

University of Alberta

Reflective Practice: Counsellor Education and Development

By

Gina Wong-Wylie



A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

In

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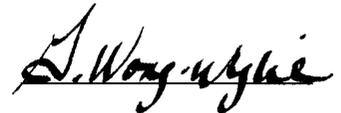
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Onore koso; Onore no yorube;
Onore o okite.
Dare ni yorube zo,
Yoku totonoeshi onore koso
Makoto egataki yorobe nari.

I am my own refuge and source of strength.
On whom may I rely, if not myself?
With self, wisely disciplined,
I find a truly rare and precious
Fountain of strength.

University of Alberta

Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled **Reflective Practice: Counsellor Education and Development** submitted by **Gina Wong-Wylie** in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of **Doctor of Philosophy in Counselling Psychology**.


Dr. Ronna F. Jevne
Supervisor


Dr. Maryanne Doherty-Poirier
Supervisory Committee Member

Dr. Mary Ann Bibby
Supervisory Committee Member


Dr. Jean Clandinin
Committee Member


Dr. Jeanette Boman
Committee Member


Dr. Kathleen Oberle
External Examiner

January 7, 2003
Date

ABSTRACT

This dissertation research focused on the lived experiences of four female counselling graduates and 1 male counselling graduate of an Educational Psychology counselling program in a major Canadian University. Through Narrative Inquiry, personal stories were connected to co-researchers' counselling approaches. Critical Incident Technique was also employed in an investigation of reflective practice on the educational landscape. In particular, barriers and facilitators of reflective practice were gleaned from co-researchers' perspectives.

Centered in an inquiry of reflective practice and counsellor education and development, the first manuscript involves a review of the professional and research literature on reflective practice and its integration in the education of nurses, teachers, home economists, and counsellors. The second manuscript integrates personal storytelling with co-researchers' preferred theories of counselling. Co-researchers' stories were captured as 'theory-portraits' as they reflected chosen counselling theories and approaches.

The third manuscript highlights barriers and facilitators of reflective practice in counsellor training. 'Open-Reflective' (butterfly) and 'Closed-Protective' (chrysalis) Stances were likened to the position co-researchers assumed in their twenty-nine experiences of reflection (supported or hindered) on the landscape. Sixteen incidents engendered an open-reflective stance (butterfly) nurtured through one or more of the following habitat conditions: (1) Experiencing a Trusting Relationship, (2) Opening up with Fellow Students, (3) Engaging in Reflective Task, (4) Having Self-Trust / Risking, and (5) Interacting with Academic Personnel. From eight incidents, habitat conditions

found to engender a self-protective stance (chrysalis) were: (1) Experiencing Mistrust/Unsafe Relationship, (2) Interacting with Non-reflective Fellow Students, (3) Receiving Unsupportive / Jarring Feedback, (4) Facing a Systemic Barrier / Unsafe Educational Landscape, and/or (5) Interacting with Academic Personnel. Furthermore, five incidents were found to be discordant in process versus outcome. 'Being Empowerment in Self' and 'Being Empowerment to Voice' were central features that enabled co-researchers to embody a self-reflective stance despite the presence of non-conducive conditions. 'Being Disempowered to Openly Reflect' was the central feature disabling one co-researcher from an open-reflective stance despite habitat conditions present to foster this growth.

The fourth manuscript proposes a reflective curriculum model, which consists of dimensions inherent in constructing a personal theory of counselling. This model, inviting a hermeneutic process of counsellor theory formation, projects an organizing schema, based on a holistic model, for integration of reflective practice. Implications for counsellor development, counsellor education, and directions for future research are provided.

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Snow lightly falls on our makeshift ice-rink. Vibrant orange sun sets low casting stark shadows upon the still Winter's eve. I will remember this day that marks the end of a long trek in my academic sojourn. Belly flutters with life-floating miracle, nudging me further to savor this moment... and in this moment, I send the warmth of my gratitude to the many who have been alongside me. I believe I have had the pleasure of working with the most superb supervisory & dissertation committee: Drs. Mary Ann Bibby, Jeanette Boman, Jean Clandinin, and Maryanne Doherty-Poirier. My thoughts linger to one individual who has been a continuous source of support and encouragement; I thank Dr. Ronna Jevne, my supervisor, who has provided her mentorship over the last 9 years starting from when I first stumbled through the doors of the Hope Foundation. A smile creases my rosy cheeks in recognition of the family and friends who have graciously understood and stood by me as I pursued this life goal. Tamara Hanoski and others in my women's writing circle (Lucia, Shelley, Jolene, & Julie) have nurtured my creative side and have provided solace in friendship. Many thanks to Ann Hollifield and Patrick McGivern as any thought on friendship is incomplete without mention of you. And for the sisterly support from Astra Wong, Theresa Wong, and Jennie Wong who help me to feel firmly planted in my family roots...

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PROLOGUE

To introduce this research project, I begin with an account of a powerful experience occurring on the counsellor education landscape, which left with me an indelible imprint of the transformative nature of reflective practice.

In this first supervision session drawing on reflecting team practices with a fellow colleague (Corey) and a counselling supervisor (Adam), I prepare to describe my counselling work of three sessions with a family. I had learned, through previous experience, to spin a tight cocoon around myself and clients I presented. In previous case meetings and supervision sessions, I would begin with a brief description of a client only to find myself interrogated with a flurry of questions often founded on diagnostic labeling or rigid, "expert" observations. I learned to retreat into my cocoon—struggling against this expert orientation, so counter to who I am as a person.

I enter this supervision session in my self-protective stance and cautiously describe what this family has shared with me as their issues. And as I describe the family, I am shocked that neither Corey nor Adam interject with a declaration of the possible underlying culprit to the family's problems and the stream of "Did you ask this?" "What did they say about that?"

Instead, Corey and Adam listen intently to what I have to say about the family. Thus begins a subtle thinning of the chrysalis web I had been spinning in my professional practice. I perceive I am being respected as the conduit of information for this family; that my work of three sessions with them warrants my voice to be valued and respected. Corey's and Adam's respect for my perspective continues as we review a video portion of the previous counselling session with the family.

Adam then invites Corey and I to engage in a reflecting process, with me bearing witness to their reflections on my work with the family. We agree, although unsure of what exactly this entails.

I sit back in my chair as Corey and Adam direct their reflections to each other rather than at me. Because of this, I am able to position myself as an observer, free to take or leave their comments as I see fit. A sliver of light penetrates the chrysalis. Adam begins, "Well first, I want to say how impressed I am with how connected Gina is with this family. It looks like this family is really comfortable talking with her. I wonder if she's noticed how much they're trusting her." He offers this in the form of a statement, not a question to be answered.

In the ensuing ten minutes they ponder my internal reactions to body language; how Jealousy, Conflict, and Disharmony have made their way into this family. Corey and Adam offer their personal experiences of parenting and their remembered experiences of being an adolescent.

As I listen to their reflections, I imbibe the essential nutrients for nourishing the wings forming within the pupa. I attend to everything; many reflections trigger further thoughts of my own about how the stories I live inform my work with this family and provide luminescent insight. A shift happens because they aren't prescribing what I SHOULD do; nor am I told what the family's REAL problems are. Instead, I am invited to witness two subjective impressions coming together that tentatively and respectfully collaborate and contribute insight, questions, and added experiences to my work with this family.

The use of reflection in supervision is a metamorphosis to the development of my counsellor self as a full butterfly with an open-reflective stance; this experience marks the time I found my wings.

This experience, so contrary to my prior experiences in counsellor education, sparked questions around coming to know the stories counsellors live by and how these stories inform our professional counselling work. I was also curious about the spaces on the counsellor education landscape that were open for student counsellors to engage with these stories through reflective processes. As such, the exploratory research inquiry informing this study was: *“What are the personal stories of developing counsellors and what are the barriers and facilitators to reflective practice and the coming to know these personal stories in the context of counsellor education?”* These inquiries were focused more on process rather than outcome, context rather than specific variables, and in discovery rather than confirmation. Through this investigation, the experience of reflective practice in the personal and professional lives of developing counsellors was illuminated. Specifically, my vision was twofold: (1) to capture lived stories of developing counsellors and to juxtapose these stories with each person's articulated personal theories of counselling, and (2) to shed light on barriers and facilitators of reflective practice in counsellor education.

Guiding Assumptions

In conceptualizing this research, I was guided by many personal assumptions. To begin with, this research was founded on Dewey's assertion that "education, experience, and life are inextricably interwoven" (1938, as cited in Clandinin & Connelly, 1990). In addition, a social constructionist lens, with its ontological and epistemological underpinnings, filters the philosophical orientation and underscores the methodological approaches of this research. That is, I concur with Gergen (1992) in his assertions and questions concerning the possibility of a world independent of an observer. I believe that knowledge is not objective and that "factual knowledge is saturated with perspectives" (p. 21).

Through the theoretical lens of social constructionism, I contend that knowledge is a social and cultural construct that contextualizes people's way of knowing (Palys, 1992). This paradigm fosters a relative ontology (multiple realities), a subjective epistemology (knower and subject create understandings) and naturalistic methodologies (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). As such, perceptions of reality are formulated through one's values, assumptions, and perceptions and are entrenched within the context of one's social, economic, and ideological circumstances (Skolnick & Skolnick, 1994).

With these philosophical underpinnings in mind, several challenges arose for me. These challenges were similar to those encountered by Larsen (1999) in her research on the biographies of Canadian counsellor educators. She stated that her research was "colored with a postmodern brush [and] replete with a social constructionist nature" (p. 44). This statement resonated for me and ultimately raised questions concerning my constructed and partial knowledge of others' stories and experiences. I wrestled with representation and voice. Cochran (1990) helped me to think about representation in a different way: "the resurgence of interest in story form is based not on its power to illuminate reality, but rather on its power to illumine human reality in particular" (p. 72). I also worked to position myself with others involved in this research as 'co-researchers' and attempted to collaborate as much as possible throughout the study. The decision to refer to these individuals as 'co-researchers' was based on my philosophical framework in conducting research and on the experience of those involved as being more than

participants. Co-researchers were involved in consistent member checks of stories and critical requirements, approval and confirmation of written drafts of the research, and telephone consultations depending on the extent of their interest and availability for collaboration. Nevertheless, I remained keenly aware that this research was merely my own partial and perceived understanding-- as is all knowledge.

Language Use

At the outset it may be helpful to delineate some of the concepts forming the basis of this research. The terms *reflective practice*, *narrative*, and *story* are defined as follows:

Reflective Practice

Although a more in-depth discussion of reflective practice follows in Chapters 1 and 3, Ross (1994) proposed a general definition appropriate within the context of the present research. He defined reflective practice as “the uncovering of taken-for-granted elements in our everyday lives for the purposes of awareness” (p. 34). Carson (2001) asserted that knowledge in reflective practice is knowledge of the self, involving reflection of one’s own practice, and the generating of knowledge out of one’s own practice.

Narrative

The making of meaning from reconstructing personal experience via storytelling is the phenomenon of narrative (Connelly & Clandinin, 1988). Clandinin and Connelly (1990) describe narrative as both a phenomenon and a method. They asserted that:

Narrative names the structured quality of experience to be studied and it names the patterns of inquiry for its study. To preserve this distinction, we use the reasonably well-established device of calling the phenomenon, ‘story’ and the inquiry, ‘narrative’. Thus we say that people by nature lead storied lives and tell stories of those lives, whereas narrative researchers describe such lives, collect and tell stories of them, and write narratives of experience (p. 416).

Story

A more in-depth discussion of story follows in Chapter 2. As described above, story is the phenomenon behind narrative. It is viewed as one of the most basic human forms of sense-making. It also serves to help us create a semblance to the experiences that shape our lives. Stories are also as evershifting as sand and the act of storying conveys the dynamic and relational quality of narrating lived and living stories. Trinh (1989) echoed this sentiment that a “story never stops beginning or ending” (p. 2).

Metzger (1992) described story as “enlivened by details, by the insights and associations that flesh it out, take it deeper, give it a larger perspective, put it in another context, relate it to other experiences “ (p. 59). And that stories heal us because “we become whole through them. In the process of writing, of discovering our story, we restore those parts of ourselves that have been scattered, hidden, suppressed, denied.... Stories alter us. We re-story, re-member, re-visualize, re-juvenate, rescue, re-cover, re-claim, re-new” (p. 71).

Organization of Dissertation

In pursuing my vision for this research, it became evident that my central focus was on reflective practice in the context of counsellor education from students’ perspectives. I wondered about the literature and practice of reflective practice in counselling education. I wondered about self-storying and if indeed personal stories would influence professional practice. I wondered about counsellor education in a university setting and what the barriers and facilitators were of reflective practice. These curiosities, revolving around the theme of reflective practice on the counsellor education landscape, were distinct questions that formed the basis for the organization of this dissertation. As such, the following four chapters were written as self-contained manuscripts; nevertheless, they added to the whole of this research and were intended to contribute to the professional literature in reflective practice and counsellor education and development. Each of the four manuscripts were woven together through a linking page entitled ‘Linking Curiosities’ which tied each paper to the next through inspired questions that arose for me, written thoughts, reflections, curiosities, or borrowed quotes that provided semblance to the whole. The final chapter, or Epilogue Discussion and Reflections, further enhanced and added closure to the links by concluding the research. The following is a brief discussion of the intent and focus of each paper.

Chapter 1: Educating Reflective Practitioners: A Review of the Literature.

This paper, premised on gaining insight into the value of developing reflective counselling professionals, assessed reflective practice in Education, Nursing, and Home Economics. This manuscript examined ways in which the value of reflective practice has entered into the education and profession of counselling.

Chapter 2: Unfolding Personal Stories: Emerging Professional Counsellor

Wings: A Gallery of Butterflies. Employing a butterfly metaphor for personal and professional development, this “gallery of butterflies” demonstrated student counsellor development in the broader context of personal development. This manuscript conveyed stories to live by and posited the link to preferred theories and approaches in counselling. A view that all theories are constructed portraits of theorists’ lives was substantiated.

Chapter 3: Student Incidents of Reflective Practice in Counselling

Education: “Self-Protective” or “Self-Reflective”? Exploring the landscape of counselling education, this paper included critical incident accounts (ecological environments) of student counsellors' experiences of reflective practice within formal university education. Critical habitat conditions that instilled student ‘self-protective’ (chrysalis/pupa/cocoon) and student ‘self-reflective’ (butterfly) stances were established from this study involving five co-researchers from a counselling department at a Canadian university. Upon submission of this manuscript for publication, Drs. Ronna Jevne and Tamara Hanoski will be acknowledged as co-authors.

Chapter 4: A Hermeneutic Process of Counsellor Theory Construction.

This final paper was informed by the previous manuscripts and proposed a point of departure for reflective curriculum development and integration of reflective practice in counsellor education. A reflective curriculum model, which invites a hermeneutic process to theory construction was considered and proposed.

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CHAPTER 1

EDUCATING REFLECTIVE PRACTITIONERS: A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Bruner (1991) keenly remarked that “most of our knowledge about human knowledge-getting and reality-constructing is drawn from studies of how people come to know the natural or physical world rather than the human or symbolic world” (p. 4). In the area of the human sciences, where intra- and inter- human processes are of primary consideration, there is a need for alternate ways of learning and coming to know. Schwandt (2000) underscored this when he wrote “the human sciences (*Geisteswissenschaften*) were fundamentally different in nature and purpose from the natural sciences” (p. 191) and that with human action, meaning and interpretation of understanding requires an interpretive epistemology distinct from “causal explanations of social, behavioural, and physical phenomena” (p. 191).

The postmodern turn challenged objective truth (Gergen, 1992) and proposed subjective knowledge in response to the need for alternate ways of coming to know. In this regard, there has been a burgeoning awareness and attention to the practice of reflection and interpretivism in the human sciences. The historical roots of reflective practice reach back to John Dewey, one of the foremost and widely read philosophers in American education. In his early writings, Dewey stated that reflection upon practice was fundamental for the growth of educated people (Kruse, 1997). His beliefs ran counter to modernist and formalistic practices in teacher education (Britzman, 1991). Dewey envisioned an educational environment that was trusting, democratic, and focused on mutual discovery and dialogue (Henderson, 1992). Devoted to the study of inquiry and experience, his philosophy provided a foundation for reflective practice.

Indeed, Dewey’s philosophy of education provided a backdrop to reflective practice. As a developing counselling professional, I was curious about the practice of reflection, particularly in the professional development and education of counsellors. Responding to this curiosity brought me to the literature in reflective practice. In this review I noticed that the profession of counselling appeared slow to embrace reflective

practice for professional development in formal education. As a result, I turned to the literature in other disciplines that have more successfully integrated reflective practice.

The breadth of this paper encompasses a delineation of this review of the literature. I searched for a fuller understanding of reflective practice and the context for the education and development of reflective practitioners. My attempt was not so much to critique the literature, as it was to understand the integration of reflection in the education and development of teachers, nurses, home economists, and counsellors. In this paper, I begin by considering the scope of reflective practice and what this practice entails before discussing three broad epistemologies of practice. Situating reflective practice within particular epistemologies provided a scope with which to peer into the literature on reflective practice in the development of these professionals.

The Scope of Reflective Practice

The rhetoric of reflective practice, which has permeated the literature in recent years, has introduced with it a multiplicity of meanings. Advocates of reflective practice are often talking about and asserting different things, focusing on different purposes, and are emerging from a different conceptual base. As such, the concept of reflective practice consists of multiple meanings depending on one's perspective and point of reference (Greenwood, 1991). The primary association of reflective practice is with Schon's highly esteemed and seminal writings (Schon, 1983, 1987). Contributing to the groundwork erected in Deweyian philosophy, Schon stimulated professionals in diverse fields to think along similar lines and to focus attention on developing the craft of their practice. He described the reflective practitioner as one who "reflects on the phenomena before him and on the prior understandings which have been implicit in his behaviour" (1983, p. 69). A reflective practitioner therefore enters a dialectic process of thought and action and actively shapes his or her own professional growth (Osterman, 1990).

Schon (1991) proposed that practitioners and educators take a 'reflective turn'—an epistemic shift, which involves a process of observing, describing, and illuminating practice actions, particularly those that are spontaneous. He outlined two different modes of reflection: 'reflection-in-action' and 'reflection-on-action' which are involved in the reflective turn.

Reflection-in-Action. Schon asserted that the knowing within our actions is tacit, which means it is intuitive and cannot be completely articulated. Built on the premise that we cannot fully describe what it is that we know, reflection-in-action involves thinking about what one is doing while doing it (Schon, 1983); thereby critically evaluating, shifting, reframing, and following our tacit knowing as we react in problem situations (Schon, 1987). Thus, reflection-in-action provides on-the-spot experimentation. Rolfe (1998) commented that by reflecting on a present experience, the reflection on that experience changes the nature of the experience itself. As such, reflection-in-action is not only reflective but also reflexive since it instantaneously changes the nature of practice (Taylor, 1998). Freire (1970) referred to this as ‘praxis,’ which is ongoing action and reflection. He proposed praxis as “reflection and action upon the world in order to reform it” (p. 32).

Reflection-on-Action. Founded on the same premise as reflection-in-action (as it happens), reflection-on-action is carried out after and usually away from the practice situation (Schon, 1983). Reflection-on-action can be summarized as “the retrospective contemplation of practice undertaken in order to uncover the knowledge used in a particular situation... the reflective practitioner may speculate how the situation might have been handled differently and what other knowledge would have been helpful” (Fitzgerald, 1994). Reflection-on-action is thus reflection intended for improving future practice while reflection-in-action emphasizes improvement in current and future practices.

Reflection-on-Self-in/on-Action. A third practice of reflection, which I refer to as ‘*reflection-on-self-in/on-action*,’ is in close relation with Schon's notions of reflection-in and -on action. This practice of reflection is based on his premise that knowing is ordinarily tacit; however, rather than focusing reflection only on situations in practice, it emphasizes salient personal experiences that influence and shape the person of the professional.

The concept of this practice is further anchored in Clandinin and Connelly's (1991) narrative perspective that a practitioner's personal awareness promotes personal and professional growth. They coined the term ‘personal practical knowledge’ to represent this knowledge, which was described as “in the teacher’s (practitioner’s) past

experience, in the teacher's (practitioner's) present mind and body, and in the future plans and actions... (and) is found in the teacher's (practitioner's) practice" (Connelly & Clandinin, 1988, p. 25). These authors posited that stories are intricately a part of this knowledge. As we begin to compose and share stories of experiences we give voice to the experiences that form the "texts of our lives" (Britzman, 1991, p. 2). Moreover, Coles (1989) underscored the value of personal stories. As a psychiatrist under the wing of Dr. Ludwig, he maintained that his own life stories marked his ability to be present with patients.

Forms of Reflection

Van Manen (1977) distinguished between three forms of reflection, each proposed for different purposes in questioning and examining formal education. The first level is 'technical rationality' (also see Schon, 1983). The primary purpose of this level of reflection is for "efficient and effective application of educational knowledge for the purposes of attaining ends that are accepted and given" (Zeichner & Liston, 1987, p. 24). The second level, according to Van Manen, is less superficial and focused on practical action where one attempts clarification of assumptions underlying practical matters in education. The third level of reflectivity was referred to as 'critical reflection,' which incorporates moral and ethical principles into the focus on practical actions underlying education. Central questions at this deeper level of reflection include examining which educational goals, experiences, and activities lead toward living a just and equality based life and whether the current arrangements serve important human needs and satisfy important human purposes (Tom, 1984).

Freire (1970) also proposed critical reflection for developing critical consciousness, which concurs with Van Manen's third level of reflection. Freirean pedagogy included student centered dialogue. In critical reflection, classroom discussions facilitated self-reflection and social reflection in regard for how issues are talked about, how we know what we know, how we can learn what we need to know, and how the learning process itself is or is not working.

Epistemologies of Practice

Three broad epistemological categories, which inform practice, can be summarized as modernist, interpretive, and critical. As Taylor (1998) stated, it is

important to remember that these categories are not in opposition to each other but that they assist in delineating tidy frameworks through which to better understand practice. The following discussion describes these epistemologies and relates each to the ways in which they influence and support the practice of reflection.

Modernist

To begin with, a modernist approach does not readily concur with a reflective perspective, yet it is vital to contemplate such an orientation. The strength and force of its canons and the foothold it has claimed in society may have precluded the amalgamation of reflective practice in a variety of disciplines.

Viewed in its extreme, modernism assumes direct, objective, and systematic observations of the world as central to generating and validating truths (Palys, 1992). At the core of modernism lies the belief in a knowable, objective world with universal properties and laws (Gergen, 1992). Modernism peaked in Western culture during the 1950s and 1960s when there was a search for singular understanding of reality within a world undergoing rapid technological advances (Brotherton, 1996). The interest at the time was in basic logic of justification. Gergen highlighted that logical empiricist philosophers were the most ambitious, for they envisioned unifying all scientific endeavours under a single logic. At this time, modern architecture also was engrossed with reducing form to function. The psychological sciences also were not immune to seductive forces of modernism and became active participants in strengthening its foothold in society by establishing and supporting research methods focused on standardization and quantification.

The educational system, as well, was quick to respond to the age of modernity. The search for a knowable world and a single logic through scientific inquiry became the driving force behind academic rigor. As such university programs, influenced by modernism, began operating from an empiricist epistemology. Technical rationality in which knowledge is "demonstrated and transferred, modelled and imitated" (Clandinin, Davies, Hogan, & Kennard, 1993b) was entrenched as the pervading mode of practice in education. Through time, modernity was so interwoven into society and education that questioning it became a questioning of the very definition and meaning of schooling.

