

Copyright is owned by the Author of the thesis. Permission is given for a copy to be downloaded by an individual for the purpose of research and private study only. The thesis may not be reproduced elsewhere without the permission of the Author.

*What is Motivation?
Building Conceptual Clarity.*

*Rebecca Leith
2009*

*Presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Masters of Sciences in Psychology at Massey University Auckland*

*Until one is committed, there is hesitancy, the chance to draw back, always
Ineffectiveness, concerning all acts of initiative and creation.
There is one elementary truth,
the ignorance of which kills countless ideas and splendid plans:
That movement one defiantly commits oneself, then providence moves too.
All sorts of things occur to help one that would never otherwise have occurred.
A whole stream of events issues from the decision.*

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

ABSTRACT

The following exploratory research was conducted to begin to build conceptual clarity for the currently ambiguous construct of motivation. Motivation is a term that is used extensively within psychology and psychotherapy. The construct of motivation has multiple theories explaining this complex phenomenon, each with their own definition. The vast array of definitions pertaining to motivation creates conceptual confusion between researchers and in turn unreliable motivational measures.

Q Methodology was used to bring a subjective viewpoint towards the research. This subjective approach allowed the opinions of the target population to determine the type of information used in analysis.

Results indicate that participants view motivation as an internal and emotional process. This research proposed a definition of motivation, as it is referred to in psychotherapy. The findings propose that motivation is an internal process fueled by emotions that energize the body towards action at a conscious level. The thought processes of an individual ignite a purpose which initiates a drive towards a change of state. Positive reinforcement of this action will perpetuate future action. Negative reinforcement of this action will decrease the likelihood of the action reoccurring.

These findings are discussed and future recommendations are suggested. A replication of this research would provide further support for these findings.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my deepest thanks and appreciation to my partner, Ben. For your unconditional support and belief in my capabilities. Your patience and encouragement was always there at the most needed times.

My thanks to my friends and family, for your incredible support and belief in my potential. The numerous phone calls and texts offering support and advice were always welcome, though it may not have seemed so at the time.

My sincere thanks to my supervisor Dr Mei Williams. Your support and encouragement throughout this process was so valuable. Your advice was always greatly appreciated. This research would not be what it is without your input.

Lastly, I would like to express my thanks to the participants of this research. Your time and effort made this research possible. I hope that this research will be beneficial to you all in your practice of psychotherapy.

TABLE OF CONTENTS:

Chapter		Page
	Abstract.....	iii
	Acknowledgements.....	iv
	Table of Contents.....	v
	List of Tables.....	vi
1.	LITERATURE REVIEW	
	Introduction.....	1
	Theories of Motivation.....	3
	Modern Theories of Motivation.....	12
	Determinants of Motivation.....	21
	Influence on Individual Motivation.....	22
	Motivation in Psychotherapy.....	28
	Conceptual Confusion of Motivation in Psychotherapy.....	31
	Building Conceptual Clarity of Motivation.....	33
	Summary.....	36
	Purpose of the Research.....	37
	Hypothesis.....	38
2.	METHODOLOGY	
	Research Design.....	39
	Explaining Q Method.....	41
	Participants.....	44
	Participant Group A	44
	Participant Group B.....	44
	Procedure.....	46
3.	RESULTS	
	Results from Group A.....	50
	Results from Group B.....	60
4.	DISCUSSION	
	Discussion of Findings.....	70
	Limitations.....	78
	Future Research Areas	79
	Conclusion.....	80
	REFERENCES.....	82

APPENDIXES

Appendix

A	Information sheet for participants of group A.....	90
B	Information sheet for participants of group B.....	91
C	Informed consent forms for all participants.....	92
D	Interview schedule for participants of group A.....	93
E	Instruction sheet for participants of group B.....	94
F	Score sheet for participants of group B.....	96
G	Set of statements for the Q set.....	97

LIST OF TABLES

Table One:	Forced Quasi-normal distribution with fifty statements....	48
Table Two:	Group A participants interview results.....	51
Table Three:	Individual Q-sorts of participants opinions of motivation...	60
Table Four:	Correlation Matrix for all Q-Sorts.....	63
Table Five:	Eigenvalues for each factor.....	64
Table Six:	Un-rotated factor matrix.....	65
Table Seven:	Distinguishing statements for factor one.....	66
Table Eight:	Distinguishing statements for factor two.....	67
Table Nine:	Distinguishing statements for factor three.....	68
Table Ten:	Non significant statements not aligned to either factor.....	69