to construe people as "open" or as not "open."

In the next extract, Anne asks Beth to express her construction of what her mother may have said to her (610). To respond to Anne's question, Beth must express her constructions of her mother's constructions. Beth comments: "I think that she would have said it's hard to break free of dependencies" (611). Anne asks a brief question which is not able to be completely transcribed (613) before Beth continues. In the following statement (614-619) Beth expresses what sense she construes her mother may have made of her actions. Beth construes her mother as having been unhappy with her father (614-615). However, according to Beth, her mother was financially dependent and afraid to forgo living at a certain level. Beth adds, "Afraid to be on her own" (618-619). If we briefly return to Beth's earlier comments we can see that here Beth again suggests that she and her mother are similar. Previously Beth had said that she construed her sisters as not having found it easy to make a go of their lives on their own (569-570). Beth comments that her sisters did not get much financial help or support from her parents (570-571). She then adds that she doesn't think it was easy for them (573). Beth goes on to express her construction of her sisters' lives: "I think it made me afraid – afraid to do it alone even though I'm in a much better position than they were at that time when they were basically unskilled and uneducated" (575-577). Beth expresses fear about

"doing it alone." She is able to express a construction of herself as "doing it alone." However, in so doing she uses a shared construct to construe herself in this way. She has not ever "done it alone." In Kellian terms, she has not included herself as an element in the personal construct used to construe others as doing it alone.

Kelly's (1955) description of "fear" may be useful in interpreting Beth's verbalised constructions. To return to the previous extract (614-619) Beth has a superordinate construction of people who "do it alone" which she does not express. However, we may assume that it might be expressed in the phrase "find life hard." Should Beth construe herself as "doing it alone" she must also construe herself as "finding life hard." Her construction of herself must change. Kelly might say that Beth was afraid to do it alone, because had she done so she would need to construe herself differently. She would have to construe herself as "finding it hard to make a go of her life on her own." In Kellian terms, fear expresses Beth's awareness that her core constructs would need to change if she were to construe herself as "doing it alone." She would need to construe herself as similar, rather than dissimilar, to those whom she currently construes as "finding it hard to make a go of their lives on their own."

Construing the Construal Process

To return to the present episode, in the extract 614-619 Beth suggests that she construes her mother as similar to herself. According to Beth, her mother, too, was afraid to be alone, because she would be without financial help and support. Anne expresses a similar construction of Beth's constructions as that which I have suggested here. Anne's construction of Beth's verbalised constructions is that, like Beth, Beth's mother stayed with her partner because she was dependent. Anne asks: "So why does she expect you to do what she couldn't?" (620). Parenthetically, it is interesting to note that Anne does not suggest that Beth has any control over events. Anne does not suggest to Beth that she construes her mother as expecting her to do what she couldn't. That is, Anne does not phrase her question as "So why do you think that she expects you to do what she couldn't?" This question is cumbersome and unnecessary here. However, there may be advantages in therapists indicating to their clients that the understanding which they have of events, and the ways in which they "perceive" people, follow from clients' constructions. This is a less "hopeless" stance than the position which professional experience suggests that clients often adopt. Often clients construe events as beyond their control. Their constructions have ceased to have predictive validity. However, their epistemological view is one which suggests that no alternative, and possibly more predictively valid, way of construing events is possible. Should clients adopt an epistemological view more consistent with that advanced earlier (Chapter Two), they may be willing to experiment with changes in their ways of construing in order to increase the

predictive validity of their constructions. Previous discussion (Chapter Two) suggests that the epistemological stance derived from Kellian theory may offer a set of constructions which could prove useful in understanding psychotherapy. This epistemological position may also offer a set of constructs which therapists may adopt for use within the process of psychotherapy.

To return to the interview, Beth responds that she does not know why her mother expected her to do something which her mother could not do (621). However, she goes on to express her construction of her mother as someone who always had "unrealistic expectations" (621). As Beth continues, it becomes apparent that Beth has a different construction of her mother than that which may be suggested in this first statement. Beth goes on to say that her mother just expected Beth and her sisters to "do well" (622). Beth continues, to suggest that her mother would say: "Well, I didn't expect anything less, would you have expected differently?" (624-625). Following an exclamation from Anne (626), Beth expresses her construction of the construction expressed in her mother's statement. Beth expresses her mother's construction in, "You are all just so bright and you are all just so smart" (630). According to Beth her mother should have said this (631).

Anne expresses her constructions of what Beth has said that her mother said, in three successive statements (632, 634, 636). It would seem here, that Anne has construed Beth's construction which is expressed within the statement "You are all just so bright...." Anne has now expressed a number of similar constructions of Beth's single construction. Beth's responses (633, 635, 636) suggest that she construes Anne as having accurately construed the construction expressed in Beth's statement (630). Notably, perhaps, Beth elaborates her construction following Anne's statement: "Aren't you clever" (636). We might speculate that this statement has greater validity than the other two statements. "Clever" seems to better convey the meaning expressed in "bright" and "smart," in Beth's statement, than do the words "proud" (632) and "wonderful." Beth suggests again that her mother acknowledged the achievements of her children (637-644). She concludes by expressing her superordinate construction that "they" (presumably her mother and father) expected their daughters to be "strong and smart" (644). Here Beth has again introduced her earlier description of people as "strong." The reader will recall that Beth previously contrasted people whom she construes as "strong" with those whom she construes as "vulnerable."

Beth continues to express her construction that you don't provide people whom you expect to be "strong and smart" with encouragement. However, Beth construes children as not naturally being "strong and smart" (646-647). Finally in this extract, Beth expresses a constellatory construct: "Neglected children become neglectful people" (647-648). People whom Beth construes as neglected are those she also construes as becoming neglectful people.

Similarly, those she construes as neglectful people are those whom she construes as having been neglected children.

Construing Previously Expressed Constructions

In the next episode Anne expresses her constructions of Beth's constructions.

649 T: I can see that you felt all these sort of mixed feelings. Like you feel bad about not
650 having kind of gone back and keeping with her and you felt angry because
651 otherwise she let you down.

652 C: Yes.

653 T: And you feel that you've let her down.

654 C: Mm. I do sometimes. Yeah. The thing is – is that I think that I do feel bad like
655 that, I feel really emotionally bad and have full of regrets and stuff like that. And
656 then on the other hand I feel the same sort of a - kind of an anger about why am I
657 regretting this, I did nothing wrong.

658 T: Say that again.

659 C: Yeah. But I do feel that way. And then I get angry that I think, well you know –
660 I'm a product of my upbringing and I'm a product of some of the things that I did
661 like clinging so fast to someone else so as not to cling to them is a result of
662 something, it's a result of being made to feel like you're somehow one of the better
663 kids because you're not clinging and you're not demanding, like my younger sister
664 who was on the other – was clinging and demanding. And she's still a demanding
665 person, but she's a lot happier, she's a lot better sense of herself than any of the rest
666 of us because she just demanded attention.

667 T: She insisted often.

668 C: That's right.

669 T: That she be looked after.

670 C: You know when you talk to her and she says, "No, I've never really had any
 671 problems with sort of my sense of self, I know exactly where I'm at," you know, but
 672 you know those of us who -- I always remember my mother just saying -- even at
 673 Christmas -- this last Christmas when I was there my mother kind of really * and
 674 said that she's ****, you know. And I remember that, you know. And those steps
 675 I have are signals. I knew I grew up, I know I grew up with those sorts of signals
 676 all the time -- of not being demanding -- those sorts of rewards that way.

Anne begins this episode by summarising Beth's constructions thus far: "I can see that you felt all these sort of mixed feelings. Like you feel bad about not having kind of gone back and keeping with her and you felt angry because otherwise she let you down" (649-651). After a brief affirmative response from Beth, Anne continues: "And you feel that you've let her down" (653). Beth's response (654-657) suggests that she construes Anne's statement (653) as an inaccurate construction of her construction. Beth goes on to elaborate her self-construction. Beth suggests that she alternates between "feeling emotionally bad and full of regrets" and feeling angry because she construes herself as having done "nothing wrong." Here Beth appears to refer to a subordinate construct with two poles which might be expressed as "let her down" and "did nothing wrong." In addition, she refers to a superordinate construct with one pole expressed as "feel emotionally bad and full of regrets" and "angry." Thus we have a further indication of the hierarchical arrangement of Beth's personal construct system.

Anne asks Beth to express her construction of herself as having done nothing wrong (658). However, Beth appears to construe Anne's statement as invalidating evidence of Beth's construction. In Kellian terms, Beth becomes "hostile." She comments: "But I do feel that way" (659). Beth does feel full of regrets. Beth then repeats her earlier statement that she then gets angry (659). However, she goes on to elaborate her construction of herself as having done nothing wrong (659-666). Beth has done nothing wrong, because she is "a product of her upbringing." She construes herself as being a product of her upbringing because she was made to feel that she was one of the "better kids." According to Beth, "better kids" are not "clinging and demanding." Those who are not "better kids" are "clinging and demanding." Beth construes herself as one of the better kids because she was not "clinging and demanding." Beth goes on to suggest that she construes herself as not having been "clinging and demanding" because she did not cling to her parents. Instead she did the opposite. She clung to someone else.

In the extract (659-666) Beth suggests that she construes her sister as happier than herself and as having "a lot better sense of herself" than other members of her family (665). According to Beth, her sister is happier and has a better sense of herself because she

demanded attention (664-666). Thus Beth again indicates two contrasting constructions. Those who cling and demand attention are happier and have a sense of self. Those who do not cling and demand attention, are not happy and do not have a sense of self. In two consecutive statements, Anne tests her construction of the way in which Beth construes her sister (667, 669). The predictive validity of any construction of the constructions expressed in Beth's next statement (670-676) is reduced as there are extracts which have not been able to be transcribed. However, we might reasonably conclude that Beth is expressing yet again her construction of herself as a "product of her upbringing."

Alternative Expression of Constructions

In the final episode of the therapeutic interaction between Anne and Beth, the interview is terminated.

677 T: Have you done any writing on this?

678 C: Well I have done a little bit. I have a journal that I only really just started keeping a
679 couple of weeks ago.

680 T: I'll tell you what I'm thinking, is that if you got things that you're regretting and
681 then you find yourself saying I'm mad about, you see what you've actually got is
682 all those sort of mixed feelings, and one way to sometimes sort this out is either by,
683 well putting it out in chairs like we've done, you could do that too, but actually
684 writing out. Like it might be one page when I've got the things I'm sad about and
685 another page on things I'm mad about.

686 C: Mmmm.

687 T: And -- and 'cause sometimes what tends to happen is that you've got -- as soon as
688 you start thinking about the things you feel sad about then you've quickly dived in
689 and said, "Hang on, but there's a reason for that." And it's like you're having a
690 debate with yourself.

691 C: Yeah, well I feel that way sometimes.

692 T: Right. And so that, I mean that's pretty usual when you're grieving. It would help
693 to either write it out or to do it in the two chairs where you actually take the two
694 parts of you and make it --

695 C: I think I'd feel more comfortable writing it out because you can be a bit more
696 reflective sometimes.

697 T: Yes.

698 C: I tend not to be reflective when I'm being asked to role-play.

699 T: Well you can have one page on what you're sad about, and one page. Well there's
700 four things, I'm sad about, I'm mad about, I'm scared about, and I'm glad about.

701 C: Yeah. All right, yeah that's good. I actually enjoy writing about things, sitting
702 down and writing this journal. I used to always -- people used to give me diaries
703 and things when I was little -- but I'd maybe write one day in it and then I'd toss
704 it off.

705 T: Give it up.

706 C: Yeah, I never kept it going. I wish I had sometimes, but I never did.

707 T: We're coming to the end of the time. Is there anything else you'd --

708 C: No -- no except to set maybe a couple more times.

709 T: OK.

710 C: You wouldn't have an extra pen up there would you?

(Tape ends.)

Anne begins the episode by asking Beth if she has expressed what she has said in the interview in writing (677). This question does not appear to have arisen from Anne's construction of Beth's previously verbalised constructions. Rather Anne has directed Beth's attention to construing verbalised constructions which are not based in Beth's constructions or Anne's constructions of Beth's constructions. Beth construes Anne's verbalised construction (677) and indicates to Anne that she has written some of her thoughts in a journal. Anne goes on to suggest ways by which Beth may elaborate her constructions by expressing them in writing (680-685). It is apparent from Anne's comments that she too, construes Beth as having alternative constructions of herself. She sometimes feels bad and at other times angry. A

personal construct theorist might suggest that Anne is providing an opportunity to verbalise constructions which Beth may have difficulty expressing. Perhaps too, by expressing her constructions in writing, Beth may be able to better see the implications of her constructions and so change her superordinate constructions. Her written constructions may serve as validating, or invalidating evidence of her constructions. However, as previous discussion suggests, constructions which Beth expresses in writing can serve as validating, or invalidating, evidence only if Beth construes herself as a validating agent of her own constructions. Doubtless, in some instances, only another person such as a therapist, can serve as a validating agent for Beth's constructions.

Anne continues, expressing her construction of Beth's construal process. She suggests that sometimes Beth is engaged in a "debate" with herself (690). In Kellian terms, of course, Anne is describing the previously discussed process of "slot rattling." Anne expresses her construction that alternating between construing oneself as bad and construing oneself as angry is usual when a person is grieving (692). Professional experience suggests that statements such as this, made within the context of psychotherapy, can provide assurance for clients. Again however, the value of such an assurance is dependent here, upon whether Beth construes Anne as a validating agent of her self-construction. Prior to this interview, Beth indicated in a character sketch that she was grieving. We do not know what her superordinate construction of herself may be or how she may construe Anne's assurance that changing our constructions of ourselves is "pretty usual" if we are grieving.

Beth responds to Anne's comment (692-694) to suggest that she feels more comfortable writing because "you can be a bit more reflective sometimes" (695-696). This is another instance in which Beth uses a second person pronoun to indicate others, but one may construe her verbalised construction as relating to Beth, in addition to others. As Beth continues she seems to construe herself as "reflective" when writing and as "not reflective" when asked to role play (698). In a subsequent statement (699-700), Anne simply describes how Beth might organise her journal in order that she may express her constructions. Anne does not express any role constructions in this statement. Beth however, responds by suggesting that she "enjoys" writing about things (701). In this Beth expresses her a further role construct. Beth continues to state that she used write in a diary but she would "toss it off" (703-704). Anne construes Beth's verbalised construction and tests her construction. Anne simply says: "Give it up" (705). Beth indicates that Anne has offered a construction similar to that which was expressed in the phrase "toss it off." Beth explains that she never kept it going (706). Here Beth may have expressed a construct used to construe a similar event, so that "toss it off" and "never kept it going" may be expressions of similar constructions. Alternatively, "never kept it going" may be an expression of a construction made using a construct which is subordinate to that used to make the construction expressed in "toss it off." Simply, Beth may have

construed herself as having "tossed off" her diary because she never kept it going. Beth goes on to say that she wished she had kept her journal going (706). Here she expresses her final role construction in this interview.

Termination

Anne effectively concludes the interview with her statement: "We're coming to the end of the time" (707). Beth too, construes the interview as coming to an end. She responds only to ask if she can make two further appointments to see Anne. She does not express any further role constructions, neither does she express constructions of her actions or those of others.

Analysis of Client and Therapist Post-Counselling Interviews

In the third phase of analysis the post-therapy interviews completed by Anne and Beth are analysed in light of the results of completion of the first two phases of analysis. In particular, this phase of analysis focuses upon any apparent linkages between the constructions which Anne and Beth express in the context of the psychotherapeutic interaction and their constructions of those constructions which they express during their respective post-therapy interviews.

As indicated in the previous chapter (Chapter Five), analysis of the therapist and client post-therapy interviews follows the order of the interviewing process.

A. Client Post-counselling Interview

i. Client response to the therapeutic interaction.

Beth said that she had found the session with Anne helpful. She reported that on other occasions her participation in therapy with Anne was not always helpful.

When Beth was asked to describe points in the session when she felt something significant took place for her, Beth commented that Anne identified what Beth had known but had not had the strength to say. She added, "like she said them for me." Beth said that sometimes she was too ashamed and constrained to say what she knew. She added that the session had been helpful because she was able to "make an insight." She was able to understand why she didn't show "vulnerability." Beth also found Anne's action in bringing her back to the "unfinished business" with her mother helpful. However, Beth reported that the occasion at which she felt the most significant change took place for her was when Anne was "involved." The next section examines the episode in the interaction between Anne and Beth when Anne was, according to Beth, "involved."

ii. The client-identified episode.

Beth identified the following section of the taped therapeutic interview as that in which the most significant change took place for her

271 T: Yes. I notice that you do that even now, that you start to cry and then you pull
272 yourself up again.

273 C: Yes, I do that. I just thought of that myself.

274 T: Yes. Like you're only allowed to be about, I don't know, ten. You're not allowed
275 to be three.

276 C: Yes. That's true. I don't know -- it's sort of this thing of kind of letting go -- I don't
277 know.

278 T: What do you think would happen if you did?

279 C: I don't know. I don't think anything would happen. I mean, when I'm on my own
280 or, when I was grieving for my mother, I could just openly cry and everybody
281 accepted it.

282 T: Yes.

283 C: You know. But maybe in grieving for myself or lack of self is not quite as accepted
284 -- you know -- the whole thing maybe of becoming completely vulnerable. I don't
285 know.

286 T: I was wondering what stops you --

287 C: I don't know -- I don't know. I think sometimes I feel like maybe if I - I wonder
288 whether or not there is a strong person inside, and that if you cry and you cry too
289 much that all you'll be is this whinging crybaby and there won't be any sort of
290 strong person to sort of sweep it up and continue on.

291 T: Yes.

292 C: Maybe that's all -- what I think it would seem like, I don't know.

293 T: It does seem like that.

294 C: Yes.

295 T: I'd like -- I'd like to encourage you to become a crybaby.

296 C: But that's just like this pathological critic inside, I think of as this kind of whinger,
297 this frightened little girl. And I keep wondering whether or not, that's in there but
298 is there another person in there. Is there another part of myself who's not that way?

299 T: Yes.

300 C: Who's happy and has a sense of self. Because at this stage I'm just – I'm just not
301 sure there is, you know. I have all these ideas about moving ahead with my life
302 and I somehow feel constrained to do them. And I wonder if I feel constrained
303 because I still can't find myself.

304 T: How do you think ****?

305 C: I just don't know. I don't know. B __ says that I'm just too reflective. He just finds
306 being around me so utterly depressing. He just wants it all to go away.

307 T: Sounds like part of you that agrees with him.

308 C: Well I think that's right. I keep thinking that there has to be sort of a bottom to all
309 of this, when you find something that sort of says right, now we're ready to move
310 on. I don't seem to be able to find that. I feel like I'm just going around in circles
311 sometimes.

312 T: The sense I have is that it's not so much – well I suppose it is like going around in
313 circles – but that you start feeling that feeling and then you pull yourself up again
314 and so you actually don't reach the bottom, you don't know what the bottom's like.

315 C: Yes.

316 T: And so you don't actually get down there enough to –

[Though Beth indicated that the episode concluded at this point, complete discussion of this episode necessitates the inclusion of the following exchanges which follow on from the above episode.]

317 C: To let it go.

318 T: To let it go. It's – my idea is that if you could somehow let it go –

319 C: But I don't know how. I just don't know how to sort of get down there and just dig
320 this stuff out.

321 T: It's deep there.

322 C: I think I keep these feelings of having to stay – an outward semblance of strength.

iii. Significance of the client-identified episode.

After Beth had identified the beginning of the above episode, the entire episode was replayed to her until she identified the point at which the episode concluded. Beth was then asked if there was anything about this section of the interview which she hadn't recalled earlier but which was now important to her. Her response was audio-taped. Beth responded:

I think that – the things – the thing is that I think it identified – when she identified this sort of characteristic that I have of not being able to let go – you know, not being able to – to – you know – as she said – you shed a tear and then you pull yourself up and you get out of it. You don't actually let go. And I've - I've often felt that way. And I've often felt like I can't be truly reflective and actually go back and think about myself and my childhood and stuff like that. And I've even felt constrained about doing it here. So I found that quite significant that she would say that and then say "It's like it's OK to be ten, but not to be three." Because sometimes I feel like there must be stuff mucked around in there – my childhood – that is keeping me sort of keeping me at a point where I am, that needs to become unstuck. (C1Tp2: 42-61)

Referring to the previous discussion, we can see that for Beth, Anne's initial comment (271-272) provides affirmation of Beth's role construction. Beth too, construes herself as constrained. Beth also indicates that Anne's following comment (274-275) is important to her since Beth construes it as validating her construction that her inability to "let go" may be related to her childhood. Indeed Beth suggests in the latter part of the post-counselling interview that the statement which held the greatest significance for her during the selected section of the counselling interview, was Anne's comment: "Yes. I notice that you do that even now, that you start to cry and then you pull yourself up again" (271-272). Beth also indicates that she construes Anne as having given her permission to be three or ten years of age. Following Anne's comment, Beth construed herself as no longer having to confine herself to being "ten," in the context of the psychotherapy session, at least.

Here Beth has identified the episode within the therapeutic interaction in which she experiences most significant change to have taken place. She has also indicated the impact of that event. Anne has validated Beth's construction of herself as "constrained." In addition, Anne has validated Beth's construction of her inability to let go as being associated with her childhood. Importantly, Beth construes Anne as giving her permission "to be" three, or ten years, of age. Beth has expressed her constructions of the episode she has identified in the

post-counselling interview. What we do not have access to at this point, is what sense Beth may have made of the verbal interaction between she and Anne while she was engaged in that interaction. This knowledge becomes important if we are to increase our understanding of the psychological implications for Beth of engagement in the therapeutic interview.

In the earlier analysis of the verbal interaction between Anne and Beth, I indicated the constructions expressed in Anne and Beth's behaviour. In addition, in some instances, I speculated as to what sense Anne and Beth may have made of their verbalised constructions. At that stage however, I did not make reference to Anne and Beth's constructions of those constructions which they had expressed in the therapeutic interview. Subsequent to the interaction between Anne and Beth, Beth expressed her constructions of what took place within the interaction.

Beth said that she felt that she had not spent enough time reflecting upon when she was much younger, in therapy sessions with Anne. In addition, she did not feel that she and Anne had spent enough time reflecting on Beth's fear that when she ceases to attend counselling, she will start "doing the same problems again" (C1Tp2: 173). However, in the episode provided earlier, Beth felt that she was allowed to reflect on the time when she was much younger. Beth comments:

I felt like one of those problems that I've identified with Anne – the things that I've been sort of angry about in my past, has been in the lack of involvement in my life on the part of parents. And I think that that showed involvement. Maybe it triggered me because it showed involvement on the part of Anne in actually spotting something – not just in this session – but something carried over from previous sessions – a trend that she's kind of seen. And that also kind of gave me permission that it was OK to actually go back and dredge up the past and that maybe I could get to some of the roots of those problems. (C1Tp2: 178-192)

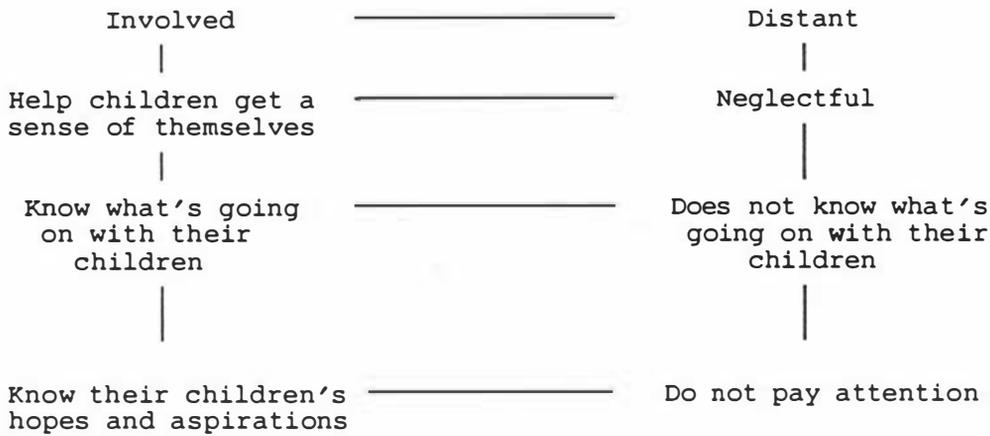
In this extract, Beth indicates that she construes her parents as having been uninvolved in her life. The reader will recall that Beth expressed a similar construction in the taped therapeutic interview. There she said: "I don't feel like there was anybody in my life that I ever felt – including my parents – that I ever felt were actually really involved in my life, gave me encouragement to sort of figure out what was me" (194-196). Referring back to the extract above, we might suggest that Beth construed Anne's comments (274-275) as showing involvement. In the above extract, Beth indicates that she construes Anne as "involved" because Anne expressed her construction of present and past events in the context of the therapeutic interview.

Many counsellors, irrespective of their theoretical orientation, would suggest that in the above extract Beth is indicating that she may have engaged in a process of "transference" with her therapist. Psychodynamic theorists would submit that Beth has transferred the thoughts and feelings she has for her parents to her therapist. She may, in the past, have perceived a "lack of involvement" on the part of her parents and her therapist. Kelly (1955) too, refers to a "transference" process (p. 163). However, he describes transference as experimentation of role constructs (Kelly, 1955). So, returning to the extract above, a personal construct theorist might conclude that Beth construed her parents and her therapist similarly. Beth construed her parents and Anne as uninvolved.

Beth's comments in the extract above suggest that so long as Beth construed Anne as "uninvolved" she did not construe herself as having permission to express her constructions of past events. In particular, she did not have permission to express her construction of events which happened when she was younger. Importantly, Beth had previously not received validation for her construction of herself as constrained. Nor had she previously received validation for her construction that her inability to "let go" was associated with her childhood. However, prior to the counselling interview which is the subject of discussion here, Beth had received validation for her construction that Anne was like her parents. Anne, according to Beth, had not been "involved." However, in the counselling interview, Anne invalidated Beth's previous construction of Anne as uninvolved. In order for her construction of Anne to retain predictive validity, Beth had to revise her previous construction of Anne, to construe Anne now as "involved."

According to Beth, construing Anne as involved gave Beth permission to express her constructions of herself as a child, within the therapeutic sessions. To understand a little more of Beth's construct system, I asked Beth to describe someone who may be the opposite of "involved." By so doing I was eliciting the opposite pole of that construct which Beth uses to construe people as "involved." Beth said that if people were the opposite of "involved," they would be "distant." According to Beth a person who is "distant," "does not pay attention" and is "neglectful." Beth describes a person who is "neglectful" as someone who "does not know what's going on" with their children. In contrast, people who are "involved," "know what's going on" with their children. Beth adds that people who are involved, try to know what's going on inside their children's heads. They know "what's going on in their schools" and they know as much as their children want to tell them. According to Beth, "involved" people know their children's hopes and aspirations and "try to help them get a sense of themselves."

Diagrammatically then, we can present some of Beth's verbalised constructions in a way which indicates the possible hierarchical arrangement of some constructs within Beth's personal construct system.



Diagrammatic representation of Beth's constructions
associated with "involvement"

iv. Analysis of the client-identified episode of significance.

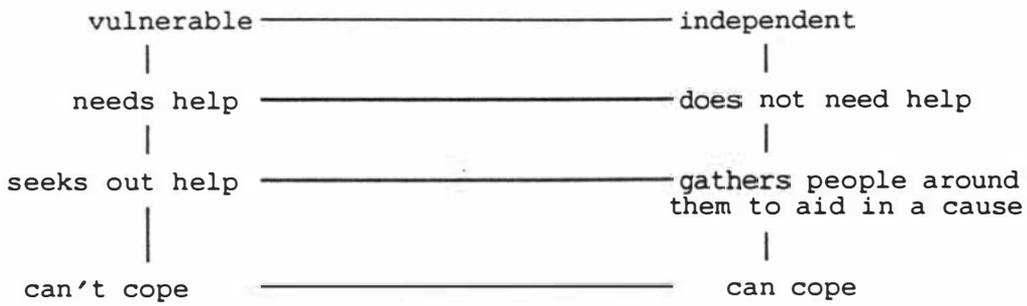
As indicated in the previous chapter, this stage of analysis is concerned with examining the client-identified episode in more detail than that provided in the earlier analysis of the counselling interview. In particular, analysis at this stage, is concerned with identifying personal, shared, and social constructions; examining occasions when social constructions may arise, and identifying occasions when validation or invalidation of clients' constructions may occur.

As suggested earlier, in the post-counselling interview Beth indicated that she construed Anne as having provided validating evidence of Beth's role construction. Anne, like Beth, construes Beth as constrained. In addition, Anne validates Beth's construction that Beth's inability to "let go" is associated with her childhood. In the counselling interview, Anne goes on to ask Beth what would happen if she "let go" (278). As demonstrated in the previous analysis of this episode, Anne thus attempts to "loosen" Beth's construing of herself. Beth is asked to construe herself "letting go."

Beth is able to construe herself as "letting go" under some circumstances. She says that when she was grieving for her mother, she could openly cry (279-280). However, Beth adds: "But maybe in grieving for myself or lack of self is not quite as accepted -- you know - - the whole thing may be of becoming completely vulnerable" (283-284). Thus Beth differentiates between grieving for another person and grieving for herself. She tests the predictive validity of a seemingly new construction. This construction is one which is superordinate to Beth's construction of herself as not being able to "let go." Beth tests out the construction that she does not let go because she construes grieving for herself as being less acceptable than grieving for others.

If we now examine Anne's role in the therapeutic process we can note that Anne first validates Beth's constructions. Anne goes on to prompt "loosening" of Beth's construct system. Anne asks Beth to change the way in which she currently construes herself. However, Beth cannot construe grieving for herself. She then attempts to make sense of this inability to construe herself in this way. As she does so she expresses a construction made using a superordinate construct (a superordinate construction). This construct is superordinate to the construct which Beth uses to construe herself as "letting go" or not letting go. By expressing her superordinate construction, Beth has been able to provide Anne with an insight into the organisation of her construct system. However, as is evident from earlier analysis, in the counselling interview Anne does not indicate her construction of the personal constructions expressed in Beth's comments (283-285). Nevertheless, a close examination of the relationship between the constructions expressed in the context of the counselling interaction, and Beth's construct system, is possible here.

The process of the post-counselling interview enabled the expression of constructions which were not expressed in the context of the counselling interview. The theoretical principles developed thus far, suggest that we may assume that constructs indicated by these constructions may be associated with constructs indicated in the counselling interview. The reader will recall from previous discussion that Beth suggests that grieving for herself may be not as acceptable as grieving for others (283-284). She concludes by saying, "the whole thing maybe of becoming vulnerable" (284). In the post-counselling interview, Beth describes someone who is "vulnerable" as someone who "needs help" (C1Tp2: 87). She adds that a person who is vulnerable "seeks out help because they [the person] can't cope" (C1Tp2: 96-97). In contrast, Beth describes someone who is "not vulnerable" as not needing help (C1Tp2: 79). She adds: "They're independent. They do it a-they do it all on their own" (C1Tp2: 81-82). In contrast to a vulnerable person, an "independent" person "gathers people around them to aid them in a cause or aid them in something that they're doing" (C1Tp2: 96-100). Beth goes on to suggest that an independent person can cope alone (C1Tp2: 102-103). We can now show more of the constructions associated with Beth's personal construct system diagrammatically. As indicated previously, we can reasonably assume that the constructs indicated by the verbalised constructions discussed above, are arranged similarly to the arrangement of verbalised constructions below.



Diagrammatic representation of Beth's constructions
associated with "vulnerable"

The reader will recall that in the character sketch which Beth was asked to complete prior to the counselling interview, she indicated that she construed herself to be "frightened." In the counselling interview Beth expresses a similar construction. She construes herself as "vulnerable." In the post-counselling interview, Beth was asked to describe herself in the light of her elaboration of her constructions associated with being vulnerable. In terms of personal construct theory, Beth was asked to construe herself using that construct which she uses to construe herself and others as "vulnerable" or "independent." Beth comments that when she had started to come to Anne she felt like she could not "cope" (C1Tp2: 107-109). She adds that she felt like she had lost a sense of direction in her life. In addition, according to Beth, there was not much in her life that was making her happy (C1Tp2: 111-114). We might at this point add to the diagram above to suggest that a person who can't cope is someone who has lost a sense of direction in his or her life. Hence the above diagram, might be extended thus:



It is important to note that Beth construes herself as having been "vulnerable" when she first came to see Anne. Of interest too, is that in the character sketch which Beth completed prior to the counselling interview, Beth described herself as liking to have fun but as being a bit solitary. In her self-characterisation she added: "That makes a kind of a conflict, makes her [Beth] feel sometimes like she's lonely, and at this stage of her life is a bit lost." We might tentatively suggest that in this initial statement Beth indicated the uncertainty she felt about how to construe herself. She likes to be with people, but is alone. In addition, Beth said that she felt "lonely" and "a bit lost." If we refer to the analysis of Beth's construct

system completed thus far, we might reasonably assume perhaps that in the character sketch, Beth expressed the dilemma she faces. She wishes to construe herself as coping and able to seek out others, but instead often construes herself as having lost a sense of direction in her life, and as without the support of others. Of course, this assumption would have been difficult to make at the time of completion of the character sketch, as we did not have the evidence of Beth's construing which we do at the present stage of analysis. Nevertheless, it is of interest that the brief character sketch which Beth was asked to complete at the outset does offer some valid insight into the pattern of Beth's construing as it is apparent in the counselling interaction and subsequent client interview.

Returning to the counselling interview, subsequent to Beth referring to the "whole thing of becoming completely vulnerable" (284), Anne asks Beth what is stopping her from becoming completely vulnerable (286). Anne assumes that Beth construes someone who cries to be vulnerable. Furthermore, Anne seems to assume that Beth wishes to be able to cry. In the earlier cited extract from the post-counselling interview (C1Tp2: 42-61), Beth suggests that she not only wishes to cry but that she regards being unable to cry as a weakness. Upon reviewing the selected section of the counselling interview at the time of the post-counselling interview, I too, thought that Beth construed herself as unable to cry and wished to do so. Hence, the following exchange took place in the context of the post-counselling client interview, where R in this instance is the researcher.

R: Now one of the things you're talking about in terms of coping is saying that you'd cry and then catch yourself and you wouldn't be able to actually reflect on yourself
 **** [This comment is based upon Beth's earlier statement (C1Tp2: 42-61) provided above.]

C: Mm.

R: And yet I think you described it as a weakness at one point.

C: Yeah.

R: If a person wasn't weak what would they be?

C: Strong.

R: And can you tell me a little bit about somebody who's strong?

C: Well I guess I think of somebody who's strong as being somebody who doesn't – who doesn't have anything to weep about or doesn't – is not in a situation where they can't cope – is able to – is happy with themselves and able to forge ahead and make their own – his or her own – choices. Is not caught up in sort of a relationship because of dependencies and that sort of thing – but has a power over their life, and can – and can cope.

R: So a strong person has power and can cope?

C: And control, yeah.

R: Yeah.

C: Yes.

R: And a person who's weak?

C: Someone who's out of control, lacks power, doesn't have any, life is just happening to that person. They're not actually participating in life and they're not really making any difference in their life. They're just sort of getting by.

R: And that sounds like the way in which you identified yourself at that point.

C: Yeah. A feeling of total lack of power. I had a total lack of choice in my life.
(C1Tp2: 121-157)

In this instance, I have made a similar mistake to that made by Beth's therapist. I too, have construed Beth as regarding not being able to cry and reflect on herself as a weakness. What is evident from this exchange is that Beth has invalidated my construction. Relating back to the previous diagram of Beth's personal constructions, it is apparent that Beth construes someone who cries as someone who can't cope, a vulnerable person. Beth no longer wishes to construe herself as vulnerable. Hence she does not wish to cry. In this instance, the constructions of the therapist and the researcher might be regarded as predictively invalid, should we accurately construe the outcomes of our constructions. Within the counselling interaction, Anne's verbal behaviour, following her constructions of Beth's constructions, has resulted in Beth attempting to make sense of why she tries not to cry.

Some comment should be made at this stage about the interviewing process evident above. The reader will recall from the previous chapter that in this section of the post-counselling interviews, I attempted to elicit constructions made by using constructs different from, but associated with, clients' constructs indicated in the counselling interview. Constructs were to be elicited using the laddering or pyramiding techniques, described earlier. Words or phrases contained in the context of the selected section of the counselling interaction were to be the basis of the use of these techniques. Words or phrases used as the basis of laddering or pyramiding might also have been noted during the course of the post-counselling interview. These words or phrases were to be selected on the basis of their construed significance in the context of the counselling interview. In the extract above, however, it is apparent that I used a word which represented my own construction of what Beth had said earlier in the post-counselling interview (C1Tp2: 42-61). I understood that Beth construed people who could not cry as "having a weakness" and as being "weak." Within the extract above (C1Tp2: 121-157), it is apparent that "weak" is included in the context of one of Beth's personal constructs. She is able to express constructions using both poles of a personal construct. In this case the personal construct is indicated by the constructions "weak-strong." Beth construes someone who is "strong" as someone who "can cope" (C1Tp2: 142) and "doesn't have anything to weep about" (C1Tp2: 134-135). In addition, according to Beth, a person who is strong "has a power over their life" (C1Tp2: 141-142). From the above extract, it appears that "strong" may be another word which Beth may use to express her construction of a person who is not vulnerable. We might tentatively conclude then, that a further addition can be made to the previous diagram of the hierarchical arrangement of Beth's personal constructions. A person who can cope "has a power" over his or her life.



If we return now to the counselling interview, it is evident that Anne has acted on the basis of her construction of Beth's construction. Anne acted on the assumption that Beth wished to be able to cry. Beth resists construing herself as grieving. However, she goes on to indicate that part of her construct system which may limit her ability to cry. In the context of the counselling interview, Beth responds to Anne's statement that she was wondering what stops Beth from being vulnerable:

I don't know – I don't know. I think sometimes I feel like maybe if I -I wonder whether or not there is a strong person inside, and that if you cry and you cry too

much that all you'll be is this whinging crybaby and there won't be any sort of strong person to sort of sweep it up and continue on. (287-290)

In this excerpt Beth again indicates that she does not wish to be a person who is not strong. Reading this extract alongside what Beth said in the context of the post-counselling interview, we can see that Beth indicated in the counselling interaction that she was reluctant to cry because she would then be, in this case, a "whinging crybaby." She would not be strong. If Beth was to cry she would need to construe herself as a "whinging crybaby." If we reflect upon the earlier diagram of the possible constructions which follow from the hierarchical arrangements of Beth's personal constructs, we can see that should Beth cry, she would construe herself as "vulnerable." Interestingly, and perhaps importantly, this consequence of Beth crying has become more evident upon examining the episode which Beth identified as significant within the counselling session, in light of the post-counselling interview.

Returning again to the counselling interview, Anne goes on to encourage Beth to become a "crybaby" (295). The word "crybaby" now indicates a social construct which is shared by Beth and Anne. Nevertheless, Beth and Anne do not appear to share the superordinate constructs associated with this construct. Previous discussion suggests that Beth's role constructions made using superordinate constructs will limit the changes that Beth may make to how she construes herself. Earlier discussion (Chapter Three) suggests that ideally therapists will be able to construe the role constructions of their clients. Only then will their constructions of the outcomes of their interactions with their clients have greatest predictively validity. However, in the counselling interaction Anne attempts to change the way in which Beth construes herself, without apparent adequate knowledge of Beth's superordinate construction. She suggests that Beth should become a "crybaby." Beth does not become a "crybaby." As indicated previously, Beth responds instead, as though she is subject to what Kelly would describe as "threat." She reiterates that a "crybaby" is a "whinger." Beth describes a "whinger" as a "frightened little girl." We might speculate here, that there is a marked similarity between what Beth describes as a "frightened little girl" and someone whom Beth construes as "vulnerable."

As the counselling interaction continues, it becomes evident, in light of discussion here, that Beth is reiterating her desire not to be sad (308-311). Anne responds by suggesting what sense Beth may make of her constructions (312-313), and then adds her constructions of Beth's constructions (314). This can be seen in the following extract from the counselling interview taken from the episode provided earlier in this section.

C: I keep thinking that there has to be sort of a bottom to all of this, when you find something that sort of says right, now we're ready to move on. I don't seem to be able to find that. I feel like I'm just going around in circles sometimes.

T: The sense I have is that it's not so much – well suppose it is like going around in circles – but that you start feeling that feeling and then you pull yourself up again and so you don't reach the bottom, you don't know what the bottom's like. (308-314)

In terms of personal construct theory, Anne has provided validating evidence of Beth's constructions in her statement, "well I suppose it is like going around in circles." However, Anne goes on to provide a different construction of Beth's expressed constructions. She suggests that Beth does not know what the "bottom" is like. Anne adds that when she notices Beth stopping herself from crying, she construes Beth as preventing herself from reaching the "bottom." As indicated in the initial analysis of the counselling interview, Beth revises her initial construction of herself as going around in circles. In the context of the interaction, she presents a different construction in response to Anne's verbalised construction. She construes herself as not being able to get to the bottom enough to "let it go." Anne too, appears to revise her initial construction and to share Beth's construction of herself as not being able to get to the bottom enough to let it go. Thus in a small interaction (308-318) there is a change in Beth's role construction and a change in Anne's construction of Beth. Both participants in the interaction now share a social construction which is expressed as "don't actually get down there enough to let it go." This construction arose through a process in which Anne validated Beth's construction and Beth reconstrued her initial construction. Beth's second construction expressed in "don't actually get down there enough to let it go" appears to have invalidated Anne's construction. Consequently Anne too, reconstrued her initial construction, finally sharing the same construction as Beth.

In the brief exchange which follows, Anne implies that Beth might be able to "let it go." She comments: "It's – my idea is that if you could somehow let it go –" (318). In short, Anne is implying that Beth may be able to take responsibility for getting to the bottom of her depression. Beth's subsequent response indicates that Beth cannot let go as Anne suggests. This of course is consistent with the pattern of Beth's constructions discussed previously. Beth's superordinate construct system suggests that should Beth express her sadness as Anne proposes, Beth must construe herself as vulnerable, as not having any direction in her life and as not coping. Beth is trying to construe herself using the opposite pole of her most superordinate construct. She is attempting to construe herself as "independent" not "vulnerable." In Kellian terms, in the context of the counselling interaction, Beth does not wish

to "tighten" her construing of herself in the way in which Anne suggests. To do so she would need to construe herself as "vulnerable."

In the context of the selected section of the counselling interview, Beth has not indicated whether she construes herself to be vulnerable or independent. In the post-counselling interview, Beth indicates that when she first attended therapy she construed herself to be vulnerable. Now however, she has loosened her construing of herself. She no longer construes herself as "vulnerable" and, according to the post-counselling interview, wishes to construe herself as "independent." Thus Anne's suggestion that Beth express her depression, is, in a Kellian sense, potentially threatening to Beth's superordinate role construct system. Anne's recommended course of action would necessitate a change in Beth's superordinate role construct system. Beth's response to Anne clearly indicates the threat posed by Anne's suggestion that Beth should somehow "let it go":

But I don't know how to sort of get down there and just dig this stuff out (319-320).

Anne follows with a response in which she appears to convey her acknowledgement of the difficulty Beth experiences following the course of action Anne suggests. Beth then again expresses her construction of having to remain strong (322). However, it is important to note that in the exchange which follows the interaction discussed here, Beth tries to make sense of why she must construe herself as not being "vulnerable." Thus, although Anne's verbalised constructions have posed a threat to Beth's construct system, Anne's interaction with Beth has prompted the elaboration of further superordinate constructions. As discussed earlier, this is, of course, the first step to change within Beth's construct system.

In summary then, within the selected excerpt Beth's construction of her behaviour is validated by Anne's verbalised construction (271-272). Anne then invites Beth to construe herself differently from the way in which she does now (278). Beth subsequently elaborates those constructions which are governed by superordinate role constructs. Beth's superordinate constructs limit the way in which she can construe herself and hence the way in which she behaves. Anne suggests a course of action (295) which poses a threat to Beth's superordinate construct system. Beth again elaborates her superordinate construct system. She goes on to try to make sense of why she does not fully express her sadness (308-311). Subsequently, Anne and Beth come to share the same construction. Anne and Beth both construe Beth as being unable to fully express her sadness. We might suggest that at this point Anne has validated a more superordinate construct than that validated initially. Beth not only does not cry, she can't let herself cry. There are no changes in Beth's superordinate role constructions during this section of the counselling interaction. However, what follows (322-) is an

elaboration of those constructions which may be governed by constructs which limit how Beth may construe herself, and hence her behaviour.

An important point worth noting here, is that the post-counselling interview has provided a valuable insight into the construct system of the client in this instance. From the insight gained, we are able to have a more in-depth understanding of the process of the counselling interaction, than was possible in the initial analysis. However, in order to fully understand the contribution which the therapist may have made to the interaction, we turn now to a discussion of the post-counselling interview conducted with the therapist, Anne.

B. Therapist Post-counselling Interview

i. Therapist response to the therapeutic interaction.

Anne indicated that she felt dissatisfied with the process of the counselling interview but was not dissatisfied with her relationship with Beth.

When Anne was asked to describe any points in the session when she thought something significant may have taken place for her client, Anne commented upon four episodes in the counselling interaction. In the first episode, Anne described Beth as not letting herself feel things. Anne added, "Beth starts to cry and then pulls herself out of it." According to Anne, Beth tells herself not to be weak. In the second episode, Anne said that Beth described the mixed messages which she got from her mother. Anne expressed the opinion that in this episode, Beth was giving herself a hard time for doing for herself what her mother wouldn't do. Anne said the third episode of possible significance for Beth was that point at which Anne said that Beth "must" compare herself with her siblings to "find herself." The final episode which Anne suggested may have been significant for Beth was when Anne asked Beth to say what she would have liked her mother to have written about Beth in her will.

The episode which Anne identified as having possible significance for Beth differed from that which Beth identified as having significance for her. Anne said that the episode of greatest significance for Beth would have been when Beth was "giving herself a hard time for doing things for her mother that her mother wasn't able to do for herself" (T1Tp2a: 21-23). When asked to elaborate on what she had said, Anne added:

There was a point in the session when she – her mother said to her, "Why don't you come back," and – which meant leave her husband, and then she said but here my mother was dependent all this time on my father, and that was the reference point like – and she kept saying "I wish, you know, if only I'd come back and I could have done that" and so on. And I said "How could you get the idea that you could – you could, that you could do something for your mother that she couldn't do with her

life," which was leave, or to come and **** , I think that was the key point. For me, I think I think I felt more significantly was to do with how she stops herself fully experiencing, fully being vulnerable, sort of being little. (T1Tp2a: 28-44).

A point worth noting in this extract is that Anne suggests that there is some importance attached to Beth being unable to be "vulnerable." As indicated previously, Beth too, considers her inability to be "vulnerable" important.

A further unexpected response in the post-counselling therapist interview came when Anne went on to describe an episode which she regarded as of personal significance to her as a counsellor. This episode was largely identical to that episode which Beth had previously identified as of significance to her.

ii. The therapist-identified episode of significance.

There was insufficient time to ask Anne to locate the beginning and end of the therapeutic episode which Anne considered had greatest significance for Beth. However, Anne's description of the episode suggests that Anne is referring to the section (507-626). In this episode, Beth says, referring to her mother:

C: And I think that for her she just could not understand why I was there, why I was here, and I couldn't really either because from about the time that Sally was born which was – we'd been here about ___ years – I wanted to go home. I was ready to move back to the States. And then it was really a question of being here because Charles couldn't get back there. (507-516)

Later, Anne, referring to Beth's mother, asks:

T: So why does she expect you to do what she couldn't. (620)

Here Anne is drawing attention to what she said later in the post-counselling interview. She noted a similarity between Beth's inability to leave her husband and the dependence of Beth's mother upon her husband.

iii. Significance of the therapist-identified episode.

A further weakness was demonstrated in the methodology used for the post-counselling interview at this point in the interview process. When Anne was asked to explain why she thought the therapeutic episode she had chosen was significant, she first explained

its significance for her, and then outlined the possible significance of the episode for her client. This was an unexpected response. Nevertheless, Anne's complete response provides further illumination of Anne's construing during the counselling interaction and proves useful in later discussion.

Anne explains that the episode she identified is significant for her because she got a sense of one of the therapeutic goals in her work with Beth during the episode. She described this goal as being to enable Beth to "let go" and to "be vulnerable," "not always in control." Anne construes Beth letting go as desirable. Recalling previous discussion, should Beth have construed herself as "letting go," she would have had to construe herself as not having direction in her life, as not coping, as having to seek help. Ultimately, she would have construed herself as being "vulnerable." Yet Beth indicates, during the latter part of the counselling interview (575-590), that she does not construe her parents as having been able to help her. If she was to construe herself as vulnerable, she would construe herself as without help.

After Anne elaborated the significance which she attributed to the therapeutic episode she had identified, Anne explained what she believed to be the significance of the episode for Beth. Anne said that she believed that in the episode, Beth had recognised that she might have to forgive herself for being unable to do for her mother what her mother could not do for herself. Anne thought that if Beth recognised that her mother could not do for herself what Beth was trying to do for her, she would be able to stop blaming herself. Anne added that Beth was blaming herself for not having fulfilled others' expectations of being a "fully realised independent person" (T1Tp2a: 80-81).

As the post-counselling therapist interview continues, Anne suggests that Beth needs to have a "more realistic idea" about her mother and the relationship which she had with her mother (T1Tp2a: 98-100). Anne's elaboration of her constructions associated with a "more realistic idea," goes some way towards confirming the earlier suggestion that Anne may have tried to encourage Beth to "tighten" her construing of herself. That is, in the context of the counselling interaction, Anne tried to ensure that Beth construed herself as "vulnerable," rather than as neither vulnerable nor independent. Anne's comments suggest that in the counselling interaction she did this by trying to change a construct which is subordinate to Beth's superordinate construct indicated in "vulnerable" - "independent." G. Neimeyer (1987) would describe Anne's action as "altering the meaning" of the superordinate construct. The reader will recall in an earlier chapter (Chapter three) that changing the meaning of a construct is described by Kelly (1955), and more recently by G. Neimeyer, as a psychotherapeutic strategy for construct system change.

In the post-counselling interview, Anne says that it would be "unrealistic for her [Beth] to view herself as especially neurotic or especially dependent or especially weak, compared

to the rest of the family" (T1Tp2a: 109-112). Anne adds that she thinks that Beth should regard herself as fearful of uncertainty, vulnerable and as having developed a long dependency in her marriage (T1Tp2a: 118-120). In addition, Anne says that Beth has created a "usual" family here, not an "especially unusual" one. Anne indicates that, in short, she regards Beth being "vulnerable," as "totally understandable" (127-128). Anne does not construe vulnerable people as "weak." Here the reader will recall that in the post-counselling client interview discussed earlier, Beth indicated that she construed people who were vulnerable as "weak" and those who were independent as "strong." Thus, in the post-counselling interview, Anne has expressed a different construction from the subordinate construction which Beth expressed in the context of the counselling interview. Interestingly, Anne does not explicitly convey her construction that vulnerable people are not especially weak, in the context of the counselling interaction.

Towards the latter part of the interview, in which I was concerned with the therapist-identified episode, I departed from the interview schedule outlined in Chapter Five and discussed above. I asked Anne whether there was any point in the section of the counselling interview, which she identified, when she was uncertain what Beth meant. In Kellian terms, I was asking whether there were occasions when she construed her expressed constructions as lacking predictive validity. This question arose out of my previous interview with Beth during which I had replayed the client-identified episode. I recalled being uncertain myself as to what Beth had meant, particularly when she was referring to a "strong person" inside and a "whinging crybaby." By the time I had commenced the interview with the therapist, I was also aware that there appeared to be a contrast between the therapist's apparent constructions of the client's constructions, and how the client construed herself and others. Hence, as I said earlier, in the post-counselling interview, I asked Anne whether there was any occasion in the section of the counselling interview which she had identified, in which she had not known what Beth meant.

Anne's response to my unscheduled question is particularly illuminating. She says:

T: Not so much that I wasn't sure what she meant – more – I was starting to be confused by what – what expectations she was actually setting up for herself in response to these family messages. Like was she – was she wanting to actually be vulnerable and get looked after, or was she actually wanting to set herself up and get free from them forever? There was that kind of confusion for me. (T1Tp2a: 133-142)

The interaction between myself and the therapist continues:

R: So it was a dilemma between wanting to be vulnerable and wanting to be free.

T: That's to be free, to be, yes, that's right.

R: OK.

T: Wanting to be vulnerable, wanting to be strong and independent. (T1Tp2a: 143-148)

In these two extracts, Anne provides a description of Beth's construing which is similar to that which has been suggested in discussion thus far. From Beth's earlier comments, we could conclude that Beth was reluctant to construe herself as vulnerable or independent. The post-counselling therapist interview suggests that Anne too, construes Beth as unable to construe herself along the construction dimension "vulnerable-independent." Moreover, in the second extract above, we can see that Anne construes Beth as construing people who are "independent," as "strong." Thus during the counselling interview an apparent social construct arose from the therapeutic interaction. Beth and Anne share a construct which is indicated by the construction "vulnerable-independent." Significantly too, the description of Beth's construing, which was offered earlier, based upon analysis of the counselling interview and the post-counselling client interview, is consistent with the therapist's constructions of Beth's construing. In previous discussion we concluded that Beth was unable to construe herself to be "vulnerable" or "independent." From the extracts above, we can see that Anne had a similar construction of Beth's construing.

At this point in discussion, it is necessary to again draw attention to the distinction between two different types of constructions. Therapists may construe constructions which clients have of their previously verbalised constructions. In strict personal construct theory terms, therapists may construe clients' verbalised constructions of those clients' constructions. One might expect that in order for therapists to be able to construe their clients' constructions of their constructions, therapists and clients must share similar constructs. Thus, in the case of the interaction between Anne and Beth, we might expect that Anne could express how Beth makes sense of her construing, since Anne and Beth share the same social construct. As we have seen, there is evidence to suggest that Anne and Beth are indeed able to similarly construe what sense Beth makes of her constructions.

Therapists' constructions of clients' constructions of their constructions must, however, be distinguished from a second type of therapist construction. Therapists may construe their clients' verbalised constructions using constructs which are different from those used in the first instance. The reader is reminded of an earlier comment in the analysis of the counselling interaction in which it was suggested that therapists may construe the same verbalised

constructions using different constructs. Therapists may construe clients' constructions using social constructs, as suggested above. Alternatively, they may construe clients' constructions using personal constructs. Of course, in each instance the constructs are personal to the counsellor. However, again the reader will recall the earlier distinction drawn between those constructs which are not shared by the therapist and the client either prior to, or during the counselling interaction (personal constructs), and those constructs which arise during the course of the counselling interaction and are shared by the therapist and the client (social constructs). Returning to the earlier point, therapists may use social constructs or personal constructs to construe clients' constructions. In the first instance, therapists construe clients' constructions of their constructions using social constructs. In the second instance, therapists construe simply their clients' constructions using personal constructs. The construction which is expressed in second instance, is the therapist's personal construction of the client's expressed construction.

Having now drawn the distinction between therapists' social constructions of their clients' constructions, and, what I have described as therapists' personal constructions of clients' constructions, we move now to discussing Anne's personal constructions of Beth's constructions. As in the case of the post-counselling client interview, I used laddering and pyramiding techniques to elicit constructions which may indicate personal constructs associated with those constructions expressed in the context of the counselling interaction. In this instance, I was particularly concerned with eliciting constructions which might indicate constructs associated with those constructions which Anne expressed during the course of the counselling interview.

Previous discussion suggested that Anne thought that Beth was unable to decide whether she wished to be "vulnerable" or "independent." As the post-counselling therapist interview continued, I asked Anne to describe someone who was "not vulnerable" (T1Tp2a: 156). Anne's response was again unexpected. She said that before she continued she wished to challenge the notion of being independent as being about "pretending and containing and strong." She went on to express her subordinate construction of someone who is vulnerable. For Anne someone who is vulnerable is someone who is "strong," "being open." The reader will recall that earlier discussion suggested that Beth construes someone who is independent as someone who is "strong." Beth construes someone who is vulnerable as someone who, in contrast, is "weak." In the post-counselling therapist interview, Anne suggested that a person who was vulnerable could be "weak," "dependent" and "scared." However, Anne suggested that a person who is "weak" is someone who is "contained" and "pretends" and "expresses that [their] vulnerability in ... direct ways, often through other people's expense" (T1Tp2a: 184-187). Here there is evidence that Anne's constructs, which relate to the shared constructs of weakness and strength, are different from similar constructs in Beth's construct system.

Anne suggests that she may construe a vulnerable person as "strong" or "weak." A vulnerable person who is strong, is "open." In contrast, a vulnerable person who is weak, is "contained." Thus, Anne is suggesting that there is more than one way by which she may construe someone whom she ultimately construes as vulnerable. In Kellian terms, Anne has a more "propositional" way of construing than Beth. Though someone may be construed as "vulnerable," they need not be "weak." They may be "weak" or "strong." Anne may treat a person whom she construes to be vulnerable as if that person is "weak." However, she alternatively, construe that person as someone who is "strong." According to Kelly, people construe propositionally when they leave open the possibility that the objects of their construing may be construed differently. For Beth a vulnerable person can be nothing but "weak." In Kellian terms, Beth construes pre-emptively. According to Beth, a vulnerable person can only be "weak."

Previous discussion suggested that a desirable outcome of counselling may be that clients have an opportunity to construe more propositionally before construing pre-emptively once again. Put another way, Kellian theory suggests that there are advantages in clients being able to construe propositionally, that is, in being able to vary the way in which they construe a particular event, object, place or person. Clients who are able to have more than one construction of subjective reality can test the predictive validity of a variety of constructions. They may then choose to construe that reality in a way which has greater predictive validity, than their previous constructions of that same reality. Returning to the above discussion of the counselling interaction between Anne and Beth, we might expect that should Beth temporarily adopt Anne's way of construing people, she might decide that she can construe herself and others differently, and with greater predictive validity than before. Simply, if Beth could construe vulnerable people as being strong or weak, she might be able to construe herself as "strong" and "vulnerable." To do so, however, Beth would need to revise her present construct with which she construes people as "strong" or "weak."

As we have seen in the previous analysis of the counselling interaction, Beth was unable to construe herself as "vulnerable," because she would then have to construe herself as "unable to get help." However, in the context of the counselling interview, Beth did not construe herself as "independent" either. According to Beth "independent" people are "strong." Beth, however, does not construe herself to be "strong." Beth believes that "strong" people are those who "can cope." However, since Beth does not construe herself as coping, she cannot construe herself as "strong" and "independent." As we have seen, Anne, has a different way of construing. She construes vulnerable people to be either "strong" or "weak." However, we must remember that Anne construes people who are "strong" to be those who are "open." According to Anne, those who are "weak" are those who are "contained" and "pretending." Thus, Anne has a subordinate construct which is similar to one of Beth's subordinate

constructs. However, Anne's construct has different elements. Those aspects of people which Anne construes as signs of strength are different from those aspects of people which Beth construes as signs of strength. Similarly, those aspects of people which Anne construes as signs of weakness are different from those aspects of people which Beth construes as signs of strength. Returning to the counselling interaction, we might reasonably assume that should Beth have a construct of strength and weakness similar to Anne's, Beth would be able to construe herself differently. She might be able to construe herself as "strong," rather than "weak." Thus we can see that within this counselling relationship there is a possibility that interaction between therapist and client may bring about a change in one of the client's subordinate constructs. Should the subordinate construct be revised during counselling, it is likely that Beth would be able to change what appear to be important constructions which she presently has of herself and others.

Though there was insufficient opportunity to locate the episode which the therapist identified as significant, discussion of the significance of the therapist-identified episode has proven useful. The analysis carried out here has enabled some identification of the constructions which may have influenced Anne during the course of her counselling interaction with Beth. In addition, this analysis has enabled a close examination of the relationship between therapist and client constructions.

iv. Analysis of the therapist-identified episode.

As indicated previously, in this instance analysis of the therapist-identified episode was not possible.

v. Therapist comment with respect to the client-identified episode.

As indicated earlier, Anne said that the episode which Beth had previously identified as significant for her, was the episode which Anne considered to be of greatest significance to her as a counsellor. Following a replaying of the client-identified episode, Anne was asked to comment upon the episode. She responded:

T: I regret that having said to her, "I encourage you to be a cry baby." What that actually did was make it funny and it actually -- it actually put us both out of touch with that vulnerable side, and we started talking about the feelings of not -- setting a mood for her to actually go further into them. (T1Tp2b: 4-11)

I asked Anne to elaborate upon why she thought it was important for Beth to be vulnerable. Anne said:

T: Well, it comes from my own experiences as much as being a counsellor really. It's - it's when I can cry from the belly rather than from the chest that I actually move along, it's actually being able to go into that more fully. And it's, if I just – if I stop myself letting go or stop myself crying then I just – I swallow it and that creates a knot to be unravelled later. (T1Tp2b: 17-25)

In the first extract above, we can see that Anne thought that Beth should experience being vulnerable. In the second extract, there is evidence to suggest that Anne thought that Beth could not easily cry. In the previously discussed section of the post-counselling therapist interview, Anne indicated that she had thought that Beth was unable to construe herself as vulnerable because then she must also construe herself as weak. However, in the second extract above, Anne does not indicate that she construed those of Beth's constructions which may have affected Beth's willingness to cry. Nevertheless, Anne later suggests that she understands that Beth's constructions may have inhibited her ability to be vulnerable. This becomes apparent in the following exchange between myself and Anne.

R: So, for you as a counsellor working with Beth, what would you have seen as the object behind what you were trying to do in that session? Just in that piece [the episode].

T: To experience that vulnerability more fully and for her to – to see that you survive it, it's survivable. That she won't fall off the edge of the world.

R: What would you see her view as being at the moment, in contrast to that, if it was in contrast?

T: That she might drown or that she might lose herself, or that it would fulfil her worst fear that she had no self. (T1Tp2b: 57-70).

In this exchange Anne indicates that she construes people who are vulnerable as being able to survive. In contrast, Beth construes people who are vulnerable as not able to cope. Anne's strategy in the counselling interaction becomes evident at this stage. Anne hoped to get Beth to experience being vulnerable and in so doing hoped that Beth would experience herself as surviving. Should Beth have done so, Beth may have had to change her existing construct system. She would no longer have been able to construe people who cry as people who "can't cope." Beth would have had to construe people who cry as people who "can cope." In particular, she would have to construe herself as able to "cope." Moreover, since, according

to Beth, people who "can cope" are "strong," Beth would have had to revise her initial construction of herself. She would have had to construe herself as "strong" rather than "weak." An interaction which had this as its outcome would have involved Beth in testing the predictive validity of an existing construction. Initially Beth construed herself as not able to cope and hence as "weak." However, if she construed the outcome of her initial construction as invalidating that construction, she would have had to revise her construct system. She would have had to be able to construe herself as able to cope and hence, as "strong." From this discussion it is evident that Anne attempted to use one of the eight possible strategies for construct system change derived from personal construct theory which G. Neimeyer (1987) has described. In the counselling interaction, Anne attempted to get Beth to construe more propositionally. Anne attempted to get Beth to construe vulnerable people as "weak" or "strong." However, in order for Beth to construe vulnerable people in this way, Beth would first have had to revise how she construed those people who cried. She construed people who cried as being unable to cope. She construed those who were unable to cope as "weak." In the post-counselling interview, Anne suggests that, in contrast, she construes people who cry as those who can cope. Such people, according to Anne, are "strong." In the context of the counselling interaction, Anne acts according to her constructions. She invites Beth to be a "crybaby" (295). In this way she invites Beth to test the predictive validity of her existing constructions. However, as we have already seen, Beth resists Anne's invitation and does not test the predictive validity of her constructions by crying.

As the post-counselling interview continues, Anne further elaborates her construction of a person who is vulnerable. She suggests that someone who is vulnerable acknowledges the need for comfort and care and feels OK about doing so (T1Tp2b: 76-77). Anne adds that a person who is not "vulnerable" is not "strong." Anne says that "strong" is not the opposite of "vulnerable" (T1Tp2b: 82). This statement lends some support for the earlier assumption that Anne construes vulnerable people as being either "strong" or "weak." Anne goes on to suggest that a person who is not "vulnerable," is "defended," "shielded," "cold" (T1Tp2b: 88), and "distant" (T1Tp2b: 91). According to Anne, someone who is not "distant" is someone who is "open," "able to be intimate," and "is aware" (T1Tp2b: 93-94). Thus we see further evidence that the construct which Anne uses to construe people as vulnerable has different elements from that construct which Beth uses to construe people as vulnerable. Each person identifies different personal characteristics as signs of vulnerability and its opposite.

Towards the conclusion of the post-counselling interview, Anne adds to her previous comments about the content of the client-identified episode. She suggests that she had not previously had a sense of what the opposite side to Beth's construction of herself as "vulnerable" might be. When Anne was asked if there was anything else which may have

happened during the client-identified episode which she had not commented upon, Anne responded:

Well, for me her idea about having an idea of herself as happy and well – I think she says *strong and, having some sense of herself and being happy and – um – like she has an inkling of – that was a new idea, I mean I wasn't aware that she had that idea of herself. (T1Tp2b: 99-105)

Anne goes on to suggest that the possibility of Beth being happy is what Anne construes to be the opposite to Beth being depressed. Thus, Anne indicates that prior to the counselling interaction discussed here, she had not known how Beth might construe herself if she did not construe herself as "depressed." Now Anne is able to construe the construct along which Beth construes herself. Anne also suggests that she is aware that within the counselling interaction, Beth does not express a construction of herself as "having a sense of herself and being happy." We may conclude then, that Anne understood that Beth was unable to construe herself to be "happy." Yet, Anne knew that Beth wished to be "happy." Hence, Anne knew what Beth wanted during the course of the counselling interview. What became important during the interview, however, was the process by which Beth might come to construe herself as happy. Anne believed that Beth would be happy if she construed herself as "strong." However, as we have already seen, Beth cannot construe herself as "strong" so long as her present construct system remains unchanged. Anne suggests that one way by which Beth may change her construct system, is by testing out the validity of her construction that people who cry, can't cope. However, in the counselling session which is the subject of discussion here, Anne is unable to overcome Beth's resistance to change, sufficiently, to prompt Beth to test the predictive validity of her construction. Thus, Beth's construct system remains unchanged.

Summary

In summary, the therapeutic episode which Beth identified as personally significant was an occasion when, according to Beth, Anne became "involved." Anne demonstrated this involvement by invalidating Beth's previous construction of Anne as "uninvolved." Upon construing Anne as "involved," Beth revised her construction of Anne as not giving her permission to talk about her childhood experiences. Anne tried to "loosen" Beth's construing by asking her what would happen if she cried, that is, if she "let go." Beth responded by trying to make sense of her inability to cry. As she did so, she indicated that she had a superordinate construct which enabled her to construe people as "vulnerable" or "strong." Within the post-counselling interview, Beth elaborates her construction to suggest that a person who is "vulnerable" is "weak." According to Beth, a person who is not "vulnerable"

is, in contrast, "independent" and "strong." From the post-counselling interviews it is apparent that the construct which governs the construal of people as "vulnerable" or "independent," is a social construct which arises during the course of the counselling interaction and is shared by Beth and Anne. However, as we have seen, the characteristics of people whom Anne construes as "vulnerable" differ from the characteristics of those people whom Beth construes to be "vulnerable." In Kellian terms, Anne and Beth do not share similar subordinate constructions. Anne construes vulnerable people as "strong" or "weak." Beth construes vulnerable people only as "weak."

Within the episode discussed above, Anne tries to prompt a change in Beth's construing. Beth construes people who cry to be unable to cope, and therefore to be "weak." Anne provides Beth with an opportunity to test the predictive validity of her construction. Using the social construct "crybaby," Anne invites Beth to be a "crybaby." In so doing, Anne employs a strategy to promote construct system change. However, in this instance, Anne's strategy is unsuccessful. Beth resists testing the predictive validity of her construction. Nevertheless, following Anne's suggestion, Beth tries to make sense of her inability to cry. In Kellian terms, Beth construes her constructions. She therefore expresses constructions of her constructions, or superordinate constructions. As the episode continues, Anne validates Beth's construction of herself as going around in circles. Anne then offers an alternative construction of Beth's construction. She suggests that Beth starts to feel "that" feeling and then pulls herself up again. Beth revises her initial construction and offers a different construction. She construes herself as not being able to get to the bottom enough to "let it go." Anne too, appears to revise her initial construction and to share Beth's construction of herself as not being able to get to the bottom enough to let it go. Anne and Beth now appear to share a social construction which might be expressed as "don't actually get down there enough to let it go."

As we have seen, the client-identified episode concludes with Anne expressing her personal constructions of Beth's constructions. She begins to explain that she thinks there would be advantages in Beth "letting go." In the post-counselling interview, of course, Anne elaborates these constructions further. She indicates that during the course of the episode she adopted a strategy for changing Beth's construct system which involved inviting Beth to test the predictive validity of her constructions. However, within this episode, at least, the strategy proved unsuccessful. No changes occurred in Beth's superordinate constructs during the course of this episode. Nevertheless, the above analysis and summary of the counselling interaction and post-counselling interviews, suggest that through a process of validation and invalidation, social constructs arose and changes in the way in which the client construed herself occurred. Importantly, too, the client tried to make sense of her behaviour.

In trying to make sense of her behaviour, Beth expressed her superordinate constructions, thus indicating to the therapist those constructs which may be inhibiting further changes in Beth's construct system. Previous discussion suggests that this is an important preliminary step to future significant construct system change. Only when therapists are able to construe the superordinate constructions which govern clients' subordinate constructions and behaviour, can therapists wittingly bring about changes in their clients' superordinate constructs. Hence, any action on the part of therapists which promotes the expression of superordinate constructions, can only be conducive to the promotion of future changes in clients' construct systems.

Concluding Comments

From the analysis of the post-counselling therapist and client interviews, we have gained further insight into the therapeutic process which was discussed in the initial analysis of the counselling interview. Earlier analysis of the counselling interview, provided an interpretation of the therapeutic process which was based upon the researcher's explicit classification of language which the therapist and client used to express their constructions. However, the interpretations of the therapeutic process offered in this later phase of analysis, are likely to have greater predictive validity than those earlier interpretations. This later analysis refers to the constructions originally expressed in the counselling interview and to the subsequent constructions which the therapist and client have of the therapeutic process. Importantly, this means that this later stage of analysis refers to the social constructions, and the personal constructions, contained within the text of the counselling interaction. In addition, analysis refers to the constructions which the therapist and her client have of the constructions which they expressed in the counselling interview. The interpretations made here are not reliant solely upon those constructions which the researcher has of the initially expressed constructions. However, the interpretations in this final stage of analysis must, of course, be the researcher's interpretations of the constructions expressed within the original interview and in the post-counselling therapist and client interviews. The validity of the interpretations offered here, is nevertheless, greatly increased over the validity of interpretations offered in the initial analysis since, in this case, the therapist and client participants have contributed to the final analysis. Similarly, the outcomes of analysis of the client-identified episodes with respect to the remaining therapist-client pairs, are likely to have greater validity than the outcomes of analysis of the complete counselling sessions.

Conclusion

This chapter has included an in-depth examination of the first of the therapist-client interactions included within this study. This examination involved three phases of analysis:

first, analysis of the therapist and client character sketches; second, analysis of the complete counselling interaction, and finally, a closer examination of an episode which the client had identified as particularly significant for her. The first phase of analysis enabled the identification of personal constructs and shared constructs which may have become evident in the context of the counselling interaction which followed the initial interview. However, the most comprehensive identification of personal constructs and shared constructs was made in the second phase of analysis. The detailed examination of the counselling interaction between Anne and Beth in the second phase of analysis, also enabled demonstration of the interaction between personal constructs and identification of social constructs arising out of that interaction. In addition, the second phase of analysis enabled identification of possible occasions of validation and invalidation during the course of the counselling session. However, it was the third phase of analysis that provided the most valid interpretation of the counselling process.

In the third phase of analysis, an episode, within the counselling session, which Beth identified as significant for her, was discussed. Unlike the second phase of analysis, the third phase of analysis made reference to the constructions expressed by the Anne and Beth in the counselling interview, and to the constructions which Anne and Beth had of their respective constructions. Discussion included the expression of the researcher's constructions of those constructions. Nevertheless, the predictive validity of those interpretations offered was greatly enhanced by the need for the researcher's interpretations to be consistent with the constructions expressed by the therapist and her client. In the third phase of analysis, the interaction of personal constructs was able to be described and the occurrence of social constructs arising out of the interaction of therapist and client personal constructs, was able to be discussed. Most importantly, however, unlike the second phase of analysis, the third phase of analysis provided an opportunity to identify occasions when construct validation and invalidation may have occurred, with some degree of certainty.

The reader will recall that Kellian theory suggests that validation occurs when people construe the outcome of their constructions as compatible with their initial constructions. Similarly, invalidation occurs when people construe the outcome of their constructions as incompatible with their initial constructions. As in the second phase of analysis, in the third phase of analysis, it is possible to speculate as to occasions when validation and invalidation may have occurred in the counselling interaction. However, if the therapist and client are able to express the constructions which they had of the outcome of their constructions, the likelihood of having predictively valid constructions of occasions when validation and invalidation may have occurred, is greatly increased. The third phase of analysis provides the therapist and the client with an opportunity to express their constructions of the outcome of the constructions which they expressed during the counselling interaction. Hence, as indicated

previously, the validity of observations made with regard to occasions when validation and invalidation may have occurred during counselling, is greatly increased during the third phase of analysis. It is for this reason that only the first and third phases of analysis are conducted with respect to the remaining seven cases. The results of this analysis are presented in Chapters Seven and Eight. As indicated previously, Chapter Seven includes the results of analysis with respect to Cases Two, Three and Four. Chapter Eight includes the results of analysis of Cases Five, Six, Seven and Eight.