Interpretive

As a challenge to modernism, the 1970s and 1980s saw the birth of postmodernism which catalysed the view that knowledge is partial, historical, social, and relational in nature (Gergen, 1991). An interpretive epistemology of practice emerged through postmodern thought. Tenets within the interpretive paradigm enable a shift to valuing the lived experience of individuals.

An interpretive paradigm is better suited as a conceptual lens for reflective practice. In this regard, Gergen (1992) eloquently expressed:

Postmodern thought invites the investigator to take account of the historical circumstances of his/her inquiry. What are the roots of the preferred discourse, what are its limits, what patterns of culture does it sustain, what does it discourage? Critical self-reflection is essential for the postmodern scholar (p. 24).

Undergirded by social constructivist premises that perceptions of reality emerge through a creative sense of selecting, ordering, and organizing information relative to one's own experiences, 'interpretive' reflection is supported as a human inquiry process. The purpose of interpretive reflection is for generating personal and descriptive meanings (Taylor, 1998).

Critical

A critical epistemology derived from Marxist politics and critical theory builds on the interpretive paradigm perspective. That is, a critical orientation aligns with the interpretive notion of engaging in reflective practice for personal knowledge and meaning. A critical epistemology further adds that reflection is a means to critique hegemonic forces within society and to bring about social and political reform. The critical psychology movement was erected from a critical epistemology whereby reflection was, and continues to be, focused on critiquing mainstream psychology as perpetuating the status quo (Fox & Prilleltensky, 1997). Van Manen's (1977) and Freire's (1970) delineation of critical reflection for justice and equality also fit within a critical epistemology whereby reflection through open-dialogue is fostered for human enlightenment and concrete fulfilment.

Reflective practice with an underlying critical epistemology aims to examine and challenge powerful edifices such as the educational system. Darder (1991) emphasized

that a critical perspective brought to education would identify and challenge the ways in which schools contribute to the political and cultural life of students and society.

Britzman (1986) encouraged student teachers to examine contradictory dynamics by reflecting on their lives and their practices. Kruse (1997) built on Britzman's suggestion and contended that if teachers could maintain a reflective dialogue, a path for new stories and visions of a better school could be paved for future generations.

Reflective Practice in Various Disciplines

Education

The discipline of education is one of the forerunners of reflective practice and has been instrumental in popularizing the notion of reflecting (Kruse, 1997). Reflective teaching has been a major focus in education for improved individual practice and social conditions of schools (Zeichner & Liston, 1996). Reflective teaching has also gained credibility as movements for increased teacher professionalism has swept through North America and other parts of the world (Ross, 1994). Since the early 1980s, an enormous amount of reflective practice literature has surfaced and represents a diversity of perspectives on reflection (Britzman, 1991). Schon's writings (1983, 1987) have been especially prolific and have catalysed reflective practice in education.

The problematic nature of reflective practice in teacher education has also been considered. Carson (2001) discussed the limits of reflective practice “both programmatically, in terms of university-based teacher education, and pedagogically, with respect to what can actually be made available for reflection for those who are learning to teach” (p. 2). Four education works (Clandinin & Connelly, 1991; Clandinin, Davies, Hogan, & Kennard, 1993a; Connelly & Clandinin, 1999; and Kruse, 1997) have examined the practices and integration of reflection in schools.

Clandinin and Connelly (1991) conducted a nine-year action research project on personal practical knowledge and narratives involving Phil Bingham, the principal of a school. Their study examined *reflection-on-self-in/on-action* as well as reflection-on-action and was situation within an interpretive paradigm, although Clandinin and Connelly also noticed the ways in which Bingham's decisions affected the greater whole of the community. These authors recognized along with Bingham that his educational and

administrative practices were the living out of the community stories of his youth and early teaching experiences.

A further study that examined *reflection-on-self-in/on-action* and reflection-on-action, but was situated within a critical paradigm given its feminist focus, was Clandinin et al.'s (1993a) collaborative inquiry into reflection and teacher education. In this study, a group of teachers used reflective journals to research their own practice. The student teacher wrote thoughts, observations, reflections, and questions and the cooperating teacher and university professor responded, offering support, encouragement, and additional perspectives on thinking about classroom life. Clandinin et al. commented that "we could make connections with the student teacher and with each other both personally and professionally" (p. 53).

From the perspective of student teachers involved in this research, comments, responses, and feedback were published in Clandinin et al. 's (1993a) Learning to teach, teaching to learn: Stories of collaboration in teacher education, which was a collaborative effort to live and write a new story of teacher education. Co-researchers wrote that keeping a collaborative and reflective journal provided essential learning in examining values and beliefs that influenced both professional and personal development (Davies, Hogan, & Dalton, 1993). Furthermore, Clandinin (1993) shared that through reflection and collaborative journal writings, she became acutely aware of the institutional narratives that shaped her experiences at the university.

Connelly and Clandinin (1999) in Shaping a professional identity: Stories of educational practice included autobiographical accounts from teacher researchers working in schools. These stories were about shaping professional identities and the craft of teaching practice through 'personal professional knowledge.' Connelly and Clandinin outlined the challenges, tensions, and triumphs of living these stories and the implications for teacher education and the practice of teaching in schools. The tenor of this book is in *reflection-on-self-in/on-action* and, at times, both reflection-on-action and reflection-in-action. Certainly situated within an interpretive epistemology this richly textured tapestry of stories also fit within a critical paradigm as writers struggled to find meaning and identity between school stories, administrator stories, and stories to live by.

Kruse (1997) conducted a longitudinal, in-depth qualitative study involving three middle schools. An interpretive paradigm was the primary perspective of reflection in this study and was focused on reflection-in-action. Kruse involved teachers from the schools and found that those who engaged in reflection reported a "greater sense of efficacy in their work as well as greater ownership in their classrooms and school goals and missions" (p. 46). Evidently reflection upon practice, specifically reflection-in-action, assisted the teachers to define and refine their educational mission and goals.

Nursing

The practice of reflection has etched its way into the nursing profession and is now regarded as a cornerstone of nursing (Davis, 1998). Reflective practice has sculpted a vision that assists nurses in developing and illuminating their practice. With an emphasis on improving the quality of patient care (Wright, 1998), nursing practitioners approach reflective practice, for the most part, from an interpretive orientation. The thread of reflective practice has been interwoven into (1) nursing practice, (2) personal awareness, (3) professional and personal ethics, and (4) nursing education.

Nursing practice. Reflective practice has been employed by nurses to better guide and understand their practice. Graham (1998) responded to nurses' comments that they often did things intuitively to provide patients with support, but that they often did not fully comprehend why they were doing what they were doing. Graham conducted a qualitative study to illuminate the unknown and unrecognized areas of nursing practice. He involved two groups of nurses in reflection over a one-year period. The nurses reported that being engaged in a reflective process allowed them to better recognize how their core beliefs, values, and assumptions undergirded their practice. The reflective nurses also stated that they began to recognize how the medical model countered some of their ideas of caring for patients.

Personal awareness. Reflection engenders awareness of the self, which can be revolutionary and transformative. Wright (1998) underscored the transformative nature of reflective nursing practice on the person and the professional of the nurse (Johns, 1998). The medium of storying reflections was espoused to facilitate nurses' awareness. Johns expressed that the aim of writing and sharing storied reflections was to become aware of

one's 'baggage.' He promoted reflection for the separating of baggage that would interfere with nursing practice.

Professional and personal ethics. Johns' (1998) aim of reflection to separate baggage stems from an important focus on nurses acting with integrity, morality, and ethics. Ferrell (1998) stated that "it is through reflection and analysis that the moral practice of nursing is assured and personal and professional integrity is maintained" (p. 39). Reflection with a focus on ethical conduct invites contemplation of moral dilemmas and consideration of the person of the nurse, her or his values, beliefs, and the meaning she or he attributes to being a nurse. These considerations are evident in Ferrell's reflective model of ethical decision-making for nursing practice. At the heart of this model is the importance of personal knowledge and ethical theory. Ferrell involved three ongoing processes to consider these aspects; they were: reflection and analysis, judgement and action, and justification and reflection.

Nursing education. Evidently, reflective practice has infused the profession of nursing in dynamic ways. Its integration into nursing education has also been evolving, although this has yet to be reflected in the literature. Moore and Carter (1998) addressed how guided reflections through clinical supervision enabled student nurses to bring down their defences and raised their confidence levels. It fostered their ability to act and think for themselves and diminished the feeling of being a "robo-nurse" (p. 114).

Home Economics

Situated within a critical paradigm, the field of home economics is founded on a reflective professional orientation (Brown, 1985). A strong emphasis within this profession is engendering better understanding of individual and community stories. Thus, reflecting on who they are, what they do, and their effect on all global citizens is integral to home economists. With this in mind, Vaines (1988) discussed ecology and enlightenment as two central themes in the reflective professional orientation within home economics.

Ecology is a fundamental philosophical perspective of this profession. Focused on daily living, home economists accentuate holism and the interweaving and multidimensional influences between all living systems. The assumption from an ecological perspective is that humans are interdependent with their surrounding

environments (Bubolz and Sontag, 1993). Vaines (1988) stated that "the more we think about and understand the interrelationships of all living systems, the greater our appreciation for the complexities of daily living which must be better understood and addressed" (p. 6). Reflection through journaling, storying, and dialoguing is a meaningful practice that home economists have infused into their practice to become critically conscious of all levels of environmental influences. A professional home economist is thus reflective about the "microsystem" (where individual development takes place), the "mesosystem" (where informal structures such as daycare and schools exist), the "exosystem" (larger institutional organizations), and the "macrosystem" (broad ideological values, norms, and institutional patterns of a particular culture) (Bronfenbrenner, 1978).

Enlightenment, which involves developing personal awareness is also a central theme in the profession of home economics (Vaines, 1988). Reflection is the central practice that home economists engender for enlightenment. Personal enlightenment for home economists is about understanding their place in the world, examining contradictions in the personal, family, social, cultural, national, and global stories. It involves the process of carefully considering and consciously choosing actions. Through reflecting on their lived stories, home economists come to be active players in their own lives as human citizens. Enlightenment fostered by a reflective professional orientation thus facilitates home economists to be activists and advocates in their lives and in their work.

Counselling

While there is a strong historical basis and a burgeoning of literature on reflective practice in the disciplines of education, nursing, and home economics, the counselling profession has only recently begun to strengthen its reflective focus. Nevertheless, in a 1978 national Canadian study, Jevne achieved consensus among counsellor educators, students, supervisors, and practicing counsellors that self-awareness was the most valued core competency in professional counselling. Likewise, in their research on counsellor development, Skovholt and Ronnestad (1995) gathered extensive information through 160 intensive semi-structured interviews with 100 different therapists, with a diverse range of depth of experience, for the purposes of deriving a stage model of counsellor

professional development. The result was an eight-stage career model and twenty themes associated with counsellor development. Self-reflection was found as one of the most salient themes. These researchers discovered that as a counselling professional matured, continuous self-reflection was a central developmental process. Certainly there has been wide recognition within the counselling profession regarding the importance of counsellor self-awareness; however, there is limited guidance for counsellors on how to become reflective practitioners. There appears to be a gap between the overwhelming support for reflective practice in the professional counselling practice literature versus the limited focus and guidance in becoming a reflective practitioner in the counselling education literature.

Kramer (2000) provided some guidance in developing as a reflective therapist. He maintained a consistent focus on the personal development of therapists in Therapeutic mastery: Becoming a more creative and effective psychotherapist. He proposed that a good therapist is “well along in personal evolution, moving toward Maslow’s ideal of self-actualization, authenticity, autonomy. The more integrated and fully functioning as a person, the more these qualities perforce therapy” (p. 71). Kramer focused on the humanness of therapists as well as ways of enhancing creativity and learning appropriate self-disclosure in becoming a master psychotherapist. Each of his chapters concluded with suggestions for reflection on the given topic. Kramer’s work is refreshing in its central focus on the person of the counselling professional; nevertheless it is one of a few books available that address and provide guidance for integrating oneself into the practice of counselling.

The reflective practice literature in counselling education predominantly focuses on considering one's therapy style and interventions with less focus on the need for counsellors to be reflective about their personal lives as an enrichment of themselves and their professional selves (White & Hales, 1997). Moreover, studies of reflective counsellors have been absent from the literature. Consequently, there is a paucity of in-depth and contemplative understandings of the practice of reflection in counsellor education and development.

The lack of reflective focus in counselling education programs was brought to light through a study conducted by Schwebel and Coster (1998). They initiated a

questionnaire study to investigate how 107 psychology department heads viewed student well-functioning. It was determined that current psychology courses and curriculum minimally focused on student self-awareness even though it was rated most important for student well-functioning. According to department heads, obstacles to offering a program with student self-awareness in mind were as follows (in order of rating): “no time or space in the curriculum,” “budgetary constraints,” “faculty resistance,” “student resistance,” and “faculty not trained.” Schwebel and Coster hypothesized that over and above the practical and logistical barriers to a reflective program, was the formalistic epistemology of practice undergirding curriculum and pedagogy that undermined the value of reflective practice.

Brookfield (1994) and Gerson (1996) advocated that the practice of reflection should be a primary aim of graduate programs. Corey (1996) also spoke to the importance of the person of the counsellor in an introduction chapter to his text on theories and techniques of counselling. Several handbooks are available to guide students in a process of personal reflection. For example, Corey and Corey's (1989) and Kottler's (1996) manuals, designed to augment counselling textbooks, encourage students' dynamic integration of personal insights with professional development. Yet, despite these helpful manuals, self-awareness constitutes more than relating psychological concepts and theories in a personal way. It also involves reflection on the personhood of the counsellor and her or his willingness to embark on a reflective journey. In any case, whether or not counselling programs have integrated these manuals into curriculum has not been addressed nor shown in the research and professional literature.

Broom (1998) studied the artistry of reflective practice by employing a research methodology of reflective practice and experiential learning as part of an MA Art Education program to art students learning about art therapy at the University of England. Although not specifically counsellor training, Broom demonstrated the significance in using reflective practice journals as log books, which integrated aspects of both reflection-on-action and reflection-in-action. She found that these log books facilitated artist's personal experience and previous training in a “dialogical thinking between the art object and the artist, incorporating empowerment of subject's experience (subject of the painter) into new practice” (p. 5). Such unique educational practices are valuable

contributions to evaluating and demonstrating the impact of reflective practice on student learning.

Although counselling educators have shied away from emphasizing the practice of reflection in education, there is an abundance of counselling literature that focuses on counsellors' lives. For instance, Kottler (1995) richly exposed the underbelly of his personal healing, while Gersen (1996) relayed critical and tragic life experiences of counsellors, and White and Hales (1997) illustrated the seamless integration of counsellors' personal and professional lives. As well, Yalom (1989) and Kopp (1985, 1990) richly reflected about clients, experiences of everyday life, and counselling practices. Kopp specifically advocated reflection for facing the hidden aspects of the self for increased self-understanding. While Crouch (1997) also wrote about counselling sessions, he focused on empathy and self-awareness for developing therapeutic relationships with clients. His aim was to encourage readers to reflect on theories and to make them their own rather than merely "parrot theory" (p. 23).

Resistances to Reflection in Counselling. Despite potential barriers, I concur with Brookfield (1994), Gerson (1996), Skovholt and Ronnestad (1995), and Jevne (1978) who contended that reflective practice is critical to the development of a professional counsellor and that it is vital for reflective practice to be fostered in graduate programs. This view is echoed by Combs (1989) and Hague (1989) who espoused that counselling departments should transcend mere theory and skills acquisition and focus on student exploration and refinement of personal beliefs.

Counselling education in the new millennium. The counselling profession and the education of counsellors in the new millennium cannot shy away from examining world views, paradigms, and research traditions, and pose new questions and present new challenges. In the twenty-first century of counsellor education, pedagogical paradigms are shifting towards multicultural, postmodern, and critical perspectives (Brotherton, 1996): reflective practice is inching into this new dawn. As such, it is my belief that research in counsellor education on reflective practice has never been more necessary and timely. There is an ever increasing need to examine reflective practice in the personal and professional development of student counsellors. Engaging in such inquiry will shed light on the resistances to reflective practice in formal counselling education and illuminate

where change is required and how to facilitate a shift toward educating reflective counselling practitioners.

Conclusion

Some of the available literature in the area of reflective practice has fostered greater understanding and provided deeper insight into the role of formal education in the development of reflective practitioners. Nevertheless, further questions and curiosities were sparked. For example, I became curious about how and why the spaces for reflective practice in the educational landscape of various disciplines in the human sciences could be so vastly different. I wondered about the history of these disciplines and saw how much present pedagogy and curriculum were shaped by the past. I was curious about these forefigures in teaching, nursing, home economics, and counselling. I was also reflective as to how and why teacher education and the value of reflective practice did not appear to greatly integrate nor inform university-based teaching beyond education departments.

Finally, in counselling education, I was specifically curious about why there appeared to be a separation between reflective practice and formal education. I wondered what the driving forces were in counsellor education and I was puzzled by the type of message this perpetuated about the value of self-reflection and self-awareness within the very profession that espouses it for others (clients). I was curious about the barriers to reflective practice in counselling education and the barriers for counselling student. I wanted to hear stories from practicing counsellors, university administrators, university instructors, and counsellor supervisors. Furthermore, I was curious to learn more about counselling programs that were indeed embracing reflective practice and the stories that shaped such a possibility.

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Linking Curiosities

Through trial and error, and in small steps, the expression of what we learn about ourselves becomes our unique method, to be shaped and reshaped for other contexts. A dialectic emerges between spontaneity and planning, a loop: spontaneously being one's self, observing the effect, evaluating the short- and long-term outcomes, fine-tuning, being spontaneous in the same or slightly different way, and so on (Kramer, 2000, pp. 25).

Who is the person of the developing counselling professional?

CHAPTER 2

UNFOLDING PERSONAL STORIES: EMERGING PROFESSIONAL COUNSELLOR WINGS: A Gallery of Butterflies

One of the most important instruments you have to work with as a counsellor is yourself as a person. To every therapy session we bring our human qualities and the experiences that have influenced us... this human dimension is one of the most powerful determinants of the therapeutic encounter that we have with clients (Corey, 1996, p. 15).

I too believe that the person of the counsellor is vital to her or his work. As a counselling student, this belief resonates with the call to story my life. Clandinin and Connelly (1991), Coles (1989), Metzger (1992) and Schon (1991), underscored the notion that we learn about ourselves and make sense of the world through stories.

Indeed, constructing and composing life stories are fundamental to comprehending ourselves. Stories or 'narratives' derive the fabric and essence of who I am as a person and who I am as a counsellor. Stories provide a forward glance, "helping us anticipate meaningful shapes for situations even before we enter them, allowing us to envision endings from the beginning" (Schon, 1991, p. 237).

However, when I began doctoral studies in counselling, Schon's (1991) ideas and Clandinin's (1993) conception of self-storying to acquire and build one's 'personal practical knowledge' were not yet meaningful to me. Instead, I was tangled in a web of learning as a "receiver of knowledge" (Britzman, 1991, p. 24) and operated by what Freire referred to as the 'banking' concept of education (Shor, 1993). That is, I was more concerned with receiving knowledge, filing, depositing, memorizing counselling theories, seeking interventions, and appropriating counselling skills.

It was through a class assignment that I was invited to write about how the person that I am shapes the professional that I was becoming. Compelled by a need to fulfil an academic assignment and a pull to dive into the trenches of myself, I began to write stories. It was then that I recognized my bone deep understanding that I live through stories (Mair, 1988) and that in telling and sharing them, I can reaffirm them, modify them, and envision new plots and stories (Clandinin & Connelly, 1991). Clandinin and

Connelly eloquently put to words this bone deep sense that my self stories are my “stories to live by” (1995) and that they are infinitely recomposed and reshaped (Bateson, 1989, 1994). Indeed, Metzger concurred that composing story would awaken my awareness of the ideas and convictions that regulated my life.

It is necessary that we know our own story before we attempt to understand others. Knowing ourselves can be a useful measure through which we can approach others. It is not that we expect anyone to resemble us exactly but that self-knowledge activates and substantiates our knowledge of the world (p. 53).

I resonated with this desire for self-knowledge and realized that my stories shaped my understanding of others and the clients with whom I worked. Indeed, the boundary between the personal and the professional is fluid and permeable (Corey, 1996; Sarason, 1988; White & Hales, 1997). I was awakened to the notion that becoming a professional is more than appropriating counselling strategies; it involves a continuous search for *self*.

I understood Nouwen and Gaffney's (1974) assertion that caring for others involves a fearless and constant painting and re-painting of self-portraits and that “by following these stories, I am able to attend more closely to how the stories I live by have been composed and recomposed, intimately interconnecting my sense of self across time and place” (Whelan, 2000, p. 28).

The intent of this paper is, through narrative inquiry, to explore personal stories (self-portraits) of four developing counsellors and their sense of themselves across time and place, and to bring to light how these stories informed their counselling orientations and approaches. I will begin by asserting the significance of using metaphor to enhance story before launching into a story of my life. The process of writing my story, as will be conveyed, brought insights through which the present investigation is hinged.

Story & Metaphor

Stories are the vehicle that moves metaphor and image into experience. Like metaphors and images, stories communicate what is generally invisible and ultimately inexpressible. In seeking to understand these realities through time, stories provide a perspective that touches on the divine, allowing us to see reality in full context, as part of its larger whole. Stories invite a kind of vision that gives shape and form even to the invisible, making the images move, clothing the metaphors, throwing color into the shadows. Of all the devices available to us, stories are the surest way of touching the human spirit (Kurtz & Ketcham, 1996, p. 17).

In the way these authors asserted that stories give fuller shape and context to images and metaphors in life, stories themselves are large metaphors in that they are representations of the way we order and make sense of intricate details of our lives and ourselves. Gergen (1992) emphasized this constructivist notion that reality and truth, such as beliefs about oneself, are a matter of perspective and influenced by social and cultural processes, conventions of language (Derrida, 1976), discourse (Shotter, 1985), and issues of power (Foucault, 1979, 1980). Bruner (1991) argued that “we organize our experience and our memory of human happenings mainly in the form narrative—stories, excuses, myths, reasons...” (p. 4). Stories and metaphors indeed represent constructions of perceptions shaped by the environment and historical contexts in which we are situated.

Lakoff and Johnson (1999) addressed the fundamental connection between *self* and metaphor. They noted in their view on the self, that “...we do not have a single, monolithic, consistent way of conceptualising our inner life... Instead, we have a system of different metaphorical conceptions of our internal structure” (p. 267). Capturing and depicting metaphorical conceptions further enhance understanding of perceptions that guide us. Kopp (1985) wrote about the metaphorical world and that “in this mode we do not depend primarily on thinking logically or on checking our perceptions... we depend on intuitive grasp of situations in which we are open to the symbolic dimensions of experience and to the multiple meanings that may all coexist, thus giving extra shades of meaning to each other”(p. 3). He asserted that metaphor throws light on character by expressing one thing in terms of another.

According to Lakoff and Johnson (1999) Milesian nature philosophers concurred that constructing metaphor assists in a more vivid comprehension of the abstract and intangible. “Metaphor allows conventional mental imagery from sensorimotor domains (our heads) to be used for domains of subjective experience (understanding)” (p. 45). In this way, stories are metaphors and metaphors themselves assist to intensify, enhance, and facilitate more vivid understanding.

In this paper, metaphor is used along with story to facilitate an evocative image of the stories conveyed through written language. Metaphor creates a visual canvas through which the text of the story is illustrated. The metaphor of various types of butterfly species and the life cycle of the butterfly is presented to enhance portraits of co-

researchers' lives. This metaphor is a symbolic framework in which to reflect growth and change.

The concept of butterfly is a uniquely powerful one with its somewhat unpromising start from larva to caterpillar, followed by its dazzling finish of visual symmetry, where it emerges from the chrysalis (pupa) with rare beauty and fragility. These mythic creatures are symbols of change, transformation, and growth and can stand for not only personal growth but also professional development. Rather than a linear process of problem solving and appropriating counselling techniques, counsellor development, as represented in this study, is a life process of self-awareness involving multiple factors and nurturing habitats.

The following is a story I wrote that awakened my senses to the power of storying and is the story that sparked curiosities and ignited my passion for the present investigation. It is followed by a translation of the story into the metaphorical world of butterfly.

Composing My Story

Fighting Heritage

This story is related to me through snapshots of images and sounds. The background in these pictures is of a Montreal, Canadian girlhood. I hear sounds of ridicule emanating from schoolmates. "Chink, Chink, Chink" is chanted in indignant rhythm and pictures reveal little girls and boys spitting on the sidewalk at my feet as they chase and kick me.

Funny, I can't recall my feelings in those moments, nor my reactions. I must have felt powerless, confused, and helpless... like a child falling down after being tripped. But to these feelings, and how much the scrape hurt, I am uncertain. I'd like to imagine that I wasn't affected by their insults: that I ignored them and skipped the rest of the way home, indifferent to their name-calling and cruelty; that I went homebound looking forward to a sweet, Chinese sticky bun as my after school snack. Yet, this was probably not the case. Through even blurred memories and amidst my uncertainty of immediate feelings, one message sank in loud and clear: I was different. But not only was I different, I was inferior to these white-skinned, fair-haired children.

A snapshot is a privilege into a tangible moment. It does not however, preserve the underlying emotions. I search my memory bank but cannot recall my feelings about the ridicule, or remember a salient moment when I felt a certain way about myself or about these white children. Like a pot of water on a low-flamed stove, the heat slowly penetrated into the viscera of my soul. Their bitter words, their fingers pulling at the sides of their faces to imitate my Chinese eyes flavoured the pot and simmered, stewing passively over the years... in ways that I can only recognize in retrospect.

I recall praying and wishing so deep within myself that I could be different from 'inferior' Chinese people. The greatest compliment anyone could have paid me during my early teen years was that I did not look or act Chinese. I strove so hard for this... and it was not difficult since I was immersed in Canadian culture and spoke English without an accent. I spoke no Chinese at all and when asked if I knew how, I denied that I had any comprehension whatsoever. I spent immeasurable amounts of time trying to alter my appearance. All because I believed that the natural me had no worth. I struggled not wanting to be that Chinese girl with scraped knees.

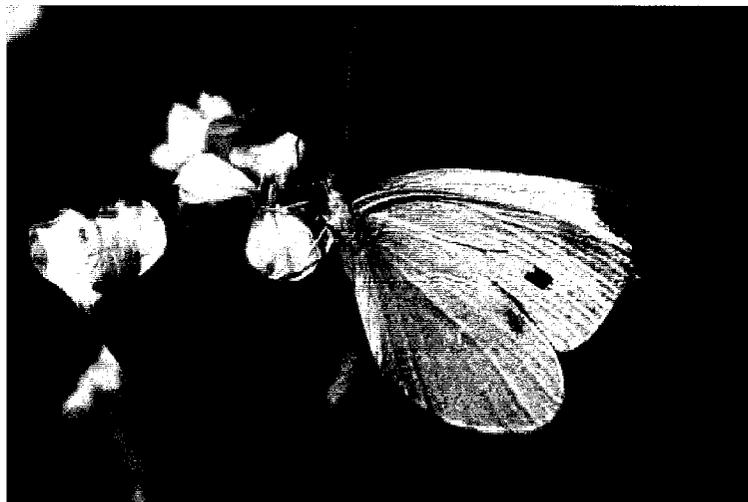
Reflection: In Butterfly World

An elusive small, yellow butterfly—I flit about carefree and light... occasionally sipping nectar from sap flowers on trees. Red butterflies mocking me—batting their wings in a trilling, taunting way. I become heavy, tattered and worn, no longer carefree. I notice the strong gale winds against my wee wings. I recoil back... into larva... I am yellow stripped but molt over and over again, each instar period between shedding of skin lets me reform and become anew. Multiple molts—attempts to find alternate color from skin shell—away from inner identity—never good enough regardless of number of molts. I cannot be red like those other butterflies. I am worn thin.

Following long battles I emerge as a shade close to red. Pump blood into veins of these new wings. A white net intrusively casts over me... a butterfly trapped in this netted cage with wings clipped against the side, I flap and flutter for release and freedom... time stands still as the helpless fluttering immobilizes me. Finally, I break out of this captured net of conformity.

I metamorphosize once again. This time I emerge from the chrysalis as a proud yellow butterfly.

Figure 2.0. Image of Yellow Butterfly.



Acknowledging the Lived Story

In writing and telling this story, I pull the thread that embroiders my professional self with personal knowledge: I connect who I am as a person—an emerging yellow butterfly and who I am as a counsellor. Awakened to that young girl's experience of internalized racism and her push against the raging currents of an inferior self-image, I see multiple ways that this plot affected choices she made in her life. I also uncover a knowing that Clandinin described as the "knowing that comes out of our past and finds expression in the present situation" (1993, p. 1). As I constructed this story, I understood more fully the writer's deepened understanding of others' experience of alienation, marginalization, and the pain of not belonging. I saw how the pebble of experience rippled and swelled into her personhood and her professional identity.

It was through reflecting and developing this story and others that I gleaned a contextual understanding of my personal theory of counselling. I appreciated Kramer's notion that "I was not just using a crazy quilt of patched-together techniques from differing and possibly conflicting, ideologies. I was being myself, with my background..." (2000, p. 18). I located a core of my values and beliefs and was thus better able to articulate and formulate a personal theory of counselling. My cultural sensitivity, my empathy with marginalized peoples, and my positioning of hope in experiences of adversity were always central in my approaches and philosophy of counselling. Like Clandinin, Davies, Hogan, and Kennard (1993), I began to see that my stories are an expression of who I am and the kind of life I was writing for myself. In writing and sharing this and other stories, I was awakened to a different process of learning and coming to know.

Essence of Research

As a student counsellor and one enthralled by the impact that self-reflection and storying has made in her personal and professional life, I was drawn to the kind of research that explored personal stories of developing counsellors. I was openly curious about whether those stories were woven into the fabric of the professional counsellor and her or his chosen theory and approaches in counselling. As such, the inquiry that framed this study was: "What are the personal stories of developing counsellors and in what

ways are these stories reflected in one's counselling approaches?" Stories of co-researchers' lives and the portrayals of these souls (or butterflies) are juxtaposed against each person's orientation.

Narrative Inquiry

In this study, narrative inquiry informed the research process. This qualitative and naturalistic research paradigm is focused on discovery, insight, and understanding from the perspectives of those involved. Narrative studies are exploratory, inductive, and emphasize process rather than outcome. In this approach, storying and restorying lived experiences were central to furthering self-understanding (Clandinin & Connelly, 1991) and gaining insight into professional foundations.

Narrative inquiry acknowledges the centrality of the researcher's experiences: her or his own tellings and retellings. When one is involved in narrative inquiry, the inquirer becomes part of the process. Her or his narratives are embedded within the research experience and are lived, told, and retold in the process. The engagement in narrative inquiry is an ongoing self and other reflective process.

Echoing this sentiment, Bird (2000) drew attention to stories as relational constructs rather than mere reflections of the self. She suggested that newly shaped discovery is possible within the relational process of conversation and that in this relationship narratives are being 'narrated'. This narrating in the moment is the storying that occurs relationally, in the present moment, with another person. Bird posited this notion of narrating lives for storying with clients in her 'Heart's Narrative' therapy approach; but it is an equally meaningful process considered in storying lived experiences in general. Thus the composing, improvising, or narrating of story in the present moment has an active component. Co-researchers were not merely taking something from the past and sharing it; rather, they were making the past into the present and transforming and reforming it collaboratively.

Co-Researchers

It is my sense that the intimate and personal nature of this research (sharing and reflecting on personal experiences) detracted individuals, who did not have an established relationship with the researcher, from participating. Initial recruitment of doctoral graduands in counselling proved unsuccessful. Past graduates declined due to time

constraints, which may well have been the case; however, I also suspected that the self-revealing aspect of this study was also a factor. Instead, four current graduate students and one past graduate student, who all knew the researcher well, volunteered participation. One person was unable to participate due to her unavailability for the research conversation.

As such, four developing counsellors, three female and one male, were involved as co-researchers in this narrative and narrating inquiry. Narrative inquiry facilitated the process of sharing personal experiences between each co-researcher and myself in an attempt to engender the reflective process and attend to the lived experiences of developing counsellors. They were past or current graduate students of a CPA accredited Counselling Psychology department at a Canadian university. Co-researchers signed a written informed consent outlining their rights and that information shared could be used for research, educational purposes, and disseminated at conferences and/or through published works. They were invited to share powerful experiences in their lives. Co-researchers were also asked to describe their orientations to counselling practice during the research conversation.

Similar to case study methods (Merriam, 1988), narrative inquiry can facilitate multiple methods of data collection. Data triangulation or ‘crystallization’ of the research are suggested as it “provide[s] us with a deepened, complex, thoroughly partial, understanding of the topic” (Richardson, as cited in Janesick, 2000). Sources of data in this study included audio-taped conversations, written stories, journal entries, collages, letters, books, course assignments, photographs, and memorabilia. These sources contributed to crystallize the researcher’s perspective of co-researchers’ lived stories.

The Elusive Butterfly

Butterfly in Ancient Greek denotes ‘psyche or soul’. In this research, I describe souls that I came to know. You are invited to witness, observe, and perhaps be induced into a trance as you venture through this gallery of ‘soul’ stories. Each soul story is conveyed in a format that preserves the depth of the story and uniqueness of each butterfly. In the process of narrative inquiry (Clandinin & Connelly, 1991) we butterflies fluttered in the air— landed and sipped flower nectar together, and explored-- changing each others’ experience of the flight. Perhaps you will capture this energy. Meteorologists

speak of the ‘Butterfly Effect’ in which the flutter of butterfly wings in one country can alter the weather system of another. Such was the impact of the lived stories of co-researchers upon my stories.

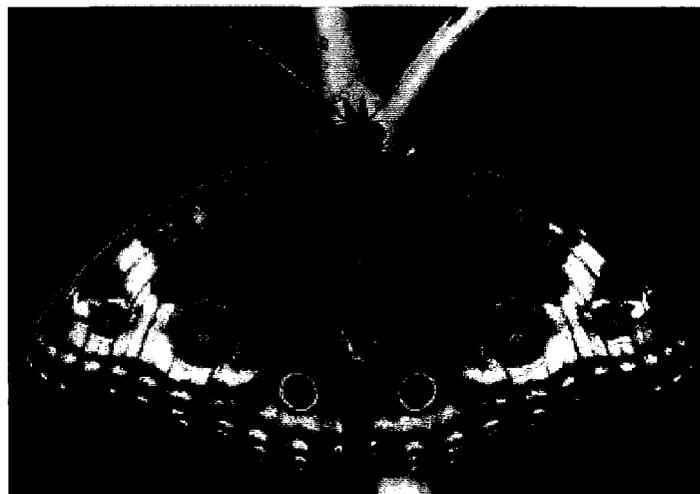
Visit this gallery of butterflies-- where co-researchers’ stories of courage, strength, family connectedness, resilience, and loss, to name a few, were symbolized through illustrious butterfly species of the Tiger Swallowtail, Monarch, Painted Lady, Mourning Cloak, and White Admiral. Observe scenes of impact on my flight as we engaged in a sharing of space and time engaged within this poetic process called life. In all, this gallery of butterflies, including my own story of transformation to an Island Blue butterfly, conveys the narrated stories behind developing counsellors and the shape these stories lend to emerging professional wings and preferred theories of counselling.

Researcher: Buckeye Butterfly

Weaving in a dance, spinning tight, nestled in this cocoon of misgivings and waverings—I break free from the encrusted cocoon of youth and uncertainty. In this 3rd decade of life, I am able to discard the protective and unyielding pupa. I am thankful in noticing how I have become a butterfly of strength. I shed chrysalis web of self-doubt and acknowledge I am my own person.

Course blood through veins of strong wings... unfold and reveal colorful orange with dark pupil-like colored scales. I am Lepidoptera (butterfly): species Buckeye--- the research butterfly. Eyespots cast outward; but gaze to self-knowledge always exists. My unmistakable bright colors serve to protect me, and my large eyes adorning the upper surface of my wings reflect my inquisitive nature. I feel from within how stable wings have taken me in flight. Journey with me as I soar through sandhills, old fields, and fallow agricultural lands and witness the unfolding and narration of personal stories and the emergence of professional wings of other butterfly species.

Figure 2.1. Image of a Buckeye Butterfly.



GALLERY OF BUTTERFLIES

Dawn: Family Connections

Monarch Butterfly

Providing essential nutrients and ideal habitat conditions for this larva within its protective pupa, Dawn's family nurtures the development of strong wings which enable her to soar through any torrential rainstorm of life. Like the Lepidoptera Monarch, with its attractive bright royal orange, black, yellow, and cream wing coloration, Dawn is full of vibrant life and energy.

The Monarch butterfly, the most familiar, recognizable, and beloved North American butterfly, capable of flying to fearless heights, has been spotted at the Empire State Building at 1,000 feet.

Dawn is also engaged with life as an adventurous possible process with few limitations.

Figure 2.2. Image of a Monarch Butterfly.



Researcher Journal Entry

Big backyard... the open window frames my body slumped comfortably on the couch. The view is of a crisp, cool, wintery, sunny day in February. The long stretch of gleaming hardwood is strewn with lego, baby stroller, and toys. More toys are piled somewhat neatly under the makeshift

fireplace. A single branch sways in the gentle breeze. Cherry-like clumps of blossoms nod back and forth in accordance with the breeze. I love this old house of ours... fragrant ambiance of newborn Iris and the newborn newness of a couple becoming three...

Snuggling into the couch at home with reminiscent thoughts of family brings Dawn immediately to the forefront of mind. Lingering with her ambiance in my home after our research conversation, her presence still hangs in the air. Dawn is an outgoing, enigmatic, and confident woman—a natural born leader and athlete. She has an infectious, gregarious, laugh, and a wide, captivating smile. I first met Dawn in a course we were both enrolled in at the university. We shared the similarity of a research supervisor and this served to bring us together in friendship.

The most touching story that Dawn shared with me-- and the reason why thoughts on family bring her to mind-- is because her story is of a nurturing close-knit family. Her family fostered, early on in the larva stage of development, a strong sense of hope and belonging within Dawn.

Without a second thought, when people ask where my hope comes from I immediately say, "My family." It's hard to describe how I feel about my family because words don't seem to do the experience justice. I cannot imagine a life without them and yet I know if they were gone, I would still be okay. I would be okay because of what they have given me. They are my foundation. They are what helped to keep me grounded. They are my roots. My parents have a unique ability to provide nurture without suffocating, to allow me to forge my own paths, even when they didn't think they were exactly the way I should be going. They were wise enough to let me experience life for myself and always stood behind me with arms outstretched, in case I slipped and fell. I have been allowed to develop a strong sense of self and independence. I have never been told that there are things that I cannot do. Only that some dreams would be more difficult than others to attain. I have always been encouraged to search for that which is positive and not permitted to dwell on the negative. My life at home has been filled with laughter, love, sharing and unlimited support. As a result of all of this and so much more, my hope has developed the strongest of roots, which keep me securely grounded and yet at the same time, the largest of wings with which allow myself to soar.

A Call to Home

Like the Monarch with its massive annual migration from Canada to Mexico, the eastern United States (a journey that may span over 2,000 miles) and then a gradual

stepwise progression all the way back to Canada, Dawn has an affinity for home no matter where she is—as a child and as an adult. Even more astonishing is that second and third generation of Monarchs in the migration process stop at the same destinations—the exact trees that their ancestors perched upon in the migratory journey. Explanation for such a curious phenomenon has eluded scientists for decades. It is a profound occurrence: a call to home reaching far and wide with outstretched arms.

Dawn laughs with a fondness as she relays that she would get homesick when she was at slumber parties at a neighbour's house as a young girl. Her flight always led her homeward bound...

I'd go to a sleepover across the street... and I couldn't stay because I'd look at my house and I'd want to go back home. I [would] take the house key with me because I knew I wasn't going to make it all night long. Like I would sneak out and it was like two o'clock in the morning. And I unlocked the door but we have a chain on the door too, so I'm ringing the doorbell and I'm hitting the chain and I'm ringing the doorbell and I'm crying... and my mom's like, "I'm coming! I'm coming!" And I remember a time... it was six o'clock in the morning and I was throwing rocks at the bathroom window because I wanted to get into my house. I didn't like sleepovers; I wanted to be at my house.

Even today, the yearning for home is powerfully imbedded within the core of this butterfly. Dawn now phones her mother 4-5 times a week as her journey has taken her to another province. "... So when I'm getting ready in the kitchen in the morning I'll just pick up the phone and walk around and talk to my mom and see what's going on and we'll just blather about anything".

Reflecting strong family ties and deep roots planted in home, Dawn's story compels me to think about the kind of home I am creating for my family. A fond wish I carry is to become a cherished great-grandmother someday. The living out of this longing involves fostering love and connectedness throughout the span of four generations. Dawn's story of profound family connection warms my spirit in this regard.

The Personal is the Professional

The Monarch pumps the lifeblood of stories into her wings. As the brightly colored orange wings dry in the cool mountain air, her stories—stories of family support expand her professional wings.

Dawn articulates how her parents never focused on the outcome of her involvement in such things as sports: “Like it was never about how I performed, they were just happy that I was performing”. Dawn recognized that she too values the process rather than focusing on the end result.

I believe very much in the process orientation towards counselling. I’m a supporter of the belief that there is integration between thoughts, feelings, behavior, spirituality, all of that. I think that for different people the hierarchy, if you were forced to put like what’s most important, would change for different people. So someone might be more sensate, feeling, emotional, experiential. Other people might be more thinking, other people might be just more action oriented and in general obviously you need to integrate that and then do what’s best for the person. But I think that change occurs primarily through the process and through the therapeutic alliance created between client and counsellor. So my belief is more strongly into the process orientation of counselling.

Kramer suggested, “Ultimately, what we have to offer is not a technique, not a theory, but who we are” (2000, p. 24). Reflective of this, Dawn’s attention to the significance of the therapeutic alliance in her counselling philosophy mirrors her own experiences: Dawn conveys the profound impact of her relationship with her mother in her life.

The relationship with my mom has helped shape and develop who I am today. My mom is the glue in the family, clearly. Just the special things, the connection, the making sure everybody knows what everybody else is doing and really motivating that...

In one example, Dawn remembers how she had decided, at the age of sixteen that she would drive to the bowling alley with some friends during a snowstorm after having just received her driver’s license.

And she [my mother] so much did not want me to go. She was just so worried about driving and I was adamant that I was going to go.... We discussed it and agreed that I would go and phone her when I got there.

Dawn’s mother was able to nurture Dawn’s independence and put it above her own fears; it is through this relationship and her relationship with her family that she is able to experience life as a series of unlimited possibilities.

I don’t recall ever in my whole life being told that I couldn’t do something—ever! Or that it would be too impossible or too... like I don’t recall ever receiving any kind of message that I had any type of lack of ability or lack of anything. The

home I grew up in and the way in which they parented never made me feel threatened or insecure or worried. There was no yelling in my house. We just... we talk about things and we work it out and you don't hold grudges and you don't dwell... like I don't recall any of that ever. There was no fighting or yelling or screaming, we always were always allowed to share how we felt and I was never told what I could and couldn't do.

Living life as an adventurous possible process, Dawn shares, "I think that my whole life, in general, is a 'choose your own adventure' book because I think there are these critical moments where you get to decide something right now [that] will really make an impact". She describes choosing to turn the pages to enter the story of a counselling doctoral program without regrets of not pursuing the story of a sports psychology doctoral program. Dawn adds that she is turning the pages in her adventure series eventually to live stories of Dawn as partner and mother. This Monarch is perched for the unfolding of these future stories.

East: Caring of the Soul

On a brisk September morning, sun streams through the blinds and casts a horizontal pattern across two faces in engaged dialogue. East and I indulge in cinnamon buns-- fresh out of the oven, and herbal tea. A gentle serenity fills the air in this humble abode and sits still with us in conversation. This serenity is absorbed into us like the sun casting a warm envelope around our interaction. There is a depth here; I feel East's soul and the openness with which she is engaging in this process with me. She reminds me a little of myself with her deliberateness. It is clear that she has been distilling her thoughts and jotting down remembered fragments to share. I can see the thoughtfulness and intention—a genuine sense of honoring, listening, and valuing what she commits herself to doing. This reflects how East cares for her soul.

East arrives having recently celebrated her 50th birthday and offers me a gift of a shimmering crystal. "It may call to your soul and its connection with the universe". This crystal symbolizes my relationship with East. She encourages me along this soulful path of life. She reminds me, as does Thomas Moore in Care of the Soul, of the importance and meaning in cultivating my soul. East also brings a container of seeds-- a cherished gift from a client and she accidentally leaves it behind. This vividly captures the

spreading of many seeds of thought and the wisdom she leaves with me about life, loss, death, discovery and a metamorphosis of the self.

Personal is the Professional

Therapy is the outcome of an intricate concatenation (fusion) of factors, many intangible, a mystery. The one thing we can be certain of is the importance of the inner world of the therapist. Maturing as a person both inside and outside the consultation room, ultimately you will find that what you have to offer is not a technique, not a theory, but who you are (Kramer, 2000, p. 259).

East's personal theory of counselling significantly portrays who she is as a person. She describes her approach as eclectic yet grounded in Humanism. East speaks about a growing comfort with "things being not necessarily as they seem to be... there are always layers underneath". She conveys that in counselling she strives to touch the lives of others at the level of emotions, which is where she believes the core exists. Identifying herself as a Transpersonal Counsellor, she aligns herself with the Shamanic perspective that "we are all one and connected to the universe and knowing oneself is the foundation to hope".

In the process of unfolding and narrating East's lived stories, the shape of her professional counsellor wings emerges for our understanding. Her story of larva to imago (adult butterfly) reverberates and echoes not only inward-- extending into her professional counsellor self—but far reaching outward into her work with clients.

The Larva Stage of Development

It is during this larva stage of the butterfly life cycle where much of the catalyst for growth occurs. As the larva grows, it sheds its skin (molts) so as to enclose its rapidly developing body.

East recounts how at the age of 39, after 25 years of working in the analytical business world, she no longer feels fulfilment despite a successful career and financial affluence. At the time, she experiences a feeling that something is missing in her life and she begins to desire something more. She begins her search by enrolling in several communications courses, which brings her awareness into "living life through communicating and connecting with others." East continues in these courses over the

next two and a half years and begins to get in touch with an emotional and spiritual way of being. These courses initiate substantial changes within East.

The larva sheds its skin when growth outstretches it's being. Intervals between molting for a larva are called instars...

This larva undergoes several molts, 3-4, before entering the chrysalis stage of the life cycle.

Following the molting initiated by the communications courses, East and her husband adopt an eight-day old baby girl. A significant event for those with a nine-month preparation, East and her husband find themselves busy with the role of new parenting with less than 12 hours notice.