Chapter Seven

Results Part II

In this chapter, the first and third phases of analysis, described in Chapters Five and Six, are completed with respect to Cases Two, Three and Four. As in the instance of Case One, some background information of each therapist and his or her client will be provided. The character sketches completed by the therapists and their clients will then be provided and analysed. Analysis of the character sketches will again include identification of the verbal expressions of role construct poles and the classification of these poles according to the category codes provided in Appendix 12. The first stage of analysis is completed since there is interest in studying the relationship, if any, between the constructs which are indicated in the completed character sketches, and the constructs which are indicated within the context of the counselling interaction. The third phase of analysis is completed similarly to the way in which this stage of analysis was completed for the earlier case study (Chapter Six). The reader will recall that, in each case the third phase of analysis involves analysis of the post-therapy client interview and analysis of the post-therapy therapist interview with reference to the counselling interaction which preceded the final client and therapist interviews. In the following chapter (Chapter Eight), the results of completing the first and third stages of analysis with respect to Cases Five, Six, Seven and Eight will be presented.

Case Two

Therapist One (Anne) Client Two (Alex)

Background Information

From the previous chapter, the reader will recall that Anne was 43 years of age at the time of interviewing. She was engaged in private practice and working as a counsellor educator and had 12 years experience as a counsellor. She described her practice orientation as Rogerian but said that her counselling interventions were influenced by her knowledge of transactional analytic approaches to psychotherapy.

At the time of interviewing, Alex was 40 years of age and initially self-referred to Anne for counselling. He had been going to Anne for counselling periodically for approximately two years. Alex said that he was practising counselling at the time of the interviews and had been receiving professional supervision from Anne prior to requesting counselling from her. He described the counselling interview as one of a series of counselling sessions during which he was engaged in a "process" that he had been involved in for some

relationship "working." Prior to the counselling session, he reported that he wished to raise 'couple of things" with Anne. However, he did not elaborate on these within the initial interview. Alex concluded by saying that he would not have sought counselling for three or four weeks had Anne not invited him to participate in this study. His most recent counselling session had been ten days prior to the time of interviewing.

Therapist Character Sketch

Anne's character sketch has been included earlier (see Chapter Six). Hence it is not included here.

Client Character Sketch

Alex's character sketch and my verbal prompts are given below:

C: Well I-I'd say that Alex is a very sincere and serious sort of a person who's strongly motivated to have things work out well in his life. He's-he's worked hard to develop kind of ethical standards and and he's also worked hard to develop his ability to relate with a wide range of people and to sort of overcome being isolated in the world. And he's also kind of a free spirit at times. He enjoys having fun and he he enjoys sort of being spontaneous and-and tr- he-he's not backward in kind of putting himself into new situations and trying-trying new things and t-, maybe crazy things. I'm not sure what else I can say.

R: Is that all that you would say of Alex?

C: Ohh, I imagine I could go on for quite a long time. I'm not sure how full you wanted me to tell it.

R: Just as it suits you so that you-you feel comfortable that you've probably described Alex as Alex's best friend would describe him.

C: Well he's also – he's also kind of quite a gutsy sort of a person.

R: Mm right.

C: He is sometimes pretty-pretty much of a wit when it comes to sort of letting other people know what he feels. But he does feel things deeply and when he has a trusting relationship with somebody he can really communicate on a very deep level. So I, he's a pretty good fella really. He enjoys laughing and he-he tries to he tries to make the most out of situations which means that sometimes he's a bit of a

perfectionist and tries too hard and gets disappointed too easily. And it also means that because he's a really, I'll say quite an intelligent sort of a person, he gets a bit obsessed with efficiency. But he's not one to give up – in fact that'd be one of his defining characteristics I'd say, is perseverance.

R: He doesn't give up.

C: No. Um I-I can't think of anything else to say.

R: OK, so that would be, that would be Alex?

C: I think so.

R: OK.

[Tape stopped.]

C: Yeah, it's another thing which might be relevant and that is really that he's a bit of an incurable romantic.

TABLE 3

List of construed verbal expressions of role construct poles and their classification

The following is a list of construed verbal expressions of role construct poles, presented in the order in which they appear in the transcription of Alex's character sketch. These are categorised according to categories listed in Appendix 12.¹

Construct pole	Category
Sincere	Integrity
Serious	Responsibility
Motivated	Aspiration
Worked hard	Commitment
Isolated	Affinity
Free spirit	Independence
Enjoys having fun	Pleasure
Spontaneous	Initiative
Not backward (in ... putting himself into new situations)	Initiative
Gutsy	Initiative
A wit	Sociability
Does feel things	Affect
Can communicate	Verbal behaviour
Good fella	Integrity
Enjoys laughing	Pleasure
Tries to make the most out of situations	Initiative
Perfectionist	Commitment
Tries too hard	Commitment
Gets disappointed too easily	Satisfaction
Intelligent	Intellect
Obsessed with efficiency	Commitment
Doesn't give up	Commitment
Incurable romantic	Affect

A cursory glance of the table above suggests that the constructs with which Alex construes himself can be classified as associated with 13 of the possible 21 categories used in the present study. Many of the personal constructs with which Alex construes himself can be classified as being associated with commitment (22%), and initiative (17%). Of equal importance apparently, are constructs associated with integrity, pleasure and affect (each 9%). The

¹ Material from the original transcript may be added to transcribed words or phrases. Such additions are made if the apparent meanings of the verbally expressed construct poles are enhanced by such additions. Material added, in context, is indicated by parentheses. For example, in the table above, the phrase "in ... putting himself in new situations" is added, in parentheses, to the phrase "not backward" to enhance the apparent meaning of Alex's verbal expression.

remaining constructs can be classified as associated with one of the following categories: responsibility, aspiration, affinity, independence, sociability, verbal behaviour, satisfaction or intellect (each 4%). The first group of constructs discussed here, becomes particularly important when we look at the therapeutic episode which Alex identified as of significance to him. As the reader reviews this episode, the reader needs to bear in mind that initially Alex described himself as "trying to make the most of situations," and of being a "bit of a perfectionist," "a bit obsessed with efficiency" and as not "giving up."

Analysis of Post-Counselling Interviews

A. Client Post-counselling Interview

i. Client response to the therapeutic interaction.

Alex said that he had found the counselling session "good," though "low key." He added that there were "no lightning bolts."

When Alex was asked to describe any points in the session when he felt something significant took place for him, he said that there was one occasion when Anne had said something that had changed the tone of the session from "spirited joviality" to where Alex became "tearful." Alex said that he and Anne began talking about an activity which Alex he wanted to do but that he didn't do. He added that he had said that he didn't engage in the particular activity because he was scared of being "hurt."

ii. Client-identified episode.

Since, in this case, and in the following six cases, the transcription of the complete counselling interaction is not provided, it is appropriate to provide the context in which the episode which Alex identified as significant for him, took place.

At the outset of the counselling interview, Alex introduces an image that he had spoken about in his previous counselling session with Anne. He imagines himself to be a knight on horse back, riding in search of a quest. Though it is not clear from the transcript what Alex's mission is, he suggests that it may be going for a goal and not being inhibited by the possibility that someone may be critical of him (22-25). As he talks he expresses excitement and says that the quest is his "mission" (58). This discussion appears consistent with the role constructions which Alex expressed previously in his character sketch. The reader will recall that in his character sketch Alex indicated that he was able to take initiative and had a strong sense of commitment. As the counselling interview continues, Alex adds that one of the difficulties that he has is that he is so easily "turned aside from my [his] own truth" (59-60). Alex goes on to speak of his recent meeting with his estranged wife. At one

point in their conversation, Alex's wife became "sarcastic" about Alex's lack of earning during the past year. Alex became angry but didn't say anything. He comments:

And I just felt quite angry about that you know. I -it's just that, you know, I just didn't say anything. I just kept it to myself and, I once again, kind of take this kind of very tolerant attitude and-and don't put forward my own point of view you know. (108-111)

Shortly after this comment, Anne asks Alex what stopped him from telling his partner that he had earned more than her in the time they had been together. Alex responds by saying that he didn't like how he anticipated his partner would respond. She would fight and Alex would feel "a bit shaky" (125). As Alex continues to describe his reaction to his partner's comments, he says:

But basically what it boils down to is I'm just a f____ wimp. That's how I feel when that happens. And that's no – that's what I feel like too, how bloody pathetic you know. (160-162)

Again Alex's comment appears consistent with a construction which he expressed of himself in his self-characterisation. Earlier he indicated that he "does feel things deeply." In the above comment, Alex expresses what might be described as a deep feeling of emotion. We might speculate too, that here Alex again indicates that he construes himself to be a "perfectionist." Hence Alex would like to be able to respond to his partner in a way which he regards as appropriate but he cannot do so. Thus he construes his behaviour as invalidating his construction of himself as competent. In the counselling session, Anne responds to Alex's comment above by suggesting that the feeling that Alex has is different from his knight on horse back. She goes on to say that as Alex is speaking about being a "knight" he has "some sense of something strong and clear" (167). At this point, Anne seems to be suggesting that "having some sense of something strong and clear," may be an expression of a construction which is in contrast to the construction expressed as being "bloody pathetic." Alex seems to agree. We might reasonably suggest here that Alex alternates between construing himself as having a sense of direction and being pathetic.

As the interview continues, Alex says that he wants to strive towards his goal. Anne then asks what that would mean when he is engaged in conversations similar to the one he reported having with his partner (178-179). In Kellian terms, Anne is asking Alex to construe himself as having a sense of direction. She then asks him to construe the possible consequences of having a sense of direction. What does Alex predict would happen if he has

"some sense of something strong and clear," and is engaged in a conversation similar to that which he previously had with his partner? Here Anne is asking Alex to reconstrue the event of having a conversation with his partner, having first construed himself in a way which is different from the way in which he construed himself initially. In short, Anne is asking Alex to express those constructions of the event which may follow from his revised construction of himself. The constructions of the event which he expresses will, of course, indicate the arrangement of constructs, associated with Alex's constructions of himself, within Alex's construct system.

Alex responds to Anne's invitation to construe himself as having a sense of direction in a conversation with his partner, by saying that he doesn't want to fight his wife. When Anne asks why Alex doesn't want to fight, he explains that his wife "withdraws" (186). He adds that he doesn't want his partner to go. Alex continues: "I want everything to be nice all the time" (193-194). He continues, suggesting that he is too dependent on knowing that his wife is there. Alex goes on to explain his dilemma further. He says that if he fights with his partner she will walk out. Alternatively, his wife may stay and fight. Alex adds:

She does things which I can't, I'm not used to you know. I haven't grown up at all in a family where there's um sort of criticism and sarcasm and um sort of hurtful things said and that, you know. It's just I-I kind of crumble. (224-226)

Hence, Alex says, he tries to avoid his partner either walking out or fighting with him. Anne suggests that Alex and his wife might be able to "discharge" some of their anger by fighting with each other. However, she goes on to comment that when Alex starts to feel angry she construes his behaviour as being similar to that of a "counsellor." Alex agrees and says, "Oh, I'm a great active listener" (259). According to Alex, his partner does not offer the same support to Alex. Thus, with the possibility that his partner will leave or fight and not listen to him, Alex says he says nothing. Alex concludes:

And um -- a-and the only other thing I can think of to do apart from that is to, is to say or do something that's gonna make her um attack me or go away. So what do I do? (294-296)

Personal construct theorists would suggest that Alex construes preemptively. If he says something to his partner, there are only two possible outcomes. Either his partner will leave, or she will fight and not listen to Alex. Anne might have opted to change Alex's construing by inviting him to test out the predictive validity of his constructions. However, during the course of the interview, Alex has already suggested that he has adequate evidence to suggest

that his constructions of the possible outcome of him saying something to his partner, are predictively valid. Anne opts for an alternative approach. She seems to attempt to change the way in which Alex might behave within a similar situation. Since Alex teaches conflict resolution courses, Anne asks Alex to tell her what he might suggest that someone else should do if they are placed in a similar situation to that which Alex has described. The episode which follows is that which Alex identified as the episode in which the most significant change took place for him. Some dialogue prior to the beginning of the selected episode is provided here so that the verbal context of the excerpt is apparent. Where there is laughter this has been indicated, as this relates to Alex's comment in the post-counselling interview that the initial mood of the episode is one of "joviality."

Prior to the beginning of the client-identified episode, Anne and Alex engage in the following dialogue. This dialogue follows Alex's comment provided earlier, in which Alex asked what he could do (294-296).

297 T: Well last time when we did, we got to that point and you – you said to me after
298 wards, "I tell clients this all the time."

299 C: I know. I was just thinking that. I've run conflict resolution courses, I've run
300 assertiveness courses.

301 T: Right. So-so let's explore what you know first about what principles you go by.
302 Like what would you tell you? Conflict resolution trainer.

303 C: I tell people –

304 T: Do you want another chair?

305 C: No.

306 T: That's OK.

307 C: I-I teach people that um, that aah they can work it out that they take it in turns to
308 listen to each other.

309 T: Mmhm.

310 C: I've um – I've coached people to, in the ability to actually say to another person
311 something along the lines of um "I would like you to just sit down and shut up for
312 a while and I've got a few things I want you to listen to me about."

313 T: Yes.

314 C: "Would that be OK?" (Laughter)

315 T: How about that!

The episode which Alex identified as significant for him follows.

316 C: (Laughter) And while I'm telling them I don't want you to interrupt me at all and
317 um when I'm finished then you can um tell me your response but not before. Is
318 that OK? I've coached people on this. I've got people to do it on a whiteboard.
319 I've drawn up there um "when you dot dot dot I feel dot dot dot I want dot dot
320 dot."

321 T: Right.

322 C: I've taught people this.

323 T: Yep.

324 C: But I don't do it. (Laughter)

325 T: Do you tell them that too?

326 C: No. (Laughter). Ahha. I've taught people about time out. I've taught people about
327 broken record technique.

328 T: Mmhm.

329 C: I've taught people about pillow fights, based on my experience of five years ago.
330 Oh dear, this is so embarrassing. I don't do these things Anne.

331 T: So what do you think stops you?

332 C: Oh I'm scared of getting hurt.

[Since the post-counselling interview refers to Anne's comment subsequent to that above, the following comment is included here.]

333 T: So it's not enough just to know the skill is it.

iii. Significance of the client-identified episode.

Prior to the above episode being replayed, Alex said that the episode was particularly significant for him as he realised that he needed to be more "loving" to himself, "more accepting of himself." In addition, the episode led Alex to believe that he should put aside his "critic" and his "driver." (The reader will recall that the psychotherapeutic approach which Anne adopted was influenced by transactional analytic approaches to psychotherapy. The terms "critic" and "driver" which Alex uses here are words commonly used by therapists engaged in transactional analytic therapy to account for particular client behaviours. A personal construct theorist might describe these terms as expressions of constructions which may be shared by transactional analytic therapists and their clients. The terms are used to refer to particular constructions which a client has when that client engages in a particular type of behaviour. Thus, in this instance, for example, Alex is suggesting that he must change the present critical construction which he sometimes has of his behaviour.) Alex went on to say that following the conclusion of the above episode, he discussed a more specific topic associated with his own learning process. Alex said that he and Anne subsequently talked about the need for Alex to move away from his present tendency to have high expectations and to be critical of himself.

After Alex had identified the beginning of the above episode, the entire episode was replayed to him until he identified the point at which the episode concluded. Alex was then asked if there was anything about this section of the interview which he hadn't recalled earlier but which was now important to him. Alex repeated that the episode was significant to him because he it allowed him to see himself in a more accepting light. He added that the episode was "enormously helpful" to him. In addition, Alex commented that upon hearing the episode when it was replayed to him he realised that the episode was particularly significant because it affected the rest of the interview (C2Tp2: 9-12). In the post-counselling interview, Alex suggests that there is no direct content relationship between the above episode and what follows in the counselling interaction. However, he comments:

Um like it actually um brings something else to the, to the fore you see, so I immediately then after that incident go on and talk about something else and then at least to do the thing, but it wouldn't it wouldn't have happened. (C2Tp2: 25-28)

Alex's response illustrates yet again the inadequacy of the wording of the statement: "Can I ask you to describe any points in the session when you felt something significant took place for you" which was used to elicit clients' responses in the post-counselling interviews. This episode was significant for Alex because it allowed him to view himself in a more accepting light. However, from the above response in the post-counselling interview, Alex becomes preoccupied with the significance of the event as a precursor to what followed in the counselling interaction. Nevertheless, I attempted to elicit more of Alex's constructions of the episode by asking:

Can you – can you tell me what-what did you understand had happened at that point for you. You said that you'd gone to a point of where there's a lot of joviality and a lot of fun associated with that and then you went to the point where you said, "Don't do that, I don't do that Anne." (C2Tp2: 32-36)

Alex responded by saying that he was "in a spontaneity state" (C2Tp2: 42-43). He was "sort of flowing" (C2Tp2: 47). Alex adds that there was "a sudden mood change in me" (C2Tp2: 59). According to Alex when Anne asked him "why," something else was "triggered" (C2Tp2: 70-71). We must assume here that Alex is referring to Anne asking why he doesn't act towards his partner in the way in which he would advise others to act under similar circumstances.

Despite Alex's lack of elaboration of the significance of the episode which he identified as important to him, Alex's above comments and those which followed in the post-counselling interview, provide an insight into the selected episode of the interaction between Anne and Alex. This becomes apparent in the discussion which follows.

iv. Analysis of the client-identified episode of significance.

As the reader will recall, this stage of analysis is concerned with identifying personal, shared and social constructions; examining occasions when social constructions may arise, and identifying occasions when validation and invalidation of clients' constructions may occur. In this instance, as in the case of the previous case study, analysis will include reference to the section of the interview which has been added to the identified excerpt.

The extract of the counselling interaction between Anne and Alex begins with Anne recalling a previous occasion when Alex had said that he had got to the point of not knowing

what to do (297-298). On that occasion, Alex had later said to Anne that he tells his clients "this" (presumably the strategies he and Anne had discussed) all the time. Anne construes a similarity between a previous exchange between her and Alex, and the comment which Alex makes (294-296) prior to Anne's comment in the counselling interaction. On each occasion, Alex did not know what to do. In the previous instance, Alex had said that he told his clients to do what Alex decided that he should have done. Anne's personal construction of Alex's comment is that this is a similar event to that which Anne has previously construed. Alex seems to arrive at a similar conclusion. He too, construes similarity between the previous event and the current event. The basis of the construed similarity seems to be similar also. Each construes the events as occasions when Alex does know what to do. Hence, Alex and Anne can be said to share a similar construction of the event (namely, the extract 294-296). This construction is a social construction.

As the extract continues, Alex suggests that a construction which he has not expressed may have been validated by Anne's verbalised construction (297-298). He comments: "I know. I was just thinking that. I've run conflict resolution courses. I've run assertiveness courses" (299-300). Anne then asks Alex to explain the principles which he should go by in managing the conflict he has with his partner. This request apparently follows from a construction which Anne may have about Alex's expressed constructions. For example, Anne may construe Alex as knowing how to resolve conflicts but as being unable to put his knowledge into practice. Anne's personal construction of Alex's constructions, may lead her to test the validity of her construction by asking Alex to "explore" what he knows about the principles he should go by. Alex responds to Anne's request by talking about what he teaches others.

As the extract continues, Alex appears to construe the constructions he has expressed. He realises that he has taught people the principles of conflict resolution that he has been expounding. However, in the episode which Alex has identified as significant, he expresses his construction of himself as someone who doesn't do what he teaches others to do. This is evident in the following brief excerpt from the counselling interaction:

C: I've taught people this.

T: Yep.

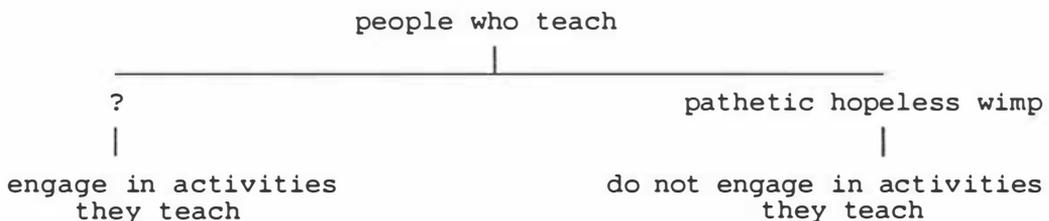
C: But I don't do it. (Laughter) (322-324)

One might speculate from the excerpt above that given the nature of the activities that Alex teaches, people teaching others those activities should be able to engage in those

activities themselves. Initially Alex appears to construe himself as someone who teaches others to do what he can, and does, do. However, as Alex describes what it is that people should do to resolve conflict, his comments suggest that he revises his initial construction. He now construes himself as not doing what he teaches others to do. As the episode continues, Alex goes on to talk more about what he teaches others. He then again construes what he has said and expresses his constructions in: "Oh, dear, this is so embarrassing. I don't do these things Anne" (330). To understand more about Alex's constructions, in the post-counselling interview, I asked Alex what the meaning to him was of "not doing these things." Interestingly, because I had not, at that stage, heard the complete counselling interview, I construed Alex to be critical of others who "do these things." However, as one might expect, Alex invalidated my construction by saying that his comments expressed self-criticism. He says: "When I say that, I'm actually being critical, self-critical" (C2Tp2: 77). He goes on: "I'm actually thinking that I should" (C2Tp2: 79). Later, Alex provides greater insight to the way in which he construes himself and others. He says:

I've got sound knowledge about those solutions you know and yet I don't apply that knowledge you know, and so ahh I'm berating myself for not coming up to scratch on this score you see. (C2Tp2: 88-90)

When Alex was asked in the post-counselling interview what he would say about someone who didn't "do these things," Alex responded by saying that prior to the counselling session he would have been inclined to say that the person is a "pathetic hopeless wimp" (C2Tp2: 101). At this point we can perhaps say a little more about Alex's construing. He construes people who teach as doing what they teach others to do. Thus we might represent Alex's constructions in the following diagram:



Diagrammatic representation of Alex's constructions associated with "people who teach"

The content of the post-counselling interview does not indicate how Alex might construe someone who is not a "pathetic hopeless wimp." However, it is apparent from the transcripts of the counselling interaction and the post-counselling interview that Alex initially

construed himself as similar to those who he construes more favourably. However, as Alex talks about his teaching he construes himself as not "doing these things." We can again speculate only that Alex may have initially construed himself as dissimilar to those who do not resolve conflicts. He construed himself as knowing how to resolve conflicts, and as applying his knowledge in the resolution of disputes. However, as he expresses his constructions of what he teaches, Alex may construe his constructions of those people whom he teaches. He may find that his initial construction of himself is invalidated. He is similar, rather than dissimilar, to those who do not resolve conflicts. Since he construes himself as knowing how to resolve conflict he construes himself as a "pathetic hopeless wimp." In Kellian terms, we might suggest that when Anne asked Alex what he would tell others to do if they were in a similar situation to himself, Anne prompted Alex to test the predictive validity of his previous self-construction. Alex construed the outcome of his initial construction as invalidated. Hence, he had to revise his earlier construction.

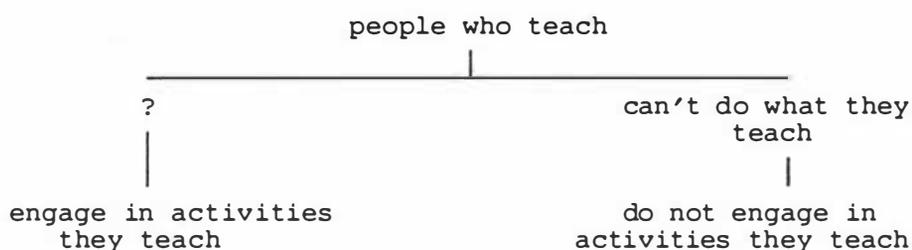
As the episode continues, Anne asks Alex what he thinks stops him from doing those things which he teaches others to do under similar circumstances (331). Personal construct theorists would suggest that here Anne asks Alex to express those superordinate constructions which may prevent him from acting differently. Anne's question, "So what do you think stops you?" is an example of the therapist using a laddering technique to encourage her client to express constructions made using superordinate constructs. Alex responds by saying: "Oh I'm scared of getting hurt" (332). Anne concludes by saying: "So it's not enough just to know the skill is it?" In the post-counselling interview, Alex suggests that this last exchange is of particular significance to him. As indicated earlier, he says that prior to the counselling session, he would have thought someone who was unable to resolve conflicts yet had the knowledge to do so, was a "pathetic hopeless wimp." However, in the post-counselling interview, he suggests that his inability to put his knowledge into practice, is understandable. He says:

I'm more inclined to be able to say um well um the-the-that I'm needing t-, that it's a-a um, it's quite expected. (C2Tp2: 110-111)

Later he adds:

And ahh like actually Anne says um like so there's more to um, I forget the exact words, but something along the lines of there's more to actually being able to do it than just knowing it. (C2Tp2: 115-118)

At the conclusion of the counselling session, Alex appears to share Anne's construction. Alex too, now realises that though people may have knowledge, they may not be able to apply that knowledge. We might suggest that the counselling session prompted a revision in one of Alex's previous constructions. So that now Alex's constructions might be represented as:



Revised diagrammatic representation of Alex's constructions associated with "people who teach"

Of course, Alex might still construe some people who do not do what they teach others to do, as "pathetic hopeless wimps." However, in Kellian terms, Alex now construes more propositionally than he did before. People who do not put their knowledge into practice are not necessarily "pathetic hopeless wimps." They may be construed as unable to put their knowledge into practice. Unexpectedly, Alex appears to share this interpretation of the outcome of the therapeutic episode he identified as significant for him. He says: "So I s'pose it's just like an ex-expansion in the possible, possibilities you know, the way you look at it" (C2Tp2: 128-129).

Towards the end of the post-counselling interview, I recalled Alex saying in the interview, that he had been berating himself for not "coming up to scratch." I asked him what he might do now say, given the change in the way in which he construed himself. Since Alex was a "pathetic hopeless wimp," he had been castigating himself. At this point in the interview, I was attempting to elicit what the consequence might be of Alex construing himself as unable to do what he knew how to do. Alex responded by saying that he had to have patience (C2Tp2: 149). He added that he had to have "dedication ... to a continued process of learning and self-development" (C2Tp2: 151-152). Finally he said that at the end of the counselling interview, he was clearer as to what he needed to "seek" (C2Tp2: 154-156). He no longer needed to be so critical of himself but had to "seek" what he wanted.

For the reader's interest, the counselling interaction continued with Anne asking Alex if there were occasions in his life when he had been bullied. Alex discusses some incidents in which he was subject to bullying. He goes on to discuss his family and the ways in which they coped with being angry. He describes these as different from the ways in which his partner learnt to cope with anger. Anne concludes that Alex does not know how to "do

battle." Later in the counselling interview, Anne suggests that Alex finds it difficult to be angry with his partner, because he does not know how to "let go the rules" (524) associated with getting on with people. Anne encourages Alex to "throw the rules out" and to engage with his partner when she is angry. Alex concludes by saying that acquiring the ability to be angry when his partner is angry will be difficult but it is what he needs to learn. Finally, it becomes apparent, as we might expect, that Alex will find being angry difficult, until he can construe other possible outcomes of getting angry, other than being hurt. Alex says to Anne:

I mean if you said something to me and I disagreed with you and I said that I didn't agree with you, or even if I said oh that's a load of c___ I wouldn't expect that you would- would leave the room you know. And I wouldn't expect that you would say that yeah, you know, I couldn't come back any more. You know, I mean I – we're we're two reasonable people sitting here together. (629-634)

B. Therapist Post-counselling Interview

i. Therapist response to the therapeutic interaction.

Anne reported that the counselling session she had with Alex, had "quite a lot of variety and life." In addition, she thought that it was "reasonably well focused." Hence, Anne felt satisfied with the session.

When Anne was asked to describe any points in the session when she thought something significant may have taken place for her client, she said that there were two moments which she thought may have had significance. In the first of these, Anne said that Alex had commented that he didn't know what to do when his partner was sarcastic. In response, Anne recalled that she had yelled: "Don't be sarcastic." She described this action as "modelling." In the post-counselling interview, Anne said that something which she and Alex had focused on subsequently was Alex being a "fighter." In the second episode which Anne identified as having possible significance for Alex, Anne said that Alex had got to another, "I don't know stage'." Anne reported that in this second episode, she had indicated to Alex that the occasion was similar to a previous instance, when Alex had said that he told his clients all the time what to do in similar circumstances. Anne recalled that in the counselling session, she went on to ask Alex to tell her what he would tell his clients to do. According to Anne, Alex did as she suggested, then said that he felt embarrassed. When Anne went on to say that "it's not just a matter of techniques then is it," Anne recalled that Alex cried. The reader will, of course, recognise the instance Anne describes in the post-counselling interview, as the episode which Alex had previously identified as of significance to him.

As indicated in an earlier chapter (Chapter 4), Alex is the second of Anne's two clients who participated in this study. The counselling session with Alex followed some time after Anne's previously documented session with Beth. In the post-counselling interview discussed here, I recalled Anne's comments in the previous post-counselling interview. Earlier she had distinguished between therapeutic episodes which were of significance to her, and therapeutic episodes which she thought may have been of significance to her client. In the present interview I asked Anne if there were other episodes in the counselling interview, other than the two which she had described, which were of particular significance to her. She responded by saying that the two episodes that she had already described were the most "memorable" episodes for her and were ones which she thought may have affected her client.

ii. The first therapist-identified episode of significance.

In the post-counselling interview, Anne was asked which of the two episodes that she had described would, in her opinion, have been of greatest significance to her client. Anne selected the episode which Alex had previously identified as having greatest significance for him. Anne said that the episode began with Alex's plea: "So what do I do?" (296). The episode ends with Anne's statement: "So it's not enough just to know the skill is it?" (333).

iii. Significance of the first therapist-identified episode and

v. Therapist comment with respect to the client-identified episode.

When Anne was asked why the episode she had chosen was particularly significant she said that the episode was significant because Alex "recognised and started to express the fear in a more congruent way" (T1Tp3: 51-52). Counsellors and psychotherapists will recognise Anne's use of the Rogerian term "congruent" here. Anne seems to be suggesting that in the episode she and Alex identified as having significance for Alex, Alex acknowledged his fear and started to express it, rather than suggesting, by his behaviour that he was not afraid. In the post-counselling interview however, I asked Anne to elaborate upon what she had said:

53 R: When you say, "In a more congruent way," it sounds like there was some oth-
54 time when he couldn't or some other point –

55 T: Well there's a lot of gallows laughter in Alex.

56 R: Right.

57 T: And um actually I must admit I join in a bit sometimes. But um I think I am
 58 watching for the moment when the defences can be lowered in some way can be –
 59 not so much the defences lowered but when it's safe for him to be able to express
 60 hurt, feeling genuinely in some kind of clearer –

61 R: The feeling being that of fear.

62 T: Yes. Th-the fear more xxx.

63 R: Right, yeah.

64 T: So I think that's what had emerged. And I think it was important also to recognise
 65 that um th-the difference between what he knows you're supposed to do in
 66 situations and what he would tell other people and what's sensible and what's
 67 rational and um and how you know in the heat of the moment when he's upset or
 68 fearful or vulnerable or whatever knowing the techniques isn't a help. There's more
 69 to it than that. (T2Tp3: 53-71)

In the above extract from the post-counselling interview, Anne expresses her constructions of the therapeutic episode which she identified as being of significance for her and her client. Anne suggests that during the counselling session she construed Alex as afraid. Alex validated Anne's constructions by laughing in a way which Anne construed as insincere. Alex explains later in the counselling session, that he does not act assertively with his partner because he is afraid of being hurt (332). According to Anne, Alex did not express the fear associated with acting assertively in his conflict with his partner, prior to the identified episode. We might speculate that he did not do so, since Anne may have invalidated his construction of himself as capable of managing a conflict. Put another way, had Alex expressed his fear, Anne may have validated Alex's construction of the outcome of expressing his fear. Perhaps Anne was aware of this possibility, given her comments in the post-counselling interview. From the excerpt of the post-counselling interview above, we can see that during the counselling interaction, Anne construed Alex as not feeling sufficiently "safe" to express hurt. However, in the counselling session, Anne did not suggest that Alex was afraid. Rather, Anne provided an opportunity for Alex to express his constructions, from the position of being confident and capable of resolving a conflict. Anne asked Alex what he would advise others to do in similar circumstances. It was while Alex said what he would tell others to do, that he revised his construction of himself. Alex construed his own constructions, rather than those of the therapist, as invalidating his constructions.

Anne's final comment in the excerpt above (T2Tp3: 65-71), suggested that Anne had construed Alex as being unable to resolve his conflicts with his partner despite his knowledge of conflict resolution because he was afraid under such circumstances. In the post-counselling interview, I tested the validity of my construction of Anne's construction. I asked Anne if she had wanted Alex to recognise that knowledge of how to react in a conflict is not sufficient to be able to resolve a conflict when he was "upset," "fearful" or "vulnerable." Anne's response to this question was unexpected. She said:

T: Well it wasn't so much that I wanted to get across that, it was really more that at that point I suddenly realised it too. (T1Tp3: 74-75)

The dialogue between myself and Anne continued:

T: It was something that kind of came up in me quite immediately at that point and— and it was good that he then recognised it too. All of a sudden he realised. I wasn't thinking at the time ohh he does know what to do—

R: Mm.

T: Why doesn't, you know, I mean he-he just needs to go on and do these things. It was — he knows what to do, oh but of course that's no help. And then my recognition was probably about the same pace as him. (T2Tp3: 84-91)

Later, Anne added.

T: It was quite a, quite a strong sense of teamwork at that point. (T2Tp3: 97-98)

Anne's comments in the excerpts above, suggest that in the counselling interaction, Anne construed Alex as knowing how to resolve conflicts. However, her construction of the circumstances which Alex described, was that Alex's knowledge would not help him to resolve any conflict with his partner. Anne had not previously construed Alex as unable to argue constructively with his partner because he was afraid of the consequences of engaging in an argument with her. In the post-counselling interview, Anne suggests that she arrived at that conclusion no more quickly than Alex arrived at the same conclusion. This is a clear instance when the client expresses his construction of those constructions which he has verbally expressed. Alex's superordinate construction is that he is afraid of being hurt if he puts his knowledge of conflict resolution into practice when he is arguing with his partner.

In the post-counselling interview, Anne suggests that she too, construed Alex's verbalised constructions. She suggests that her personal construction of what Alex had said was that he was scared of being hurt if he applied his knowledge of conflict resolution in arguments with his partner. Thus, we may conclude that towards the latter part of the selected therapeutic episode (297-333), Anne and Alex share the same construction of Alex's construction.

To summarise discussion thus far, Anne validates her client's initial construction of similarity between the present therapeutic event and previous occasions when Alex has not known what to do. Anne goes on to construe Alex as unable to handle conflict, despite him teaching others how to do so. In contrast, Alex appears to initially construe himself able to deal with conflict. Anne asks Alex to explain how he would advise others to cope in similar circumstances to those Alex has described. As Alex does so, his initial construction of himself appears to be invalidated by his own constructions. The reader will recall earlier discussion in which the work of Landfield (1988) was discussed. Landfield suggested that a person can act as the validating agent of that person's constructions. The present discussion is consistent with Landfield's view that a client can provide validating, or invalidating, evidence of the client's constructions as in this case. As a consequence of construing his initial construction to be invalidated, Alex revises his construction to construe himself as unable to constructively argue with his partner. In this case then, the therapist has not invalidated her client's superordinate role construction. Rather, the therapist has prompted a revision of her client's role construction by asking her client to express subordinate constructions. As argued earlier, we can only speculate that while Alex is explaining what he would tell others to do under similar circumstances, he construes himself in relation to those others. As he does so, his initial construction of himself as dissimilar to them, is invalidated. Finally, in the selected episode of the therapeutic interaction, Alex and Anne construe Alex as being unable to apply his knowledge of conflict resolution in his arguments with his partner, because he is afraid of being hurt. The therapist and client, in this instance, share a construction of the client's constructions.

Returning to the post-counselling interview, I asked Anne to elaborate on the significance of the selected therapeutic episode. The reader will recall that in an earlier extract of the post-counselling interview (T2Tp: 57-61) Anne suggested that the therapeutic episode (297-333) was significant because on this occasion Alex expressed his hurt, rather than behaving in a way which Anne construed to be insincere. Later in the post-counselling interview, I asked Anne to express her construction of someone who is doesn't express fear. Anne said that a person who does not express fear is "unaware," "being defended" (T2Tp3: 109). She continues: "Either not recognising it, or not being aware of it, pretending" (T2Tp3: 111). Here it is important to draw the reader's attention to Anne's expression of a construction which is similar to one which she expressed in her earlier work with Beth. In

the research interview subsequent to Anne's counselling interaction with Beth, Anne said that she construed "weak" people to be "contained" and "pretending." In the same interview, Anne indicated that she construed "strong" people to be people who were "open." According to Anne, she would construe "vulnerable" people to be "strong" if they were "open," that is, if they expressed their vulnerability. This way of construing contrasted with the way in which Beth construed people. Beth construed those who expressed their vulnerability to be "weak." In the interview subsequent to Anne's counselling interaction with Alex, Anne suggests that while Alex was not expressing his fear in the counselling session, she construed him as either not recognising his fear or as "pretending." In the interview subsequent to Anne's session with Alex, Anne indicates that she construes a person who expresses fear more positively than a person who doesn't express fear. Thus, in the case of each client, Anne appears to operate from a position of construing "openness" as a positive attribute, and not expressing "vulnerability" or "fear" as "pretending." We might reasonably speculate then, that this discussion refers to one of the most superordinate of Anne's constructions, since the constructions expressed here appear to influence Anne's work with two clients, each of whom have different presenting problems.

As the interview, subsequent to Anne's counselling session with Alex, continued, Anne indicated that another reason why the selected episode was important was because she felt "closer" to Alex when he said that he was scared of being hurt. She added:

I felt sad with him like – like despite all his good intentions. I think that's what it was. It was that it was with all his good intentions and skills and knowledge and awareness and so on, was still was still sort of fighting this particular fear of-of – fighting the fear and-and somehow not and hitting this barrier all the time with somebody that he wants to be close to. (T2Tp3: 119-124)

In terms of personal construct theory, we might suggest that Anne construed a similarity between Alex's inability to overcome his fear despite his knowledge of what to do, and occasions when Anne construed herself to have been "sad." Hence, Anne too, felt "sad."

In the post-counselling interview, I recognised that Anne construed the expression of fear to be important. Following on from the preceding extract from this interview, I asked Anne how a person might overcome the "barriers" of fear to which she had referred. Anne responded by saying that people overcome their fear by "getting closer" to themselves. Anne didn't elaborate further. However, again in terms of personal construct theory, we might suggest that "getting closer" to oneself, is similar to being able to make sense of how one understands the world. People may get closer to themselves then, if they are able to express those superordinate constructions which govern much of their behaviour.

iv. Analysis of the therapist-identified episode.

Since the episode which Anne (and Alex) identified as most significant for Alex has already been the subject of analysis, no further analysis is undertaken here.

vi. The second therapist-identified episode.

In the second part of the post-counselling interview, Anne was asked to locate the beginning and end of the second therapeutic episode which she thought may have had significance for Alex. The second episode which Anne identified as having significance, follows. To provide the reader with some idea of the context of this episode a small passage which precedes the selected episode is provided first.

398 C: And-and um Shirley's [Alex's partner] mother's got a pretty sharp sort of tongue
399 and she's um, and it's like there's a very, they're a very verbal family, you know.
400 I mean it's j- they're just different. It's very different from what I'm used to an-and
401 um and-and so Shirley's had a lot of experience at when there's anything wrong
402 between you and other, another person, you hurt them. And um that's not, I mean
403 I just –

404 T: So I see what you mean when you said you didn't know.

405 C: I haven't had any training.

The second therapist-identified episode follows:

405 T: No. So I see what you meant when you said before, "I can't win a verbal battle" and
406 I was puzzled on, 'cos I thought you don't want to know here, you don't seem to,
407 have trouble with words, but what you have trouble with is fighting.

408 C: Yeah.

409 T: It's the battle part.

410 C: Yeah.

411 T: It's not the verbal part.

412 C: Right. Yeah.

413 T: It's staying. It's saying i-it's being willing to battle.

414 C: Um yeah. I-I don't know whether i-it that's or um, all of it is. I mean verbal's one
415 thing, like I can you know come up with the words to respond to, like you're doing
416 you see. But um what words do you use to respond when-when somebody is um
417 um being sarcastic?

418 T: Stop being sarcastic [shouted]

419 C: You could do that. See that's very foreign to me. Oh dear. You could say that.

420 T: Are you thinking that-that the, if you're having sarcasm thrown at you you have to
421 go and throw it back? Is that what you think battling is?

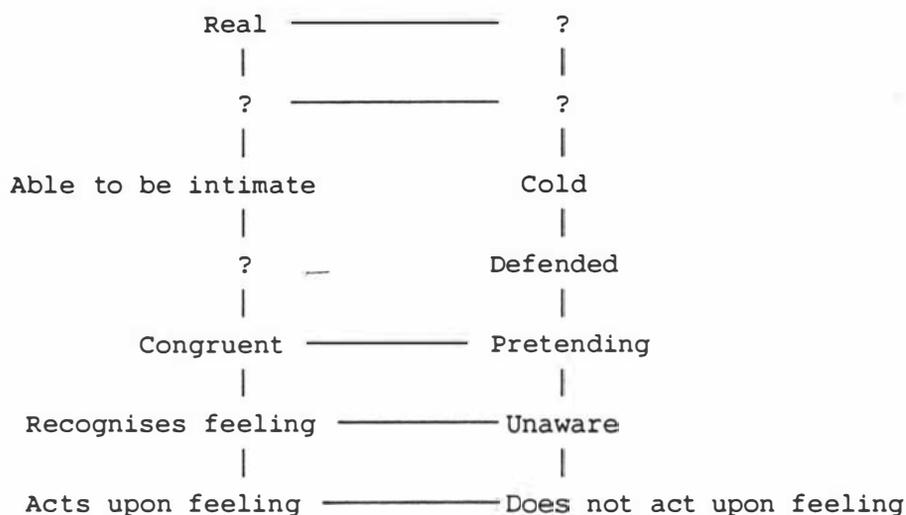
vii. Significance of the second therapist-identified episode.

When Anne was asked to comment upon the significance of the above episode, she said that now she had listened to the episode and reflected upon it, she thought that it was one of those moments which may have been more important for her than for her client. Once again, Anne differentiated an episode which was significant for herself from an episode which she thought may have been significant for her client. Anne went on to suggest that the episode was important because she "let an impulse go" (T2Tp3: 144). Anne indicated that the impulse she referred to in this instance was to shout: "Stop being sarcastic" (418). Anne added: "Like that's kind of important to me to stay being real" (T2Tp3: 146). She goes on:

And like for me it's a bit of a -- it -- there's always a bit of element of risk in-in giving someone a surprise like that or shouting in an interview or something that's sort of a bit out of the ordinary. But it's something I like to be able to do to stay, I don't know playful or um ordinary or not to sound like a counsellor. I've got a bit of a horror of that. (T2Tp3: 151-156)

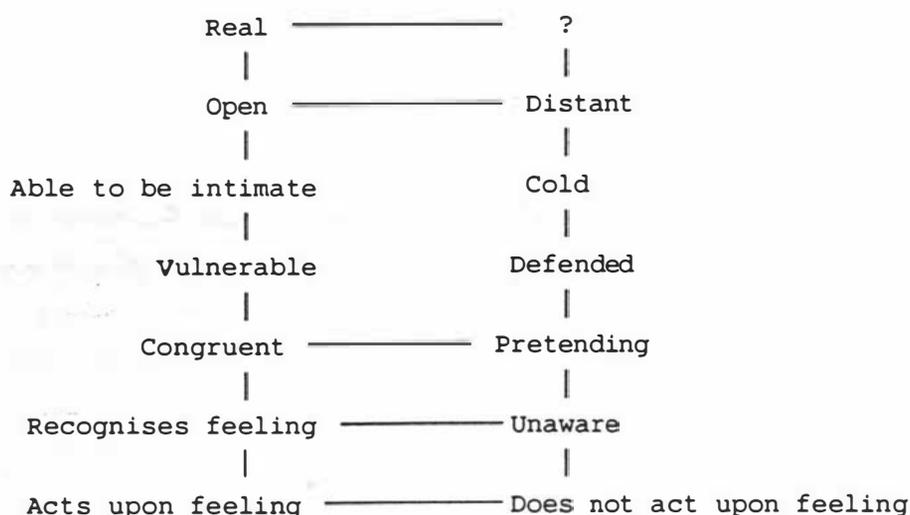
We may conclude from these comments that Anne likes to construe herself as being "real." Anne suggests that she construes people who are "real" as those people who express what they feel. From this discussion and earlier discussion we can perhaps speculate that the following diagram represents the order of some of Anne's constructions, and hence the possible order of the constructs which govern those constructions. The question marks (?)

included within the diagram which follows, and in subsequent similar diagrams, indicate expressions of constructions which cannot be construed from the available data, at the point of analysis when the diagram is given.



Diagrammatic representation of Anne's constructions
associated with being "real"

As previous discussion with regard to the theory of personal constructs suggests, the role constructs which Anne uses in her construal of others, are also used in her construal of herself. From the transcript of the post-counselling interview, we can see that Anne identifies herself as being like others whom she construes to be "real." Earlier discussion, suggests that Anne also construes Alex to be "real" when he expresses his fear. However, prior to Alex's expression of his fear, Anne's comment suggests that Anne may construe Alex as opposite to being "real." He is then "pretending" and "unaware." In the interview subsequent to Anne's counselling session with Beth, Anne expressed constructions similar to those which she expresses in her counselling interaction with Alex and in the research interview subsequent to that interaction. Then Anne suggested that she construed people who were aware to be people who were "vulnerable," "able to be intimate," "open." In contrast, those who were not "vulnerable" were described as "defended," "cold" and "distant." From this brief discussion we can now complete the above schematic representation of Anne's constructions associated with being "real." We can now suggest that Anne's constructions are consistent with the following diagram:



Revised diagrammatic representation of Anne's constructions
associated with being "real"

The importance of this representation of Anne's constructions can be seen when the first and second case studies are compared. As will be discussed in a later section in this chapter, Anne appears to make use of this system of constructions in her counselling interactions with Beth, and Alex.

Returning to the interview subsequent to Anne's counselling interaction with Alex, Anne says that the second therapeutic episode which she chose as significant, had significance because she was willing to "suggest and coach and roleplay" (T2Tp3: 187-188). She adds that she also thought that Alex might gain something from the idea that "you can be intense and fired without being abusive." Here, Anne introduces yet another of the personal constructions which influence her counselling with Alex. Anne believes that people can express intense feelings without being abusive. Later in the interview, Anne contrasted her constructions with those which she construed Alex to be expressing.

I think -- I think he-he thinks fighting is dirty tricks and abuse and violence and aggression and all the kind of negative, the damaging things about fighting back and I was trying to convey another idea about fighting as being something about um being kind of strongly standing up for yourself and using whatever strength or volume or passion that you might have to-to express that. (T2Tp3: 200-205)

Interestingly, the latter part of the above extract, suggests that the constructions which Anne expresses are again influenced by the construction system represented above. The reader may recall that in the post-counselling interview, following Anne's counselling interaction with Beth, Anne said that she construed people who expressed their feelings to be "strong." Anne

construed those who did not express their feelings to be "weak." "Strong" and "weak" may be the expressions of two contrasting construct poles. In this case the construct may be superordinate to that indicated by "real," and a construction which Anne does not express, in the diagram above.

Anne concluded the interview by saying that she thought that the counselling session may have been significant for Alex because she had shown him how to wield his sword without causing pain (T2Tp3: 235). In terms of previous discussion, Anne thought that she had provided Alex with a different way of construing "fighting." Personal construct theorists, might suggest that Anne was presenting Alex with a way of construing which may have greater predictive validity for him than his previous way of construing. This becomes apparent as we take a closer look at the episode which Anne identified as having possible significance.

viii. Analysis of the second therapist-identified episode.

Anne begins this episode by indicating that Alex has invalidated Anne's previous construction. Prior to this episode Alex said:

And-and um Shirley's mother's got a pretty sharp sort of tongue and she's um, and it's like there's a very, they're a very verbal family, you know. I mean it's j-they're just different. it's very different from what I'm used to an-and um um and-and so Shirley's had a lot of experience at when there's anything wrong between you and other, another person, you hurt them. And um that's not, I mean I just – (398-402)

In the second episode, Anne suggests that she interpreted Alex's above comment to mean that he didn't want to know his partner (405). Anne's personal construction of what she construed to be the meaning of Alex's comment, was that Alex did not want to know his partner. However, in the second episode, Anne suggests that Alex invalidated her personal construction. Anne goes on to express her revised construction of the personal meanings which she has construed Alex to have expressed in his comments. She says: "You don't seem to, have trouble with words, but what you have trouble with is fighting" (406-407). Alex affirms Anne's comment (642). However, in the brief exchange which follows (408-412), Anne seeks further validation of her revised construction.

In Kellian terms, Anne goes on to "tighten" her revised construction of Alex. She says: "It's being willing to battle" (413). Previously Anne construed Alex as having trouble with fighting. Now, she has defined Alex's behaviour more precisely. She now tests the predictive validity of her construction. Alex invalidates her construction (414-417). He indicates that rather than being unwilling to battle, he does not know how to respond to someone who is

sarcastic. In the post-counselling interview, Anne expresses her personal construction of Alex's statement at this stage of the counselling interaction. She construed Alex as not knowing how to battle. Hence she showed him how to battle by shouting, "Stop being sarcastic" (418).

The counselling interview suggests that even at this stage Anne has not yet construed the superordinate construction which governs Alex's behaviour. Anne does not yet know why Alex does not do what he has the apparent skills to do. Anne revises her construction of Alex's comments still further and tests its predictive validity. She says:

Are you thinking that that the, if you're having sarcasm thrown at you, you have to go and throw it back? Is that what you think battling is? (420-421)

As we have seen, in the post-counselling interview (T2Tp3: 200-205), Anne further elaborates those constructions which she construes Alex to have expressed in the counselling interaction. She believes that Alex construes the outcome of fighting back to be "all the kind of negative, the damaging things about fighting back" (T2Tp3: 201-202). Of course, as earlier discussion indicated, Alex does construe at least one negative outcome of fighting back: he may be hurt.

Summary

In summary, this episode contrasts with the first episode which Anne, and coincidentally Alex, chose as having particular significance for Alex. In this episode, Anne actively seeks validation for her constructions. In the previous episode, Anne's comments were governed by an initial construction which continued to be evident throughout much of the episode. In the first episode there is a change in the way in which Alex construes himself. As a consequence, Anne is able to prompt Alex to express the superordinate construction which appears to influence his ability to cope with conflict. This construction remains an important influence in all the subsequent exchanges between Alex and his therapist. As indicated earlier, Alex's final comment suggests that only when Alex can construe an alternative outcome of battling, other than him being hurt, will Alex be able to "do battle." In the second episode, Alex does not change the way in which he construes his behaviour. Anne however, revises her construction then tightens her revised construction. After this tightened construction is invalidated, Anne again revises her construction and acts upon this revised construction. Finally Anne revises her construction of Alex's behaviour yet again, and tests the predictive validity of her revised construction. It is now understandable perhaps, why Anne identified the first episode as having significance for her client and why she selected the second episode as one which had particular significance for her.

Case Three

Therapist Two (Bruce) Client Three (Claire)

Background Information

The reader may recall that Bruce was a male counsellor aged 45 years of age at the time of interviewing. He had been educated as a counsellor at a university in New Zealand and had practised as a school counsellor. More recently he had taken a position as a counsellor in an urban community based counselling agency. Bruce described his practice as eclectic but with a "leaning" towards "solution-based" approaches to therapy.

Claire was a woman aged 42 years of age at the time of completion of the fieldwork for this study. She indicated that she had been referred to the community agency in which Bruce worked, following her attempted suicide. Since then she had had approximately eight counselling sessions with Bruce. Claire said that she had come to counselling on the day of the interviews to find out "what is wrong." She added that she had been molested as a child and attributed some of her current problems to this experience. The day of the counselling session, Claire commented that she had "come up against a wall" which she wanted to get over. In the preliminary interview, Claire spoke of the previous session she had with Bruce. In that session, Claire recalled that Bruce had said that she had a body of a 42 year old but the mind of a person in their 20's. She concluded by saying that though she had had a number of counselling sessions with Bruce, it took a long time for her to trust anyone.

Therapist Character Sketch

Bruce's character sketch and my verbal prompts are given below:

T: An interesting question. Yes, Bruce is a counsellor, therapist, who works now in I guess private practice rather than in a school setting. I think Bruce found his 10½ years in schools a challenge—found it rewarding but very frustrating in that the school's expectations of him were not quite what his expectations of the role of a counsellor were and had some dilemma with that t-that dichotomy I guess you'd call it. But lately with the things that have happened in his family over the last few years I think he's really become—wanting and becoming to be clearer about the kind of direction his therapy and work with people wanted to go, and as a consequence has taken up the opportunity to come and work here at the ____ ____ with a small team of people who are all in the same kind of work. I think Bruce really finds that quite__quite empowering in that there are people here who are able to come from different points of view and therefore there the wider range of approaches is-is great. The fact that everybody here is à colleague, if you say you're a therapist or

a counsellor everyone here's a colleague. You also lose that kind of need to be seen to be doing everything for everybody which was in the schools. So I think Bruce finds that as a particularly freeing kind of process for himself and his work with families, couples and individuals and also it gives him, I think, more space in his family. I guess the other thing that Bruce finds in his work a chance to not have to be involved at weekends, meeting the requirements of the school. There's a 35 hours a week time slot on this job, and whilst you work more anyway you know that there's an end to it, there's a--there's a time frame, there's a boundary. And I think that's really essential for good--good therapy. As a person I think Bruce really is impressed with the boundaries that prevail here at the Centre. And I guess that really translates quite comfortably to how he sees himself and I think that he's probably, yeah, I think Bruce's a bit of a pain in the butt sometimes to his friends lately because they say, "How the hell can you get around looking so happy when the climate out there is so bad?" And I think well as far as my kids are concerned I've really got to be able to be clear about what I can do for them to help them become independent and free as far as possible from the disorders that the --they have, and I guess it's also important for L___ to feel OK about her job and not have to sort of meet a whole lot of--you know--have two jobs. I think it's best we have one and a half jobs each rather than her having two jobs and me having one job. And so I-I just think that it's, it seems to be a better way of life. I think Bruce's feeling much better physically. I know that he's looking better physically, not so sort of worried and probably all the lines in his face will go away now. His hair will turn less grey. But yeah, and I think that the exciting thing he finds about being in this new position is that he's able to challenge his old ideas about therapy, get involved in new-new ideas about therapy and really make some good progress, even thinking of writing a paper I believe he is and that's sort of untold. So think that pretty well sums him up.

R: Is there anything else you want to say about Bruce?

T: Well--yeah I think he's changed quite a lot over time. I know that he's become perhaps quieter and more thoughtful rather than sort of loud and thoughtless. And I think that's been as a result of good supervision and good supervisors over his--the whole time he's been involved in counselling, on a weekly or fortnightly basis. And I think that's been really very very important for his growth, and also that he's been prepared to take risks and go out and go after things and be prepared to challenge ideas that others have put forward. And I guess in that, in challenging

himself. So I think all those things make him quite-quite an able and, I think, reasonably respected person in the counselling community, here in ____ [name of town] anyway.

TABLE 4

List of construed verbal expressions of role construct poles and their classification

The following is a list of construed verbal expressions of role construct poles, presented in the order in which they appear in the transcription of Bruce's character sketch. These are categorised according to categories listed in Appendix 12. Numbers indicate the number of occasions in the character sketch in which some construct poles were expressed.

Construct pole	Category
Counsellor	Role
Therapist	Role
Works ... in private practice	Role
Had some dilemma	Certainty
Wanting ... to be clearer	Aspiration
Becoming to be clearer	Certainty
Taken up the opportunity	Initiative
Involved (x2)	Commitment
Impressed	Satisfaction
Pain in the butt	Sociability
Got to be able to be clear	Certainty
Feeling ... better physically	Wellbeing
Not so ... worried	Affect
Able to challenge	Empowerment
Able to ... get involved	Empowerment
Able to make ... progress	Empowerment
Thinking of writing	Aspiration
Changed	Difference
Quieter	Verbal behaviour
Thoughtful	Intellect
Loud	Verbal behaviour
Thoughtless	Intellect
Prepared to take risks	Initiative
Prepared to ... go out	Initiative
Prepared to ... go after things	Initiative
Prepared to challenge	Initiative
Challenging	Intellect
Able	Competence
Respected	Integrity

A cursory glance of the table above suggests that the personal constructs with which Bruce construes himself and others are distributed amongst 15 of the possible 21 categories used in the present study. Bruce expresses more constructions associated with initiative (17%) than constructions associated with role, certainty, empowerment and intellect (each 10%), aspiration, commitment, and verbal behaviour (each 7%), and satisfaction, sociability, well

being, affect, difference, competence and integrity (each 3%). These observations have importance in later discussions.

Client Character Sketch

Claire's character sketch and my verbal prompts are given below:

C: She's got very low self-esteem, doesn't like herself, is not relaxed with people.

R: *** Claire's friend, who knows her really well.

C: Well all my friends say that I'm loving, that I'm --

R: That you're --

C: Loving, that I am, but I don't reckon I am.

R: But as -- So can you start, "Claire is loving"? What else would she think?

C: What she'd like to be or what she is?

R: What is she?

C: Well, I think, nothing. This is it. So I can't think what a friend would say because I just don't know anythink^{er} of myself. So I sort of can't think that way.

R: You said Claire was loving.

C: Well, so her friends say.

R: What else would friends say that's a positive thing, understanding of Claire?

C: Oh -- I don't know. It's hard to think, I just can't think.

R: Is there anything else that would be something very special about Claire something that would help people get to know Claire that they just don't always know?

- C: Well, I guess they sort of talk to me a bit more. If I start to relax – they'll sort of get to know me. As you say, there is a good side to you.
- R: Tell me about that good side.
- C: You know – well you're always helping people – you're always running after people.
- R: So Claire's friends –
- C: You'll think I sound pathetic, that sort of thing. ** My mind's not working today, sorry.
- R: That's OK. Anything else that you'd want to – that a friend of Claire would want to say about Claire? If Claire was a main character in a play what could you tell me about Claire?
- C: That she does have confidence, that she can have confidence. That she isn't dumb, like Claire thinks she is. (Long pause.)
- R: "She isn't dumb like Claire thinks she is."
- C: No.
- R: What else?
- C: Well, like I said she gets so upset that she is loving, she can do things and she can – you know.
- R: She can?
- C: Do – do different things like other people, that she is normal, those sort of things. And she would make a good housewife, I feel.
- R: She would or wouldn't?
- C: She would. I don't reckon I would.

It is obvious that this client found the task of completing the character sketch very difficult. As indicated earlier (Chapter Five) Claire was frequently tearful throughout the initial research interview but, when Claire was asked if she wished to end her participation in the project, she opted to continue. Nevertheless, this case suggests that there are occasions when asking clients to complete character sketches may be inappropriate. Claire seems to have experienced difficulty completing her character sketch for two reasons. Firstly, she was asked to complete the character sketch from the point of view of someone who knew her intimately. However, Claire suggests that people may not know her intimately. According to Claire, other people construe her more positively than she construes herself. In addition, the verbal prompt to elicit the character sketch requires Claire to respond from the perspective of a person who knows her sympathetically. To respond appropriately, Claire needs to be able to view herself sympathetically. However, as becomes evident from the transcript of Claire's character sketch, Claire does not construe herself in a way which might commonly be described as "sympathetically." Hence the task which Claire is asked to complete is very difficult for her.

Interestingly, Kelly (1955) says that he included the word "sympathetically" in the original prompt to elicit character sketches, to indicate to clients that they should consider themselves acceptable. He submits that the term "sympathetically" will suggest to clients that they are not expected to provide a self-incriminating description of themselves. They need not expect to receive invalidating evidence of their constructions. Hence, they need not anticipate the need for changes in their role constructions if they express positive self-constructions. In short, Kelly suggests that use of the term "sympathetically" should mean that clients are not, in his words, "threatened." However, Kelly does not note the problems which may be associated with asking a client to complete a character sketch when that client holds only an "unsympathetic" self-view. Such a client may be as threatened as the clients Kelly was concerned about. For example, in the present instance, Claire may be threatened by the possibility that she may need to change the way in which she construes herself if she expresses her construction of how others construe her. Claire's construction of others' constructions, may have greater predictive validity than her self-construction. Any expression of a positive construction of herself may be validated by others. In which case changes may have to take place in the way in which Claire construes herself. Claire might no longer be able to construe herself negatively. Hence Claire resists expressing any construction which might be construed as positive. Claire's resistance is particularly evident when she says that others would construe her as "loving." However, Claire adds that she does not construe herself as "loving."

I attempted to get Claire back on task, as Kelly suggests, by suggesting that Claire begin her character sketch by saying: "Claire is loving." However, as is apparent from the

above transcript, Claire continues to resist any suggestion that she should express a positive construction of herself. However, despite the difficulties which Claire experiences trying to complete the character sketch some useful information is included in the context of the sketch. In Table 4 we take a closer look at some of the expressions of role construct poles which may be construed from the text of Claire's self-characterisation.

TABLE 5

List of construed verbal expressions of role construct poles and their classification

The following is a list of construed verbal expressions of role construct poles, presented in the order in which they appear in the transcription of Claire's character sketch. These are categorised according to categories listed in Appendix 12.

Construct	Construct pole
Has got ... low self-esteem	Certainty
Doesn't like herself	Affect
Not relaxed	Sociability
[Not] loving	Affect
Nothing	Difference
Don't know anything (of myself)	Certainty
Is a good side	Difference
Helping	Support
Does have confidence	Certainty
Can have confidence	Certainty
Dumb	Intellect
Gets ... upset	Affect
Loving	Affect
Can do things	Competence
Normal	Difference
Good housewife	Role

A cursory glance at the table above suggests that the personal constructs which Claire uses to construe herself and others are distributed almost evenly amongst 8 of the possible 21 categories used in the present study. The majority of constructs indicated in Claire's character sketch are associated with certainty and affect (each 25%). The remaining constructs are associated with difference (19%), and sociability, supportiveness, intellect, competence and role (each 6%).

Analysis of Post-counselling Interviews

A. Client Post-counselling Interview

i. Client response to the therapeutic interaction.

Claire said that she had been a bit apprehensive about the session but that she had got through it. She thought that she and Bruce would talk about what she describes as the "sexual side" of her problems. Instead they talked about what Claire had learnt during the week. In particular, they talked about some of the things which Claire had accomplished during the previous week and the significance of what Claire had achieved.

When Claire was asked to describe any points in the session when she felt something significant took place for her, she said that the most significant point was the occasion in the counselling interview when she told Bruce about some of the "discoveries" she had made. She added that at the time she thought, "Oh maybe I am changing at last." In the post-counselling interview, Claire described three of five "discoveries" she had made. Firstly, she had been able to tell a senior member of her church that she had enjoyed a meeting she had attended. Claire commented that she had never done this before. Secondly, Claire had been able to talk freely with a neighbour which she had also not done before. Thirdly, Claire had been told by a church member that she should not be seeing a counsellor. She reported that she had become distressed but that she had rung a friend. Claire said that usually she would "go into depression [and] withdraw." This occasion was significant because Claire had rung someone which she usually does not do when she is depressed.

ii. Client-identified episode.

Since the transcription of the complete counselling interaction is not provided it is appropriate to provide the context in which the episode which Claire identified as significant for her, took place.

The counselling session begins with Claire commenting upon the content of her diary which she has given Bruce to read. She says that the previous counselling session had left her "disturbed" (4). Bruce agrees with Claire that in the previous session he seemed to have "hit a nerve somewhere." The interaction continues with Claire reiterating that she was "agitated" following the previous counselling session and that she had been "uptight" (32) prior to the present counselling session. Claire goes on to say that she was not able to respond as she would have liked to the questions which I had asked in the earlier interview. She had unexpectedly started crying (45). Bruce appears to have construed this behaviour as being in response to Claire expressing her constructions of past events. He asks:

When you start thinking back over these old things that have happened to you which are all relating to you as a person, what do you think you're discovering about yourself regarding people getting close to you? When you think about these things, what do you think you're starting to discover about yourself. (46-49)

In this comment Bruce talks about Claire "discovering" something. The reader will have noted that in the post-counselling interview, Claire refers to "discoveries" which she has made about herself. From the transcription of the counselling session between Claire and Bruce, it is possible to conclude that Bruce initially has a personal construct used to construe events as "discoveries." During the course of the interaction, Claire too, comes to construe events as "discoveries." Since Claire does not introduce, or use the term during the counselling interaction, we may conclude that the construction indicated by "discovery" becomes a social construction. It is one which is shared by Bruce and Claire and arises during the counselling session.

Bruce goes on to ask Claire what influence past events may have had upon her contact with men (55-57). Claire responds by saying that she doesn't know because she has never had a decent relationship with a man (58-59). Later she questions whether she will ever love a person in a "normal way" (68). Claire indicates that when she discussed her thoughts with a friend, she said that Claire is "loving." (69). This comment is consistent with Claire's character sketch in which Claire suggested that others would construe her as "loving," though she does not have a similar construction of herself.

As the interaction continues, Bruce presents his construction of Claire's comments. He suggests that Claire's feeling of agitation and her concern about what may be correct and what may feel right, "go back" to a letter which Claire has written to her father (82-86). Claire expresses doubt (87). Bruce goes on to say that if Claire had known what it was like to have "warmth and love" as a child, she would be able to establish relationships (88-91).

In the following section of the interview, Claire speaks of a recent occasion when a friend told her that there was a "wall" between Claire and her friend and partner (108-109). In the counselling session, Claire reports that she was "shocked" (116). She goes on to explain. Claire indicates that her friends are her "spiritual Mum and Dad" (141-142). She adds:

But even on Thursday -- it came out of -- it came out of my mouth. I said: "You know, you and Jim are the only ones that I can rely on that I'm able to talk to about - - [the "sexual side" of Claire's problems]. (144-146)

Claire asks Bruce if this ability to talk to others about things that she would never usually talk to others about is "love" (149). Bruce responds by saying that "it's got to be a window on

some sort of love doesn't it?" (150). Claire resists this idea, saying that she had put the "wall" up with them. Bruce provides a different construction than that which Claire expresses. Bruce says: "I guess you were trying to sort out all this disturbing stuff" (155). Claire goes on to say that she has been "working" ever since she began counselling with Bruce. In reply Bruce comments:

But you're making some wonderful discoveries I think about yourself. (160)

Claire responds by saying:

Well everybody else is, but me. (161)

In this excerpt, Bruce again refers to "discoveries" which Claire might make. The above exchange is followed by Bruce asking Claire how she would recognise changes in herself. In response Claire says that she would have a bit more confidence. Shortly afterwards, Claire begins to talk about the previously discussed occasion when she approached a senior member of her church and told him how much she had enjoyed the service she had attended. The episode which follows is that which Claire identified as most significant for her.

185 C: (I was doing. So I did, I went up to him and said how much I'd enjoyed it.) Now
186 I've never done that before. At that point ***

[Tape has been stopped very briefly here]

187 C: We have a bloke that's *

188 T: * yes.

189 C: A brother [member of Claire's church] that's moved in next door -- right next door
190 to me you see.

191 T: Yes.

192 C: And he came up and introduced himself last night. Now I was able to talk to him
193 quite freely last night and I couldn't believe it. Nor could H___. She said she was
194 shocked.

195 T: But pleasantly shocked.

196 C: Yeah. Yeah. That's what I mean. I've never done it before.

197 T: So --

198 C: That sort of thing I noticed last night. But I don't think I've actually really, I can't
199 see any other changes.

200 T: Having seen those two changes do you think that those -- when you recognise
201 yourself doing those two things, do you think that might be part of what other
202 people are noticing about the changes?

203 C: Yeah, probably, yeah, yeah.

204 T: How did you notice those two things? What made you aware of you doing it.

205 C: It surprised me that I actually did it. I shocked myself.

206 T: It sounds really superb.

207 C: That's the only -- that's --

208 T: How was it when you did it? Tell me about the experience of going up and telling
209 the ____ --

210 C: ____ [senior member of Claire's church], yeah. I was a wee bit edgy with him, I
211 know that, but I did it. But the other one, E____, I was quite sort of relaxed with
212 him. But then he's sort of a more relaxed sort of person. I think this is what it is
213 with me. I people are sort of relaxed then I am.

iii. Significance of the client-identified episode.

As indicated above prior to hearing the preceding therapeutic episode, Claire said that the episode was significant because she thought that her actions which she talked about suggested that she may have been "changing." After Claire had identified the beginning of the above episode, the entire episode was replayed to her until she identified the point at which the episode concluded. Claire was then asked to elaborate upon what she had said

earlier about the significance of the episode. She said that normally she can't approach people, especially when those people are not well known to her (C3Tp2: 121-125). Claire added:

But it's just amazing. I'm still amazed over the fact that I did it [spoke to the senior member of her church]. Still don't know. You know, and the fact that I was so relaxed. With that other one [talking to her neighbour] it's just – I suppose I sort of, it wasn't till Bruce sort of point it out. I thought yeah, amazing, I did it. (C3Tp2: 127-132).

The above comment suggests that Bruce's suggestion that other people may have considered Claire's actions to be indicative of "changes" in Claire (200-202), had importance for Claire. In the counselling interview, the reader will note that Bruce comments:

Having seen those two changes do you think that those -- when you recognise yourself doing those two things, do you think that might be part of what other people are noticing about the changes?" (200-202).

We might speculate that here Bruce expresses his personal construction of Claire's actions in the events which Claire has described. He construes these actions as following from "changes" in Claire. Claire says that she has been previously unable to speak to people who are not known to her. Now she is able to speak to other people, irrespective of whether she knows them. However, Claire does not appear to have construed these recent actions as following from "changes" in herself. In Kellian terms, we might suggest that Claire has not construed changes to have occurred in the way in which she construes the world. In the above extract from the counselling interview, Bruce invites Claire to construe herself as having "changed." A personal construct psychologist might suggest that here Bruce is promoting what Neimeyer (1980) describes as the "elaboration of a personal 'theory'" (p. 79). Neimeyer suggests that a primary therapeutic goal for personal construct psychologists is the elaboration of a personal theory which enables clients to "impart structure and coherence" (p. 79) to their lives. He adds that such a theory should include constructs which allow for the construal of future events. In the present instance, Claire is invited, in the counselling session, to construe her constructions of her actions, similarly to Bruce. Claire is provided with the opportunity to construe her actions as following from changes in the way in which she construes people and events. Thus Claire has an opportunity to elaborate a "theory" of her actions which may better account for her behaviour, than any previous "theory" which she may have had. Quite

simply, this alternative construction may have greater predictive validity than any previous construction which Claire may have had of her behaviour.

To return to the post-counselling interview, Claire said that there were no additional comments that she would make about the significance of the episode.

iv. Analysis of the client-identified episode of significance.

As in the preceding cases, this stage of analysis will be concerned with identifying personal, shared and social constructions; occasions when social constructions may have arisen; and identifying occasions when validation and invalidation of clients' constructions may have occurred.

Prior to the opening statement in the episode, Claire describes the occasion when she told a senior member of her church that she enjoyed his church service. The selected episode then begins with Claire's comments about the incident. She says: "Now I've never done that before" (185-186). Thus Claire suggests that she construes her behaviour as different from her previous behaviour. Claire follows this comment by describing a second instance in which she acted uncharacteristically. She concludes by saying that she couldn't believe what she had done (193). She goes on to say that her friend had said that she was "shocked" (193-194). Bruce expresses his personal construction of Claire's expressed construction. He says: "But pleasantly shocked" (195). Claire evidently construes Bruce's construction as similar to her own. She provides what Bruce would probably construe as validating evidence of his construction in her next comment (196).

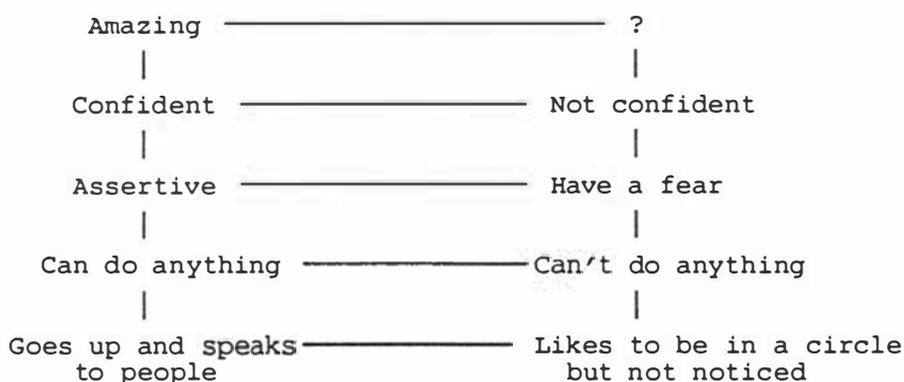
In the comment which follows, Bruce expresses his personal construction of Claire's behaviour (200-202). In the subsequent comment (203) there is evidence that Claire too, may now construe her actions as following from changes in the way in which she construes people and events. The episode continues with Bruce asking how Claire noticed that she had twice done what she had not done before (204). In Kellian terms, Bruce is asking what features Claire identifies as similar to behaviour which is different from her previous behaviour. Claire does not respond directly to Bruce's question. Instead, she again expresses her surprise at construing herself as having behaved in a manner which was different to the way in which she had behaved previously (205). Claire's comments suggest that her construction of herself as having acted differently, invalidated her previous constructions of herself. She had previously construed herself as unable to speak to people she did not know for any length of time. Her construction of her behaviour as different from her previous behaviour, invalidated her construction that she was unable to speak with others whom she did not know. Hence, we might expect that Claire may have revised her initial construction prior to the counselling session.