East conveys her belief that “the spirit chooses which parents... it just makes a lot of sense that she chose coming into our family, from a spiritual level. Maybe that’s what the soul of a child chooses because that’s what they need to learn from”. East finds reassurance in the view that we don’t choose our children but they choose us. “And whoa, that’s a remarkable philosophy, I was quite stunned by that initially, but as I’m thinking about it more and more over these last four or five years, oh it makes sense”.

Chrysalis Stage of Development

When the Juvenile hormone in the larva is high this signals that it is time to enter the Chrysalis phase. The chrysalis (or pupa) is the transformation stage where the larva tissues are broken down and adult structures emerge. The larva spins a silken pupa to build protection and isolation against harsh elements in the environment during this intense phase.

Slightly more than a year after adopting their daughter, East’s husband ends his own life. She describes the vivid details still etched in her mind, of the last ten days before losing her life partner of 25 years to suicide. They are the details in which this larva weaves a shell to protect herself from the dramatic transformation to come. Through a solid basis of trusting friendship East allows me to peer into her window of darkness. She shares with me the devastation of recognizing the indicators so obvious to her now as a trained professional. With a deliberate slowness and a self-forgiving tone, East conveys how her husband had paid visits to friends and family before that fateful Sunday evening.

We had a Lab (dog), so both of our cars were eternally full of white dog hair. So that night, he said, “Well, I can’t really sleep so I’m going to go out to vacuum my car”. And I said, “Well, why don’t you vacuum mine while you’re at it?” Because I had just had a new car and was trying to keep the dog hair down (laughter). And he said, “Oh, sure. I’ll do that”. And so, just about nine thirty or so, we’d already put [our daughter] to sleep, he had always walked the dog about that time. So he did that and then he...

East pauses at this point in our conversation. In her eyes I see the anguish of loss that years of overcoming, processing, and forging ahead cannot dilute. Determined, as if her telling of this story would move her to a new healing ground, East continues to share the accounts of the last few hours to a traumatic life-changing event.

So then he walked the dog, came back, and said he’d go out and vacuum the cars. And we had that conversation-- he just said, “I love you”, and gave me a kiss [pause].

And that was it... And I went to bed. I had no idea. And then when I woke up the next morning, I noticed that the dog was waiting to be walked and he (husband) wasn’t around. He hadn’t come back in. And so I noticed, “Oh, he hadn’t come back”. So then I went and looked around the house and-- nothing. And so I got some clothes on. I was starting to think, “What’s happening here?” And then I slipped outside with my coat because it was a chilly morning and windy. And I walked down the sidewalk and then up the walk. The garage was at the corner of the lot and I was coming around and going up the garage pad. I could hear the vacuum going with the garage door shut and I thought, “Oh my God!” And I had the garage door opener.

And I just knew... So I still stayed quite a distance away and opened the garage door and I could still see... he had been vacuuming his car so by then the rigor mortis had set in... He had vacuumed my car first and it was spotless.

East finds herself alone for the first time in her life:

All of a sudden he is gone, and so there is my coach gone. I am on my own. That’s a big change because until I married, I lived with my parents on the farm until I was 18. When I turned 18, I went to university, into residence, and then married, so it was kind of like never being out on my own. I never had to stand alone and now to be a single mom of a one year old, that is quite a shock to my system.

East reveals how she went to automatic “survival mode” after this loss. She shares that having an infant to care for provided structure and gave her a reason to continue on... “I couldn’t let myself fall into a depression or let anything happen to me. So I had

to take really good care of myself... And having lots of family and friends, that really helped.”

Figure 2.3. Image of a Mourning Cloak Butterfly.



Butterfly: Mourning Cloak

The adult butterfly (or imago) of the Mourning Cloak hovers in the wetlands, forest edges, and waterways. Its larval host plant is the Weeping Willow. A butterfly of resilience and profound inner strength, the Mourning Cloak survives harsh cold winters.

This life-changing event moves East into “the spiritual and intuitive side of my life.” She begins to incorporate practices of Reiki, Qi Gong, and more recently Shamanism into her daily life. It is from aligning with these Eastern philosophical practices that East chooses her pseudonym. Through guided imageries, Qi Gong, and quiet meditations in the early morning hours of 5:30, East spends nearly an hour “just be[ing] with myself... and the other things I’m learning is that it is a catharsis, a getting rid of all that old stale energy in my body, and just kind of sounding it out.”

Mourning Cloak: Seeks Answers from Within

In these times of quiet meditation, East begins to listen to the voice within herself. And so that’s where I start to ask myself more and more questions, and looking internally for my own answers. Whereas up until then, I’d ask my girlfriends, or

family, and I am kind of getting the answers externally, and my teachers, and everybody else knows better than I do. Now, I've shifted... I'm getting my own answers really clearly and strongly, and feel good about that.

The Mourning Cloak is named for its dark, somber wing coloration; however, this species of butterfly is more a welcome reminder of approaching spring than a symbol of passing. A difficult butterfly to approach at first, it is a swift and fervent traveler through life.

Hailing a reminder of the approaching newness of Spring, East listens for her own voice that calls forth a budding self-confidence. “She begins to challenge the influence under which the logic of a “patriarchal analytical model” structures her development. She moves into a deeper level of reflection by questioning the influences and roles the corporate environment and social environment play in shaping who she is as a person.

Solitude in Flight

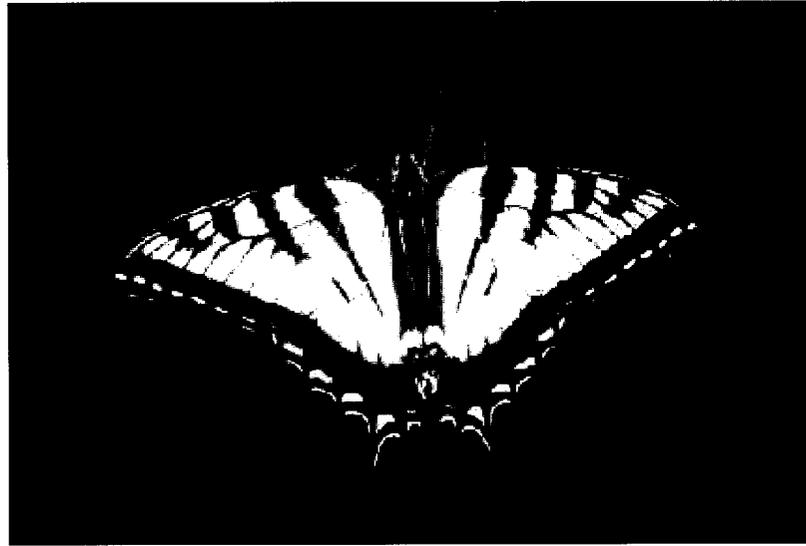
East describes having roots solidly planted in rural upbringing and that spending time with animals fostered a sense of awe and respect for the cycle of life: “I think that growing up in connectedness with animals, and just the life and death cycles of the cattle and the pigs, and the horses made [brought] a different groundedness to my life”.

She speaks of the sadness in recently losing her mother and the revelation that she is now really on her own.

So maybe at 50, I've reached kind of a growing point... one of my mentors was saying that when he was 72 his guides just left him and they said, “You don't need us anymore.” So he's kind of on his own. I'm wondering if that's where I'm now heading because my physical supports, my emotional, mental [supports] are gone, which were my grandparents and my mom... and then [my husband] being a guide and kind of a mentor for me for so long. So it's all kind of dropped away. And as it's dropped away it's just leaving me standing up here, in solitude and yet in strength—because in many ways I've never been healthier.

Standing in solitude and strength, spreading wisdom—pollinating growth of others... a new soulful butterfly emerges.

Figure 2.4. Image of a Tiger Swallowtail Butterfly.



Free spirit in flight and lacking constraints, the Tiger Swallowtail butterfly is an elusive creature who significantly pollinates many wildflowers. This gentle winged species is a powerful flier. So named for the long “tails” on the hindwings which resemble the long, pointed tails of swallows, the colorful brilliance in her wingspan is even more awe inspiring.

An Old Soul

East speaks of spiritual journeys and a growing wisdom through an empowered voice. She is an ‘old soul’ at the pivotal age of 50: soulful, wise, and an intuitive woman who seeks to learn about women’s rituals and admirable women in herstory:

Rituals were a way of getting in touch with these wonderful women of the past and this Hildegard deBingen sticks in my mind. Just being such a feisty little woman-- who dared in 1007 AD, to write letters to the Pope telling him off.... this little woman in this Catholic Monastery!

Following the fervent pursuits of this woman, East’s activism in letter writing to effect change in society is also admirable. At the time of our conversation, she works on composing a letter expressing her concern for the few hospices available to persons in palliative care.

East’s life stories stand for perseverance and capture the continuing life cycle of a courageous woman transforming herself following the devastating loss of a life partner.

Her strength and wisdom reaffirm and validate an essence of life—living a reflective life, an awareness within and pollinate my growth as a butterfly and as a woman.

Researcher Journal Entry

East seems a different person from when we first met three years ago... or perhaps my understanding of East has transformed from this intimate conversation. Her story alters my flight... moving me profoundly as if picked up by storm fronts and moved hundreds of miles at altitudes of several thousand feet. My Buckeye flight is profoundly shifted by her courage in rediscovering herself. Hers' is a story of metamorphic change, from larva to chrysalis to butterfly and now a butterfly aged with the enduring wisdom of an "old soul".

Crystal: Conversation Between Friends

On a warm summer's eve, I enter Crystal's home, carefully closing the door behind me so that her cat does not slip out. The apartment is inviting and familiar to me. I am warmed by the candle burning and the photos of babies, friends, and kittens adorning her walls and shelves. Removing my sweater, I settle back into the soft, sloping couch. I feel greatly at ease with Crystal. We are old friends-- colleagues from the counselling program. We were first drawn to each other because of similar values and counselling styles and have become closer confidantes over time.

Soft background music emanates from the stereo. It is the same stereo Crystal invited me to use at the birth of my daughter nearly a year ago. I smile in anticipation for this chance to sit with a dear friend and converse about her life experiences and counselling approaches. Although ostensibly quiet and unassuming, Crystal is a profoundly insightful and reflective woman with a strong sense of who she is and what she wants out of life. Through the comfort of our friendship and her genuine passion to strip away the layers of herself, Crystal unabashedly conveys her *self*.

Crystal's cat drinks out of our water and gnaws at my fingers; the cat too seems aware of the privilege of this conversation and tries, in earnest, to be a part of it. Three hours slip away through laughter, tears, seriousness, and fun. Our friendship is deepened as the shadows of hidden selves disappear into the night. She is a soft-spoken woman with a twinkle in her eyes as she speaks of her reflective nature.

Like a pirate showing her lost treasures, Crystal takes me through the pages of a book of collages she has lovingly created through the years. It is as if she rediscovers the

jewel of each collage as we admire them together. She describes them as “pasted fragments of images collected from magazines, of dreams and goals, and of how I would like to define myself.” Crystal voices the validation in discovering collages done many years ago and finding that her passions have remained the same: “Babies, marriage, travel are things I still want in my life... skiing, sailing, rollerblading, nature and animals, camping, poetry, partners, oceans, music, coffee with friends are all still important to me.”

The Call to Reflect

Within one of the collages, I see an eye pasted near the center of the page. “That’s like the inner eye to my soul-- looking inward at who I am, deep down.” Crystal recounts the story of when this inner eye became significant in her life. She talks about a time, in her mid-twenties when she has a profound dream and realizes that there are things in her past that she must confront.

In the dream, she is in a crowd of people who are covered in shadows: “They had their eyes averted and wouldn’t look at me. I hear them saying to each other, but loud enough for me to hear, that if I won’t look at them and get rid of them, that they will have to look at me and destroy me.” Crystal goes on to describe the palpable fear she experiences and the shift from this fear when a friend takes her hand in the dream. In that simple gesture of connection, Crystal feels safe enough to look intently at the shadowed figures and conquer them.

Upon waking from this dream and writing about it, Crystal recognizes that it is a call for her to reflect on her life and to give voice to her past. “I was determined to figure out what those demons were and to look inside myself.” Crystal’s awareness of the profound difference that feeling supported made is also strengthened through this dream. It is this awareness that likely informs her emphasis on the therapeutic relationship in her work with clients. Also consistent with the message of her dream and the resources that enable her to look inside herself, Crystal values the therapeutic relationship, client choice, empowerment, and the accessing of painful experiences in order to heal them as central in her personal theory of counselling.

A Vital Transformation

Intent on looking her ‘demons’ in the face, Crystal recounts a very difficult time in her life. She goes back several years in her mind and takes me to a time when she finds herself isolated in a new city: no job, no family, no friends. She moves in with a boyfriend despite nagging doubts about the relationship.

Crystal looks away from me-- averting her eyes down to her folded hands as she discloses that the relationship became abusive: “I was thrown into a wall, and was left with bruises and welts on my body, and an unimaginable fear. I was faced with a realization that I was not truly safe, anywhere.”

With pursed lips and her head shaking back and forth, Crystal goes on to say that this is not what was most upsetting to her about the experience. With her eyes cast further down, Crystal speaks of the shame she felt, “I promised myself that I would never put up with that...” Barely audible, she whispers, “And yet I stayed.”

The Painted Lady begins its life cycle as an egg that is the size of the head of a pin. The egg is pale green with 12 to 14 longitudinal ridges; and laid on thistle, mallow, or hollyhock leaves.

Crystal does stay, but she also knows that a catalyst for change is necessary and insists that she and her partner seek counselling. She describes her first experience of couples’ therapy.

There was a power in going there. As I faced my demons and confronted myself, I began to take control over my life. I felt myself growing stronger. Through my tears, through my fear, I forced myself to tell the truth. It is one of the hardest things I’ve ever done- sit in that room and bare my soul- but I could feel myself growing and healing with each risk I took. I came to realize that the unsaid somehow had power over me, and in this realization, I forced the words out.

Without help, nine out of ten caterpillars will not survive long enough to become butterflies. Few realize that many species are endangered. Egg to caterpillar to chrysalis (pupa) to butterfly—irresistible habitats (basking sites, water sources, shelter) are foundational for transformation to be realized. Any butterfly can be fatally damaged if handled improperly, e.g., vein on front wing, if broken, will render butterfly flightless evermore.

This multi-colored, yellow-green striped caterpillar is able to nourish and grow continuously for days before she pupates. She builds a silky, webbed nest as she feeds.

A profound change from egg to caterpillar, Crystal is unaware of the shift and her transformation to come: Crystal tells me that the counsellor asks her, one week, what happened to her since their last session.

Not realizing the implication of her statement, I look at her, confused. “Nothing,” I say. Then I think for a moment, and add matter of factly, “Oh. I got my hair cut.” The counsellor shakes her head and chuckles softly. “No, not like that. Something has changed in you. You look completely different...” “I deny that anything has happened and shrug off her comment.

‘Pupa’ is Latin for girl or doll and comes from root meaning ‘pupil’ or student. The adult Painted Lady is mostly black, brown, and orange with some white eyespots; the underside is gray with white and red markings.

The Painted Lady, a ‘student’ of life, may be the last to recognize that the seemingly imperceptible shifts to her, have catalyzed a dramatic, life-altering transformation.

In reality, the week before that session, I had done many things, all of which I considered to be insignificant, but were, in actuality, very important. A deep desire to be independent had been ignited, and had sent me scurrying, trying to put my life on the road I wanted it to be on. In seven short days I had bought myself a car as well as a used computer. Although I was struck by the excitement and freedom I felt in making those purchases, I did not consider the fact that I had been relying on my partner for all my transportation and for him to take me to his place of work to use a computer. So with these purchases, I had taken steps toward independence.

In that last week, Crystal also strengthened her support network by visiting with family and friends. She also took steps toward graduate school by finding a volunteer position at a hospital and enrolling in counselling courses.

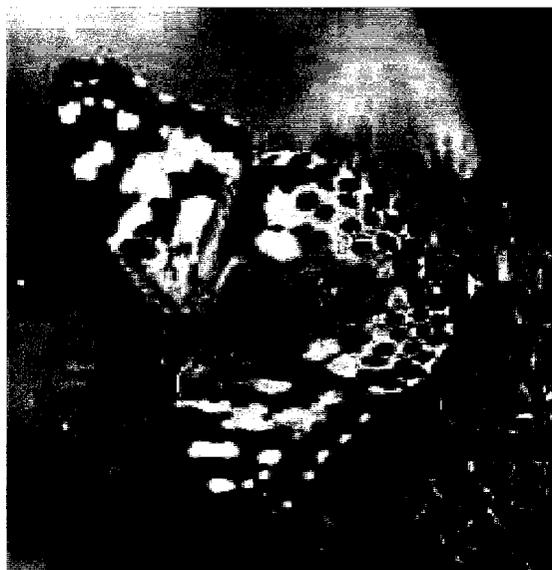
And yet Crystal truly felt that she had done nothing. A dramatic shift had indeed taken place. “Unknown to me at the time, many of the wounds that I had been carrying had started to heal through my work in counselling.” A few weeks later, after gaining what she describes as “my strength and my *self* back,” Crystal makes the final decision to end the abusive relationship.

When the life cycle is near completion, the adult emerges from the split chrysalis and pumps blood into its four wings, inflating them. The Painted Lady waits for her delicate wings to dry... She can fly a few hours after emerging.

It is some months later when Crystal realizes the tremendous gift from the counsellor. “If it wasn’t for her and the work we did together, I may not have made the decisions I made and I would not be where I am in my life. I know that I worked hard in our sessions, but she walked with me on that journey.” Crystal voices how she carries this with her in her work as a counsellor: “I hope that I convey the warmth, caring, and support that will help clients find their way out of the murky, muddled waters, and into a place of greater peace and happiness.”

The Painted Lady is a stunningly beautiful butterfly and may be the most widespread beloved butterfly in the world. It is also known as the thistle butterfly and the cosmopolitan (because it is so prevalent, occurring in North and South America, Europe, Asia and Africa).

Figure 2.5. Image of a Painted Lady Butterfly.



Personal Theory of Counselling

In telling this story, Crystal breathes life into her theory-preference that includes emphasis on the therapeutic relationship, client choice, empowerment, and the accessing of painful experiences in order to heal them. Evident in her telling of how she fights her own demons and through her reflective writing and collages, Crystal also values restorying experiences in her work with clients. She speaks to her draw to narrative

therapy where each client is viewed as constructing his or her reality in a very personal manner and is given the opportunity to tell his or her story.

It also comes as no surprise that Crystal sees her *self* as the basis through which she formulates her theory preferences:

I feel that I have adopted an eclectic theoretical orientation, which uses my personality, beliefs, and values as a basis for technique and theory selection... I think I have not a theory, but basic guidelines of how I want to be. I want to be supportive and empathic and warm and caring. I think those qualities come naturally to me. So if I am struggling with them [qualities] in session, then I walk away and need to think about why.

Crystal's reflective nature is further illuminated as she speaks of her quest for self-awareness in her work with clients.

Soul of Crystal

Toward the end of our conversation, Crystal privileges me by showing me a "crystal" sphere that safely fits in the palm of her hand. She tells me that she has always held the metaphorical belief that her soul is a glass ball: very precious and fragile. Crystal shares: "Whenever I become close to someone, I feel that I am giving them a part of this glass ball. I am hoping that they will honor and cherish it as it can be scratched, cracked, or shattered very easily." She continues to say that its fragility represents her soul. I feel deeply honored for Crystal to share this very private symbol with me; I feel that she has entrusted me with her soul in our conversation. I watch as she, very gently and carefully, returns the ball back to its protective stand. In my perspective, the crystal ball, in fact, represents how this Painted Lady butterfly caringly nurtures and cradles the growth of her own soul.

Sean: Being Open

It is a gray, October, Autumn afternoon. I feel incredibly honored for the opportunity to talk with Sean. Having recently attended the launch of his new book, where he shares his and others' experiences of coming out, I feel privileged for his time. In awe of his accomplishments, I begin with lighthearted conversation to ease my own nervousness. A profound inner beauty emanates from Sean. As he speaks, I feel my anxieties drift away. There is something very serene about his presence and energy. Sean speaks slowly, with deliberateness and intent. He measures his words carefully. This

quality adds to his engaging presence and reflects his genuine nature as a person, professional counsellor, and author. He is lively and charming-- with a wide, gregarious smile that reveals much joy and balance in his life.

We sip decaffeinated coffee. Sean begins by contextualizing his experiences.

I grew up in a family that was not, in many ways, open to people of other cultures or of different persuasions of any kind. It was a very red neck family of origin, and by that I mean narrow-minded... I had absorbed all of those conditioning messages... That 'this was not okay' and... 'This was not good' and... 'You should fear this' and 'you should fear that'.

These conditioning messages have a profound impact on Sean. Over several cups of coffee, he privileges me with his disclosure of three painful life stories that have brought him to a place of humility and strength. Sean eventually breaks down the conditioning messages from his youth and, with them, crumbles down the wall of conformity and homophobia within his own mind. These experiences transform him to new heights as a person and professional. With the wingspan of a full butterfly, he awakens, coming through the other side.

Love & Denial

In his first experience of tremendous struggle and pain, Sean reveals how at the age of twenty-two, he moves away from home and develops intense romantic feelings for a male roommate.

He saw me as his best friend, and of course I was. I would have done anything for him. His lifestyle was considerably different from mine, though. We often smoked marijuana together, and that aroused feelings in me that I couldn't, or wouldn't, understand. Meanwhile, he brought young women over almost every night, and I didn't understand why I was going through emotional hell, tortured by bedroom sounds I heard through paper-thin walls.

After a few months of living with unspoken anguish and heartache, the days become filled with blackness and bleakness for Sean. "It gets to a point where I become completely immobilized by it... by the depression. There is a period of a week where all I do is stay in bed, and get up to shower and eat, and then I go right back to bed again."

Utterly and completely broken-hearted, Sean is unable to deal with, or admit to, his feelings. The homophobic family and culture Sean is raised in disables and paralyzes him from acknowledging his inner feelings and of accepting, or even considering, that he

could be gay. “So the depression just is unrelenting and it gets worse and worse until I am hospitalized.” The one-week hospitalization is a humbling first-hand experience of being a patient but does nothing to minimize a depression that lasts nearly 8 months.

During that time, Sean begins seeing a Christian counsellor who also does not help to minimize his inner turmoil and and pain.

Somehow, I could never utter that I felt completely heartbroken, and he [counsellor] could never ask. I didn't have a vocabulary for that gnawing pain, so I kept on hurting for months, adhering to a code of silence that perhaps only the military would commend.

In retrospect, Sean speaks to how this experience teaches him about the power of denial and how easily a therapist can collude with that denial. “I just do not have the vehicle or the forum to talk openly because it just isn't allowed. He can't go there and I can't go there. So that means it all has to stay within.” Imprisoned within the confined walls of homophobia, neither Sean, nor the counsellor acknowledges Sean's true feelings of love for his roommate.

A pupa is often camouflaged to hide from predators of various kinds.

In this case, the Pupa also hides from himself. The caterpillar, within the Pupa, is in desperate need for release. But butterfly wings remain unformed within. He, indeed, is unaware of the changes to come and the changes necessary to break free from the encrusted cocoon.

Overcome with Exhaustion

Somehow, life goes on for Sean... eventually the depression subsides and the graying of his heart is lifted. He believes that he finds the source of the problem. “I understood what daily marijuana use could do to a young man's mind. It could twist your feelings around and make you believe things that are not true.” Instead of admitting to his true inner feelings, Sean accepts this as the explanation for his pain and suffering and vows never to smoke again; nevertheless, he does not become immune to suffering.