If we now return to the earlier analysis of Claire's character sketch, we can see that Claire indicated that other people construe her as having confidence and as able to do things. In contrast, however, Claire suggests that she may not construe herself similarly. At best we may say that prior to the counselling session, Claire alternates between construing herself as having confidence and competence, and as not having confidence and competence. Interestingly, as indicated previously, in the counselling interaction Claire suggests that she may sometimes construe herself as confident. Prior to the therapeutic episode which Claire identified as having significance for her, she said that she would know that she had "changed" if she had "a bit more confidence" (171).

To understand a little more about the way in which Claire construed herself and others, in the post-counselling interview I asked Claire to tell me more about people who are able to do what she describes as "go up and speak" (C3Tp2: 150-151). Claire responded by saying: "Well, I reckon they're assertive, I think they're confident. They're amazing" (C3Tp2: 159-160). When Claire was asked to describe people who are in contrast to those who go up and speak, she responded by saying that others would construe such people as "shy" and as "not very confident of themselves" (C3Tp2: 169-172). In the post-counselling interview, I asked Claire if she construed herself as one of those people whom others would construe as "shy," and "not very confident with themselves. She responded by saying that she is not shy but that "it's just a fear I suppose you'd call it, or I'm not confident" (C3Tp2: 178-180). Later I asked Claire if she would be someone who was "shy and not confident." She replied that she would be the one who would like to be in a circle but unnoticed (C3Tp2: 187-188).

In the next section of the post-counselling interview, I used laddering and pyramiding techniques, to elicit further constructions associated with construing people as "assertive." Claire said that people who are "confident," "assertive" and "amazing," are "easily able to engage in a conversation" (C3Tp2: 199). She added that by this she means that they can "go anywhere," "do anything" (C3Tp2: 200). Claire went on to say that, in contrast, a person who is "not confident" "not assertive and "not amazing," "can't do a thing" (C3Tp2: 204).

Having now elicited Claire's constructions associated with people who are "assertive," or "not assertive," we may suggest the way in which constructs may be arranged which govern these constructions. From the preceding discussion we may suggest that the following diagram represents the order of some of Claire's constructions, and hence the possible order of the constructs which govern those constructions:



Diagrammatic representation of Claire's constructions
associated with being "assertive"

Earlier discussion suggested that prior to the counselling interaction Claire may have sometimes construed herself as confident and at other times, as lacking in confidence. However, in the post-counselling interview, Claire indicates that she construes herself to be not confident. The reader will recall that we left discussion of the post-counselling interview at the point when Claire indicated that people who are not assertive "can't do a thing" (C3Tp2: 204). She went on to add, "because I know, I'm like that" (C3Tp2: 204-205). At this point I suggested that Claire's construction of herself as "not assertive" contrasted with her earlier expressed construction of herself as someone who goes up and talks to people. Claire's response to this was to say: "Maybe she's changing, and she doesn't like it" (C3Tp2: 215). Thus we can see that, in Kellian terms, Claire is threatened by the possibility that she may be "changing." If Claire construes herself as having "changed," as Bruce suggested in the counselling interaction, she will have to construe herself as able to "go up and speak to people." Claire will have to change the way in which she construes herself. In the context of the counselling interview, Bruce does not invalidate Claire's constructions. However, he provides a personal construction of Claire's constructions which, if shared by Claire, will suggest that Claire's present construction of herself is invalid. A person who has changed, is able to go up and speak to people. In contrast a person who has not changed, presumably, is not confident and is unable to speak to people.

In the post-counselling interview, Claire explains what she understands to be the implications of her "changing." She says that she doesn't like changes and adds that changes are frightening (C3Tp2: 217-218). Claire goes on to say that she doesn't know what it is like to be "changing." However, she continues to talk about what Kelly would describe as the "threat" associated with having to construe herself as no longer "not changing," as is apparent in the following excerpt:

I mean I find it frightening actually. I sort of feel that I'm going in a circle at the moment sort of thing. One part's pulling me one way and the other part's pulling the other way – like Bruce said – you know – sort of three quarters is wanting me to go this way the other quarter's (C3Tp2: 229-236)

Later, Claire describes the contrasting emotion associated with construing herself as "not changing." She says:

If I could just stay in the old way, you know, shy – it feels quite comfortable. I don't have to face pain and anger and – which is what I'm going to have to –. (C3Tp2: 275-279)

Here Claire explains the reasons for not changing the way in which she construes herself. However, as has already been discussed, the fear which Claire experiences when she is faced with the prospect of revising her present constructions, is understandable. Should Claire revise the way in which she construes her recent behaviour, she must revise a construct which governs the way in which she construes herself. In short, if Claire construes herself as having changed, she will need to revise one of her existing role constructs.

We can conclude from the above discussion that Claire did not apparently change her way of construing herself. She still construes herself as lacking in confidence. However, she is apparently prepared to entertain the possibility that her way of construing her recent actions may not be as predictively valid as the way in which Bruce construes her actions. She appears to be testing the predictive validity of a construction which is an alternative to the construction she usually has of herself. Thus, at very least we may say that Bruce has loosened Claire's construing by offering a construction of Claire's actions which may suggest the predictive invalidity of Claire's previous way of construing herself. As indicated previously, if Claire comes to share Bruce's construction of her actions, she must revise her earlier construction of herself.

For the reader's interest, the counselling interaction continued with Claire indicating that she is afraid of what is happening to her. She adds that she has contemplated moving from her home because she is afraid of what is happening. However, Claire comments that "three quarters" (284) of her says that she has to stay and "the other quarter" (284) says that she does not have to stay. Bruce responds by suggesting that Claire is continuing to look after herself by checking out what may happen if she changes. Later Bruce asks if Claire's friends can help Claire by telling her that her new behaviour is an example of her being assertive. In reply Claire says that she is afraid of getting close to people as she has learnt that those she gets close to soon go. She adds that she wonders if her reluctance to get close to people was

interpreted by her friend as a "wall" between Claire and herself the previous weekend. Claire goes on to discuss an incident in which she had gone to meet a senior person in her church who was in hospital. She became upset when the elder said that Claire should not have done something which he regarded as contrary to the teaching of the church. As indicated earlier, Claire says that she would normally have become depressed. However, instead she phoned her friend. Bruce affirms Claire's decision and, what he describes as, Claire's ability to trust herself. Later Bruce asks if Claire's action is an example of Claire beginning to "love" herself. Claire replies by saying that she doesn't know as she does not know what love is.

As the counselling interview continues, Bruce asks Claire what her ability to take care of herself may allow her to do in future. Claire says that she will be able to be more "genuine" (485) and the "wall" will hopefully drop (487). However, she again says that if she gets close to her friends they may go. Bruce suggests that Claire might discuss her fear with her friends. However, Claire resists this idea. She goes on to say that she may be too reliant on others. Bruce agrees and suggests that Claire may not be able to identify changes in herself because she is so dependent upon others. Claire says that despite the apparent recent "changes" in herself, she still finds it difficult to express her feelings for others. Again Bruce says that it is appropriate for Claire to be cautious about what happens in her life and how close she gets to people. He adds that as Claire begins to love herself more she will be more comfortable about getting close to people. However, Claire says that she finds this idea frightening. Nevertheless, she is "amazed" by the recent changes in her behaviour. Claire adds that she still does not understand why she has not been able to talk about something which happened to her previously. Bruce responds by suggesting that Claire may have decided that the incident will no longer affect her life. He goes on to suggest that Claire will not become free of "the old restraints" (639-641) quickly. However, he concludes that depression is no longer running Claire's life. Claire agrees and adds that she hopes that the depression will go. The session finishes with a discussion as to the destination of a letter completed in the preceding counselling session.

B. Therapist Post-counselling Interview

i. Therapist response to the therapeutic interaction.

Bruce reported that the counselling session which he had with Claire was positive. He did not add to this comment.

When Bruce was asked to describe occasions in the counselling interaction that may have been significant for his client, Bruce described four incidents. In the first of these occasions, Bruce said that Claire had recognised that the sexual abuse and "inappropriate sexual encounters" which she had experienced in the past contributed to her current cautious approach to meeting people. He described this recognition as a "freeing point" for Claire.

Bruce went on to say that Claire and he were excited on this occasion. The second occasion when Bruce thought that something significant may have taken place for his client was when Claire recognised that talking with the senior church member was unusual for her. The reader will recognise this as the beginning of the previously discussed episode which Claire said had particular significance for her. In a third occasion, Bruce said that Claire had said that "three quarters of her wants to stay and a quarter of her wants to go." Bruce added that in the past the "one quarter" would win, but that in the counselling interaction, Claire had seemed to want the three quarters to win. Here Bruce is referring to Claire's resistance to change. Bruce said that in the past Claire would move house when she was faced with difficult situations. However, according to Bruce, at the time of the counselling session, Claire was more willing to stay. As we have seen, Claire mentioned her "three quarters" and "one quarter" in the post-counselling client interview. Finally, Bruce mentions an occasion when Claire asks about love. Bruce suggests that recognising love will "help her [Claire] to continue to develop" (T2Tp2: 54).

ii. The therapist-identified episode of significance.

In the post-counselling interview, Bruce was asked which of the four instances he had described, would, in his opinion, have been of greatest significance to his client. Bruce selected an episode in which he said that Claire was "no longer needing to be restrained in her understanding of herself" (T2Tp2: 59-61). He added that in this episode, Claire was "trusting herself and beginning to love herself as an individual" (T2Tp: 61-62). The episode which Bruce identified as having greatest significance for his client follows:

540 T: (So that changes become less noticeable because you're -- you're) I'm wondering
541 about you depending on other people, if that lessens the chance of you noticing
542 change, whereas if you were depending on you, you would notice these changes
543 more. If you were depending on Claire for understanding what your -- how you're
544 treating yourself now, and that could be linked to a growing love for yourself. I'm
545 wondering if that would change your dependence on other people if you started
546 depending on yourself for your own love.

547 C: Oh probably, I see what you mean sort of. Claire's not thinking too well.

548 T: Oh yes she is. That was -- that's a -- I think that was probably Bruce having a little
549 wander around in his head.

550 C: Yeah, probably, yeah.

551 T: [Cough.] Excuse me. So I'm just wondering if as you discover more about yourself
 552 that you can do and you feel more confident about yourself, then you'll feel that
 553 you've got the right to actually love yourself as a person.

iii. Significance of the therapist-identified episode.

When Bruce was asked to comment upon the significance of this episode, he said that he thought it was significant because "trusting herself and beginning to love herself as an individual" (C2Tp2: 61-62) would "allow her to be free of the old restraints and start developing this new story that's she making" (C2Tp2: 65-68). In this statement, Bruce's reference to a "new story" most likely refers to a new pattern of behaviour. The terms "story" and "script" or "life script" are often used by therapists, particularly those trained in transactional analytic approaches, to refer to apparent patterns of clients' behaviour which those clients have described. Here Bruce expresses his personal construction of the counselling process. He suggests that his comments in the counselling session followed from his construction that Claire trusting and loving herself will allow her to change her behaviour.

Bruce adds that in the counselling interview (540-546) he had tried to "put all the pieces together" (T2Tp2: 77-78) of what Claire had said. Claire responded to Bruce's comment by saying: "Oh probably, I see what you mean sort of, Claire's not thinking too well" (547). In the post-counselling interview, Bruce says that he made what he was saying very complicated for Claire to understand. Hence, in the latter part of the episode above, Bruce tried to present a simpler question. At this point we might suggest an interpretation of the exchange described above which is consistent with personal construct theory. Claire's response (547) to Bruce's comment (540-546) suggests that Claire construed Bruce's expressed construction. However, Claire's response also suggests that Claire may not have received validating evidence of her construction. While Claire may have been able to construe Bruce's construction, she may have received sufficient invalidating evidence to suggest that her construction had little predictive validity. Such evidence might have come from Claire's constructions of previous dialogue in the counselling interview, or from Claire's constructions of Bruce's behaviour. Claire may have been unable to revise her construction to increase its predictive validity. Kelly might suggest that Claire may construe Bruce's construction, using her existing construct system. However, Claire's construction is not predictively valid. In this case we might say that the construction which Claire is trying to construe cannot be construed with predictive validity using Claire's existing constructs.

The reader may recall that, according to Kelly, awareness of occasions when one cannot construe objects, places, people or events, since those things are "outside the range of convenience of one's construct system," is defined as "anxiety." Of course, something which cannot be construed would not be able to be construed. Hence, one would not experience

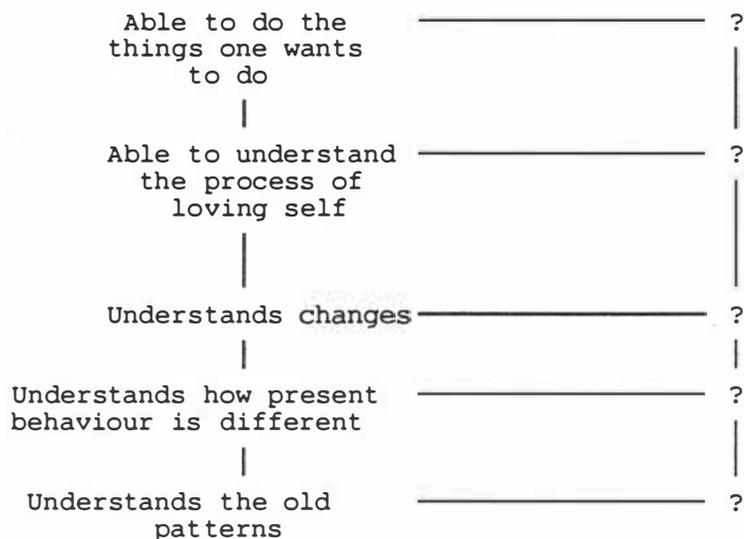
anxiety under such circumstances. Understandably, Button (1985) submits that Kelly is referring to occasions when people are able to only partially construe subjective reality in his definition of anxiety. However, it is perhaps as difficult to understand how people may partially construe subjective reality, as it is to understand how people may construe something which they cannot construe. Perhaps the excerpt above from the counselling session between Bruce and Claire provides an opportunity to clarify what may be meant by "anxiety" in personal construct theory. In the above instance, Claire may be able to construe Bruce's construction. However, she may not have a predictively valid construction of Bruce's construction. Moreover, Claire may not be able to revise her initial construction upon receiving invalidating evidence of the predictive validity of her construction. Claire may not have constructs similar to those which govern Bruce's personal constructs. Claire's constructs may not include Bruce's personal construction within what Kelly has described as their "ranges of convenience." Quite simply, Claire may not have previously construed a construction similar to that which Bruce expresses in the context of the counselling interaction. Hence, Claire's construction of Bruce's construction is dissimilar to the meaning which Bruce intended to convey in his statement in the counselling interaction. From the transcript of the counselling session, we may speculate that Claire was aware that she did not have a valid construction of Bruce's construction. Hence Claire may well have experienced what personal construct theorists describe as "anxiety." In analysis and discussion of the interaction between Anne and Beth, anxiety was described as the recognition that one could not construe a personal construction which included a particular social construction as part of its context. In the case of the therapeutic interaction between Bruce and Claire, anxiety is similarly described. In this instance, anxiety may be described as: the awareness that one cannot revise one's construction upon receiving invalidating evidence because the objects, places, people and events with which one is confronted lie outside the range of convenience of one's construct system.

Returning to the post-counselling therapist interview, Bruce says that:

If she [Claire] understood the old patterns and how she is actually managing to do things differently she could understand that change. Then she would be better able to understand the process of loving herself, which I guess would be freeing her up from not being able to do -- to do things that she wanted to do because of the old ways that she'd been involved in. (T2Tp2: 88-96).

At this point we might speculate that the diagram below represents the order of some of the constructions which governed Bruce's interaction with Claire in the counselling session. The

diagram also therefore represents the possible order of those constructs which govern Bruce's constructions in the counselling session.

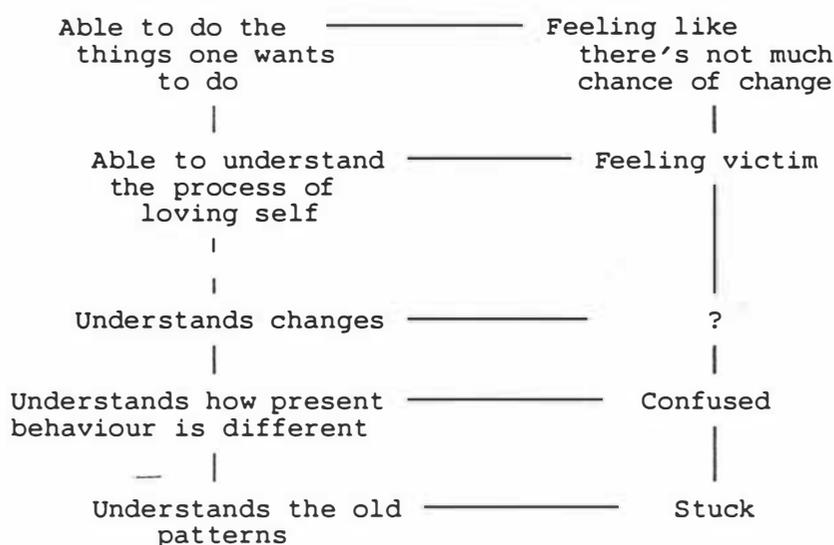


Diagrammatic representation of Bruce's constructions
associated with being "able to do the things one
wants to do"

To understand a little more about the way in which Bruce construed, I asked him how he would describe a person who doesn't understand the past. He responded:

Probably stuck. Probably quite confused about why things are going the way they are, probably feeling victim, and probably feeling like there's not much chance of change.
(T2Tp2: 122-125)

From this brief comment we may speculate as to what the opposite constructions are of those illustrated in the preceding diagram. Thus, the complete scheme of Bruce's constructions relating to people being able to do what they want to do, might be represented by the following diagram:



Revised diagrammatic representation of Bruce's constructions
associated with being "able to do the things one
wants to do"

Bruce adds an important point later in the post-counselling interview which relates to the diagram above. He says that people who went to the agency where he was working at the time of the interview, had chosen to start making changes. The reader will recognise the importance of this statement in light of earlier discussion. In the counselling interview and post-counselling client interview, Claire indicated that she was frightened of change. Change still poses a threat to Claire. She may have started to change, but neither the counselling interview nor the post-counselling interview suggest that Claire has chosen, as yet, at least, to make changes.

iv. Analysis of the therapist-identified episode.

The therapeutic episode which Bruce identifies as significant for his client, begins with Bruce saying that Claire may not be able to notice any changes taking place in herself because of her "dependence" upon others (540-543). Bruce suggests that Claire depends upon others to understand how she is treating herself. In contrast, perhaps, the transcript of Bruce's character sketch suggests that Bruce construes himself as confident and independent of others. As the counselling episode continues, Bruce goes on to imply that Claire may now be able to depend more upon herself for understanding as she comes to love herself more (543-544). We can see that in this opening statement Bruce has expressed constructions which follow from those constructions which Bruce expressed in the post-counselling interview. Thus we can again clearly see the way in which a therapist's superordinate constructs may influence the constructions which therapists express in counselling.

As indicated earlier, Claire goes on to suggest that she may not have a valid construction of the construction which Bruce expresses in the opening excerpt. She says: "Oh probably, I see what you mean, sort of. Claire's not thinking too well" (547). Again, as discussed earlier, Bruce construes Claire's uncertainty. In the post-counselling interview, Bruce suggested that he may have expressed his construction in a complicated manner. Hence Claire's confusion. Bruce responds by affirming Claire's ability to think. He invalidates Claire's construction expressed in Claire's statement that she is "not thinking too well" (547).

In the concluding statement of this short excerpt (541-554), Bruce again expresses constructions which follow from the scheme of constructions offered earlier. This time Bruce says:

So I'm just wondering if as you discover more about yourself that you can do and you feel more confident about yourself, then you'll feel that you've got the right to actually love yourself as a person. (551-554)

Claire responds (555-558) to Bruce's concluding statement in a way which suggests that she is able to construe at least one of the constructions which Bruce expresses. Claire says:

Yes, yeah like I said last night: "I think there is a bit of a wall." ** I wanted to put my arms around her [Claire's friend], you know, just to hold on to her but I couldn't. One part of me was wanting to do it – to reach out – but the other part was saying "no, no, no", and I couldn't. (555-558)

Claire implies that she understands Bruce construes her as not confident. As earlier discussion suggests, of course, Claire would construe Bruce's verbalised construction as validating evidence of her self-construction. Claire too, construes herself as not confident. Claire concludes her response by going on to tell of an incident in which she clearly construed her behaviour as demonstrating a lack of confidence.

In summary, though this episode is brief, it illustrates the way in which the constructions which therapists express in counselling may follow from superordinate constructs which are not indicated in counselling interactions. In addition, discussion of this episode, in light of earlier discussion of the client-identified episode, suggests that therapists may construe their clients differently from the ways in which clients construe themselves. In this instance, Bruce has operated under the assumption that Claire wants to change. Hence he has expressed constructions which are consistent with his superordinate constructions as to how client psychological change may be brought about. However, as we have already seen, Claire is frightened of change. Indeed, change is threatening to Claire. Should she change

she could no longer retain her construction of herself as not confident. Nevertheless, as discussed earlier, at the conclusion of the client-identified episode, Claire has two apparently incompatible constructions of herself. The first is that which she has held of herself as not changing. The second construction is one which she construes as Bruce's construction. Bruce construes Claire as "changing." As indicated previously, personal construct theory suggests that people can have apparently incompatible constructions. However, as suggested earlier, in the counselling interaction, Claire seems to test the possibility that Bruce's construction of Claire may have greater predictive validity than Claire's original self-construction.

v. Therapist comment with respect to the client-identified episode.

When Bruce was asked to comment upon what may have been taking place in the client-identified episode, Bruce expressed his constructions of his client's constructions. He commented that he thought that Claire was realising that she had more ability to "have some say in her life" (T2Tp3: 6-7). Bruce suggests that Claire is now able to take initiative. It is interesting that, as the reader will no doubt have noted, Bruce implies in his character sketch that he has recently taken initiative in his own life. There he speaks of being "able to challenge," and being "prepared to take risks." There is a similarity between how Bruce construes himself and how he now construes Claire.

Returning to the post-counselling interview, Bruce said that he had got quite excited during the episode which Claire identified. He said that "I feel a sense of excitement at the discovery by clients that they recognise what they've done as belonging to them" (T2Tp3: 13-15). He goes on to suggest that it is important that clients recognise the significance for them in what's happened. In particular, Bruce says that it is important that a client recognises what has happened as different from the "old story" (T2Tp3: 21-22). He adds: "The old restraints aren't in fact playing a major role in the – in the new interactions" (T2Tp3: 25-27). In this brief commentary Bruce has expressed his constructions of his client's constructions; his constructions of himself during the interaction, and his constructions of other people generally. From analysis of Bruce's comments in regard to the client-identified episode, it is difficult to suggest the relationship of one construction to another. However, it is again apparent that the constructions which Bruce expressed during the counselling interaction, follow from those constructions which were derived from the previous section of the therapist post-counselling interview. These were, of course, detailed earlier and represented diagrammatically.

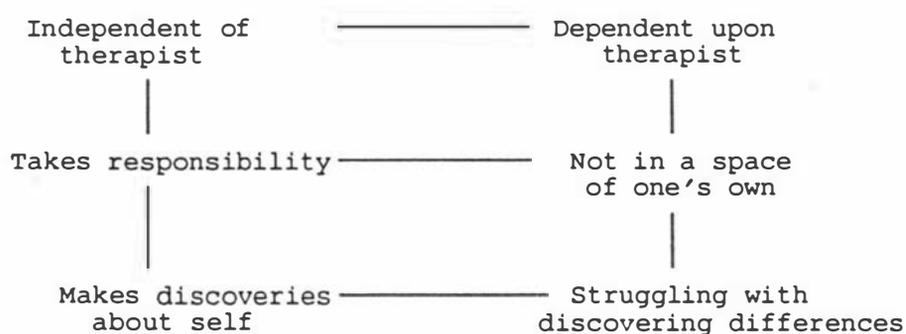
As the post-counselling interview continued, I asked Bruce what the "old story" refers to when Claire is the client. Bruce responded by saying that the "old story" would be, "depression, lack of control, everything happens to ... 'good things happen to other people but nothing good ever happens to me" (T2Tp3: 31-34). Once again, Bruce seems to be expressing

the contrast side of the construct system indicated in the earlier diagram. If, for a moment, we apply our knowledge of the social constructions expressed in Bruce's comments, we can speculate that a person who says "good things happen to other people but nothing good ever happens to me" is similar to someone who feels like a "victim" and "feels like there is not much chance for change." Thus, in the post-counselling interview, Bruce suggests that Claire's recent behaviour is part of the "new story" not the "old story." Bruce suggests that Claire now knows that her behaviour can be different. She is now able to do the things she wants to do.

Finally, Bruce suggests that his task in the therapeutic process is to help Claire recognise the changes in her behaviour (T2Tp3: 54-55). He describes his client's tasks as using the "discoveries" she has made and continuing to behave differently. Bruce goes on to suggest that he construes clients who make "discoveries" about themselves as not dependent upon their therapists. He adds that, in contrast, people who are dependent upon their therapists, are "not in a space of their own" (T2Tp3: 64-65). They are "still struggling with discovering the differences that they've come to talk about" (T2Tp3: 66-67). According to Bruce, people who are not dependent upon their therapists have "started to make ... steps in discovery" (T2Tp3: 69-70). Finally, Bruce concludes:

Claire right now has -- today made discoveries about herself and taken responsibility for those discoveries that she wasn't doing before. (T2Tp3: 72-75)

Thus we have learnt a little more about the way in which Bruce construes his clients. The constructions expressed in Bruce's commentary can perhaps be represented in the following diagram. As in previous similar instances, the order in which the verbalised constructions are presented here, also represents the order in which constructs which govern those constructions, may be arranged.



Diagrammatic representation of Bruce's constructions
associated with being "independent of a therapist"

Summary

In summary, analysis of two therapeutic episodes in the interaction between Bruce and Claire, suggests that therapists and clients may have different constructions as to what is significant to the client. Claire indicates that the first episode is significant for her, because it is in this episode that she finally construes her behaviour as different from her previous behaviour. However, as we have seen Claire is reluctant to construe her changed behaviour as a consequence of changes in the way in which she construes the world. The episode which Bruce selects as significant for his client includes an expression of Bruce's construction of Claire's previously expressed constructions. Bruce suggests that this episode has particular significance because he is able to convey to Claire that she can become increasingly free of restraints as she becomes more confident and continues to engage in new behaviour. Bruce had previously suggested that this new behaviour, is Claire "loving herself" (464-469). Importantly, as we have seen, despite apparent differences in the episodes selected as having significance for Claire, and the significance attributed to these episodes, the therapeutic session has some positive outcomes for Claire. She construes her behaviour as different from her previous behaviour. In addition, the post-counselling interview suggests that Claire now has an alternative way of construing her recent behaviour. At the time of the interview, she was cautiously testing the predictive validity of this alternative construction.

Thus we may conclude that the counselling interaction contributed to some change in the client's construct system. During the counselling session, occasions when interaction between personal constructions gave rise to social constructions were identified. In addition, instances when the therapist validated, and invalidated, the client's constructions were examined. Notably, the client did not revise her construction upon receiving invalidating evidence of her construction. However, the client's construction of the way in which her therapist construes her, remains a possible alternative construction of herself which she may yet adopt. In the next case, we examine Bruce's interaction with a different client. This enables a comparison between the interaction between Bruce and Claire, and the interaction between Bruce and a male client.

Case Four

Therapist (Bruce) Client (Ken)

Background Information

The reader may recall that Ken is 22 years of age. At the time of interviewing he was attending an eating disorders clinic at a local hospital. Ken said that hospital staff had advised him to attend counselling at the agency where Bruce worked, as the clinic could not offer counselling services similar to those offered at the agency. Ken described himself as a self-referred client. Ken said that the counselling session that was to follow was a scheduled interview and one of a series of weekly interviews which Ken had been having with Bruce. Five days prior to the counselling session, Ken said that he had completed a "mood assessment" at the hospital clinic. Ken said that he was going to discuss this experience with Bruce. Ken said that he was "freaking out" about the experience.

Therapist Character Sketch

As Bruce's character sketch was included earlier in this chapter (p. 283) it is not included here.

Client Character Sketch

Ken's character sketch and my verbal prompts are given below:

C: Like a lost soul I think, soul's not the ri-right word to use, in a nightmare at the moment and seems a lot-a little lost. I'm not sure what's going on around him or inside him, and he's probably pretty scared, he seems pretty lonely, even though he's got lots of people around him, support, seems like a bit different now than everyone else. And so he seems trapped between like a rock and a hard place, not being really sure, wants to sort of be better or wants just to sort of stay the same. And he's got a -
- It's like a two way fight. One bit's going, "No don't worry about it" and the other bit's going, "Have a fight, fight it" and he's sort of really not too sure what direction to take for the future, and not really too sure about the future. So he's still pretty much mixed up, pretty confused, pretty down – and stuck.

R: Would there be anything else you'd want to say about Ken?

C: Still a rigid nonconformist.

R: A rigid nonconformist?

C: Yeah. And still, yeah still trying to keep that bizarre side without trying to lose that or the other part which is a ** bizarre and keep the edge and keep the intensity.

R: That the lot?

TABLE 6

List of construed verbal expressions of role construct poles and their classification

The following is a list of construed verbal expressions of role construct poles, presented in the order in which they appear in the transcription of Ken's character sketch. These are categorised according to categories listed in Appendix 12. Numbers indicate the number of occasions in the character sketch in which some construct poles were expressed.

Construct pole	Category
Lost soul	Affinity
In a nightmare	Pleasure
Lost	Certainty
Not sure (x4)	Certainty
Scared	Affect
Lonely	Affinity
Got ... people around him	Affinity
Got ... support	Affinity
Different	Difference
Trapped	Empowerment
Wants to ... be better	Aspiration
Wants to ... stay the same	Aspiration
Mixed up	Certainty
Confused	Certainty
Down	Affect
Stuck	Empowerment
Rigid nonconformist	Role
Bizarre (x2)	Difference

A cursory glance of the table above suggests that the constructs with which Ken construes himself can be classified as being associated with 8 of the possible 21 categories used in the present study. However, Ken expresses more constructions associated with certainty (32%) than constructions associated with affinity (18%), difference, (14%), empowerment and aspiration (each 9%), and pleasure, affect and role (each 5%).

Analysis of Post-counselling Interviews

A. Client Post-counselling Interview

i. Client response to therapeutic interaction.

Ken commented that the counselling session which he had had with Bruce, was one of the "better" ones. He described the session as more structured and more relaxed than some of the previous counselling interviews he had participated in. Ken added that in the counselling interview, he had reflected on the good, not on the bad. As the post-counselling interview continued, Ken said that he had been able to look back on what had happened recently to him. In particular, Ken commented that in the interview he had talked about the closure of the outpatient clinic and how he felt about it.

Ken said that prior to the counselling interview he had been a "a bit up and down in weight" and had missed appointments with Bruce since his last counselling interview. He went on to say that the counselling interview had been "interesting" because he and Bruce had been "relaxed." Ken described himself as going at his own pace and as thinking while he was talking, during the counselling interview.

When Ken was asked to describe any points in the counselling interview when he thought that something significant took place for him, Ken said that there was one point. He described the episode as being prior to his discussion of the previously mentioned mood assessment. According to Ken, in the episode, he and Bruce concluded that Ken had obtained his "independence." He was no longer "dependent."

ii. Client-identified episode.

As in previous instances, since the complete transcription of the counselling interaction is not provided, it is appropriate to provide the context in which the episode which Ken identified as having significance for him, took place. However, before doing so, it is important to note that this case illustrates the limitations of audio-taping counsellor-client interactions. Ken was a softly spoken young man, who constantly had his hand over his mouth during the research interviews which I conducted with him. It is likely that he engaged in similar behaviour during the counselling interview. Hence the audio-tape recording of the counselling session between Bruce and Ken is inaudible at times. Consequently, the transcription of the counselling interaction contains more omitted words and phrases than is the case for transcriptions of other counselling interviews. Experienced counsellors would describe Ken's behaviour as not atypical of clients with similar presenting problems. For this reason similar future research may need to give attention to developing improved ways of recording counselling interactions. Of course, such developments would continue to be constrained by the need to limit disruptions to the counselling process. But, despite the

limitations of the methodology described above, the transcription of the counselling interview between Bruce and Ken does provide sufficient data from which to derive an adequate description of the context of the client-identified episode.

The counselling interview begins with Ken discussing a recent trip to another city to see his girlfriend. Ken adds that the closure of the hospital clinic is no longer such a "big issue" for him. He says that now there are too many other things happening so he concentrates on something else. In response to Ken's comments, Bruce asks how Ken feels now. Ken says that he is "a lot more relieved," "a lot more enthused," "not so much on edge now" (18) and "a bit more relaxed" (19). Later, Bruce asks Ken where his "anorexic kind of lifestyle" (30) and "the total focus on food and things" is, "in relation to" (31) Ken's now relaxed lifestyle. Ken responds by saying that he has "booze" and "crime" in context now (37-38). He is now spending money and having a good time. Bruce follows Ken's comments by expressing his personal construction of what Ken has said: "So the journey to (name of city) was really quite significant" (41). Ken agrees and adds that the recent trip to his girlfriend was "much better" (44) than his previous trip to see her.

As the interview continues, Bruce asks Ken if he thinks that the recent trip away might have been much better because Ken had resolved some issues with his girlfriend. Ken replies by saying that there are still some unresolved issues. However, these do not really bother him any more. Ken adds that on his first trip to visit his girlfriend, he had spent all his time with her. He reports that he "freaked" (56) on this occasion. On the recent trip Ken had spent only two hours with his girlfriend. He said that this occasion was "comfortable and mellow" (60). Bruce goes on to ask Ken if the "comfortable and mellow kind of contact" (62) which he describes, has had an effect on Ken. In reply, Ken says that he thinks this is the case. However, he adds that he is "highly strung" (64). Sometimes he feels "a bit coming on" (65). The transcription does not suggest what Ken means by "a bit coming on." However, we might speculate that Ken is referring to a feeling, perhaps a feeling of anxiety. Bruce asks what Ken does when the "bit" appears. Ken says that he may go to sleep, go out, keep occupied or go and see someone (67-69). Bruce's next comment suggests that Bruce construes Ken's reference to "a bit coming on" as reference to a tendency to behave as Ken did previously. Bruce says: "That's sort of some of the old ways still there" (70). Ken agrees. Subsequently, the episode which Ken identified as significant to him begins. This episode follows.

74 T: (So what do you -- when then you know you've obviously found a -- several ways
75 of being different from when the old way came in the past.) You seem to have
76 developed some new ways of doing things.

77 C: Yeah, I'm not quite sure what they are. I don't know, it's sort of – it still seems to
78 always come – it always seems to come from late nights I suppose, as soon as
79 you're tired, as soon as you can't get to sleep sometimes you can't think. * struggle
80 even more.

81 T: So you distract it?

82 C: Yeah.

83 T: Or distract yourself?

84 C: I distract myself.

85 T: So you've -- you've really taken a lot of control of your own life in a way that hasn't
86 been destructive like anorexia and those old feelings were.

87 C: Yes, I think so. I mean that's **** amongst **** had quite a few nights where
88 nothing sort of seems to have worked. Some days it's quite difficult. I just want to
89 be able to function and keep myself occupied. **** Otherwise I don't think too
90 much, which can be good but it's pretty damaging though in my case.

91 T: It seems to me that you've discovered a way of supporting yourself in a supportive
92 lifestyle rather than being dependent on a sort of damaging anorexic lifestyle.

iii. Significance of the client-identified episode.

Prior to hearing the above episode replayed, Ken said that he thought that he may have been "looking for an answer." In the post-counselling interview, Ken did not say what question was associated with the answer he was looking for. However, he went on to say that he felt that something had finished and that he had "come out of the experience" "pretty much all right" (40). Ken concluded that he did have an answer as a consequence of participating in the preceding counselling session.

After Ken had identified the beginning and end of the above episode and heard it replayed, Ken was asked if there was anything which he thought may have been significant which he had not yet mentioned. Ken repeated that the episode was a summation of what had happened to him recently. He continued:

I'd sort of finally found a good coping mechanism. I was sort of getting sort of realising I had one and that. It just helps. It's like I've come to a conclusion, some sort of decision. I'd just realised that I sort of blew up my friends for talking about sort of anorexia and stuff, and the whole, people closing the programme [the eating disorders programme] and everything. I sort of realised I hadn't let it get to me so much the last couple of weeks. (C4Tp2: 47-52)

In this excerpt, Ken suggests that during the counselling interaction he construed himself as being able to cope. Previously he construed himself as being angry with others and angry about the closing of the hospital programme which he attended. However, in the counselling session, he construed his verbalised constructions as suggesting that he now could cope. These points will be taken up again in the later analysis of the therapeutic episode which Ken identified as having significance for him.

Earlier in the post-counselling interview, Ken had said that Bruce had helped him to reach the conclusion that he could cope now. After Ken had heard the episode which he identified as significant for him, I asked Ken to elaborate on his earlier comment. Ken said that Bruce is good at summarising. However, he went on to say that Bruce leaves opportunities for Ken to comment. In addition, Ken thought that Bruce was helpful because he helped Ken when he found it difficult to express himself. With these comments in mind, we turn now to the analysis of the episode which Ken identified as significant for him.

iv. Analysis of the client-identified episode of significance.

The episode begins with Bruce expressing his personal construction of the constructions which Ken has expressed. He suggests that Ken has developed some "new ways of doing things" (76). The phrase "new ways" appears to be a construction which is made using the same construct as that which Bruce used to construe the previously mentioned "old ways" (70). As the therapeutic episode continues, Ken agrees with Bruce. He has developed some new ways of doing things. However, Ken is uncertain what the "new ways of doing things" are. Ken is able to construe the shared meaning conveyed by "new ways of doing things." However, Ken does not share the personal construction of the "new ways" which Bruce expresses. He construes himself as having developed new ways, but cannot construe those new ways. Ken goes on to say:

I don't know, it's sort of -- it still seems to always come -- it always seems to come from late nights I suppose, as soon as you're tired, as soon as you can't get to sleep you can't think. *struggle even more. (77-80)

Here Ken appears to again construe himself as engaged in what Bruce might describe as "old ways" of behaving. As suggested in previous discussion, Kelly (1962/1969) would describe Ken's apparent fluctuation in the way in which he construes himself as "slot rattling" (200). Ken appears to construe himself by alternatively using different poles of the same personal construct. At one time he construes himself as having found new ways of doing things. At another time he construes himself as still engaging in old ways of behaving.

Bruce follows Ken's comments by asking a question which follows from his understanding that Ken has found "new ways of doing things." Bruce does not appear to have construed Ken's previous construction in which Ken suggested that he was still engaged in "old ways" of behaving. Bruce asks Ken if he distracts "it" (81). Here we might speculate that "it" refers to the feelings which precede engaging in old ways of behaving. Ken responds affirmatively to Bruce (82). In the next question, Bruce seems to express the construction he intended to convey in the first instance, more precisely. He asks Ken if he distracts himself (83). Ken appears to share the construction conveyed in this second question. However, as in the similar previous instance, Ken may not share the personal construction conveyed in Bruce's comment. In response to Bruce, he says: "I distract myself" (84).

As the episode continues, Bruce again expresses his personal construction of what Ken has said. He comments:

So you've – you've really taken a lot of control of your own life in a way that hasn't been destructive like anorexia and those old feelings were. (85-86)

In this excerpt, Bruce suggests that he construes Ken as having gained control of his life. He also conveys a further construction. He suggests that he construes anorexia and "those old feelings" as having been "destructive." As an aside, the reader may note that the assumption was made earlier that "it" (77, 78) referred to feelings which precede old ways of behaving. The above excerpt suggests that Bruce too, construes "it" as being the feelings which precede Ken's previous style of behaviour.

Returning to the client-identified episode, we can see that Ken does not appear to share Bruce's construction of the constructions which Ken has expressed. Bruce expresses his construction of Ken's constructions in the above extract (85-86). Bruce construes Ken as having taken control of his life. However, Ken still appears to construe himself as sometimes not having control. He says that he still has nights where nothing seems to have worked (87-88). Ken adds that some days too, are difficult (88). He goes on to say: "I just want to be able to function and keep myself occupied" (88-89). Again, Bruce does not appear to construe the constructions expressed in Ken's comment. Bruce concludes the episode by saying:

It seems to me that you've discovered a way of supporting yourself in a lifestyle rather than being dependent on a sort of damaging anorexic lifestyle. (91-92)

This comment, and the comments which Bruce makes during the episode, suggest that Bruce has a construction which he is attempting to get Ken to share. He construes Ken as having found a way of behaving which is alternative to what he describes as, Ken's previously "destructive" way of behaving. During the course of the episode, Ken's construing is, in Kellian terms, "loosened." Ken is able to construe himself as sometimes having control. At other times he seems to construe himself as not having control. However, Ken appears reluctant to construe himself as only having control. He is reluctant to "tighten" his construing and thereby define himself as perhaps, "having control." Personal construct theorists would suggest that Ken's reluctance to tighten his construing is due to his experience of "threat." In some way the alternative way of construing, suggested by Bruce's comments, may pose a threat to Ken's construct system. Should Ken adopt the way of construing himself which is suggested by Bruce, Ken may need to change one of his superordinate constructs. To understand a little more about Ken's construct system, in the post-counselling interview I asked Ken to comment upon particular aspects of the episode which he had identified as having significance for him.

In the post-counselling interview, Ken said that in the therapeutic episode which he identified, he and Bruce had discussed how Ken had stopped being "dependent." They had suggested that Ken now had his independence. Interestingly, as we look back on the episode from the counselling session, we can see that the word "dependent" was initially used by Bruce. The word "dependent" expressed Bruce's construction of Ken when Ken was engaged in what Bruce described as "damaging" behaviour. Ken did not initially use this word to express his construction of himself when he was engaged in old ways of behaving. However, the post-counselling interview suggests that at the conclusion of the counselling session, "dependent" was an expression of a construction shared by Bruce and Ken. At the conclusion of the counselling interaction, both participants similarly construe Ken's previous behaviour. They share a social construction which is expressed by the word, "dependent." On the basis of Ken's comments during the post-counselling interview, we might also speculate that "have independence" is an expression of Ken's construction which is in contrast to the construction indicated by the word "dependent." This appears to be the construction which Ken makes using the opposite pole of the construct which Ken uses to construe people as "dependent."

In the post-counselling interview, I asked Ken to elaborate further upon what he meant when he construed people as "dependent." In Kellian terms, I asked Ken to elaborate the constructions which he might make using constructs superordinate and subordinate to the construct which he uses to construe people as "dependent." Before elaborating his

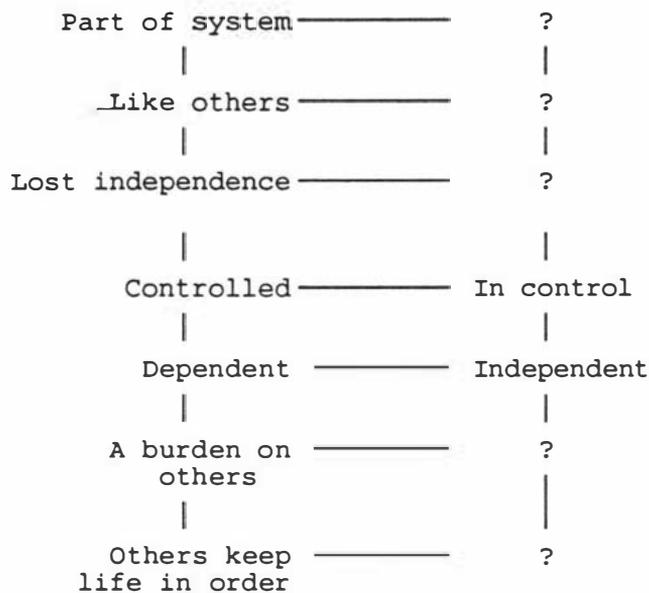
constructions, Ken said that he had previously been dependent upon others. However, at the conclusion of the counselling session, he construed himself as more "independent." We can now see that "independent," rather than "having independence," is the construction which Ken makes using the opposite pole of the construct which Ken uses to construe people as "dependent." Ken goes on to suggest that he construes an "independent" person to be "a bit more in control." Ken implies that, in contrast, a person who is dependent is "being controlled." When Ken was asked to comment further upon what a dependent person is like, Ken said that a dependent person is:

Always a burden on someone or something, you know. Dependent on medication or dependent on this person too, these people to keep your life in order or something you just sort of, and just after a while you'll always be dependent on people for the rest of it. You lose your independence, you become like these people who mould you to be. You become part of the system. (C4Tp2: 64-68)

Thus we may conclude that, for Ken, "dependent" people are "always a burden." People who are always a burden, are "dependent" on other people to keep their lives in order. Ken goes on to suggest that the disadvantage of being "dependent" is that a "dependent" person loses his or her independence. "Dependent" people become like those upon whom they are dependent upon. According to Ken, they become ultimately part of the system. At this point we may identify subordinate constructions and superordinate constructions in Ken's comments. The reader will recall that we can identify subordinate constructions by asking ourselves, "How do we know if a person is a ...?" If the blank space can be filled by a verbal expression, we can assume that the construction which was expressed was a subordinate construction. In this instance, we may ask what kind of people are "dependent." Referring to the above episode from the therapeutic session involving Ken and Bruce, we can see that "dependent" people are those people who are a burden on others. How do we know if people are a burden on others? According to Ken, people will be a burden on others if their lives are kept in order by other people. Thus Ken has expressed some subordinate constructions associated with his construction of people as "dependent."

In the interaction above, Ken has not only expressed constructions which we may assume are made using constructs which are subordinate to the construct which he uses to construe people as "dependent." Ken has also expressed constructions which are made using constructs which are superordinate to the construct which he uses to construe people as "dependent." To ascertain the order of superordinate constructions, we must imagine asking such questions as, "Why would you prefer to be ... rather than ...?" So that in this instance, we might imagine asking Ken, why would you prefer to be "independent" rather than

"dependent?" If we refer back to the previous excerpt from the post-counselling interview (C4Tp2: 64-48), we can see that Ken would possibly respond by saying that a dependent person is "controlled." In contrast, according to Ken, an "independent" person is "in control." Similarly, we might imagine asking Ken, "Why would you prefer not to be controlled?" Ken would possibly respond by saying because he would lose his independence. Thus, from discussion so far, we might assume that the constructions associated with Ken's construction of "dependence" could be displayed diagrammatically as follows:



Diagrammatic representation of Ken's constructions
associated with "dependence"

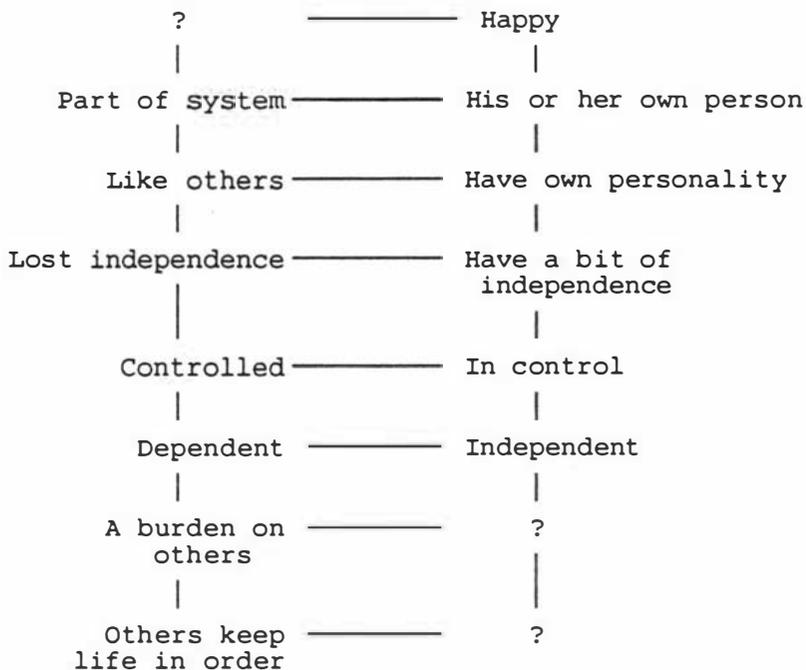
Of course we can check to ensure that the above order of constructions is reasonable. If we now use a "pyramiding" procedure, similar to that described previously, we should find that the expression of a particular construction, naturally follows from the expression which precedes it. For example, if we imagine asking Ken, "How do you know if someone is part of the system?" we find that the answer to this question is suggested by the diagram above. If Ken construes a person to be "part of the system," Ken will first have construed that person to be "like others." If we now imagine asking Ken what kind of person is "like others?" the diagram suggests that Ken would respond by saying that a person who is "like others" is someone who has lost his or her independence. Our checking of the diagram can continue in a similar vein for the rest of the diagram. If the answers we find ourselves provided with seem reasonable we can, tentatively at least, conclude that the diagram is a reasonable representation of Ken's constructions associated with his construction of people as "dependent."

Returning to the post-counselling client interview, Ken suggests that people who are dependent begin to look after themselves (C4Tp2: 71-72). He adds that he started to look after himself (72). Ken goes on to say that he had been seeking "answers" from the hospital clinic which he attended. He construed himself as "dependent" on the hospital for answers. However, in the post-counselling interview, Ken suggests that he began to question whether he was indeed dependent upon the hospital staff for the answers to his questions. He says:

Why was I sort of dependent on [name of hospital] for the answers, when I knew I wasn't going to get them? (C4Tp2: 73-74)

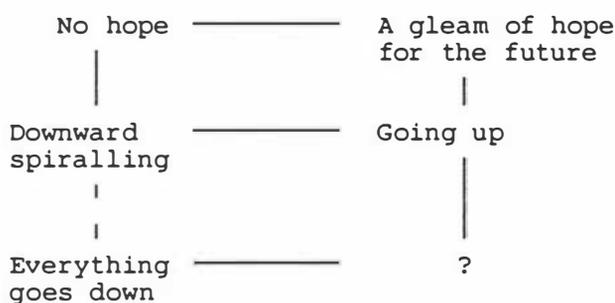
In this excerpt, Ken indicates that he has begun to construe himself as no longer "dependent" upon the hospital staff for answers to his questions. Earlier discussion suggests that in the counselling session, Ken's construing may have been "loosened" so that he now sometimes construes himself as "independent." At other times he construes himself to be "dependent." Ken did not "tighten" his construing during the counselling interview up to the point of the client-identified episode, or indeed during the episode. Though he construed himself as not dependent on the hospital for the answers, he did not now construe himself only as "independent."

To examine Ken's construct system further, in the post-counselling interview, I asked Ken how he would describe someone who was "not dependent" (C4Tp2: 75). As might be expected, Ken replied that such a person would be "independent." He added that he would construe an "independent" person to be "happy." Ken continued, suggesting that an "independent" person is his or her "own person." According to Ken, people who are their "own person," have their own personalities. Ken goes on to suggest that "independent" people have at least a small "bit of independence." Thus we might suggest that the following diagram provides an almost complete view of the order in which Ken's constructions associated with his construction of people as "dependent," are arranged.



Diagrammatic representation of Ken's constructions associated with "dependence"

As the post-counselling interview continued, Ken indicated that if one was independent there would be "a gleam of hope for the future" (C4Tp2: 82). I asked Ken what the situation would be like if there was no hope. In Kellian terms, I asked Ken to express his construction of a situation which was unlike a situation where there was "a gleam of hope for the future." Ken responded by saying: "Just downward spiralling" (C4Tp2: 86). In such a situation, Ken says that "everything goes down" (C4Tp2: 90). Interestingly, in the earlier character sketch, Ken said that he felt "down." As suggested earlier, perhaps at the time of completing the character sketch, Ken construed himself as being "dependent" upon others and as in a situation which was "downward spiralling." Returning to the post-counselling interview, according to Ken, a situation which is in contrast to being "downward spiralling" is one in which everything would "go up" (C4Tp2: 94). So now, we can venture to suggest that Ken has another set of constructions which he uses to describe the feelings of "dependent" or "independent." Ken's constructions of these situations can perhaps be represented in the following diagram:



Diagrammatic representation of Ken's constructions
associated with describing the feelings
of "dependent" and "independent" people

At the time of the post-counselling interview, Ken did not appear to have changed the way in which he construed himself. However, he had loosened his construing. As indicated earlier, Ken now construed himself sometimes as "dependent" and at other times, as "independent." I attempted to find out what role Ken's therapist (Bruce) may have played in loosening Ken's construing. Ken suggested that it was Bruce's use of the word "dependent" which contributed towards the change in the way Ken construed himself. The reader will, of course, recall, that the point was made earlier that Ken's use of the word "dependent" in the post-counselling interview, seemed to follow from Bruce's use of the word in the counselling interaction. The word, "dependent" did not initially appear to be used in the context of the counselling interview by Ken to indicate a personal construction. Rather, "dependent" appeared to be a word used to express Bruce's personal construction of Ken when he was engaged in what Bruce termed, "damaging" behaviour. Returning to the post-counselling interview, we can see that interestingly, Bruce's use of the word "dependent" to describe Ken, had an effect upon the way in which Ken construed himself and his previous behaviour. As suggested earlier, Ken may have construed himself as dependent upon the hospital staff for answers. However, he may not have previously construed himself as "dependent" because he was dependent upon other people for answers to his questions. In terms of personal construct theory, Ken may have shared the construct with which Bruce construed people as "dependent." However, Ken may not have previously construed himself as "dependent."

Presumably during the counselling interaction, Ken construed the construction of Ken which Bruce verbally expressed. Ken may then have tested the predictive validity of his construction of Bruce's construction. Ken may have construed the outcome of this construction to be validated. Hence, in Kellian terms, Ken may have come to extend the range of convenience of one of his constructs. He may have come to construe himself using the same construct with which he construes others as "dependent." Thus, we may say that the counselling interview had two therapeutic outcomes. First, during the counselling session, Ken "extended the range of convenience" of his construct system. Previously he had not

construed himself using the construct with which he construes people as "dependent" or "independent." During the course of the counselling interview, he construed himself as having been "dependent." Thus he came to share the construction that Bruce had of Ken. Bruce and Ken share a social construction. In the second outcome of the counselling session, Ken loosened his construing to construe himself sometimes as "dependent" and at other times as "independent." What wasn't evident up to this point in the post-counselling interview, was at what point in the interaction, Ken may have loosened his construing to construe himself as sometimes "independent."

To understand a little more of the process by which Ken may have changed his construing to sometimes construe himself as "independent," I asked Ken what, in retrospect, appears to be a rather obtuse question. I asked: "What would be the ultimate connection for you between 'dependent' and 'independent?' What was the connection you made for yourself there?" (110-111). Ken responded:

The connection obviously was I've got a coping mechanism together. Anorexia is a bit more of a control. It hasn't been controlling me so much lately. And the other one was the closure of the support group [eating disorders out-patient group]. It might have been a bit of forced independence but hey not to worry. (C4Tp2: 112-115)

Though my question had been unclear, Ken provides an answer that increases our understanding of his construing. Previously Ken construed anorexia as controlling him. However, now he construes himself as less controlled by anorexia. Hence, as we saw earlier, Ken is able to construe himself as sometimes in control. Referring to the preceding diagram we can conclude that, at least sometimes, Ken must construe himself as "independent." In addition, as Ken hints, the closure of the hospital clinic leaves Ken without the support he has had. Other people are no longer "keeping his life in order." Thus Ken has two sources of invalidating evidence of his construction of himself as "dependent." The first source is his construction of himself as sometimes in control and the anorexia as now less in control. The second source of invalidating evidence is his construction of the hospital staff as no longer providing him with support. Thus it is understandable that Ken now no longer construes himself as dependent upon other people. He now construes himself sometimes as "dependent" and at other times as "independent."

Before examining the therapist's perspective on the counselling interaction between Bruce and Ken, the reader may be interested to know how the interview progressed. As the counselling session continues, Ken states that just as he is no longer searching for answers from the hospital staff, he is no longer going to seek answers from his girlfriend. Again Bruce suggests that Ken has decided to "be in charge" (111) of his life. Ken responds by saying that

though this may be the case, he is still not able to be discharged from the outpatient clinic. This leads Ken on to talking more about the mood assessment that he has completed at the hospital. Ken describes his discussions with a staff member (R) who administered the evaluation. He says that in the past he has "sabotaged" the process of administering the evaluations. However, on the more recent occasion, Ken decided to respond honestly to the questions he was asked. Ken continues to describe the process of completing the mood evaluation. He says that he had been asked how many valium tablets he had been taking. Again he decides to answer the question honestly. Ken reported to Bruce that in two weeks he had taken only one tablet. He thought that was "pretty good" for him (186).

Bruce goes on to ask Ken whether he feels better without the valium tablets. Ken replies that sometimes he does. He says that he felt good recently when others were "smacked out" (193). As the interview continues Ken indicates that the doctor (R) said Ken should just "get out" (194-195). However, he goes on to say that the doctor is not worried if Ken decides to take valium. Bruce concludes that the doctor has given Ken responsibility for himself (199). Bruce adds that this is different to other actions of the hospital staff. At this point, Ken indicates that the doctor said that Ken is not an alcoholic (202) or a drug addict (204). Rather the doctor described Ken as an "abuser" (206).

As the counselling session continues, Ken describes himself as having been more relaxed lately. He then goes on to say that he is due to have an interview with the doctor later in the week. Ken says that if he is not "happy" (256) he will discharge himself from the outpatient programme. Later Ken explains why he has not been happy with the programme. He says:

You never had the chance to feel that you knew -- you knew quite a lot about yourself anyway. (265-266)

Bruce suggests that Ken may have had to "give up all context" (271) of himself so that "they can take you over" (273). Ken agrees. However, he goes on to say that he is taking more control now. He still doesn't trust the hospital staff and has decided to take charge of himself. However, as the interview progresses, Ken suggests that he will need to buy himself some scales to watch his weight. He describes a set of scales as "like a security blanket" (334). Following a question from Bruce, Ken suggests that hopefully he will become more confident that the "weight thing" (336) will become less important as he becomes more assured in his lifestyle of being free of anorexia (338). We might reasonably suggest that Ken is saying that he hopes that he will become less worried about what he weighs as he becomes more used to living like as someone who is free of anorexia. Ken goes on to say that when he feels good, he tells himself that he feels good (353-354). He also tries to tell himself that he looks "all

right" (358). Later in the interview, Ken's feelings become apparent. He says: "I just feel really bloody chuffed today" (368-369).

The counselling interview concludes with Ken indicating that he will possibly need to go onto the "dole" (unemployment benefit) (405). However, he is not as worried about that as he used to be. He adds that he is still having problems with money. Hence, he says he will need to get some part-time employment. Bruce concludes:

What you've been talking about here today is you being in charge, you're gathering more and more control back for me. It's not debilitating, it's not sort of being destructive control, it's actually constructive control. It's a – it's turned around. (427-430)

Ken follows Bruce's comment with a different viewpoint:

I sort of – I think it's a, just today – I'm a better person I think than when I was last here. Whereas usually I'm always – a bit better than the worse times – I mean there's still worse times but I'd rather talk about the better times for once. Sick of being morbid. (435-438)

Again, there appears to be a discrepancy between Bruce's construction of Ken and Ken's construction of himself. Bruce's above comment (427-430) suggests that he construes Ken as taking more control of himself. However, Ken again suggests that he does not always construe himself as being in control. As indicated earlier, he has not yet tightened his construction of himself to define himself as only in control and hence as "independent." We turn now, to consider Bruce's perspective on the counselling interview.

B. Therapist Post-counselling Interview

i. Therapist response to the therapeutic interaction.

Bruce described the session which he had with Ken as "a really superb session." He said that Ken had found things out about himself which allowed him to view himself differently. Bruce continued, saying that Ken had actually been "in charge" more, in what he had talked about, than on previous occasions when Ken had come to counselling. Bruce added that he felt that for the first time "Ken had made some progress towards becoming free of an anorexic lifestyle." He said that he thought that Ken was beginning to develop a "non-anorexic constructive lifestyle" rather than a "destructive anorexic" lifestyle.

When Bruce was asked if there were any occasions when he thought that something significant may have taken place for his client, Bruce reported that there were two such

occasions. Bruce indicated that in each case, the episode was of possible significance to his client and of significance to Bruce. The first episode which Bruce identified was when Ken discussed his trip away to visit his girlfriend. Bruce said that this was Ken's second visit to his friend. He went on to say that Ken had high expectations when he had first visited his friend. However, Bruce reported that when Ken had made his recent visit to his friend, he had expected nothing. In the post-counselling interview, Bruce suggested that Ken had recognised that he had been "less intense" when he had made his recent visit to his friend. According to Bruce, Ken made a "reasonably good connection with his friend" as a consequence of being less intense. Bruce went on to suggest that Ken was also less "spun out" about the hospital support group finishing because he was now "less intense."

The second episode which Bruce regarded as being of possible personal significance for Ken, was when Ken concluded that his lifestyle had gone from a "one kilogram gap to a two kilogram gap'." Bruce did not elaborate upon what he meant by his suggestion that Ken's lifestyle had changed in this way. However, as will become apparent later, during the counselling interview, Ken reports that he now allows himself to put 1 or 2 kilograms of weight on, or take 1 or 2 kilograms off. Previously he had allowed himself to increase or decrease his weight by only 1 kilogram. In the post-counselling interview, Bruce concludes that Ken now has more choices.

ii. The therapist-identified episode of significance.

When Bruce was asked which of the above two episodes he thought would have been of greatest significance to Ken, Bruce selected the first episode. The episode is preceded by the following exchange:

41 T: So-so the journey to [name of city] was really quite significant.

42 C: Yeah, the second time was. The first time was worse, you know.

43 T: The first time you came back really a -

The episode which Bruce selected as having possible personal significance for Ken follows:

44 C: It was a bit – But this time, yeah, it was – it was much better.

45 T: Do you think that was because you'd resolved some of the issues with F____?

46 C: Yeah, I suppose it'd be the second time **** I don't know. There's still some things
47 unresolved there, it's very bizarre. I've only sort of started to figure out what's
48 going there myself so – but I only – it doesn't really bother me any more.

49 T: So it's become less of an issue.

50 C: Oh yeah, sure.

51 T: Whereas before it was sort of the –

52 C: Yeah, I think it was more everyone else that's more outside. But you know, I
53 suppose it's more ** because everyone was going you know. But now** I sort of
54 realise they're still pretty built up to go on with their lives and think aaaah. I came
55 back and spent a couple of hours – it was really good. It's like the first time I was
56 up there the all time spent together I freaked, two hours and spent there not
57 much more.

58 T: First time was sort of getting ready.

59 C: Yeah, and sort of things didn't work out, and then I was resigned to that. And the
60 second time was just like **** it was just really comfortable, and mellow so it's quite
61 good.

62 T: Do you think that comfortable and mellow kind of contact was actually starting to
63 have an effect back here with you in ____ [name of town]?

64 C: Yeah, I think so. I think you could say I'm highly strung at the moment.
65 Sometimes I feel it a bit coming on.

66 T: What do you do when the – that arrives?

67 C: Go to sleep, you know, do something else, go out and do something else, get
68 occupied. Just go and see another person that I know, he always makes me feel
69 better, you know.

iii. Significance of the therapist-identified episode.

Prior to hearing the episode replayed, Bruce was asked to comment upon the significance of the above episode. He said that he thought that this episode was significant because he regarded the decrease in Ken's intensity as a "highly significant change" for Ken. Bruce added that he thought that Ken had made the connection between being less intense and getting better "results" with his friends. According to Bruce, Ken was able to allow himself a two kilogram space now, because he had got the better "results" with his friends.

When Bruce had heard the episode replayed, he said that he thought that he had "picked up" (T2Tp4: 7) on the difference in what Ken was saying from what he had said in previous counselling sessions. Here Bruce suggests that he succeeded in validating what he construed to be Ken's construction. At this point there is no evidence to suggest what Bruce may have construed Ken's construction to be. However, as the post-counselling interview continues, this becomes more apparent. Bruce goes on to say:

He was actually – actually valuing his own kind of status and his discovery, so he was linking himself with his discovery, therefore giving himself permission, I believe, to understand what he could do for himself which was different from how it had been in the past. (T2Tp4: 12-15)

In this excerpt, Bruce is suggesting that in the counselling interview Ken construed what he had said about his trip away. According to Bruce, Ken construed his visit to his friend as having been successful because Ken was less intense than he had been on his previous visit to his girlfriend. Before leaving this episode, the reader may note that the above excerpt contains reference to Ken's "discovery" about himself. The term "discovery" was also used by Bruce in his earlier counselling interview with Claire. There Bruce referred to Claire's "discoveries" about herself.

Returning to the post-counselling interview which followed Bruce's session with Ken, I asked Bruce whether he had wanted to emphasise the difference between what Ken had been saying in the counselling interview, and what Ken had said in previous counselling sessions. Bruce said that this was the case. However, he said that he also wanted Ken to consider why he and other people noticed the change in Ken. This comment is again reminiscent of Bruce's earlier comments with regard to Claire. Bruce wanted Claire too, to consider how she came to recognise changes in herself. In addition, Bruce suggested instances when other people may have noticed changes in Claire, during his counselling session with Claire.

In the post-counselling interview following Bruce's counselling session with Ken, Bruce indicates the behaviour which he construes to be indicative of Ken taking more control of his life. Bruce comments:

He [Ken] talked about not letting lack of sleep become the issue. He was actually giving himself space to go to sleep. He also talked about using valium less. He also talked about using booze less. So he's really – you know further on through the session – so he's really developing constructive controls which is a – the complete antithesis of the anorexic, destructive, self-destructive lifestyle. (C2Tp4: 19-24)

In the above excerpt, Bruce indicates what the alternative to an anorexic destructive lifestyle might be. In the post-counselling interview, I went on to ask Bruce what the opposite of such a lifestyle would be. In other words, I asked Bruce to elaborate his constructions associated with his construction of an "anorexic destructive self-destructive lifestyle." Bruce responded by indicating those constructions associated with his construction of an anorexic lifestyle. He also reiterated his constructions associated with the converse of an anorexic lifestyle. Initially Bruce said that the anorexic lifestyle involved not eating, not sleeping (31). He added:

Getting boozed, paralytic, getting into places where there was a chance of having your head beaten in and being killed in a punch up at a party, into valium in a big way, I mean completely zapping out on valium. So he was, I mean he was really into – and also have a pact with a friend to see who could top [kill] themselves first. Okay. So those, I believe, are all aspects of a self-destructive kind of lifestyle which is – which anorexia is definitely part of in my knowledge of things. And so what Ken was talking about today was a turn around. He was talking about constructive, getting sleep, cutting back on valium to the point that he wasn't using it at all, and not getting smashed with alcohol, and that – the connection he had made between the second visit to Wellington and the fact that it did produce a result that he's now recognising is the constructive aspect of things. So he's gone from destructive to constructive I believe. He's said, "I don't want to be like this any more". (T2Tp4: 33-44)

The above excerpt refers to the behaviour which Bruce construes as indicative of people who have a destructive lifestyle. Bruce construes people to be self-destructive, subsequent to construing their behaviour to be similar to that described in the excerpt above. The words used to express the behaviour of people whom Bruce construes to be "self-destructive," are expressions of subordinate constructions. Thus, Bruce may construe a person as "getting

boozed" and as "[getting] paralytic" and as "getting into places where there is a chance of that person's head being beaten in." Bruce may also construe a person in those other ways which he has described above. Should Bruce construe people as engaging in these behaviours, Bruce suggests that he would construe them as having a self-destructive lifestyle. Bruce's construction of people as having a self-destructive lifestyle is, in this instance, a construction made using a superordinate construct. Hence the construction itself may be described as a "superordinate construction." In this instance however, there is no hierarchical arrangement of subordinate constructions. Rather, we can suggest only that there are a number of subordinate constructions all of apparently equal status in Bruce's construct system. According to Bruce, each of these aspects may be present in a person whom he construes to be self-destructive. We do not know which of the above aspects Bruce must construe before he construes people as self-destructive. Neither do we know whether there is a particular number of those aspects which must be present before Bruce construes people as anorexic. All we do know is that, as indicated earlier, each of what Bruce describes as the aspects of a self-destructive lifestyle, are expressions of subordinate constructions of equal status in Bruce's construct system. We may then attempt to represent the superordinate construction, and the relevant subordinate constructions associated with Bruce's construction of self-destructive people, in the following diagram. For ease of display, these constructions are presented vertically. However, unlike other instances where subordinate constructions have been represented, there should be no assumption made that this representation indicates an hierarchical arrangement of constructions. Hence only one set of vertical arrows is provided in the diagram. These indicate that the expressions of constructions which follow are constructions which are subordinate to the superordinate constructions: "self-destructive lifestyle" and "constructive lifestyle."

Self destructive lifestyle	_____	Constructive lifestyle
Not eating	_____	?
Not sleeping	_____	Getting sleep
Getting paralytic	_____	Not getting smashed
Getting into places where there is a chance of your head being beaten in	_____	?
Into valium in a big way	_____	Cutting back on valium
Have a suicide pact with a friend	_____	?

Diagrammatic representation of Bruce's superordinate construction
and subordinate constructions associated
with "self-destructive" and "constructive" life styles

The reader will recall that Bruce had said that the episode he had identified was significant because Ken had made a "connection" (T2Tp4: 9) between his changed behaviour with his girlfriend and his successful interactions with his friends. Bruce concluded that Ken was able to do understand what he could do for himself. Bruce went on to suggest that there was a second reason why the episode he had selected was significant. He said that the episode was significant because Ken was "really developing constructive controls" (T2Tp4: 23) which Bruce concluded were the "complete antithesis of the anorexic, destructive, self-destructive lifestyle" (T2Tp4: 23-23). The above diagram suggests why Bruce may have construed Ken's previous comments as suggestive of a self-destructive lifestyle. The diagram also indicates why Bruce construed the comments Ken made within the present counselling session to be suggestive of the antithesis of this lifestyle. This discussion is taken up again later when we consider Bruce's comments in relation to the therapeutic episode which Ken considered to be personally significant.

iv. Analysis of the therapist-identified episode.

The therapist-identified episode begins with Ken commenting that his trip to visit his girlfriend had been "much better" (44) than his previous trip. Bruce goes on to check the predictive validity of his personal construction of what Ken has said. He asks Ken if he may have thought the trip was better because he had "resolved some of the issues" with his girlfriend (45). Ken validates Bruce's construction. However, he says that there remain some

unresolved "things" (46). Ken goes on to suggest that he has recently been able to make sense of his interactions with his girlfriend. He adds that "it doesn't really bother me any more" (48). A personal construct theorist might suggest that Ken now has a predictively valid construction of his constructions of events involving himself and his girlfriend. Previously he would have been unable to revise his construction sufficiently to have a predictively valid construction. Hence he may have experienced what Kelly describes as, "anxiety." Now, however, with a predictively valid construction, events involving himself and his girlfriend do not "bother" him.

As the counselling interview continues, it becomes evident that Ken may now have a predictively valid construction of his constructions of other events. He says that he realises that others are "built up to go on with their lives" (54). Ken then returns to his earlier discussion of his visits his friend. He suggests that on the occasion of his first visit he experienced, what Kelly describes as, "threat." Ken's comments (55-57) indicate that Ken may have had to change the way in which he construed himself, if, at the time of his first visit, he was to have a predictively valid construction of that visit. However, Ken goes on to suggest that his second visit was "comfortable and mellow." Again, Ken's comments indicate that he did not experience anxiety or threat during his most ^{recent} visit to his friend.

The reader will recall that in the post-counselling interview, Bruce said that he had "picked up" on the "connection" which Ken had made between his experience with his girlfriend and his recent changes in his behaviour. In the counselling interview, one might reasonably suggest that it was Bruce who initially construed some relationship between Ken's behaviour with his girlfriend, and his behaviour back in his home town. Bruce comments:

Do you think that comfortable and mellow kind of contact was actually starting to have an effect back here with you in [name of city]? (62-63)

We may reasonably conclude that Bruce construed a similar feature in Ken's description of his second visit to his friend and Ken's discussion of other events. Bruce's question (above) clearly follows from this construction. However, Bruce does not express his personal construction of Ken's construction in the counselling interview. As we have seen in the post-counselling interview, Bruce implies that he construes Ken to have valued "his own kind of status and his discovery" (T2Tp4: 12). Bruce does not elaborate the subordinate constructions which follow from this construction. Hence we do not know how Bruce identifies someone as valuing his or her "own kind of status or discovery." However, Bruce suggests that the advantage of Ken having valued "his own kind of status and discovery" is that Ken now gives himself permission to understand what he can do for himself (T2Tp4: 14-15). Perhaps we might speculate that simply, Bruce is suggesting that Ken realised that he had been less

"intense" in the more recent visit to his friend. The reader will recognise that the word "intense" was used by Bruce in the first part of the post-counselling interview to describe Ken as he had been prior to the recent visit to his girlfriend. To return to what sense Bruce made of Ken's constructions, Bruce may have been suggesting that Ken realised that he had got what he wanted when he was less intense. He had a "comfortable and mellow kind of contact" (62) with his friend. Bruce thought that Ken may have changed his behaviour in relation to his other friends as a consequence. In Kellian terms, Bruce suggests that he construed Ken as having revised his initial construction. Previously Ken may have construed himself as unable to do what he wanted to do. However, this construction was invalidated upon his visit to his friend. Bruce suggests that Ken revised his initial construction. Ken now construes himself as able to do some things for himself.