In 1984, he completes a Masters degree in Clinical Psychology—completely exhausted and burned out. Unable to recognize and adequately acknowledge his own need for a break, Sean accepts a prestigious position at a hospital in a different city. Right away, his misery intensifies; not only is he working in an unfulfilling job, he is homesick

for his friends. His only refuge, at the time, seems to be the emotional support and solace of a woman with whom he is engaged to be married.

For what seems like the longest 3 months of his life, Sean works an unrewarding job and falls into the “worst mental state you could imagine.” With less than a moment’s notice, Sean leaves the new job and city, but does not escape the anguish. For the following ten days he is unable to sleep.

Eventually, severe sleep deprivation, mental and physical exhaustion, and depression culminate to a peak. Sean begins to experience psychotic episodes.

I would hear and see things. I would hear something and it would be turned in my head so that laughing—I would experience it as crying. I also didn’t know when my stomach was full or empty. I was just a total wreck.

Sean thankfully gets help from a psychiatrist and is hospitalized. Once again, he experiences what it is like to be on the other side. “That was profound because it taught me so much about the vulnerability of our clients-- and the head space they’re in and the need for them to be listened to, and heard, and for their fears to be dealt with honestly and directly.”

Sean leaves the hospital after 6 weeks of recovery. Although no closer to recognizing the source of his pain, he feels reasonably better and ready to resume his life.

Coming Out: Free at Last

In the Fall of 1992, nearly eight years after his breakdown, Sean’s life appears picture perfect. He seems to have everything going for him. Employed at a college, he counsels, teaches, and mentors students. Sean also has a successful private practice and is married. He has a four-year old son and a daughter only a few months old. And yet he feels completely unfulfilled and devoid of pleasure—rather, few ‘acceptable’ pleasures: “My greatest pleasure was coming from getting to know two young men at the college where I worked. One I taught, the other I counselled... my professional boundaries were getting stretched.”

Sean experiences great anxiety and unhappiness about the deep feelings he develops for these men. He drinks frequently to drown out the noise of unrelenting emotions and confusion. “I felt like I was going crazy, and I didn’t know why. I yelled

too often at my kids, I drank excessively; I had my own separate bedroom at home... So all of this was coming up for me.”

Sean describes feeling ‘dead’ inside. Attempting to stimulate excitement in his life and to ensure himself that he is ‘alive’, Sean begins shoplifting.

I started stealing-- just stupid stealing. I wasn’t taking things I needed; I was just taking things for the excitement of it. My passion for life was... it was gone. And it was being channelled into doing something that was criminal... When I was stealing something and risking getting caught, it was like-- finally there’s some life in my blood!

Eventually, Sean is caught and charged for the stealing. The lawyer he seeks for counsel offers sage advice: “He (lawyer) says, “What is wrong? This doesn’t make any sense. You’re a successful psychologist and you’re stealing. Where is this coming from?” He says, “I think you might want to seek out your own therapy for this.” Sean takes this advice to heart and, after much consideration, goes to see a psychiatrist. This proves to be critical turning point for Sean. He begins seeing a psychiatrist who is not afraid to speak the ‘unspeakable’ and probe into ‘forbidden’ territory.

He (psychiatrist) was brilliant, insightful, and caring. He asked poignant questions that deeply frightened me, however. At the end of our first session, I felt like vomiting. I couldn’t imagine having just shared such deep thoughts, feelings, and fantasies... Near the end of our second session, he told me that he knew what my problem was. He said. “Your problem is you’re gay and you’ve never come to accept this in yourself.” And I was like “What!? I’m seeing you about my shoplifting problem and you’re telling me I’m gay?” And yet right away I knew that what he was saying was the truth. I just knew it... I knew it. It was all there.

Sean is in shock. He realizes that he does not know anything about gay people. “And I didn’t want to know because I was raised extremely homophobic... So that was the last thing on earth I wanted to be.” Sean feels incredible pain and contemplates suicide often during this difficult time. He credits the psychiatrist for saving his life. “Ending it all” becomes less of a consideration after the psychiatrist reveals to Sean that he knows what he is going through because he is also gay.

Then the bond between him and I was so strong. I began to idolize him. He was my role model at that point. He helped me with the coming out [process] and worked with me through the months that followed. Then I was able to completely let go of the homophobia that I carried around and it further helped me develop a philosophy of equality.

Confronting and accepting his innermost feelings, Sean is finally able to fully engage with life. Vividly, he shares his experience of finding his voice.

Until there is a voice, there are no words to make sense of experience. My therapist helped me find a voice. At first it sounded like a scream, but even that was better than the sound of eternal silence... my emotions were no longer serving hard time. My escape had given me a passion and a zest for life, which I had never experienced earlier....

Indeed, Sean's escape enables him to live life authentically and with integrity. He confesses to having been a "very good liar" up to that point in his life. "I lied about so many things. My own experience... I mean like the incredible infatuation I would have for men and love at times. Denying all of that meant I had to lie to myself and others in the worst ways." The coming out process is a break through of the biggest lie of his life. "Once I came out I realized that I can't lie again."

Figure 2.6. Image of a White Admiral Butterfly.



The White Admiral, a most beloved and admired butterfly, breaks free from the encrusted pupa. He is large, predominantly black with a broad white band through the middle of both wings—his badge of honor. Well-known for his strength in flight, the White Admiral soars along forest edges. His wings proudly salute a profound inner courage.

The Personal is the Professional

The experiences of intense human suffering and finding a voice greatly humble Sean as a person and as a professional. Defining himself as a Humanist counsellor, Sean views these experiences as building blocks to becoming a stronger person and profound lessons to him as a professional.

I see very much that the way I can benefit others is mostly the result of how I've grown as a person. My life experiences have the most profound impact on my practice, more so than any training that I've ever taken.

Sean regards the pain, and working through the pain, as rich blessings-- not as shameful experiences. In fact, he is proud to have a deeper understanding for the human condition and brings this insight into his work with clients—helping them to find the way. He also speaks to saluting clients' suffering and not being afraid of exploring painful territory. Because of his experience of facing his own fears, Sean believes in challenging clients through Socratic dialogue to help clients face theirs.

Living with Integrity

Sean's courage to work through the 'biggest lie' in his life in coming out to himself and others enables him to live his life with integrity.

I have often wondered if there is anything more important than this (integrity). Being true to oneself is the lesson I most want to teach my children. I think I finally know how.

Most important in his personal life, the value of integrity is also most valued to him as a professional. Sean conveys that he tries to be "fully and truly myself, so if I'm doing my job (counselling) right, it doesn't feel like a job. I'm just relating to my client as I am as a person... That's number one in importance."

People as Equals

Sean's experience of internalized homophobia and subsequent pain from self-denial, teaches him the value of respecting and embracing diversity and considering all people as equals. This impacts his view of the hierarchy within counselling relationships:

I don't want to be coming across as the expert although if I do know what I'm talking about, then, I will come across as the expert, simply because I've learned more than you have as my client about a particular subject.

Sean's philosophy of equality also comes through in his regard for how much clients have to teach him, "After a session is over, I reflect on what I've learned from that person and how I can improve my practice based on how that person's experience has helped me grow in some way."

Story: Reaching Out

In Sean's sharing and writing of his story, he helps crumble down the edifice of heterosexism in our society. With his courage and profound inner strength, he paves the way for other marginalized persons. I believe his story has the capacity to reach others and perhaps save them from the inner turmoil and anguish that he experienced. The White Admiral is truly a courageous butterfly. Watching this 'soul' in flight is most enriching to me as a person as well as a professional. I am in even greater awe and even more profoundly struck by the inner beauty and wisdom of this individual.

Researcher: Impact of Stories

The researcher eyespots on the Buckeye butterfly peer outward and turn inward again as co-researchers' stories vividly confirm that the professional counsellor's wingspan is greatly shaped by self-awareness and personal development. Indeed, my professional wingspan is marked by personal growth. Turning inward, I become acutely aware of how profoundly my hope has been influenced by co-researchers' stories. First, Dawn's story of family connections engenders my hope in the limitless possibilities and rewards that come from loving children and nurturing families. I am struck by the close relationship that Dawn has with her mother; I truly hope that I am fostering such a relationship with my daughter. Second, East's incredible life metamorphosis through the loss of her husband to suicide and her development into an 'Old Soul' (soulful, wise, and intuitive woman) nourishes my hope about the resiliency of the human spirit to endure through intense human suffering. Third, Crystal's acknowledgment of her strength in leaving an abusive relationship and taking control over her own life are admirable. Her story quenches my hope for how much we can help ourselves through reflection. I am also reminded of the tremendous power in the counselling relationship. Finally, Sean's story instills my hope for he was able to break free from the homophobic prison and overcome cultural and family constraints. In our culture, a deep-rooted belief prevails that 'the apple does not fall far from the tree'. Sean's story confirms my hope and my own

experience that we do not have to live out our parents' script or adopt their values if we intentionally choose not to do so.

My Story: Mothering

I share my own journey of metamorphosis through poetry, past journal entries, and reflections. It is a transformative story to motherhood-- the process beginning early in my toddler years.

The Island Blue butterfly usually lays a single egg. It is typical that this butterfly does not tend to the young after the egg is laid.

Shredded Worth

*My tiny frame shakes hysterically,
I am beyond fear.
At the age of 3, I know terror
as it rips through my small frame.*

*Screaming and shrieking at the top of my lungs...
Heaving and sobbing so greatly that the air
fails the expression of my helplessness.
Huge silences fill the gap between bellowed fear.*

*The basement cellar is my
Forever imprinted burn of abandonment.
The floor is cold and hard...
darkness makes my dismal aloneness all the more palpable.*

*There are spiders here- no time for fear.
I must get out before the ghosted blackness snuffs out my existence.
Heart pounding with a life of its own,
I hold my breath, close my eyes,
and wail for reprieve as I live out my necessary punishment.*

Punishment for what?

*Perhaps I spilled my drink;
didn't finish dinner;
touched something not mine;
lied.*

*The crime is not what sears my anguish.
The punishment creases my dignity...
folds it tidily and
tears it to shreds.*

(Wong-Wylie, November 1998, personal reflection)

Each egg is surrounded by a hard outer shell, known as chorion, to protect the developing larva. The shell is lined with a fine protective layer of wax, which helps the egg to survive in harsh elements.

Although my parents loved and love me deeply, some of their methods of teaching merely served to fortify the development of strong chorion. The authoritarian and punitive style of parenting and the cultural chasm between immigrant parents and a rebellious, first generation Canadian-born child were significant barriers to a close mother-daughter relationship. It was not until adulthood, when I became pregnant with my first child, that the next phase of metamorphosis was catalyzed.

July 4, 1999

Hello Little One,

You are 28 weeks old in my tummy. You are so active today—bulging out in the front and my sides!

I seem to be going through some emotions these last few weeks. I am feeling a lot of fears about being a good mother to you, what our life will be like with you, and if we'll be able to manage in providing you a nurturing environment. Mostly they are my own insecurities surfacing.

July 16, 1999

Dear Iris,

According to the ultrasound technician you are a girl. This might sound awful but it frightens me a little that you could be a girl. I've missed having a close relationship with my mother and I'm afraid that I may not know how to foster a strong and caring mother-daughter relationship with you. Silly... because I know deep down, who I am is very unlike my mother. Some part of me believes that if you were a boy—I would have a better chance of having a different relationship with you.

August 30, 1999

Dear Iris,

I just turned over in bed—slowly and painfully so that I can write to you. Boy, are you (am I) big at 37 weeks!! Doug thinks you will be 8 or 9 pounds. We'll see. My candidacy is in one week. I can't wait to get past this hurdle so that I can focus all my energy on you.

I took part in a woman's Ph.D. dissertation research on the culture of mothering. I talked about not feeling like a mother yet. I described the non-supportive relationship I have with my mother and the trepidation it has fostered in my image of our relationship. I talked about how scary it is to me that you might be a girl with an expected due date right on my birthday. It's hard not to worry about repeating patterns when you could be born the day my mother gave birth to me. However, I also talked about the potential for healing— to know for myself that I can love you and be a good mother.

The chorion layer is broken down before the egg becomes a caterpillar and before the larva stage ensues. It is during the larva stage that caterpillars do most of their growing. These “growth machines” take few breaks even for resting. When the caterpillar becomes too large for its skin, it molts, or sheds its skin. At first, the new skin is very soft, and provides little support or protection. This skin soon hardens and molds itself to the caterpillar.

Just before they pupate, island blue larvae spin a silk mat from which they hang upside down. While the process of complete metamorphosis looks like four very distinct stages, continuous changes actually occur within the larva.

My beautiful daughter was born on the eighth of September. The final stage in this life cycle metamorphosis was stunning-- my initiation into motherhood truly transformative.

October 18, 1999

Dear Iris,

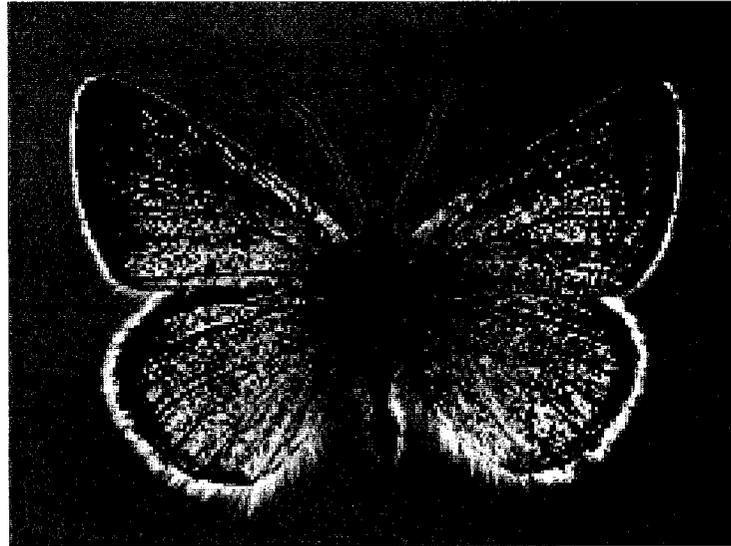
An unbelievable 6 weeks have gone by. You are lying next to me and for the first time since your arrival I have a few moments to write down some thoughts. I could never have imagined how instantly I fell in love with you and how strongly and powerfully I feel that love. Everyday I tell you... I can't tell you enough. All my anxieties and insecurities I had about being a mother were washed away when you crooked your head up to gaze into my eyes seconds after you were born. Oh Iris, you are truly a blessing. Your birth was incredible— brought out the best in me while challenging me to the fullest. I know you will continue to do this the rest of our lives. Thank you for coming into my life and for showing me my strength and ability to profoundly love a daughter.

I have many hopes that I can be a good mother to you. I hope that someday when you read this journal—many, many years from now—that you will be able to say that you have a good relationship with me and know how much you are loved and cared for. I hope you will be able to say that I've been supportive of you and always let you know how important you are to me.

I feel that my life would not be as rich and meaningful if I cannot engender a feeling of worth and love in my children. This is why it saddens me

to not have a close relationship with my own mother, but it is, at the same time, a huge contributor to why I know and feel it is so valuable and important. But I have been forging new ground and new ways of being a mom that feel right for me. You're 9.6 pounds today—every ounce a joy!

Figure 2.7. Image of an Island Blue Butterfly.



The island blue has a wingspan of 21 to 29 millimeters. The female's upperside is dark brown with a bluish sheen, and there is a row of faint orange-capped black eyespots on the hindwing margin (similar to that found on Buckeye wings). The island blue is a mysterious butterfly; little is known about the details of her transformation—yet it is stark. What is known is that the island blue is found only one place in the world. She has a distinct place she inhabits-- the east side of Vancouver Island.

Undoubtedly, having a place to call home with my loving partner is essential in supporting my transformation to motherhood. My daughter was born during the process of completing this research; in the soulful and enriching experience of becoming a mother, I gained tremendous self-acceptance. In my metamorphosis to motherhood, I too recognized as did Sinclair (2001), "Our children offer us the sacred opportunity to overcome our deepest fears, challenging us with our life issues, our fallibility, and our humanness. Also in the process, we have the greatest opportunity to witness a new beauty in life and experience a depth of gratitude and joy that stops and stills us" (p. 139).

October 30, 2001

Dear Iris,

You sleep so restfully and peacefully beside me in this tiny bedroom in Vancouver. Your gentle eyelids are closed... precious tiny mouth so relaxed. You curl into your pillow and make relaxed humming sounds. I lie face to face and breathe you in--- my attempt to transcend time: First to drink up what I missed of your exploratory day full of wonder and discovery—still that incredible sense of loss I feel in not being with you during the day. Second, to preserve the moment in time when I lay transfixed by the suppleness of your skin and your existence. I cherish the ever-changing moment that slips away from my grasp the moment I savor it. Your ‘crazy’ gentle curls tumble and fly like wings that frame your face. Thin, wispy tendrils of hair... definitely your dad’s hair. I smile when I can identify what you get from him and what you get from me.

My favorite time of day with you is before bedtime. All three of us lay in bed and I feel how much you can sense that you are loved and that we are a family. We interact without distractions and talk, and tickle, and laugh, and tell and read stories. You lavish us with kisses and hugs. It’s such precious time. And I know that you are a confident child.

I look at you now and listen to the rain rattle and beat against the pavement outside. You’ve grown so much in a year...

Last look, your ears are just like Doug’s. He’s just crawled into bed on the other side of you. Sweet slumber and rest my love.

October 11, 2002

Dear Iris and 9 week-old baby in my tummy,

It’s past midnight on Friday and I just got into bed. Am thinking about how lucky I am to have you all in my life. Doug and I decided last night that 3 is the best age! Iris, you are so capable, independent, and articulate. You’re throwing the frisbee well and hitting the ball with the bat. You love biking and want to go skiing. I love your sense of adventure and risk-taking. I feel proud that I am able to encourage you to explore your world and to stay a far enough distance, to let you learn from your own mistakes, but close enough to catch you if you need me. Though never ‘perfect’, I know that I am a nurturing and loving mother to you.

... and the metamorphosis journey of motherhood is never fully complete.

Personal is the Professional

My approach to counselling has certainly been influenced by the experience of motherhood. My focus on ‘relationship’ in counselling is highlighted as it is through

knowing the importance of connecting with others and the mother-daughter relationship I have with Iris, that I am attuned to the counselling relationship. As well, I am influenced by narrative therapy as I am keenly aware of the significance and power of restorying experience. I know personally, through restorying my mother-daughter story, that I am capable of mothering in a way that feels right for me. In a similar fashion, a “Just Therapy” approach, which is one that takes into account the gender, cultural, and social and economic context of persons seeking help, is part of my counselling orientation. Justice highlights “equality in relationships between people: it involves naming the structures, and the actions that oppress and destroy equality in relationships... In essence, Just Therapy finds its expression in the movement in meaning from problem-centered patterns, to new possibilities of resolution and hope” (Waldegrave, 1990, p. 7). This approach is representative of my feminism and attentiveness to cultural, gender, and socio-economic factors that thwart individual growth, as I am keenly aware of these factors that influence and shape my own circumstances. Likewise, I weave conversations of hope and meaning into the counselling process. A humanistic-existential flavor exists to my approach because of my deep connection to my own hope, which has been profoundly strengthened through mothering.

Discussion

The narrated stories of developing counsellors were found to intrinsically influence the shape and color of professional wings. Indeed, Connelly and Clandinin (1999) underscored this notion in their edited book Shaping a professional identity: Stories of educational practices, which focused on the experiences, or ‘personal practical knowledge’ of teachers and the influence of these experiences on teacher identity and practices. Likewise, Larsen (1999a) noted in her biographical research with long-time counsellor educators that one’s orientation to counselling practice was recognizably foreshadowed by personal life experiences. These authors highlighted a constructivist perspective that our personality, experiences, and personal constructs fashion the craft of our practice.

Theorists as Storytellers

Drapela (1990) maintained that counselling theories “pulsate with life” (p. 22) as they embody the lived experiences and personalities of their originators. A view of theory

as an integration of the theorists' personhood was asserted by Drapela as well as Kottler (1995) and Larsen (1999b). Larsen suggested that all theories are "theory-stories." Likewise, Drapela concurred that every theory is a self-theory storied through time. In this perspective, theories are like narratives in that they represent perceptions of experience in a given time of the storyteller or theorist.

Theories: Telling of Personality. Hague (1989) discussed theories as reflective of theorists' personality and values. Kottler and Brown (1992) recognized that Albert Ellis, Eric Berne, and Fritz Perls branched off from their mentors to create new approaches that reflected their unique values and personalities. Albert Ellis, who was considered a logical and concise debater of his time, developed rational-emotive behaviour therapy, which is a highly cognitive and action-oriented model (Corey, 1996). Likewise, Carl Rogers, the embodiment of genuineness, warmth, and congruency, devised a person-centred therapy, which was truly an extension of his personality (Drapela, 1990; Hague, 1989). Kramer (2000) put forward that each theory is an accurate expression of each theorist's personality: "The best therapists take command using their unique person, their style, their strengths" (pp. 9). Rollo May went as far to say, "If you do not express your own original ideas, if you do not listen to your own being, you will have betrayed yourself" (1995, p. 29).

The counselling processes and approaches described by co-researchers in this study were reflective of their personalities and values. Dawn is an outgoing and confident woman who values family, supportive relationships, and 'process' rather than outcome; East is a thoughtful, spiritual woman who enjoys meditation and Eastern philosophies; Crystal is a quiet, reflective, and passionate woman who values support and connection; and Sean is a genuine, humble and lively character who values integrity and honesty. As for myself, I am a reflective woman and mother who is relationship oriented. I value the restorying of experience as well as equality and am acutely aware of my own hope. There is little doubt that we butterflies would be described in these terms within our professional lives. Our personalities and values invariably shape our counselling approaches. That is, these co-researchers, similar to myself, prefer less hierarchical orientations than ones informed by the medical model. We were drawn to Humanistic, Transpersonal, Narrative, Person-Centred, Existential, and Process-Oriented therapies.

Certainly, one's orientation to counselling appeared to be influenced by personality and values; however, even more evident in this research—as was the primary focus—was that preferred theories and approaches were influenced by lived experiences.

Theories: Telling of Experience. Further exemplifying theories as stories or "portrayals," Drapela (1990) stated that "all psychological schools are extensions, or subjective self-interpretations, of significant life experiences of their originators" (p. 24). Drapela supported his beliefs through a discussion of Frankl's existential therapy, which was the product of Frankl's experiences in the brutal concentration camps of Auschwitz and Dachau (Corey, 1996). Frankl wrote and theorized about the search for personal meaning as the essence of being human (e.g. Frankl, 1963, 1965, 1978). This notion of counselling theories as portrayals of theorists' lives can also be supported by examining Freud and Psychoanalysis; Adler and Individual Psychology; Skinner and Operant Conditioning (Kottler & Brown, 1992); as well as further exploring the lives of the co-researchers involved in this study.