Ken's comment (64-65) which follows Bruce's question (62-63) suggests that Ken has not revised his construction, as Bruce implies. Ken replies:

Yeah, I think so. I think you could say I'm highly strung at the moment. Sometimes I feel a bit coming on. (64-65)

Ken suggests that he has not yet revised his construction. However, in Kellian terms, he may have loosened his construing. Sometimes, Ken construes himself as able to do what he wants to do. At other times, however, Ken suggests that he construes himself as not able to do what he wants to do. This conclusion appears consistent with conclusions drawn from analysis of the post-counselling client interview. In discussion of the post-counselling client interview, the conclusion was drawn that Ken had not yet tightened his construing sufficiently to construe himself as only "independent." Sometimes he construed himself as "dependent." However, at this point we can only speculate upon any similarity in conclusions drawn from analysis of the post-counselling client interview and the post-counselling therapist interview in this case. As yet, there is no evidence to suggest that Bruce's construction of people as understanding what they can do for themselves, is similar to Ken's construction of people being "independent." Similarly, there is no evidence to suggest that Bruce's alternative construction would be similar to Ken's construction of people as "dependent." Nevertheless, later discussion suggests that we are justified in suggesting that analysis and discussion of the client-identified episode and the client interview, and analysis and discussion of the first therapist-identified episode and the associated therapist interview, give rise to similar conclusions.

We return now to analysis of the first episode which Bruce identified as having possible significance for him and his client. In the last excerpt from the interview, which is presented above, Ken reports that he is "highly strung" (64). He goes on to say that he

sometimes "feels a bit coming on" (65). As indicated previously, there is no evidence to suggest what Ken may be referring to when he makes this statement. As stated earlier, we can perhaps speculate that Ken is referring to a feeling which may precede what Bruce describes as "destructive" behaviour. Reading on in the counselling interview it is perhaps more likely that Ken is expressing his anxiety about an event. Interestingly, in the counselling interview Bruce does not indicate what he understands Ken to be referring to. Bruce simply asks: "What do you do when the – that arrives?" (66) It may be that Bruce and Ken share a construction of Ken's initial comment. Such a construction may have arisen out of an earlier counselling interaction or from the present interaction. Alternatively, Bruce may have a personal construction of the construction which Ken expresses in his comment. This may be different from that construction which Ken expresses. Certainly, if Ken is expressing anxiety, we may conclude that Ken would construe Bruce's construction to be a predictively invalid construction of his construction. Should Ken construe Bruce as having an invalid construction, Ken may provide invalidating evidence of Bruce's construction. Bruce in turn, may construe his construction as invalidated. Regardless, it is possible that Bruce does not have a construction of Ken's construction which Bruce would construe as having predictive validity. Interestingly, Bruce avoids the possibility of invalidation by not expressing his construction of Ken's expressed construction. Bruce expresses only the subordinate constructions associated with his construction of Ken's constructions. Thus only those constructions which follow from Bruce's construction of Ken's construction can be invalidated. Of course, as previous discussions of personal construct theory have indicated, continued invalidation of constructions which follow from a particular superordinate construction, often precedes construct revision. However, for the moment, at least, Bruce avoids the apparent necessity of changing his construct system.

Clients participating in counselling with therapists who do not test the predictive validity of their superordinate constructions, may find that the constructions of those clients are frequently invalidated. Clients may construe their therapists' constructions as invalidating evidence of their constructions. Hence, they may adopt one of three possible courses of action. First, they may continue to express associated subordinate constructions until their therapists validate their constructions. Second, they may become, what Kelly would term, "hostile." They may continue to express their constructions despite construing their therapists' constructions as invalidating evidence of those clients' constructions. Clients thereby provide invalidating evidence of their therapists' constructions. Finally, clients may revise their initial constructions. If we return now to the counselling interaction between Bruce and Ken, we can see that Ken assumes that Bruce has, what Ken would construe to be, a predictively valid construction of Ken's construction. Ken assumes that Bruce understands what Ken means when he says that he sometimes "feels a bit coming on." Ken does not further elaborate the

meaning of what he says. Instead he goes on to respond to Bruce's question (66) as though Bruce is referring to the same event as Ken. At this stage, then, Ken appears to construe Bruce as sharing a similar construction. However, as we conclude analysis of this episode, it becomes apparent that Ken construes Bruce as either providing invalidating evidence of Ken's initial construction or as providing no validating evidence of Ken's construction.

The episode concludes with Ken responding to Bruce's question by stating what he does when "it" comes on. Notably, Bruce said that the episode he identified concluded prior to Ken saying: "But sometimes it catches up with you. You, you can't help it" (69). In this latter comment, Ken has reiterated his earlier statement. It would seem that Ken is again seeking validating evidence of his construction, whatever this may be. The transcript of the counselling interview suggests that, up to this point in the interview, Ken has not received invalidating evidence for his earlier expressed construction. Nevertheless, Ken may have construed Bruce as having a construction of Ken's construction which is different from the construction which Ken initially expressed. That is, Ken may have construed the construction which governed the question Bruce asked, as invalidating evidence of Ken's initial construction. Regardless, Ken continues to seek validating evidence of his construction by stating that "it" catches up on him and he can't help it.

The first therapist-identified episode in this instance, concludes almost immediately before the episode which the client identified as having significance for him. If we look back now to the analysis of the client-identified episode, we can conclude that Ken continues to seek validating evidence for his construction, despite what may be construed as the presence of invalidating evidence of his construction. As indicated earlier, Bruce does not appear to share the personal construction which Ken expressed in the sentence: "Sometimes I feel a bit coming on" (65). At the conclusion of the therapist-identified episode, Ken's comment suggests that Ken construes Bruce as having, what Ken might describe as a predictively invalid construction of Ken's initial personal construction. In his final comment in the episode, Ken expresses a similar construction to his earlier construction, in the sentence: "But sometimes it catches up with you" (69). Here Ken seeks validation for his construction though he may construe his previous construction as invalidated or as not having been validated in the counselling interaction. Later, as we have seen in the client-identified episode, Ken says: "It still seems to always come -- it always seems to come from late nights I suppose, as soon as you're tired, as soon as you can't get to sleep sometimes you can't think. *struggle even more" (77-80). Here, Ken appears to have expressed a similar construction to that which he expressed before in the phrase, "it still seems to always come." Then Ken has gone on to express constructions which may be subordinate to the first construction. He says: "It always seems to come from late nights...*struggle even more." The constructions expressed in this sentence are examples of what Kelly describes as, "contextual elements." Previous discussion

demonstrated that clients often express contextual elements of a superordinate construction to increase the likelihood that therapists may be able to construe their clients' constructions. In the present instance, Ken has expressed contextual elements of the construction which he expressed earlier. Thus we can see that Ken has adopted two of the three possible courses of action when faced with invalidating evidence, or no validating evidence of his constructions. He has continued to express his constructions. In addition, he has expressed the subordinate constructions, or contextual elements of his initial construction. However, as previous discussion suggests, Ken does not adopt the third possible course of action when invalidating evidence, or no validating evidence, of his constructions is provided. Ken does not revise his construction. Nevertheless, his construing appears to have been loosened as a consequence of his interaction with Bruce. This discussion will be taken up again in the later section when we discuss Bruce's comments in relation to the client-identified episode.

vi. The second therapist-identified episode.

The second episode which Bruce identified as having significance for him and his client, was preceded by Ken indicating that he still did not have confidence in the hospital staff (302). He still did not trust them (302). Bruce responds by expressing his construction of what Ken said previously. Bruce concludes: "You've decided that you're going to take some charge of this yourself rather than wait for it to arrive" (304-305). Bruce is suggesting that Ken may have decided to take charge of anorexia. Ken continues, suggesting that he may now allow himself to sometimes be two kilograms, rather than one kilogram, over the weight he thinks that he should be. Alternatively, Ken suggests that he can also now go two kilograms under his target weight. The therapist-identified episode follows:

314 C: (Yeah. I think it's probably because now sort of I've sort of dropped back a bit so
315 I think now it's probably not any different, it's just that I've gone below that sort of
316 mark now.) So I can still -- I know I can go up to that mark there and that I know
317 I don't want to go any lower than that mark there. Because I've studied it. If I was
318 over that mark, I wouldn't want to go up to the next one Bruce, I wouldn't want to
319 go up to the next one.

320 T: Right. I know what you mean.

321 C: I know often I'm in a two k g *

322 T: So you're got a two k g range, so you've a broader area of choice than the one kg
323 range.

324 C: That's the other thing – I mean – now I mean I know that if I get discharged from
 325 the outpatient programme I know I probably won't get weighed any more and that.
 326 I haven't got any scales or anything like that and the ones they've got there are
 327 pretty – goes – goes down to point something, you know so I'm not just too sure
 328 what to do about that. It's pretty sort of freaky.

vii. Significance of the second therapist-identified episode.

In the post-counselling interview, Bruce described the above episode as significant because Ken had said that he could now increase his weight by two kilograms, rather than by just one kilogram, above his target weight. Bruce said that this decision meant that Ken's chances of making choices were now "more expansive" (T2Tp4: 141-142). He added that this was, "a direct link from him [Ken] giving himself permission to believe that his second ____ [name of city] visit was successful because of him, not in spite of it" (T2Tp4: 144-145). Once again one may construe the construction expressed in Bruce's comment. However, it is doubtful whether the construction would be predictively valid. Nevertheless, we might again speculate that Bruce is suggesting that Ken construed his visit to his girlfriend as a success because of his own actions. Ken then concluded that he could also control his weight himself. Bruce suggests that once Ken had construed himself as able to control the outcome of one activity, he could construe himself as able to control the outcome of other activities. However, as we have seen, Bruce's construction of Ken's construction is inconsistent with Ken's construction. Ken has only loosened his construction of himself. He has not tightened it, as Bruce suggests.

As the post-counselling therapist interview continues, Bruce again says that Ken has given himself permission to have more choices (T2Tp4: 156). To better understand Bruce's construct system, I asked him to elaborate his subordinate constructions associated with his construction of someone as "having permission to have more choices." Bruce suggested that a person who had more choices could choose to eat, and choose to talk to friends about how he feels. Bruce goes on to say that a person who has choices should become "aware of their choices." He adds that one is then allowed to give oneself permission to "have a chance to pick and choose from a wider variety of things" (T2Tp4: 170-171). In the post-counselling interview, I went on to ask Bruce to elaborate his constructions of a person who does not have "permission to have more choices." According to Bruce, such a person would be "anxious," "very frightened," a "very unsure person" (T2Tp4: 181) and "almost invisible" (T2Tp4: 182).

Later in the post-counselling interview, I asked Bruce if he wished to comment further upon the above episode. Bruce said that he thought that Ken's language was in complete contrast to the language of an anorexic (T2Tp4: 192). He cited an instance when Ken said, "I'm fed up with being anorexic" (T2Tp4: 192-193). Bruce continued, saying that he had

replied by saying: "Well if you [were] fed up you wouldn't be" (T2Tp4: 193-194). In turn, Ken "fell on the floor laughing" (T2Tp4: 194). This interchange and Ken's response was construed by Bruce as being in complete contrast to "anorexic" behaviour.

Bruce also reported that the episode was significant for him because Ken linked his "first findings" (T2Tp4: 212-213) with his "second findings" (T2Tp4: 213). Bruce went on to say that Ken had to have the link before he made his "second discovery." (T2Tp4: 214). Again, we may construe what Bruce has said but it is doubtful whether we will have a predictively valid construction. Suffice to say, that Bruce appears to again suggest that Ken construed himself as able to control his behaviour in recent events, because he had succeeded in controlling his behaviour in an earlier event.

vii. Analysis of the second-therapist identified episode.

The episode begins with Ken expressing what appears to be a revised construction. He now construes himself as able to exceed his previously set weight limit. He has, as Bruce suggests later in the episode (322-323), increased his choices. Again Ken has loosened his construing. He no longer construes himself as able only to increase his weight by one kilogram. He can increase his target weight by a further two kilograms. However, once again, towards the latter part of the above episode, we have evidence that Ken has not reconstrued his earlier construction of himself as "dependent" on others. He has only loosened his construction. Ken now construes himself as sometimes having control. This is evident in Ken's comment:

That's the other thing – I mean – now I mean I know that if I get discharged from the outpatient programme I know I probably won't get weighed any more and that. I haven't got any scales or anything like that and the ones they've got there are pretty – goes – goes down to point something, you know so I'm not just too sure what to do about that. It's pretty sort of freaky. (324-328)

One final comment in regard to this episode is important. Previous discussion suggested that Bruce construes Ken as now having a constructive lifestyle and as having given himself permission to have more choices. Bruce appears to have construed Ken as having revised his earlier constructions of himself as "dependent" and as not having permission to have choices. However, Ken's comments suggest that Ken has only loosened his construing. He has not yet revised his self-constructions, and hence tightened his construing, as Bruce suggests. This said, it is important to include a further comment from Bruce which suggests that nevertheless, Bruce has construed what may be described as a contextual element of Ken's superordinate construction. In the context of the post-counselling interview, Bruce comments:

I guess I was supporting his supporting himself in a community without the links to the hospital being necessary, because I think he's really freaked out about the hospital system. He sees two of the girls that were in there with him back in there and really in desperate straights, and he's – he's bloody frightened that he's going to end up there, and he doesn't want to be there. And so he sees himself – by giving himself a two kilogram boundary, I mean that means he can drop a kilogram or go up a kilogram, and that feels all right for him. And I suspect that it will allow him to go two kilograms up rather than go two kilograms down, but he's actually, you know, giving himself permission to – to have more choices. (T2Tp4: 148-156)

In the above excerpt, it is apparent that Bruce construes Ken as being afraid that he will end up in hospital like the two girls he knows. He goes on to again suggest that Ken has given himself more control of what happens to him, by allowing himself to increase his weight further than he had allowed himself to increase it before. We turn now to Bruce's comments in regard to the client-identified episode.

viii. Therapist comment with respect to the client-identified episode.

Before discussing Bruce's comments in regard to the client-identified episode, the reader's attention needs to be drawn to some points made in previous discussion. The reader will recall that in earlier discussion a suggestion was made that analysis of the client-identified episode and the post-counselling client interview, and analysis of the first therapist-identified episode and the post-counselling therapist interview, gave rise to similar conclusions. However, the validity of this suggestion rests upon there being some similarity between the construction which Bruce expresses in "having permission to have choices" and the construction which Ken expresses in the word, "independent." In addition, we might suggest that there would need to be a similarity between the construction which is alternative to that expressed by "having permission to have choices," and Ken's construction of someone as "dependent." Parenthetically, the reader will recall from previous discussion that the contextual elements of the construction which is expressed by not "having permission to have choices," are expressed in, "a very anxious, very frightened, very unsure person, almost invisible" (T2Tp4: 180-182).

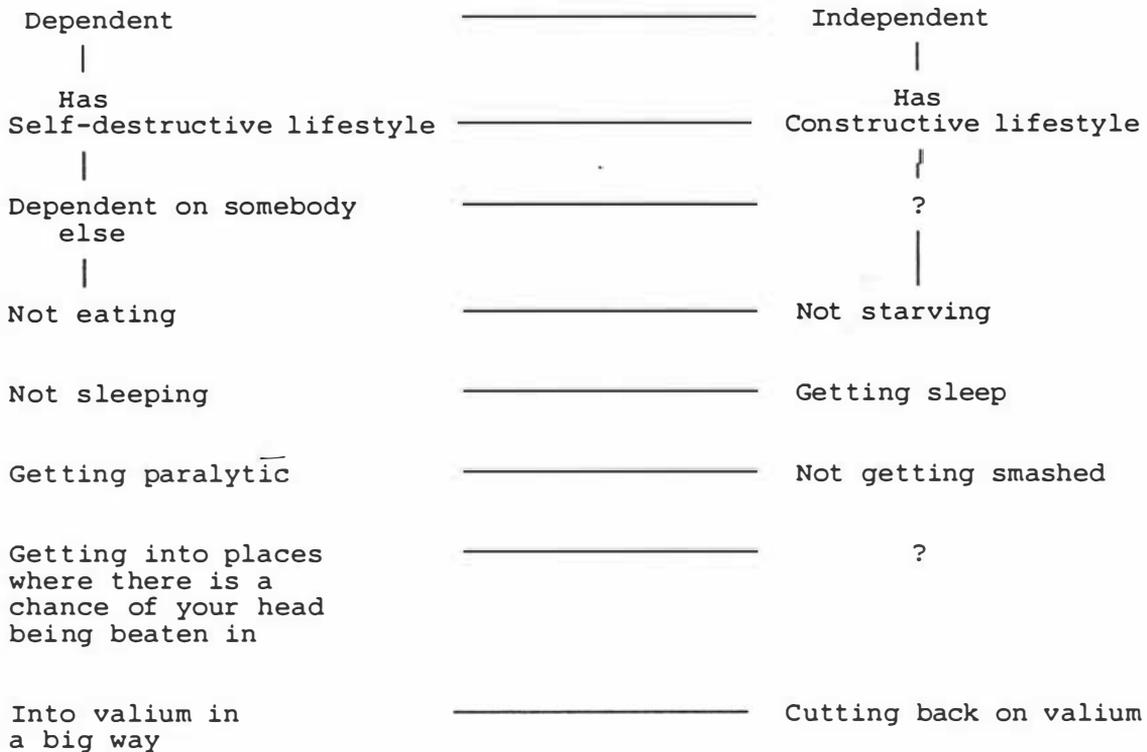
When Bruce commented upon the client-identified episode he elaborated in particular upon his last comment in the client-identified episode. In this comment he said:

It seems to me that you've discovered a way of supporting yourself in a supportive lifestyle rather than being dependent on a sort of damaging anorexic lifestyle. (91-92)

As indicated previously, this is the first reference in the counselling interview, to Ken having been "dependent." In the latter part of the post-counselling interview, Bruce elaborated upon the above comments. He said:

I think that the booze, the topping of himself or his friend, you know, was quite dependent on somebody else for something to happen. He wasn't – he wasn't independent of the destructive influences. But he is now – he is now doing that you see. He's actually not depending on booze or alcohol or drugs or starving himself to actually have any kind of status. He's actually moved away from that into a status that says, "I am independent of those things. I do not need those to be seen." I would think, yeah, he's actually stopped being invisible by feeding himself, because I mean he was also invisible. I mean, anorexia was part of the invisible. (T2Tp4: 58-65)

In the above excerpt, Bruce suggests that he construes a person who has, what he previously described as a "self-destructive lifestyle," to be "dependent." In contrast, he suggests that a person he who has, what he previously described as a "constructive lifestyle," to be "independent." Thus we may add to the earlier scheme of constructions associated with Bruce's construction of people as having a "self-destructive lifestyle," so that the diagram now appears as follows:

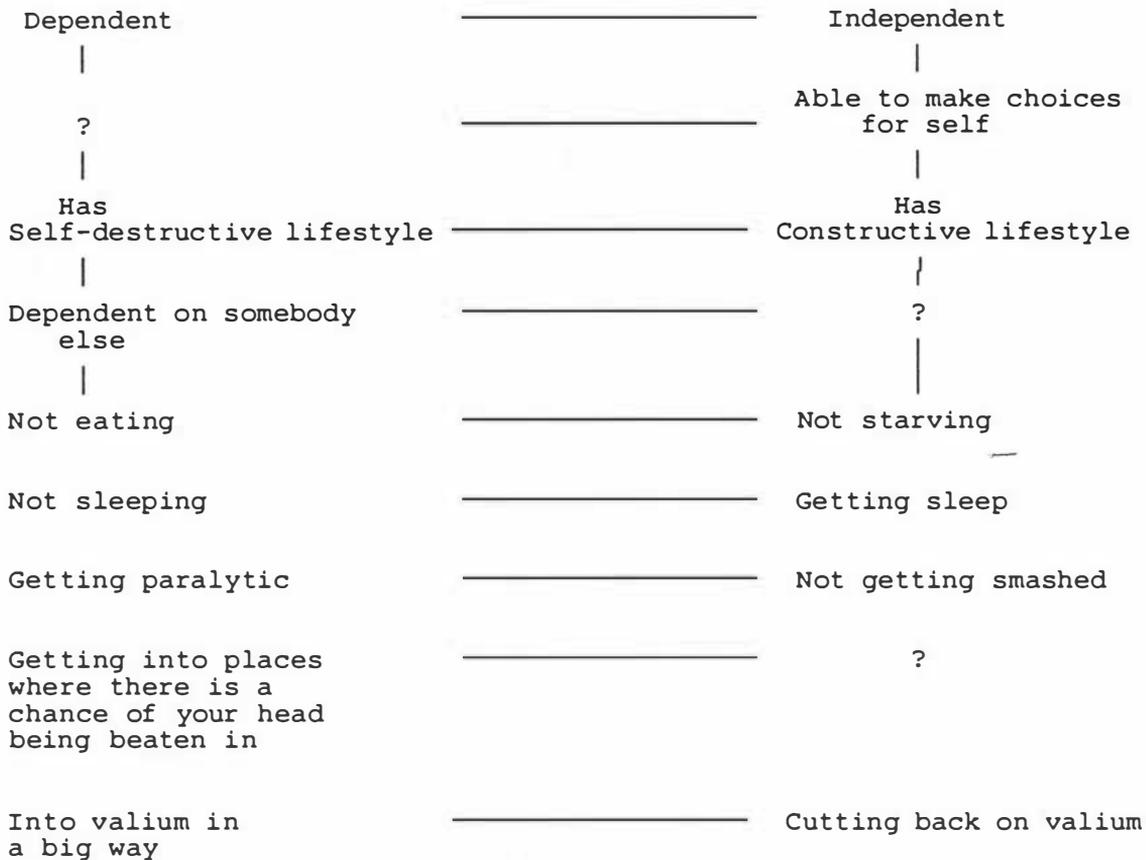


Diagrammatic representation of Bruce's superordinate construction
and subordinate constructions associated
with "self-destructive" and "constructive" life styles

If we return now to the earlier scheme of Ken's constructions associated with being "dependent" or "independent," we can conclude that there is evident similarity between the way in which Bruce construes Ken and others, and the way in which Ken construes himself and others. Ken construes a person who is "dependent" upon others, as someone who is a burden on others. According to Ken such a person is a burden on others, because others keep that person's life in order. Bruce too, suggests that a person who is dependent is someone who is reliant upon somebody else for something to happen. There is evident similarity between the contextual elements of the respective constructs which Bruce and Ken use to construe people as "dependent" or "independent." Hence, we may conclude that Bruce and Ken use similar constructs to construe people as "dependent" or as "independent." In this instance then, Bruce construes Ken's constructions using a similar construct as that which Ken uses to construe his constructions. Using this construct, Bruce construes Ken to have tightened his construing so that he now construes himself in a way which Bruce and Ken might construe as "independent." However, as indicated earlier, using a similar construct to that which Bruce uses, Ken construes his constructions differently from the way in which Bruce construes Ken's constructions. Ken has only loosened his construing. He now sometimes, but not always, construes himself as "independent." At other times he construes himself as "dependent."

We can then conclude that, as suggested earlier, Bruce has an invalid construction of Ken's constructions. Using a similar construct, Bruce construes Ken's constructions differently from the way in which Ken construes his constructions. Of course, this conclusion is based upon the analysis of Bruce's and Ken's constructions undertaken here. As previous discussion suggests, in counselling interactions such as those described here, the predictive validity, or predictive invalidity, of a person's constructions is determined by the construer. So, in this case, Bruce may not construe the outcome of his construction as evidence of the predictive invalidity of his construction. Hence Bruce may not construe his construction as predictively invalid. Of interest here, is that we can demonstrate the possible invalidity of Bruce's construction. In addition, from a review of the interaction between Bruce and his client, we can demonstrate that Bruce does not construe his construction of his client's constructions as predictively invalid. Yet, as previous discussion suggests, Bruce, understandably, does not revise his construction of Ken's constructions. The subsequent constructions which Bruce expresses, continue to be influenced by what has been shown to be, an invalid construction of Ken's constructions.

Discussion has suggested that there is a similarity in the personal meaning which Bruce and Ken intend to convey when they refer to someone as "dependent" or as "independent." However, there was also a suggestion made earlier, that there may be some association between Bruce construing someone as "independent" and Bruce construing someone as "understanding that they have permission to make choices." In the latter part of the post-counselling interview, Bruce validates this assumption. He says that people who are "highly independent" (100) are able to make choices for themselves. Thus we may suggest that the above diagram of Bruce's constructions could be revised further as follows:



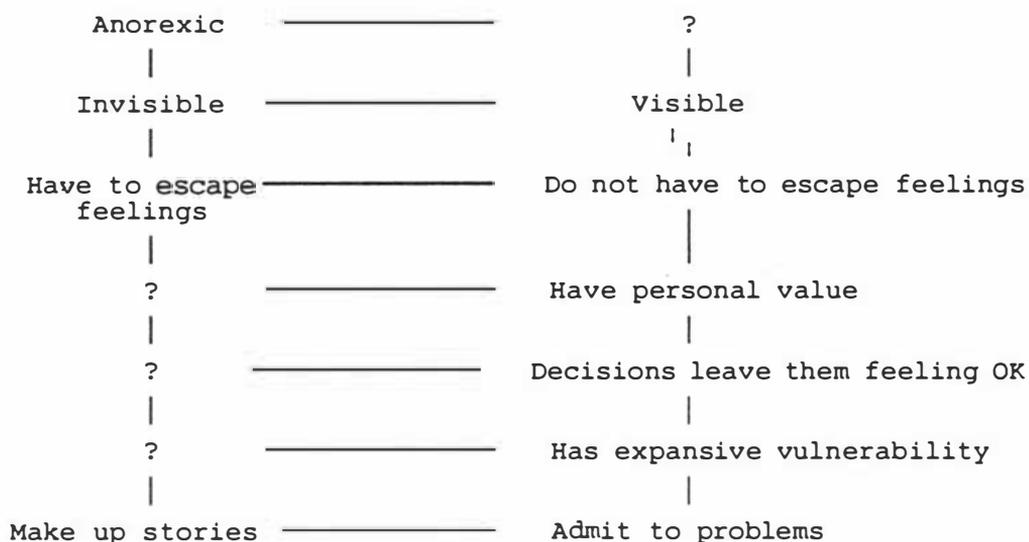
Diagrammatic representation of Bruce's superordinate construction
and subordinate constructions associated
with "self-destructive" and "constructive" life styles

Interestingly, if we now look back again at the diagram of Ken's constructions associated with being "dependent" or "independent," we can construe greater similarity between the two sets of constructions. Ken construes "dependent" people as being controlled and as having lost their independence. In contrast, he construes "independent" people as those who are in control. If we make use of our social constructs to separately construe the two diagrams of constructions, we might reasonably assume that there is a similarity between the way in which Ken construes "independent" people, and the way in which Bruce construes "independent" people. Bruce construes "independent" people to be able to make choices for themselves. It seems reasonable to suggest that this construction is similar to that which Ken expresses when he says that someone is "in control." Thus, returning to previous discussion, it is reasonable to suggest yet again, that though Bruce construed Ken as able to make choices, Ken had not revised his self-construction to construe himself in this way. Only sometimes, but not always, does he construe himself as "independent." Hence, he only sometimes, but not always, construes himself as "in control." We might conclude that Bruce's constructions would have had greater predictive validity had he construed Ken as only sometimes, but not always, construing himself as able to make decisions.

Finally, discussion of this episode is concluded by indicating Bruce's constructions associated with his construction of people as "anorexics." The reader will recognise that this is important since we might reasonably expect that Bruce's constructions in regard to anorexia govern many of the constructions which Bruce expresses during the course of counselling anorexics. Bruce suggests that anorexics are "dependent on lack of food" (T2Tp4: 67-68). According to Bruce, lack of food develops the "invisibility of anorexics" (T2Tp4: 68). Of course, in these comments Bruce is expressing his constructions of anorexics' constructions. Bruce continues: "If you give up anorexia then you're independent and visible" (T2Tp4: 70). He adds:

I think anorexics, and I mean Ken has really wanted to become invisible because, you know, he didn't want to be seen by anybody as having a problem. As soon as you have to admit to a problem then your vulnerability is expansive. So if you can become an invisible, ie. don't eat and blow away, peew, then you're OK, it's not a worry. But if you discover that you actually do have value and that you discover that your decisions can leave you feeling OK then I think – and I mean he said, "I'm actually going out and talking to people. Instead of being invisible I'm actually being visible. Everybody that I saw before I was anorexic, I've actually seen again now and I don't have to make up stories about them." So he's actually feeling comfortable with his visibility. He's not having to become invisible to escape from what he was feeling. He's feeling more comfortable with his visibility. (75-86)

From this excerpt we may conclude that Bruce assumes that anorexics construe people who are invisible as people who don't want to be seen by anybody as having a problem. A person who admits to a problem has an "expansive" "vulnerability." Bruce suggests that for an anorexic, a person in contrast to someone who is vulnerable, is someone who discovers that their decisions leave them feeling OK. Consequently they construe themselves as having value. According to Bruce, such people do not escape from what they are feeling. Consequently they are visible. Thus we can diagrammatically present Bruce's possible constructions of the constructions of people whom he construes to be "anorexics." This diagram follows:



Diagrammatic representation of Bruce's constructions of the constructions of people whom Bruce construes as "anorexics"

The importance of the above diagram to our understanding of the counselling interaction between Bruce and Ken now becomes more evident. Throughout the interview, Bruce has stressed that Ken is satisfied with his trip to see his girlfriend. In addition, Bruce says that Ken now recognises he has the ability to decide for himself. The above diagram suggests that Bruce will be searching for aspects in Bruce's behaviour which he may construe as indicative of a different way of being to the way in which Ken was before. Needless to say, in this interview, Bruce did construe Ken as having adopted a more constructive lifestyle than before. He also construed Ken as having demonstrated some of the characteristics which Bruce construes as indicative of a person who is in contrast to an "anorexic."

Summary

Analysis of the three selected interviews and the two post-counselling interviews, suggests that, once again, there is a difference between what therapeutic episode a therapist and a client may identify as having possible significance for the client. In this instance, Ken chose an episode in which Bruce's comment appeared to prompt some loosening of Ken's construct system. In contrast, Bruce selected an episode in which he construed there to be validating evidence of his personal construction of Ken's constructions. A further outcome of discussion with respect to this case study, is the conclusion that a therapist's constructions of the superordinate constructions of a client, significantly influences the counselling process. In this case, Bruce had, with good reason, construed Ken to be an anorexic. Following from this construction, were further constructions of Ken's superordinate constructions. Bruce construed Ken to have superordinate constructions which were similar to constructions of

other anorexics. As we have seen, Bruce's constructions consequently influenced how Bruce interacted with his client.

Conclusion

This chapter has included the results of completion of the first phases of analysis with respect to Cases Two, Three and Four. In the next chapter, the results of analysis completed with respect to Cases Five, Six, Seven and Eight will be presented.

Chapter Eight

Results Part III

In this chapter the results of the first and third phases of analysis completed with respect to Cases Five, Six, Seven and Eight are presented. Analysis follows a similar pattern to that apparent in the analysis completed with respect to Cases Two, Three and Four (Chapter Seven).

Case Five

Therapist (Susan) Client (David)

Background Information

From previous discussion (Chapter Five) the reader will recall that, at the time of interviewing, Susan was 54 years of age and had had 16 years counselling experience. Susan had received her initial counselling training from the New Zealand Marriage Guidance Association (now, MG). She described herself as an experienced practitioner in transactional analytic therapy but described her practice as primarily eclectic. When the interviews that follow were conducted, Susan was working as a counsellor within a New Zealand penal institution.

At the time of interviewing, David was 33 years of age and was a prison inmate. David described himself as having established a relationship with Susan because he had felt "safe" with her when he had his initial interview. (All prisoners have an interview with the counsellor at the prison upon entry to the institution, and may request counselling subsequently.) David said that he had felt "comfortable" with Susan from his first meeting. He added that Susan had encouraged him. At the time of the research interviews, David commented that he expected the interview to involve some "clarification" and "probing." He described clarification and probing as seeming to do the most good. David said that he hoped that the interview would provide him with more understanding of himself.

The reader should again note that the researcher's understanding is that participation in counselling by prisoners is regarded very highly by prison authorities. With reason then, we may question whether the counselling interactions discussed below would have taken place had the clients not been prisoners but presented with similar problems and had ready access to a counsellor. With this thought in mind we proceed now to discuss the first of two cases in which Susan counsels a prison inmate.

Therapist Character Sketch

Susan's character sketch and my verbal prompts follow:

T: Um Susan is probably not known as well to her friends as she is to me. She's got a really wide variety of friends, some who are in, who are also colleagues and some who have nothing to do with counselling business at all. And then she's got friends that are part of couples so – and that-that provides her with a real sort of solid base of resources for unwinding and getting away from work or whatever. And that's neat. And I suppose um she doesn't really tell many of them all her secrets. There's ah – there would only be one handful that-that she would really be absolutely totally honest with. Um when I say honest she's always honest, but I mean she would tell everything, bare all her soul bits. Um as far as her friends are concerned. Aah she um she's a very practical woman and is very good at making things and doing things in the household, enjoys them, gardening and um all those sort of things. A lot of the things she wants to do more of when she retires, wants more time. Goodness knows when that'll be. Um very fond of family, very close, without-without – I mean close but not suffocating and not – there's lots of freedom and the things she admires about her kids is that they're able to say no to her, have been to for years, in ways she couldn't have with her parents, or in-laws or that sort of thing, and her kids in-laws like can and she really likes that. Um, is very loyal, aah, she has a weird sense of – not weird sense o- mad sense of humour, fun sense of humour. Um, sometimes does, says naughty things that shock people. Aah, not in a nasty way but you know, and sometimes when they think she's very ladylike I think they're shocked because she uses words that they don't think she should, and her mother certainly tells her that she didn't bring her up to be like that. Um what else? She loves challenges. Um she loves learning. She's-she'd done a lot of extra learning that – to do with her job and her counselling and that sort of thing. Um, that a lot of her friends who are never connected would never understand that she even does. 'Cos she doesn't talk to them about her business things. Um so she likes doing that. She likes new things and part of that she discovered a few years ago, um was about her name. She found the significance of her family name, aah in that the first Susan was a pioneer in the sense that she was a baby coming to New Zealand in 1848 coming round the Cape of Good Hope, and actually named after the captain of the ship. And um so it was decided somehow or other in the family that each eldest daughter, or the first daughter of each generation, would be called Susan. And she was always very proud of that. Sort of like a bit of history and her mother's often told her about when she was little she

would go places and say, "Hi, Hello, I'm Susan." And her mother told her a couple of years ago, I remember, she couldn't help grinning because she still does it. She still says, "Hi, I'm Susan" and introduces herself, often without her surname. And often people say Mrs or Mrs or Ms or Miss and she says, "I'm Susan" and so I mean that's-that's been interesting. But she's sort of been a pioneer like her forebears, her early Susans. They broke in the land and she's broken in jobs and she made that connection which was really quite, quite nice. She's like that. Um she'd secretly love one of her grandchildren to have the name but she won't, she won't put that on her kids.

R: ****

T: That's a bugger. [Laughter.] She's had a bit of a hang-up in the past about not having qualifications like some of her colleagues have and but she's mostly given that away, mostly given that away. And I suppose I'm, I suppose it's registered because why it's registered because when she sees names on things like her name on the CIT and she hasn't got as many letters after her name as the others. And so it still registers. It doesn't hurt and it doesn't make her feel inferior at all because she's knows she's as good as them because she gets the feedback from clients and from other people, and from her colleagues. Um she's ah in a partnership that's been t- um -- it's always, you know, when people say, "How long have you been together" she looks at them and thinks my god, it's longer than your age, and she sort of thinks hells bells, you know. You're ancient, getting ancient. And and yet there's also a part of her that's proud of that because it certainly hasn't been smooth or anything like that. She's learned a hell of a lot of it from it in the relationship, and her partner is really supportive and a strength to her. Um and that's not to say that sometimes he's not those things. But ah that's all right. She's pretty happy, very positive, um very supportive of her family and friends without intruding. Gets lots of feedback from her daughter about that. She's got a daughter and two sons, and the daughter lost a child this year and ah who was nearly three and it was, that's been a-a learning and a growing and a sadness and a lot of stuff about that for-for Susan herself and also learning about her daughter which was a lot of good things in that sense of seeing her daughter grow and her strength and-and what her daughter's given her feedback of what she's been able to do because Susan's been the way she's been and that's a -- that's a real treasure. She-she's ah got good relationships with her extended family. One was a struggle in the sense that the gap between her only sister and herself because of age difference and the differences in

them, but that's-that's really come together beautifully with her and she has learned a lot about herself from that. Um, she really likes living and working with people and seeing them grow and seeing them develop, that's exciting, both from her tutoring side and the counselling side. I've never talked a story as long as this about Susan before. Aah she's a pretty happy person really. That's probably got to be it.

TABLE 7

List of construed verbal expressions of role construct poles and their classification

The following is a list of construed verbal expressions of role construct poles, presented in the order in which they appear in the transcription of Susan's character sketch. These are categorised according to categories listed in Appendix 12. Numbers indicate the number of occasions in the character sketch in which some construct poles were expressed.

Construct pole	Category
Not known	Likes ... working with people
Has ... friends (x2)	Sociability
Doesn't ... tell ... her secrets	Sociability
Honest (x2)	Integrity
Would tell everything	Integrity
Would bare ... her soul bits	Integrity
Practical	Integrity
Good at making things	Competence
Good at doing things	Competence
Enjoys making things	Competence
Enjoys doing things	Pleasure
Enjoys gardening	Pleasure
Wants to do more	Pleasure
Wants more time	Aspiration
Fond of family	Aspiration
Close (x2)	Affect
Not suffocating	Affinity
Admires her kids	Sociability
Loyal	Affect
Has a ... sense of humour (x2)	Commitment
Says naughty things	Pleasure
Ladylike	Verbal behaviour
Loves challenges	Responsibility
Loves learning	Intellect
Done ... extra learning	Intellect
Doesn't talk (to friends)	Intellect
Likes new things	Sociability
Proud (x2)	Pleasure
Pioneer	Satisfaction
Broken in jobs	Role
Had a ... hang-up	Initiative
[Does not have] qualifications	Affect
Given hang-up away (x2)	Competence
Knows she's .. good	Affect
In a partnership	Certainty
Ancient (x2)	Affinity
Learned ... a lot (x2)	Wellbeing
Happy (x2)	Intellect
Positive	Affect
Supportive	Certainty
Has ... good relationships	Supportiveness
Likes living ... with people	Sociability

Likes ... working with people	Sociability
Likes ... seeing people grow	Sociability
Likes ... seeing people develop	Sociability

A cursory glance at the table above suggests that the constructs with which Susan construes herself can be classified as being associated with 17 of the possible 21 categories used in the present study. However, Susan expresses more constructions associated with sociability (19%) affect (13%), and pleasure (11%), than constructions associated with integrity and intellect (9%), competence (7%), affinity (6%), aspiration, satisfaction, certainty and well being (each 4%), and commitment, verbal behaviour, responsibility, role, initiative, and support (each 2%).

Client Character Sketch

David's character sketch and my verbal prompts are given below:

C: David is um a very quiet shy person. Um he's um has um lot of good qualities like um ooh.

R: OK, you're fine. David has a lot of good qualities like?

C: Um likes to do a job that's um really nice you know. Um likes to help other people.

R: Right.

C: Um working at things as um doin' it properly.

R: Yeah.

C: Having the job done not untidily.

R: Right.

C: He'd probably rather have it done um um not so much – ooh probably too perfect is probably a um negative aspect but um he is conscientious for work um and trustworthy. Um patient, very patient, tolerant and a very good friend. Um so he's loyal to-to friends. Um um David is quite talented at um artistic things.

R: Yeah.

C: And this um aah yeah seeing that as an aspect that is improving um each week.
Um mm yep, mm aah I can't think of anything else.

R: OK.

TABLE 8

List of construed verbal expressions of role construct poles and their classification

The following is a list of construed verbal expressions of role construct poles, presented in the order in which they appear in the transcription of David's character sketch. These are categorised according to categories listed in Appendix 12. Numbers indicate the number of occasions in the character sketch in which some construct poles were expressed.

Construct pole	Category
Quiet	Verbal behaviour
Shy	Sociability
Has ... good qualities	Difference
Likes to do a job that's ... nice	Competence
Likes to help (other people)	Supportiveness
Likes ... working	Pleasure
Likes ... doin' it properly	Responsibility
Likes ... having it done not untidily	Responsibility
Too perfect	Competence
Conscientious	Commitment
Trustworthy	Integrity
Patient (x2)	Tolerance
Tolerant	Tolerance
Good friend	Role
Loyal	Commitment
Talented	Competence

A cursory glance at the table above suggests that the constructs with which David construes himself can be classified as associated with 11 of the possible 21 categories used in the present study. However, David expresses more constructions associated with competence and tolerance (each 18%), than constructions associated with responsibility and commitment (each 12%), and verbal behaviour, sociability, difference, supportiveness, pleasure, integrity, and role (each 6%).

Analysis of Post-counselling Interviews

As will become evident in subsequent discussion, methodological problems were encountered during the course of completing the interviews for this case study. Nevertheless, this case study is included since some useful analysis of the counselling interaction remains

possible. In addition, of course, inclusion of this case study and discussion of the methodological difficulties encountered, highlights some of the problems associated with completing research in naturalistic counselling settings.

A. Client Post-counselling Interview

i. Client response to therapeutic interaction.

David reported that he was "exhausted" because the counselling interview was very "in-depth." He added that he realised that more "damage" was done when he was younger than he had previously acknowledged. David continued, to say that what had happened in the counselling interview discussed in this study, was "good."— He went on to say that the counselling he had experienced had been "different" to the counselling he had experienced previously. Here the client did not make clear whether he was referring to the counselling he had previously received from Susan, or to the counselling he had received from a counsellor other than Susan on an earlier occasion.

When David was asked to identify any points in the interview when he felt that some significant change had taken place for him, David identified one section of the interview. He said that during this section, "things had started to snowball." He had got excited. He went on to say that earlier in the week, he had been trying to find Susan because an incident had taken place in the prison which led him to be scared that counselling would stop.

ii. Client-identified episode.

David located the section of the tape containing the episode he had identified as having particular personal significance. However, unlike other clients discussed in this study, David was unable to locate the beginning and end of the therapeutic episode to which he referred. This has made analysis and discussion of this episode difficult. Nevertheless, some useful information can be obtained from analysis of the section of the counselling interview which David said included the client-identified episode. Hence, this section is included here. Analysis and discussion of the section follow.

As in previous instances, since the complete transcript of the counselling interview is not included here, it is appropriate to provide the context of the section of the interview which contains the client-identified episode.

The counselling interview begins with David speaking to Susan about his efforts to find her earlier in the week. David had thought that Susan was due to come to the prison on a day when Susan was, in fact, not due to be at the prison. David had become anxious and had thought that Susan may have been injured. To David, his feelings were all "very familiar" (60). Later David found out that Susan was not expected at the prison on the day he had been looking for her. However, further on in the interview, he said that the feelings he had were

"so real" (102). It is at this point that the section of the interview which David identified as including an episode which had particular significance for him, begins. Henceforth, in the interests of clarity, this section will be referred to as the client-identified episode. However, the reader should appreciate that this description does not accurately convey the nature of the counselling interaction given below.

102 C: Yeah. And it was – and it – it all seems so real you know, like I'd been there
103 before you know.

104 T: Right. So we need to go back to that then to find out where this memory comes
105 from, this sort of familiar feeling.

106 C: Mm.

107 T: And also you said you were scared of losing me.

108 C: Yeah.

109 T: So it really – do you mean of you losing me or do you mean that something had
110 happened to me?

111 C: A bit of both. I-I thought that um -- well the way my mind was working was that
112 say for instance it followed through that you had been attacked and that you were-
113 would be-been removed from the prison and then therefore my counselling would
114 cease.

115 T: Right.

116 C: And everything like that, you know, between us. Not so much with Lauren. That
117 would just carry on.

118 T: So the counselling's important to you.

119 C: Yeah.

120 T: And the counselling could maybe go on with someone else.

121 C: Um – no -- well – well what I actually felt like was that our counselling would stop.

122 T: Yes.

123 C: You know, even though I do see Lauren now and again.

124 T: Right. And Jonathon.

125 C: And Jonathon. It's not often now.

126 T: Uh ha.

127 C: But ah it was just that um – you know – that was – feeling I had while I'm here

128 is unique so the other counselling of you –

129 T: Right.

130 C: [Sigh.]

131 T: I hear that sigh.

132 C: Mm.

133 T: Yeah.

134 C: 'Cos there's a lot of stuff um – to – I don't say when I'm here.

135 T: That you don't say when you're here.

136 C: Yeah. It goes on in my thoughts.

137 T: Right.

138 C: And I think well why didn't I say that when I was, you know, when I'm in my cell.

139 T: Right.

- 140 C: Wonder what would say that when I was in the session.
- 141 T: Right.
- 142 C: It's just still that part of me that wants to lock those little secrets away.
- 143 T: Yes, yeah, right. Yeah.
- 144 C: And it's um – this is really good actually. What's happening today.
- 145 T: Good, good.
- 146 C: Um. So that's what it was like um so once it's ah I saw J__ at the same day at
147 night on Tuesday and then um – then yesterday I was just right again.
- 148 T: Right, right.
- 149 C: And I was getting – just – I just mellowed right out and I was, everything was
150 honky dory you know.
- 151 T: So it sounds like two things David. It sounds like on the one hand you were, you
152 had this familiar feeling that you were going to lose someone.
- 153 C: Mm.
- 154 T: And on the other hand it's that you're saying that this counselling is different from
155 the other counselling that you had with the other two.
- 156 C: Yeah, mm.
- 157 T: Counsellors. And that you don't say some things here and sometimes you wish you
158 had said some of the things here.
- 159 C: Yeah. And sometimes I will say um – say in Lauren's sessions –
- 160 T: Mm.

161 C: I will say it is like in -- um -- it's like -- I haven't - oh how do I explain it. -- It's like
162 I'm on revision, it's like revision.

163 T: Yeah.

164 C: So when I go into another counselling situation

165 T: Right.

166 C: I've already revised what I was going to say to you sort of thing.

167 T: I see, I see. Like you're going over the same ground with someone else.

168 C: Yeah and other things fall out. Hmm.

169 T: I see.

170 C: You know. Hmm.

171 T: Like what other sort of things fall out?

172 C: Um -- well it's like ah oh for instance this dream that I had. I never mentioned that
173 to you but I had mentioned it to Lauren and ah it's very significant and I didn't
174 realise that.

175 T: Right.

176 C: And that it's um -- it was very horrific. It woke me up and I thought I'd been
177 asleep for just an hour or so but in fact I'd been sleeping a whole-the whole night,
178 and parts of the dream have surfaced from, just from day to day.

179 T: This last couple of days?

180 C: Yeah, um within the last three weeks.

181 T: I see, I see.

182 C: Well that session I had with Lauren oh um -- yeah the last time I had that dream
183 before that, so that's over three weeks ago.

184 T: Right.

185 C: And also this other drawing I've done lately has-has come up since then too.

186 T: Right.

187 C: Um --

188 T: So is this dream that you had, did that reconnect with the experience this week
189 when you said that you thought that you'd -- you know, that the familiar feeling of
190 losing someone, so that dream's connected to that.

191 C: Yeah.

192 T: OK.

193 C: And things even on TV are a bit being like huge messages coming through. Hmm.

194 T: Right.

195 C: And TV was my first addiction sort of thing.

196 T: Right, yep, yeah.

197 C: Um that's it's like that's where it's like everything, it's quite spooky really because
198 of this fright. Things have been -- messages have come in from all directions you
199 know, and sometimes it's a little too much for me to handle.

200 T: Right.

201 C: Um -- and that's sort o- -- another thing too was I last week um -- I felt like my
202 studies and everything like that was just getting too much and I was, my mind was
203 churning over.

204 T: Mm, right. So one of the things you – we all have to be careful is that I mean you
205 can – there's so much, so many messages that you can read into – read from all
206 sorts of things like, you know you can read the stars column.

207 C: Mm.

208 T: What do you call it? The –

209 C: Yeah um.

210 T: You know that thing I was talking about, that 'You and Your Stars', you know, that
211 give you messages about your day.

212 C: Right.

213 T: And you can hear things on TV and you can – so sometimes you can actually read
214 more than is really there.

215 C: Right.

216 T: You know, like you have to be careful of that sort of thing. That's what I guess I'm
217 saying David.

218 C: Mm. Yeah. Well what one of the things was-was this programme that's coming on
219 TV and they were showing the shorts of it and what the girl on it. Her mother was
220 an alcoholic and she just yells out to her girlfriend, "You don't know what it's like
221 to live with an alcoholic."

222 T: Aah right.

223 C: And it-it is –

224 T: So that's the message, I see. I can understand that one.

225 C: Yeah.

226 T: Yes.

- 227 C: And-and I sort of
- 228 T: And like that's the work you've been doing for yourself.
- 229 C: Yeah.
- 230 T: And it's like hearing it from the other side.
- 231 C: Right.
- 232 T: Yeah, crikey. It's sure
- 233 C: Because I-I had the tendency to-to minimise a lot of these things that's happened to
234 me.
- 235 T: Mm hmm.
- 236 C: And um, and put them or just block them out completely.
- 237 T: Right. So who's the, who's the alcoholic that you would say, "You don't know what
238 it's like to live with an alcoholic"?
- 239 C: Dad.
- 240 T: Mm.
- 241 C: Mm. Yeah. Um.
- 242 T: And who else?
- 243 C: Myself.
- 244 T: Mm hmm. But mostly for Dad isn't it?
- 245 C: Mm.
- 246 T: Yeah.

247 C: And because I --

248 T: Dad.

249 C: Yeah.

250 T: Yeah.

251 C: It's becoming more and more open up. A while ago I-I thought well there's an aw-
252 -- you know I've just made it as a just a very um general statement. I thought well
253 there's an awful lot of damage done.

254 T: Mm hmm. Mm hmm.

255 C: But I haven't even touched half of it.

256 T: Mm.

257 C: That's what it feels like.

258 T: Right.

259 C: Because I've blocked a lot of it out.

260 T: Right.

261 C: Um -- and it was quite good because Lauren, I saw Lauren yesterday.

262 T: Mm.

263 C: And it's -- this is enabling me to go over it again.

264 T: Mm.

265 C: And I've got it a lot-a lot more clearer. Um -- you know you, even improve it's like
266 when I was -- I-I've been just scratching the surface you know, all this time.

iii. Significance of the client-identified episode.

Prior to hearing the above section of the interview, David did not add anything to his earlier statements about the significance of the episode. Upon hearing the episode, David said that it was significant to him because things were "touched on" in "more detail" (C5Tp2: 4) than before. He added that he recognised a "pattern" (C5Tp2: 6) related to what had happened to him in the past and his behaviour towards his daughter (C5Tp2: 6-8). David does not elaborate upon how he behaved to his daughter in the past. However, in the transcription of the counselling interview, David suggests that he sexually abused his daughter. In the context of the post-counselling interview, David appears to be suggesting that what happened to him in the past may have had some influence upon his behaviour with his daughter. Parenthetically, a personal construct theorist would suggest that it is not the events which occurred in the past which influence a person's present behaviour. Rather, a person's construct system changes as that person construes events. As indicated previously, a person's constructs govern the way in which that person construes current events. Hence, a person construes present events using constructs which have arisen from the construal of previous events. A person's behaviour follows from that person's current constructions. Thus, it is not past events which directly affect present behaviour. Rather, it is how a person construed previous events, which influences how a person construes current events, and hence how that person behaves in the present.

Returning to the post-counselling interview, David suggests that previously he had considered the possibility that what had happened to him in the past may have influenced his behaviour with his daughter. However, he adds that he doesn't want "that" (presumably the knowledge that this may be a possibility) to affect him in any way, or to put him back "into denial" (C5Tp2: 12). Presumably here, David is referring to the possibility that he may deny that he behaved in the way he did previously. David goes on to say that in the past he had been concerned about the possibility that he may be put back "into denial." However, he adds that now he wants to explore this possibility

Later in the post-counselling interview, David says that when he was younger he experienced similar problems to those which his daughter may now be experiencing. David indicates that he has been told that his daughter may have "trouble at school" and become "quiet and shy and withdrawn" (C5Tp2: 24-25). David recalls himself having "trouble at school" and being "quiet and shy and withdrawn." Interestingly, as the reader will have noted, David appears to express similar constructions of himself in the post-counselling interview, as he did in the earlier character sketch. There too, David construed himself as "quiet" and "shy."

Returning to the post-counselling interview, David says that he can remember more of his childhood now. He adds, "talking through it" (C5Tp2: 32) with Susan is "just sort of

a really neat way of understanding, just letting it all out" (33). However, he added that he wasn't sure whether "it" was "true" (36-37). At no point in the post-counselling interview, did David clarify what he was referring to when he said "it." However, the complete transcripts of the counselling interview and the post-counselling interview, suggest that David is uncertain if he may have been sexually abused in the past. The post-counselling interview continued with David saying that he is afraid that he may start "makin' up stories" (39-40) as he has in the past.

We now turn to the analysis of the section which David identified as including the episode which he said had particular significance for him.

iv. Analysis of the client-identified episode of significance.

As indicated earlier, the client-identified episode is preceded by a discussion of David's anxiety when he discovered that Susan wasn't coming to the prison on a day when David expected her to come. He had said that he had thought that Susan had been hurt. In addition, people outside the prison were saying that Susan was at the institution. The section of the interview begins with David expressing his superordinate construction of his earlier expressed constructions. He says, "It all seems so real you know, like I'd been there before you know" (106-107). David construed his constructions of the most recent event as similar to his constructions of previous events. Susan responds by suggesting that David must try to find out what past event the most recent occurrence is similar to. She says: "So we need to go back to that then to find out where this memory comes from, this sort of familiar feeling" (108-109). In this statement Susan has expressed her construction of a course of action which David must take. In Kellian terms, Susan is suggesting that David should express the construct element which is similar to the recent event. Susan has not asked David to attempt to elaborate his construction of his "familiar" feeling. That is, Susan has not asked David to express those subordinate constructions which are associated with the construction which he expressed in "familiar feeling." As the reader will recall this latter course of action was often the one adopted by therapists in each of the preceding cases.

Kelly might suggest that Susan could have adopted yet another approach to elicit the constructions associated with David's initially expressed construction. He might suggest that Susan ask David to elaborate his superordinate constructions associated with the construction expressed in a "familiar feeling." In this way Susan would have been asking David to elaborate, what (Kelly, 1955) has described as, his personal theory. As the reader will recall, Neimeyer (1980) suggests that the "elaboration of a personal 'theory'" (p. 79) is a primary therapeutic goal for a person who adopts a therapeutic approach based upon personal construct theory. Of course, in this instance, the therapist is not influenced by a knowledge and understanding of personal construct theory. Hence, we need not expect her to adopt an

approach consistent with the theory of personal constructs. Of interest in this instance, however, is that the therapist has apparently adopted an approach which is in contrast to the approach adopted by other therapists under similar circumstances. Nevertheless, we can provide an interpretation of the therapist's actions which is consistent with personal construct theory.

Returning to the above section of the counselling interview, Susan goes on to express another construction which David previously expressed. She says: "You said you were scared of losing me" (107). Here, Susan does not attempt to understand the personal meaning associated with David's earlier comments. In Kellian terms, she does not express a construction of David's previous constructions. Neither does Susan provide a personal interpretation of her constructions of David's constructions. That is, Susan does not express a superordinate construction of David's earlier constructions. She simply reiterates a statement which David made previously. Susan goes on to test the predictive validity of her constructions of the possible subordinate constructions associated with David's comments (109-111). She says: "Do you mean of you losing me or do you mean that something had happened to me?" (109-110). David responds to Susan by expressing his subordinate constructions of his earlier comment that he was scared of losing Susan (111-114). He suggests that someone who has been attacked is someone who will be removed from the prison. If Susan had been removed from the institution, David's superordinate construction was that he would no longer receive counselling. He went on to say that he would, however, be able to continue to have contact with another member of staff at the prison under such circumstances.

In Susan's next comment (118), she expresses her personal construction of what David has said. Susan concludes that counselling is important to David. David responds affirmatively (119), before Susan expresses a further construction of David's earlier comments. She suggests that David considers that he could continue to receive counselling with someone else (120). Evidently, David construes Susan's comment as invalidating his construction. He reiterates his earlier construction in his statement: "What I actually felt like was that our counselling would stop" (121). In the brief interchange which follows (122-123), David agrees with Susan that he sees other counsellors. However, in his later comment (127-128), he suggests that he construes his counselling sessions with Susan as different from the counselling sessions he has with other counsellors.

As the interview continues Susan reports her construction of David's behaviour. She says: "I hear that sigh." This comment of course, is simply Susan's way of expressing her construction of David's behaviour. She has not attempted to construe the personal meaning which may be associated with the behaviour. We might construe Susan's comments to be an attempt to elicit a construction which she assumed was not verbally expressed. However, David apparently construes Susan's comments to be an invitation to express the construction

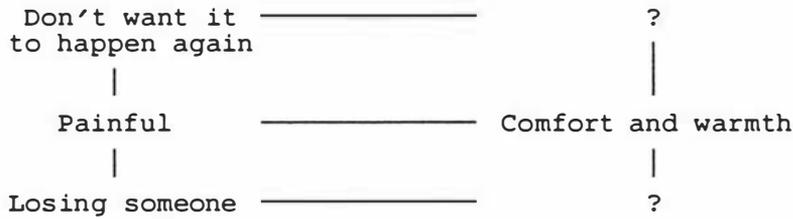
which directly governed his behaviour. He says: "Cos there's a lot of stuff um – to – I don't say when I'm here" (134). Susan repeats what David has said. David goes on to express a construction which is subordinate to that which he expresses in "a lot of stuff" when he says: "It goes on in my thoughts" (136). As the interview continues, David continues to express subordinate constructions associated with the construction which he expressed initially. David goes on to suggest that he still wants to "lock" his secrets away (142). Here David has expressed his "theory" as to why he doesn't tell Susan all his thoughts when he goes to counselling.

David continues, suggesting that he may construe himself as having acted in a way which is different from the way in which he usually acts. He says: "And it's um – this is really good actually. What's happening today" (144) David implies that, in the counselling interview, he is not "locking" his secrets away. This time he is expressing those constructions which he would usually not express in counselling. David then returns to talk about his thoughts when he discovered that Susan had not gone to the prison earlier in the week. In later comments, Susan expresses her personal constructions of the constructions which David has expressed. She says: "It sounds like on the one hand ... you had this familiar feeling that you were going to lose someone" (151-152). Susan goes on: "And on the other hand it's that you're saying that this counselling is different from the other counselling that you had with the other two [counsellors]" (154-155). Susan adds: "And that you don't say some things here and sometimes you wish you had said some of the things here" (157-158).

David responds to the latter two comments made by Susan. However, he does not elaborate the subordinate constructions which might be associated with his previously expressed construction that he was "losing" someone. Before continuing with the analysis of the section of the counselling interview provided above, it is appropriate to examine David's constructions a little more closely. In the post-counselling interview, I asked David what it was like when he lost something (C5Tp2: 66-67). In other words, I asked David to express his superordinate construction of that construction which is expressed in "losing something." David responded by saying that it was "painful" (C5Tp2: 68). He added:

That's what brings on that anxiety things. What went through my mind is that it's happening again and I didn't want it to. (C5Tp2: 68-70)

In the post-counselling interview, I went on to ask David what he might feel if he didn't feel those "anxiety things." David responded by saying that he would feel "warmth" and "comfort" (C5Tp2: 78). Thus we have some insight into the way in which David construes his experiences. Discussion to this point, suggests that we can represent David's constructions diagrammatically as follows:



Diagrammatic representation of David's constructions
associated with "losing someone"

David does not indicate how he might express the constructions which are in contrast to those expressed in "losing someone" and in "don't want it to happen again." However, as becomes evident in later discussion, David suggests that he was anxious because Susan was not at the prison for a different reason other than that he thought he may have "lost" Susan. Hence the constructions represented in the diagram above, have less importance than present discussion may suggest.

Returning to the analysis of the counselling interview, the reader will recall, from above discussion, that Susan had summarised David's constructions. She suggested that David thought that the counselling he received from Susan was different from that of the other counsellors he had contact with. In addition, Susan construed David as suggesting that he did not express all those constructions which he might have expressed in the counselling sessions with Susan. David responds by suggesting that he revises what he was initially going to say to Susan during his sessions with other counsellors. Hence he does not say what he might have said to Susan had he been receiving counselling only from her. In a later statement David says that "other things fall out" (168). He does not explain what he means by this statement. However, Susan attempts to elicit the contextual elements of the construction which David has expressed. She asks: "Like what other sort of things fall out?" (171). David goes on to discuss a dream which he had. He had not discussed this dream with Susan previously. David describes the dream as "very horrific" (176). He goes on to say that he has also done a drawing lately. David suggests that he construes the construction he has of the drawing as having personal significance. Parenthetically, and for the reader's interest, Susan reported in her later interview that David had been drawing in prison. David had recently given Susan a number of his drawings which she showed to me while I was at the prison. Returning to the counselling interview, Susan responds only to the comment which David makes about his dream. She asks David if the dream might "reconnect" with the familiar feeling of losing someone (188-190). Here Susan attempts to test the predictive validity of the construction which she has of David's constructions. David validates Susan's construction (193).

As the interview continues, David suggests that he construes some similarity between what he has seen on television and his constructions of past events. He adds that he had been

finding his "studies" stressful and that his mind was "churning over" (203). Susan's next comment clearly follows from her personal construction of David's expressed constructions. She says: "So one of the things you – we all have to be careful is that I mean you can – there's so much, so many messages that you can read into – read from all sorts of things" (204-206). We might reasonably suggest that Susan's superordinate construction of David's more recently expressed constructions is that David often construes similarity between those events which Susan construes as different from each other. Susan acknowledges that one may possibly construe these events similarly. However, she suggests to David that he should more commonly construe these events as dissimilar to each other (204-206). David goes on to speak of a recent event in which he construed similarity between a television programme and what had happened to him in the past (218-221). According to David, in the programme, a girl had said: "You don't know what it's like to live with an alcoholic" (220-221). Susan construes David to have construed similarity between this construction and a construction which he may have of a previous experience. She says: "So that's the message, I see. I can understand that one" (224).

As the counselling interaction continues, David indicates the features that the advertisement may have in common with a past experience. He says: "I-I had the tendency to-to minimise a lot of these things that's happened to me" (233-234). Here David suggests that he construed the girl in the advertisement to have expressed a construction similar to a construction which David has of a past experience. Susan suggests that she shares David's superordinate construction. She too, construes similarity between what David reports the girl in the advertisement to have said, and a construction which David has of his past experience. As a consequence of the interaction a social construction has arisen. Following from Susan's construction, Susan asks David: "So who's the, who's the alcoholic that you would say, 'You don't know what it's like to live with an alcoholic?'" (237-238). David responds by saying his Dad would be the alcoholic (239). He says later that he too is an alcoholic (243).

As the section of the interview concludes, David goes on to suggest that he has revised his previous constructions of his father and himself. He says that previously he had thought that an "awful lot of damage" (253) had been done. Now he says: "I haven't even touched half of it" (255). David adds that he had "blocked a lot of it out" (259). However, he concludes that the counselling session was "enabling" him to revise his previous constructions of his past experiences (263, 265-266).

From the above discussion we can conclude that the identified section of the counselling interview included occasions when the therapist attempted to construe her client's constructions. During the course of the interaction the therapist tested the predictive validity of her constructions. As a consequence of the client either invalidating his therapist's constructions or re-expressing his constructions, Susan revised her initial constructions. In this

way the therapist and the client came to share constructions. Susan construes David as having been scared that something may have happened to Susan. She also construes David to have been afraid that he may no longer receive counselling similar to that which he received from Susan. In addition, Susan shares David's construction of a similarity between what the girl said in the television programme and the way in which David would express a construction of his past experience. As the reader may note, there are a number of occasions in which the therapist suggests the validity of her client's constructions by the use of minimal encouragers (e.g., "Right," "Yeah," "Mm). There are few instances of invalidation of the client's constructions by the therapist in the above section. However, as indicated above, in this section of the interview, there are occasions in which the therapist's constructions are validated and other occasions when the therapist's constructions are invalidated.

For the reader's interest, the section of the interview discussed above is followed by David's discussion of his experiences as a child. He describes a discussion with another therapist when David mentioned that he had been circumcised. The second therapist had asked David whether he had been molested. At this point David again refers to an occasion when he had been talking to someone about the behaviour of his daughter. The person had spoken of the behaviour which David's daughter may engage in as a consequence of David's abuse of her. As the other person described this behaviour, David reports: "Everything was clicking into my head" (296-297). David suggests that he construed the description of his daughter's behaviour to be similar to the way in which he would describe his own behaviour. However, David adds that he doesn't want to find excuses for what he has done. The interview continues with David discussing another childhood experience. He talks about his aunt and uncle whom he and his parents used to go and see. David reports that later in his life, his father said that his aunt had "gone a bit funny" (342). However, his parents did not explain what that meant to him. David was unsure what had happened. However, his parents forbade him going to see his aunt. At this point in the interview, Susan clearly does not have what she construes to be a predictively valid construction of the constructions which David has been expressing. Hence she asks: "How's this tying in with-with the feeling you had the other day, sort of the panicky feeling? It's tied in with losing your mother, like fear of your mother not being there?" (377-379). The latter sentence in the transcribed extract reads as though it is a statement. However, since the audio-tape contains an upward inflection of voice, this sentence is presented as a question. Thus the reader should interpret this extract as an occasion when Susan tests her personal construction of David's constructions.

Following Susan's question, David discusses an occasion when his mother was ill (380-382) and he sought help from a neighbour. Later in the interview, Susan says: "And maybe you found her lying still and she wasn't talking and you might have thought she wanted someone to talk to and you went and got a neighbour" (426-428). This comment does not

appear to be a construction of David's expressed construction. Rather this comment appears to follow from Susan's personal construction of the constructions which David has expressed in the interview. This construction may be different from David's superordinate construction of his construction. However, when reading the transcription of the counselling interaction, it is difficult to understand the basis of Susan's superordinate construction. David appears to have expressed too few constructions for Susan to be confident that the construction she has expressed is a predictively valid construction of David's constructions. Nevertheless, Susan tests the validity of her superordinate construction by making her comment. David evidently construes Susan's suggestion as having some similarity to his own constructions. He says: "And um -- mm -- could be -- I really can't remember. It does feel right" (431). As the interview continues, Susan again expresses her personal constructions. She suggests that David may have missed his mother while she was in hospital because "little kids need Mum around" (437-438). David does not indicate whether he comes to share the constructions which Susan has of his past experiences. He simply comments: "Um quite amazing --. If I tried to work this out on my own I couldn't do it" (443).

Later in the interview, Susan returns to the earlier discussion about the apparent similarity between David's mother and herself. She suggests that David may construe her as having features which are similar to his mother (446). David agrees and goes on to say that is possibly why he is "comfortable" in the interview room. David then speaks of a third experience he had as a child. He talks about having initially slept in the same room as his sisters. However, later he remembers that his childhood got "very sour" (527). Susan does not ask him to express the subordinate constructions of the construction expressed here. Rather, she asks David what age he was when his childhood went sour. (528). David says "five, four or five or something like that" (529). He goes on to talk about his school and describes it as not a "very friendly environment" (545). Later David returns to talk about his father.

The reader will note that discussion to this point suggests that David did not often express his constructions of his past experiences. Rather, much of the dialogue to this point within the interview has included David's descriptions of his past experiences. These descriptions, of course, are expressions of David's constructions. However, they are not expressions of David's "theories" about his constructions of subjective reality. They are not expressions of David's superordinate constructions. Previous discussion suggests that a common prerequisite to construct system change is the expression of clients' superordinate constructions. Only when clients express their superordinate constructions can therapists construe those constructions. Therapists may then actively promote changes in their clients' construct systems which are possible and which will perhaps increase the predictive validity of their clients' construct systems. Returning to the counselling interaction between Susan and

David, Susan now asks David to express his superordinate construction of his earlier constructions.

Referring again to the television programme, Susan asks David to express the similarity he construes between the advertisement and his previous experience. She says: "What-what was your inst-did you have? What do you feel in here? [Therapist presumably indicates.] Your guts" (589). David responds by saying he has an "empty feeling" (593). Susan goes on to say that previously David has "dramatised" (609) his father. She adds, "like you [David] protected him" (609) "to compensate for the way he wasn't" (611). Here Susan expresses her construction of the constructions which David has previously expressed. Susan goes on to test the predictive validity of another personal construction. She says: "Do you think you've done that with your Mum and me as well?" (613). David responds by saying, "Yeah" (614) but then adds that he is exhausted. He terminates the discussion by saying: "Leave the digging for a while" (631). Kelly might suggest that at this point, David has responded to "threat." Perhaps David may only be able to share the construction he construes to have been expressed by Susan, if he changes one of his self-constructions. David's response appears to be not to revise his initial construction. Instead he indicates to Susan that he does not wish to express any further constructions related to this topic.

In the next section of the interview, David discusses an occasion when he responded to what another inmate said to him in a way which meant that David was able, in Susan's words, to "protect" (659) himself. However, before long, Susan returns to discuss the similarity which David has previously suggested that he construes between Susan and his mother. Susan says: "I want to go back to your anxiety about me not being here" (701-702). Here Susan expresses her construction of the constructions which David expressed earlier. Susan construes David as being anxious about Susan not being at the prison. Susan goes on to ask David to tell her what he construes to be the difference between Susan and his mother. Initially David construed Susan as similar to his mother. Here Susan is asking David to revise his initial construction. Perhaps not unexpectedly, David expresses his subordinate constructions of his initial construction of Susan. In other words, David expresses those ways in which Susan is similar to his mother. He says: "You're um very-very warm and open and kind" (711). David goes on to suggest that his mother is the same. In the post-counselling interview, David suggests additional subordinate constructions of his initial construction of Susan. He indicates that Susan and his mother each have a "very caring and nurturing side" (99). Returning to the counselling interview, David adds to his earlier comments by saying: "And she's like an angel" (715). Susan evidently thinks that David construes her as an angel. She attempts to invalidate what she construes David's construction of her to be. She says: "I'm no angel" (721). However, David goes on to indicate the reasons for, what he construes to be, the predictive validity of his construction. He says:

No well the actual definition of angel is um a person who – hold on – this is quite interesting that, finding this out – is a person, you know, of divine, they call it divine something-or-other. That's the – that's one type. And the other one was a person who's ah, a person who has the ability and quality of mental and spiritual awareness. So – and I thought that was right. (722-726)

David goes on to say that he construes his mother and his therapist as angels. However, David suggests that there may be a way in which his mother and Susan are different. He says that "its the mental part that's not right" (734) for his mother. David does not elaborate on the construction expressed here. However, he goes on to recall an incident in which his mother was being attacked by another woman. Susan expresses her construction of David's superordinate construction of what he has said. She says:

She was – she was being threatened by this woman. And you couldn't do anything. That's what – is that the same thing that happened on ____ [day of the week]? That you visualised that may be I was being hurt and you wanted to protect me? (760-762)

Here Susan tests the predictive validity of her constructions. David does not directly respond. However, he suggests that Susan's constructions may have been predictively valid. He indicates that he felt "so stupid" afterwards (763). Susan responds by suggesting that she construes David's construction of her as a "compliment" (770). However, she adds that she will not be at the prison one day (773). This last statement presumably follows from Susan's personal construction. As will become evident later, Susan construed David as "dependent" upon her. She construed the consequences of this apparent dependence to be undesirable. However, David indicates that, from his point of view, Susan's construction of his constructions lacked predictive validity. David was not worried that he would no longer receive counselling from Susan. Rather, David's construction was that he was getting "too much wrong information" (780). David's superordinate construction of this construction was that "there might be something wrong" (783). David added that too much wrong information was "like a cover up" (784). He continued, suggesting he thought that the prison protection was "not up to scratch" (792) "for people comin' in and out" (796). Susan again expresses her personal construction of David's constructions. She says: "So there's a part of you that-that cares for and wants to protect the women around here" (801-802). Susan adds: "In the way like you did with your Mum" (806). David agrees.

As the interview continues, Susan again attempts to change the way in which David construes her. She asks: "Do you think that ____ and ____ and me and ____ and ____ [names of women working in the institution] and whoever else is here can look after themselves?"

Susan evidently construed the women she mentioned as able to "look after themselves." Should David have shared Susan's construction, David may have had to revise his initial construction of Susan. Susan construes David's response as indicating that he is uncertain. David does not share the personal construction which he construes Susan to have expressed. Later David comments: "Sometimes I feel that there's elements in this prison that um are dangerous to anybody" (832-833). David continues to describe his feelings earlier in the week. He also says that he used to be unable to deal with conflict. Susan says that he is being "a bit more assertive" now and "standing up for himself" (889). In these comments Susan expresses her personal constructions of the constructions which David has expressed. As the interview draws to a close David says that he is "pretty drained" (896). Susan responds by suggesting that therapy is like peeling an onion: "You peel off that [layer] and there's another layer. You peel off that and there's another layer" (914-915). The interview concludes with Susan and David contracting to discuss dealing with "outright conflict" (891) in the next session. We turn now to considering Susan's response to the counselling interaction discussed above.

B. Therapist Post-counselling Interview

i. Therapist response to the therapeutic interaction.

When Susan was asked to indicate her response to the counselling interaction, Susan chose to firstly discuss her previous professional association with another inmate of the prison. She described an incident in which a prisoner had wrongly publicly accused her of breaking confidentiality. Susan expressed her concern to the prisoner about the possibility that she would lose credibility as a result of the prisoner's comments. When the inmate told others of his conversation with Susan, he was "beaten up." Susan was then told by some of the inmates that she must not leave. Susan construed these inmates to be "dependent." Susan had not previously construed David as "dependent." However, during the post-counselling interview, Susan suggested that she now construed David to be "dependent" too. She added that she was "shaken up" by this.

When Susan was asked to identify any occasions in the counselling interview when she thought that something significant may have taken place for her client, Susan reported that there were two such occasions. In the first of these, Susan said that there was an episode in which David described a conflict between his mother and a neighbour. David had said that he couldn't help his mother. Susan said that the episode was significant because David was able to construe similarity between the most recent occasion in which he thought that Susan had not been at the prison, and his past experience. In the post-counselling interview, Susan goes on to suggest that David had construed Susan as "reliable." Susan suggested that David construed Susan as like his mother because he construed his mother too, as "reliable." As we

have seen, David does not express his constructions of Susan or his constructions of his mother using the term, "reliable." Nevertheless, Susan's construction is similar to David's construction. David does indeed construe similarity between his mother and Susan. The second instance in which Susan says that something significant may have taken place for David, was when David spoke of his experience with his father. David had indicated that his father was an alcoholic.

ii. The therapist-identified episodes of significance.

Regrettably, Susan had not allowed for sufficient time between the first counselling interview, and the second counselling interview (Case Study Five) for the completion of the research interviews. In addition, as indicated above, Susan had been somewhat distressed following her interview with David. Understandably, Susan said that she needed some time to "take a break" between the present interview and the one which was to follow. Hence, there was insufficient time for Susan to identify the beginning and end of the episode which Susan considered may have had greatest significance for David. However, we might reasonably conclude that the second episode which Susan said may have had some significance for David would have been included within the section of the interview, discussed earlier.

iii. Significance of the therapist-identified episodes.

Susan does not discuss the significance of the first episode she referred to in the post-counselling interview. However, she suggests that the second episode was significant because David had been able to construe his father differently. Susan said that David's father had "ruled" (T3Tp2: 22) him. However, Susan suggests that only recently has David come to share Susan's construction of his father. Susan says that David had previously "protected" his father. However, now Susan suggests that David has been "able to see what's been right about that and what's been wrong about that for himself" (C3Tp2: 25-26).

From above discussion, we have some brief insight into Susan's constructions of David's constructions. Regrettably however, there is insufficient evidence to illustrate those of Susan's constructions which are associated with frequent constructions expressed within the context of the counselling interview. Analysis of any therapist-identified episode is not possible here.

iv. Therapist comment with respect to the client-identified episode.

The lack of opportunity to complete the research interviews in this case study, for the reasons stated earlier, means that data for analysis at this point, is unavailable. The primary disadvantage of not having data for further discussion of the client-identified episode, is

readily apparent. Analysis of the section of the interview containing the client-identified episode has been possible from the separate perspectives of the researcher and the client. However, my constructions of the therapist's constructions within the identified section of the interview, cannot be validated. Reference to the expressions of the therapist's constructions of those constructions which she has expressed in the interview, is not possible. Hence, any comment made with respect to the interaction of the constructions of the therapist and the client in this case, must be viewed more critically than has been the case in the previous four case studies.

Summary

This case study is incomplete since there is insufficient data available to complete the usual schedule of analysis. Nevertheless, this case study illustrates the application of some of the theoretical constructs outlined in the first three chapters of this thesis, in the analysis of counselling interactions. In particular, this case study indicates the advantages and disadvantages of eliciting only the subordinate constructions, or contextual elements, of clients' constructions. A therapist who elicits such elements may come to share her client's initial superordinate construction. However, the therapist may be no closer to being able to construe what sense the client makes of this initial construction. Simply, the therapist may not know what "theory" the client has about his or her previously expressed constructions. The therapist may not know how a client makes sense of his or her experiences. In contrast, a therapist who attempts to elicit a client's superordinate constructions of previously expressed constructions, may come to understand what constructions govern the client's verbal behaviour, and perhaps, that client's non verbal behaviour. In this case, for example, Susan initially construed David's construction of her absence to be that he would no longer have access to counselling such as he has experienced with Susan. She did not ask David to express his superordinate construction of his initially expressed construction. Rather, Susan elicited David's subordinate constructions. In addition, she tested the predictive validity of her personal constructions of David's constructions. Susan did not attempt to elicit David's superordinate construction of his initial construction. Susan construed David's construction of her to be that she had been hurt. However, Susan made an apparently incorrect assumption. She assumed that it was because David had construed Susan and his mother as similar, that he construed Susan was hurt. Susan thought that David had construed Susan's absence as similar to his mother's absence. Hence, he construed Susan as hurt. This personal construction appears to govern many of the constructions which Susan expresses in the context of the counselling interview. Yet David continues to suggest that he construes his previously expressed constructions differently from the way in which Susan has construed his constructions. Later in the interview, David indicates that he had construed Susan's absence,

and the information he was getting from outside the prison, as a "cover up" (784). Since David construed there to be a "cover up," he thought that Susan may have been hurt.

Of course, the above analysis and discussion is based only upon the client's briefly expressed constructions of a section of the counselling interview, and upon my constructions of the interview process. As indicated earlier, in this case, validation of my constructions of the therapist's constructions is not possible. Nevertheless, this analysis suggests, at very least, that there is value in therapists attempting to elicit their clients' superordinate constructions. Therapists may elicit clients' contextual elements to enable construal of their clients' initially expressed constructions. Thereafter however, consideration should be given to eliciting clients' constructions of those initial constructions. Therapists should then attempt to construe these superordinate constructions, before they test the validity of their personal constructions of their client's initially expressed constructions. In the next case study, we examine Susan's interaction with a second male client.

Case Six

Therapist (Susan) Client (Frank)

Background Information

As indicated in a previous chapter (Chapter Five) Frank was 27 years of age at the time of interviewing. He was an inmate in a penal institution and had initially attended counselling because he had a lot of problems associated with "drug use" which, according to Frank, he needed to sort out. The day following the research interviews, Frank was due to go out of prison on his second home leave since his term of imprisonment began. Frank said that he had made an appointment for counselling because there were "some things" which he wished to talk about. He did not elaborate on these. Frank added that he expected to gain a boost of confidence from counselling on the day of the counselling interview to be discussed here.

Therapist Character Sketch

Susan's character sketch was presented earlier in this chapter (p. 347). Hence it is not included here.

Client Character Sketch

Frank's character sketch and my verbal prompts are given below:

C: Frank, Frank is, I'd say he's quite a nice guy. Um Frank's had a -- he's had a lot of problems in the past. I think he's worked through a lot of them now. Um he seems to be heading in the right direction. He's got his act together. Aah [sigh] um.

R: What else would Frank's friends say about him?

C: He's-he's quite a sensitive guy. Um he's got ambition. Aah I think if he carries on like he's going he'll achieve quite a lot. Aah -- he's quite easy to talk to.

R: Anything else you'd like to say about Frank

C: I know that Frank really wants to get out.

R: Right. Out of prison?

C: Out of prison, yeah.

R: Yeah.

C: I'm gonna try and make a go of it out there. And I think he will succeed. That's about it.

TABLE 9

List of construed verbal expressions of role construct poles and their classification

The following is a list of construed verbal expressions of role construct poles, presented in the order in which they appear in the transcription of Frank's character sketch. These are categorised according to categories listed in Appendix 12. 1

Construct pole	Category
Nice guy	Sociability
Had ... problems	Certainty
Worked through ... problems	Intellect
Seems to be heading in the right direction	Competence
Got his act together	Competence
Sensitive	Affect
Has ... ambition	Aspiration
Will achieve	Competence
Easy to talk to	Sociability
Wants to get out [of prison]	Aspiration
Gonna try	Initiative
Gonna ... make a go of it	Initiative
Will succeed	Competence

A cursory glance at the table above suggests that the constructs with which David construes himself can be classified as associated with 7 of the possible 21 categories used in the present study. However, David expresses more constructions associated with competence (31%), sociability, aspiration, and initiative (each 15%), than constructions associated with certainty, intellect, and affect (each 8%).

Analysis of Post-counselling Interviews

A. Client Post-counselling Interview

i. Client response to therapeutic interaction.

Frank reported that he thought that the session was good and that he had been able to get the answers to the questions he had, from his participation in the session.

When Frank was asked to identify any points in the session which may have had significance for him, Frank identified one section of the interview. He said that during this

section of the interview he had spoken about his concerns related to meeting his girlfriend again while he was out of prison on leave.

ii. Client-identified episode of significance.

As in previous instances, the complete transcript of the counselling interview is not included. Hence it is appropriate to outline the context of the client-identified section of the interview.

The interview begins with Frank saying that he is not well. He has suffered from a cold for some days. He goes on to say that he is about worried about "a few things" (26) in relation to his girlfriend. Frank describes his friend, Cherie, as "very keen" on him (34). However, Frank doesn't feel as fond of Cherie, as he reports that Cherie is of him. Frank says that he finds it difficult to talk about "love and stuff like that" (55) with people. He goes on to say that he feels guilty because he doesn't demonstrate the same level of emotion for his girlfriend as she does for him. However, he does not want to lie to Cherie. Nevertheless, Frank says that he does not want his current relationship to be like other relationships he has had. Frank describes himself as having previously given nothing to a relationship. He also expected nothing in return. Frank reports that the previous relationships finished in two months. He adds that he wants something from his present relationship with Cherie.

As the interview continues, Susan asks Frank if he, and members of his family express affection verbally to each other. Frank suggests that his mother would say "I love you Frank" (95). Frank indicated that he would mutter his response. Later Frank suggests that he doesn't feel confident expressing affection to people. He adds that he expects members of his family to know that he loves them. Frank goes on to say that his father is "distant" (122). Later he indicates that he thinks that a lot of the "hassles" that his father has had, come from not being able to be "emotional" (130-131). Susan goes on to say:

It seems to me that sometimes the words "I love you" are part of the fear, that so you've gotta have the feeling to be able to say it. (132-133)

Susan adds:

And then there's another part that seems connected to the trust, and that's what I was meaning when I said "I wonder if it goes back to that-the trust," the lack of trust, the loss of trust that you had when your parents separated and you were sort of pulled between the two of them. You know, you wanted to be with one and had to be with the other and -. (135-139)

Frank appears to invalidate Susan's constructions in his response to Susan's above comments. He says:

I think it goes back to --probably does go back to the ah. Aah, the last person I was with, and I felt comfortable suddenly and I said it a lot **** and I used to say it to her all the time. (142-143)

In the above comment Frank suggests that his "problems" are associated with a previous relationship. In the earlier relationship Frank had expressed what he felt. He goes on to suggest that he also expressed more affection towards his parents at the time of his previous relationship (146). Susan suggests that there is "the same connection" (147). Susan adds that in each case Frank had expressed his feelings but had lost the relationship (149). Frank continues, to say that when his previous partner had died he made a commitment that he wasn't going to risk being hurt again. Susan suggests that Frank has now, however, decided to take a risk (157).

As the counselling interview continues, Frank says that he needs trust to be able to take a risk. He will "think himself lucky" when he has trust (175). Susan asks Frank how he will know when he has trust (176). Frank responds by suggesting that he will have "let down the walls" when he has trust (181). At this point Susan asks Frank what will be different when he has "let down the walls" (182). Frank responds by saying that the will be dependent on someone else (184). He goes on to suggest that he will be dependent upon another person being there for him.

Frank says that at the moment he is "not trying to set himself up" (209). Frank does not elaborate upon what he means by this statement. However, we might reasonably speculate that Frank is saying that he is not trying to put himself in the position of being "hurt." Later, Frank says that he has some feelings for Cherie. He adds that the weekend is important because he gets only a short amount of time each week to spend with his girlfriend. As the interview continues, Frank says that he would like to be able to tell Cherie that he is scared of "exposing" himself (235). He goes on to say that he does not want to lose her by "weighing too much hassles" (251) that he's got and "things on her" (252).

Susan suggests that Frank should tell Cherie that he wants to protect himself and his feelings. She goes on to say that Frank should also tell Cherie that she is important to him. In addition, Frank should say that the relationship is important. Susan suggests that by making these comments to Cherie he will not be "laying anything on her" (268). Frank replies: "As long as I can get that across" (272). He continues: "To get that across without-without it seeming like, you know, her reaction kind of thing, you know God this guy's totally screwed" (274-275). Frank adds that he is worried that he may be making up problems. He

concludes: "They're just stupid you know" (279-280). At this point the episode which Frank identified as having significance for him begins.

281 T: (Yeah. I don't think they're [Frank's problems] stupid actually Frank. I think
282 they're -- it's not attitude, it's more like experience.) This is the way it's been for
283 you which can, may affect your attitude, but um, um, it's like you need to maybe
284 re-learn in a different way. And don't forget this time you're not affected by drugs
285 so you're going to be straighter about it, clear about your communication.

286 C: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Well that's what-what's --

287 T: And with a woman who is the same.

288 C: Yeah, yeah.

289 T: Eh.

290 C: That's why I'm -- well this relationship is a lot more precious to me.

291 T: Mm. Mm.

292 C: It means -- it should mean something.

293 T: Mm. Well if you told her that then that's neat.

294 C: And --

295 T: You know. She knows where she stands with you along the way so that -- I find
296 that it's what people don't know that they worry about.

297 C: Yeah.

298 T: You know.

299 C: Yeah.

300 T: What they know they can get on with. So if you tell how it is for you then she
301 knows where she stands and where you stand.

302 C: Well up to now we've been well we've only had one argument together. And I've
303 been totally honest about it. We've talked about it.

304 T: Right.

305 C: About myself.

306 T: Right.

307 C: We haven't quite reached this, you know "this is gonna happen" this weekend.

308 T: That's right, yeah.

309 C: Um, but that's a big thing for me, is honesty.

310 T: Mm.

311 C: I don't want any repeat performances of –

312 T: Mm.

313 C: Of you know other fiascos I've been involved in.

314 T: Mm. Frank is this going to be the beginning of a sexual relationship too for you?

315 C: Yeah well –

316 T: Or has that started?

317 C: Yeah, well, it already has yeah.

318 T: Right, OK. So you don't have to start that as well.

319 C: No.

320 T: No. So it's like you've got that side and you want to build the other side as well.

iii. Significance of client-identified episode.

In the post-counselling interview, Frank said that the episode was significant because he had talked about how important "honesty" and "trust" were for him in a relationship. Frank did not add anything further to this comment after he had identified the beginning and end of the above episode.

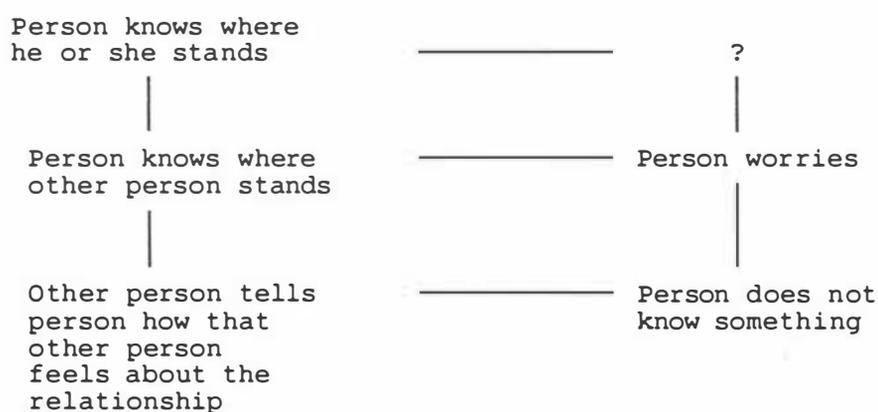
iv. Analysis of the client-identified episode of significance.

The episode begins with Susan expressing her personal construction of the constructions which Frank expressed immediately prior to the episode. She suggests that Frank's comments express his interpretation of past experience. Susan adds that Frank's interpretations of his previous experiences may affect his "attitude" (283). She continues, saying that Frank may need to "re-learn in a different way" (283). These last two comments express Susan's constructions of her personal constructions of what Frank has said. As the reader will note, Susan's comments might suggest that Susan has adopted a constructivist approach to therapy. For example, a constructivist would say that a person's constructions of previous events affects, or more appropriately, governs, that person's constructions of present events. However, a constructivist would not suggest that a person needs to "re-learn in a different way." This suggests a behaviourist approach to construct system change. A constructivist would suggest that a person's constructions of events will change if that person revises his or her initial constructions. Such reconstrual would take place upon the person construing invalidating evidence of those earlier constructions. At this point, the dialogue prior to the above episode does not indicate what Frank may "relearn." The first extract of the episode provides no clarification either. Hence, we can speculate only that Frank may have good reason to assume that his girlfriend will say that this guy is "totally screwed" if he expresses his feelings to her. In the past, Frank may have received frequent validation of the construction expressed in these comments. A personal construct theorist would suggest that Frank must now receive, what he construes to be, invalidating evidence of his previous constructions if he is to change his constructions. He does not need to re-learn in a different way. However, this discussion is merely a commentary upon the difference between Susan's approach to psychotherapy and that suggested by personal construct theory.

The episode continues, with Susan expressing her construction of Frank's behaviour in, "And don't forget this time you're not affected by drugs" (284). Susan continues, expressing her superordinate construction of this construction: "So you're going to be straighter, clear about your communication" (285). Frank responds affirmatively. Susan goes on to express her construction of those constructions which Frank has expressed. She suggests

that she construes Frank and Cherie to be similar (287). Frank follows this comment by saying: "That's why I'm — well this relationship is a lot more precious to me" (290). Frank does not elaborate upon the reason why his current relationship is important to him. However, we may reasonably conclude from discussion to this point, and close reading of the interview transcript, that Frank is suggesting that his relationship is important to him because he is no longer using drugs.

Susan again expresses her personal construction when she says: "Well if you told her that then that's neat" (293). Susan suggests that she construes the behaviour of someone who tells another person that their relationship is "precious," as appropriate. Susan goes on to express further personal constructions. She says that a person in a relationship will know "where he or she stands" if a second person in the relationship tells the first person how the second person feels. Susan suggests that, in contrast, a person who does not know "where he or she stands," will not know something. According to Susan such a person will have something to worry about. Later Susan suggests that people who are told where they "stand," also know where they stand. They also know where others in relationships with them "stand." At this point we can show Susan's constructions diagrammatically. The following diagram represents the hierarchical arrangement of Susan's constructions associated with telling people where they "stand" in a relationship. As indicated earlier, this diagram also indicates the possible hierarchical arrangement of those constructs associated with the constructions indicated here.



Diagrammatic representation of Susan's constructions associated with telling people where they "stand" in a relationship

If we look back at the counselling interview, it is evident that Frank has construed Susan's constructions. Frank is aware that Susan construes the behaviour of someone who has expressed his or her feelings to another person, as appropriate. Following from Frank's construal of Susan's constructions, Frank says: "Well up to now we've [Frank and Cherie]

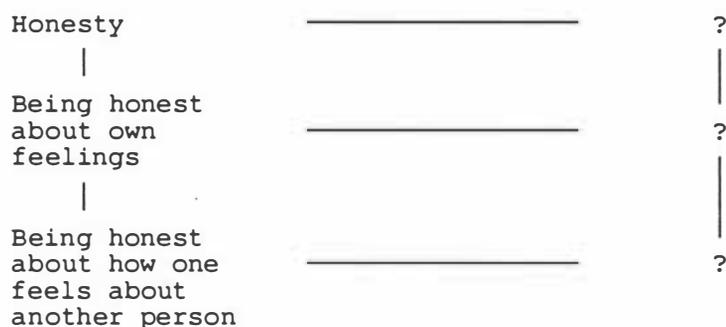
only had one argument together. And I've been totally honest about it. We've talked about it" (302-303). Frank suggests that he construes Susan's subordinate construction which is expressed in, "other person tells person how that other person feels about the relationship." Frank's comments (302-303) suggest that Frank construes Susan's constructions to be similar to some of his constructions. Frank implies that Susan's constructions are similar to his constructions which are associated with being "honest."

As the interview continues, Frank says that "honesty" is a "big thing" (309) for him. This statement is taken up shortly in a discussion of the post-counselling interview. Frank's next comments suggest that what Frank wants in his present relationship is in contrast to what he had in his earlier relationships. Frank says that he does not want "any repeat performances" (311) of "other fiascos" he has been involved in (313). Frank does not provide any indication of the subordinate constructions associated with the constructions expressed in the phrases "repeat performances" or "other fiascos." Hence, we do not know in what way past relationships may have been different from the way in which Frank wants his present relationship to be.

The episode concludes with Susan asking Frank whether his new relationship is going to be the beginning of a "sexual relationship" for him (314). Clearly, this question follows from Susan's personal construction. The counselling interview does not provide an indication as to the contextual elements of Susan's constructions. We do not know what constructions were expressed during the counselling interaction which might have been construed by Susan as indicating that Frank and Cherie had decided that they would engage in a sexual relationship. Neither can we be confident that we can construe the superordinate constructions which may be associated with the construction expressed in Susan's question, with predictive validity. Simply, we do not know what conclusions Susan may have drawn had Frank said that he and his girlfriend had decided to begin a sexual relationship in the forthcoming weekend. However, Susan does suggest that she would have concluded that Frank had to start a sexual relationship (318). We can perhaps speculate that Susan thought that Frank may have encountered problems associated with engaging in a sexual relationship. In her last comment, Susan expresses her construction of Frank's constructions. Susan concludes that Frank has a "sexual side" to his relationship. Now, he wants to "build" the "other side" (320). Susan does not indicate what she means when she refers to the "other side" of the relationship. Clearly the construction expressed here is the alternative construction made with the same construct as that used to construe the "sexual side."

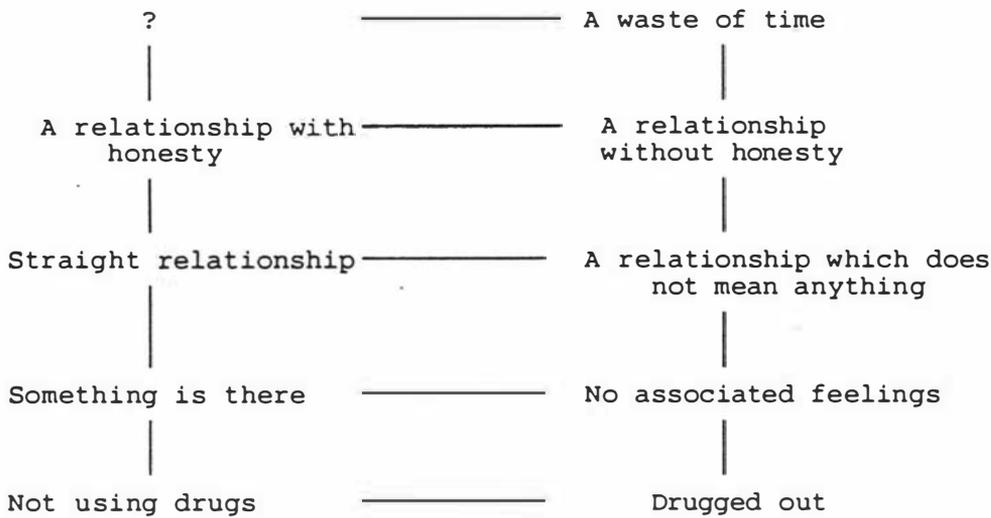
Above discussion suggests that Susan construes a person telling people where those people and the person stand, as important. There is evidence to suggest that Frank has a similar construction. He construes honesty as a "big thing." In later discussion we will more closely examine the constructions associated with those constructions which Susan has

expressed in the client-identified episode. Here, however, we will examine the constructions associated with Frank's comments in the above episode. In the post-counselling client-interview, I asked Frank to elaborate upon the construction he had expressed in the counselling interview, when he said that "honesty" was a "big thing" for him (309). Frank said that "honesty" referred to "being honest about your feelings" (C6Tp2: 6). He added that "being honest about your feelings" involves being "honest with how you feel about each other" (C6Tp2: 11). From this discussion we can partially sketch the possible hierarchical arrangement of some of the constructions which are associated with Frank's construction of "honesty." A complete diagram of constructions cannot be presented since the constructions which are alternative to those mentioned above have not been discussed to this point.



Diagrammatic representation of Frank's constructions
associated with "honesty"

In the next section of the post-counselling interview, I asked Frank to elaborate the construction which is alternative to his construction of honesty as existing in a relationship. Frank said that if honesty wasn't in a relationship, "it wouldn't mean anything" (C6Tp2: 21). Frank suggests that a relationship without "honesty" would be like some of the previous relationships he had had. He described these relationships as "a waste of time" (C6Tp2: 22). According to Frank, there are no feelings associated with such relationships (C6Tp2: 25). Frank reports that usually he is "too drugged out" to "feel much." In contrast, Frank says that when he is in "straight" relationships (C6Tp2: 28) he is not using drugs. He adds that such relationships are "a lot harder" (C6Tp2: 28). Frank continues, saying that in "straight" relationships, "there's something there." From this discussion we may illustrate more of Frank's constructions diagrammatically. The following diagram indicates the constructions which are associated with Frank's constructions of his relationships.



Diagrammatic representation of Frank's constructions
associated with "relationships"

Frank does not specifically say that he wants a "straight" relationship in the post-counselling interview. However, in the context of the counselling interaction, Frank says that "honesty" is a "big thing" for him. In the post-counselling interview, Frank says that people should be honest with each other. Thus we may reasonably conclude that Frank believes that honesty in a relationship is desirable. More particularly, Frank would like a relationship in which there is honesty. Frank would like, what he describes as, a "straight" relationship.

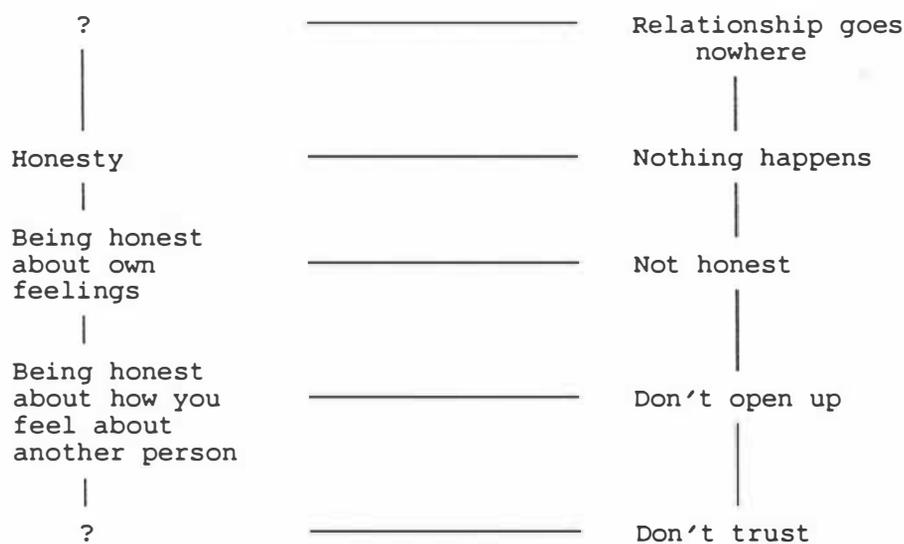
The reader will recall that early in the post-counselling interview, Frank said that in the counselling interview he had talked about how important "honesty" and "trust" were to him in relationships. In the previous discussion I considered Frank's constructions which are associated with the construction which he expresses in "honesty." In the second part of the post-counselling interview, I asked Frank to elaborate those constructions associated with the construction which he expresses in "trust."

Previous discussion of the section of the counselling interview prior to client-identified episode, suggested that Frank needed to be able to "trust" (164), to risk being hurt again. We might tentatively assume that in the counselling interview, Frank was suggesting that he needed to be able to trust to be honest. We might similarly assume that Frank construes honest people to be those who risk being hurt. Thus, for Frank, being honest might carry the risk of him being hurt. Of course, this is purely speculation. We have insufficient evidence upon which to base our constructions to this point. Thus we cannot assume that our constructions will have maximum predictive validity. However, the post-counselling interview suggests that the previous assumptions are reasonable.

In the post-counselling interview, Frank explained that he found it hard to "trust," in a relationship (C6Tp2: 36). In a previous relationship Frank trusted. However, he reported

that his friend died. In Kellian terms, Frank may have initially construed "trust" as having a different outcome than his friend's death. For example, Frank's superordinate construction of "trust" in a relationship, may have been expressed in such words as "a permanent relationship." Needless to say, Frank would most likely have construed the death of his friend as invalidating evidence of his initial construction. Hence, Frank's statement during the course of the counselling interaction that he had made a firm commitment (152) not to "risk being hurt again" (154). In addition, Frank's comment in the post-counselling interview that he has difficulty trusting (C6Tp2: 36), is understandable.

As the post-counselling interview continued, I asked Frank to express the contextual elements of the construction which is alternative to that expressed in "trust somebody" (C6Tp2: 37). Frank responded by saying: "If I don't trust I don't open up. I'm not open. Um and nothing happens and the relationship goes nowhere" (C6Tp2: 41-42). At this point, we can now extend the earlier diagram in which we presented the possible hierarchical arrangements of Frank's constructions associated with Frank's construction of "honesty." The revised possible arrangement of these constructions is given below.



Diagrammatic representation of Frank's constructions associated with "honesty"

Interestingly, if we look at the earlier diagram we can see that Frank's comments during the course of the counselling interaction and the post-counselling interview, suggest that Frank has a relationship which includes honesty if he is not "drugged out." However, the preceding diagram suggests that a further prerequisite for Frank to have a relationship which includes honesty is that he trusts the other person. Conversely, as we have seen, Frank has a relationship which does not include honesty, if he is "drugged out." The above diagram

suggests that Frank may also have such a relationship if he does not trust the other person in a relationship.

This discussion suggests that during the counselling interaction, Frank has expressed some important constructions. The constructions which Frank has expressed are those which govern his behaviour in relationships. If Frank does not trust a person with whom he is in a relationship, he cannot be honest and the relationship will "go nowhere." Alternatively, if he is able to be honest, he will have the relationship which he wants. Previous discussion suggests that Susan should have constructions of Frank's constructions which Frank might construe as predictively valid. Only then can Susan be reasonably confident that her interventions will prompt changes in Frank's construct system which increase the predictive validity of his constructions. However, in the client-identified episode, Susan appears to be suggesting a course of action which follows from her personal constructions of the constructions which Frank expressed earlier. These constructions are different from Frank's superordinate constructions of his constructions. Susan suggests that Frank should tell Cherie that the relationship is "precious" to him. She says that then Cherie will know where she stands and where Frank stands. Susan has not ascertained how he may construe the course of action which Susan proposes. She does not know what he may construe to be the consequences of the actions which Susan suggests. Hence, Susan does not know the possible implications for Frank's construct system of her proposed course of action. For example, immediately prior to the beginning of the client-identified episode, Frank suggested that the possible outcome of him telling Cherie that the relationship is important to him, would be that she might think "this guy's totally screwed" (275). Thus, there is an apparent risk in Frank telling his girlfriend how he feels. Frank suggests that she may think that he is "totally screwed." However, this discussion is taken up again in a later section of this chapter.

To complete discussion of this episode, the reader may be interested in knowing how the interview progressed subsequent to the client-identified episode. As indicated earlier, the episode which Frank identified as having significance for him concludes with Susan saying that Frank has one side (presumably, of a relationship) and now wishes to build the other side (320). Frank responds that it is the other side that he felt that he had to put the work into (323). Susan appears to invalidate Frank's construction. She says: "Well it's both sides" (324). Susan goes on to express her personal constructions associated with relationships. She suggests that there should be honesty in the sexual side and the "other side" of relationships. The interview continues, with Frank discussing his plans for the forthcoming weekends. He and Cherie had been going to go out on the Saturday night but decided against doing so. They expressed similar thoughts about what to do on Saturday in separate letters to each other. Susan comments: "That means that you-you-you've sort of got two-two minds

thinking similar things" (367-368). Frank responds by saying that he and Cherie "connect really well" (373).

As the interview continues, Frank says that he knows that the relationship can be "good" if he works on it right (410). However, he worries about what happened some years before. Here Frank implies reference to the death of his former girlfriend. Nevertheless, Frank says that by the time he gets out of prison, he and Cherie will know each other "really well" (420). Susan goes on to suggest that there is a similarity between the time when Frank and Cherie will be largely separated, and the time when Susan was engaged. She concludes:

A lot of people now start their relations sexually and then they might get to know each other and think they really like each other and then that might work. And then some of them have the liking but not the sex, and then they have the sex but not the liking, you know. And it's -- it's all those sorts of different variations. So in one way the-the year could give you a real solid base of understanding how you two can --. (446-451)

Later in the interview, Susan asks Frank what risks he can take for himself (457). Frank responds by saying he can "open up a lot more" (458). The reader will recall that the phrase "don't open up" expresses one of Frank's constructions associated with the construction expressed in "honesty." If Frank doesn't trust, he doesn't open up and he is not honest. We might speculate that the converse may also apply. If Frank does trust, he opens up and is honest. The interview continues with Frank saying that the stage he wants to get to is where he can be totally open about how he feels and about what he is about (460-461). He wants to be able to do this without Cherie "stepping back" (461). Susan asks Frank what he would do if Cherie "steps back" (462). Frank responds by saying that he would step back also (463). Susan suggests that Frank could step back but not "step out" (478). Susan says that Frank should tell Cherie how he experiences her actions. In Kellian terms, Susan is suggesting that Frank express his constructions of Cherie's actions. Later Susan adds: "We're not mind readers" (492).

As the interview continues, Susan tells Frank that he should use his feeling reactions (503) because they are "very good information givers" (505). She goes on to say that nobody can deny Frank's feelings (506). Frank says that he can get there (509). Susan concludes that Frank is saying that he can risk telling Susan more things about himself (510-511). Later Frank says: "It's just there's still that risk" (517). Susan tests the predictive validity of her construction in her response to Frank. She says:

So is is something like the feeling thing that you're scared of. It's like I know it in my head but my feeling is my feeling part of me is scared that I might be rejected or-- (518-520)

Susan concludes that Frank is afraid that he may be rejected. However, Frank suggests that Susan's construction of Frank's expressed constructions, is predictively invalid. He says that the feelings are new (521). He has been "dead inside for so long" (523). Frank adds that, "it gets overwhelming sometimes" (525). Susan suggests that she construes Frank's constructions. She goes on to express her personal constructions of Frank's constructions. She says: "That's natural too, Frank" (526). Susan adds: "That would be good to tell her as well" (526). Susan has validated Frank's constructions. She has not attempted to elicit further constructions associated with Frank's initially expressed construction. Neither has Susan attempted to prompt changes in Frank's construct system. Rather, as already indicated, Susan has again expressed her personal constructions of Frank's constructions.

In the next section of the counselling interview, Frank talks about a forthcoming visit which he and Cherie are due to make to his father. Frank says: "I'm looking forward to taking it a step further with my dad and his lady and showing them that um I'm serious about what I'm doing" (557-558). He adds that he thinks that it is difficult for his father and his father's partner to "build trust" in Frank. Susan then asks Frank if he gets encouragement from his parents. Frank responds by saying that his father finds it "pretty hard" (581). Susan suggests that Frank may be able to change his father's response to him. Susan says that Frank could be affectionate towards his father (599). Frank replies that he is, "now and again" (600).

As the interview draws to a close, Frank suggests that he wanted to discuss the forthcoming weekend with Susan. He now knows what he is doing. Frank says that he is "aware of what to watch out for" (626). Later he adds that he's "gonna stay in control" (647). He goes on to suggest that he does not need to have any worries about using drugs (653). He adds:

I'm not in any environment where I can have -- I can have feelings that I want to use. But to carry them out would be so much effort and it would destroy so much. (655-657)

Frank goes on to say that he is aware of everything that he is doing a lot of the time (683). He continues, saying: "I mean it does feel like treading on or walking on eggshells or whatever" (685). Susan responds by saying, "that's the same with anything new" (686). She concludes: "It's a new life you're living isn't it Frank?" (686-687). The interview concludes as Frank says that he is going bungy jumping in the following weekend (699) even though he

is, "s___ scared of heights" (703). Susan comments: "If you can do that you'll do anything" (713). The final interchange in the interview, involves the organisation of the next occasion when Frank can participate in counselling with Susan. We turn now to more closely examine Susan's constructions in the counselling interview.

B. Therapist Post-counselling Interview

i. Therapist response to the therapeutic interaction.

In the post-counselling interview, Susan reported that the session which she had had with Frank was "good." Initially she had wondered what she and Frank would discuss because they had "covered so much" previously. She added that it was good that Frank had talked about his relationship. Susan said that in the past he hadn't felt that he could do that. Susan added:

But he wanted to do that, to talk about the relationship and we talk-talked about the one in the past and-and he sort of hedged a little bit around this new one with me. So he's, and I've just sort of accepted it and, you know. So I felt good about that, he was – he was wanting to to do some useful things about building it 'cause a couple of times I've thought I wonder what he's going into and does he know, you know, something from the history that he's told me about, I've just-. (T3Tp3: 9-14)

The reader will note that here Susan has referred to "building," presumably, a relationship. At the conclusion of the client-identified episode, Susan had introduced the notion of "building" as associated with relationships. There, she said: "So it's like you've got that side and you want to build the other side as well" (320). The word "building" then indicates a construction which Susan expresses in the post-counselling interview, and in the counselling interaction.

As the post-counselling therapist interview continues, Susan says that she had a "nice" feeling because Frank was trusting her again (T3Tp3: 16-17). Susan added that the interview was "affirming" of what Frank knows (T3Tp3: 24). She goes on: "Like he didn't know he knew it, some of the things about his girlfriend, you know, that she would be there and she would listen" (T3Tp3: 24-26). This sentence possibly relates most specifically to a statement in the counselling interaction when Frank says that he, "kind of knows in the back of his head that Cherie will be receptive" (512-513).

When Susan was asked if there were any points in the counselling interview when she thought that something significant may have taken place for her client, Susan initially replied that there were no sections of the interview that she considered might have had significance. I therefore asked Susan if she could identify any key themes within the interview. Susan

suggested that there were four key themes in the context of the interview. First, what Frank was "able to do for himself" (T3Tp3: 28). Second, the relationships Frank is able to be "clearer" about, including Frank's relationship with his father (T3Tp3: 31). Third, Frank's determination to "go through with his goals to be drug-free (Co3Tp2: 31-32). Susan reported that Frank's determination was evident in the way in which Frank talked about his father. She said: "Like, 'they've still got to learn to trust me'" (T3Tp3: 32-34). The fourth theme which Susan identified in the interview was that Frank has got to "learn to trust himself" (T3Tp3: 36).

In the latter half of the post-counselling interview, Susan identified an episode which she thought may have had significance for Frank. She identified the episode as a section of the interview which immediately followed Susan's drawing of a diagram of Frank "stepping back" but not "stepping out."

ii. The therapist-identified episode of significance.

The episode which Susan considered had significance for Frank follows. To give the reader some idea of the context of this episode a small passage which precedes the selected episode is provided first.

457 (T:Yes. Yeah. So what risks can you take Frank? With yourself.

458 C: I can open up a lot more.

459 T: Mm.

460 C: That's the stage I want to get to where I can, just being totally open about how I feel
461 about what I am about. Without Allison stepping back.

462 T: And if she does, if you feel she steps back, what can you do?

463 C: Step back myself.

464 T: Well you could, but you could also tell her that you feel she's stepped back if that's
465 how, so that you don't actually see what can happen is that. When you're here
466 [draws on whiteboard] and you've reacted to her to what you call dialogue or what
467 you've been talking about.

468 C: Yeah.

469 T: And she says something like, you might say something and you feel she steps back
470 so, and if you say "I could step back" it leaves you both way out here.

471 C: Yeah, yeah, well that's – that's what I don't want to happen, yeah.)

472 T: So what you can tell her is you can tell her your experience, you know, like I feel
473 you step back from me am I right? What's going on? What's – what's your
474 thinking? What are you feeling about it? Because sometimes people do step back
475 if they've got new information and they've got to get used to it.

476 C: Yeah, yeah.

477 T: But it doesn't mean they've switched off, you know. So – so you say you've
478 stepped back but you don't step out.

479 C: Yeah, yeah.

480 T: So, but – 'cos the risk is that if she steps, you feel she steps back, and then you feel
481 step back like "oh, I've got to be careful here" then you start both going this way.

482 C: Yeah. And that's-that's not how I want it. I want it – I want it to be, if that
483 happens, yeah, for me to be able to say to her, yeah.

484 T: Is this what

485 C: I've got to watch the old

486 T: That's right.

487 C: Defence mechanisms coming up.

iii. Significance of the therapist-identified episode.

Susan said that the above episode was significant because Frank could see the diagram of the interaction between Cherie and himself which Susan had drawn on the whiteboard (T3Tp3: 107-108). According to Susan, Frank could see what he had done in the past and what he didn't want in the future (T3Tp3: 108-109). She went on to say that the episode was also significant because Frank acknowledged what he didn't want to do (T3Tp3: 111). Susan

said that Frank also acknowledged that he can then do some other things instead. Susan adds: "Like use his experience, use his feelings" (T3Tp3: 112).

After locating the beginning and the end of the episode she had selected, Susan went on to say that she had wanted to give Frank information. She wanted Frank to know that people can "step back in" and "listen and ... absorb some new information" (T3Tp3: 119-120). Susan added that Cherie may "step back" but he does not need to "step out" (T3Tp3: 122). Susan continued, suggesting that Frank has to allow time to find out what his girlfriend is feeling or thinking. She said that Frank should listen without "stepping out." This discussion is taken up again in the next section of this analysis.

iv. Analysis of the therapist-identified episode of significance.

Prior to the beginning of the above episode, Susan asks Frank what risks he is going to take for himself. As discussed earlier, Frank says that he is going to "open up a lot more" (458). He wants to get to the stage where he can be open about how he feels and what he is about (460-461). Frank adds: "Without Cherie stepping back" (461). Frank introduces the construction expressed in "stepping back" to the counselling interaction. This phrase expresses Frank's construction. However, Susan responds as though she shares Frank's construction. She says: "And if she does, if you feel she steps back, what can you do?" (462). In this instance the construction expressed in "stepping back" and the construction expressed in "steps back" may possibly be described as social constructions.

Returning to the counselling interaction, Frank responds to Susan's question in which she asks Frank what he would do if Cherie, "steps back" (462). Frank says that he would step back also (463). At this point Susan turns to illustrate her constructions on the whiteboard in the interview room. Susan discussed this diagram during the post-counselling interview. Hence it is possible to describe it here.

The diagram referred to in the discussion above, has two "stick figures" representing Frank and Cherie. In the counselling session, Susan had shown the interaction between the two figures by the use of arrows. Susan went on to show one of the figures moving back from the other figure. This figure, representing Cherie, was "stepping back." This was followed by a drawing of the second figure, representing Frank, moving down and away from the first figure. In this instance, the figure was shown outside, what Susan described as, "the relationship." Susan said that the second figure had "stepped out."

If we return to the counselling interview, we can see that immediately prior to the therapist-identified episode Susan says that Frank may "feel" that Cherie steps back (469). Susan suggests that Frank could step back and then both he and Cherie have left the relationship. Frank evidently has a construction of Susan's construction which is similar to the construction which she expressed. Frank goes on to express his superordinate construction

of his construction. He says: "That's what I don't want to happen" (471). At this point the therapist-identified episode begins.

The therapeutic episode which Susan identifies as having possible significance for Frank, begins with Susan suggesting a course of action which follows from her constructions of Frank's previous comments. She construes Frank as not wanting Cherie to "step back." What follows in Susan's comments are expressions of Susan's constructions associated with someone not "stepping back." Susan suggests that Frank should express his constructions of Cherie's actions. She goes on to say that Frank should then ask Cherie what she is feeling. In Kellian terms, Susan suggests that Frank should encourage Cherie to express her constructions. Finally, Susan expresses a superordinate construction associated with her construction of people "stepping back." She suggests that people "step back" because "they've got new information and they've got to get used to it" (474-475).

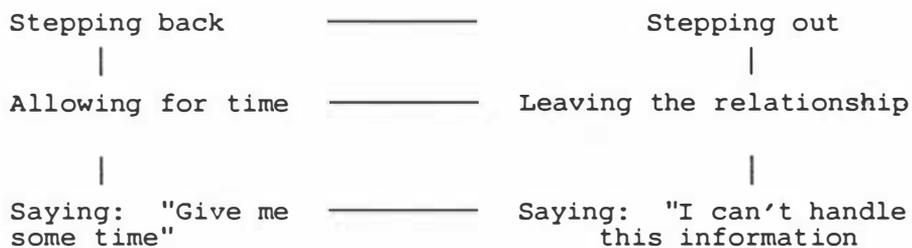
Following a brief affirmative response from Frank (479), Susan indicates that the construction which she expresses in "step back" and "steps back" is different from the construction which she expresses in "switched off" (477). Susan suggests that people who have stepped back have not "switched off." In Susan's next comment, Susan indicates what she construes to be the possible outcome of Frank "stepping back." She says: "'Cos the risk is that if she [Cherie] steps back, and then you feel step back like 'oh, I've got to be careful here' then you start both going this way" (480-481). The reader will no doubt realise that while Susan is speaking at this time, she is using the whiteboard. Susan uses the whiteboard to illustrate her personal constructions associated with Frank "stepping back."

Frank evidently shares the construction which is expressed in "both going this way." As the episode continues, Frank says that he does not want him and Cherie to move away from the relationship. Frank then begins to express another construction. He says: "I want - I want it to be, if that happens, yeah, for me to be able to say to her [Cherie], yeah" (482-483). However, here Frank does not appear to have expressed his construction completely. There is insufficient information from which to construe what Frank wants to say to Cherie.

The therapist-identified episode concludes with Frank saying that he has to "watch the old" (485) "defence mechanisms coming up" (487). Here Frank suggests that he construes his possible actions of stepping back as following from his "defence mechanisms coming up." Frank does not elaborate the construction which is expressed in the phrase "defence mechanisms." That is, he does not express the subordinate constructions associated with his initial construction. In the above episode and in the subsequent interchange following the episode, Susan does not appear to have construed the construction which Frank expresses in "defence mechanisms." The reader will recall a similar moment at the conclusion of the client-identified episode when Frank expressed his concern that Cherie may construe him as "totally screwed" if he expressed his feelings. We might speculate then that until Frank revises the

superordinate constructions expressed in his comments, he may be unable to engage in the behaviour which Susan suggests, in the client-identified episode, and in the therapist-identified episode, that he should engage in. Susan must first have constructions of Frank's constructions which are similar to those constructions which he expresses. Susan may then provide validating evidence, or invalidating evidence, of Frank's constructions.

Before leaving the therapist-identified episode, we can examine the contribution which Susan makes to this segment of the therapeutic interaction still further. In the post-counselling interview, Susan said that one of the primary objectives of this section of the counselling interview, was to convey the difference to Frank between "stepping back" and "stepping out." Susan added that she wanted Frank to realise that "stepping back" need not be "stepping out." She construed "stepping out" as "moving away from" (T3Tp3: 152). However, Susan said that "stepping back" meant "allowing for time" (T3Tp3: 155). She added that a person who "stepped back" would say, "Give me some time to absorb this and this-this information" (T3Tp3: 157). When Susan was asked what the contrasting situation would be to a person who "stepped back," Susan said, "leaving the relationship" (T3Tp3: 159). Susan suggests that a person who was "leaving the relationship" might say, "I can't handle this information" (T3Tp3: 161). From this brief discussion, we can speculate that the following diagram might represent the hierarchical arrangement of the constructions associated with Susan's constructions of people "stepping back" or "stepping out" in relationships.



Diagrammatic representation of Susan's constructions
associated with people "stepping back" or "stepping out"

Towards the end of the post-counselling interview, Susan expresses the construction which governed her behaviour during the therapist-identified episode. Susan says that when Frank said in the counselling session, that he would "step back" if Cherie "stepped back," she "saw" a risk. Susan continues:

And the risk I saw was – 'that's when it gets blown because you [Frank and Cherie] haven't understood each other. You [Frank] made an assumption here.' So that's why it got, made me put it on the board. (T3Tp3: 163-165)

In Kellian terms, Susan had construed Frank's previously expressed constructions. Susan's personal construction of Frank's constructions was that Frank had made an assumption. Susan suggests that she construes Frank and Cherie as not understanding each other. According to Susan, Frank and Cherie are unable to construe each other's constructions with much predictive validity. Susan construed the outcome of Frank having made an assumption as being that the relationship "gets blown." From previous discussion, we can see that as a consequence of Susan's constructions, Susan suggested a course of action which would allow Frank and Cherie to understand each other. She suggested that Frank should "step back" rather than "step out" of the relationship. That is, he should allow more time to absorb the new information. However, as previous discussion has demonstrated, Frank is afraid to express his feelings because Cherie may think that he is "screwed up." Moreover, Frank later suggests that if Cherie reacts in this way, his "old defence mechanisms" will come up. Susan's comments in the counselling interview suggest that Susan proposes that Frank should express his feelings. Susan suggests that Cherie will respond. She goes on to say that Frank should stay and absorb the new information. However, during the counselling interaction, there do not appear to be opportunities for Frank to revise the constructions which respectively govern, his fear of expressing feelings, and his responses to others' reactions.

v. Therapist comment with respect to the client-identified episode.

When Susan was asked to comment upon what may have been taking place within the client-identified episode, Susan said that the episode was a reflection of earlier sessions when Frank had told her about other relationships he had had (T3Tp3: 51-52). Susan added that the other relationships were "influenced by heavy drug use" (T3Tp3: 54). Susan said that Frank had got "really close" to one woman and she had died (T3Tp3: 54-55). Susan continued, saying that Frank had had other relationships which were "purely sex" (T3Tp3: 57). She said that Frank was not going to put himself into that situation again because of the "risk" (T3Tp3: 58). Looking back at the transcript of the counselling interview, Frank is the first participant in the counselling interaction, to refer to "risking" anything. Frank said that he had made a firm commitment "in his head" on the night that his girlfriend had died (152). Susan expressed her construction of what Frank's as yet unverballed construction might have been. She said: "Right. That I'm not gonna love again" (153). Frank responded by invalidating the construction which Susan had expressed in her comment. He said: "No. I won't risk getting -" (154). Susan completes Frank's sentence and in so doing expresses her construction of Frank's construction. She says: "Risk being hurt again" (155). Frank responds with "Mm" (156). However, it is unclear from the transcript whether, at this point of the interview, Susan has a construction of Frank's construction which is similar to that construction which Frank has expressed. Earlier in the interview, Frank may not have wished

to risk getting hurt. Alternatively, Frank may have referred to a different risk other than getting hurt. Regardless, Susan's suggestion in the post-counselling interview, that Frank does not wish to lose another person with whom he has a relationship, seems a reasonable conclusion to draw from the latter part of the counselling interview.

In the post-counselling interview, Susan goes on to say that she regarded the client-identified episode as information giving of "two base lines" (T3Tp3: 60). The personal meaning associated with this statement remains unclear. However, Susan goes on to say that she didn't want Frank to lose the importance of both sides of the relationship (T3Tp3: 61-62). She added that she didn't want Frank to focus on the "emotional side" and forget "that honesty and the sexual side" (T3Tp3: 66-67). Here Susan suggests that she construes "honesty" to be associated with the "sexual side" of a relationship.

The reader will recall that in the client-identified episode Frank said that "honesty" was a "big thing" for him (309). Susan too, construes honesty as important, particularly in relationships. In the post-counselling interview, I asked Susan to elaborate the construction which she expressed in the word, "honesty." Instead, Susan expressed her construction of the construction which Frank expresses in, "honesty." Susan suggests that she has construed the subordinate constructions which are associated with Frank's constructions. Susan says: "He [Frank] wants to be honest with her [Cherie] and not hide the way he is, not have to hide the way he's been" (T3Tp3: 90-91). Earlier discussion indicated that Frank construes people who are honest to be people who convey their feelings to others. Susan seems to construe Frank as having a construction similar to that which Frank expressed in his earlier post-counselling interview. Susan's comments in the post-counselling interview (T3Tp3: 90-91) suggest that Susan has constructions of Frank's constructions which are similar to those constructions which Frank expresses.

In the post-counselling interview, Susan goes on to suggest that Frank would construe people who were not honest as people who "pretend." Susan says that if Frank was not honest he would pretend that he "hadn't been this bad in whatever way he's been" (T3Tp3: 96-97). She adds that Frank would "lose this woman [Cherie] who he respects" (T3Tp3: 97). Again Susan seems to have, what Frank might construe to be, predictively valid constructions of Frank's constructions. Perhaps we might conclude that the client-identified episode has significance for Susan and Frank because it is an occasion when Susan comes to construe the constructions which Frank expresses. Susan's constructions of Frank's constructions are, what Frank might describe, as predictively valid. However, in the post-counselling interview, Susan expressed a different construction of the client-identified episode. She said that the episode was significant because Frank thought both sides of a relationship were important. In addition, Susan said that the episode was significant because Frank had acknowledged that the sexual side and the emotional side of a relationship were important to him.

Summary

Analysis of the client-identified episode and the therapist-identified episode in this instance, suggests that psychotherapy may not include evident occasions of client construct system change. In this instance, Frank expresses his constructions during the course of the counselling interview. Susan construes Frank's constructions. Sometimes Susan construes Frank's constructions in a way which Frank might construe to be predictively valid. That is, social constructions appear to arise from the counselling interaction. At other times, Susan expresses only her personal constructions of the constructions which Frank has expressed. Sometimes, Susan suggests a course of action which follows from her construal of the situations which Frank describes. However, in some instances, Susan does not appear to have construed sufficient of Frank's superordinate constructions to understand the possible implications of Frank acting in the ways Susan suggests. That is, Susan does not appear to know what changes may be necessary in Frank's construct system to be able to act in the way she proposes. There are likely outcomes of Susan's lack of familiarity with Frank's construct system. In the counselling interview, Frank may suggest that he will act as Susan suggests. However, changes in Frank's construct system may be necessary for Frank to act in the way in which Susan suggests. Frank may therefore resist acting as Susan proposes. Alternatively, Frank may act in the way Susan suggests. However, the outcome may prompt changes in Frank's construct system which Susan may consider to be undesirable. For example, Frank may receive further validating evidence that others construe him as "screwed up." Should this be the case, Frank will possibly be less likely than before to express his feelings to someone with whom he wishes to be in a relationship.

Case Seven

Therapist (Audrey) Client (Joan)

Background Information

The reader may recall that Audrey is a female counsellor aged 51 years. At the time of interviewing, Audrey was working in an urban community counselling agency. Audrey said that her counsellor education had included completion of a Diploma in Social Work and completion of advanced training in transactional analysis. At the time of interviewing, Audrey described herself as being in training for certification as a clinical transactional analyst. Audrey said that she had attended a number of counselling skills courses and had 16 years experience as a therapist. Audrey described her practice as largely eclectic, though she said that she was influenced by principles of transactional analysis and often employed cognitive behavioural approaches to psychotherapy.

Joan is a woman aged 37 years. In the research interview prior to the counselling session, Joan said that she had initially attended counselling with Audrey to receive some "healing" from the effects of sexual abuse which she received as a child. Joan reported that a health professional had made a recommendation that she attend counselling at the agency. Joan said that she had attended counselling on the day of the interview to continue the "healing" process. She expected the forthcoming counselling interview would provide her with an opportunity to increase her self-knowledge and to release further previously suppressed emotions.

Therapist Character Sketch

Audrey's character sketch and my verbal prompts are provided below:

T: I experience Audrey as a warm person. She is generous of her time in support of other people. She is intensely interested in justice, social justice issues. Um she has a strong commitment to the welfare state. She enjoys people. She enjoys seeing people grow.

[Telephone rang. Tape stopped.]

T: She enjoys people, enjoys seeing people grow. Loves work. Um um is a family-orientated person. Um she's committed, she's very committed to whatever she does. She does um – she likes to do things well, and sometimes if she doesn't. Um and um Gives herself sometimes space to make mistakes. Sometimes she doesn't. Um, yes, she has a very strong commitment to her clients and um they come first in

terms of um commitment to an agency or an organisation or anything else. And that comes to mind.

R: Mm.

T: But over and above that family come first. When I'm here, I'm here for my clients. When she's here she's here for her clients. When she's at home it's the family that comes first. Her family comes first and her clients come second, but when she's here she gives everything she's got to her clients. I think that's about it.

R: There's nothing else you want to add?

T: Um mmm whatever, yeah. I'd like to say something about um that I really like my work space and um I feel very comfortable in my work space. Um or she feels very comfortable in her workspace. At the moment I'm talking about Audrey in relation to work. There are lots of things I could say about her in relation to who she is as a person but I tend to be focusing more on much less, on who she is more than her work. Um mm, yeah I think that's about all I can say.

TABLE 10

List of construed verbal expressions of role construct poles and their classification

The following is a list of construed verbal expressions of role construct poles, presented in the order in which they appear in the transcription of Audrey's character sketch. These are categorised according to categories listed in Appendix 12. Numbers indicate the number of occasions in the character sketch in which some construct poles were expressed.

Construct pole	Category
Warm	Affect
Generous	Supportivness
Interested	Intellect
Has a ... commitment (x2)	Commitment
Enjoys people	Sociability
Enjoys seeing people grow	Sociability
Loves work	Pleasure
Family-orientated	Sociability
Committed (x2)	Commitment
Likes to do things well	Responsibility
Doesn't do things well	Responsibility
Gives herself space	Tolerance
Gives everything	Supportiveness
Likes her work space	Pleasure
Comfortable	Satisfaction

A cursory glance at the table above suggests that the constructs with which Audrey construes herself can be classified as associated with 9 of the possible 21 categories used in the present study. However, Audrey expresses more constructions associated with commitment (24%) and sociability (18%), than constructions associated with supportiveness, pleasure and responsibility (each 12%) and affect, intellect, tolerance and satisfaction (each 6%).

Client Character Sketch

Joan's character sketch and my verbal prompts are given below:

C: OK. I-I-I see Joan as coming to terms with the fact she's actually a woman. She has a lot of fear that she's dealing with. She hasn't got so much fear that she can't -- she's not too afraid --

R: Right.

C: To-to -- she's got a lot of courage.

[Problems with tape recorder.]

R: OK. To try again. This one will be all right, it'll be fine.

C: Yeah that's OK, OK. Um had stopped too because I'm looking for words anyway. Um, who she is now in a play. She's in the middle actually of an absolute muddle. I mean her family -- you know counsellors get funny and you're not allowed to use the word sick, but she thinks about it that once she had a lot of nursing, thirty years nursing, and um I suppose she can tend to draw parallels with health you see and if you might use um -- other people might say the norm or acceptable, and she might say well or unwell you see. And it's just occurred to her lately that she's right in the middle of a very unwell family. She's surrounded by people who aren't well either. They prop each other up and people she should be able to depend on, aren't dependable because of their own needs, whatever word you could give it. And that's one of the things she's going to talk to Audrey about today.

R: Mm.

C: But there's other things that are happening. She's becoming aware that she's um along with her courage she's got abilities. She's gaining confidence, she's got abilities to do things. She communicates fairly well and she wants to work on listening skills more but she's very good at getting across what she thinks or as you can see, she can communicate herself well.

R: Mm hm.

C: And if people are able to do the same she does get the messages through. She's not perceptive s-so much with people who don't say what they're feeling, although she finds that she looks at people and doesn't see what they're wearing, or the hairstyle, colour of their eyes, but she sees the person.

R: Mm hm.

C: She maybe sees what they're feeling and and um she's gone -- she's gone from her nursing days of kind of that co-dependency kind of need to be needed.

R: Mm hm.

C: To actually wanting to intervene for people and um ahh she's able to say no now, or to observe something but know I can't do things like that, she can't do anything about that. She'll say that, "I can't do anything about that". And so she'll leave it going. She can cry about it, she can refer it on to somebody else, but she's learning her strengths and weaknesses I think.

R: Yeah.

C: Um she has to cope with her husband who's three years dry now, dipsomania. Do you know what that is?

R: A little bit.

C: It's another form of alcoholism, if they have it it's a yearly binge otherwise he would be a social drinker or not even drink at all at a social function. And they didn't know what that was until he dried out, and he just doesn't touch it because he can't. But then they're both -- he's really furiously now because he's also aware that his

behaviours are inappropriate and that um some are from his family background and some are from the alcoholism.

R: Right.

C: Um and he's studying psychology of education and they both want to work – they both have been married nearly thirty years, will be February, and ahh probably ten of those years were not good. But they want, you don't waste that. They want to be well and then to hand that on, see, and she wants to be an educator, as in a director of traffic. She wants to be in women's ministries and tell women some of the things that she's learnt, and try and somehow tap into the pain that's in a lot of people who don't realise that-that the type of counselling she's getting, is getting, there's a difference 'cos she's had counselling off and on since she was 21. This is the first time the healing's begun. That's an awful lot- 16 years. What a waste. Um so she wants to direct traffic.

R: Yeah.

C: You know, and say well these are the things that children need as they develop. This is the thing that every human being needs and deserves. If it's not met these are some of the results. But it can be undone. And I think the thing is that um if she survives this, um she's going to be living proof of it.

R: Right.

C: It's not just an idea.

R: Right.

C: But she knows.

R: Yeah.

C: She can say to someone yes it feels too hard but it's not 'cos I'm alive, you know. That's what-that's what she wants.

R: Yeah. Is there anything else you want there?

C: Um I don't know. I can waffle on for hours. Um and then her spirituality which is only one portion of her wholeness. There's also fear and questionings and doubts and um she accepts that. There's no guilt, no guilt for the questioning or doubting or needing. She-she's using her brain. She thought she was stupid. She grew up thinking she was stupid. When she started her education she kind of realised she was just uneducated because she'd been hurt. She owes her life really to her education and to her **. That's all.

R: Thanks Joan.

TABLE 11

List of construed verbal expressions of role construct poles and their classification

The following is a list of construed verbal expressions of role construct poles, presented in the order in which they appear in the transcription of Joan's character sketch. These are categorised according to categories listed in Appendix 12. Numbers indicate the number of occasions in the character sketch in which some construct poles were expressed.

Construct pole	Category
Woman	Role
Has ... fear	Affect
Not got ... fear	Affect
Not ... afraid	Affect
Has ... courage	Affect
In the middle of a muddle	Certainty
In the middle of an unwell family	Affinity
Surrounded by people	Affinity
Has ... abilities (x2)	Competence
Gaining confidence	Certainty
Communicates well	Competence
Wants to work	Aspiration
Good	Integrity
Can communicate herself well	Competence
Get[s] ... messages through	Competence
Not perceptive	Intellect
Wanting to intervene	Tolerance
Able to say "no"	Competence
Can't do things	Competence
Can't do anything (x2)	Competence
Learning	Intellect
Has to cope	Independence
Want[s] to work	Aspiration
Married	Affinity
Want[s] to be well	Aspiration
Wants to hand ... on	Aspiration
Wants to be an educator	Aspiration
Wants to be in women's ministries	Aspiration
Wants to try and ... tap into the pain	Aspiration
Wants to direct traffic	Aspiration
Going to be living proof	Aspiration
Using her brain	Intellect
Stupid (x2)	Intellect
Uneducated	Intellect
Hurt	Affect
Owes her life	Empowerment

A cursory glance at the table above suggests that the constructs with which Joan construes herself can be classified as associated with 11 of the possible 21 categories used in the present study. However, Joan expresses more constructions associated with aspiration and competence (each 23%) than constructions associated with intellect (15%) and affect (13%),

affinity (8%), certainty (5%) and role, integrity, tolerance, independence and empowerment (each 3%).

Analysis of Post-counselling Interviews

A. Client Post-counselling Interview

i. Client response to therapeutic interaction.

Joan reported that in the counselling interview she had begun to understand that she had been appropriately motivated by anger when she had spoken with her mother earlier in the week. She said that she had been motivated in an aggressive manner rather than in a destructive manner. Joan added that she had been motivated enough not to buckle when she was threatened by her mother's comments in, "Oh well you're the educated one" and by her mother's "sarcasm." Joan said that she had responded to her mother by saying: "Yes I am" and "Yes I am, you bet." Joan reported that in her conversation with her mother she had added: "And you could be too." The reader will no doubt have noted the apparent contrast between the self-construction which Joan has expressed here, and the self-construction which Joan expressed in the character sketch. Earlier, Joan had described herself as "uneducated." However, in the counselling interview, Joan reports that she had expressed a different construction of herself to her mother. She had said that she was "educated." Returning to the post-counselling interview, Joan said that in the counselling interaction she was basically telling her mother that there was no need for her mother to be ignorant. Joan concluded, by saying that her experience in the counselling session was new for her. She realised that she had experienced "appropriate anger."

In the post-counselling interview, Joan went on to say that she then realised that she could use her anger appropriately. Joan continued, saying that she is more afraid of the "anger" that is in her, than of the "pain" she has. However, Joan said that she now realised that she had already done something that she wanted to do. She had not previously realised that she could use her anger appropriately.

When Joan was asked to identify any points in the counselling interaction which she thought may have had significance for her, Joan identified one section of the interview. This was the section in which Joan realised that she had expressed her anger towards her mother appropriately. In this same section, Joan came to realise that she could experience anger appropriately, and use it appropriately.

ii. Client-identified episode of significance.

As in previous instances, the complete transcript of the counselling interaction is not provided. Hence, it is appropriate to outline the context of the client-identified section of the counselling interview.

The counselling interview between Audrey and Joan begins with Joan saying that she was quite "relaxed" (21) about completing the character sketch in the initial interview. Audrey said that she hadn't been prepared for the question which I had asked. However she thought it was useful to "reflect like that for a few moments" (31). Joan goes on to say that she has to find out how to cope with her mother. She adds: "I'm not coping with her demands, emotional demands" (44-45). When Audrey asks Joan how she knows that she is "not coping," Joan responds by saying:

I'm pulling away from her. And the more I pull away the more obsessive and clinging she gets. And she's just not um respecting my treatment. She's not respecting my needs because she's in so much pain herself. She's just totally selfish. In the things that she says and does. And it hurts. I've always been there for her. And I can't be everywhere. She's 60 years old, she's going to a counsellor of her own and she just has to stand on her own two feet. I should never have been there to support her emotionally. It's wrong and it's not the natural way. And it's been damaging *. (47-54)

As the interview continues, Joan says that she had come to understand, and accept, that she hasn't been "trusting" her mother (59-60). Later Joan concludes that trusting her mother totally would be "total healing" (74) for Joan. She goes on to talk about the "child" within her. She says that the "child" "couldn't rationalise what was wrong with her mother" (81-82). Later, Joan states that she wants her mother to "back off" (89). Joan then indicates the reason why she wants her mother to "back off." She discusses a recent meeting with a friend, Carol, whom she hadn't met for twenty years. Joan suggests that her mother has known Carol's parents for many years. Joan rang Carol to ask Carol's mother to "carry" Joan's mother, because Joan said that she couldn't any more (121-122). Carol suggested that Joan tell her mother what she could accept and what she couldn't (126). According to Joan, when Carol was speaking to her, Carol said that Joan should tell her mother what she would accept because otherwise Joan's mother would "bleed" Joan "dry" (126-127). Carol said that Joan's mother would also "bleed" Carol's mother "dry" (127).

Later in the counselling interview, Joan says:

I'm getting pretty desperate because Mum rings up, she makes demands, she's rude to me, she negates what is happening to me. (130-131)

Joan adds that she "can't cope" (139) with her mother's behaviour that she says she understands is motivated by her disorder. Later in the interview, Joan describes her mother's "disorder" as "obsessive compulsive disorder." Audrey responds to Joan's statement that she can't cope, by asking Joan if she can't cope, or is not willing to cope (143). Audrey adds that Joan has shown that she can cope (144). Joan responds by saying that she won't cope any more (145).

As the interview continues Joan suggests that she will not accept her husband's behaviour either (152-153). She returns to talk about her mother and to suggest that she doesn't know what to do. Audrey asks Joan to describe what happens when she feels that she is not coping with her mother (172-173). Joan responds by saying that she panics (174). She adds that she wants to say to her mother: "Let me out, let me breathe, back off give me some room" (183). Joan goes on to discuss a robbery that took place at her home, which "upset" her (186-188). Joan continues, saying how her mother got "so shitty" (208) because Joan didn't go over to see her mother on the day of the robbery. Audrey concludes that Joan has "some really angry feelings" (241). Joan agrees and says that she has "very angry feelings for a lot of things" (242).

In the next section of the interview, Joan says that she believes her mother to be partly responsible for the abuse that Joan experienced as a child. She says:

When a wife stops relating with her husband and um sexually, emotionally, verbally and um just ignores the symptoms, especially -- I mean OK they didn't know those things in those days. The highest percentage of abusers are stepfathers and then fathers and those are the statistics. (249-252)

Audrey asks Joan what she would like to say to her mother (259). She then tells Joan to say to her what Joan would say to her mother. Acting as though Audrey is her mother, Joan tells her mother that she rejected Joan and she was too busy feeling sorry for herself to see Joan's needs (269-270). As the interview continues, Joan indicates that she would like to tell her mother that she was not acknowledging what Joan was "going through" (282-283). According to Joan her mother was just "draining" her, "bleeding" her "dry" (283-284).

Later in the interview, Joan says that she won't meet her mother's needs. She adds that she feels "angry" (298) and "frustrated" (300). Further on, Joan tells of a situation when her husband had to tell her mother how to behave. Joan concludes: "I can't cope and I can see now that I mustn't cope" (319). The reader will note the contrast between this statement

and way in which Joan suggested that she construed herself prior to the counselling interview. In the research interview prior to the counselling interaction, Joan suggested that she construed herself as having to cope. Now, in contrast, Joan says that she must not cope. Joan continues, suggesting that she would like to speak with her mother's counsellor. She would like to tell the counsellor that her mother is "lying" to the counsellor (360-363). However, Audrey says that if someone spoke with her about a client, she wouldn't listen to the caller. There follows a brief discussion about the financial support available for Joan, and her mother, to receive counselling.

Further on in the interview, Joan says that her mother is "driving her nuts" (419). She adds that, "it's been going on all my life" (437). As the interview continues, Joan suggests that she is afraid of getting rid of her anger (479). At this point in the interview, Audrey illustrates her personal constructions of Joan's constructions. She suggests that as children get older, they start to look after their mothers. Later Joan says that she would like to "throttle" her mother (538). She adds: "It's awful in that I have to carry the guilt for those thoughts" (542). Audrey asks Joan if she could "feel," (561). Presumably here, Audrey is asking Joan to express her anger. However, Joan suggests that she would be too afraid to express her feelings (572-573). Audrey concludes: "The fear is of the rage" (576). The reader will recall that previously Joan had indicated in her character sketch that she was afraid. However, at that time Joan had not indicated what her fear was associated with.

Joan says that she feels "very controlled" (579). Audrey responds by saying that she experiences Joan as controlled (580). However, she adds that Joan will express her anger when she feels ready to (584). As the interview continues, Audrey tells Joan that she has good reason to be scared of anger because "it's very strong" (601). The reader will recall that earlier in the counselling interview, Joan acted as though she was talking to her mother when she was talking to Audrey. She told "her mother" what she would like to say to her. At the present point in the interview, Joan recalls:

I was stating fact and feeling angry and allowing it. But that's as far as I could go. I didn't feel like the child because I didn't behave like it. I didn't feel like the child. But I knew I was angry and I knew I had the right to be. (618-621)

Audrey responds:

And that is a major shift for you as I understand it actually. I understand that to be a major shift for you to allow yourself to have angry feelings. (622-623)

The above exchange becomes important in later analysis of the post-counselling interviews.

Returning now to the counselling interaction, Joan suggests that she trusts Audrey sufficiently to "go with the feelings" (635). She also feels "safe enough" that she can turn her feelings "off" (635-636). Later Joan says that she has lost her previous suicidal feelings of harming herself but she still wishes that she was dead (665). She adds that her family is causing more pain than she had before (667-668). Joan goes on to talk about her concern that her niece and nephews may be being subject to abuse from her brother. Joan doesn't know what to do. Later, Joan returns to discussing how her family construes her. In response to Audrey's questions (729, 731, 733), Joan suggests that members of her family do not regard her as "healing" and as "having grown." Neither do they regard her as being a person of "professional standing."

At this point in the counselling interview, Audrey provides what might be considered her professional construction of the constructions which Joan has previously expressed. She says that Joan is becoming herself (755). As the interview continues, Joan asks if she has to "carry guilt" because she wants something from her mother which she can't give Joan (774-775). Audrey replies saying that Joan does not have to "carry guilt." Audrey goes on to suggest that Joan can get rid of the guilt by "separating and maintaining" herself (779). However, Joan suggests that she is finding it hard trying to do as Audrey suggests (791-792). Audrey goes on to ask Joan if it feels OK for Joan to allow herself to test out what her responsibility is as a daughter (796-797). Joan replies: "No because I'm afraid of hurting her" (798). She then tells of a recent incident in which her mother would not allow her to "stuff up for the day" (800-801). Joan added that she had thought that her mother might acknowledge that she had done her best that day. She went on to say that she had thought this because her mother was going to counselling.

As the interview continues, Joan suggests that her mother is being told in counselling that she is a "good mother" (856). Joan goes on to say that she is angry because of what her mother has done to her (866-867). Audrey gets Joan to tell Audrey that she is angry with her mother. Later, Joan says that there were times when her mother was a bad mother (899). Joan then recalls an incident when her mother told her grandson that he was "silly" when he was angry (925). Joan reported that she was "very angry" (935) at the time. Audrey concludes that Joan needs to allow herself to be angry with her mother (938). Joan responds by saying:

Yeah I do, yeah I do because when I'm angry I'm in control. That's awful in my way of thinking. Well I'd like to be motivated by other than anger. (939-940)

The episode which Joan identifies as having significance for her follows shortly after this extract.

944 C: Why is it that it has to be anger to motivate me?

945 T: Because you're feeling it.

946 C: Yeah but why can't I be motivated just because of what I know?

947 T: You feel angry.

948 C: Is that why?

949 T: You feel your anger.

950 C: So when the anger has gone will I then be motivated by other things?

951 T: When you have expressed your anger and the way you feel --

952 C: Yep.

953 T: Then that, that will make way for other things in your life.

954 C: Yeah, OK. 'Cos I don't want to be a person who is motivated by anger forever.

955 T: You're pushing it down.

956 C: Yeah. But it wasn't. It wasn't. When it came up I wasn't out of control. It gave
957 me that--

958 T: What does that tell you about you?

959 C: Yes.

960 T: What does it tell you about this-this d- your ability to manage your anger? What
961 does it tell you?

962 C: It's there.

963 T: Yes Joan. It's there.

964 C: Mm.

965 T: It's there.

966 C: It is isn't it. And I know that anger is a part of – I mean I might – It scares me.
967 I know that anger is an emotion, a human emotion, and I want to teach my mothers
968 and two and three year-olds at this camp we're having in January, ten days and I
969 **** and one of those hours is going to be about anger, and that we do have anger
970 and real ways of letting it out. And I think how am I going to teach them I don't
971 know. It must be time to go. I just, but no, yes. I can control my anger. Because
972 anger is relevant, as you've said to me and as I know I read Jesus got angry. It's
973 what we do with the anger. It's that you don't hurt another person or yourself and
974 preferably you don't destroy things either. But i-it's yeah, anger is justified.