The theorists in this study, Dawn, East, Crystal, Sean, and myself bring our stories and the impact of those stories into our counselling philosophy. Dawn focuses on process and is deliberate in recognizing the power of the therapeutic relationship, which is reminiscent of her stories of family. Likewise, East strives to connect with clients at an emotional level. She also recognizes the 'layers underneath' what clients expose in therapy. These tenets echo of her experiences of transformation and metamorphosis. In a similar fashion, Crystal's emphasis on the therapeutic relationship, client choice, empowerment, and the accessing of painful experiences for healing emerged out of her own experiences of facing and overcoming her own demons. Her pull towards Narrative Therapy emerges from her own experiences in the power of restorying her own experiences. Sean's experience of intense pain and suffering in his process of coming to terms with his sexuality, facilitates great lessons, which he brings to his counselling work. In his own experience, Sean was unable to live life authentically until he, similar to Crystal, truly faced his fears. He spoke of exploring painful territory and challenging and supporting clients to enter into their pain. Having integrity, which meant being honest with himself and others, and embracing diversity, which meant treating all people as equals, became central to Sean in his life and in his work following his own process of

coming out. Lastly, my journey in motherhood-- which involved doubting and fearing my ability to foster a close mother-daughter relationship, and rejoicing and healing after the birth of my beautiful daughter-- was transforming. The emphasis I place on connections and relationships, equality, justice, and hope in my counselling approach are greatly shaped by my experience of metamorphosis in motherhood. The portrayals of co-researchers' lives and the influence life experiences had on counselling approaches confirms my own experience in recognizing how the stories I live by shape my professional self.

Theory as Self-Portraits

The Portrait Metaphor. Just as every theory is a story (Larsen, 1999b) every theory is a portrait of the theorist as was no less so captured in this study. Deriving a personal theory is a striving to sketch the self just as a "painting is a striving to express life" (Carr, 1966, p. 117). In haste, the novice artist may throw colors and patterns together on the canvas or attempt to duplicate the work of an esteemed painter. In parallel, a beginning counselling student may attempt to emulate their supervisor (Kottler & Brown, 1992). The struggle is, in part, trusting the creative process. With time and understanding, the artist—like Dawn, East, Crystal, Sean, and myself—begins to take ownership of each brush stroke, each deliberate tint and shade of her or his work. We begin to compose a self-portrait, recognizing the centrality of personhood in our work. The counsellor recognizes, just as the painter does, that one must be willing to "sit still" as well as "stand back" in contemplation and reflection of the work in progress.

A Masterpiece is rarely composed in a day. As Bateson wrote, "These works of art, still incomplete, are parables in progress, the living metaphor with which we describe the world" (Bateson, 1990, p. 18). With each viewing of the portrait, the artist sees through different eyes. New experiences have altered his perceptions. Depending on the audience, she may choose to focus on a certain dimension of the composition-- just as a counsellor may focus on various aspects of her theory-portrait when working with different clients. However, that piece is integrally connected to the whole.

All Theory-Portraits are Originals. Brammer, Shostrom, and Abrego (1989) asserted that all counselling theorists basically formulate ideas based on their unique life experiences and times. This underscores the significance of composing one's unique

theory. Similarly, a postmodern perspective recognizes the implausibility of practicing theory in a purist sense. As Drapela (1990) stated, "It is impossible for any of us to be Rogerian, Adlerian, or Ericksonian purists since we did not live the life of these theorists" (p. 24). Instead, becoming a counsellor involves integrating existing theories and searching for a personal theory derived from our own identity (Brammer et al. 1989; Drapela, 1990; Hague, 1989) and experiences.

Struggling Artists: Painting Original Theory-Portraits. Artists must struggle with the painstaking, yet worthwhile task of self-reflection and storying in their development of a personal theory of counselling (Combs, 1989). The quality of original theory-portraits depends upon the introspection, self-awareness (Kottler & Brown, 1992), knowledge, and skills of the artist. The co-researchers in this study clearly, whether with deliberateness or not, were painting original theory-portraits. The portrait painted on the canvas became home to these butterflies in flight.

In conclusion, Kramer well captured that who we are is the most powerful of what we have to offer in counselling. "You will do your best work when your method is consonant with your personality... experiment and find ways that resonate positively. Invent a fit that feels right, at home, natural..." (2000, p. 216). The present investigation involved a narrative and narrating inquiry of stories of developing counsellors and how these stories shape professional counselling wings. The intent was not to analyze stories or emerge with themes of developing counsellors' lives but simply to engage co-researchers in a reflective sharing of stories. These stories were juxtaposed with articulated theories of counselling with an open curiosity to personal stories reflecting professional counselling orientations. In so doing, unfolding personal narratives displayed professional wings. A metaphor was presented where co-researchers' 'souls' were captured as butterflies.

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Linking Curiosities

Spin tight-- be guarded, weave a rigid web of protection
 Hold tight within.
 Flutter for release

Discard the protective pupa
 Shed cocoon webs...

Evolve personal stories
 Unfold the sticky wings
 Feel from within the wings that stabilize growth and expansion
 Spread wings of self-knowledge
 Be empowered: risk and grow
 Extend professional counsellor wings.

(Wong-Wylie, December, 1999, Research Journal entry)

*Given that self-knowledge and storying appear to centrally inform developing
 counsellors' personal theory and approaches to counselling,
 in what ways does counsellor education encourage and
 in what ways does counsellor education discourage student self-knowledge and the
 coming to know the stories that students live by?*

CHAPTER 3

STUDENT INCIDENTS OF REFLECTIVE PRACTICE IN COUNSELLOR EDUCATION: “Self-Protective” or “Self-Reflective”?

Socrates espoused the inherent worth in living an examined life. Such a philosophy fits with a decree commonly conveyed by various practitioners in the Counselling profession: *Counsellor, know thyself*. The use of self and staying in touch with one's human experiences have been asserted for both professional enlightenment and personal development in counselling practice; however, in the context of counsellor education, the experiences, processes, prevalences, and practices of reflective practice in curriculum are data that remain obscure and unknown.

Brookfield (1994) and Gerson (1996) promoted the primary aim of counselling programs to be focused on developing self-awareness through reflective practice; however, it has been found that counselling courses minimally focus on student processes (Schwebel & Coster, 1998). Further perpetuating this gap, the reflective practice literature in counselling predominantly focuses on considering one's therapy style and interventions with less of a focus on the need for counsellors to be reflective about their personal lives as a solid foundation in developing personal and professional selves (White & Hales, 1997). Moreover, studies of reflective counsellor development have been absent from the literature. Consequently, there is a paucity of in-depth and contemplative understandings of the practice of reflection in counsellor education and development.

The purpose of this qualitative research paper was to peer into the practice of reflection in counsellor education within the context of one department. The experiences of five doctoral graduates, who received their training from a Counselling department in a Canadian University, were explored to shed light onto counsellor education and development. Specifically, from co-researchers' perspectives, hindrances (discouraged) and facilitations (encouraged) of reflective practice on the counselling education landscape were investigated. This research explored ways in which formal counselling pedagogy encourages or discourages student self-knowledge.

Before launching into the study, I begin by outlining what is meant by 'reflective practice.' This is followed with a review of literature on reflective practice in counsellor education.

What is Reflective Practice?

The concept of reflective practice consists of multiple meanings depending on one's perspective and point of reference (Greenwood, 1991). The primary association of reflective practice is with Schon's highly esteemed and seminal writings (Schon, 1983, 1987). Contributing to the groundwork erected in Deweyian philosophy, Schon stimulated professionals in diverse fields to think along similar lines and to focus attention on developing the craft and artistry of their practice. He described the reflective practitioner as one who "reflects on the phenomena before him and on the prior understandings which have been implicit in his behaviour" (1983, p. 69). A reflective practitioner therefore enters a dialectic process of thought and action and actively shapes her or his own professional growth (Osterman, 1990).

Schon (1991) proposed that practitioners and educators take a 'reflective turn' and begin a process of observing, describing, and illuminating their practice actions, particularly those that are spontaneous. He outlined two different modes of reflection: reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action which are involved in the reflective turn.

Reflection-in-Action. Schon asserted that the knowing within our actions is tacit, which means it is intuitive and cannot be completely articulated. Built on the premise that we cannot fully describe what it is that we know, reflection-in-action involves thinking about what one is doing while doing it (Schon, 1983); thereby critically evaluating, shifting, reframing, and following our tacit knowing as we react in problem situations (Schon, 1987). Thus, reflection-in-action provides on-the-spot experimentation. Rolfe (1998) commented that by reflecting on a present experience, the reflection on that experience changes the nature of the experience itself. As such, reflection-in-action is not only reflective but also reflexive since it instantaneously changes the nature of practice (Taylor, 1998). Freire (1970) referred to this as 'praxis,' which is ongoing action and reflection. He proposed praxis as "reflection and action upon the world in order to reform it" (p. 32).

Reflection-on-Action. Founded on the same premise as reflection-in-action (as it happens), reflection-on-action is carried out after and usually away from the practice situation (Schon, 1983). Reflection-on-action can be summarized as "the retrospective contemplation of practice undertaken in order to uncover the knowledge used in a particular situation... the reflective practitioner may speculate how the situation might have been handled differently and what other knowledge would have been helpful" (Fitzgerald, 1994). Reflection-on-action is thus reflection intended for improving future practice while reflection-in-action emphasizes improvement in current and future practices.

Reflection-on-Self-in/on-Action. A third practice of reflection, which I refer to as '*reflection-on-self-in/on-action*,' is in close relation with Schon's notions of reflection-in and -on action. This practice of reflection is based on his premise that knowing is ordinarily tacit; however, rather than focusing reflection only on situations in practice, it emphasizes salient personal experiences that influence and shape the person of the professional.

The concept of this practice is further anchored in Clandinin and Connelly's (1991) narrative perspective that a practitioner's personal awareness promotes personal and professional growth. They coined the term 'personal practical knowledge' to represent this knowledge, which was described as "in the teacher's (practitioner's) past experience, in the teacher's (practitioner's) present mind and body, and in the future plans and actions... (and) is found in the teacher's (practitioner's) practice" (Connelly & Clandinin, 1988, p. 25). These authors posited that stories are intricately a part of this knowledge. As we begin to compose and share stories of experiences we give voice to the experiences that form the "texts of our lives" (Britzman, 1991, p. 2). Moreover, Coles (1989) underscored the value of personal stories. As a psychiatrist under the wing of Dr. Ludwig, he maintained that his own life stories marked his ability to be present with patients.

I refer to *reflection-on-self-in/on-action* and reflection-in/on-action with the overarching terms 'reflective practice' or 'self-reflection' in this research. The focus of my research was on these various types of reflection for self-awareness and professional growth.

Counselling Curriculum

There have been few studies that have inquired into the reflective focus in counselling curriculum. Schwebel and Coster (1998) were among the few who examined such practices. They conducted a questionnaire study to investigate how 107 psychology department heads viewed student well-functioning. Although student self-awareness was rated as most important, it was determined that current psychology courses and curriculum minimally focused on this intent. According to department heads, obstacles to offering a program with student self-awareness in mind were as follows (in order of rating): “no time or space in the curriculum,” “budgetary constraints,” “faculty resistance,” “student resistance,” and “faculty not trained.” Schwebel and Coster hypothesized that over and above the practical and logistical barriers to a reflective program, was the formalistic epistemology of practice undergirding curriculum and pedagogy that undermined the value of reflective practice.

Brookfield (1994) and Gerson (1996) advocated for a central role of reflective practice in counsellor education. Several handbooks are available to guide students in this process. For example, Corey and Corey's (1989) and Kottler's (1996) manuals, designed to augment counselling textbooks, encouraged students' dynamic integration of personal insights with professional development. Nevertheless, despite these helpful manuals, self-awareness would seemingly constitute more than relating psychological concepts and theories in a personal way. It is fair to assert that reflective practice also involves insight into the person of the counsellor and his or her willingness to embark on a reflective journey. In any case, whether or not counselling programs have integrated these manuals into curriculum has not been addressed nor shown in the research and professional literature.

The ‘Inner’ versus the ‘Outer’ World of Therapy

Counselling programs appear to be primarily focused on what Kramer (2000) referred to as the external world of therapy.

The outer world of therapy is our everyday domain. Taught and practiced everywhere, it fills our professional journals, makes up the majority of training programs, and dominates our conferences. It is the world of many theories, many methods, many techniques for doing therapy. It has to do with diagnosis, treatment outcome, grants, reimbursement, organization,

standards, credentials, and so on. This is a familiar bread-and-butter world. For some therapists it is the only(ital) world” (pp. xiii).

In contrast, Kramer juxtaposed this domain with the inner world of therapy which involves the subjective realm of “thoughts, feelings, attitudes, behavior, emotions, therapeutic experiences, memories, life history, level of evolution toward maturity, inner cast of characters, style, opinions, personal story, family life, spiritual inclinations, philosophical beliefs” (p. xiii). Jevne (2002) concurred that the counselling profession, while for decades has espoused the significance of the person of the counsellor, has paradoxically avoided direct reference (with rare exceptions) to personal development in textbooks, counsellor development models, training programs and evaluative processes.

Reflective Practice: Integral to Counsellor Development

Recent research lends compelling support that a reflective practice orientation is vital to professional counsellor development. In her biographical accounts of six long-time (25 years or more) male Canadian counsellor educators, Larsen (1999) found that an openness and intentionality into self-discovery through reflection was consistent among participants. In one biography, Larsen conveyed that “Frank’s life journey affirmed the importance of self-reflection as an important developmental experience. He held firmly to the conviction that understanding one’s personal development was critical to counsellor and teacher preparation...” (p. 100). In another biographical account, one interviewee eloquently stated “In counselling it is important for them (students) to understand themselves and find ways of utilizing who they are in their work with people” (p. 132).

Additionally, McMullen’s research on the storied reflections of four experienced counsellors (minimum of 10 years experience and considered exemplars in the field) identified these individuals as highly self-reflective (2001). McMullen emphasized:

It is evident from the recollections of their pasts, that they know where they come from, and know a great deal about who they are... Their knowledge is integrated into the art of counselling. With their effective self-reflection, they have developed into practitioners of therapy with a holistic spirit (p. 63).

From sharing stories of experienced counselling practitioners, McMullen suggested that self-reflection has a sustaining quality for individuals in the profession. In

contradiction, within counselling curriculum mandate, there appears a plethora for the development of skills and theoretical competencies but little when it comes to personal or self dimensions. There is a dearth of help for evolving counselling students' inner world (Kramer, 2000).

The present research investigated doctoral counselling students' experiences of exploring the inner world of therapy. In other words, the focus was students' perceptions of experiences of reflective practice in the context of education. Such an inquiry could help facilitate understanding into barriers and facilitators of reflective practice in counsellor education.

Sampling

Purposive sampling (Patton, 1990) was utilized in this research and is based on the assumption that one wants to discover, understand, and gain the richest insight. To further this aim, co-researchers who met the following criteria were included. Co-researchers had completed at least one year of doctoral study; had experiences of reflective practice in their counsellor training; were willing to share incidents of facilitations and hindrances of these experiences; and were comfortable with audio-tape recording of research conversations and transcription for use in research and dissemination. Beyond these criteria, co-researchers were selected on the basis of their ease of accessibility and willingness to participate.

It is likely that individuals who value reflection were attracted to this study and thus created a homogeneous sample. Those who did not value self-reflection, in all likelihood, did not volunteer participation simply because the topic may not have interested them. Having a homogeneous sample of reflective persons enriched the research in that these co-researchers were highly attuned to the topic under investigation.

Co-Researchers

Five co-researchers from a CPA accredited Counselling Psychology department (one male: Sean; and four females: Dawn, Holly, East, and Crystal) were involved in this study. Co-researchers signed a written informed consent outlining their rights and that information shared could be used for research, educational purposes, and dissemination at conferences and/or through published works. Critical incidents collected through a preliminary interview with the primary researcher were included as data in this study.

Sean had graduated from the program two years prior to commencement of this study. Of the four female doctoral students, Crystal had completed the program prior to completion of the present study. Co-researchers ranged in age from 27-50 years. All experiences shared by co-researchers were of times prior to the counselling department gaining CPA accreditation status.

Method

Critical Incident Technique

Critical Incident Technique (CIT) developed by Flanagan (1954), is a well-established method for documenting and understanding human experience (Burns, 1956; Flanagan, 1954; Mayhew, 1956; Ronan & Latham, 1974; Sawatzky, Jevne, & Clark, 1994; Wong-Wylie & Jevne, 1997). CIT is an innovative, exploratory, and versatile qualitative method of research that generates comprehensive and detailed descriptions from first-person accounts and illuminates a specific content domain. Flanagan defined a critical incident (CI) as any human activity that is significant to those involved. It is a form of interview research in which participants are invited to share descriptive accounts, from their subjective experiences, of situations that facilitated or hindered a particular aim.

In this study, CIT was employed to inquire into salient experiences of reflective practice. This technique assisted in exploring students' perceptions of incidents in the educational setting that influenced their practice of reflection (reflection-in/on-action; *reflection on self-in/on-action*). The focus was on counselling students' experiences and their perceptions of the critical factors in their education that facilitated or hindered reflective practice.

Critical incidents in this study were generated from individual research conversations with co-researchers. *Critical requirements* are the resulting set of descriptive conditions or features that constitute necessary elements for facilitating or hindering a particular aim (Flanagan, 1954). In this study, the focus was on reflective practice and the critical conditions in counsellor education experience that encouraged or discouraged this practice.

Data Collection

Following ethics approval, the five co-researchers met for an individual research conversation with the primary researcher. Collecting CI accounts included inviting the co-researcher to clearly and descriptively recount salient experiences of times in their counsellor education (in their current department) when reflection was either significantly facilitated or significantly hindered.

Co-researchers were informed prior to meeting of the focus of the research conversation. All five co-researchers arrived at the meeting with at least four incidents in mind. Co-researchers were able to provide rich, descriptive verbal accounts of each incident and responded to questions pertaining to the incidents and about reflective practice in general. Due to issues of confidentiality, relevant details of some of the accounts provided by co-researchers could not be revealed in this paper; however, this did not affect the nature nor integrity of the resultant critical conditions.

Data Analysis

In this study, several different sources of information were used to establish the critical requirements of what fostered and what inhibited reflective practice in counsellor education in this department. These sources of information included transcripts of CI accounts, research conversation transcripts, researcher's memos, and an unordered representational meta-matrix (Merriam, 1988), which is a large conceptualization of each CI in a time-sequenced representation.

These CI data sources were divided into categories of 'fostered' or 'hindered' and were content analyzed using a data-reduction technique (Miles & Huberman, 1984, 1994). Themes emerged inductively through a constant comparative method of analysis (Patton, 1990). That is, once regularities begin to emerge, the researcher worked back and forth between the data and the classification system to verify the meaningfulness and accuracy of the categories and the placement of the data in categories.

Emerging themes were synthesized and applied to four (two 'foster' and two 'hinder') remaining CIs to determine if new themes were required. As a result of this splitting of the data, one critical requirement category was altered to fit a broader context. In addition, two others of the emerging labels were later changed to reflect greater semantic meaning.

The derived themes were shared with each co-researcher to determine if they resonated and captured what was critical in their experiences to engender or hinder reflective practice in counsellor training. No changes were requested; all co-researchers expressed that the themes reflected their lived experiences at the time.

Results/Interpretations

Butterfly Metaphor

The metaphor of a butterfly was employed to vividly capture co-researchers' experiences of reflective practice in counsellor education. That is, in terms of the impact of self-development through reflective practice on counsellor development, a beginning counselling student could be viewed as in the Larva stage of metamorphosis, which is the feeding and growth stage of development. With appropriate conditions and suitable nutrients, the larva undergoes transformation to a Chrysalis, which is an intense phase of structural and internal changes within the protective sheath of the pupa. In this study, this image of the Chrysalis appropriately symbolized the 'Closed-Protective Stance' of co-researchers who experienced a hindering incident.

On the other hand, 'facilitative' incidents, where reflective practice was supported appeared to engender an 'Open-Reflective' stance, whereby individuals felt safe to engage and dialogue about reflections and thus completed the life cycle to full butterfly. In other words, certain contexts or habitat conditions in counsellor training engendered a 'Closed-Protected' stance (counsellor in the *chrysalis*) versus an 'Open-Reflective' stance (fully open *butterfly*) in students.

Overall, twenty-nine critical incidents in five co-researcher's experiences of hindrances or facilitations of reflective practice in counsellor education were shared. These critical incidents can be likened to the ecological environments in which the growth of a butterfly was nurtured out of the chrysalis or nurtured to stay within the chrysalis. The term 'habitat conditions' is used in place of critical requirements and represents the features that facilitate or hinder counsellor reflectiveness.

Of those 29 ecological environments (CIs) described, 16 were determined to have the appropriate conditions to foster a full butterfly; 8 were determined to have the appropriate conditions to foster the butterfly to stay within the chrysalis; and 5 were found to be discordant in that the ecological environment nurtured a particular emergence

but the opposite occurred. Of those five, four included habitat conditions for staying within the chrysalis but yielded a full butterfly and one had conditions which should have fostered a full butterfly but yielded a closed-protective stance (see Table 3.0).

In terms of the sixteen ecological environments supportive of reflective practice for students in this counselling program, nine occurred in the context of a counselling course and five occurred in the relationship or context of supervision. Likewise, co-researchers' perspectives of eight ecological environments hindering reflective practice occurred four times in the context of a course and two in the context of supervision. Moreover, two discordant incidents (chrysalis conditions, butterfly outcome) occurred in a counselling course and one occurred during supervision. The one discordant incident where butterfly conditions were present but a chrysalis (or self-protective stance) emerged was also course based. In total, 16 incidents were course-based and 8 were supervision based. Additionally, five incidents were shared which were unrelated to a course and unrelated to supervision. For example, one involved a counselling centre and another was focused on a course delivery experience.

Table 3.0

2x2 Matrix of Ecological Environments: Conditions versus Outcome

		HABITAT CONDITIONS	
OUTCOME			
POSITIVE "Full Butterfly"		++ (16) 'Facilitative'	
NEGATIVE "Chrysalis"			-- (8) 'Hindrance'

'Hindrance' to Reflective Practice

It was found that since co-researchers were individuals who valued self-reflection, the term 'hindrance' or 'barrier' to reflect did not fit appropriately. Instead, comments such as "I shut down to that person" captured with more accuracy that reflective process continued (often more voraciously in the challenge) but that a 'Closed-Protective Stance' was engendered in a particular relationship or context.

Shows you're at a place with reflection that you know it's important and you're going to keep doing it (on your own) and how this person or that person reacts to it doesn't change that you're still going to do it. It may change if I share it with him [/her] or not.

The chrysalis as a metaphor appropriately captured this closed-protective stance. Larva continue to develop into butterflies within the protective pupa, as do students, but they may not emerge from the chrysalis if habitat conditions are non-conducive and the openness to reflect has not been engendered.

Chrysalis: Habitat Conditions for 'Closed-Protective' Stance

Of the 29 ecological environments described (CIs), 8 engendered remaining in the chrysalis protection. Five habitat conditions (critical conditions) (see Table 3.1 Column B) were derived whereby one or more of these conditions could be perceived within each environment as critical to instilling a chrysalis protective stance. These conditions included: (1) *Experiencing Mistrust / Unsafe Relationship*, (2) *Interacting with Non-Reflective Fellow Students*, (3) *Receiving Unsupportive / Jarring Feedback*, (4) *Facing a Systemic Barrier / Unsafe Educational Landscape*, and/or (5) *Interacting with Academic Personnel (Supervisor, Instructor, Administrator)*.