975 T: You don't have capacities for feeling angry without having real justification.

976 C: Mm, you've got them.

977 T: That's part of your human functioning.

978 C: Yes.

979 T: To have angry feelings. So it's just the same as it is part of your human functioning
980 to have tears and your smile.

981 C: Yes, yeah. So when you're angry you have a justified reason and so you deal with
982 it.

983 T: Your anger is a reaction to something that-that's causing you to feel angry.

984 C: Yeah.

985 T: Something that's going on around you.

986 C: A lot of people would say it was actually a perception, um and it's not necessarily
987 how things are. Um so I guess the onus comes back onto me to make sure that that
988 anger is justified.

- 989 T: Mm hm. Well it sounds to me.
- 990 C: Well that just happened all in one incident. I knew that anger was justified and I
991 knew she was repeating what she'd done to me.
- 992 T: Mm.
- 993 C: And that she had no right to do that and destroy that little child and tell him he
994 was silly.
- 995 T: I'm glad you have allowed yourself to be in touch with your anger.
- 996 C: Mm.
- 997 T: And allow yourself to speak from that.
- 998 C: And it went on. She said well what – I said, "Let him go to his room and shout and
999 scream, jump up and down." "Oh the wee boy will be in bed." And I said, "Well
1000 let him go somewhere else." And she said, "And how's his father going to cope
1001 with anger? What would they think if Dad went to his bedroom and shut himself
1002 in and had a scream?" I said, "They'd be relieved because he'd be getting rid of it
1003 a healthy way instead of taking it out on them." "Ooh they'd think he was a nut
1004 case."
- 1005 T: Mm.
- 1006 C: That's her worry. Everyone's going to think she and her family are nut cases.
- 1007 T: One of the things about anger um is that if you allow yourself to know you feel
1008 angry –
- 1009 C: Mm.
- 1010 T: And allow yourself to say it, very often that's all that's needed.
- 1011 C: Yeah.

1012 T: And if it's managed, but if it's – if you build it up and it gets pushed down –

1013 C: It gets out of control, doesn't it.

The counselling interview concludes shortly after the above exchange.

iii. Significance of the client-identified episode.

Before Joan had heard the above episode replayed, she commented upon the significance of the episode. Again Joan said that she had used her anger appropriately. However, she hadn't known before the counselling interview that she had done so (C7Tp2: 74). She added that she could go away now and "be confident" (C7Tp2: 78) because she already has the skill which she wanted. Joan went on to say that she could be more confident that the next time that she was angry she could use her anger "legitimately" (C7Tp2: 81-82). As the post-counselling interview continued, Joan said: "I didn't know you were allowed to because Mummy said you're not allowed to be angry" (C7Tp2: 84-85). In this comment, Joan suggests that she construes her mother as what Landfield (1988) describes as a "validating agent" (p. 242). As indicated earlier, a validating agent is a person whom we construe as providing validating evidence of our constructions. In this instance then, Joan construes her mother as providing validating evidence of her construction that one is not allowed to be angry. Joan's comment suggests that, despite evidence which she may have received to the contrary in the past, she has construed being angry as something one is not allowed to do. She has done so because her mother has validated her construction. However, Joan suggests that during the counselling interaction, she revised her initial construction. She now construes herself as being allowed to be angry.

Prior to hearing the tape replayed, Joan also indicated that she had not known that she was "capable" of controlling her anger (C7Tp2: 87). She continued:

I-I thought I had – I could accept initially oh yes well I controlled my anger, and then the little light went on that said hey it's not that you controlled it, it's that you used it. (C7Tp2: 87-90)

This extract suggests that Joan initially construed herself as having controlled her anger. However, as the counselling interview continued, she revised this initial construction too. Joan came to construe herself as having used her anger, rather than as having controlled it. Joan concluded by suggesting that she had come to construe her anger as appropriate. She also construed herself as having used her anger.

After Joan had heard the above episode replayed, Joan said that within the episode it "dawned" (C7Tp2: 101) on her that she had been saying that she didn't want to be a person motivated by anger. She said that she had still been denying that it is appropriate to be motivated by anger (C7Tp2: 102-103). Here of course, Joan expresses her superordinate construction of her constructions. Usually Joan construes herself as not construing motivation by anger as appropriate. In simpler terms, we might say that Joan construes herself as construing motivation by anger as inappropriate. However, Joan suggests that she should construe motivation by anger as appropriate. She adds that within the counselling interaction she concluded that it was "desirable" (C7Tp2: 110) to be motivated by her anger. Moreover, Joan says that she experienced being motivated by her anger as "successful" (C7Tp2: 112).

As the post-counselling interview continued, Joan suggested that the success of being motivated by anger is dependent upon how one uses anger (C7Tp2: 114). Joan recalled the incident in the episode above when she was angry with her mother. Joan said:

I was assertive with my mother but it was anger, but I wasn't humiliating her and saying well you're a bitch, you haven't, you know, you've denied me the anger and look how screwed up I am and I've got all this work to do because of you. (C7Tp2: 114-118)

Joan went on to say that she had thought that the situation was not real because she had been "kind of calm" (C7Tp2: 121). Joan added that when she was angry, she would not behave in the way in which she had behaved when she was angry with her mother (C7Tp2: 124-125). Joan suggested that in the counselling interview she concluded that there is "righteous" anger. According to Joan "righteous anger" arises when a person has a reason for being angry (C7Tp2: 128-129).

From the comments which Joan made at the outset of the post-counselling interview, which were reported earlier, and from the comments which Joan has made above, it is possible to summarise some of Joan's constructions. Though not indicated earlier, Joan suggested at the outset of the post-counselling interview that there are "appropriate" and "inappropriate" ways of expressing emotions (C7Tp2: 25-26). She went on to suggest that anger was an emotion. In addition, Joan suggested that a person could "experience" "appropriate anger" (C7Tp2: 27), or inappropriate anger. Thus Joan refers to ways of expressing anger and types of anger. As becomes evident in later discussion, Joan's reference to "appropriate anger" comes to imply appropriate ways of behaving when a person is angry. Similarly, reference to "inappropriate anger" later implies inappropriate ways of behaving when a person is angry.

In summary, in the post-counselling interview, Joan said that she was afraid of her anger. She suggested that she was afraid of her anger because she had not known that she was capable of controlling it. Simply, Joan had thought that she was incapable of controlling her anger. In the post-counselling interview Joan suggests that she revised her initial construction to construe herself as controlling her anger. Later, she revised this construction to construe herself as having used her anger. Moreover, she concluded that her anger was appropriate. As the post-counselling interview continued, Joan said that she now construed being motivated by anger as appropriate and desirable. She added that the success of being motivated by anger was dependent upon how one used one's anger. Joan concluded by suggesting that one could be angry for a reason. She described such anger as "righteous anger." In the next section, Joan's constructions are examined more closely and diagrammatic representation of the possible hierarchical order of Joan's constructions is given.

iv. Analysis of the client-identified episode of significance.

Prior to the above episode Joan had talked about a recent incident in which she had responded to her mother's comments. Joan's mother had told her grandson that he was "silly" when he displayed his anger by throwing a tantrum. In the counselling interview, Joan said:

And I said to her, "How did you tell him to express his anger? What options did you give him of getting over it?" "I didn't." [Joan reports her mother's reply.] And then she started to defend herself. "Oh well you're educated" and blah blah. I said "Yes, I am, and you can be too." I wouldn't wear it that time. I'm strong enough." (926-929)

The counselling interview continued with Audrey asking:

So how did you do that when other times you've felt you haven't done that. So what was the difference? What was going on for you at that time? (930-931)

Joan responded:

I was very angry. (932)

The client-identified episode begins with Joan asking a question (944) which follows from Joan's self-construction. Joan construes herself as having been "motivated by anger" to speak with her mother. Audrey responds by validating Joan's construction and expressing her personal construction of Joan's constructions. Audrey does not express a construction of

Joan's superordinate construction. Audrey suggests that Joan is motivated by anger because Joan feels angry (945). Joan responds by saying: "Yeah, but why can't I be motivated just because of what I know?" (946). Joan suggests that she prefers to construe herself as being someone who is motivated because of what she knows. Yet, she construes herself as having spoken with her mother in the way that she did because she was motivated by anger. Audrey's comments and Joan's construction of her constructions, are validating evidence of Joan's self-construction. However, Joan appears to have another construction for which she seeks validating evidence. Joan apparently construes being motivated by what she knows, as more appropriate than being motivated by anger. She appears to continue to seek evidence for this construction. However, Audrey does not provide this evidence. Rather, Audrey again expresses her personal construction of Joan's constructions, twice (947, 949).

Finally, Joan tests the validity of what appears to be, a revised superordinate construction. Joan asks: "So when the anger has gone will I then be motivated by other things?" (950). Audrey responds to Joan's question by again expressing her personal construction of Joan's constructions. She suggests that Joan will be motivated by other things when she has expressed her anger and the way she feels (951). Again Joan repeats her earlier comment that she does not wish to be motivated by anger (954). From Joan's comments, cited earlier, in the post-counselling interview, we can conclude that Joan's statement that she does not wish to be motivated by anger, follows from her belief that it is inappropriate to be motivated by anger. At this stage in the interview, Joan construes being motivated by anger as inappropriate.

As the interview continues, Audrey says that Joan is "pushing down" her anger (955). Here Audrey again expresses her interpretation of Joan's comments. More particularly, Audrey expresses her personal construction of those constructions which she construes to be expressed in Joan's comments. We might reasonably conclude that Audrey is expressing her construction of Joan's present behaviour. This may include Joan's verbal behaviour and, or her non verbal behaviour. However, Joan suggests that she construes Audrey as expressing a construction of Joan's reported behaviour in relation to her mother. Joan says: "But it wasn't. It wasn't. When it came up I wasn't out of control" (956-957). We might reasonably conclude that the "it" which Joan refers to here is her anger. As indicated above, Audrey had previously suggested that Joan had pushed her anger down. Joan has attempted to invalidate what she construes to be Audrey's constructions. She suggests that she did not push the anger down. Rather the anger "came up." Joan adds that she was not "out of control" when her anger came up. At this point, Audrey asks a question which seems to follow from Audrey's personal construction of the constructions which Joan has expressed. Audrey does not express her personal superordinate construction. Rather she asks Joan: "What does that tell you about you?" (958). Here, Audrey attempts to elicit Joan's superordinate construction

of her constructions. She adds: "What does it tell you about this-this d- your ability to manage your anger? What does it tell you?" (960-961). In these questions, Audrey conveys the impression that she has arrived at some conclusion about Joan's ability to manage her anger. Joan apparently shares the construction which is expressed in Audrey's first question. She too has a construction of her ability to manage her anger. Joan responds to Audrey's questions by saying: "It's there" (962). Joan suggests that she construes herself as having an ability to manage her anger. Audrey validates Joan's construction by twice repeating Joan's comment. Audrey too, says: "It's there" (963, 965).

At this point in the counselling interview, a social construction appears to have arisen within the counselling interaction. Initially, Joan reported that she had been in control of her anger. Audrey evidently construed the constructions which Joan expressed and concluded that Joan had been able to control her anger. Audrey asked Joan to also construe the constructions which Joan had expressed. In the past Joan may have construed herself as unable to control her anger. Now, however, she has invalidating evidence of this previous construction. However, the transcript of the counselling interaction suggests that it is only when Audrey asks Joan to construe her expressed constructions, that Joan construes invalidating evidence of a previous construction. Joan construes her own constructions as invalidating evidence of a previous superordinate construction. Joan now construes herself as having an ability to manage her anger. Joan and Audrey now share a social construction. Both women now construe Joan as having an ability to manage her anger.

As the counselling interview continues, Joan says that anger is an emotion. The reader will recall that Joan expressed a similar construction in the post-counselling interview. Joan goes on to say that she wants to teach other people about anger. As the interview continues Joan says: "I can control my anger" (971). Here Joan appears to express a similar construction to that expressed previously. Joan continues to say that anger is "relevant" (972). She adds that anger is not used to hurt another person, or oneself, and preferably is not used to "destroy things" (973-974). Here Joan expresses subordinate constructions associated with her construction of anger. She concludes, "anger is justified" (974).

In the next exchange in the counselling interview, Audrey expresses her personal constructions associated with her construction of Joan's comments. Audrey says that people do not have "capacities" for "feeling angry without real justification" (975). She adds: "That's part of your [Joan's] human functioning" (977) "to have angry feelings" (979). Joan responds by saying: "So when you're angry you have a justified reason and so you deal with it" (981-982). Joan construes Audrey's comments to imply that people are only angry because they have a justified reason to be angry. Here Joan appears to be testing her construction of Audrey's construction. The reader must, of course, distinguish such a construction from a shared construction or a social construction. Social constructions are constructions which

people have in common. As indicated earlier, people can have two apparently incompatible constructions. They may have a construction of another person's construction and a different personal construction. In this instance, for example, Joan may construe Audrey as believing that people are only angry when they have a justified reason. However, Joan may construe people differently. She may construe people as being sometimes angry for unjustified reasons. If Joan construed people similarly to Audrey we might say that Joan and Audrey have similar constructions. These constructions would be social constructions.

Returning to the counselling interview, Audrey continues to express her constructions associated with being angry. She says to Joan: "Your anger is a reaction to something that—that's causing you to feel angry" (983). Joan's next comment (986-988) lends support to the earlier statement that constructions which we may have of other people's constructions, need not be constructions which we share. Joan suggests that she may sometimes think that anger is justified. However, she sometimes construes others as providing invalidating evidence of her constructions. Joan suggests that some people will say: "It's actually a perception ... and it's not necessarily how things are" (986-987). Joan adds: "So I guess the onus comes back on to me to make sure that that anger is justified" (987-988). Joan construes Audrey as saying that anger is justified and that a person should deal with the cause of the anger. However, Joan suggests that she must demonstrate the justification for her anger before she is angry. If she does not, other people will invalidate her construction that there is a reason for her anger.

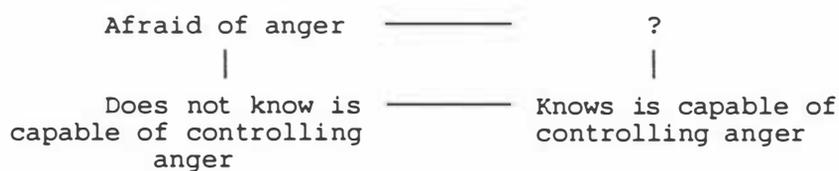
As the interview continues, Audrey makes a brief comment (989) which appears to be an incomplete expression of a personal construction. She says: "Mm hm. Well it sounds to me—" (989). Joan goes on to say that her anger with her mother was justified (990-991). After a brief minimal response from Audrey (992), Joan expresses her constructions of what her mother had said to Joan's nephew in the incident discussed earlier. She says: "She had no right to do that and destroy that little child and tell him he was silly" (993-994). Audrey goes on to express her personal construction of what Joan has said. Audrey says that she is glad that Joan allowed herself to get "in touch with" her anger (995). Audrey adds that she is glad that Joan allowed herself to "speak from" her anger (997). In less colloquial language, Audrey is pleased that Joan allowed herself to feel angry and to express her anger in the context of the counselling interaction.

Joan concludes the episode by again recalling her discussions with her mother (998-1004). She goes on to express her construction of her mother's constructions (1006). She suggests that her mother thinks that, "everyone's going to think she [Joan's mother] and her family are nut cases" (1006). Audrey responds, but does not appear to have construed the constructions which Joan has previously expressed. Rather, Audrey elaborates her personal constructions associated with being angry. She suggests that very often all people need to do

is allow themselves to know they feel angry and allow themselves to say it (1007-1008, 1010). She does not elaborate on these comments further. Hence, we are unable to construe what Audrey might construe to be the outcome of allowing oneself to know that one feels angry. Neither are we able to construe what Audrey might construe to be the outcome of expressing one's anger. Audrey goes on: "And if it's [presumably, anger] managed, but if it's – if you build it up and it gets pushed down –" (1012). Joan evidently construes Audrey's constructions. She expresses her construction with an implication that she shares Audrey's initial construction. Joan says: "It gets out of control, doesn't it?" (1013). Joan thus completes the episode by testing the predictive validity of her construction of Audrey's construction.

Earlier discussion of the post-counselling interview, and above discussion now provides us with a basis for suggesting the possible hierarchical arrangement of Joan's constructions and associated with being angry. In addition, we can present the possible hierarchical arrangement of Audrey's constructions associated with being motivated by anger. These are presented below. As in previous cases, the suggested arrangements of constructions, also suggests the possible hierarchical arrangements of the personal constructs which govern Joan's constructions and Audrey's constructions.

At this stage we can suggest only abbreviated hierarchical structures for Joan's constructions associated with anger. However, this structure will be completed as analysis of the post-counselling interviews continues. Initially Joan was afraid of her anger. She did not know that she was capable of controlling her anger. However the post-counselling interview suggests that she has reconstrued her initial self-construction. She now knows that she is capable of controlling anger. Indeed, earlier discussion suggests that Joan revises her initially revised construction during the course of the counselling interview. She comes to construe herself as having used her anger. Thus we can represent the constructions associated with being angry, expressed in Joan's earlier comments, in the following diagram.

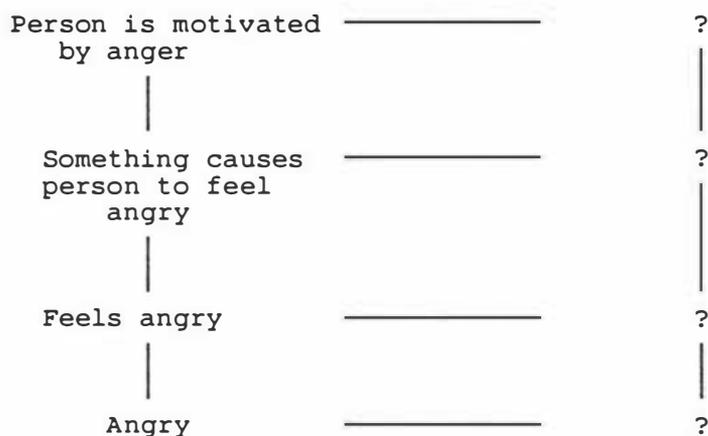


Diagrammatic representation of Joan's constructions
associated with being "angry"

Of course, the reader will recall that the transcript of the counselling interaction suggests that Audrey construes anger as getting out of control, if anger is "pushed down." Hence, Audrey too, apparently construes being able to control one's anger as desirable.

During the counselling interview, Joan suggests that she construes people to be motivated by anger or motivated by what they know. The post-counselling interview suggests that early in the counselling interview Joan construed being motivated by anger as not

appropriate. Of course, this view becomes understandable if Joan assumes that in her case at least, she may not be in control of her anger. If Joan does not know she is capable of controlling her anger, she is afraid of her anger. As we have seen, later in the interview Joan comes to construe motivation by anger differently. At this point the suggested hierarchical arrangement of Audrey's constructions associated with people being motivated by anger, becomes relevant. The following diagram represents this arrangement.



Diagrammatic representation of Audrey's constructions
associated with being "motivated by anger"

Quite simply, Audrey suggests that people who are angry have reason to be angry. As we have seen, the transcription of the counselling interview suggests that Joan prefers to construe herself as being motivated by what she knows. Initially, Joan construed being motivated by anger as inappropriate. However, as we have seen in discussion of the post-counselling interview, Joan came to construe being motivated by anger differently. From the earlier analysis of the client-identified episode, we might reasonably conclude that the interaction between Audrey's constructions, detailed above, and Joan's constructions, may have contributed towards changes in Joan's construing. However, closer analysis of Joan's constructions is necessary before drawing any further conclusions.

From this discussion, we may conclude that Joan revises two constructions during the course of the counselling interaction. Initially, Joan construed herself as not knowing she was capable of controlling her anger. She revises her construction to construe herself as knowing that she is capable of controlling her anger. Initially too, Joan construed being motivated by anger as not appropriate. She revises her construction, so that she comes to construe motivation by anger as appropriate and desirable. To understand a little more about the process of construction change in this instance, we need to examine Joan's constructions more closely.

In the post-counselling interview, Joan suggests that prior to the counselling interview, she had construed her angry behaviour as a "manipulation tool." She says: "To me anger's always been something people have done to manipulate me" (C7Tp2: 255-256). She adds:

And I guess I've used it myself because that's what I was taught. And now, surprise, surprise, I find I can use it um, not as a manipulation tool, but as a healthy expression of myself. (C7Tp2: 258-260)

These comments provide an insight into Joan's construing prior to the counselling episode. At the outset of the counselling interview, Joan construed herself as able to use anger only as a manipulation tool. However, Joan comes to construe herself as able to use anger differently. Joan revises her initial construction of herself. The following discussion indicates the pattern of Joan's construing during the counselling interview, and suggests reasons for the changes in the way in which she construes herself.

In the counselling interaction, and in the post-counselling interview, Joan said that she construed anger as an "emotion." Joan suggests that anger may be construed as "appropriate anger" or "inappropriate anger." In the post-counselling interview, Joan suggests that a person is expressing "appropriate anger" when that person is being "assertive" (C7Tp2: 149). According to Joan, she was expressing "appropriate anger" when she confronted her mother because she was respecting her mother's right to be respected "in her ignorance" (C7Tp2: 150). Joan adds that she wasn't putting her mother down or trying to put her mother down (C7Tp2: 152-153). Joan says: "I wasn't conscious that I was trying to make her feel guilty" (C7Tp2: 153-154). Later she adds that, "appropriate anger" is anger for which there is a reason (C7Tp2: 163). She adds that a person who is expressing appropriate anger deals with it in a way that "all people involved are safe" (C7Tp2: 164-165). Further on in the post-counselling interview, Joan suggests that "appropriate anger" is "comfortable" and "it's really nice" (C7Tp2: 226). Joan goes on to suggest that she construes "appropriate anger" as a "healthy expression" of herself (C7Tp2: 260).

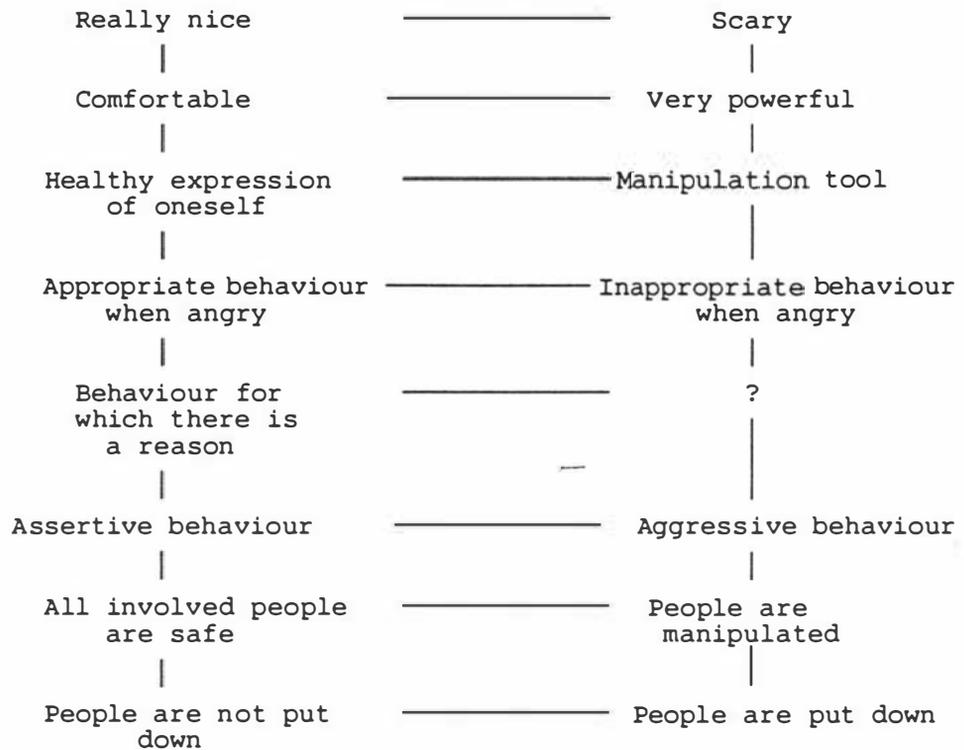
Joan says that in contrast to "appropriate anger," "inappropriate anger" is expressed when a person is "aggressive" (C7Tp2: 158). Joan says that if she had been expressing "inappropriate anger" when she confronted her mother, Joan would have been sticking up for her rights and for her nephew's rights (C7Tp2: 159). She would not have been giving her mother any rights (C7Tp2: 160). Later in the post-counselling interview, Joan suggests that she associates "inappropriate anger" with people "throwing tantrums." Joan goes on to suggest that "inappropriate anger" can be "very powerful and scary" (C7Tp2: 220). Much later, Joan suggests that she has been manipulated by people who are expressing "inappropriate anger"

(C7Tp2: 255-256). She continues, implying that "inappropriate anger" is a "manipulation tool" (C7Tp2: 259).

Much later in the post-counselling interview, Joan appears to express her constructions of anger differently to the way in which she expresses them in the counselling interview and earlier in the post-counselling interaction. Joan says:

It's appropriate to be angry. It's not appropriate to throw a tantrum and manipulate people through a tantrum. That is bad anger. It's not bad anger, that's a bad way of dealing with anger. (C7Tp2: 233-235)

This extract is followed by a brief exchange after which I ensured my understanding of Joan's words, by simply reflecting back her last comment. I said: "And that's a bad way of dealing with it" (C7Tp2: 240). Joan responded by saying: "Yeah. It's inappropriate behaviour when you're angry" (C7Tp2: 241). By these comments, Joan suggests that the constructions which are indicated in "appropriate anger" and "inappropriate anger," are more appropriately indicated in the phrases: "appropriate behaviour when you're angry" and "inappropriate behaviour when you're angry." Assuming that Joan is indeed referring to behaviour, rather than to types of anger, we may now suggest the hierarchical arrangement of Joan's constructions which are associated with a person's behaviour, when that person is angry. The following diagram represents that possible arrangement.



Diagrammatic representation of Joan's constructions
associated with a person's behaviour
when that person is "angry"

As indicated earlier, this discussion and accompanying diagram suggest reasons for the way in which Joan initially construes herself. Reasons for changes in Joan's construct system are also suggested by the above discussion and diagram. Initially, Joan was afraid of her anger. She suggested that she was afraid of her anger because she could not control her anger. The diagram above suggests that if Joan construed herself as unable to control her anger, she would construe herself as only able to use anger as a "manipulative tool." Joan construes anger used in this way to be "powerful" and "scary." As we have seen, during the counselling interaction Audrey asks Joan to construe the incident Joan reported in which she confronted her mother. The evidence of Joan's constructions suggested that her construction of herself as unable to control her anger, was predictively invalid. Hence Joan revised her self-construction.

Joan does not state that when one has control of one's anger, one is assertive. However, during the counselling interview and the post-counselling interview, Joan suggests that this is the case. Thus we may reasonably conclude that if Joan now construes herself as able to control her anger, she also construes herself as able to use her anger appropriately. As previous discussion has already indicated, Joan does indeed come to construe herself as being able to use anger appropriately. In so doing, Joan shares Audrey's personal construction of Joan's expressed constructions.

Above discussion also suggests reasons for changes in the way in which Joan construes motivation by anger. As indicated previously, at the outset of the counselling interview, Joan considered motivation by anger to be inappropriate. However, during the course of the counselling interaction, Joan revises her initial construction. In the post-counselling interview, Joan comments on the client-identified episode. She says that in the episode she is "denying" that she is allowed to be motivated by anger (C7Tp2: 202-203). Joan adds: "I thought that once I was healed I wouldn't have anger motivating me in the future" (C7Tp2: 203-204). Later she says: "And then I began to think, I, it occurred to me that I-I should have. As a healthy person I will have" (C7Tp2: 206-207). Earlier analysis of the client-identified episode did not identify any occasion when changes in Joan's way of construing motivation by anger, may have taken place. However, if we reflect on the above statements which Joan made in the post-counselling interview, we might reasonably conclude that interaction between Audrey's constructions and Joan's constructions was associated with a construct system change. The reader will recall that during the client-identified episode Audrey said that Joan did not have "capacities for feeling angry without real justification" (975). She added: "That's part of your [Joan's] human functioning" (977) "to have angry feelings" (979). If we construe these comments using our social constructions, we might reasonably conclude that Audrey is attempting to suggest to Joan that it is usual for people to have angry feelings. It is not unreasonable perhaps to suggest that Joan may have construed Audrey's comments to mean that healthy people have angry feelings. Joan may have construed Audrey's comments as invalidating Joan's constructions that a "healthy person" is not motivated by anger. We might then speculate that Joan may well have revised her initial construction upon construing Audrey's comments as invalidating evidence. Regardless, it is important for the reader to realise that the preceding diagram of Joan's constructions, illustrates Joan's constructions at the completion of the counselling interaction. Regrettably, perhaps, the methodology used here does not provide adequate data from which to suggest the possible initial arrangement of client constructions and client constructs.

Again for the reader's interest, as indicated earlier, the counselling interaction concludes shortly after the client-identified episode. Audrey indicates that it is lunchtime, and Joan apologises for talking for so long. Understandably, Audrey tells Joan that she does not need to apologise. She adds that she is aware that Joan has still not made a decision about what to do in regard to Joan's nephew. Here Audrey is referring to Joan's uncertainty as to what to do about the abuse which she believes her nephew may be being subjected to.

B. Therapist Post-counselling Interview

i. Therapist response to the therapeutic interaction.

In the post-counselling interview, Audrey commented that Joan was "really intensely scared" of her anger (T4Tp2: 7). Audrey said that her counselling work was to allow Joan to let a bit of her anger out (T4Tp2: 8). Audrey added that she had asked Joan to let her anger out at Audrey, because Joan doesn't like "two-chair work."¹

When Audrey was asked to identify points in the counselling interview which may have had significance for her client, Audrey referred to three episodes. Audrey said that in the first episode, Joan had changed her statement from "can't" to "won't," after Audrey had asked Joan to do so. The reader may recall that this is the occasion referred to in earlier discussion of the counselling interaction. Joan referred to her mother's behaviour when she said: "I can't cope with her behaviour" (139-140). Audrey responds by saying: "So is it that you-you can't cope or that you won't at the moment, because you could, you have, you've shown yourself that you can?" (143-144). Joan responds by saying: "I won't" (145).

Returning to the post-counselling interview, Audrey said that when Joan had said "I can't", Joan was "discounting herself" (T4Tp2: 25-26). Audrey expresses her personal construction of Joan's expressed constructions. Audrey continued:

And then she [Joan] said "I won't," "I won't put up with it" or something like that. And-and she changed and she really looked very relieved when she did, and I felt that that was significant for her. (T4Tp2: 26-29).

Another point in the interview which Audrey identified as having possible significance for her client, was when Joan was angry in the interview. According to Audrey, Joan had said what she was angry about. Audrey said that Joan had not done that before. She added: "She hasn't allowed herself to do that before. But she did" (T4Tp2: 40-41).

A third occasion in the interview, when Audrey thought that something significant may have taken place for Joan, was when Joan realised that she didn't have to trust everybody and that she "had good reasons for not trusting" (T4Tp2: 54-55). Audrey continued, saying that Joan realised that it would also take time for her to build up trust to say what she wants to say to Audrey (T4Tp2: 57-58). Audrey reported that during the counselling interview there

¹ In this comment Audrey refers to a therapeutic technique which is characteristic of Gestalt therapy. Ivey et al. (1987) indicate that in Gestalt therapy an empty chair is commonly used to enable a client to express the conflict which she may have with another person. When a therapist uses this technique the therapist asks a client to speak to another person as if that person were sitting in an empty chair alongside, or in front of, the client. A therapist directs the interaction between the client and the other person by directing the client to change chairs at critical points in the interaction. Ivey et al. suggest that clients increase their understanding of their own feelings by participating in therapy in this way.

had been a "real shift" in "that process" as well (T4Tp2: 59). Here we can assume that Audrey is referring to the process by which Joan must establish trust with Audrey.

Audrey said that the episode which she considered would have had the greatest significance for Joan was the one in which Joan had said that she wouldn't cope, rather than that she couldn't cope.

ii. The therapist-identified episode of significance.

The episode which Audrey identified as having particular significance for her client follows:

135 C: I have – I have to do something about it because I-I can't cope any more and I
136 choose not to cope any more. I'm not my mother's mother. And you're not **,
137 you're not. And tired of having to be.

138 T: Mm What do you want to say to your mother Joan?

139 C: I want to tell her that I loved her very much but that I can't accept, I can't cope with
140 her behaviour that I understand is motivated by her disorder. She's obsessive and
141 her obsessiveness or-or as my friend put it, her obsessive possession is um not
142 helping my own feeling.

143 T: So is it that you-you can't cope or that you won't at the moment, because you could,
144 you have, you've shown yourself that you can.

145 C: I won't.

iii. Significance of the therapist-identified episode.

Audrey did not add to her earlier comments when she was asked to comment upon the significance of the episodes which she had identified. However, when Audrey had heard the episode replayed, Audrey said that Joan was "taking responsibility for herself" (T4Tp2: 79-80) during the episode. She added that Joan was not saying "I can't" from the 'adult'² (T4Tp2: 86). Audrey said Joan was saying: "I won't" (T4Tp2: 86-87). Audrey went on to say that the episode was also significant because Joan had so much energy when she spoke

² In this comment Audrey refers to one of three "ego states" described in transactional analytic approaches to therapy. The "parent," "adult" and "child" ego states are described by Dusay and Dusay (1979) as fundamental concepts in transactional analysis. They describe the "adult" ego state as the "realistic, logical part" of people (p. 375). The "parent" ego state includes one's values and beliefs, while the "child" ego state acts and sounds like a child (Dusay & Dusay, 1979).

(T4Tp2: 116). According to Audrey, Joan was "angry" (T4Tp2: 118). Joan was "fired up" (T4Tp2: 118). Audrey continued, saying that Joan had given her her "raw anger" (T4Tp2: 123). Later Audrey says that by this statement she means that Joan showed Audrey her anger (T4Tp2: 125). Audrey said that she considered that it was significant that Joan had shown her her anger. Audrey commented:

Joan has had very strong strictures about um anger and showing angry feelings and feeling she shouldn't be angry and that, you know, because she's very involved with the church and so on and so forth and the church has has um um you know, endeavoured to um get her to believe something else about, you know, that anger isn't right and so on and so forth and ahh and to you know have been able to own her own anger and feel good about her anger, that it's part of her, a part of her being, part of her essence. She's got some ideas about anger that we're working through, but you know she's coming to – she has come to accept her anger as being part of her. (T4Tp2: 127-136)

In this extract Audrey's constructions of Joan's constructions are similar to the constructions which Joan expresses. Joan indicated in the post-counselling client interview that she had previously construed her anger as "inappropriate." As we have seen, in the post-counselling client interview, Joan suggests that she now construes her anger as "appropriate." However, she distinguishes between "appropriate behaviour when a person is angry" and "inappropriate behaviour when a person is angry." As previous discussion demonstrated, Joan now construes being angry as consistent with being a "healthy person." Audrey's comments above suggest that Audrey too, construed Joan as previously construing anger as "inappropriate." However, she now construes Joan as having a different self-construction. Audrey says that Joan feels "good about her anger." In addition, Audrey suggests that Joan construes her anger as "part of her being." The constructions expressed within these comments certainly appear consistent with the earlier comments made by Joan in the post-counselling client interview.

In short, perhaps, Joan's demonstration of anger towards Audrey in the therapist-identified episode, invalidated the way in which Audrey initially construed Joan. Previously Audrey had construed Joan as construing her anger as "inappropriate." Joan's behaviour in the counselling interview, suggested the predictive invalidity of Audrey's initial construction. Hence, Audrey suggests that she revised her construction of Joan. Audrey came to construe Joan as feeling good about her anger.

Audrey commented further upon the significance of the therapist-identified episode. She said that Joan's expression of anger was significant for Joan's "personal insight" (T4Tp2:

154). In addition, however, Audrey said that the episode was personally significant for her. She added:

It was significant for me, very significant that she [Joan] was expressing an anger to me and to my face and the way she was saying it and she was looking at me when she said it which is something that she has found it very hard to do. And to stay with her anger, you know, she pushes it away. She actually stayed with it. (T4Tp2: 158-162)

This extract suggests that Audrey was surprised by the change in Joan's behaviour during the therapist-identified episode. Again we have evidence that Audrey's earlier constructions of Joan's construing may have been invalidated during the counselling interaction. Audrey seems to have construed Joan's comments as invalidating evidence of her previous construction. Hence, any change in Audrey's construction of Joan, as suggested earlier, is understandable. We turn now to a closer analysis of the therapist-identified episode.

iv. Analysis of the therapist-identified episode of significance.

The episode begins with Joan saying that she can't cope and she chooses not to cope any more (135-137). Unfortunately, despite repeated listening to the audio-tape, the following sentence is inaudible. However, Joan goes on to suggest that she is "tired" (137). In response to Joan, Audrey asks: "What do you want to say to your mother Joan?" (138). Audrey evidently construes Joan as wanting to speak with her mother. Audrey does not test the predictive validity of her construction. Rather she asks a question which follows from this construction. Joan responds to Audrey by saying:

I want to tell her that I love her very much but that I can't accept, I can't cope with her behaviour that I understand is motivated by her disorder. She's obsessive and her obsessiveness or-or as my friend put it, her obsessive possession is not helping my own feeling. (139-142)

In this extract, Joan first expresses her self-constructions. She describes herself as loving her mother, but says that she can't cope with her behaviour. Joan construes her mother's behaviour to be "motivated" by her mother's "disorder." Secondly, Joan expresses her constructions of her mother. She construes her mother as "obsessive." Joan goes on to construe her mother's "obsessiveness" as not helping Joan's own feelings.

At the conclusion of Joan's above comment, Audrey asks Joan if she "can't cope" or if Joan "won't cope." Joan responds that she won't cope and concludes the episode by saying:

I won't any more. It's too much. I've got to deal with this. She can deal with herself.
(147-148)

As indicated in an earlier discussion of the post-counselling therapist interview, Audrey construes Joan as having "taken responsibility" during the above episode. Audrey does not indicate what Joan may have taken responsibility for in the counselling interaction or the post-counselling interview. However, in the post-counselling interview Audrey suggests why she construes Joan as having taken responsibility. Audrey says that Joan is now "taking charge" (T4Tp2: 95). She adds:

And it's not like that she's being caught in the flow of going along with what she believes is-is outside of her control. It's sort of she's taking it for herself and taking charge of her own life and um, yeah I just feel that -- I feel that um for her to be able to say "I won't" is much more clearly her differentiating herself and part of her process of individuation which is um -- and she's caught in a symbiosis with her mother and she -- we actually went through a process of drawing that and um on the board and now she's, you know, going through that process of separation and individuation. But ah part of that needs to be able to say "I won't". (T4Tp2: 96-105)

In this extract Audrey suggests that the way in which she differentiates the statements, "I can't" and "I won't," is similar to the way in which most people might differentiate these statements. The two statements can be distinguished from one another if we apply social constructions in our construing of them. We might say that people who say they "can't" do something, attribute responsibility for those people's actions to other people. On the other hand, we might suggest that people who say they "won't" do something, accept responsibility for their own actions. Audrey construes Joan's statements, that she "can't" and she "won't," similarly. Audrey suggests that she construes Joan as no longer acting because she construes herself as unable to do otherwise. However, Audrey goes on to suggest that Joan is caught in a mutually dependent (symbiotic) relationship with her mother. Audrey construes Joan as now separating herself from her mother and as becoming more of an individual. Audrey's comment that Joan is going through a process of "separation" and "individuation" (T4Tp2: 104), is an expression of another personal construction of Joan's constructions. This construction differs from the way in which most people might construe Joan's constructions. However, it is to be expected that Audrey might express a personal construction of Joan's constructions. Moreover, we can reasonably expect that Audrey's construction will differ from the social construction which might be expressed by most people if they were to construe those constructions. In this case, of course, Audrey's construction follows from her

superordinate constructions associated with her understanding of transactional analytic therapy.

To summarise, Audrey suggests that the therapist-identified episode is significant because Joan expresses her anger. In addition, Joan "takes responsibility." Audrey's comments during the post-counselling interview suggest that Joan has invalidated Audrey's previous constructions. Previously Audrey construed Joan as not able to express her anger. In addition, Audrey suggests that she previously construed Joan as not "taking responsibility." Now, however, Audrey must construe Joan as able to express her anger and as having "taken responsibility." Interestingly, and perhaps importantly, Audrey has selected an episode which is of particular significance to her. Nevertheless, Audrey suggests that the episode was of significance to Joan too. According to Audrey, Joan had an "insight" because Joan expressed her anger towards her mother, to Audrey. Unfortunately, there was no opportunity in the methodology used here to investigate whether Joan too, considered that the therapist-identified episode was significant for her. We turn now, to more closely examine Audrey's constructions associated with the client-identified episode.

v. Therapist comment with respect to the client-identified episode.

When Audrey was asked to comment upon what she thought may have been taking place in the client-identified episode, Audrey said that she thought that Joan had received permission (T4Tp2: 175-176). This construction expressed in Audrey's comment is consistent with the construction which Joan expressed in the post-counselling interview. She said that she not realised that she was allowed to express her anger prior to the counselling interview.

Returning to the post-counselling therapist interview, Audrey goes on to say:

I think the change taking place with her is to let herself be an- you know, let herself know she's angry and to stay with it and feel OK about it and ahh um and ahh know that she ahh doesn't have to um justify her anger to anybody, that she can-she can have her angry feelings, that-that her angry feelings are there and she's the reason for having them. (T4Tp2: 199-204)

In this extract, Audrey expresses her construction of Joan's constructions. She suggests that in the episode, Joan lets herself know she's angry and continues to be angry. As we have already noted, Audrey's constructions which are expressed in these comments, have significance for Audrey. Audrey's constructions of Joan's constructions are invalidating evidence of one of Audrey's superordinate constructions. Audrey can no longer construe Joan as unable to express her anger.

In the above extract, Audrey goes on to express further constructions of Joan's constructions. She suggests that the episode is significant because Joan feels OK about her anger. In addition, Audrey says that Joan does not have to justify her anger. She can have angry feelings. Audrey implies too, that Joan comes to construe herself as the reason for having angry feelings. Previous discussion suggests that these later constructions which Audrey expresses in the extract above, are consistent with the constructions which Joan has of the same therapeutic episode. Joan too, construes herself as feeling good about her anger. She also knows that she can be motivated by anger. However, in the post-counselling client interview, Joan does not indicate that she construes herself as the reason for her anger.

Audrey concludes her comments with respect to the client-identified episode, by suggesting that the psychological changes which may have taken place for Joan in the episode, are all part of a "whole process." Audrey adds: "I think, you know, that the whole session is all tied up with that initial experience of 'can't' and 'won't'" (T4Tp2: 218-219). For Audrey, the therapist-identified episode, continues to be the episode which she construes as having greatest significance for her client.

Summary

At the outset of the interview, Joan construed anger as "inappropriate." She also construed herself as unable to control anger. In addition, Joan suggested that she construed being motivated by anger as "inappropriate." Similarly, Audrey construed Joan as construing anger as inappropriate. She also construed Joan as unable to express her anger. As the interview progressed, Joan came to construe anger as appropriate. She construed herself as able to control anger. More than this, she construed herself to be able to use anger for something other than manipulation. Joan also construed being motivated by anger as appropriate. Audrey too, revised her constructions of Joan. She came to construe Joan as construing anger as appropriate. Audrey also construed Joan as being capable of expressing her anger. As we have seen, the process by which these construction changes have taken place, has involved an interaction between therapist constructions and client constructions. During this interaction, social constructions have arisen from a process of construction invalidation and validation. In some instances, constructions have been invalidated by a participant's own constructions. For example, Joan could no longer construe herself as unable to control her anger, when faced with the evidence of her constructions. Joan's constructions of the incident with her mother suggested that Joan was capable of controlling her anger. However, it was only when Audrey asked Joan to construe the constructions which she expressed, that Joan construed them as invalidating evidence of her previous construction. In other instances, a participant tested the predictive validity of a possible alternative construction and received validating evidence of that new construction. An example of this

is where Joan tested the validity of a new construction which she had of her actions in relation to her mother. Joan asked Audrey if she was motivated by anger because she felt angry. Audrey validated Joan's construction.

Finally, the reader will note that, in this case, there is evident similarity between the client's constructions and the therapist's constructions of the client's constructions, throughout the counselling interview. Nevertheless, there is a notable difference between the episode which the client identified as significant for her, and the episode which the therapist identified as significant for her. The post-counselling interviews suggested that the client-identified episode had greatest significance for the client. As the therapist suggested, the therapist-identified episode may have had significance for the client. However, the episode appears to have had greatest significance for the therapist.

At this point we conclude analysis of this case and turn to a second case in which Audrey is again the therapist.

Case Eight

Therapist (Audrey) Client (Kay)

Background Information

The reader may recall that at the time of interviewing, Kay was 45 years of age. She had initially sought counselling with Audrey to clear what she described as "debris" from a previous relationship. According to Kay, her engagement in counselling had led to "much more." Kay described herself as a self-referred client. She added that the counselling interview, which will be the subject of later discussion, was one of two sessions which she would have with Audrey during the week in which the research interviews were conducted. Prior to the counselling session discussed later, Kay said that counselling would provide her with an opportunity to become clearer about what she described as her "inherited patterns of behaviour." Kay indicated that her reluctance to take responsibility for herself was "at the bottom of it all." She added that during the counselling interaction she expected to take more responsibility for herself.

Therapist Character Sketch

Audrey's character sketch was presented earlier in this chapter (p. 400). Hence it is not presented again here.

Client Character Sketch

Kay's character sketch is presented below:

I've known her for about 45 years on and off. There have been times when I feel a wee bit distant from her. But at the moment we're quite close and that feels really good. Um getting that closeness has been quite painful at times and ahh there's really been times when I've wanted to run away from her. She often seems to be filled with self-doubt about her own abilities and this quite concerns me. Um I know where she's come from, I'm really familiar with that place, um and she's done incredibly well in her life. Sometimes I will be afraid of her. Um she has a lot of energy and there will be times when it has a tendency to be out of control. I mean her life um can fall into chaos. But as she grows older and has more understanding of herself I can see that she does this chaotic living less and less. I see that she's coming to understand and take responsibility for herself and it's been my experience of living for this person for so long that this really has been always her primary quest. And she seems to have to understand every corner and nook and cranny and look into every corner. This is not a person in my experience that can just take things on blind faith. There has to be a-a

deep understanding. Maybe this is a lack of trust in herself. But she has to have both her feet on the ground, that she has to feel the ground under her feet quite solidly before she'll say "Yep, my feet are on the ground and this is really really mother earth that I'm standing on." This is really important to her. Mm, what I actually feel quite comfortable being near her and, you know, and being her friend. And that in itself is a real experience and one for me that's really joyful, mm.

TABLE 12

List of construed verbal expressions of role construct poles and their classification

The following is a list of construed verbal expressions of role construct poles, presented in the order in which they appear in the transcription of Kay's character sketch. These are categorised according to categories listed in Appendix 12.

Construct pole	Category
Filled with self-doubt	Certainty
Done ... well	Competence
Has ... energy	Wellbeing
Grows older	Wellbeing
Has ... understanding of herself	Certainty
Does this chaotic living	Difference
Coming to understand	Certainty
Coming to ... take responsibility	Responsibility
Seems to have to understand	Intellect
Not a person ... that can just take things on blind faith	Certainty
Has to "have both feet on the ground"	Certainty
Has to "feel the ground"	Certainty

A cursory glance at the table above suggests that the constructs with which Kay construes herself can be classified as associated with 6 of the possible 21 categories used in the present study. However, Kay expresses more constructions associated with certainty (50%) and wellbeing (17%) than constructions associated with competence, difference, responsibility and intellect (each 8%).

Analysis of Post-counselling Interviews

A. Client Post-counselling Interview

i. Client response to therapeutic interaction.

Kay reported that the counselling session had provided her with "clarity" which she hadn't had before.

When Kay was asked to identify any points in the counselling interview which may have been significant for her, Kay referred to two occasions in the interview. In the first instance, Kay said that she had gained clarity "around not being so rigid." She went on to say: "I don't have to compromise on the truth, but there is a time to say and there is a time to be silent." In the second instance, Kay said Audrey had asked her to talk about her "fear." In the post-counselling interview, Kay reported that on this occasion, she had said that she didn't want to be "completely overwhelmed by fear" because it had happened in her life before.

Kay indicated that the first of the therapeutic incidents which she had discussed, was the most significant for her. We turn now to examine this incident in detail.

ii. Client-identified episode of significance.

As in the previous case studies, the complete transcription of the therapist-client interview is not presented here. For this reason it is appropriate to describe the context in which the client-identified episode took place.

The interview begins with Audrey indicating that her previous client had arrived for her appointment later than the scheduled time. Hence Audrey said she could understand Kay feeling "really annoyed" (11) about Audrey being late for her appointment with Kay. Audrey and Kay go on to briefly discuss Kay's experience of the research interview held prior to the counselling session. Kay says that she didn't feel anxious (22), and reports that the process was good (22).

Later Audrey asks Kay how she wants to use the time available in the counselling session (41). Kay responds by saying that she has been reading a book recently in which the author refers to "imaginary crimes" (47). Kay refers to two crimes: the crime of outdoing parents or siblings, and the crime of taking more love than a person is actually due (51-52). Kay goes on to suggest that she wanted to explore two things which happened in her childhood. However, she says that first she wants to tell Audrey that she has written to her sister (65). Kay comments that her sister is carrying on the "family tradition" (65) of "not talking within the family" (65-66). She gives an example of when her auntie thought that someone had said something about her. According to Kay, her auntie didn't talk to the person concerned for five years. Kay says that her mother behaved in the same way as her auntie. She goes on to say that she has been suspecting that her sister has been engaging in similar behaviour in relation to Kay.

Kay says that she wrote to her sister. She told her sister that her perception of the family was that family members do not talk to people who may have upset them. Kay reports that she told her sister that she (Kay) would not engage in the same behaviour. Kay goes on to say that she must be "clear" (106). She adds that "clarity" is a "primary ingredient" for her (110).

As the counselling interview continues, Kay again says that she wants to discuss two incidents (120-121). One occurred when she was a baby. The other occurred when she was older. Kay goes on to discuss the first incident. On this occasion, Kay says that she was four months old when her sister had an accident (124-125). At this point, Audrey asks Kay what it is she would like for herself from her discussion of the incident (126-127). Kay responds by suggesting that she needs to "clarify" her feelings. She adds that she feels guilty about the incident and has "intellectually" (129) explored it. Audrey concludes that Kay wants to know about the feeling which she has (133). She goes on: "And you think by reflecting back on it you're going to get in touch with what feelings you have about this event, these events" (139-140). Kay agrees and goes on to discuss the first event.

Kay says that when Kay was four months old her sister had an "horrendous car accident" (149). She continues, saying that intellectually she knows she does not bear responsibility for her sister's accident. However, she adds: "There's something else going on that's made me feel really uncomfortable" (153-154). Later Kay says that the words she hears are: "If I hadn't have been born" (165-166), "____[Kay's sister] wouldn't have had the accident" (168). Kay indicates that she feels sad (170). She adds that there was an "awful sibling rivalry" between her sister and herself (174-175). Kay continues, suggesting that her mother "reinforced" (182) the rivalry between herself and her sister. As Kay continues to discuss the incident, she reports that she can no longer "see the picture clearly" (186) because she isn't in the picture (187). Kay says that she is on the outside looking in.

The transcript of the interview suggests that at this point, Kay is visualising herself as a five year old girl (195). She indicates that her father, sister and mother are inside while she remains outside. Kay reports that she has heard her mother say "'Oh, your sister's your father's favourite'" (198). At this point, Audrey prompts Kay to again visualise her family (200). However, the transcript of the interview suggests that Kay now visualises a different scene from that which she first described. Kay says that:

She still exasperates me. She still exasperates me when I look at her. I can't believe this. She – We're standing there. My mother's sittin' in the chair and she's saying to me: "Who's, who would you rather be with? Me or your father. (202-204)

As becomes apparent later in the interview, in this passage Kay is referring to her mother as the person who "exasperates" her.

Returning to the interview, Audrey asks Kay to role play her mother (205). Audrey tells Kay, acting as her mother, to ask Kay who she would rather be with. Having done this, Kay reports how she feels. She says:

Oh it feels incredibly uncomfortable, incredibly like I'm torn between wanting to tell the truth and wanting to tell a lie so as not to hurt Mum because I don't want to be with her. I'd rather be with my father, and I just can remember this block of silence. I had to make this decision. Whether to go with the truth and tell the truth or whether to tell a lie. So I told the truth. And the consequences caused so much pain. (208-212-253)

This extract provides possibly the most concise description of what is, later in the interview, described as, Kay's "dilemma" (330).

As the interview continues, Kay describes the scene in which her mother asked her which of her parents she wished to go with. As Kay describes the scene, she says that she feels "cold and shivery" (237). She adds that her mother is "rigid" (246). Kay goes on to suggest that she expects something to happen. At this point, the audio-tape lacks some clarity. Hence the discussion between Audrey and Kay has not been able to be completely transcribed. However, Kay's subsequent comment (254-257) suggests that Kay may have visualised herself as being punished for what she said. She says that she feels "angry" (254). Kay adds that she knows that when she has told the truth she has been punished for it. She goes on to indicate that she felt "guilty" about telling the truth. Later, Kay adds that she feels uncomfortable because it made her feel "a bit martyrish" (280). She continues: "Standing by what is the truth in you can be a bit like being a martyr" (282-283).

Interestingly, Kay goes on to say that telling the truth is "not consistent with survival" (288). Audrey asks Kay what her comments mean for her (289). Here Audrey attempts to elicit Kay's construction of Kay's comments. Kay replies:

Sometimes I have to tell lies. It means that literally. And I find it incredibly hard to do. Well I don't have to tell lies. Sometimes it's better -- there's a very subtle difference. Sometimes maybe it's better not to tell the truth. (290-292)

She adds:

But don't tell, don't tell things that aren't true and -and be true to yourself. This is really quite confusing actually. (294-295)

The above two extracts suggest the pattern of Kay's construing. Kay concludes that she sometimes has to "tell lies." Kay has loosened her construing so that she no longer construes herself as having to "tell the truth." At this point it is important perhaps, to remind the reader that, according to Kellian theory, people loosen their construing when they can use the same

construct to construe a particular person, object, place or event, but vary the constructions they make (Kelly, 1955). In this instance, Kay suggests that sometimes she has to not tell the truth. However, the second abstract above suggests that, according to Kay, when one does not tell the truth, one may tell things that "aren't true." Kay's comment suggests that if Kay tells things that aren't true, she will not be true to herself. The reason for Kay's confusion becomes evident. Kay construes not telling the truth as necessary for her survival. However, if Kay does not tell the truth, she may tell things that are not true. If Kay tells things that are not true, she is not true to herself. The apparent arrangement of Kay's construct system dictates that she has a choice: survive or be untrue to herself.

Later in the interview, Kay says that a "really fundamental thing" (298) for Kay is to be able to "have the freedom to tell the truth at all ... times" (301). The interview continues, with Audrey validating Kay's constructions. Audrey expresses her constructions of Kay's constructions: "It's very confusing" (308). Audrey goes on to ask Kay what sort of things a little girl at that time might have said about herself (312-313). Kay responds by saying: "I should love my Mum" (314). She adds: "I shouldn't love my Dad more than my Mum....And I believe I was bad for not loving my Mum the same as my Dad" (316-317).

As the interview continues, Audrey asks Kay what her "stand on that" is now (335). Presumably here, Audrey is asking Kay whether she still construes herself to be "bad" because she does not love her mother. Kay responds to Audrey's question by saying: "It still makes me feel really uncomfortable" (336). Later, Audrey asks: "Do you love your mother or don't you love your mother?" (340). Kay replies:

I do love my Mum. You know, I just don't feel comfortable with some of the things that she did. You know it was -- it was the lack of the -- it was the lack of choice. A lot of the time in my childhood it used to bring out this fear in me all the time. Like being asked questions that really only had one answer for me, and that was the truth because that's what I thought I had to do. (341-345)

Kay goes on to make a more emphatic statement. She says: "I will not ... do anything that's not true to myself (366-367). However, she says that she does not know whether she can handle the consequences (369). Still later, Kay says: "I'm not prepared to compromise on the truth" (388-389). Kay says that she wants to say this to herself and to her sister. Kay repeats what she wants to say to an imaginary self sitting on her chair. Audrey then asks Kay to tell her "sister" her thoughts. Kay says:

I'll have to tell you [her image of her sister] that I'm not prepared having come this far to compromise on the truth. I can't take responsibility of your feelings and I can't

play the old game. I am not even sure that I've ever been able to play the game anyway. But I certainly am not prepared to play it now. (409-412)

Following Kay's comment, Audrey interrupts Kay to ask her to change the word "can't" to "won't" (415-416). Kay responds: "I won't, I won't compromise" (417). Audrey asks Kay if it feels all right for Kay to say this. . At this point the client-identified episode begins:

419 C: (It feels fine.) Yep. I won't compromise.

420 T: Mm.

421 C: I'm not really sure I've used the right words. A bit of self-doubt.

422 T: Listen to yourself.

423 C: Mm. It feels like there's this great big person inside saying "don't be so black and
424 white, compromise even if it's not the truth, be more flexible" and there's this other
425 small voice saying, "Bullshit, I will not compromise on the truth." But I can learn
426 to be more flexible.

427 T: So you'll pick your moment. Is that what I hear you say?

428 C: Yeah. I guess what I'm saying is that um the truth is really very, is very
429 fundamental, very vital to me, to my er on- ongoing growth.

430 T: Mm.

431 C: But I, yeah. I have to wait I can pick my moment. I can choose my moment.

432 T: So there may be times when you are aware that you um may shape the truth to fit
433 the situation.

434 C: Yeah, yeah. Yeah.

435 T: And have some flexibility.

436 C: That's it.

437 T: Whether you tell it or not.

438 C: Yes that's right.

439 T: Allow yourself to discern whether it feels right to say the truth or not.

440 C: And I think that's why I waited so long to write to my sister is because I may I may
441 have felt some anger. I may even have entered oh my God I may even have entered
442 the arena of playing the family game as well, of "I won't talk to her before she talks
443 to me" sort of thing. I may have done this. I'm not actually clear on that.

444 T: OK.

445 C: Um so yeah. I guess that it was important for me to be flexible and to let some time
446 go by. And I-I really when I wrote the letter to my sister this week I really didn't
447 feel afraid at all. I-I have -- there wasn't anything to lose, I needed to do it. I
448 needed to do it for myself.

449 T: How does it feel for you here now knowing that you've given yourself that
450 flexibility to decide when you want to tell the truth and when you decide when you
451 don't want to.

452 C: It feels really good. It's-it's -- I mean it wasn't -- it's like I can tell the truth or I can,
453 I can be silent.

454 T: Yes.

455 C: And I think that's mainly more the road I'll choose to go to, I am choosing to go to,
456 is that I won't choose to tell lies. Um but I won't be brutal with the truth either.

457 T: And how does that feel?

458 C: It feels good. It feels good. It feels like a relief and a release.

459 T: Sure looks like it. That sigh. Kay um going back to what you said before about
460 your mother and you're good

461 C: Yeah.

462 T: Or bad. I wonder how that fits now. Can you make any links between what
463 happened before with your mother and how you're feeling now, the resolution
464 you're just coming to? There's not a link there.

465 C: Yeah the link is that it's like it's not all or nothing. It's not forgiveness or all
466 bitterness for me at the moment. It's just like there's a lot of forgiveness in there.
467 There's wisps of bitterness and dislike in there and that's OK too. I feel that I'm
468 going in the right direction with the work that I'm doing and so it isn't quite so
469 black and white. I don't have to split from one side to the other.

iii. Significance of the client-identified episode.

The reader will recall that Kay said that the episode which she identified as significant was one in which she had obtained "clarity around not being so rigid." This comment is elaborated upon in subsequent analysis and discussion of the above episode. Prior to hearing the selected episode, Kay said that the above comment about the episode was linked with a picture which she had of her mother. She indicated that she had previously construed her mother "with great bitterness" (C8Tp2: 12), or with "great forgiveness" (C8Tp2: 12). Kay added: "It was very much black and white for me" (C8Tp2: 12-13). During the counselling session, Kay suggested that she had changed the way in which she construed her constructions of her mother. She said:

Now I can actually have this feeling of um forgiving overall forgiveness but with a few strands of-of dislike or bitterness in there. And it was the same sort of thing. It doesn't have to be black and white. Yeah. It can be more -- I can be more flexible with the picture. (C8Tp2: 15-18).

Kay's comments suggest that during the counselling interaction, Kay loosened her construing. She no longer construes herself as either forgiving her mother, or as being bitter towards her mother. She can now construe herself as forgiving her mother, and also as disliking her mother, or having some bitterness towards her. Previous discussion suggests that following this loosening of the constructs which govern Kay's constructions, Kay may eventually revise the construct which governs her initial construction. In this way Kay's construct system will have undergone change.

After hearing the episode, Kay suggested that the episode was significant to her because she was now able to compromise. She could have some flexibility. The personal

meaning associated with this, and other comments which Kay made in the post-counselling interview, are discussed in the following section.

iv. Analysis of the client-identified episode of significance.

As indicated previously, prior to the client-identified episode, Kay had said that she was not going to compromise on the truth. Audrey then asked Kay to indicate to whom she wished to convey her intention that she was not going to compromise on the truth. Kay had responded by saying that she wanted to tell her sister of her decision. Kay had imagined her sister sitting in the room in which the counselling session was conducted. She then spoke to her image of her sister. As Kay spoke, Audrey interrupted her and suggested that she change the word "can't," which Kay had previously used, to the word "won't." Kay responded by saying: "I won't compromise" (417). Audrey asked Kay if it felt right to say she wouldn't compromise. Kay responded by saying that it felt fine (419). At this point the above episode begins.

Again Kay says to her image of her sister: "I won't compromise" (419). However, Kay expresses her construction of the outcome of her expression of her initial constructions. She says: "I'm not really sure I've used the right words. A bit of self-doubt" (421). The reader will recall that prior to the counselling interview, Kay had described herself as someone who was filled with "self-doubt." Audrey responds to Kay's comment by asking Kay to listen to herself (422). In terms of personal construct theory, we might say that Audrey has asked Kay to express the superordinate, or subordinate, constructions of the constructions which she has expressed. Kay replies by suggesting that she now has two alternative ways of construing herself. She construes herself as either compromising on the truth, or as not compromising on the truth (423-425). As indicated earlier, prior to the client-identified episode, Kay had loosened her construing so that she no longer construed herself as either "telling the truth" or as "telling lies." She construed herself as sometimes able to tell the truth or as sometimes able to not tell the truth. Kay construed not telling the truth as necessary for her "survival." However, telling the truth allowed her to be "true to herself." Kay's comments in the client-identified episode suggest that she now alternates between two constructions of herself which are similar to those constructions which she expressed earlier. Kay is able to either compromise on the truth or not compromise on the truth. As indicated in previous discussion, a client who alternates between two contrasting ways of construing the same object, place, person or event, would be described by Kelly (1962) as "slot rattling." Such a person construes himself or herself using either of the two poles of a construct which governs that person's alternative constructions. In this instance, then, Kay appears to "slot rattle" between construing herself as compromising on the truth and construing herself as not compromising on the truth.

Immediately prior to the client-identified episode, Kay said that she would not compromise on the truth. Now, in the client-identified episode, Kay is suggesting that, instead, she can learn to be more "flexible" (425-426). Kay suggests here that she has begun to "tighten" a revised way of construing herself. She suggests that she construes herself as able to be more "flexible" rather than as not compromising on the truth. Thus we might conclude that Kay is opting for a single way of construing herself which is different to the way in which she previously construed herself. Audrey expresses her construction of Kay's constructions. She says: "So you'll pick your moment. Is that what I hear you say?" (427).

Kay goes on to express her construction of "the truth" (428). She says that the truth is very fundamental to her "ongoing growth" (428-429). Kay has again expressed her previously expressed construction. She suggests that she will not "compromise on the truth." Kay then suggests that she construes Audrey's construction which was expressed previously (427), as predictively valid. Kay suggests that Audrey has expressed a predictively valid construction of Kay's construction. She says: "I have to wait I can pick my moment. I can choose my moment" (431). In Audrey's next comment, Audrey appears to express her personal constructions of the constructions which Kay has expressed. She suggests that there may be times when Kay will be aware that she can "shape the truth to fit the situation" (432-433). Audrey adds: "And have some flexibility" (435). She goes on: "Whether you tell it or not" (437). Kay's affirmations of Audrey's comments (434, 436, 437) suggest that Audrey may have expressed constructions which are similar to Kay's previously expressed constructions. Thus, at this point, we may tentatively conclude that Audrey and Kay share similar personal constructions of Kay's constructions. They may share a social construction which has arisen out of the therapeutic process.

As the episode continues, Audrey expresses a further personal construction of Kay's constructions: "Allow yourself [Kay] to discern whether it feels right to say the truth or not" (439). Kay's response (440-443) suggests that Kay offers what Audrey might construe to be validating evidence of the construction which Audrey expressed (439). She says: "And I think that's why I waited so long to write to my sister is because I may I may have felt some anger" (440-441). In this statement, Kay expresses her personal theory of why she delayed writing to her sister. In Kellian terms, Kay has expressed her superordinate construction of her constructions. She goes on to suggest that she construes herself as possibly playing the "family game" (442) of "I won't talk to her before she talks to me" (442-443). Kay continues, expressing her construction of her previously expressed constructions. She says: "I guess that it was important for me to be flexible and to let some time go by" (445-446). She adds that she was not afraid when she wrote the letter to her sister (446-447). She construed herself as not having "anything to lose" (447). She also construed herself as having "needed" to write the letter (447).

Audrey goes on to ask Kay how it feels for her now, knowing that she has given herself flexibility to decide when she wants to tell the truth and when she doesn't want to tell the truth (449-450). If we construe the construction which is indicated in Audrey's comments, we may speculate that Audrey expresses one of two possible constructions. First, Audrey may construe Kay as deciding when she will tell the truth and when she will say something which is not the truth. Second, Audrey may construe Kay as simply deciding when she will tell the truth. Sometimes she will tell the truth. Sometimes she may say nothing. Earlier discussion suggested that Audrey and Kay may have come to share a similar construction of Kay's constructions. An element of doubt remained in the conclusion drawn. At this stage, we cannot say with a great degree of certainty that Audrey and Kay do share a similar construction of Kay's construction. We do not have access to Audrey's constructions of Kay's constructions. We do not know which, of the two suggested constructions of Kay's constructions, Audrey may have expressed. Moreover, we do not know if Audrey may have expressed a construction which is different from either of the two constructions suggested above. However, as indicated earlier, there does seem to be sufficient evidence to, at least, suggest that Audrey and Kay share a similar construction of Kay's constructions.

As the client-identified episode continues, Kay's comments suggest that Kay is uncertain as to whether she and Audrey have a similar construction of Kay's constructions. In response to Audrey's question (449-451), Kay says: "It feels really good. It's-it's -- I mean it wasn't -- it's like I can tell the truth or I can, I can be silent" (452-453). Kay suggests that she may construe Audrey as having a construction of Kay's constructions which is dissimilar to Kay's construction. In Kay's response to Audrey's question (449-451), Kay clearly indicates that she construes herself as able to tell the truth, or be silent. Earlier analysis suggested that Kay may have revised the previous construction which she expressed in, "I will not compromise on the truth." She appeared to have tightened her construing to now construe herself as able to compromise on the truth. However, as current discussion demonstrates, this is not the case. Rather, during the course of the counselling interview, Kay appears to have revised her construing differently. At the beginning of the client-identified episode, Kay suggests that she construes herself alternatively, as compromising, or as not compromising, on the truth. Then Kay apparently tightens her construing to construe herself as not compromising on the truth. However, Kay suggests that she no longer needs to express her construction when she construes something to be the truth. She can remain silent.

After a brief affirmation from Audrey, Kay goes on to suggest the predictive validity of the above construction of Kay's constructions. She says: "And I think that's mainly more the road I'll choose to go to, I am choosing to go to, is that I won't choose to tell lies" (455-456). Kay goes on to say that she won't be "brutal with the truth" (456). We might then speculate that for Kay, a person is "flexible" if that person chooses when to speak the truth.

However, a person is not "brutal" when telling the truth. Later discussion, examines Kay's constructions associated with people being "flexible," more closely.

Audrey goes on to ask Kay how she feels (457). Kay responds by saying that it feels "good" (458). She adds that, "it feels like a "relief and a release" (458). Perhaps, we might suggest that Kay's response follows from her having loosened her construing. Previously she could only construe undesirable outcomes of her constructions. Kay had construed herself as only able to tell the truth, or as able to not tell the truth. As previous discussion demonstrated, Kay construed speaking the truth as uncondusive to "survival." She construed not telling the truth as being "untrue to herself." Early in the client-identified episode, Kay suggested that she had loosened her construing so that she could construe herself as either compromising on the truth or as being flexible as to when she expressed the truth. Kay tightened her construing again to construe herself as able to be flexible when she expressed the truth. Thus Kay was able to satisfy her wish to be true to herself, by speaking the truth. Presumably too, Kay construed herself as able to ensure her continued "survival" by choosing when she would tell the truth.

At this point in the client-identified episode, Audrey asks Kay (462-464) how what she has been saying during the episode relates to comments which Kay made about her mother earlier in the counselling interview. In Kellian terms, Audrey asks Kay to express any similarity which she may construe between the two topics discussed. Kay responds by saying:

Yeah the link is that it's like it's not all or nothing. It's not forgiveness or all bitterness for me at the moment. It's just like there's a lot of forgiveness in there. There's wisps of bitterness and dislike in there and that's OK too. (465-467)

Kay's comment is similar to that which she makes in the post-counselling interview. Kay suggests that the similarity which she construes between her two sets of constructions, is that she has loosened the constructs associated with her constructions in each case. She has loosened her constructs associated with telling the truth. She has also loosened those constructs which she uses to construe her mother. Now Kay can construe her mother with forgiveness, and bitterness and dislike. Kay concludes the episode by saying:

I feel that I'm going in the right direction with the work that I'm doing and so it isn't quite so black and white. I don't have to split from one side to the other. (467-469)

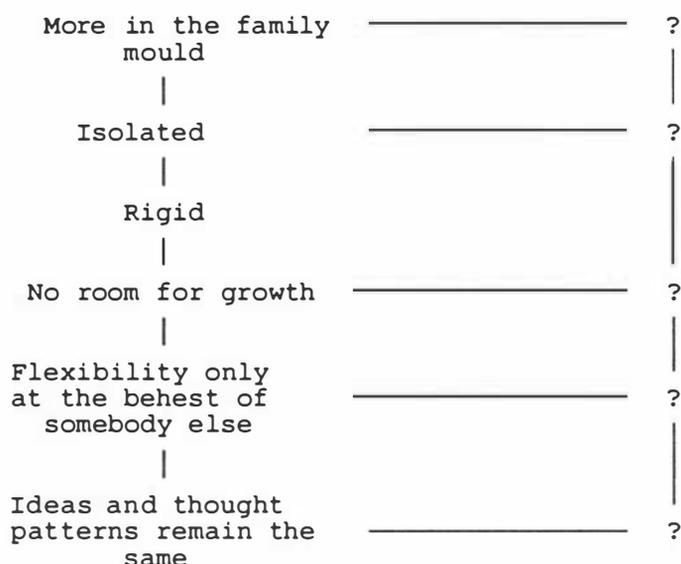
The term "work" is commonly used by therapists, and clients engaged in psychotherapy to suggest the process of psychotherapy. Given the context in which the above comment is made, it seems reasonable to assume that Kay has used this term in a similar way here.

Hence, we might conclude that Kay is expressing her construction of the psychotherapeutic process she has been engaged in. She construes the process as going "in the right direction." Finally, she again suggests that she now construes some aspects of her subjective reality differently from the way in which she construed that reality prior to the counselling session discussed here.

In the post-counselling interview, I asked Kay to elaborate her constructions associated with being "flexible." Interestingly, in the post-counselling interview, my initial question followed from a construction similar to that which was made earlier in this analysis. Upon first hearing the client-identified episode, I had construed Kay's constructions in a way which I now construe to have been predictively invalid. I had construed Kay's comments as suggesting that Kay now construed herself as able to compromise. Since she was able to compromise on the truth, I construed Kay as construing herself to have "flexibility." As previous discussion has demonstrated this is not the case. Rather Kay construes herself as not compromising on the truth. However, she construes herself as able to be flexible as to when she tells the truth.

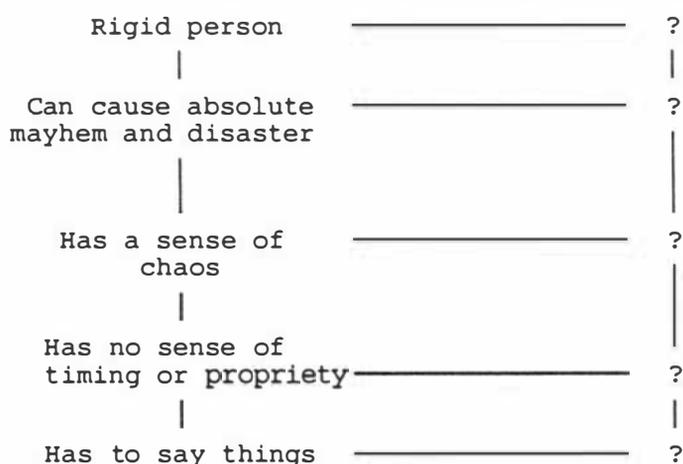
Despite the predictive invalidity of my initial constructions, Kay elaborated her constructions associated with being flexible. She said that no "flexibility" is a form of "isolation" for her (C8Tp2: 46). She added: "When I'm rigid nothing goes out and nothing comes in. Nothing's able to go out or come in" (C8Tp2: 48-49). At this point we may conclude that, according to Kay, being "rigid" involves having no "flexibility." Moreover, a person whom Kay construes to be in contrast to a person whom she describes as "flexible," is a person whom Kay describes as "rigid." This becomes apparent during the latter part of the counselling session. In addition, this pattern of Kay's construing becomes apparent during the course of the post-counselling interview. In the post-counselling interview, Kay suggests that the ideas and thought patterns of rigid people "remain the same" (C8Tp2: 57). She added: "There's no-there's no room for growth, there's no room for movement" (C8Tp2: 57-58). Kay goes on to suggest that someone who is rigid is able to move only at the behest of somebody else (C8Tp2: 61). Later she suggests that someone who is rigid is "more in the family mould" (C8Tp2: 73). In the post-counselling interview, Kay goes on to suggest that she would have "doggedly" gone on being her "mother's daughter" (C8Tp2: 77) had she remained rigid.

At this point then we may illustrate the possible hierarchical arrangement of Kay's constructions associated with construing someone as "rigid." The following diagram represents this possible arrangement.



Diagrammatic representation of Kay's constructions
associated with construing a person as "rigid"

As the post-counselling interview continued, Kay elaborated her constructions associated with the behaviour of someone who is "rigid." She suggested that a person who is rigid has a sense of "chaos" (C8Tp2: 95-97). According to Kay, a person who has a sense of "chaos" is someone who has "no sense of timing" or "propriety" (C8Tp2: 99-100). Kay suggests that such a person has to say things (C8Tp2: 99). At this point we can illustrate the possible hierarchical arrangement of Kay's constructions associated with a "rigid" person's behaviour. The following diagram represents this possible arrangement.

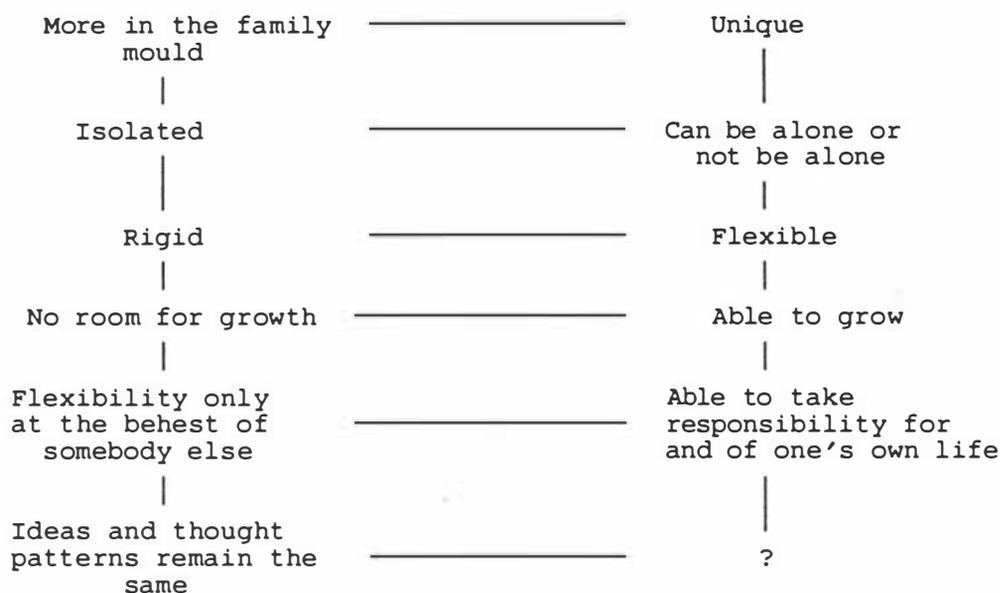


Diagrammatic representation of Kay's constructions
associated with the behaviour of a "rigid" person

At this point, the pattern of Kay's construing becomes more evident. Initially, in the counselling interview, it appeared that Kay had two choices. She could either tell the truth or she could "tell lies." If Kay told the truth, the consequences were hard for her to bear. However, if Kay told lies, she was not true to herself. Subsequently, Kay suggested that she could compromise on the truth, or she could be "flexible." Kay went on to tighten her construing. She construed herself as being "flexible." Kay could tell the truth, but choose when she told the truth. In the latter part of the counselling interview, and now in the post-counselling interview, Kay suggests that she no longer construes herself as compromising on the truth, or, alternatively, as being "flexible." Rather, Kay suggests that she construes herself as being "rigid" or "flexible." The contrasting construction which Kay may have of herself and, presumably of others, is no longer expressed in "compromising the truth." Rather, it is expressed in the word, "flexible." Thus, Kay seems to have revised her construing so that she no longer uses the original construct to construe herself. Instead Kay appears to use a different construct in the construal of herself from that which she initially used. The constructions which follow from this construct revision are the subject of discussion here. We turn now to examine the constructions associated with constructions of people and constructions of people's behaviour which are alternative to those suggested in the diagrams above.

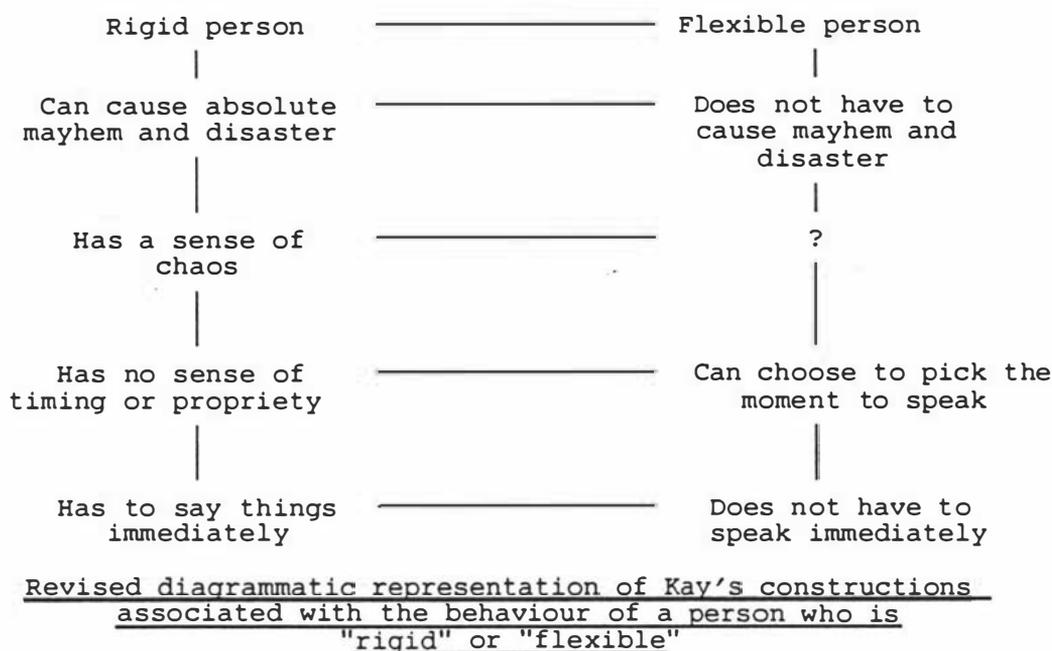
Kay suggests that a person can "grow" only if that person is "flexible" (C8Tp2: 51). She goes on to suggest that a "flexible" person is someone who is "able to take control and responsibility for and of that person's own life" (C8Tp2: 66-67). In contrast, Kay suggests that a rigid person is able to move only "at the behest of somebody else" (C8Tp2: 61). Kay goes on to suggest that a "flexible" person is able to find out more about his or her "individuality" and "experience" his or her "unique self" (C8Tp2: 69-70). Kay construes herself as someone who is "flexible" and hence "able to take control" and "responsibility" for, and of, her life. In addition, Kay construes herself as able to find out more about her "individuality" and experience her "unique self." Kay suggests that a "flexible" person is "unique." In contrast, a "rigid" person is "more in the family mould" (C8Tp2: 73). As will become apparent in later discussion, a further construction associated with Kay's construction of people as flexible is given later in the counselling interview. There Kay suggests that a "flexible" person does not have to be limited to "one mode" (573). The verbal context of Kay's comment suggests that Kay is implying that a "flexible" person has choices. That person can be alone or not be alone. As we have seen, according to Kay, in contrast a "rigid" person is someone who is "isolated."

At this point we can complete the earlier diagram of Kay's constructions associated with construing a person as "rigid." We can now illustrate Kay's constructions associated with construing a person as either "rigid" or "flexible."



Diagrammatic representation of Kay's constructions
associated with construing a person as "rigid" or "flexible"

In the post-counselling interview, Kay went on to express her constructions associated with the behaviour of a person who is "flexible." She suggests that a person who is flexible can choose when that person speaks the truth. According to Kay, such a person does not have to speak the truth immediately and at "an inappropriate time." Kay also suggests that, in contrast to a "rigid" person, a "flexible" person does not have to cause "mayhem and disaster" (C8Tp2: 89). Importantly, Kay suggests that she no longer has to cause "mayhem and disaster." She can now "choose to pick her moment" when she tells the truth (C8Tp2: 87). At this point we can complete the earlier diagram of Kay's constructions associated with the behaviour of "rigid" people. We can now suggest the possible hierarchical arrangement of Kay's constructions associated with her constructions of the behaviour of "rigid" people and the behaviour of "flexible" people. The following diagram represents this possible arrangement.



From the above two diagrams we can gain further insight into Kay's construing. Kay construes people who are "rigid" as those who cause "mayhem and disaster." Kay construes herself as having been a "rigid" person. However, Kay does not need to construe herself as "rigid." Instead she can be "flexible" and thus have the freedom to choose when she speaks the truth. However, regardless of whether Kay is "rigid" or "flexible" she need not "compromise on the truth." As earlier discussion has suggested, Kay's comments indicate that this is a necessary outcome of any revision of Kay's construct system.

As the post-counselling interview continued, I asked Kay if there was anything else about the client-identified episode that was significant for her. Kay commented that Audrey's comments towards the end of the interview, were significant. The reader will recall that Audrey asked Kay if she could make any "links" (462) between her earlier discussions of the way in which she construed her mother, and her comments about the way in which she construed herself. In this section of the post-counselling interview, Kay again indicated that she did not have to construe her mother as "all forgiveness" or "all badness" (C8Tp2: 105-110). Earlier discussion and analysis of the client-identified episode suggests that this comment may not adequately indicate the construction expressed here. Previous discussion suggests that Kay revised her constructions of her mother. She construed herself as having some "forgiveness" for her mother and some "dislike" or "bitterness" (C8Tp2: 15-18). Kay concludes the post-counselling interview by saying that there is nothing further in the client-identified episode which was significant for her.

For the reader's interest, the counselling interaction continues, with Audrey asking Kay how she feels (481). Kay responds by saying that she feels "tired" (482). She feels that she has "worked hard" (482). However, Kay goes on to ask: "How come I didn't see this

before?" (488). The reader might recall that in the research interview prior to the counselling session, Kay indicated that she has a desire to understand. This desire is reflected in her comment here. Audrey responds to Kay's question by discussing a personal experience in which she had not known why she was unable to understand what was "there" (493-499). Audrey suggests that people may lack understanding because they have some sort of "defence" (499) which protects them.

Later Kay returns to her discussion of "flexibility." She says: "If you shout loud enough and are rigid enough at least you'll believe yourself" (506-507). Kay goes on to suggest that she associates "flexibility" with being "wishy-washy" (507). Audrey asks Kay if she still has a similar belief about flexibility (510). Kay replies that she does not feel that now (511). However, she adds that her belief has not entirely gone. In other words, Kay still construes a person who is "rigid" to be someone who will believe himself or herself. Kay also associates being "flexible" with being "wishy-washy." Kay goes on to suggest that being flexible is a "new concept" (516). Thus, we have further evidence in support of an earlier conclusion. Previous analysis and discussion suggested that Kay had loosened her construing to construe herself as either compromising on the truth or as being more flexible as to when she told the truth. Subsequently she tightened her construing to construe herself as being flexible as to when she told the truth. At this stage of the interview, Kay suggests that her present construction is indeed a revised, and hence, a new construction. Kellian theory would suggest that Kay must test the predictive validity of this construction, just as she would test the predictive validity of all other constructions. Thus, this new construction, like the previous construction, is subject to possible revision. The revised construction is subject to possible revision if Kay construes evidence which suggests the predictive invalidity of the revised construction.

As the interview continues, Kay says that she does not have to be "absolutely rigid" (527). She concludes that it is "not a good place to be" (527). Later Audrey says that children don't recognise that they do not have to be absolutely "rigid" (534). Kay agrees (535). Audrey continues, suggesting that children think that their parents can't possibly be "good with bad in them" (539). This comment follows from a personal construction which Audrey has of Kay's constructions. Audrey apparently construes further similarity between Kay's description of the way in which she construes her mother, and Kay's comments associated with telling the truth. She suggests that just as there is an alternative to telling the truth or not telling the truth, there is an alternative way of construing Kay's mother. Audrey suggests that Kay need not construe her mother as "good" or as "bad." Rather, Audrey suggests that Kay can construe her mother as having "a bit of good" and a "bit of bad" (545-546). Audrey expresses her construction in: "But as an adult you can see that you can have a bit of good in you and a bit of bad in you" (545-546). Kay responds by saying that she now has a clearer picture of

who her mother is. She says: "She wasn't all bad and she wasn't all good" (550-551). In Kay's next comment there is evidence that Kay shares the personal construction which Audrey expressed in her comment. Kay too, construes her description of the way in which she construes her mother as similar to her comments associated with telling the truth. She says "It's the same as I am not always clear, I am not always clear. I don't always have to speak the truth. I don't have to tell lies either" (553-554).

Thus, Audrey and Kay share a social construction. They each have a similar personal construction of Kay's constructions.

Kay goes on to suggest that "rigidity" is "isolation" (563). She adds: "Very isolated" (563). Audrey agrees (564). Later Audrey suggests that when a person becomes "flexible," "a whole new horizon" opens up. She adds: "You have choices to ... stand back and ... be alone" (569-570) or be "involved" (572). Here Audrey expresses another construction which has arisen during the course of the counselling interview. At this stage of the interview, the construction conveyed by the word "flexible" appears to be a personal construction which is now shared by Audrey and Kay. However, Audrey has gone on to express her personal constructions by suggesting that a "whole new horizon" opens up. Audrey also expresses her superordinate construction of Kay's constructions when she says that a person has the choice to stand back and be alone, or be involved. Kay evidently has a similar construction of the constructions which she has expressed. She says: "Mm. Yeah, you certainly do. I don't have to limit myself to one mode. Oh good, what a relief" (573-574).

The counselling interview concludes with Audrey expressing her personal construction of Kay's behaviour. She says: "You look relieved. Your body looks relieved" (575). Kay follows by saying that she feels good. In Audrey's final comment she says:

So. Practise it when you're ready. Start practising today and start practising tomorrow. Be flexible about when you start practising your flexibility. (577-578)

In this final comment of course, Audrey again expresses the construction which she and Kay express in the word "flexible." We turn now, to a discussion of the constructions which Audrey has expressed within the counselling interaction.

Now to learn more about the possible interaction between the constructions of the client and the therapist, we need to more closely examine the constructions which Audrey expressed during the counselling interaction.

B. Therapist Post-counselling Interview

i. Therapist response to the therapeutic interaction.

Audrey commented that Kay had "empowered" herself during the counselling session. She said that Kay had "reached a point ... where she recognised... that she could be flexible, that she didn't have to be rigidly to the left or the right" (T4Tp3: 2-3).

When Audrey was asked if there were any points in the counselling interview which may have been of significance to her, Audrey suggested that there were two episodes which may have been of significance. Audrey comments upon the first of these episodes in the following extract:

She-she [Kay] contacted an early scene where she'd been in her home and she'd had to make a choice, and she got in touch with the unfairness and the confusion that she felt in the um the beliefs that she had about telling the truth but knowing that if she told the truth by telling the truth she was going to hurt someone or upset someone and um ahh um so you know just the confusion she felt about that and the feelings she had were attached to that, that very much linked with guilt she had around her sister. (T4Tp3: 8-17)

Audrey went on to suggest that the link which Kay made between the way in which she construed her mother and the way in which she construed herself, was an important one. Audrey commented:

And um she linked into um her own um st- her own belief system that she has to tell the truth, you know, has to be truthful and um um and related that to ohh feeling about her father and her mother being all bad and her mother being all good. (T4Tp2: 19-21)

Audrey said that in the second episode which she considered had significance, Kay had talked to herself from one chair. The reader will recall that this is the occasion in the counselling interview, when Kay imagined herself to be in another chair. During the session, Kay spoke to her imaginary self. In this instance, of course, the therapeutic intervention used by the therapist during the counselling session is consistent with a gestalt therapeutic approach.³ To return to our discussion of the post-counselling therapist interview, Audrey said that Kay told herself that she "could choose" (T4Tp2: 37). Audrey went on to recall that

³ See p. 427.

Kay had said that she could tell the truth but she could choose to remain silent (T4Tp2: 38-39).

When Audrey was asked which of the two incidents she had described was the most significant, Audrey asked a similar question to that asked by the first therapist in this study. She asked whether she should identify an episode which may have been of particular significance to her client, or identify an episode which may have been of particular significance for her. I responded as in the previous instance. I suggested that Audrey may choose to select two separate therapeutic episodes, one which was of significance to her and one which was of possible significance to her client.

Audrey said that she thought that the most significant point in the counselling interview for her client would have been when her client spoke to herself in the chair. The reader will recall that this incident took place almost immediately prior to the client-identified episode. However, Audrey said that for her the most significant episode involved Kay expressing her realisation that she could choose to remain silent. As previous discussion has indicated the incident which Audrey described was contained in the client-identified episode.

The reader may recall from earlier discussion of the counselling interview, that, as a consequence of a client arriving late, the therapist was anxious because she was behind schedule with her appointments. Hence, I was limited in the amount of time which I had available to complete the remainder of the interview schedule. Given that the incident which the therapist decided had significance for her, was included within the client-identified episode, I decided to omit any examination of the first therapist-identified episode. Instead, I examined only the episode which the therapist said had particular significance for her.

ii. The therapist-identified episode of significance.

Surprisingly, the beginning and the end of the episode which Audrey described as having significance for her, were consistent with the beginning and end of the client-identified episode, given earlier. Hence, the episode is not again presented here.

iii. Significance of the therapist-identified episode and

v. Therapist comment with respect to the client-identified episode.

Upon hearing the episode, Audrey said that the episode was significant because in the latter part of the episode (465-469), there was an "integration with the self" (T4Tp3: 59). Here, we might reasonably assume that Audrey is referring to Kay's comment that she no longer has to "split from one side to another" (469). Audrey goes on to confirm that her comments do indeed follow from her construal of Kay's concluding statement in the episode. In the post-counselling therapist interview, Audrey suggests that Kay is able to accept "good" and "bad" and put them "together." According to Audrey, Kay does not have to have "the bad

mother" in one place and "the good mother" in another place (T4Tp3: 61-63). Instead, Audrey says, Kay's mother "can be both" (T4Tp3: 65). Audrey continues: "She can be both. Kay can be both. Her sister can be both" (T4Tp3: 67). In these comments, Audrey appears to express contextual elements of the construction which she expressed earlier in her comment that there was an "integration with the self." Audrey suggests that she construes Kay as construing herself, her sister, and her mother, as able to be "good" or "bad."

To understand a little more about Audrey's construing, I asked Audrey what would happen if Kay was not "integrated." Audrey responded by saying "she loses her power" (T4Tp3: 72). She added: "She's just not an integrated person"⁴ (T4Tp3: 72-73). Audrey continues, suggesting that Kay would lose touch with reality if she was not able to integrate. She comments that in the episode discussed here, Kay is being "real," "in touch with herself" (T4Tp3: 77-78). Later Audrey says that a person who is not "integrated" is unable to "self-actualise"⁵ (T4Tp3: 82). She adds that such a person cannot "find themselves and take responsibility for their actions and their feelings and for who they are" (T4Tp3: 82-84).

In the post-counselling interview, Audrey commented further upon the significance of the episode. She said that the episode was significant because Kay had given a lot of thought to what she was going to use the session for. According to Audrey, Kay had "hunches" (T4Tp3: 96) about herself before she came to counselling and she "went with them and came out with something for her" (T4Tp3: 96-97).

Audrey went on to say that Kay took things for herself during the session which she has not done in the past (T4Tp3: 98-99). She continued, suggesting that Kay taking things for herself is part of the process of Kay being OK about "who she is" (T4Tp3: 103-104). Audrey added that Kay was "empowering" herself (T4Tp3: 117) on the day of the counselling session. At this point, I asked Audrey what might happen if Kay did not have the power which Audrey had suggested was important. She replied:

You know, for her. Um ahh giving power to other people and giving power to other um other things, dependency, you know, a dependency situation for her. It's part of her, you know, taking responsibility part of her claiming her own power. She doesn't

⁴ This is a further example of the therapist using a concept from the principles of Gestalt therapy. Ivey (1987) suggests that Gestalt therapists hold that we start life more or less in one piece. They suggest that our experiences, feelings and fears in life cause us to lose parts of ourselves (Ivey, 1987). Thus, Gestalt therapy is centrally concerned with "integrating or reintegrating our split-off parts into a whole person" (Ivey, 1987, p. 284).

⁵ Ivey et al. suggest that "self-actualization" may be defined as "experiencing one's fullest humanness" (p. 273). They go on to say that people who self-actualize enjoy all aspects of their lives not only those moments when they experience success. Ivey et al. indicate that according to Gestalt therapists, people can live "self-actualized" lives only when they know and understand those feelings and thoughts which are associated with all their life experiences. According to Gestalt therapists then, integration is a necessary condition for self-actualization.

have to rely on other sources but she can rely on herself and be herself in the world.
(T4Tp3: 125-129)

These comments provide the first insight into those constructions which may be directly associated with changes in Kay's construing during the counselling session. Previous analysis and discussion of the counselling interview, and the post-counselling client interview, suggested that Kay construed herself as having previously been able to grow only "at the behest" of somebody else. Subsequent to the counselling interaction, Kay construes herself as able to take responsibility "for and of" her own life. In the above extract, Audrey suggests that she too, construes Kay as having previously been reliant upon others. At the conclusion of the counselling session, Audrey too, construes Kay as having taken responsibility for herself.

Looking back now at the other constructions which Audrey expressed during the course of the post-counselling interview, we can perhaps conclude that what Audrey construed to be a desirable therapeutic outcome of the counselling session, was consistent with what appeared to be the desirable therapeutic outcome, from Kay's point of view. Audrey's comments in the post-counselling interview suggest that she construes Kay as having previously been unable to take responsibility for her thinking, feelings and actions. She construes a person who is able to take responsibility for his or her thinking, feelings and behaviour, as someone who is "integrated." Audrey suggests that one becomes "integrated" when one gets "in touch" with oneself. Perhaps, in Kellian terms, we might say that one is "integrated" if one revises one's constructions upon construing invalidating evidence of those constructions. By so doing, one increases the predictive validity of one's constructions. For example, in this instance, Kay may have previously construed herself as only able to tell the truth immediately. She could only be "rigid." However, she did not tell the truth to her sister immediately. Thus Kay's constructions of the event of writing to her sister, may have provided evidence of the invalidity of her self-construction. Hence, Kay may have begun to loosen her construing. As we have already seen during the course of the counselling interaction, Kay tightens her construing again. However, as a consequence of the loosening process, she has revised her initial construction, and so increased the predictive validity of her self-constructions.

Earlier, Kay's pattern of construing suggested that any revision of Kay's construct system must enable Kay to continue to construe herself as "not compromising on the truth." Only by not compromising on the truth would Kay remain "true to herself." We might reasonably suggest that for Kay, it was important that she remain true to herself. Perhaps too, we might reasonably suggest that what is important to Kay is similar to what was important to Audrey. Kay sought to remain true to herself. Audrey considered that it was important that Kay become "integrated." Kay could only become integrated by revising her previous

construction of herself. She could no longer continue to construe herself as either unable to survive, or as being untrue to herself. By revising her constructions during the counselling session, Kay was able to survive and remain true to herself. Thus Kay achieved Audrey's goal of her becoming "integrated." In addition, Kay revised her constructs in a way which was consistent with her still not compromising on the truth. Thus the construct system change which occurred during the course of the counselling interview, was consistent with the superordinate construct structure of Kay's construct system.

Summary

Prior to the counselling session, Kay foreshadowed the possibility that she would take more responsibility for herself during the counselling session. As we have seen this goal was consistent with the therapeutic outcome which Audrey considered desirable. During the counselling interaction, Kay suggested that the outcomes of her present behaviour were undesirable for her. Previously Kay had construed herself as having to tell the truth. However, when she did so, the consequences were "mayhem and disaster." Nevertheless, Kay's construct system did not appear to permit any change in her construal of herself as someone who does not compromise on the truth. As the counselling interview progressed Kay was able to loosen her construing sufficiently to be able to construe herself as sometimes able to tell the truth and sometimes as able to say nothing. By so doing, Kay was able to maintain her construction of herself as someone who does not compromise on the truth. However, she was also able to construe herself as being "flexible" rather than as being "rigid." According to Kay, "flexible" people are no longer dependent upon others for their personal "growth." They take responsibility for themselves and their behaviour. As discussion demonstrated, by Kay reconstruing herself in this way, Audrey was able to revise her construction of Kay to construe her as "integrated" rather than as being "unable to integrate." Thus, this case has demonstrated that changes can take place in a client's construct system through a counselling process which promotes the loosening and subsequent tightening of client constructs. However, as we have seen, any possible construct changes must imply limited changes in the client's superordinate construct system. Otherwise, as indicated in previous case studies, changes in the client's construct system will not occur.

Conclusion

In this chapter and the previous two chapters the character sketches of each of the four therapists and each of the eight clients have been presented. Analysis of these self-characterisations has included the identification of construed expressions of role construct poles and the categorisation of these expressions. A summary of the classification of the role

construct pole expressions has been provided in each instance. These summaries are the subject of discussion in the following chapter.

This chapter, and the preceding chapters have also included analysis and discussion of the therapeutic interactions between the therapists and their clients. In particular, I discussed therapeutic events which therapists and their clients identified as significant. Analysis of these identified episodes has enabled a close examination of the process of psychotherapy. Notably it has been possible to illustrate the possible constructs which may govern the constructions of therapists and their clients during psychotherapy. In addition, social constructions have been identified and occasions when new social constructions have arisen have been indicated. Importantly, too, analysis and discussion of these therapeutic episodes has enabled identification of occasions when therapists have validated or invalidated clients' constructions. Occasions when clients have validated and invalidated therapists' constructions have also been evident. Consequently it has been possible to comment upon the possible place of construction validation and invalidation in the context of psychotherapy.

In the following chapter, a summary and discussion of this study and its findings is provided. In addition, limitations of the present study are discussed and implications for further research considered.

Chapter Nine

Discussion and Conclusions

The theory of personal construct psychology elaborated by Kelly (1955) provides a basis for understanding the way in which people interact with reality. In particular, Kelly's theory illuminates the process by which people establish and maintain relationships with others. G. Neimeyer and R. Neimeyer (1985) submit that the theory of personal constructs can be used to understand the way in which intimate and non-intimate relationships, may be established. They describe an intimate relationship as a relationship which develops from a stage of acquaintancy to a stage of deeper knowledge. G. Neimeyer and R. Neimeyer suggest that, in contrast, a non-intimate relationship is a relationship where one person develops a relationship with another person without having much, if any, knowledge of the other person outside of a single context. A psychotherapeutic relationship is an example of a relationship such as this. Therapists can engage in psychotherapeutic relationships with their clients without having much knowledge of their clients beyond the therapeutic context. Similarly, clients can engage in therapeutic relationships with their therapists without having much knowledge of their therapists outside the context in which therapy takes place. We may assume then, that Kellian theory provides a basis for understanding the process by which therapeutic relationships are established and maintained.

Psychotherapeutic relationships are different from other interpersonal relationships. Psychotherapeutic relationships provide opportunities for clients to increase their understanding of themselves and others through their relationships with their therapists. In contrast, other interpersonal relationships are the contexts in which people engaging in those relationships increase their understanding of each other. Hence, any study of psychotherapeutic relationships must focus upon the process by which clients increase their understanding of themselves and others, not upon the process by which clients increase their understanding of their therapists. Nevertheless, clients' understanding of themselves and others may follow from an increase in clients' understanding of their therapists. The process which therapists and clients engage in to increase clients' understanding of people is commonly described as psychotherapy, or counselling. It is this process which is the subject of investigation in this study.

Personal Construct Theory

In an elaboration of personal construct theory, Kelly (1955) suggests that while people objects, places and events are real, people can know reality only through their personal constructions. According to Kelly, people use personal constructs to identify similarities in

parts of reality. Personal constructs arise when people simultaneously perceive parts of present reality to be similar to each other with respect to some aspect, but dissimilar to at least one other part of reality with respect to that same aspect. Those parts of reality which have a single aspect in common are termed elements. Kelly suggests that each construct has one set of elements located at each construct pole. All these elements have a single aspect in common. Elements of one construct pole are similar to, but different from, the elements of the other construct pole. That aspect which links and separates construct elements, is what Kelly describes as a personal construct.

According to personal construct theorists, people construe reality when they perceive present reality to be similar to parts of previously construed reality. These parts of previously construed reality, are elements of the construct used to construe present reality. The perceived similarities of parts of previously construed reality and present reality are people's constructions. People's constructions of present reality are based upon their constructions of previous reality. Kelly, and more recently Radley (1977), suggest that people's constructions may therefore be described as their anticipations of reality. People expect to perceive in present reality the similarities which they perceived between reality and other construct elements on previous similar occasions. Hence, their initial constructions of present reality will be similar to their constructions of similar previous reality.

Kelly (1955) suggests that people engage in role relationships with each other when they use their role constructs to construe each other's construction processes. The constructions which are governed by people's role constructs are people's role constructions. Leitner (1988) submits that, contrary to what Kelly suggests, people do not have access to the construction processes of others. They have access only to the constructs which govern others' constructions. Here, I have argued that people can construe only the verbal expressions of people's constructions. People may engage in role relationships with others then, only if people construe the personal constructions which others express in their verbal behaviour.

People's verbal behaviour comprises words, and word combinations which have literal meanings (Tshudi & Rommetveit, 1982). The literal meanings of words are the common meanings which people who speak the same language give to those words. These are the common constructions expressed by people's verbal behaviour. In addition, people's verbal behaviour may include expressions of people's personal constructions. More recently, Proctor (1985a, 1985b, 1987) suggests that people's verbal behaviour may contain expressions of a third type of construction. Proctor (1985a) says that shared meanings of language may arise from interaction between members of single social contexts such as families. He describes these negotiated meanings as people's social constructs. These constructs have been described here as people's social constructions. The constructs which govern these social constructions are people's social constructs. It is important to indicate that people's social constructs, are of

course, personal constructs. However, for the purpose of discussion here, personal constructs, which two or more people, but not all people, have in common, are described as social constructs.

Personal construct theory suggests that people are able to engage in role relationships with others when they construe the personal constructions which are expressed in the verbal behaviour of those others. People express their constructions in their verbal behaviour when they have included words as elements in their construct contexts. Words may be included in construct contexts when people construe similarity between the common constructions which those words express, and their personal constructions. When people construe the verbal behaviour of others they may construe that behaviour as including expressions of common constructions. Alternatively, they may construe that behaviour to include expressions of common constructions and personal constructions. People involved in verbal interactions with others, engage in role relationships with others only when they construe the verbal behaviour of those others as including expressions of others' personal constructions.

We may expect that people involved in verbal interactions can construe the personal constructions of others only when they and those others share a common language. Commonality of common constructs is then essential for people to be able to construe the personal constructions of others. However, Kelly (1955) submits that personal construct commonality is not essential for people to be able to construe the personal constructions of others. Provided people and others have included similar common constructs in the contexts of their personal constructs, people may construe the personal constructions which others express in their verbal behaviour.

Personal construct commonality is not essential for the establishment of role relationships. However, personal construct commonality may be a pre-requisite of communication (Landfield, 1971). Tshudi and Rommetveit (1982) suggest that communication takes place when a state of "shared social reality" (p. 245) exists. Shared social reality may be said to exist when people's constructions of others' constructions are similar to those constructions which those others have expressed. People may have constructions which are similar to those constructions which others have expressed only if people and those others have similar personal constructs. In addition, for communication to take place, people and others must have included words, indicating similar common constructions, in the contexts of similar personal constructs.

Neimeyer and Hudson (1985) suggest that communication between couples is a condition of marital satisfaction. Marital satisfaction is likely to be greatest in a couple relationship when a person's constructions of her partner's constructions are similar to those constructions which her partner may express. A person's constructions are similar to those constructions which her partner expresses when each partner has similar personal constructs.

People may have similar personal constructs. However, Neimeyer and Hudson suggest that they may not similarly apply their personal constructs in the construal of similar reality. That is, personal construct commonality may exist in the presence of "functional dissimilarity" (Neimeyer & Hudson, 1985, p. 132). In psychotherapeutic interactions too, personal construct commonality, and communication of the personal constructions of therapists and their clients, may be important.

Personal Construct Theory and Psychotherapeutic Interactions

Psychotherapeutic interactions are principally contexts in which clients' constructions of themselves and others are subject to change. A client's role constructions are changed through a client's engagement in psychotherapy. Previous discussion suggests that psychotherapeutic interactions follow a common pattern of therapist-client interaction. Clients' constructions can be changed only when therapists engage in role relationships with their clients (Kelly, 1955, 1965a; Landfield & Leitner, 1980; R. A. Neimeyer, 1987; Guthrie, 1991). Therapists engage in role relationships by construing their clients' constructions. During the process of psychotherapy, therapists' role constructions may be validated, or invalidated, by their clients' behaviour. Therapists' role constructions are validated when therapists construe the outcome of their constructions to be consistent with their initial constructions. The role constructions of therapists are invalidated when therapists construe the outcome of their constructions to be inconsistent with their initial constructions. In a psychotherapeutic interaction, clients' verbal behaviour may include validating, or invalidating evidence, of therapists' constructions. This evidence may be the verbal expressions of clients' constructions contained in clients' verbal behaviour.

When therapists' constructions of their clients' constructions are validated, the construct systems of those therapists are said to be defined. Therapists' constructions of their clients' constructions may, however, be invalidated. Under these circumstances, therapists may revise their initial role constructions. Psychotherapists may continue to construe their clients' constructions and revise their own constructions, until they construe their constructions to be predictively valid. Under such circumstances, therapists' construct systems are said to be extended. In this way, therapists and their clients come to share similar personal constructs. Therapists may then have constructions of their clients' constructions which are similar to those constructions which their clients express. Thus, social constructs may arise in the context of psychotherapy and social constructions may be expressed.

Therapists and their clients may sometimes express similar constructions. However, Kellian theory suggests that therapists may have constructs in addition to those constructs which they use to construe their clients' constructions. These constructs may enable therapists to have different constructions of that reality which their clients construe. As becomes

apparent in later discussion, the ability of therapists to construe reality differently from their clients has particular significance in the process of psychotherapy.

Clients too, may have their construct systems defined and extended during psychotherapeutic interactions. However, there is a difference between those aspects of therapists' construct systems which may be defined and extended, and those aspects of clients' construct systems which may be defined and extended during psychotherapy. Therapists' constructions which are validated, or invalidated, by clients' constructions, are therapists' constructions of their clients' constructions. Clients' constructions which are validated, or invalidated, by therapists' constructions, are clients' constructions of their therapists' constructions and clients' constructions of themselves and other people. That part of clients' construct systems which clients use to construe themselves and others, is then, defined and extended through therapist-client interaction.

Changes may occur in the way in which therapists construe themselves and others, following invalidation of therapists' constructions of their clients' constructions. This is to be expected since therapists use their role constructs to construe their clients' constructions. However, therapists do not test the predictive validity of their constructions of themselves and others during the course of psychotherapy. Hence, changes in the way in which therapists construe themselves and others are unlikely to occur in the context of psychotherapeutic interactions. More likely, changes in the way in which clients construe themselves and others will occur during psychotherapy.

When therapists and their clients engage in role relationships with each other, they risk experiences of anxiety, threat, fear, hostility, or guilt (Kelly, 1955; Leitner, 1985). People experience these emotions if their constructions are subject to invalidation. In the context of psychotherapy, clients test the predictive validity of a greater number of role constructions than their therapists. Hence the risk of experiencing what Leitner (1985) describes as the "terror" of role relationships is greater for clients than for their therapists. In the event that clients experience anxiety, threat, fear, hostility, or guilt, they may prevent changes in their construct systems (Harter, 1988). Clients may constrict their construct systems by failing to perceive any similarity between different constructions of reality (Harter, 1988). Alternatively, clients may dilate their construct systems by construing all their constructions to be related to a particular problem or concern (Button, 1985).

Contemporary personal construct theorists (e.g., Harter, 1988; Leitner, 1985, 1987, 1988; Neimeyer & Hudson, 1985; G. Neimeyer & R. Neimeyer, 1985; R. Neimeyer, 1987) suggest that psychotherapists should minimise the possibility that clients may experience anxiety, threat, fear, hostility, or guilt. Therapists should do this by reducing the likelihood that they may invalidate their clients' constructions (Harter, 1988). Nevertheless, invalidation of people's constructions may precede construct system change (Kelly, 1955; Viney, 1989). Hence, the

predictive validity of clients' constructions may be increased when therapists invalidate their clients' constructions. Importantly too, invalidation is likely to occur in the context of psychotherapy irrespective of whether therapists may intend to invalidate their clients' constructions. Therapists then, are faced with a dilemma. They must simultaneously maximize the possibility that changes in clients' constructions may increase the predictive validity of those constructions, and minimise the likelihood that their interventions will limit psychotherapeutic change.

Here I have suggested that therapists are able to maximise the possibility that their interventions will contribute only to positive psychotherapeutic change, when personal construct commonality exists between therapists and their clients. Personal construct commonality enables communication between therapists and their clients. Therapists may have constructions of clients' constructions which are similar to those constructions which their clients express. In the event that personal construct commonality exists then, therapists can construe the possible implications of changes in clients' constructions. Hence, one might expect that therapists will be able to predict the possible outcome of their therapeutic interventions. They may then be able to express constructions which may possibly be followed by positive changes in clients' constructions. That is, those changes which may follow from the expression of therapists' constructions, may increase the predictive validity of clients' future constructions. With the existence of construct commonality, therapists are in a position to minimise the occasions when their interventions may reduce the predictive validity of their clients' constructions.

Personal construct commonality is essential if psychotherapeutic interventions are to be maximally effective. However, it is reasonable to assume that there are few, if any, instances in which psychotherapists and their clients will share many similar personal constructs, at least initially. One must now ask how do therapists and their clients come to share similar personal constructs? That is, how do social constructs arise in the context of psychotherapy? In addition, how do therapists contribute to changes in the way in which clients construe their worlds, once they and their clients share similar personal constructs?

An Illustration of Therapeutic Interaction

In this study, empirical data have been collected which illustrates the process by which therapists and their clients come to share similar personal constructs. In addition, the collected data demonstrates the contributions of therapists to changes in their clients' construct systems.

Methodology and Procedures

Participants.

Four therapists and eight clients participated in the study. Each of the four therapists was engaged in providing individual counselling to each of two, of the eight clients. The therapists included two male and two female therapists. Their ages ranged from 43 to 51 years, with a mean of 48.25 years. At the time of interviewing, one of the therapists was engaged in private practice and involved in counsellor education. Another therapist was employed as a counsellor in a governmental institution. The other two therapists were employed as counsellors in an urban community counselling agency. All the therapists had participated in counsellor education programmes in New Zealand. The years of therapeutic experience which the therapists had, ranged from 11 to 16 years, with a mean of 13.75 years. The clients who participated in this study included four female and four male clients. Their ages ranged from 22 to 45 years, with a mean of 35.25 years.

Interview schedules.

A pre-therapy interview schedule was developed for administration to all therapists. This schedule asked each therapist to provide his or her name, age, details of training, years of experience, and a description of his or her practice orientation. A second interview schedule was used to elicit personal character sketches from each therapist. A third interview schedule administered to all therapists asked each therapist to indicate his or her feelings about the therapeutic interaction in which the therapist had engaged. In addition, this schedule asked each therapist to identify, and comment upon, instances in the therapeutic interview, when psychological changes may have taken place for the client.

A pre-therapy interview schedule was also developed for administration to all clients. This schedule asked each client to provide his or her name, age, reason, or reasons, for initially seeing the therapist, source of referral, reasons for seeing therapist on the day of the research interview, and expectations of the interview. A second interview schedule similar to that administered to therapists, was used to elicit personal character sketches from each client. The third interview schedule administered to all clients asked each client to indicate his or her feelings about the preceding therapeutic interview. In addition, this schedule asked each client to identify, and comment upon, instances in the therapeutic interview, when psychological changes may have taken place for the client.

Data Analysis

Analysis of self-characterisations.

In the analysis of self-characterisations, the units of analysis are construed verbal expressions of role construct poles. Guidelines were developed for the identification of

verbally expressed role construct poles, based upon Davis, Stroud and Green (1989). The inter-rater reliability for the application of these guidelines was 85.2%. The range of reliabilities obtained for the application of these guidelines to four character sketches was 78.7%-95.6%.

A list of 21 unit categories was developed to assist in discussing the content of the self-characterisations completed by therapists and their clients. These unit categories enabled the explicit classification of identified expressions of role construct poles. These categories are listed in Appendix 12. The inter-rater reliability for the application of the category codes used to classify expressions of role construct poles was 86.7%. The range of reliabilities in the application of the category codes across five character sketches was 79.3%-90.6%.

Analysis of therapeutic interactions.

In the analysis of the therapeutic interactions completed as part of this study, the units of analysis are construed verbal expressions of personal constructions. Earlier discussion (Chapter Five) indicates that in any one segment of an interaction, many different verbal expressions of personal constructions may be identified. The verbal expressions which were identified in this stage of analysis were those which I construed to be the subjects of particular therapeutic interactions. Inter-rater reliability was not ascertained for the identification of verbal expressions of personal constructions in the context of the therapeutic interactions discussed here.

Analysis of post-counselling interviews.

Analysis of the post-therapy interviews involved discussion of possible associations between constructions expressed by therapists and their clients in the context of psychotherapy, and constructions which therapists and their clients expressed during the post-therapy interviews.

Results

The results have been presented in three parts. In Part I the data include data collected from the pre-therapy therapist and client interviews; the therapeutic interview, and the therapist and client post-therapy interviews of the first therapist-client dyad which participated in the project. In Part II the data include data collected from the pre-therapy therapist and client interviews, and the post-therapy therapist and client interviews, of the second, third and fourth therapist-client dyads to participate in the study. In Part III the data include data collected from the pre-therapy therapist and client interviews, and the post-therapist and client interviews of the fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth therapist-client dyads which participated in this study. In each part, the presentation of results is accompanied by

comprehensive analysis and discussion of the results. Hence, the intention of this discussion is to draw attention to possible significant findings, rather than to provide additional extensive discussion of the results.

One of the intentions of this study, was to examine the possibility that commonality of therapist and client personal constructs, may enable clients to communicate with their therapists. For this reason each therapist and client was asked to complete a character sketch prior to participating in a psychotherapeutic interaction. The purpose of completing these character sketches was to enable identification of construed expressions of role construct poles. Earlier argument (Chapter Five) suggested that these expressions indicate the role constructs which therapists and clients use to construe the constructions of themselves and others. Commonality of role construct expressions may be expected to be associated with therapist-client communication in the context of a psychotherapeutic interaction. More accurately, perhaps, one might expect that when a therapist and a client share similar personal constructs, therapists may have constructions of their clients' constructions which are similar to those constructions which their clients express.

In this study, the mean number of construct poles identified from the character sketches completed by therapists was 33.5. The mean number of categories used to classify the identified expressions of role construct poles elicited from therapists was 13.75. The mean number of construct poles identified from the character sketches completed by clients was 19.4. The mean number of categories used to classify the identified expressions of role construct poles elicited from clients was 9.25. These results suggest, as one might possibly expect, that therapists are more able to verbally express their constructions of themselves, than are their clients. Nevertheless, some implications are suggested when the categories used to classify the construed expressions of role construct poles are identified.

Two or more ($\geq 50\%$) of the four therapists provided role construct pole expressions which could be classified in each of the following categories: affect, affinity, aspiration, certainty, commitment, competence, initiative, integrity, intellect, pleasure, responsibility, role, satisfaction, sociability, supportiveness, tolerance, verbal behaviour, and well being. Four or more ($\geq 50\%$) of the eight clients provided role construct pole expressions which could be classified in each of the following categories: affect, affinity, aspiration, certainty, competence, intellect, pleasure, responsibility, role, and sociability. Four or more ($\geq 50\%$) of the clients in this study, did not express role construct poles which could be classified as associated with commitment, initiative, integrity, satisfaction, supportiveness, tolerance, verbal behaviour or well being.

These results suggest that therapists may construe themselves with a greater diversity of role constructs than the range of role constructs used by clients in their construal of themselves. In addition, some categories may have greater relevance in the classification of

client role construct poles, than others. In particular, the categories of affect, affinity, aspiration, certainty, competence, intellect, pleasure, responsibility, role, and sociability, have greatest relevance in the classification of verbal expressions of clients' role construct poles.

Commonality of therapist and client role constructs prior to engagement in therapy, is suggested by the use of similar categories to classify expressions of role construct poles derived from the character sketches of a therapist, and his or her client. In this study, the mean percentage of similar categories used in the classification of expressions of therapist and client role construct poles is 67.75%. The percentage range of similar categories used in the classification of expressions of therapist and client role construct poles is 27%-100%. These results suggest that there is some commonality between the role constructs used by therapists, and the role constructs used by clients. Nevertheless, these results must be viewed with caution given the small size of the samples referred to here.

The classification system employed in this study does not necessarily reflect the way in which therapists and clients might classify the role construct poles which they expressed in the context of their self-characterisations. Hence, greater, or less, commonality may exist between the role constructs of therapists and their clients than that which is suggested here. Moreover, of course, the transcripts of the character sketches of therapists and their clients, are unlikely to have included all role constructs included within the construct systems of therapists and their clients.

The results of this study suggest that there is a relationship between those constructions which clients express in the context of self-characterisations prior to therapy and those constructions which clients express during psychotherapy. Five of the eight clients who participated in this study (C1, C2, C3, C4, C6) expressed constructions in therapy which were similar to those constructions which they had expressed in the character sketches completed prior to therapy. Two other clients (C7, C8) expressed constructions which may have been similar to those constructions which they had expressed in their self-characterisations. Only one client (C5) expressed constructions in the context of psychotherapy which were dissimilar to those constructions which he expressed in his character sketch.

These findings suggest that character sketches can be used to indicate clients' self-constructions to therapists prior to engaging in therapy. In addition, completion of character sketches by clients prior to therapy, may direct therapists' attention to those role constructions which have particular relevance for the way in which clients construe themselves. Therapists may then provide therapeutic interventions which will enable elaboration of these constructions. Therapists may thereby be better placed to promote psychotherapeutic change in a direction which will increase the predictive validity of clients' role constructions.

Notably too, these results support the conclusions of Davis, Stroud, and Green (1989). As they suggest, character sketches can be usefully employed in research. In this study, each

client-participant completed a character sketch without having first been engaged in a professional, or personal, relationship with the researcher. It is likely that, as Kelly's (1955) writing suggests, clients may have provided different self-characterisations had I established a professional relationship with each client prior to beginning the research. Nevertheless, the apparent similarity between constructions expressed in clients' character sketches, and constructions which clients expressed during therapy, suggests that the client self-characterisations completed as part of this study, have validity. Hence, these findings suggest that character sketches provide useful access to often inaccessible information. They may provide researchers with an insight into the ways in which clients construe themselves.

In contrast, there is an apparent lack of relationship between the constructs indicated by the content of therapists' self-characterisations, and the constructs indicated by therapists' verbal behaviour in psychotherapy. This result is not unexpected. The role constructions which clients express in the context of character sketches and during therapeutic interactions, are primarily self-constructions. Therapists too, express self-constructions in the context of their character sketches. However, during psychotherapy therapists express primarily constructions of their clients' constructions. Constructs which therapists use to construe themselves may be similar to constructs which therapists use to construe their clients' constructions. However, the construct poles expressed in therapists' self-characterisations may be opposite to those construct poles expressed when therapists construe their clients' constructions. Simply, therapists may construe the constructions which clients express to be dissimilar to their own constructions, with respect to aspects which the constructions of therapists and their clients have in common. Hence, therapists' self-constructions may be dissimilar to their constructions of their clients' constructions. This may be the case though therapists may use the same constructs to construe themselves and the constructions of their clients.

Some constructs indicated by the content of therapists' self-characterisations may therefore be similar to constructs which therapists express in psychotherapy. It is possible to speculate as to which constructs indicated in therapists' self-characterisations may be similar to constructs indicated by therapists' verbal behaviour in a therapeutic interaction. However, such speculation was not undertaken here, as the probable validity of the findings would have been minimal. Only when therapists have clearly indicated contrasting construct poles, as in the case of Part III of the results, has any suggestion been made that constructions expressed in different contexts, may have been made using similar constructs.

A primary objective of this study was to apply the theoretical principles outlined, and the associated concepts described, in this study to the analysis of psychotherapeutic interactions. Unlike other similar studies (e.g., R. Neimeyer, 1980; Leitner, 1980; G. Neimeyer, 1987a), the purpose of this study was to apply the principles of personal construct theory to

the analysis of therapeutic interactions in which the therapists were not practitioners of personal construct therapy. In this case the psychotherapeutic interactions involved therapists whose practice orientations were primarily consistent with humanistic-experiential approaches to psychotherapy. However, the practice of three of the four therapists (T1, T3 and T4) was influenced by the therapists' knowledge and experience of transactional analysis. The fourth therapist (T2) described his practice orientation as consistent with eclecticism. Nevertheless, his practice was strongly influenced by his knowledge of family therapy and solution-based therapy. A significant finding of this study is that the theoretical relationship between words, common constructs, and personal constructs described here, can be usefully applied in the analysis and discussion of psychotherapeutic process. This is so regardless of the stated practice orientation of the therapists involved in the therapeutic interaction.

Application of the theoretical principles derived from earlier discussion enabled the identification of six primary levels of construing in psychotherapeutic interactions. These included: a) client constructions, b) client superordinate constructions c) therapist constructions, d) therapist constructions of client constructions, e) therapist constructions of client superordinate constructions, and f) therapist superordinate constructions. Identification of these levels of construing enabled illustration of therapeutic interactions which were consistent with a therapist's engagement in a role relationship with her client. In addition, the process by which therapists and clients come to share similar constructions during the course of psychotherapy was able to be described. This last outcome is of particular significance. Identification of different levels of construing enabled me to describe the process by which social constructs arise in the context of psychotherapy.

In the latter part of this study, therapists and clients were asked to locate therapeutic episodes which contained events of personal significance. The procedure adopted here was largely consistent with that suggested by Elliot and Shapiro (1988). The most significant difference between the two procedures was that Elliot and Shapiro asked client-participants to write an account of "the most helpful event in the session" (p. 144). In this instance, seven of the eight client-participants were able to identify the beginning and end of a therapeutic event which was of personal significance. This result confirms the suggestion made by Elliot and Shapiro (1988), and Elliot and James (1989), that clients can locate personally significant events within the context of psychotherapeutic interactions.

A further outcome of the present study is that the events which therapists identify as having personal significance for their clients, are not always the events which clients identify as having personal significance for them. Only one of the four therapists (T1) who participated in this research, identified an episode of personal significance to one of her clients which was also identified by that client as having personal significance. It must be noted

however, that in the case of one therapist (T3) there was insufficient opportunity for her to identify an episode of possible personal significance to one of her clients (C5).

A further result suggests inconclusive findings. Two of the four therapists who participated in this study identified reasons for the personal significance of client-identified events, which were consistent with those reasons offered by their clients. This result suggests that some, but not all, therapists may be able to identify reasons for the personal significance of client-identified therapeutic events which are similar to those reasons offered by their clients.

Analysis and discussion of the therapeutic interactions was based upon my constructions of the verbal behaviour of the research participants. The reliability of my interpretations of the therapeutic interactions was not established. Viney (1988) suggests that interpretations of data may be said to be reliable when one of two criteria are met. Data interpretations may be described as reliable if two independent researchers make the same interpretations. Alternatively, interpretations of data can be considered to be reliable if the researcher and the participant have similar interpretations of the data. The interpretations offered in Parts I, II and III of this study, may then have been described as reliable had the researcher and an independent rater interpreted the collected data similarly. Alternatively, had the researcher and the research participants agreed upon the interpretations provided, those interpretations may have been described as reliable, or at least as demonstrating what Viney describes as, "convergent validity" (p. 199). In the present study, therapists and clients were not asked to comment upon the interpretations of their respective constructions. Nevertheless, the detailed descriptions of the data collection process, and analysis provided here, allows some public verification, or otherwise, of the conclusions made here.

The latter part of the data collection procedure was completed in order to increase the validity of interpretations made earlier in the research process. Viney (1988) suggests that construct validity may be the most essential quality of any interpretations which include reference to people's personal constructions. She suggests that research data must represent the constructions of participants as accurately as possible if subsequent interpretations are to have construct validity. Viney submits that a mutual-orientation model of data collection in research maximises the possibility that collected data will accurately represent participants' constructions. Such a model involves researchers making a request of research participants. The participants respond. The researcher then reflects upon the response of the participants. The researcher's reflections are revealed to the participants. Finally, the research participants confirm or deny the reflections of the researcher. The approach to data collection adopted here in the latter part of the data collection process was consistent with Viney's mutual-orientation model.

In the present study, data was drawn from the transcribed therapeutic interviews and the pre-therapy and post-therapy research interviews. I interpreted this data to include expressions of particular therapist and client constructions. In the latter part of the data collection process, clients were asked to retrospectively elaborate the constructions which they had expressed in the therapeutic interviews. They were also asked to provide their constructions of their therapists' constructions. When clients responded, I revealed my revised interpretations of their responses. Client-participants then provided validating evidence, or invalidating evidence, of my constructions. Similarly, therapists were asked to elaborate their constructions, and to provide constructions of their clients' constructions. Again, I provided an opportunity for therapists to indicate the validity, or otherwise of my interpretations. As Viney's (1988) comments suggest, I cannot say, with complete assurance, that my final interpretations accurately reflected the constructions of therapist-participants and their clients. Nevertheless, it is reasonable to suggest that the approach to data collection which I adopted here ensured that these interpretations were maximally reflective of participants' personal constructions.

A significant outcome of this research was the elaboration of therapist and client constructions expressed in the context of psychotherapy. The post-therapy therapist and client interviews provided an opportunity to increase the predictive validity of my earlier constructions of therapist and client constructions. In addition, I was able to describe the elaborated constructions of therapists and their clients, following a process of "laddering" and "pyramiding" participants' responses to the initial post-therapy interview questions.

The elaboration of therapist constructions enabled identification of superordinate constructs governing a therapist's interaction with a client. Importantly too, analysis and discussion of therapists' interactions with two clients enabled identification of superordinate constructs which governed therapists' constructions in each of the two interactions. One might speculate that these superordinate constructs may also influence therapists' interactions with other clients. In addition, analysis of the post-therapy interviews enabled identification of occasions when therapists' superordinate constructions apparently influenced the psychotherapeutic process.

Differences in the superordinate constructs of therapists and their clients did not preclude therapists from acquiring constructs which allowed them and their clients to share similar constructions. Occasions were identified when therapists construed their clients' constructions. They then expressed their constructions and construed the outcomes of their constructions. When therapists construed their constructions of their clients' constructions as invalidated, they revised their initial constructions. In this way therapists and their clients expressed similar personal constructions. These, of course, are more accurately termed social constructions. The process which has taken place might be described as communication.

Clients have communicated their personal constructions to their therapists. This study has demonstrated that it is through the process of communication in psychotherapy, that social constructs may arise and later, social constructions may be expressed. Understandably, there were few instances in which clients revised their constructions of their therapists' constructions in light of invalidating evidence of their constructions. Those constructions which clients revised were more commonly those constructions which they expressed of themselves or others, not their constructions of their respective therapists.

Therapists who participated in this study, often expressed constructions of their clients' superordinate constructions and subordinate constructions which were similar to those constructions which their clients had expressed. Through a process of construction expression, validation, invalidation, and construction revision, therapists and clients came to share similar social constructions. Communication took place. However, therapists can have additional constructions of their clients' constructions. This follows from Kelly's (1955) fragmentation corollary which suggests that people may use different constructs to construe similar reality. According to Kelly, the constructions which arise from the use of these constructs may be incompatible.

Therapists may then have superordinate constructions of their clients' constructions which are dissimilar to their clients' superordinate constructions. These constructions may be in addition to the social constructions shared by therapists and their clients. Analysis of the post-therapy interviews of this study enabled the identification of such constructions. Some significant differences between therapists' superordinate constructions of their clients' constructions and the superordinate constructions of their clients, were evident. Analysis of the psychotherapeutic process, in light of these differences, enabled reasons to be suggested for apparent therapeutic outcomes. In particular, differences in the constructions of therapists and their clients were identified as precursors to changes in clients' constructions.

One might expect that differences in the constructions of therapists and their clients, may be associated with invalidation of clients' constructions by therapists' verbal behaviour. However, there were few occasions when invalidation of clients' constructions was identified prior to occasions of client construct system change. More frequent were instances in which therapists and their clients had apparent different superordinate constructions of those constructions which clients had expressed. Therapists and their clients often, though not always, shared similar superordinate constructions of their clients' constructions. However, therapists had additional different superordinate constructions of their clients' constructions. These last superordinate constructions were often the basis for therapists' interventions which prompted construct system change. Such interventions often involved therapists inviting their clients to construe their previously expressed constructions. Frequently, as a consequence of construing their previously expressed constructions, clients revised one or more of their

previous superordinate constructions. In these instances, the clients' own constructions were invalidating evidence of their earlier constructions.

This discussion suggests that therapists who have constructions of their clients' constructions which are different from their clients' superordinate constructions, may be able to prompt client construct system change. We may speculate perhaps, that when therapists have constructions of clients' constructions which are only similar to their clients' constructions, client construct system change may not take place. In such instances, therapists may not have reason to suggest that clients construe the constructions they have previously expressed. There is no apparent inconsistency between their constructions and the constructions of their clients.

Importantly, analysis and discussion of the post-therapeutic interviews in this study, suggests that therapists must have constructions of their clients' constructions which are similar to those constructions which their clients have expressed. Only under such circumstances, are therapists in a position to predict the likely changes in clients' construct systems which may follow from their interventions. This said, above discussion suggests that therapists must have constructions of their clients' constructions which differ from their clients' superordinate constructions. Only in such instances, may therapists be in a position to enable changes in their clients' constructions. In conclusion then, some personal construct commonality in the presence of personal construct diversity is essential if client construct system change is to be in the direction of increased predictive validity.

Implications of the Study Findings

The findings of this study have implications for future psychotherapy research, psychotherapist education and training, and for psychotherapeutic practice.

This study suggests that there may be advantages in the future use of character sketches in psychotherapy research. Character sketches can be used by researchers in a manner which does not contravene the ethical principles governing research in psychotherapeutic contexts. In addition, character sketches can be utilised in therapeutic contexts without the prior establishment of professional therapeutic relationships between the researcher and the research participants. In research contexts, character sketches may be used to identify those constructs which govern client constructions most prevalently expressed in the context of psychotherapy.

These findings suggest that there may be advantages too in therapists' use of character sketches prior to engaging in psychotherapy with clients. The use of character sketches, with an associated classification system, may enable therapists to focus attention upon the most superordinate of their clients' constructions. Therapists may thereby be better able to promote elaboration of clients' superordinate constructions during psychotherapy. As a consequence,

therapists may be better placed to provide therapeutic interventions which will increase the predictive validity of their clients' future role constructions.

The classification system provided here enables comparison of the role construct poles expressed by different therapists and different clients. In addition, comparison of the role construct poles expressed by therapists and their clients is possible. With further development across a wider sample of therapists and clients, this classification system may enable quantitative analysis of character sketches completed by therapists and their clients. Further useful comparisons between the role construct poles expressed by therapists and their clients may be possible. Thus knowledge of possible similarities and differences in the ways in which therapists and clients construe themselves may be extended.

Importantly, the findings of this study lend support for Harter's (1988) comment that constructivist theories may provide a framework for explanation of the effectiveness of therapeutic interventions based in divergent schools of therapy. In particular, this study suggests that the principles, and associated concepts, of personal construct theory can be applied in the analysis of psychotherapeutic interactions. This is so when the practice of therapist-participants is primarily consistent with humanistic-existential traditions of psychotherapy. Nevertheless, the diversity of influences upon the practice of the therapists who participated in this study, suggests that the principles of personal construct theory may also be applied to analysis of therapeutic interactions more generally. This is a valuable outcome of the study as a model which can be applied in the analysis of therapeutic interactions generally would enable the possible development of a generalised model for therapy evaluation.

The results of this research suggest, too, that clients can retrospectively identify therapeutic events which may be of personal significance. Moreover, clients are able to provide meaningful comments as to the reasons for the significance of these events. Such comments may be used to elucidate earlier interpretations of a therapeutic interaction. The development of criteria for the identification of personally significant events may enable future comparison of the events which clients identify as significant in psychotherapy. Such comparison may contribute to psychotherapists' knowledge and understanding of the effects of psychotherapy upon their clients.

Therapists too, can identify therapeutic events which may be personally significant for their clients. However, there is evidently little similarity between events which therapists identify as significant for their clients and events which clients identify as having personal significance. This finding suggests once again that therapists may usefully benefit from increased knowledge of events which clients construe to be personally significant. Nevertheless, more investigations are needed to examine whether client-identified events are

events in which the most significant changes take place in clients' personal construct systems.

Importantly, analysis of the results derived from this study suggests that therapists' values, beliefs and attitudes have a significant influence upon the psychotherapeutic process. This finding suggests that psychotherapist educators must give attention to ensuring that student-therapists' beliefs and attitudes permit them to contribute to positive changes in clients' construct systems. Therapists must be able to contribute to an increase in the predictive validity of their clients' constructions. Therapists may do this only if their personal constructions do not preclude their clients from communicating with them. Only if clients can communicate with their therapists, may therapists be able to construe the implications of their interventions. Only then may therapists be able to offer interventions which will increase, not limit, the predictive validity of their clients' constructions.

Limitations of The Study

In this study, participants were asked to provide character sketches of themselves. The content of these character sketches was analysed to provide an indication of the role constructs used by therapists and their clients. However, Kelly (1955) proposed that character sketches be used only for clinical purposes, not for research purposes. Hence, the validity of data collected in the present study, can be questioned. Moreover, Kelly designed the character sketch as a task to be completed in writing. In this study, participants were asked to provide oral self-characterisations for research purposes. In addition, Kelly's original prompt was revised for the purpose of this study. Hence, comparison between the findings of this study, and other studies in which research participants have been asked to provide character sketches, is not possible.

The list of categories used to classify expressions of role construct poles was developed using an inductive approach. The data from which the categories were derived comprised the role construct pole expressions identified from the twelve character sketches which were completed as part of this study. This is a limited number of character sketches from which to derive a list of categories. The inter-rater reliability for the classification of role construct pole expressions was satisfactory. Nevertheless, the extent to which the category list may be applied in the analysis of other therapist and client character sketches, remains unknown.

An evident weakness of this study is that insufficient time was available to complete all aspects of the fieldwork. Notably, one therapist (T3) lacked adequate time to identify a therapeutic event which may have been of personal significance to her client (C5). In addition, there was insufficient time for the therapist to comment upon the episode which her client had identified as personally significant. Variations in the data collected with respect to other

therapist-client dyads are also evident in the results discussed earlier. Time constraints arose from unexpected events such as clients arriving late; previous clients completing therapy later than scheduled; therapist distress at the conclusion of counselling, and therapists' lack of understanding of the research schedule, despite prior notification. Nevertheless, future similar studies should ensure that such time constraints are few.

Possibly the most significant limitation of this study is that the therapist and client samples are small. A larger therapist sample may have enabled more conclusive comments to be made in regard to the role constructs commonly employed by therapists in their construal of themselves. Similarly, a larger client sample may have enabled more conclusive comments to be made in regard to the role constructs commonly employed by clients. In addition, a larger therapist sample, and a larger client sample, would have permitted the generalisability of the description of psychotherapy offered here, to be tested.

The small size of the therapist and client samples also limited conclusions that were possible in regard to the influence of therapists' constructions in psychotherapy. Larger therapist and client samples would have enabled me to investigate whether therapists' constructions, which may have been predominant in two therapeutic interactions, were also prevalent in therapeutic interactions with other clients.

A further significant limitation in the methodology employed here was that the instructions given to therapists and their clients, when they were asked to identify therapeutic episodes, were a source of undesirable variation in results. As suggested previously (Chapter Five), one might reasonably expect that each therapist and each client would have different constructions of the instructions they were given. Nevertheless, a more explicit prompt may have minimised the variation in people's constructions. As a consequence, comparison between episodes selected by therapists and their clients would have had greater validity.

Despite these limitations, the methodology employed in this study enabled therapists and clients to contribute to the interpretations offered here. Thus the methods and procedures adopted as part of the present study enabled the completion of a research project which was largely consistent with the principles of personal construct psychology. Importantly too, the methodology employed here enabled me to fulfil my ethical responsibilities both as a researcher and a psychotherapist.

Directions for Future Research

Results from this study suggest that similar therapists' constructs govern therapists' constructions during the course of more than one psychotherapeutic interaction. Future research might be directed towards ascertaining the extent to which therapists apply similar constructs in their interactions with different clients. In addition, findings from this study indicate contributions which therapists' constructions may make to psychotherapeutic change.

A larger therapist sample and a larger client sample would enable further investigation of the contribution which therapists' constructions may make to client construct system change. Such a study might enable the development of a model of psychotherapy which would be generalisable to many, if not all, psychotherapeutic interactions.

Findings from this study also suggest that the application of the principles and concepts elaborated here to the process of psychotherapy may enable the development of a model of psychotherapy evaluation. Such a model might include provision for the elaboration of client constructs prior to, during, and after, psychotherapy. Psychotherapeutic change may be described in terms of changes which occur in clients' constructs. These changes would be indicated by the personal constructions which clients expressed in their verbal behaviour during the course of psychotherapy. A model of psychotherapy evaluation such as that described here, would provide psychotherapists with a valuable tool to enable evaluation of in-session psychotherapy process.

Future research might also be directed towards investigating the possible relationship between the process of psychotherapeutic interactions and psychotherapeutic change. One might ask, to what extent does psychotherapeutic change occur within the context of single psychotherapeutic interactions? What contribution do clients' interactions with people outside the context of psychotherapy sessions make to changes in clients' construct systems? Only when these questions are answered may psychotherapists confidently describe the contribution which they make to client construct system change.

The findings of this research have gone some way towards identifying the contribution which therapists make to changes in clients' construct systems, in the context of single psychotherapeutic sessions. In particular, this study has demonstrated the apparent relationship between therapists' constructions and client construct system change. Importantly, too, this study has confirmed the comments of previous writers (e.g., Kelly, 1955; Harter, 1988) which suggest that invalidation of clients' constructions is unnecessary for changes in clients' construct systems to occur. Nevertheless, this study does suggest that differences in the constructions of therapists and their clients may play an important part in promoting later client construct system change.

Lastly, and perhaps most importantly, this study has demonstrated that the principles of Kellian theory can be extended and applied in investigations of psychotherapeutic interactions conducted in naturalistic settings. Moreover, the elaboration of Kelly's personal construct theory offered here, suggests a model of psychotherapy which may be generalisable to other psychotherapeutic interactions, irrespective of the therapist's practice orientation. Such a model would contribute much to our present knowledge and understanding of the process of psychotherapy.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

CONSENT FORM

for counsellor-participants in the research project entitled:

A study of client-counsellor interaction

conducted by Ruth Anderson, Education Department, Massey University

I am satisfied that I have been fully informed of the nature and purpose of the research project.

I understand what is involved in my participation in the project.

I therefore

i. agree to participate in the research project

ii. give my consent to information and materials produced in the course of this study being used by the researcher for the purpose of completing the associated doctoral thesis and writing associated academic papers, subject to:

-Anonymity with respect to my clients, my agency and myself being protected by the researcher at all times.

-Confidentiality with respect to all information which may be potentially harmful, or injurious to myself, or to my client should it become public knowledge, being maintained by the researcher.

-Confidentiality with respect to all information which I have requested be confidential, or understood to have been given by me in confidence, being maintained.

-Use of audio-tapes of interviews, being subject to my written informed consent and use of audio-taped counsellor-client interviews, being subject to the obtaining of my written informed consent and that of my clients.

-Access to the audio-tapes and transcripts of counselling interviews by persons other than the researcher, her supervisors and thesis examiners being dependent upon approval of the Human Ethics Committee, Massey University.

-The audio-tapes of interviews and transcripts of counselling interviews being retained by the researcher with these to be released to myself and my client given the consent of us both.

.....Counsellor

.....Date

Appendix 2

**Counsellor Information Sheet
for the project
A study of client-counsellor interaction**

1. Name

2. Age.....

3. Could I ask you to provide details of the training you have had to be a counsellor

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

4. Number of years experience as a counsellor?

5. How would you describe your practice orientation? (e.g. Rogerian, Transactional analysis, Eclectic?)

.....
.....
.....

Appendix 3

CONSENT FORM

for client-participants in the research project entitled:

A study of client-counsellor interaction

conducted by Ruth Anderson, Education Department, Massey University

I am satisfied that I have been fully informed of the nature and purpose of the research project.

I understand what is involved in my participation in the project.

I therefore

i. agree to participate in the research project.

ii. give my consent to information and materials produced in the course of this study being used by the researcher for the purpose of completing the associated doctoral thesis and writing associated academic papers, subject to:

-No information which may identify me, my family or my associates, being published or referred to in any discussions.

-No information which I have requested or understood to be have been given by me in confidence, being published or referred to in any discussions with the possible exception being if I, or others are, in the professional judgement of the researcher, in clear, imminent danger.

-Use of audio-tapes of interviews, being subject to my written informed consent and use of audio-taped interviews in which I received counselling, being subject to the obtaining of my written informed consent and that of my counsellor.

-Access to the audio-tapes and transcripts of counselling interviews by persons other than the researcher, her supervisors and thesis examiners being dependent upon approval from the Human Ethics Committee, Massey University.

-The audio-tapes of interviews and transcripts of counselling interviews being retained by the researcher with these to be released to myself and the counsellor given the consent of us both.

.....Client

.....Date

Appendix 4

Client Information Sheet
for the project
A study of client-counsellor interaction

1. Name

2. Age

3. Reason(s) for initially seeing counsellor
.....

4. Referred by? or self referred
.....

5. Reason(s) for coming to see the counsellor today
.....
.....
.....
.....

6. Can you tell me what you expect to happen during counselling today?
.....
.....
.....

Appendix 5

Methodological Issues

This section considers important issues associated with the choice of research design and methodology employed in the present study. In addition, ethical issues relevant to the data collection phase of this research project are discussed. The section concludes with an outline of the preliminary work necessary to ensure the willing participation of counsellors and clients in the study.

Research designs in counselling process research

Previous discussion indicates that this study involves an investigation of the process of psychotherapeutic interactions. In particular, this study investigates the relationship between in-session therapeutic events and reported outcomes of single counselling sessions. Hill (1982) suggests that the methodological approach associated with any investigation into the process of psychotherapy may conform either to a group, or individual (case study) design. She suggests that research which follows a group design involves a study of therapist-client dyads in which as many "input variables" (p. 7) as possible are kept constant. Hill describes three types of input variables: 1) client variables such as type and severity of presenting problem; past history; demographics of age, gender, ethnic origin and educational background; 2) therapist variables such as professional qualifications; professional experience and expectations of counselling, and 3) situational variables such as the setting in which research interviews are conducted; length of psychotherapeutic sessions, and whether the setting is an institutional, agency or private setting.

According to Hill (1982) one of the primary advantages of research which follows a group design is that research findings can be generalised. However, Hill submits that group data may imply that change processes within counselling interactions are similar in each counselling dyad. For example, a group of counselling dyads may be the subject of a study which follows a group design. If the outcomes of the counselling interactions are similar, a researcher may draw the conclusion that the process of client psychological change was similar in each case. Hill argues that such an assumption should not be made. According to Hill, patterns of psychological change are not identical across individuals, as research which follows a group design might suggest.

Highlen and Hill (1984) submit that case study designs enable more adequate descriptions of what happens between therapists and their clients than is possible using group designs. In addition, they suggest that case study designs permit reported counselling outcomes to be understood in terms of what takes place during each therapist-client

interaction. Highlen and Hill add that outcomes can be evaluated according to each client's problem in case study research. They conclude that findings from research which follows a case study design have more direct application to practice. However, Highlen and Hill (1984) submit that case study approaches to research have traditionally been hampered by threats to internal validity. It is difficult, for example, to conclude from a case study design that a therapist's behaviour influenced a particular counselling outcome. Input variables, or independent variables, as such variables are commonly termed, may have affected the outcome. Independent variables are often not controlled in case study approaches to research. Hence, a researcher who employs a case study design has no way of knowing the extent to which independent variables may have affected research findings. A further disadvantage of a case study approach to research, is that findings can often not be generalised from the dyads studied to other counselling dyads.