Table 3.1
Delineation of Habitat conditions supporting ‘Open-Reflective’ (Butterfly) and ‘Closed-Protective’ (Chrysalis) Student Stances in Counsellor Education

(A) NURTURING HABITAT CONDITIONS FOR BUTTERFLY (16)	(B) NURTURING HABITAT CONDITIONS IN CHRYSALIS (8)
<i>‘OPEN-REFLECTIVE’ STANCE</i>	<i>‘CLOSED-PROTECTIVE’ STANCE</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experiencing a Trusting Relationship (Challenging/ Supportive), (6) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experiencing Mistrust/ Unsafe Relationship, (5)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opening up with Fellow Students, (6) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interacting with Non-reflective Fellow Students, (2)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaging in Reflective Tasks, (14) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receiving Unsupportive / Jarring Feedback, (3)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having Self Trust/ Risking, (12) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facing a Systemic Barrier/ Unsafe Educational Landscape, (4)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interacting with Academic Personnel (Supervisor, Instructor, Administrator), (9) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interacting with Academic Personnel (Supervisor, Instructor, Administrator), (5)

Experiencing Mistrust/ Unsafe Relationship. This habitat condition involved environments in which co-researchers felt that a particular relationship was a barrier to reflective practice. Experiencing mistrusting relationships perceived as “unsafe” were identified in five of the eight environments described. For the most part, this condition was most closely linked with the condition of Interacting with Academic Personnel. Supervisors, instructors, and administrators were found in these environments, as were fellow students. One example consisting of critical habitat conditions of *Experiencing Mistrust/ Unsafe Relationship*, *Receiving Jarring Feedback* and *Interacting with Academic Personnel* involved a series of critical happenings that contributed to Dawn developing a closed-protected stance towards an instructor.

The incident began in a doctoral seminar when a classmate showed a videotape of work with a client. Dawn described that after seeing about 30 seconds of the tape, the

instructor commented on the client by saying: “Well, it’s clear that the client’s crazy and like must be either Schizophrenic or Manic. Client needs some drugs...” Dawn described:

If you’re at all aware of group process... you could see the class just drop. Like people were... we started getting quiet. I didn’t even say it in a confrontational voice, I said it in just a very ...”I just feel really uncomfortable with the language that we’re using and... this is why I feel uncomfortable with it. Couldn’t we find other ways in which to talk about the client that are going to be more helpful, rather than so labeling and elitist and that hierarchy of I know best and [the client is] just crazy and stupid?

Dawn explained that after saying this, the instructor called for a class break and following the break, it was Dawn’s turn to show a video of her work with a client.

After watching my video [instructor] turns to me and for 2 minutes straight hammered me on it. “Do you see what you’re doing? Do you see how bad this is?” [Instructor] made it very clear that I was making huge mistakes with this person and what I was doing was wrong, and who did I think I was... [Instructor] made it very clear that there was a hierarchy between me and [instructor] and that I was just the student and [instructor] was going to show me how bad I had done in my video.

Dawn commented that she humbly accepted [instructor’s] comments but that it was clear to her that the instructor was putting her in her place. She spoke about her ‘shutting down’ for a couple of weeks.

I just felt... like why should I risk now, after that? And there is this power differential that [instructor] made perfectly clear.

It was also particularly difficult because this instructor was also her counselling supervisor. After considering it for several weeks, Dawn decided to try to put an end to the tension by broaching the topic during a one-on-one supervision meeting.

[Instructor] response was “Yes, I’ve been feeling the tension. I thought that was cheeky of you to speak to me like that.” And I was just like... did you just call me cheeky, like in a professional supervision... like that’s what I was thinking (laughter). And the fact that [instructor] had been also feeling the tension but that I had to be the one to bring it up... [I thought,] you’re useless, I’m not even going to... [I] ended my relationship with [that] instructor. I never turn to [instructor] for anything—ever! It was very clear to me right then that there is not a mutual understanding about what’s going on. There is not a willingness to talk about it, there’s not a

willingness to grow from it, there's not a... it was me, it was all me. It was just that I was cheeky and loudmouthed and outspoken and...

The unwillingness to talk openly was appalling for Dawn. This account clearly captured how lack of trust in a relationship created the habitat for a closed-protective stance.

Interacting with Non-reflective Fellow Students. This habitat condition captured fellow students as hindrances to reflective practice in two of the eight incident accounts revealed. Although not overly represented in the number of incidents with this condition, it is significant nonetheless as a barrier to reflective practice. Crystal shared an account including critical conditions of *Interacting with Non-reflective Fellow Students* and *Facing a Systemic Barriers / Unsafe Educational Landscape*. She reported being very excited about a Personal Development Seminar consisting of all new counselling students when she first entered the program. The seminar was focused on developing self-awareness. Crystal conveyed her excitement and enthusiasm for such a learning experience; however, she voiced becoming more and more apprehensive as she picked up on other students' undermining and objections to the course.

[The] second day, I just remember having this group and some not very reflective people [in it] and we had to go individually and do this little assignment thing and then meet up with our group and talk about it. And I did it and I went first, I think, and told them all this deep stuff and then the other people went and every single one of them was done in like 20 seconds... such superficial things. And their attitudes, you could tell on their faces that they didn't like it and they didn't take it seriously. And that's the moment I went "phff, forget this, what's up with these people and this class!?"

She reflected that the difficulty in gaining self-awareness in this course was a combination of the students' attitude and the structure of how it happened. Crystal further hypothesized that being evaluated at the end as well as the contrived nature to reflect in school where one typically feels in competition with students may have led to the discomfort and blatant objections to this seminar.

I may not trust necessarily and then... I share something deeply personal and then I pass by them in the hallway all the time in the mailroom and it's not... like it's not the same as just a counselling group where you only see each other and you only connect on that level.

She also added, “I guess down the road, if you’ve really spilled your guts and stuff, you never know if you will be supervised by them [seminar leaders]”. Crystal had a suggestion around this systemic barrier.

They need to find a way to do it that is non-threatening to students and maybe private. I think a lot of them are worried about the whole evaluation component. At the end of the year so many people complained that they dropped it for the next year, which I thought was just stupid... here they are making this attempt to have at least some kind of self-reflection and then the whole thing, including the idea, gets trashed.

Receiving Unsupportive/ Jarring Feedback. This critical habitat condition arose from incidents including feedback or comments from academic personnel that led co-researchers to weave more tightly the silken chrysalis web of self-protection. For example, 1 of the 3 incidents involved ‘Closed-Protective’ conditions of *Experiencing Mistrust/ Unsafe Relationship, Receiving Unsupportive / Jarring Feedback, and Interacting with Academic Personnel*. It involved a comment from a supervisor that was perceived as particularly inappropriate and unsupportive.

I remember just following my regular way of being with supervisors, which had become very... just honest, here's the problem, here's me... help me. I was going on about my philosophy of life... and that my client was saying something that I totally disagree with and I was trying to give her (the client) hope and focus more on the good things that are going on. I sort of went off on a little tangent about that. [Supervisor] said, “What are you supposed to be? A guru?” or something like that. I was just immediately like, "oh my God!" [Supervisor] thinks I'm being preachy or something.

She conveyed how it was startling and disempowering to be criticized when she was authentically sharing her thoughts in relating to a client.

And it was so me at that moment in what I was saying. And [supervisor] just says that and I was like whoa, punch me in the stomach. I felt attacked for being myself, which is horrible but true....

She articulated that she developed a closed-protective stance, on guard from this supervisor.

Then every supervision session I had with [supervisor] after that, I was careful. And if I'd been with [supervisor] all year I would have learned diddly squat because I would have told [supervisor] nothing. So that shuts

down your opening up of what you're thinking and feeling. And made me more reserved for the following supervisions [with this supervisor].

Facing a Systemic Barrier/ Unsafe Educational Landscape. This habitat condition was evident in ecological environments where the hindrance to the reflective process for students came from a barrier, which was seemingly inherent and embedded within the structure of the system and politics of education. These barriers can be typically described as invisible, uncomfortable, and often unnamed boundaries that are blurred within the academic system. The four accounts of incidents representing this condition included systemic barriers such as: (a) assigning a standard grade for reflective exercises, (b) instructors and supervisors playing dual roles, (c) students being put into contrived situations to self-reflect with fellow students, or (d) students attempting to gain self-awareness on their own and feeling less able to access personal counselling support because of confidentiality concerns as well as financial barriers.

For example, Sean spoke about how he had tried to get counselling support from a local counselling center and was turned away due to service constraints.

I think (personal counselling) should be built into every psych program. Applied Psych program... and at least the Ph.D. level. Yes, I do believe that strongly that if we're going to do something, we better have experienced it ourselves. If students aren't expected to take part in counselling, it's easy for them to get into this superiority/inferiority place, believing that they're better than their clients because they've never had to go to counselling themselves.

Additionally, a systemic barrier was evident when Holly shared feeling extremely uncomfortable in a course with a strong interactional component which was run by an individual she had as a past supervisor and previous course instructor. She spoke about a series of negative critical happenings that fostered her apprehension about this individual.

I went to talk to [instructor] because I was feeling very out of place in the department with the lack of feminist focus. I was abhorred when [instructor] told me that I needed to repress my outward declaration of feminist ideas because it would prevent me from going places in this profession. She specifically told me about a psychologist who identified herself as feminist and how people wouldn't even shake her hand at conferences.

Holly went on to describe other startling interactions with this instructor. She spoke to how the instructor, during class, had listened for less than a minute about a client who a classmate was working with and offered expert, labeling interpretation.

[Instructor] said, “Well, obviously he’s (client’s) gay and won’t admit it.” Just like that, [instructor] had undermined all [classmate’s] work with the client and [classmate’s] possible reflections on the client and chimed in with statements to solve it all.

In the last interaction, which sealed the chrysalis protected sheath from this instructor, Holly spoke about how the instructor in class had talked about working with clients who had experienced childhood sexual abuse.

[Instructor] said that there’s no room for hope for clients who were sexually abused. [Instructor] said that it takes years and years of therapy and even then it’s an upward battle of undoing the trauma. I, and another classmate challenged this perspective. We said that even though there may be some merit to what [instructor] was saying, shouldn’t we see the possibility and hope in working with these clients? [Instructor’s] response was that we were neophyte counsellors and experience would show us that [instructor] was right.

In the experience of taking the course with a strong interactional component with this instructor, Holly stated:

For obvious reasons, I had no respect or trust for [instructor]. I felt unsafe around [instructor]. I shut down. There was no trust. How was I going to open up in a [interactional] course with [this instructor] as the facilitator? So this was a barrier to self-reflection, [my] lack of trust for the instructor and the other students and just the academic setting itself. It just didn’t feel right. I remember feeling uncomfortable in my chair. Kind of like not even being able to sit comfortably. So the awkwardness physically embodied. Not trusting... like it was just a weird, really awkward feeling. I always had a headache after that class so it was obviously very stressful for me.

Although a developing butterfly within the chrysalis, Holly would not shed the cocoon lining in this relationship. The conditions were non-conducive for such a development to occur. Along with conditions of *Experiencing Mistrust / Unsafe Relationship, Interacting with Academic Personnel*, and *Receiving Unsupportive / Jarring Feedback*—Systemic Barriers were particularly rigid and most impenetrable in this incident.

Interacting with Academic Personnel (Supervisor, Instructor, Administrator).

Academic professionals were involved in five of the total eight ecological environments described that included barriers to reflection in the educational landscape. Many of the incidents previously highlighted conveyed how this feature was involved to hinder student reflection. In the following incident, a faculty member was perceived as unsupportive.

I ended up having to go and talk to [faculty member]... I remember walking to [individual's] office because I was a little nervous. And it was useless, [individual] did nothing to help me, nothing! [Individual] looked at me and you could tell got nervous with what I was saying... and [individual] just said, "I think you should go back and try to work it out..." And I said, "I will try again, if you want me to. But if I can't... then will you help me?" "Well, then we'll see what..." [Individual] was useless! I will never ask for [individual's] help again.

'Facilitative' of Reflective Practice

Developing student counsellors in the protective sheath of the chrysalis who are within an environment of support for self-growth can hatch through the sheath. A sliver of light can penetrate into the chrysalis. The nutrients of support for self-development fuel the expansion of wings that will unfold and be strong enough to support and be flexible enough for movement. As a result, an openness occurs and the butterfly emerges. This metaphor appropriately captured the "Open-Reflective Stance" taken on by developing counsellors who experienced facilitative incidents around reflection.

Butterfly: Habitat Conditions for 'Open-Reflective' Stance

From the 29 ecological environments, 16 were perceived as engendering an 'Open-Reflective Stance'; whereby individuals felt safe to share themselves. Five habitat conditions (see Figure 3.1 Column A) were derived from these ecological environments where one or more of the conditions were found to be critical influence(s). They were: (1) *Experiencing a Trusting Relationship (Challenging / Supportive)*, (2) *Opening up with Fellow Students*, (3) *Engaging in Reflective Tasks*, (4) *Having Self Trust / Risking*, and (5) *Interacting with Academic Personnel*.

Experiencing a Trusting Relationship (Challenging/ Supportive). In this critical condition contributing to an open-reflective stance, co-researchers reflected on how particular relationships were empowering. Co-researchers conveyed that a basis of trust

with an instructor opened her or him up to be challenged in the supportive relationship. At other times, the trust was a leap of faith and increased or decreased a sense of bond to the instructor depending on the instructor's response as well as the individual's interpretation. These relationships were characterized as challenging and supportive. This type of relationship was found in six of the sixteen incidents shared by co-researchers. In one incident involving conditions of *Experiencing a Trusting Relationship, Engaging in Reflective Tasks, Having Self Trust, and Interacting with Academic Personnel* it was relayed that trust was central to getting the most out of a reflective assignment in that the student would not have opened up as much if she did not trust the instructor.

We were to write 10 critical incidents in our lives that affected who we were personally and professionally and then weave together our developing personal theory of counselling. That was a huge facilitator of reflective practice in my training. I got a lot out of that exercise. I wrote this small journal book. It was so much fun doing it. For one I crumpled up a leaf and pasted it in there all crumpled up. I just enjoyed it so much. The process... it's kind of a book that if someone read it they would know the essence of who I am.... They are the stories that make up a lot of who I am as a person.

Opening up with Fellow Students. This critical condition demonstrated that perception and meaning were most salient for determining the outcome of a specific interaction. Fellow students were involved in closed-protective incidents and were also part of six incidents regarded as nurturing an open-reflective stance. In relationships with fellow students that fostered reflection, Crystal commented on the salience of this connection.

I think that also it stands out to me just because colleagues, who think like me, also impact how reflective I am. Like I learn from them and get support from them. How important they (colleagues) really are... I can't imagine not having people there that I trust to talk things over with and even if it's my personal life, or with clients. I think it's so valuable.

Dawn spoke about her close friendship with a fellow student with whom she had completed a degree at a different university.

And when she transferred for the first two and a half months, she lived with me in this small apartment. We'd have lots and lots and lots of conversations with respect to work. Like I'd be working in the kitchen and she'd be working in the living room and then something would trigger for me and I'd be like, "What do you think about this?" And then we'd get

into these huge discussions about our understanding with respect to counselling and theory and like it really helped having her and she's really, really good at... She's one of the first people I will call if I have an ethical dilemma or am struggling with a client or in my personal life if I'm struggling. She's so good at listening and then in asking you what do you need from her. And in helping you reflect what's going on for you about stuff.

Engaging in Reflective Tasks. Instructors who integrated reflective assignments or discussions into the course content and who were trusted individuals were found to be successful in fostering a reflective process. Interestingly, these instructors were described as persons who value reflective practice and were reflective within their own lives. There were 14 out of 16 critical incidents where this condition was evident. All five of the co-researchers shared at least one reflective assignment as part of coursework from an instructor that led to greater self-awareness and facilitated the reflective process. The following statement captures how a co-researcher felt she grew from the reflective assignment as well as in her relationship with this instructor:

[Instructor] got me to think about what are all the different things in my life that have really helped to nurture, focus, and develop my hope. It was the whole process of reflecting because just doing it: having to pick the pictures, having to decide what to write about, having to pick the songs, having to write and pick the inserts, having to pick the colors of paper that I wanted to have it written on.... The effect that it had has been lasting... as well as the influence [that instructor] has had on my life. [Instructor] was just so good because [instructor's] never been... like [instructor] plants the seed and then lets you nurture it in the way you want.

Sean also recalled a reflective assignment that involved thinking and writing about his life experiences and how they influenced his practice. The students were asked to get together in small groups outside of class and share their reflections with each other.

But I remember we had... student cooked a roast or something. He loved cooking roasts, that guy and so we had a nice dinner and it felt like...you know what it felt like? It felt like the kind of thing you want to do with friends a lot more often. You just want to sit down and get real with them and forget about all the rest of the hogwash but let's get down to talking about who we are and what we believe in and what's important to us. And that's how it felt. It felt like I was having this breaking of bread ritual with two people that were closer to me than my own family. And so that was unique.

Sean recalled a most memorable and positive experience from this assignment.

I think it is good periodically to have that kind of reflection where you start putting all the things together because that creates integration I think. And so I think it was a very positive... had a very positive impact and as I think about it, I'd love to do it again soon to see how it's changed. But I think I'd do it first before I'd pull out what I wrote back then and then see from that how I've changed. So I think it was a good experience.

Having Self Trust/ Risking. The element of self-trust and risking was evident in 12 of the accounts of shedding the Chrysalis cocoon and spreading of wings to take on an Open-Reflective Stance to reflective practice. Sean expressed many risks he took while pursuing his doctorate. He spoke about coming out to classmates.

Although I didn't know them very well... so it was a big step... But I did look at university as an experiment, as a chance to try out some different things. And I knew that in my own growth, I needed to become more able to talk about who I am without being embarrassed or scared. And so that was just another step along that journey.

Sean also talked about the personal risk he took in engaging in heuristic research for his dissertation.

And I was at some level frightened by heuristics and I wasn't sure I wanted to go there because it meant being much more out than I had been before. And [dissertation supervisor] actually challenged me a bit to say, "Well, you know I think you would stand (gain) the most if you did heuristic research". And I thought about it and thought about it and reflected (laughter) and came to that decision. But even in the practicums that I chose, I wanted to be in places that would force reflection and also for the internship. I wanted to be in a place that I felt I'd be able to do more of that too. So I looked for self-reflection as I reflect on it, I looked for it everywhere and found it.

Crystal spoke about her experience of risking when she was paired with a counselling supervisor who had a reputation of being challenging. Crystal conveyed that because of her own desire for personal and professional development, she would choose a point in her videotape of a session with a client to show a point where she felt stuck.

And even, you know [it was] this weird dichotomy. I'd be sitting there, showing my video... scared of what [supervisor's] going to say to me and at the same time "Bring it on," "Let's do it, let's look at me". There's something... I just liked it. It taught me to look at myself when I was

counselling, because I wasn't... I don't think I was (looking at myself) up until then. Helped me to risk more. And it would make me self-reflect.

Interacting with Academic Personnel (Supervisor, Instructor, Administrator). In this critical condition contributing to an open-reflective stance, co-researchers reflected on how particular academic personnel were inextricably linked to completing the life cycle to an 'imago' or adult butterfly. Nine incidents captured the influence of Interacting with Academic Personnel to nurturing a larva to imago. These accounts often, but not always, involved the condition of *Trusting Relationship*. East, for example, shared a facilitative incident where her supervisor was extremely encouraging and challenging in helping her to get a client to continue coming for counselling. It was through encouraged reflection that East was able to think through why this was such an issue for her.

And you can see it was to a high degree, because I really, really wanted to get to the bottom of it, for my own values and beliefs, in how I could best help [client] because I felt that I wasn't giving [client] the best that I could.

Again, I think it's just shown the reflection of when I come into troubles and I'm not feeling good about the situation, I've got to do something about it... talk to the people who do more research, come up with some sort of plan of action. And always look at my own values and beliefs, [and] what's happening for me.

I didn't necessarily agree with all that [supervisor] was saying in terms of my high expectations, but it sure helped and coached in kind of working with getting client back in. If it hadn't been for [supervisor], I don't think I would have been able to get [client] back in.

Discordant Incidents

Of the twenty-nine ecological environments, five were found to be discordant in habitat conditions versus outcome. That is, habitat conditions that should have engendered a butterfly to stay within the chrysalis instilled the emergence of a full butterfly (see Table 3.0, Negative-Facilitative). Likewise, habitat conditions that should have engendered a full butterfly instead instilled the butterfly to stay within the chrysalis (see Table 3.0, Positive-Hindrance). The habitat conditions yielding a specific outcome, such as *Experiencing a Trusting Relationship*, *Opening up with Fellow Students*, *Engaging in Reflective Tasks*, *Having Self Trust / Risking*, or *Interacting with Academic*

Personnel for ‘Open-Reflective’ --- or *Experiencing Mistrust/ Unsafe Relationship, Interacting with Non-reflective Fellow Students, Receiving Unsupportive/ Jarring Feedback, Facing a Systemic Barrier/Unsafe Educational Landscape, or Interacting with Academic Personnel* for ‘Closed-Protective’ stances, were present but did not yield the expected outcome from these conditions.

In these discordant ecological environments, it became clear that "Empowerment" was central in shifting a particular conducive environment to facilitating the unexpected. In the four incidents that should have resulted in a chrysalis protection, themes of *Being Empowered in Self* and *Being Empowered to Voice* were determined as the key strengths that enabled a butterfly to break through the sheath in spite of the lack of conducive conditions. Sometimes a butterfly emerges and the wing may be clipped or a tentacle may not have emerged intact but butterflies are highly adaptive and eventually learn to fly regardless of the hindrance. In terms of the one ecological environment described that should have yielded a full butterfly, *Being Disempowered to Openly Reflect* was found as the essence that impeded the expected outcome.

Being Empowered in Self. Sean shared an incident that fell into the category of ‘negative facilitative’. He described a negative process involving critical conditions of *Interacting with Non-reflective Fellow Students, Facing a Systemic Barrier, and Interacting with Academic Personnel*. In this incident, two fellow doctoral students approached him after class and warned him that if he wanted to graduate he had better change his dissertation topic, which was on gay issues.

Here I was, coming into the university to learn about gay individuals and to do research in it, and then I was being already shut down by two students who are telling me this is not a safe place. And I was thinking, “Well then how the hell am I going to do my research? Where is there going to be a safe place?” If I can’t feel safe in the Ph.D., which is the crowning glory of your academic achievement then where are you going to feel safe to do your research? Academia is supposed to respect academic freedom, so all those messages were going on in my head, so on one hand I was thankful to them but I was also angry at the content of the message to think does this mean now I’ve got to be going back into the closet and somehow I’m going to study this in spite of the fact that I can’t be who I am? The whole thing was just a real mind game for me as I tried to process it.

Sean decided that he would not be silenced and through 'Being Empowered in Self' he continued to pursue this area for his dissertation research.

I took the message to heart but I didn't heed what they said to me whatsoever. I decided that again if I'm going to live with integrity and if I'm going to do the research I want to do, then I'd better be an example of that which I believe in. How can we possibly get to a better place in society if we all shut down? We've done that for centuries. So I wasn't going to do it.

Dawn also reported an experience that was a 'negative facilitative' incident. She described that she was told she would be instructing a course less than two weeks before it was to start. Dawn relayed her frustration in not receiving any support in preparing for the course and that she struggled alone in the process: "Like I'm not a teacher. I can lecture but with respect to creating exams... I've never made graded criteria...". Through 'Being Empowered in Self', Dawn conveyed how she ended up learning and reflecting so much about herself in developing and delivering the course.

I really wanted them (students) to reflect on themselves and to get a good understanding. And they'd always ask me questions and then I could think about..."Ok, well this is why for me... like it's been a phenomenal experience in terms of solidifying the belief that I have about counselling." I never thought of teaching that way... that (it) would influence my self-reflectedness.

Being Empowered to Voice. East shared two incidents that fit the negative facilitation category. The first was an account of wrestling with the perspective of her practicum supervisor that she should return a gift given to her by a client. East spoke about how she reflected upon her own stance and talked with many fellow students after being challenged by this supervisor.