Research which follows a group design may have greater internal validity than case study research, since internal variables may be more easily controlled. In addition, group designs often have greater external validity than case study approaches to research. That is, the findings of group designs are often more generalizable than the findings derived from the use of case study methodology. However, Kelly's (1965b) comments suggest that we may have difficulty demonstrating the generalizability of research which follows a group design. Kelly submits that the "variables" which are controlled in research refer to people's constructions of how things vary. According to Kelly, variables may not refer to how those things actually vary. For example, a researcher may decide upon the basis of his or her constructions, that some clients attending counselling have problems which are similar to, but different from, problems presented by other clients. The researcher may control the independent variable, "client presenting problem," by inviting a group of clients with problems which the researcher construes as similar, to participate in the research. Other relevant independent variables may also be controlled, as in the case of research which follows a group design. Thus, threats to internal validity will be reduced. However, the research findings may not be generalizable to other therapist-client dyads unless the same researcher conducts replications of the initial study.

For example, as above, a researcher, A, may define the variable, "client presenting problem," and select client-participants on the basis of this variable. Another researcher, B, may agree upon the common constructions conveyed by the words used to express the variable in this instance. However, B may not have a similar personal construction of the verbally expressed variable. Thus, if B attempts to replicate A's study, B may not similarly differentiate between clients with respect to the variable. We cannot be certain therefore, that similar variables are controlled in a replicated study. Hence, the findings of replicated studies must be viewed with caution. We cannot assume that group designs which have controlled

independent variables, are more likely to be generalizable than case study designs, in which few independent variables may be controlled. Strictly speaking, only if the researcher remains constant in replicated studies, can we be reasonably confident that findings which suggest the generalizability of the outcomes of the original study, are valid. Of course, as McMillan and Schumacher (1984) suggest, most researchers acknowledge the limitations of their research findings. Hence, despite the argument above, we must acknowledge that group findings have the potential to be more generalizable than case study findings.

Preceding discussion suggests that there would have been advantages and disadvantages in employing a methodology which was consistent with either a group design, or a case study design, in the present study. Group designs afford more opportunity to provide findings which are generalizable. However, researchers employing group designs must remain cautious in their assumptions that their findings are generalizable. Case study designs enable research outcomes to have greater relevancy to practice. However, case study findings are often regarded as being less credible than findings from group design research because of a lack of internal validity and generalizability of findings.

In the case of the present study, a case study research design was used. This design had the advantage of enabling an in-depth study of therapist-client dyads. In addition, findings of a case study were more likely to have applicability to practice than the findings of a group design (Hill, 1982). However, there remained the problem of ensuring that threats to internal validity were reduced, and that the generalizability of findings was maximised.

Validity of Present Study

i. Internal validity.

As indicated earlier, case study approaches are often limited by what Kazdin describes as "threats to internal validity" (p. 183). Independent variables are not usually controlled in case study designs. Hence, researchers cannot be certain that any relationship between independent and dependent variables (those variables which are the subject of study) suggested by research findings, exists. As Kazdin (1981) submits, there is an ambiguity about the factor, or factors, (independent variables) which may be responsible for changes in any dependent variable specified in a case study. In the case of the present study, threats to internal validity may have included criteria upon which participants were selected, procedures followed, interview schedules used and researcher bias. These, and other factors, could account for apparent similarities or differences in the therapeutic interactions studied and the reported outcomes of the single therapeutic sessions. Each of these factors could therefore affect the credibility of interpretations made as part of this research project. However, Kazdin suggests that threats to internal validity in case study designs can be reduced. According to

Kazdin, the internal validity of case study findings can be increased by controlling for some of the independent variables indicated earlier.

As discussed earlier, there were a number of factors which threatened the internal validity of the research design adopted here. As will be apparent in the preceding chapters, I had little, if any, control over some of these variables. For example, I specified the criteria used in the selection of therapists in this study and selected the therapists to participate. However, the criteria which I specified for use in the selection of clients for this study were not as detailed as criteria used in the selection of therapist-participants. Moreover, one of the conditions for client participation in this research project was that therapists selected those clients who agreed to take part in the study. Each therapist was asked to invite two clients to participate in the study who, in the therapist's professional opinion, would be unlikely to be detrimentally harmed by the research process. I therefore had little influence upon the selection of client-participants.

There were some factors, which could have threatened the internal validity of this research design, over which I had some control. For example, I expected that the research interviews which were conducted prior to therapists and their clients engaging in therapy, might influence the process of the therapeutic interactions which were to follow these initial interviews. Hence, the initial research interviews were designed to minimise the possible effect of the interview process upon the subsequent psychotherapy process.

McMillan and Schumacher (1984) suggest that any data collection method used in research must be consistently used across all cases studied. They add that failure to use any research instrument consistently may mean that changes in dependent variables follow from the use of the research instrument, not from any process or intervention being investigated. McMillan and Schumacher suggest that in such an instance, researchers could not assume that changes in a dependent variable followed solely from the influence of a previously specified independent variable. In the case of the present study, an inconsistent approach to data collection might well have contributed to apparent differences in the verbal interactions between the research participants of this study. Hence, I attempted to avoid problems which might have been associated with changes in procedures, by preparing a list of procedures to be used, prior to collecting data. This list of procedures included schedules for pre-counselling and post-counselling session interviews and was the basis for all the procedures which were followed in the data collection phase of the present study.

A further possible threat to the internal validity of this research design, was researcher bias. McMillan and Schumacher (1984) describe this threat as the deliberate and unintentional effects that the researcher has upon his or her research participants. I made every effort to act consistently towards each of the research participants. However, as suggested earlier

(Chapter Five) I was not always successful in my efforts. Researcher bias is, therefore, likely to have been a source of threat to the internal validity of the present study.

ii. External validity.

The primary concern in the case of the present study is whether the interpretations of counselling interactions studied have validity beyond those interactions. Are the interpretations offered, generalizable to other therapeutic dyads other than those which were the subject of this study? In short, did the research design have external validity? Mishler (1986) submits that, in the case of studies such as this, the critical issue of concern is not whether there is one true interpretation which has applicability in every case. Rather, he suggests that "assessment of the relative plausibility of an interpretation when compared with other specific and potentially plausible alternative interpretations" (Mishler, 1986, p. 112) is important. In this instance, interpretations of the therapeutic process may be said to be generalizable to other psychotherapeutic interactions if those interpretations can be shown to more plausible, or at least, as plausible, as alternative interpretations which may be offered.

Mishler suggests that threats to internal validity have importance in the evaluation of the plausibility of interpretations. However, he proposes that there are other features of the study which are of equal importance. These include the care with which procedures are carried out and documented; the explanations given of analysis; the elaboration of the theoretical framework and explanation of the inferences and interpretations which follow, and the judgements of other interested audiences as to the plausibility and meaningfulness of the interpretations (Mishler, 1986). According to Mishler, researchers can base evaluations of the plausibility of their interpretations upon information provided by features of research such as those listed above.

In a discussion based on Katz (1983), Mishler lists three issues, which he suggests must be addressed when researchers evaluate the plausibility of their interpretations. Firstly, investigators must consider what threats exist to the external validity of the study. What may prevent findings from being generalizable? Secondly, researchers must consider the possible effect of the research context upon the research outcomes. Thirdly, consideration must be given to the criteria used to select subsets of data for analysis and interpretation. The first of these issues is the subject of discussion here. The second and third issues have been considered previously (Chapter Five).

Kazdin (1981) suggests ways by which researchers might reduce the threats to internal validity in studies of therapeutic outcomes. In particular, Kazdin indicates how researchers may reduce threats to internal validity when relationships between therapeutic interventions and session outcomes are examined. Unlike the studies with which Kazdin is concerned, the present study does not attempt to demonstrate any relationship between particular

interventions and therapeutic outcomes. Nevertheless, Kazdin's comments suggested approaches which might be taken to reduce threats to external validity in the present study.

According to Kazdin (1981), there is a greater likelihood of a particular type of intervention having an effect upon counselling outcome, if research indicates an association between that type of intervention and therapeutic outcome in more than one case. That is, the more cases in which a similar relationship between a particular type of intervention and single session outcomes can be demonstrated, the greater is the likelihood that change is due to the psychotherapeutic process. The likelihood that a single extraneous event may have led to an identified therapeutic outcome is reduced. Kazdin adds that the credibility of research findings which suggest a relationship between counselling intervention and outcome is enhanced further if the client sample is heterogeneous. Under such circumstances, Kazdin suggests that psychological change is even less able to be attributed to similar external events than may be the case if a homogeneous group of clients is used.

Kazdin's (1981) comments suggested that there would be a greater likelihood of the present study findings being generalizable to other therapeutic interactions, if a similar process of interaction was identified in each of the transcribed counsellor-client interviews. However, if the therapists who participated in this study had been similar in a number of factors such as practice orientation, professional experience, and gender, similarities in dyad interactions would be generalizable only to therapeutic interactions conducted by other counsellors who were similar with respect to each of these factors. In addition, of course, if the clients who participated in this study had been similar with respect to such factors as presenting problem, and gender, the findings might be generalizable only to clients who are similar with respect to each of these factors. Kazdin's comments suggested that if the therapists and clients chosen to participate in this study varied with respect to certain factors, any identified common pattern of interaction might be generalizable to other counselling interactions. Under such circumstances, the findings of the present study might be generalizable to other counselling interactions, irrespective of whether there is similarity between the counsellors and clients participating in other interactions and those making up the present study sample. It is for this reason then that more than one case study was completed in this project, and the research participants varied with respect to each of the factors mentioned here. The threat to external validity which may have been posed by a small sample and lack of variability in the sample, was thereby reduced.

Ethical Principles of Counselling Research.

The data collection phase of this project necessitated careful consideration of associated ethical issues. Evidence of such consideration proved essential when initiating discussions with administrators of counselling agencies and counsellors in private practice who had

expressed an interest in participating in the study. An initial proposal outlining the ethical issues associated with this research was presented to the Massey University Human Ethics Committee. Subsequent minor changes were made in accordance with the committee's advice. The revised version of the original application is given in Appendix 6.

In my capacity as a researcher I was primarily governed by the Code of Ethical Conduct administered by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee. However, in the conduct of this research, I was also bound by additional ethical principles relevant to research in counselling contexts. To fully appreciate these principles and their relevance to the present study, some discussion of counselling practice and the ethical issues associated with that practice is needed.

Blocher (1987) states that counsellors are able to function in what he describes as "professional ways" because there is "public trust" in the counselling profession (p. 22). He suggests that therapists must continue to earn and maintain the trust of the general public for three reasons. Firstly, the counselling profession does not have a long established record of credibility as do some other professions, for example the teaching, or legal, professions. Secondly, a high level of trust between therapists and their clients is essential if clients are to feel confident enough to disclose significant personal issues of concern. Thirdly, the counselling profession cannot be clearly defined and identified by the public. Blocher adds that the term "counsellor" is widely used and easily misunderstood. Though Blocher is referring to the North American counselling context when he suggests that counsellors must maintain the public's trust, Blocher's comments are equally relevant to the New Zealand counselling context. There is not a long established history of counselling in New Zealand. In addition, counselling, irrespective of where it takes place, necessitates clients' trust and confidence in therapists' ability to engage in counselling. Lastly, in New Zealand too, the terms "psychotherapist" and "counsellor" are widely used. Those people who refer to themselves as psychotherapists or counsellors, have varied educational backgrounds and training experience. Hence there are adequate opportunities for the public at large to lose their trust in therapists in general.

According to Blocher (1987), public trust in psychotherapists arises from three beliefs. The first is that therapists have an expertise not shared by the general public. The second is that the professional counselling community governs its activities in ways which ensure the welfare of clients. Finally, the public believes that practitioners are genuinely motivated to serve their clients. Blocher suggests that since public trust permits counsellors to act professionally, counsellors must ensure that no member acts in a way which disconfirms any one of these beliefs. Counsellors must not therefore engage in unethical, unprofessional or irresponsible behaviour (Blocher, 1987). It follows that counsellors must be seen by the public at large to be acting ethically at all times. Counsellors, irrespective of whether they are

counselling clients, or participating in research activities which refer to, or directly involve their clients, must behave in an ethical manner. Hence the need for therapists, who participated in this research, to be seen to be engaged in ethical practice had to be taken into account in the development of the methodology employed here.

This discussion also suggests that any therapist who undertakes research and presents himself or herself as a therapist to those who participate in the research, must act in a manner which is ethically appropriate. In the case of the present study, the researcher is a counsellor and at the time of conducting the field work for this project, she was a counsellor educator. As such, I am bound to act in a manner which is consistent with ethical counselling practice when I am engaged in counselling research. Hence the therapists who participated in this study and I, were bound not to act in a manner which might be considered inconsistent with ethical counselling practice. I, as the researcher in this study, was bound by ethical standards which govern the academic research community and by ethical standards which are applicable to the counselling profession.

In summary then, the proposed research methodology for this project had to demonstrate that the following principles of counselling research had been taken into account:

1. Researchers should act in accordance with those ethical standards which are generally regarded as applicable to the activities of the professional research community.
2. Counsellors should act in an ethical manner to ensure that the welfare of their clients is not placed at risk.
3. Counsellors who present themselves as counsellors while conducting research should act in accordance with those ethical standards which are generally regarded as applicable to the activities of the professional research community. In addition, they should act in accordance with those principles which are generally regarded as applicable to the conduct of the counselling profession.

In this instance, I was bound by three sets of ethical principles: those which apply to the activities of the academic research community; those which might reasonably be expected to apply to the professional counselling community, and those upon which the code of ethics of the New Zealand Association of Counsellors is based. My membership of the New Zealand Association of Counsellors obligates me to ensure that I act to protect the interests of counsellors and their clients. Under ordinary circumstances, I must retain confidentiality with respect to all that is said to me in my capacity as a counsellor. The exceptional circumstance is when I have knowledge which suggests that either a client or a therapist is likely to be physically or emotionally detrimentally harmed. Under this circumstance I am ethically

obliged to firstly express my concern to the person conveying the information. Should the risk of harm not be removed, I must act in a way which ensures, if possible, that the person placed at risk, does not remain at risk. In addition, membership of the New Zealand Association of Counsellors deems any action on my part to condone the unethical behaviour of another counsellor, as itself unethical.

Arising from the principles which govern counselling research are a number of ethical issues which needed to be addressed in the development of procedures to obtain participants for this research project. These ethical issues and the procedures developed to address them are the subject of following discussion.

Ethical Issues Relating to the Present Study

i. Access to counsellor-participants.

The present study sample comprised four counsellors and eight clients. Obtaining access to counsellors and their clients required that consideration be given to the professional obligation of therapists to ensure that they do not place the welfare of their clients at risk by their actions. Therapists who might be willing to participate in the research project needed to be fully informed as to:

- .the purpose and possible outcomes of the project
- .the methodology to be employed, with full information given as to their role in the research
- .the researcher's role in the conduct of the research
- .any information or materials which might arise from the study
- .the uses to which such information or materials might be put
- .ownership of the information and materials produced during, or subsequent to, the collection of data
- .research reports which they might receive subsequent to completion of the research.

Therapists could give their written informed consent to their participation in the present study only upon receiving all of the above information.

Administrators of counselling agencies and private therapists were informed of the requirements of this research project initially by telephone. Subsequently four written communications were sent to the administrators of counselling agencies and counsellors who expressed an interest in participating in the research. These included a letter of information and a consent form for counsellors, and a letter of information and a consent form for clients willing to participate in the study.

The letter of information to counsellors (Appendix 7) included: an invitation to participate in the study; an explanation of the purpose of the research project; a brief outline

of the research methodology, and an indication of what counsellors and their clients would be expected to do should they be willing to participate in the study. The letter of information also indicated that counsellors and clients participating in the study could expect to receive a summary of research findings at the conclusion of the research. In addition, the possible implications of the research findings were outlined. The communication concluded with an invitation to recipients to contact the researcher should they be willing to participate in the study.

ii. Access to client-participants.

Clients who may have been willing to participate in the present study were selected by counsellors who had earlier agreed to participate in the research. Three important ethical principles governed the participation of clients for this research:

1. No person should be harmed during the course of research.
2. Research participants should not be led to believe that they must continue to be involved in the research process should they wish at any time to withdraw.
3. Client participants should not be led to believe that their continued access counselling is conditional upon their continued involvement in the research process.

Following from these three principles no person was invited to participate in the present study, who, in my professional judgement, or that of the client's counsellor, may have been harmed by the research process. In addition, clients were advised, in an initial letter of information (Appendix 8) that they could withdraw from the research project at any time and that their continued access to counselling was not contingent upon their continued participation in the study.

As indicated earlier, obtaining access to clients who might be willing to participate in this research project was dependent upon first obtaining the agreement of four counsellors to be involved in the study. In order to obtain such agreement, I had to demonstrate that I had given consideration to the professional obligation of therapists to behave in a manner which does not place clients at risk. Understandably those therapists who were considering participating in the study, required evidence that I had taken account of this obligation in my proposed communications with their clients. Hence the material which I was to make available to possible client participants prior to, and at the time of the data collection, was made available to counsellors before I communicated directly with their clients. This material included the letter of information (Appendix 8) and the client-participant consent form (Appendix 3). Upon clients agreeing to participate in the study, counsellors gave the copies of the letter of information and consent forms to their clients.

Counsellors who wished to participate in the research project could provide their written informed consent to their participation only upon prior provision of the information

outlined earlier. Clients too, could give their written informed consent to their participation in the study only upon receiving similar information. Hence the letter of information given to clients contained material similar to that which was contained in the letter of information given to counsellors wishing to participate in the research project.

The letter of information to clients (Appendix 8) included: an invitation to participate in the study; an explanation of the purpose of the research project; a brief outline of the research methodology, and an indication of what clients would be expected to do should they be willing to participate in the study. In addition, as indicated previously, prospective client-participants were informed that they could withdraw from participation in the project at any time. They were also informed that their continued access to counselling was not contingent upon their continued participation in the study. The client letter of information also indicated that clients participating in the research could expect to receive a summary of research findings at the conclusion of the research. In addition, the possible implications of the research findings were outlined. The communication concluded with an invitation to recipients to contact the researcher should they have any queries regarding the contents of the letter or the research project.

iii. Participation of counsellors and clients.

The consent forms for counsellors and clients who expressed a willingness to be involved in the research, invited participants to give their written consent to their participation in the research subsequent to their receipt of a letter of information. In addition, participants were asked to consent to the use of information and materials produced in the course of this study being used by the researcher for the purpose of completing a doctoral thesis and associated academic papers. Consent to participate, and consent to the proposed use of information and materials were given subject to the researcher agreeing to satisfy the conditions detailed in the remainder of the consent form. These conditions related to three ethical principles concerned with anonymity and confidentiality, and four ethical principles concerned with the use of information and materials produced during the course of research.

It is important to emphasise that the principles which have relevance in counselling research include not only those principles applicable to research with human subjects in general, but also those principles which are applicable to research involving therapists and their clients, in particular. In the case of the present study, still further ethical principles applied. These followed from the researcher's position of being both a researcher and a professional counsellor. In the present study then the following ethical principles concerned with anonymity and confidentiality were addressed in the counsellor-participant consent form (Appendix 1) and the client-participant consent form (Appendix 3):

The first principle states that no information which identifies, or has the potential to identify, any agency, counsellor or client who agrees to participate in research should be shared verbally with others, or produced in any published document arising from the research, without the written permission of the participants concerned. In addition, no information which may identify a client's family, or his or her associates should be referred to by the researcher in discussions, or made available for publication by the researcher.

The second principle states that confidentiality with respect to any information or materials produced during the course of the research should be maintained, unless prior written permission is for their use and, or publication, is obtained.

The third principle states that in the event of the researcher acquiring knowledge during the course of the research which indicates that a participant is in clear imminent danger, maintenance of confidentiality may not be appropriate. This principle however, requires further elaboration.

In the context of counselling research, a researcher who is also a counsellor, is bound primarily by the code of ethical conduct relating to research activities. The therapists, and not the researcher, who participate in the research have primary responsibility for their clients. Hence, the initial responsibility for a client's welfare rests with that client's counsellor. However, the researcher may become party to information which suggests that a client is in clear imminent danger. In such circumstances, the researcher should endeavour to get the informed consent of the person, or persons who make this information available, if one of those persons is not the client's therapist, to share this information with the client's therapist. Similar action should follow if information is shared which suggests that a person other than the client, but associated in some way with a client, is at risk. If permission to share the information with the client's counsellor is not granted, the researcher must use his or her professional judgement in divulging information to the counsellor concerned and, or the relevant counselling agency.

Should information which suggests that a therapist-participant or another person is in clear imminent danger arise from discussions with a therapist-participant during the course of the research, the researcher should again act in accordance with his or her professional judgement. In the unlikely circumstance that a therapist is unwilling to take a course of action which ensures his or her personal safety or that of others, the researcher should ask the therapist for verbal permission to speak with another person who may be able to ensure such safety. Such a person may be a senior counsellor in a relevant counselling agency, or the professional supervisor of the therapist at risk.

The final principle which was addressed in the counsellor-participant and client-participation consent forms, states that in the event that the researcher becomes party to information during the course of the research, which indicates that a therapist-participant is

engaged in unethical practice, the researcher should speak with the counsellor concerned. Should no appropriate action be taken by the counsellor the researcher may inform the agency concerned and, or a relevant professional association, of the researcher's concern and the circumstances under which such concern arose. The researcher ideally should inform the counsellor concerned of the researcher's proposed course of action.

There were three conditions relating to the four above principles which I, as the researcher, agreed to satisfy, upon counsellors giving their written informed consent to their participation in the research project. I agreed to maintain anonymity with respect to therapists, their clients and each therapist's employing institution (where applicable). In addition, I agreed to maintain confidentiality with respect to all information which might be potentially harmful to therapists or their clients. I also undertook to maintain confidentiality with respect to any information which the therapists requested that I hold in confidence.

There were three similar conditions relating to the four previously cited principles which I, as the researcher, agreed to satisfy upon clients giving their written informed consent to their participation in the present study. I agreed not to make any information which might identify clients, members of clients' families or clients' associates, evident in discussions, or available for publication. In addition, I agreed to maintain confidentiality with respect to all information which had been given in confidence and all information which client-participants understood to have been given to me in confidence. A condition of this undertaking was that such information was not injurious to the health and well-being of the client concerned, or others.

As indicated earlier, therapists and their clients gave their written informed consent to the proposed use of information and materials produced during the course of the research, subject to the satisfaction of conditions which related to four ethical principles. These principles were addressed in the counsellor-participant, and client-participant, consent forms.

The first principle states that any information or material obtained during the course of the research remains the property of the research participants and cannot be used for other than the stated purpose without their written informed consent. This principle applies to information or material which is given to the researcher, not to information or material which the researcher obtains from sources other than the research participants. In addition, this principle does not apply to material which is generated during the course of the research.

The second principle states that any material produced during the course of the research remains the joint property of the researcher and the research participants concerned and cannot be used for other than the stated purpose without the written informed consent of both research participants. It follows that any audio-tapes of interviews between two research participants made during the course of the research, remain the property of the interviewees and the researcher, and cannot be used for other than the stated purpose without

the written informed consent of both interviewees. It is important to add that following from the first principle, research participants retain ownership of the information recorded on audio-tapes during the course of data collection. Possession of the audio-tapes is retained by the researcher for the duration of the research. Nevertheless, research participants have right of access to the information contained on the audio-tapes and should, if they so wish, receive the audio-tapes at the conclusion of the research. Alternatively, the audio-tapes should be destroyed at the conclusion of the research.

In the case of audio-tapes which contain information given by more than one research participant, the researcher also retains possession of the audio-tapes for the duration of the research. In the event that any one participant wishes to have access to an audio-tape the researcher must seek the written informed consent of the other participant, or participants concerned. A research participant may, if he or she so wishes, receive the audio-tape at the conclusion of the research, given that the other participant, or participants, concerned provide their written informed consent. If more than one participant wishes to have the audio-tape, copies of the tape should be made and given to each participant upon the researcher obtaining the written informed consent of each participant. Alternatively, as indicated earlier, the audio-tapes should be destroyed at the conclusion of the research.

Obtaining Research Participants

i. Counsellor-participants.

There are approximately 1000 counsellors in New Zealand. This is possibly a conservative estimate given that the membership of the New Zealand Association of Counsellors (NZAC) at the time of writing is approximately 900 (personal communication from Membership Secretary, NZAC). Not all therapists in New Zealand are members of this association. Counselling practitioners and counsellor educators in New Zealand often have personal knowledge of many other practitioners given the small size of the professional counselling community relative to the size of other professional communities in New Zealand. I have worked in two regions of New Zealand as a counsellor and one as a counsellor educator. Hence I have established collegial contacts in a number of New Zealand regions.

The data collection phase of this project could have been completed in the Manawatu region of New Zealand where I reside. However, it would have been difficult to have maintained my role as a researcher since the regional counselling community is small. I have been involved in the training of some local therapists, have supervised, or been supervised by others, and am personally and professionally known by many local counselling practitioners. As indicated previously, I am known by some counsellors in other regions. However, I have not been professionally, or personally, closely involved with any counselling practitioners in other regions of New Zealand apart from the Manawatu region, for over five

years. As evident in earlier discussion, it was essential that I acted as a researcher, rather than as a counsellor, or counsellor educator, in the conduct of this research. Hence the data collection phase of this research was completed in two New Zealand regions other than the local Manawatu region.

For the purpose of this research I hoped to involve therapists who described themselves as engaging in therapy which was largely consistent with a humanistic-existential approach to therapy. By not seeking the involvement of counsellors who were engaged in less traditional counselling practice (e.g. neuro-linguistic programming), I hoped to standardise aspects of the practice of those counsellors who participated in the study. Nevertheless, I anticipated diversity in the interventions used by the therapists who participated in this project. For example, I anticipated that one therapist might describe his or her therapeutic approach as largely consistent with client-centred therapy, another might describe his or her approach as largely consistent with Gestalt therapy, while another might perhaps describe his or her practice orientation as largely eclectic.

Therapists involved in this research project were to have had at least ten years counselling experience. In addition, I wished to involve therapists who had received counselling training which would be considered by the professional counselling community at large, to be of a creditable standard. Therapists who participated in the research were also to have been receiving professional counselling supervision at the time of the data collection. Most importantly, those therapists who were to participate in this study, were to be regarded as competent practitioners by their professional peers.

Initially, I had intended to request the involvement of therapists whom I did not know personally. However, upon discussion with other counselling colleagues, I became aware that the sensitive nature of the research necessitated initial personal contact with those who had some personal and professional knowledge of me. Hence, I made telephone contact with colleagues in each of two regions, prior to providing them with formal details of the research project. I received the tentative support of two groups of counsellors. The first group comprised counsellors who work in separate private practices. The second group comprised counsellors who work in a community counselling agency. Having received expressions of interest from each group, I sent copies of the counsellor and client information sheets and copies of the consent forms for counsellors and their clients, described above, to my initial contact persons.

Those therapists who were my initial contact persons were known by me prior to the beginning of the research project. Immediately prior to the commencement of the data collection phase of this project I came to know one of the counsellors in private practice through a mutual professional interest. Subsequently, we discussed my project proposal during a social occasion. I had known one of the group of counsellors working in the

community counselling agency referred to earlier, five years prior to commencing the data-collection phase of this project. My association with this therapist had always been professionally based. I had not had further professional, or social contact with this counsellor prior to my telephone conversation with him about this study. Despite not having had recent extended contact with either of the two therapists referred to here, the establishment of some initial mutual understanding prior to the commencement of the study proved to be very important in the data collection phase. I was quickly able to renew and build upon the rapport and trust which had been established earlier. Needless to say these initial relationships proved invaluable in providing me with access to other therapists willing to participate in the research project.

Following further correspondence, I arranged to meet with both groups of counsellors. However, in the case of the counsellors who were all members of a counselling agency, there was a confusion as to the dates of the meeting. I went to the agency expecting to discuss the research proposal and the proposed data-collection programme. However, I found that I was not expected. Nevertheless, the misunderstanding associated with the timing of my meeting with members of the agency proved fortuitous. On the presumed date of the meeting at which I was to speak about the research project, my initial contact person introduced me to all members of the agency, including the secretarial staff. I was also given an opportunity to speak with staff on a social basis. In short, I was welcomed as a person who would be having further contact with the staff in the future. This initial meeting proved to be a very important one as I was able to establish a rapport with counsellors whom I had not met previously. In addition, the early contact with secretarial staff ensured that any time when I wished to make enquiries, or organise times to visit, the secretarial staff were supportive and did all that they could to assist.

Prior to meeting with prospective counsellor-participants I discussed my research with another group of counsellors. This assisted me to develop a presentation of the proposed study which addressed the possible concerns of counsellors who might be interested in being involved in the research project. I discussed the research proposal and the proposed data-collection programme with each of the two groups of counsellors who had expressed an interest in participating in the present study, at separate meetings. The meeting with the therapists in private practice was my first meeting with the group. As suggested by earlier discussion, the meeting to discuss the research project with those counsellors working in a community counselling agency was my second meeting with members of the group. A written outline for my presentation of the research project was given to counsellors at the time of the meeting (Appendix 9).

Subsequent to my presentation of the research proposal and proposed data-collection programme to those counsellors who were in private practice, I received a request for further

information with regard to the ethical issues relating to the collection of data. In response to this request, I forwarded an extract of the revised version of the original application for approval of the project which had been made to the Massey University Human Ethics Committee (Appendix 10). This extract was also sent to the second group of counsellors subsequent to my second meeting with them.

In summary, the procedure for obtaining participants for the present study was as follows:

1. Preparation of the application for project approval to the Massey University Human Ethics Committee (Appendix 6).
2. Telephone contact with counsellors known to the researcher in each of two geographic regions in New Zealand.
3. Discussion of the research proposal with two local counsellors.
4. Postage to the initial contact persons of:
 - i) Letter of information for counsellor-participants (Appendix 7)
 - ii) Letter of information for client-participants (Appendix 8)
 - iii) Consent form for counsellor participants (Appendix 1)
 - iv) Consent form for client participants (Appendix 3)
4. An initial meeting with the second group of counsellors all of whom were working in a community counselling agency.
5. Presentation of the research proposal and proposed data-collection programme separately to each group (Appendix 9).
6. Postage of an extract of the revised application to the Massey University Human Ethics Committee, to the initial contact persons in each group (Appendix 10).

ii. Client-participants.

Clients were invited to participate in the programme by their therapists. As indicated earlier, I requested that clients who, in the professional judgement of their respective therapists, might be harmed in any way by the research process, not be invited to participate

in the project. In addition, I asked that therapists invited the participation of only clients who, in the professional judgement of their respective therapists, were mid-way through a long term therapeutic process. I made this request on the basis of my professional understanding that clients who have only recently entered counselling relationships are in the process of establishing trust in their counsellors. My experience as a counsellor educator suggests that clients who have already established trust in their counsellors will be more receptive to "intruders" entering the context of their usual counselling relationships, than will clients who have not as yet established trust in their counsellors. In the case of the present study, I was to be an "intruder" in the context of therapeutic relationships since I proposed asking therapists and their clients to tell me, rather than each other, something about themselves and their professional relationships with each other. In addition, I wished to ask therapists and their clients to discuss the process of their recent therapeutic interviews with me. Under usual circumstances, of course, neither party in a counselling relationship would be obliged to discuss a therapeutic interview. The possible exception would be when therapists discussed interviews with their respective professional supervisors.

I requested that invitations to participate in the project not be extended to clients who were at the end of therapy. Clients nearing the end of therapy might reasonably be expected to have made many psychological changes during, or as a consequence of, their participation in counselling. Thus we might expect that less psychological change would take place in interviews at the conclusion of therapy. The present study includes an investigation of possible client psychological change during psychotherapy. Hence, I considered the likelihood of being able to identify client psychological change at the conclusion of therapy would be less than the likelihood of identifying such change when clients are in mid-therapy. In summary then, clients invited to participate in the present study were those who, in the professional judgement of their respective counsellors, were unlikely to have been harmed and were mid-way through therapy.

As indicated earlier, therapists received all the information and materials to be distributed to clients, prior to me communicating with prospective client-participants. When therapists were satisfied that they understood the research process which client-participants were to be engaged in, therapists invited clients who satisfied the criteria to be involved in the study. In each case, therapists then distributed the material which I had made available to them, to their clients. They also discussed this material with their clients prior to me speaking with them.

Perhaps an interesting and important aside at this point, is that one therapist reported that she had spoken with a client about the research project. When the client agreed to participate in the study, the therapist asked her client his reasons for wishing to be involved. The client's response became the central topic of a therapeutic interview. During the

interview, the counsellor became aware that the client's agreement to participate was consistent with a pattern of behaviour which the client had been trying to change. The client had agreed to participate in the study because he had wanted to please his counsellor. Yet, the client had been trying to change his tendency to engage in activities to please others through his engagement in counselling. At the conclusion of the therapeutic interview, the client withdrew his consent to be involved in the project. This reported incident raises questions which were not directly addressed during the course of this study. Aside from the stated criteria for selection, what other criteria influenced counsellors' selection of clients for participation in this research project? What factors influenced clients' choice to participate, or not to participate, in the study? Importantly one might ask what factors influence the participation of counsellors and their clients in any counselling research? Clearly, the answers to these questions must have a significant influence upon the interpretations given to any counselling research findings.

Conclusion

In this appendix, I have outlined some of the issues associated with the development of this research project. Firstly, I have drawn attention to matters relating to the development of an appropriate research design. Secondly, matters related to the internal validity, and external validity, of the research design used in this study, have been discussed. Thirdly, I have examined the ethical issues associated with the methodology and procedures used here and discussed the means by which ethical concerns have been addressed. Finally, I have discussed the process by which the research participants were obtained for this study.

Though this discussion has not been included within the report of the present study, the issues discussed here have been of relevance in the development of the methodology used in this study. In addition, some of the matters addressed in this discussion have potential relevance for other similar studies which may be conducted in the future. Hence, this appendix has been included for the reader's interest and possible information.

Appendix 6

APPLICATION TO MASSEY UNIVERSITY HUMAN ETHICS COMMITTEE

Name of applicant: Ruth H. Anderson
Department: Education
Project status: Ph.D thesis project
Name of supervisors: Professor I. Snook (Chief supervisor)
 Assoc. Professor J. Kirkland
Title of project: A study of client-counsellor interaction

Description of project:a) Objectives of the project

These are to:

1. Provide a replicable means of identifying the elaboration of social constructs in audio transcriptions of counselling interactions.
2. Illustrate the development of new social constructs in the process of counselling.
3. Demonstrate counsellor and client construct commonality and functional similarity with respect to those constructs relevant to the client's issues of concern.
3. Describe the relationship between counsellor and client construct commonality and functional similarity, and significant changes which clients report to have taken place for them during counselling.
4. Provide evidence which confirms or refutes the theoretical position that invalidation, within a context of construct validation, facilitates psychological change in counselling interactions.

b) Obtaining participants

Counselling agencies and private counsellors will be asked to participate in the study.

- i. An initial letter outlining the project, its purpose and possible outcomes, is to be sent to possible interested agencies and counsellors in private practice. (See Appendix 2) (Appendix 7 of present study)
- ii. Discussions providing further detail will be held with agency representatives or private counsellors who may have expressed a willingness to participate in the study.
- iii. Written permission to conduct research within any interested agency will be sought from the relevant agency administrative board or senior administrator.
- iv. Informed written consent will be obtained from all counsellors willing to participate in the research project. (See Appendix 3) (Appendix 1 of present study)

v. People who may be willing and able to participate in the research will be provided with written information as to the nature and purpose of the study in an initial interview with the counsellor-participant concerned. (See Appendix 4) (Appendix 8 of present study)

Clients interested in participating in the project will be invited to speak with the researcher prior to their first counselling session.

Any client who, in the professional opinion of an agency representative or the counsellor concerned may be detrimentally harmed by participation in the study, will not be invited to participate in the project.

vi. Informed written consent will be obtained from all clients willing to participate provided that in the professional judgement of the researcher such persons will not be detrimentally harmed by participation in the research. (See Appendix 5) (Appendix 3 of present study)

c) Procedures which participants will undergo.

Details are provided in Appendix 1.

d) Information and materials produced in the course of this study will be used as appropriate, and where relevant in the completion of a doctoral thesis. Such information and materials may also be referred to in academic papers arising from the research.

Use and/or publication of any information or materials which refer directly or indirectly to any client, counsellor or agency will, however, be subject to receiving written permission for their use and/or publication from the relevant client, counsellor or agency.

A detailed account of the project is included in Appendix 1.

Ethical concerns:

a) Access to participants

i. Entrance to any counselling practice for the purpose of conducting research would be unethical unless the permission of the agency administrative board or appropriate senior administrator was obtained in the first instance.

ii. Counsellors have an ethical responsibility to ensure that the best interests of their clients are protected.

Written informed consent must therefore be obtained from counsellors as to their willingness to participate and their willingness to allow their clients to be invited to participate, before the researcher can gain access to the counsellor's clients.

iii. A counselling relationship is one which clients enter into voluntarily for the purpose of seeking help from a counsellor. It would be unethical for the counsellor or researcher to suggest that clients must participate in the research project in order to receive counselling.

Clients must be provided with a genuine choice as to whether they do participate.

Clients must also know that they have a right to end their participation in the project at any point.

b) Informed consent

Counsellors and clients must give their written informed consent to participating in the research project. In addition, they must give permission for their clients to be invited to participate in the study.

i. Participants should be fully informed as to:

- .the purpose and possible outcomes of the project
- .the methodology to be employed with full information given as to their role in the research
- .the researcher's role in the conduct of the research
- .any information or materials which may arise from the study
- .the uses to which such information or materials may be put
(reference should be made to their possible use in discussions with supervisors and other professional colleagues, in completion of the doctoral thesis and in possible academic presentations and/or publications)
- .ownership of the information and materials produced in the course of fieldwork
- .research reports which they will receive subsequent to completion of the research.

ii. Researcher's role

Since the researcher is a qualified counsellor, it is important that her role with respect to all parties in this research, should be clarified.

The role of the researcher, in this instance, is firstly that of a researcher. However, the researcher acknowledges her ethical responsibilities not only as an academic engaged in human subject research, but as a counsellor bound by the professional ethics of the New Zealand Association of Counsellors.

The researcher has a responsibility to ensure that her research does not cause harm to any participant in the research. She also has an ethical duty to act responsibly should she be directly, or indirectly aware of any action which is likely to cause harm to client or counsellor during the research process.

iii. Ownership of information or material produced during the course of the fieldwork

.Information obtained during the course of interviews remains the property of interviewees and cannot be used without their written informed consent.

.Direct audio-taped conversation remains the property of the person or persons engaged in the conversation. Thus, the audio-tapes of the characterization sketches (see Appendix 1 for details), remain the property of the counsellor or client who produced the tapes.

.Similarly, should additional audio-tapes be produced in which only one participant, other than the researcher is speaking, these tapes will remain the property of the participant.

.The audio-tapes produced of counsellor-client interactions remain the joint property of the researcher and the counsellor and his or her client.

The researcher cannot use any part of the recordings or the transcriptions of those recordings without the written informed consent of the counsellor and his or her client.

Counsellors and their clients have the right of access to tapes of interviews in which they participated. However, the written informed consent of the client or counsellor who participated in the interaction must be obtained before release of the tapes to any one of the participants.

Note

Audio-tapes of counselling interviews are assumed to be the joint property of the researcher and the counsellors and clients involved since release of these audio-tapes to a counsellor or his or her client, without the permission of the other participant, could potentially harm that person.

c) Confidentiality and Anonymity

.No information which identifies or has the potential to identify any agency, counsellor or client who agrees to participate in this project will be shared verbally with others, or produced in any published document arising from the research, without the written permission of participants.

.Confidentiality with respect to any information or materials provided during the course of the field work will ordinarily be maintained, unless prior written consent for their use and or publication has been obtained.

.In the event of the researcher having knowledge of information which indicates that a participant is in clear and imminent danger, confidentiality may not be maintained.

Under such circumstances, the researcher's role dictates that the counsellor has first responsibility for the protection of the client's welfare. If such information arises in the course of a client-counsellor interview confidentiality would be maintained, with responsibility for any action to be that of the counsellor.

If information such as that referred to above, is given during an interview with a client, the researcher would, in the first instance ask verbal permission of the client to share this information should such action be judged appropriate. In the event that such permission is not given, but the client or another person remains in imminent danger, the researcher would use her professional judgement in divulging information to the counsellor and/or relevant agency.

Should information which suggests the counsellor or another person is in imminent danger arise from any discussions with the counsellor, the researcher's professional judgement would dictate the appropriate course of action. Under the unlikely circumstance that a counsellor is unwilling to take a course of action which ensures his or her safety or that of others, the researcher would ask the counsellor for verbal permission to speak with another person who may be able to ensure such safety. Such a person may be a senior counsellor in the agency or the counsellor's professional supervisor.

.In the event that the researcher is party to information which indicates that a counsellor is engaged in unethical practice, the researcher would, in the first instance be ethically obliged to speak with the counsellor concerned. Should no appropriate action be taken by the counsellor, the researcher may inform the agency concerned, and/or a relevant professional association of her concern and the circumstances under which such concern arose. In this instance, the researcher would inform the counsellor of the action she was taking.

d) Potential harm to participants

The researcher has an ethical responsibility to ensure that no person participating in the study is likely to be detrimentally harmed during the course of the research.

Hence, no person, who in the judgement of the counselling agency, the counsellor concerned or the researcher may be harmed during the course of the research, will be invited to participate.

Furthermore, the research procedures may be halted by any party should that person judge themselves, or any other participant to be at risk of harm due to their participation in the project.

Researcher credentials:

Given the sensitive nature of this research, it may be appropriate to provide the Ethics Committee with information as to the applicant's professional background. The following comprises a brief summary of her professional experience relevant to this project:

Present position

Currently employed by the Education Department, Massey University, as a lecturer in the counselling training programme and with responsibility for 36.474 Assessment, Evaluation & Research in Counselling, 36.653 Assessment & Evaluation in Guidance & Counselling and 36.477 Transition Education. Date of appointment 25/5/87.

Qualifications

1985 M.Ed. (Dist.)(Counselling) Canty.
 1975 B.Sc Otago
 1976 Diploma in Teaching

Relevant counselling experience

1987- Counsellor educator, Education Department, Massey University

1991-(1993) National President of the New Zealand Association of Counsellors (NZAC)

1989-1991 Taranaki/Wanganui/Manawatu/Horowhenua Regional Representative on the National Executive of the NZAC

1990-1991 Chairperson Taranaki/Wanganui/Manawatu/Horowhenua Branch of the NZAC

1984-1985 School Guidance Counsellor, Christchurch.

From 1987-90, in addition to my duties at the university, I worked as a counsellor at Manawatu Child and Family Services, for one morning each week, and provided professional supervision to two counsellors.

All counselling practice in which I have engaged has been subject to professional supervision.

In addition, a number of workshops concerned with professional and/or practical aspects of counselling have been offered at various institutions and agencies in New Zealand.

Guidance sought from the Ethics Committee:

Guidance which the Committee may deem appropriate to give with respect to any aspect of this project, is appreciated.

Submission of this project to other ethical committees:

There is a possibility that submission to other ethical committees may be necessary. Whether this is the case will be dependent upon advice received from representatives of counselling agencies or practices willing to participate in the project.

I thank the Committee for their consideration of this application.

Ruth H. Anderson
Lecturer
Education Department
Massey University

APPENDIX 1

A STUDY OF CLIENT-COUNSELLOR INTERACTION

The following comprises a brief summary of the project referred to in the current application to the Massey University Human Ethics Committee.

Introduction

This investigation is a study of counselling process within the context of counsellor-client relationships. The development of interpersonal understanding within the context of counselling interactions is described and associated changes in personal representations of events discussed. In addition, the possible contribution of counsellor invalidation to client psychological change is explored. This project thus examines the relationship between counselling processes and immediate counselling outcomes.

The outcome of this study has implications for counsellor education, counselling professional practice and future research. Counsellor educators and counselling practitioners attribute importance to counsellor awareness of personal constructs and understanding of client constructs as expressed verbally and nonverbally in counselling interactions. This study attempts to elaborate the contribution which counsellor and client personal and social constructs make to the counselling process, and to suggest an explanation for client change during counselling.

Aims of the study

These are to:

1. Provide a replicable means of identifying the elaboration of social constructs in audio transcriptions of counselling interactions.
2. Illustrate the development of new social constructs in the process of counselling.
3. Demonstrate counsellor and client construct commonality and functional similarity with respect to those constructs relevant to the client's issues of concern.
3. Describe any relationship which may exist between counsellor and client construct commonality and functional similarity, and significant changes which clients report to have taken place for them during counselling.
4. Provide evidence which confirms or refutes the theoretical position that invalidation, within a context of construct validation, facilitates psychological change in counselling interactions.

Research Questions

1. Can the development of social constructs be identified in audio-transcripts of counselling interactions?
2. What is the extent of counsellor/client agreement as to occasions when client psychological change occurs?
4. Are occasions when psychological changes have been reported as having taken place for the client, identifiable by independent review of audio-taped counselling sessions as occasions when such changes may have taken place?

5. Is there a relationship between client and counsellor construct commonality and functional similarity and client-reported psychological change?
6. Is there agreement between counsellor and client as to when counsellor validation and invalidation of client constructs occurs during times of client-reported change?
7. What relationship, if any, can be demonstrated between counsellor invalidation of client constructs and occasions when clients report significant psychological change?
8. What changes in client constructs can be identified at the conclusion of a counselling session as having taken place during counselling?

Methodology

A. Subject group

This will comprise 6 counsellors and 12 clients.

The counsellors asked to participate will include:

Group A: 2 male and 2 female counsellors with similar stated theoretical orientations, each with one male and one female client.

Group B: 1 male and 1 female counsellor with similar stated theoretical orientations but orientations different to those counsellors in Group A, each with one male and one female client.

The clients asked to participate will include:

Group C: 2 male and 2 female clients with similar presenting problems

Group D: 4 male and 4 female clients with different presenting problems, to those of clients in Group C.

No client who is considered psychotic or obviously suicidal in the judgement of any participating agency representative, participating counsellor, or in the judgement of the researcher, will be asked to participate.

B. Setting

All field work for this project will be conducted in natural counselling settings with the written informed consent of all participants.

C. Procedure

1. Counsellors and clients will be interviewed initially by the researcher and informed (orally and in writing) of the nature and purpose of the research. Potential participants will be invited to give their written informed consent to participate in the research.

2. Participating counsellors will be asked to

- provide relevant demographic information
- outline their training background
- indicate the extent of their counselling experience
- state their counselling orientation

3. Counsellors will be asked to provide a "character sketch" of themselves using an audiotape, prior to counselling client- participants.

The researcher will provide the following statement prior to the counsellor recording his or her personal sketch:

Could I ask you to provide a character sketch of [counsellor's name, e.g. Harry Brown], just as if he/she were the principal character in a play. Speak as a friend who knows him/her very intimately and very sympathetically, perhaps better than anyone ever really knew him/her. Don't forget to speak as [counsellor's name]'s friend. For example, you could start out by saying [counsellor's name] is...".

(Adapted from Kelly, 1955,p.323)

When the counsellor has completed the sketch he or she will be asked the question: "Is there anything else that you would like to say about [counsellor name]".

The procedure referred to here was designed by Kelly (1955) for use as a means of initially engaging clients in a therapeutic relationship. It continues to be used for therapeutic purposes. More recently however, this procedure been used successfully for research purposes (Davis et al., 1989).

The applicant has invited counselling students at Massey University to complete personal sketches, such as those referred to here, as part of discussions about the current research project. Students were very positive in their response and were supportive of research employing this methodology.

4. Participating clients will be asked to

- provide relevant demographic information
- briefly describe their reasons for seeking counselling
- outline their expectations of counselling

5. Clients will be asked to provide a "character sketch" of themselves using an audiotape.

The procedure used here will be similar to that described previously, with the client's name substituted for that of the counsellor's name in the provided initial statement.

6. The counselling session which follows completion of the character sketch will be audio-taped, with the researcher absent from the setting in which counselling takes place.

7. At the conclusion of the counselling session the client and counsellor will each be asked to describe occasions when they consider there may have been some changes in the client's understanding of his or her problem or issue of concern.

8. a) Each client will be asked to identify some part of each event where he or she considers there was a change in their personal understanding. The audio-tape will be wound forward, stopping at regular intervals of 100 tape counter units, to play enough of the audio-tape to enable the client to determine whether an event has been located, is yet to come or has been passed. Once some part of each event has been located, the client will be assisted by the researcher to locate the beginning and end of each event.

This procedure is similar to that developed by Elliot & Shapiro (1988).

b) Upon locating each event clients will be asked to indicate the personal meanings which they attributed to the counsellor's verbal behaviour.

The procedure used here is one involving a semi-structured interview schedule employing two techniques commonly used in personal construct psychology research: "laddering" and "pyramiding".

Laddering involves asking questions such as "what is it important to ...?" or "what are the advantages of ...?" Pyramiding involves asking questions such as "how do you know if something is...?" or "what is anlike?"

9. Counsellors will be asked to indicate the personal meanings which they attributed to the client's verbal behaviour during each of the client-identified change events.

The procedure employed will be similar to that described in 8 b) above.

10. At the conclusion of field work involving each participant he or she will have an opportunity to ask any further questions or offer comments with respect to any aspect of the research in which they have been engaged.

References

Davis, H., Stroud, A. & Green, L. (1989). Child characterization sketch. International Journal of Personal Construct Psychology, 2, (3), 323-327.

Elliot, R. & Shapiro, D. A. (1988). Brief structured recall: A more efficient method for studying significant therapy events. A paper made available by Department of Psychology, Wollongong University.

Kelly, G.A. (1955). The psychology of personal constructs. New York: Norton.

Appendix 7

INITIAL LETTER

to counselling agencies/practices with respect to the research project:

A study of client-counsellor interaction

conducted by Ruth Anderson, Education Department, Massey University

Dear Sir/Madam

Currently I am engaged in a doctoral research project which investigates the relationship between the process of counselling and reported client outcomes. This letter is to invite you/your agency to participate in the fieldwork which is to be associated with the project.

Counselling practitioners and counsellor educators attribute importance to counsellor awareness of personal values and attitudes. In addition, counsellors are trained to give particular attention to the personal meanings which clients give to their experiences. This study investigates a possible relationship between the personal interpretations which counsellors have of their own experiences and the extent of personal change which clients experience during counselling. It attempts to describe how counsellor's interpretations of their experiences may influence their responses to clients, and hence influence the extent of client change. In short, this investigation is an attempt to increase our professional understanding of what takes place within the context of counselling relationships.

The study includes an investigation of the development of interpersonal understanding which arises in counselling relationships despite often initial differences in the personal meanings which counsellors and clients give to their experiences. In addition, points in counselling sessions where clients report experiencing significant change are described and possible aspects of counselling practice contributing to client change are discussed.

Six counsellors and twelve clients are to be invited to participate in this study. Each participant will be fully informed of all relevant aspects of the study orally, and in writing, and invited to give their informed consent to their participation in the project. In preliminary discussions all matters of possible ethical concern will be discussed.

This project has been presented to, and discussed with the Human Ethics Committee, Massey University, and has received the approval of that committee.

Counsellors willing to be involved in the research project will be asked to:

1. Respond verbally to a structured question.
2. Briefly interview clients who may be willing to participate in the project.
3. Permit an audio-tape recording of a counselling session, given the written informed consent of the client.
4. Following completion of the counselling interview, discuss parts of the audio-taped interview where the client has identified significant personal change to have taken place, with the researcher.

Approximate total time commitment, in addition to the time taken for the completion of the counselling interview is 2 hours.

Each counsellor will be asked to permit a maximum of two interviews to be audio-taped.

At the conclusion of the research you would be given a summary of the research study findings. Any questions or comments with respect to these would be welcomed.

It is hoped that the outcomes of this study will have implications for professional counselling practice, counselling education and future research.

I hope that you/ your agency will be interested in participating in this study and look forward to hearing from you in the near future. Meanwhile should you have any queries with respect to any aspect of this letter, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Ruth Anderson
Lecturer (Counsellor Education Programme)
Education Department
Massey University

Appendix 8

INITIAL LETTER OF INFORMATION

to clients invited to participate in the research project entitled:

A study of client-counsellor interaction

conducted by Ruth Anderson, Education Department, Massey University

Dear Client

Currently I am engaged in a doctoral research project which investigates the relationship between the process of counselling and the outcomes of counselling which are reported by clients. This letter is to invite you to participate in the fieldwork which is to be associated with the project.

The study includes an investigation of the development of mutual understanding which takes place in counselling relationships, often despite initial differences in personal viewpoints. Points in counselling sessions where clients report significant changes will be described. Possible aspects of counselling which may affect changes experienced by clients will also be discussed.

Should you be willing to participate in the study, you will be fully informed as to what will be involved. You will also have an opportunity to ask any questions you may have and discuss any areas of concern at any time during your participation in the project.

In addition, it is important to point out that your access to counselling is not conditional upon you agreeing to take part in this research. Furthermore, should you choose to end your participation in the study at any time, you may do so without prejudicing your access to continued, or further counselling.

This project has been presented to, and discussed with the Human Ethics Committee, Massey University, and has received the approval of that committee.

Should you be willing to be involved in this research study you would be asked to:

1. Respond orally, or in writing to three brief preliminary questions.
2. Respond orally to one further question.
3. Permit an audio-tape recording of a counselling session, provided you have given your written informed consent beforehand.
4. Following completion of the counselling interview, discuss your experience of the counselling session with the researcher.

Approximate total time commitment, in addition to the time taken for the completion of the counselling interview is 2 hours.

At the conclusion of the research you would be given a summary of the research study findings. Any questions or comments with respect to these would be welcomed.

It is hoped that the findings of this research will lead to a better understanding of what happens in counselling, and that the results will have a positive effect upon counselling practice and counselling education in New Zealand.

I do hope that you will be willing to participate in this project and look forward to working with you. Meanwhile, should you have any queries with respect to this letter or any aspect of the project, please do not hesitate to let me know.

My regards

Ruth Anderson.
Lecturer (Counsellor Education Programme)
Education Department
Massey Univesity

Appendix 9

Presentation of Research Proposal to possible counsellor participants

A. Introduction

1. Acknowledgement of invitation to present the proposal
2. Own background, interests and reasons for undertaking the research.

Include statement which indicates:

As counsellors we are unable to conduct research while engaged in counselling. Our first and foremost responsibility is to our clients. This study provides an opportunity to research an aspect of counselling process without my own engagement in the counselling process but with the input of experienced counsellors. My hope is that counsellors who participate in the study will feel able to play an active part not only in the process of research but also in discussions of the research outcomes.

B. Basis of research

1. Counsellor education

Emphasises counsellors' knowledge of themselves; how they see the world and how past experiences have influenced how they act.

In addition, counsellor education is concerned with how others are affected by the actions of trainees.

2. Professional supervision

In professional supervision, counsellors discuss their own actions in relation to the actions of their clients during counselling.

Good supervision will encourage counsellors to examine how their actions affect what they do in relation to their clients.

Counsellors may be encouraged to reexamine how useful previous ways of viewing the world are for them now, in order to enable them to be open to how clients may see their world.

In summary, it is important for counsellors to have ways of functioning that are valid for them. Moreover, counsellors must keep checking their perceptions of their past and present perceptions and modify them if necessary in order that they can continue to function effectively.

3. Our clients

To generalise a little, clients are usually clients because their actions no longer work for them. (Here there is an assumption that counselling is client-centred. There is no intended reference to "counselling" which attempts to put "right" what others may see as the "problems" which clients have.)

Frequently how we interpret our past experiences affects how we interpret new experiences and hence, how we act and function. Clients are no different. They may, or may not recognise the influence their interpretations of their experiences have upon their present actions. Regardless however, they, at very least, feel as though their way of being is not congruent with their world.

4. Client and counsellor experiences

It is important to recognise that a counsellor and his or her client can have similar or different interpretations of their separate experiences. Even if counsellors and clients have had similar experiences they may not have interpreted them in the same way.

To illustrate this point:

In a recent television programme a reporter spoke to children who were brought up by single parents. Though the now-adult children shared the experience of being children of solo parents, what they had made of their experiences was often different.

5. Counsellor' role in client change

i. Through their interventions counsellors attempt to facilitate change in a way which will enable their clients to function effectively within their own world.

ii. Beginning counsellors often believe that they know best how their clients should act. What they seldom appreciate is that changes that they insist upon their clients making, may not prove useful for their clients. Indeed, such changes may have costs which only their clients know about.

For example, a counsellor may be working with an adolescent girl who has been the victim of sexual abuse by her brother. The counsellor cannot presume that the girl will necessarily want her brother as the subject of blame. As in the case of some incest victims, the girl may continue to have a deep affection for the perpetrator of the abuse, her brother. For her to see her brother as at fault, would be tantamount to rejecting the one person who may have offered her any form of affection.

iii. Skilled counsellors are concerned with how clients make sense of their experiences. They will try to ensure that changes which take place as a consequence of counselling enable clients to function in a way which their clients believe is more constructive than their previous mode of functioning.

6. Occurrence of client change

It is important to say that should client change occur, such change is likely to take place during, immediately after, or some time after any one counselling session. This study focuses upon two points of possible change: during and immediately after a counselling session.

Longer term effects of counselling are not a subject of study here primarily because of difficulties associated with attributing change solely to any counselling which may have taken place.

7. Evidence of client change

i. We are limited in our access to what changes take place at any point in counselling. If we were looking at the long term effects of counselling we might regard significant behaviour change as evidence of significant psychological change having taken place. In the case of changes which may occur during, or immediately after counselling, observations of behaviour change are likely to convey little evidence of psychological change.

ii. However, irrespective of when client change occurs, it is likely that a counsellor's actions during counselling sessions contribute to any psychological change which can be said to have taken place as a consequence of counselling.

iii. Much of what we and our clients do is non verbal. However, our predominate means of bringing about client psychological change in counselling, is through our verbal communication. Equally, our clients predominate way of interacting with us is by communicating verbally.

This being so, what we don't know is how clients interpret what is said and to what extent counsellors' verbal communications influence client change.

B. The study

This study is concerned then with two key questions:

i. What relationship, if any, exists between the similarity of counsellor and client world views and the extent to which client change takes place during counsellor-client interactions?

ii. To what extent do counsellors contribute to client change by what they say?

It is important to stress that this project does not have an evaluative function.

C. The outcomes and implications

The outcomes of this research have potential implications for counselling practice.

i. Counsellors may be able to assess the potential success of any counsellor client relationship prior to engaging in a counselling relationship.

ii. Counsellors may be provided with increased insight into the effects of the verbal component of counselling upon client-change.

In addition the research outcomes have the potential to influence counsellor education.

Currently we teach counsellors that their use of language is important in the counselling process. However, trainee counsellors can only learn of the effects of their verbal communication upon others by experience. The outcomes of this research, may enable trainee counsellors to make sense of their experience.

The Research Process

Counsellors will be asked to:

1. Provide information with respect to:

- . name, age
- . training background
- . extent of counselling experience
- . counselling practice orientation.

2. Complete a verbal portrait of themselves.

This involves responding orally to a single structured question.

The response to this question has relevance in the subsequent analysis of the counselling session.

3. Speak with clients (mid-therapy) to ask them if they would be agreeable to meeting with me to discuss the research project. Clients should not be those who are obviously psychotic or suicidal. Selection of clients who may be willing to participate in the project is solely at the counsellor's discretion. The researcher must reserve the right however, to exclude from the project any client who, in her judgement may be harmed by participating in the study.

4. Meet with the client and researcher in a preliminary discussion.

.The research and the research process would be explained.

Clients are being asked to "help us in understanding more about what happens during counselling".

.In this session also, counsellor and client consent forms would be discussed and signed.

5. Record the counselling session.

Researcher-client interview

Subsequent to the counselling session, the client will be asked to meet with the researcher.

The client will be asked to identify points in the counselling session where they consider some significant personal change took place for them. During this session the researcher will ask the client to talk about those points of change and what they understood by what they, and their counsellors said immediately prior to, during and immediately after the identified points of change.

6. Review the counselling session with the researcher subsequent to the researcher reviewing the session with the client.

The counsellor will be asked to identify points of client change and to comment upon what they understand took place at these points and at those points which their client identified.

7. At the conclusion of the researcher-counsellor interview, or at some convenient occasion shortly afterwards, counsellors and their clients may wish to meet either together, or with the researcher to discuss the outcomes and process of the research. This would seem to be a very important conclusion to the research process.

8. All participants will receive a summary of the outcomes and conclusions of the research study.

Ruth Anderson
26/8/91

Appendix 10

Ethical Issues and Potential Concerns of the Research Project**A Study of Client-Counsellor Interaction****to be conducted by Ruth Anderson, Massey University**

The following is an excerpt from the full application for approval which was made to the Human Ethics Committee 28 June, 1991. The application was subsequently approved.

This information supplements that contained in the initial information sheet to counsellors interested in participating in the research project.

a) Access to participants

- i Entrance to any counselling practice for the purpose of conducting research would be unethical unless the permission of the agency administrative board or appropriate senior administrator was obtained in the first instance.
- ii Counsellors have an ethical responsibility to ensure that the best interests of their clients are protected.

Written informed consent must therefore be obtained from counsellors as to their willingness to participate and their willingness to allow their clients to be invited to participate, before the researcher can gain access to the counsellor's clients.

- iii A counselling relationship is one which clients enter into voluntarily for the purpose of seeking help from a counsellor. It would be unethical for the counsellor or researcher to suggest that clients must participate in the research project in order to receive counselling.

Clients must be provided with a genuine choice as to whether they do participate.

Clients must also know that they have a right to end their participation in the project at any point.

b) Informed consent

Counsellors and clients must give their written informed consent to participating in the research project. In addition, they must give permission for their clients to be invited to participate in the study.

- i **Participants should be fully informed as to:**
 - . the purpose and possible outcomes of the project
 - . the methodology to be employed with full information given as to their role in the research
 - . the researcher's role in the conduct of the research
 - . any information or materials which may arise from the study
 - . the uses to which such information or materials may be put

(reference should be made to their possible use in discussions with supervisors and other professional colleagues, in completion of the doctoral thesis and in possible academic presentations and/or publications)

ownership of the information and materials produced in the course of fieldwork research reports which they will receive subsequent to completion of the research.

ii **Researcher's role**

Since the researcher is a qualified counsellor, it is important that her role with respect to all parties in this research, should be clarified.

The role of the researcher, in this instance, is firstly that of a researcher. However, the researcher acknowledges her ethical responsibilities not only as an academic engaged in human subject research, but as a counsellor bound by the professional ethics of the New Zealand Association of Counsellors.

The researcher has a responsibility to ensure that her research does not cause harm to any participant in the research. She also has an ethical duty to act responsibly should she be directly, or indirectly aware of any action which is likely to cause harm to client or counsellor during the research process.

iii **Ownership of information or material produced during the course of the fieldwork**

Information obtained during the course of interviews remains the property of interviewees and cannot be used without their written informed consent.

Direct audio-taped conversation remains the property of the person or persons engaged in the conversation. Thus, the audio-tapes of the characterization sketches (see Appendix 1 for details), remain the property of the counsellor or client who produced the tapes.

Similarly, should additional audio-tapes be produced in which only one participant, other than the researcher is speaking, these tapes will remain the property of the participant.

The audio-tapes produced of counsellor-client interactions remain the joint property of the researcher and the counsellor and his or her client.

The researcher cannot use any part of the recordings or the transcriptions of those recordings without the written informed consent of the counsellor and his or her client.

Counsellors and their clients have the right of access to tapes of interviews in which they participated. However, the written informed consent of the client or counsellor who participated in the interaction must be obtained before release of the tapes to any one of the participants.

Note

Audio-tapes of counselling interviews are assumed to be the joint property of the researcher and the counsellors and clients involved since release of these audio-tapes to a counsellor or his or her client, without the permission of the other participant, could potentially harm that person.

c) Confidentiality and Anonymity

- . No information which identifies or has the potential to identify any agency, counsellor or client who agrees to participate in this project will be shared verbally with others, or produced in any published document arising from the research, without the written permission of participants.
- . Confidentiality with respect to any information or materials provided during the course of the field work will ordinarily be maintained, unless prior written consent for their use and or publication has been obtained.
- . In the event of the researcher having knowledge of information which indicates that a participant is in clear and imminent danger, confidentiality may not be maintained.

Under such circumstances, the researcher's role dictates that the counsellor has first responsibility for the protection of the client's welfare. If such information arises in the course of a client-counsellor interview confidentiality would be maintained, with responsibility for any action to be that of the counsellor.

If information such as that referred to above, is given during an interview with a client, the researcher would, in the first instance ask verbal permission of the client to share this information should such action be judged appropriate. In the event that such permission is not given, but the client or another person remains in imminent danger, the researcher would use her professional judgement in divulging information to the counsellor and/or relevant agency.

Should information which suggests the counsellor or another person is in imminent danger arise from any discussions with the counsellor, the researcher's professional judgement would dictate the appropriate course of action. Under the unlikely circumstance that a counsellor is unwilling to take a course of action which ensures his or her safety or that of others, the researcher would ask the counsellor for verbal permission to speak with another person who may be able to ensure such safety. Such a person may be a senior counsellor in the agency or the counsellor's professional supervisor.

- . In the event that the researcher is party to information which indicates that a counsellor is engaged in unethical practice, the researcher would, in the first instance be ethically obliged to speak with the counsellor concerned. Should no appropriate action be taken by the counsellor, the researcher may inform the agency concerned, and/or a relevant professional association of her concern and the circumstances under which such concern arose. In this instance, the researcher would inform the counsellor of the action she was taking.

d) Potential harm to participants

The researcher has an ethical responsibility to ensure that no person participating in the study is likely to be detrimentally harmed during the course of the research.

Hence, no person, who in the judgement of the counselling agency, the counsellor concerned or the researcher may be harmed during the course of the research, will be invited to participate.

Furthermore, the research procedures may be halted by any party should that person judge themselves, or any other participant to be at risk of harm due to their participation in the project.

Furthermore, the research procedures may be halted by any party should that person judge themselves, or any other participant to be at risk of harm due to their participation in the project.

Appendix 11

Guidelines for Transcriptions

The following discussion outlines the guidelines employed in the transcription of the audio-taped research interviews and counsellor-client interactions.

Spelling

Conventional English spelling is used in the transcription of the interviews and therapeutic interactions. Exceptions have been made where a speaker has pronounced a word in a distinctly different way to that which is usually accepted.

Example:

C1: Beth is lots of fun and kind of mischievous, rather sharp-tongued but witty....
[C1.Tp1]

Beth pronounced the word "mischievous" as though the word has an additional "i" in it. The transcription of Beth's character sketch indicates that she pronounced the word in this way.

Real names

To protect the anonymity of counsellors and their clients, names of people referred to by respondents in the research interviews or counsellor-client interactions, are transcribed with real names replaced with pseudonyms.

Example:

C1: I mean it's not right to even put it down on Geoff. I know it's not. [T1-C1 transcript]

Punctuation

Labov & Fanshel (1977) offer a set of guidelines for indicating punctuation in the transcription of therapeutic interactions. These guidelines have largely been adhered to in the transcription of interviews and counsellor-client interactions which have been audio-taped as part of the data collection process for this project. Labov & Fanshel suggest that:

1. Commas be used to indicate falling intonations that level off or rise slightly as in "1, 2, 3...."
2. Question marks be used to indicate syntactic questions. However, in the transcription of tapes comprising data for this thesis, a question mark has been used where rising intonation suggests a question is intended on the part of the speaker.
3. A dash (–) be used to indicate "an abrupt termination of an utterance without change of pitch level, frequently with a glottal stop" (p.41). Labov & Fanshel add that an additional guide to use of the dash is that a speaker usually places stress on the first syllable of words which follow what may appear to have been a word or phrases which the speaker said in error.

Example:

C1: Yes. I think one of the reasons why I never really got much was that I married, but I married somebody who—and he was really a lot like my Dad, but he's not—he's not successful. [T1-C1 transcript]

4. A hyphen (-) be used to indicate an apparent error made by the speaker, when the erroneous sound is less than one complete word.

Example:

C1.1: Children are supp-naturally give their parents trouble. [T1-C1 transcript]

In the above example, the word "suppose" is not completely enunciated.

Labov & Fanshel suggest that a hyphen may also be used when the first pronunciation of a word appears to be only the first sound associated with the word.

Example:

C1.1: And so-so it's not like you can't expect somebody like that to do it for you, you know. [T1-C1 transcript]

In the above example, the first pronunciation of the word "so", does not appear to be a full pronunciation of the word. Rather only the consonant and an incomplete pronunciation of the vowel appears to have been enunciated by the speaker.

Hesitations

2. Labov & Fanshel (1977) indicate the sounds that represent hesitation on the part of speakers, e.g. "um", "er" and "uhm". In the transcriptions included here, these hesitation forms have largely been omitted to ensure clarity of speech content.

Omissions

1. Labov & Fanshel (1977) suggest the use of xxx to indicate speech which is indecipherable. However, French (1989) proposes a convention which provides a clearer indication to the reader of what sounds were apparent to the transcriber. She suggests that unclear utterances should be indicated by asterisks (**) in brackets. French proposes that each asterisk should represent one syllable.

Transcriptions of audio-tapes relevant to this thesis include asterisks which represent each syllable up to three syllables. So that, if one syllable is indecipherable this syllable would be indicated by (*). Two indecipherable syllables would be indicated by (**) and three indecipherable syllables by (***). If there are more than three indecipherable syllables heard

Appendix 12

Categories used to classify verbal expressions of construed role construct poles

Construed role construct poles are classified as referring to either:

- i. a. a feeling
- or b. an attribute
- or c. behaviour,
- indicated by a particular category

or

- ii. a. a feeling
- or b. an attribute
- or c. behaviour,
- which is in contrast to that indicated by a particular category.

The categories used to classify verbal expressions of construed role construct poles are listed below:

Affect:

Reference is made to feelings of emotion; attributes such as sensitivity and warmth; engagement in affectionate behaviour. Includes verbal expressions such as "loving" and "callous."

Affinity:

Reference is made to feelings of proximity in relation to others; attributes indicating position relative to others such as closeness and belonging; engagement in behaviour to achieve proximity to others. Includes verbal expressions such as "close" and "lost soul."

Aspiration:

Reference is made to feelings of desire to engage in particular activities or behaviour; attributes such as ambition and longing; engagement in behaviour to achieve an aspiration. Includes verbal expressions such as "driven" and "unmotivated."

Certainty:

Reference is made to feelings of self-confidence; attributes such as confidence or conviction; engagement in behaviour to gain assurance. Includes verbal expressions such as "certain" and "not sure."

Commitment:

Reference is made to feelings of willingness to maintain engagement in particular behaviour; attributes such as dedication and loyalty; continued engagement in particular behaviour. Includes verbal expressions such as "obsessed" and "disloyal."

Competence:

Reference is made to feelings of proficiency; attributes such as successfulness and ability; engagement in proficient behaviour; Includes verbal expressions such as "talented" and "incapable."

Difference:

Reference is made to feelings of being different; attributes such as difference and change; engagement in different behaviour. Includes verbal expressions such as "normal" and "bizzare."

Empowerment:

Reference is made to feelings of freedom to engage in different behaviour; attributes of ability to engage in new or different behaviour. Includes verbal expressions such as "empowered" and "trapped."

Independence:

Reference is made to feelings of autonomy; attributes such as independence and autonomy; engagement in autonomous behaviour. Includes verbal expressions such as "free spirit" and "dependent."

Initiative:

Reference is made to feelings of willingness or intention to engage in new behaviour; attributes such as spontaneity and leadership; engagement in initiating behaviour. Includes verbal expressions such as "spontaneous" and "indirect."

Integrity:

Reference is made to feelings of being honest or sincere; attributes such as honesty and sincerity; engagement in trustworthy behaviour. Includes verbal expressions such as "honest" and "makes mistakes."

Intellect:

Reference is made to feelings of willingness to engage in cognitive activities; attributes such as intelligence and aptitude; engagement in cognitive behaviour. Includes verbal expressions such as "intelligent" and "dumb."

Pleasure:

Reference is made to feelings of enjoyment related to a particular experience; attributes such as cheerfulness and joviality; engagement in jovial behaviour. Includes verbal expressions such as "likes fun" and "loathes parties."

Responsibility:

Reference is made to feelings of being reliable or responsible; attributes such as reliability and dependability; engagement in responsible behaviour. Includes verbal expressions such as "reliable" and "irresponsible."

Role:

Reference is made to feelings of engaging in defined social, or professional roles; attributes which speaker indicates are typical of a social, or professional role; engagement in defined social roles or professional roles. Includes verbal expressions such as "friend" and "therapist."

Satisfaction:

Reference is made to feelings of contentment; attributes such as satisfaction and contentment. Includes verbal expressions such as "comfortable" and "disappointed."

Sociability:

Reference is made to feelings of preference for the social company of others; attributes such as friendliness and congeniality. Includes verbal expressions such as "easy to talk to" and "shy."

Supportiveness:

Reference is made to feelings of support for others; attributes such as sympathy and understanding; engagement in supportive behaviour towards others. Includes verbal expressions such as "supportive" and "can intimidate."

Tolerance:

Reference is made to feelings of willingness to endure; attributes such as patience and acceptance; engagement in accepting behaviour. Includes verbal expressions such as "patient" and "intolerant."

Verbal behaviour:

Reference is made to feelings of engaging in particular verbal behaviour; attributes indicating particular verbal behaviour; engagement in particular verbal behaviour. Includes verbal expressions such as "quiet" and "loud."

Wellbeing:

Reference is made to feeling or experience of physical wellbeing; attributes such as health and vitality; engagement in health-related behaviour. Includes verbal expressions such as "better physically" and "ancient."