I think it has heightened my awareness of my own beliefs and values and just to emphasize that we really need to be well grounded in our beliefs and values through reflection; that's what the goal is.

East shared a further incident with negative habitat conditions present but yielding an open-reflective stance through *Being Empowered to Voice*. This incident took place in a doctoral seminar where the instructor was perceived as badgering a student for a particular response to a question. East explained that the class felt traumatized by the event.

I think this is an example, a real good example, of how it wasn't until after the incident, that we're all out of the class, and a colleague started to verbalize what happened-- reflecting on it, then [the student's] realizing the seriousness of what just happened. And same here, it hadn't occurred to me in the moment but as [the student is] talking and feeling, "Oh yeah, that's why I wasn't feeling very good." And then we started to realize.... but it's only at that point, where the group cohesion started to occur, when we realized that we've been feeling this way since [the instructor] started, about lack of liking [instructor's] monologues, lack of being heard, lack of air time. And we individually had these feelings of various incidents but it was only at that moment that through reflecting together as a group, did we start to come up with our own examples and we realized that "Yes, we've got common examples here, common areas of complaint and nobody's ever vocalized them." It took an incident like this, a critical incident that brought us all together and brought out the speaking out for the first time, in three years.

Being Disempowered to Openly Reflect. One co-researcher shared an incident that fell under the unique category of positive hindrance. In this experience involving habitat conditions of *Engaging in Reflective Tasks* and *Having Self-Trust / Risking*, East worked on an assignment that felt very positive in terms of the self-awareness that she was gained. However, the experience shifted to a negative one and involved conditions of *Unsupportive /Jarring Comment* and *Facing a Systemic Barrier* when she received a grade on the assignment that was lower than she would have anticipated given the effort, self-initiative, and risk she felt she had taken.

It was crushing to have somebody put an (average) mark to it—like marked me as a person and what I believe in... [I] got an article the instructor referenced and followed it 'talk to a native elder and get your spirituality advice as part of that journey'. I thought the purpose of it was excellent. To give this beginning person without any idea of what they were getting into, a chance to sit back and look at what we are embarking upon. I mean it was excellent. ... The exercise itself was a highlight. It sticks out as one of the best exercises for me because it was a really good chance for really reflecting and experiencing. But then to get this darn mark, it was kind of like a little arrow zinging into my heart and sort of piercing it (laughing through tears). It hurt. It was crushing to have somebody put a number to that... Like having my hand slapped for being me. Because my ego is right there. I mean it's very vulnerable... that was one of the first times I'd done that for marks.

East spoke about how she, after four years since that incident, still hesitates to share herself where it may come under academic scrutiny. She made suggestions during our conversation to account for this caveat in assigning reflective exercises as part of course content.

Maybe something like that should never be marked. Very personal... there's no right or wrong. But it needs to be done- that kind of self-reflection is kind of a stepping stone. And then maybe there's room to mark other types of assignments.

Overall Perspectives on Reflective Practice in Counsellor Education

In response to an interview question, four of the five co-researchers indicated that support for self-reflection in their counsellor education was low relative to their expectation. This information emerged through co-researchers' responses to completing the following sentence: "With regard to self-reflection, my counsellor education has..." East responded positively by indicating that reflective practice was supported in her counsellor education.

[Self-reflection has] been enhanced by my professors that ensure we do reflection by making it one of the projects that we have to do. That's very good incentive to keep building that in because again it's competing time, competing priorities [as a student].

The following quotes reveal four co-researchers who were disappointed with the degree of reflection emphasized or felt that their self-reflection was independent of their Ph.D. counsellor education:

Parts of it [counsellor education] has [fostered self-reflection]. I think that it really depends on the type of professor that you have whether someone believes that it's important or not important. So in the courses where it's been promoted it has, and in those where it hasn't been promoted, it hasn't. I'd say that percentage wise fewer classes support it. I learned much more about how to be a counsellor in my Masters program (at a different university) than I have in my Ph.D. In the courses that I took there (different university) the emphasis was on what was happening for me.

Crystal echoed the previous co-researcher in her experience of reflective practice.

In some ways [my counsellor education] has helped it [self-reflection] and in some ways not because it couldn't be stopped. But I think overall, I had

more experiences that were disappointing. Certain situations and professors have supported it [self-reflection], others have not.

Likewise, Holly indicated that she experienced disappointment with the lack of focus on self-reflection in her counsellor training.

My counselling education has not been as present [in my self-reflection] as I would have liked it to be. A lot of the self-reflection I have done as a counsellor has been of my own impetus. Like it hasn't come directly from my training. However, in [instructor's] classes there have been assignments on reflection so in that way I would say it was intentional and very directive to be reflective. But in other classes it wasn't the case. It has been disappointing because I thought there would be more. And for me, it ties into feminism because reflective practice-- and just giving voice to the self-- is a very feminist concept. And I was very sad at the beginning of the program because I found that a feminist focus and reflective practice [orientation] just weren't part of the training. So I was very disappointed because I had wanted it to be so much about self-discovery.

Lastly, Sean spoke to how it was not specifically the counselling program that engendered the self-reflection and awareness he gained.

My counselling education has been superb, not so much because of the program but because of what I put myself through and how I responded to the program... I don't think that you're going to really get what you need to get out of a Ph.D. program in counselling psychology if reflective practice isn't the most important piece of it... I think when you are in graduate work, you can get as much out of it as you want and you can also get as little out of it as you want. And the choice really is yours. So I chose, partly because of my own inner work I was doing in still trying to complete more of my journey in coming out... And also because of the philosophical shift that I made, which largely occurred after coming out-- I decided that I wanted to do a lot of reflection and I decided to pick a methodology for my dissertation that would force that.

With respect to these quotes, it is counterintuitive that 16 'facilitative' critical incidents versus 8 'hindering' critical incidents were shared in this research. Co-researchers discussed the tremendous value they place on self-awareness and reflection in their lives. One hypothesis for this discrepancy is that negative incidents were most jarring and made a lasting impression; and/or that from the many and varied experiences of reflective practice in their lives, co-researchers were able to select incidents in their counsellor education that fostered

reflection. It may well be that these co-researchers were on their way to full butterflies with open-reflective stances regardless of their experiences as a student.

Discussion and Summary

This exploratory research revealed, from 5 co-researchers' perspectives of their counselling education experience, that reflective practice was not overwhelmingly embraced. Some students appeared reluctant and opposed to personal exploration in counselling courses as evident in the incident shared by Crystal where students undermined the self-reflective component of a seminar. Similarly, some instructors, supervisors, and administrators appeared not to place value in guiding and supporting students' reflection and self-awareness. Additionally, as Schwebel and Coster (1998) revealed, educational policies and practices may not be designed to facilitate reflective practice in the context of formal counselling education. These concerns are valid and emphasize the significance of a reflective turn (Schon, 1991), which involves an epistemological shift.

In this shift, students are not containers waiting to be filled (Freire, 1970), but are encouraged to focus on their own experiences to contextualize new knowledge. This reflective posture is what Freire called an 'epistemological relationship to reality,' which involves being a critical examiner of personal experience, questioning and interpreting one's life and education (Shor, 1993). Students are thus facilitated to "reflect critically on their own knowledge and language as well as the subject matter, the quality of their learning process, and the relation of knowledge to society" (p. 33). This reflection is indeed foundational in the critical psychology movement, which examines and critiques mainstream psychology as perpetuating the status quo (Fox & Prilleltensky, 1997). Jennings and Kennedy (1996) highlighted that in the profession of practicing psychologists "interpersonal effectiveness is now a theme which runs throughout, and there is a key emphasis on the development of the self in professional and applied psychology as a 'reflective practitioner' (p. 19). Nevertheless, the critical psychology movement and the focus on developing reflective counselling professionals may be slow to reach counselling pedagogy and curriculum.

In this study, incidents perceived as facilitative of reflective practice (16) outnumbered shared incidents of hindrances (8); however, four co-researchers were clear that the degree of reflection and tenor of a reflective orientation in their counselling department was low relative to their expectation of a doctoral program in counselling. From these four individuals' perspectives, subjective reports revealed that they did not feel that this counsellor education department was able to support reflective practice at a fundamental level of counsellor development.

Carson (2001) pointed out in his writings on the limits of reflective practice that educators should recognize and accept first the necessity for reflection and then navigate the inevitable contingencies of teaching. Britzman (1991) described a major contingency as the persistent cultural myths of teachers as “experts, as sole bearers of power, and as self-made products of experience” (p. 8). These myths, Carson summarized, are supported by the impression that teaching is a very “transparent profession that we know well by virtue of our years spent in classrooms” (p. 7, Carson). Consistent with this perspective, Freire (1973) noted:

After long years in traditional schools, teachers become conditioned to lecture, to assert their authority, to transfer official information and skills, as the proper way for professionals to do their work. It is not easy for them to share decision-making in the classroom, to negotiate curriculum, to pose problems based in student thought and language, to lead a dialogue where student expression has an impact on the course of study, and to learn with and from students (p. 52).

Shor (1993) elucidated Freire's perspective on traditional education, which highlights another major condition to reflective teaching. That is, within a traditional education setting, students are taught to “conform, to accept inequality and their places in the status quo, [and] to follow authority” (p.22). Shor noted that traditional classrooms were seen to develop authority-dependence in students where education meant listening to what teachers dictate. In this perspective, “real education” (Freire, 1973, p. 52) was something done to students, not something they do nor are integrally involved. This barrier to reflective practice was apparent in the present study where some fellow students were described to undermine reflective practice in course content. It is not surprising that after years in passive classrooms with traditional curriculum that students do not see themselves as people who can transform knowledge and society.

Reflections of the Study

The co-researchers involved in this study: Holly, Dawn, Crystal, Sean, and East conveyed 29 critical incident accounts of reflective practice in their counsellor education experiences. These rich descriptions elucidated perceptions of hindrances and facilitators to self-reflection. Reflecting overall on these incidents, a central theme of ‘reflective practice as relational’ emerged. Reflective practice in the context of counselling education, for the most part, was engendered or inhibited for students through other individuals. It was also indicated that these other individuals’ (students, instructors, supervisors, administrators) personal value of reflective practice came through in their ability to engender it for students. For example, educators and supervisors in this study who engaged students in reflective tasks and who were perceived to facilitate open-reflective stances were described as individuals who were reflective in their own lives. As such, one’s values were mirrored in curriculum delivery and content. In this way, curriculum is also relational to one’s experiences, values, and epistemic beliefs.

Recommendations

In the biological world of the butterfly, without help, nine out of ten caterpillars will not survive long enough to become butterflies. Few realize that many butterfly species are endangered. Egg to larva to chrysalis to butterfly—irresistible habitats that are necessary for completing the life cycle were found in this study. Indeed, if counsellor education programs are interested in fostering ‘open-reflective’ stances, it would be of benefit to examine practices that foster students: *engaging in reflective tasks, taking self-risks, and experiencing a trusting relationship* (that is supportive as well as challenging) that allows one to *open up and interact with fellow students and/or academic professionals*. These conditions were involved in creating an ideal habitat that nurtured the emergence of a full butterfly. Further the absence of having to *face systemic barriers, mistrusting relationships with non-reflective fellow students and/or academic professionals*, and *receiving jarring feedback* also served to foster the growth of a full butterfly. These conditions contributed to the ‘closed-protective’ stance of student counsellors and often instigated staying within the chrysalis. As well, engendering student empowerment and students’ ability to self-risk would increase the chance that

developing counsellors could learn and grow through reflection even in the midst of non-conducive habitat conditions.

In essence, as mentioned earlier, a 'reflective turn' is what is required to engender and facilitate a learning environment where self-reflection is valued and supported. As well, given that reflective practice is relational, one consideration to increase reflective practice in counsellor education is the recruitment of faculty who place value in reflection meaning that they "question the goals and values that guide her or his work, the context which she or he teaches, and personal assumptions" (Zeichner & Liston, 1996, p. 1). Dewey also outlined three attitudes inherent in reflective educators. He suggested that attitudes of open-mindedness, responsibility, and whole-heartedness were critical to reflective teaching (as cited in Zeichner & Liston).

In facilitating a learning environment where reflective practice is embraced, it seems also necessary to have open dialogue about how to empower students to reflect and how to foster a reflective curriculum. This can be accomplished by sharing tensions, challenges, and rewards collaboratively among faculty, supervisors, and students in a continual exploration of the issues. Zeichner and Liston (1996) underscored this aim that education should be self-renewing in that "students and teachers in the program should continually reexamine its curriculum, organization, pedagogy, and authority relationships, and work toward ongoing improvement of the program based on knowledge gained from experience and research or evaluation" (p. 28).

Additionally, to facilitate reflective practice in counsellor education, students need to be able to develop an awareness of learning as an ongoing process of reflection, intervention and evaluation. This view of the learner as actively involved in her or his own learning and development is represented in the learning cycle, as originally presented by Kolb (1970). As well, Knowle's (1978) concept of the adult learner, and Schon's (1987) vision of 'professional artistry' in the reflective practitioner both suggest that adults characteristically draw on their "accumulated experiences in problem-solving, reflect on them and re-evaluate them in a new contexts" (Jennings & Kennedy, 1996, p. 19). Students require help in shifting out of the traditional model of education, which they ironically would have likely mastered in order to meet the standards for entrance into a competitive counselling program.

Directions for Future Research

From the present exploratory research, directions to turn toward for future research include a follow-up study involving more counselling students with varying experiences and perspectives on reflective practice. Additional research could involve studying reflective instructors and non-reflective instructors and what they include in course content and course exercises and the types of relationships they foster with students. It would also be worthwhile to examine their life stories and the role of reflective practice within their own lives.

This research further emphasizes the need to investigate innovative reflective teaching and skills strategies in counselling curriculum. Also, considering that counsellor education is part of a larger context of the profession, research that examines and deconstructs multiple levels and spheres of influence to understand how each level impacts the development of a reflective counselling professional is necessary research (e.g. individual student counsellor dimensions; counsellor educator stories; counselling curriculum; formal educational system; licensing and accreditation standards, etc.). For example, a document analysis of curricula policy would be informative (of one level) as to the emphasis on reflective practice within formal counselling programs.

We need to take a closer look at the epistemology of practice underlying counselling pedagogy and modernist educational practices, which emphasizes skills and theories more than the person of the counsellor. We could also learn from counselling programs that integrate more reflective practices and examine how they navigate this within formal education.

Conclusion

This exploratory research lends credence to the significance of understanding ways in which the educational landscape and environment of academia can help developing counsellors experience more contexts in which they become butterflies and reflective practitioners in flight rather than cocooned in self-protection. From five developing counsellors' perspectives, understanding conditions that encouraged or discouraged reflective practice, contributes to a body of knowledge regarding reflective practice in counselling education, which has not been previously explored.

This research informs counsellor educators, supervisors, and university administrators as to factors that specifically thwart and foster growth of these five reflective counselling students. This paper also contributes to understanding the significant yet tenuous relationship between reflective practice and counsellor education. Counsellor education is a crucial time when students can be assisted to position themselves with open-reflective stances. This reflective stance has the capacity to sustain longtime professionals within the field of counselling.

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Linking Exposition

How can reflective tasks or activities be organized within counselling curriculum?

What would a counsellor development model, focused on reflective practice, look like?

CHAPTER 4

A HERMENEUTIC PROCESS OF COUNSELLOR THEORY CONSTRUCTION

To be nobody but yourself—in a world which is doing its best, night and day, to make you everybody else—means to fight the hardest battle any human being can fight and never stop fighting – (Cummings, 1953).

One hallmark of professionalism in counselling is the ability to undergird practice with theoretical insights (Drapela, 1990). In effect, one's theory is a professional road map; critical as a navigator's astrolabe. Drapela maintained that counsellors who do not consider theory a vital component of professional practice succumb to the level of well-meaning technicians oblivious of their impact on clients. Indeed Combs (1989) found that 'effective' counsellors were able to ground their work in a personal philosophy of counselling. He determined that effective counsellors reported a consistent, comprehensive, and defensible personal theory from which to operate. This theoretical base has been argued not only for effective practice, it has been asserted as fundamental to counselling with ethical integrity (Koocher & Keith-Spiegel, 1998).

As such, acquisition of a solid theoretical base is perceived as paramount in the profession of counselling, as it allows for prediction, evaluation, and effective practice (Brammer, Shostrom, & Abrego, 1989; Drapela, 1990). As asserted by Hershenson, Power, and Seligman (1989), theory also provides a rationale for the direction one takes in the practice of counselling. Indeed, Brammer and colleagues and Hague (1989) viewed the cornerstone in counsellor education programs as facilitating students' construction and articulation of a personal theory of counselling. Hague emphasized the ultimate goal to be engendering "response-able" (p. 341) students, which meant that they could defend, from a theoretical perspective, what they did in practice.

Such an empirically driven focus toward theory formation, in the way of locating oneself within externally derived theories of counselling, is inconsistent with a postmodern paradigm. Kvalve (1992) and Gergen (1992) among others, advocated for a postmodern turn in psychology. These psychologists argued for a shift in epistemology from a belief in universal principles and objective, systematically verified theories to

constructivist, constructionist, phenomenological, and hermeneutic (interpretive) ways of knowing. In a postmodern perspective, theory formation consists of “reliance upon our experiences as a basis for understanding our world” (Gergen, 1985). Shotter (1992) added:

The process involved in the development of one’s knowledge is quite unlike any so far discussed in the empirical tradition. It is not induction (for it does not depend upon the discovery of regularities), nor is it inference (for the unique and particular nature of circumstances cannot be understood by assimilating their details to any already established theoretical categories and premises). As each ‘part’ of the description is supplied, a conceptual ‘whole’ has to be fashioned to accommodate it... In the hermeneutical account of knowing, then, a process of ‘making’ or construction is at work (p. 61).

Counselling students may be left quite perplexed with the messages about constructing a personally relevant theory of counselling that fosters prediction, rationale, and defensibility in practice. It is not surprising then that practicing counsellors struggle with personal integration and formation of theory (Andrews, Norcross, & Halgin, 1992; Hague, 1989; Kottler & Brown, 1992; Rybak & Russell-Chapin, 1998). Students are expected to absorb a breadth of psychological theories and approaches to coherently formulate and state the orientation that undergirds their work. Some students find this a daunting task, which is exacerbated by a paucity of literature on the genesis of a personal theory of counselling (Bayne & Horton, 1996) and enhanced by an inordinate number of different counselling theories: 130 to 400 according to Norcross and Grencavage (1989). Not surprisingly, the field itself has suffered from confusion, fragmentation, and discontent (Horton, 1996; Mahalik, 1990; Norcross & Grencavage, 1989; Short, Boone, & Hess, 1997; Ward, 1983). Students no doubt succumb to this confusion and are offered little guidance for personal integration and formation of theory (Hague, 1989).

The scope of this paper encompasses an attempt to shed light on the daunting inquiry of personal theory construction. An organizing schema is proposed for entering a hermeneutic process of constructing a personal theory of counselling. As Shotter (1992) described,

The hermeneutical process continues as each new fact is added to the account; the whole must be progressively transformed and articulated, metamorphosed in fact, in a back-and-forth process, in such a way as to afford all the parts of the whole” (p. 61).

The concentric dynamic model (CDM), a metatheoretical blueprint for composing one's counselling theory, was initially conceived by three counselling students attempting to seek clarity and understanding of theory construction for themselves. The model was conceptualized from a human ecological perspective, which emphasizes the self or personhood of the counsellor as central within holistic spheres of influence. Two of the three counselling students proceeded to explicate specific dimensions, from their perspectives, within each sphere and depicted counsellor theory formation as a back-and-forth hermeneutic process (Wong-Wylie & Hanoski, 2000).

To set the stage for this model, I begin by discussing student counsellor development, and provide an overview of 'theory' and the focus on reflection in counsellor development before considering what a reflective counselling curriculum could entail. A delineation of the CDM framework is then offered. In closing, implications of CDM for counsellor education and development as well as directions for future research are suggested.

Student Counsellor Development

With respect to student counsellor development, there is a considerable body of literature in the areas of therapeutic process (Daniluk, 1989; Mahrer, 1989; Neimeyer, 1993), intra-psycho experiences of the developing counsellor (Chazan, 1990; Grater, 1985; Sawatzky, Jevne, & Clark, 1994), supervisory experiences and relationships (Rodenhauser, 1994; Stoltenberg & Delworth, 1987), and changes in counselling skills (Hill, Charles, & Reed, 1981). Numerous models have been proposed (Kottler & Brown, 1992), most of which depict professional growth as a series of stages and/or phases, ranging from two to nine (Daniluk, 1989). For the most part, the models illustrate development as linear, stage-bound (Daniluk, 1989), unidirectional, and static. In contrast, there are but a few examples of dynamic or multidimensional views of student development (Holloway, 1987; Sawatzky et al., 1994; Hansen, Rossberg, & Cramer, 1994; Tyron, 1996). Sawatzky et al. devised a four-phase model of student development that depicted growth as a spiral process cycling from "Experiencing Dissonance" toward "Becoming Empowered" (p. 181). This model is one example that vividly illustrates professional development as a dynamic human process.

Overview

What is theory? From a modernist lens, a good theory or a well-established model is depicted as a unified, logical conceptualization by which people can filter ideas in a meaningful and consistent pattern (Combs, 1989). In this perspective, theory provides structure and adequate guidelines for practice. Combs insisted that one's theoretical framework should be broad and well-established to expand counsellor options rather than being limited and constrictive. Likewise, a unified model or good theory was purported to offer interpretations of the inner world of clients and their relationships with other people and the society at large.

In addition to the few dynamic models of counsellor development, there are limited guidelines and models for the construction of a personal theory of counselling (Hague, 1989; Bayne & Horton, 1996); there are even fewer available guidelines or models that acknowledge the person of the counsellor in theory development. For instance, Kottler and Brown (1992) discussed the construction of a personal counselling theory over time from a retrospective position as professional counselling educators and practitioners. These authors offered a description of the stages of personal theory building-- from soaking in theory, to eclecticism and theory hopping, to eventually settling into a personal theory. Kottler and Brown captured a range of influences on the development of theory, such as client needs, training, and science but did not include development of the person of the counsellor. To support their perspective of theory building, they devised a Theoretical Dilemma Inventory, which includes a checklist of ten items to help students identify their perspectives. The checklist does not invite students to reflect upon their life experiences; rather, students are committed to yes/no responses.

Hansen, Rossberg, and Cramer (1994) were among the few who acknowledged personal dimensions in their systems approach to counsellor theory development. Their model includes the environment and the larger social and historical context in theory development. Hansen and colleagues depicted theory construction as a process moving through three developmental stages of before, during, and after counsellor training.

Brammer and colleagues (1989) were also among the few who offered guidelines to integrate theory in a personal way. They argued that a counsellor's personal theory

predominately involved interweaving counsellors' own goals, values, assumptions, interventions, and expectations. This was described as the creative synthesizing where the creative component involved "culling" (p. 13) of concepts and practices together from existing theories and transforming them into personally relevant ideas. The synthesis component was described as students' integration of seemingly unrelated elements into a coordinated and cohesive whole. Although the creative synthesis approach is a valuable suggestion for students, Brammer et al. did not allude to what the unrelated elements may be and how they might be involved in counselling theory formation.

Hague (1989) discussed the significance of the development of the person of the counsellor in theory development. He asserted that, "the fit between theory and the counsellor is really a match of theoretical knowledge with insight into one's own way of being in the world" (p. 341) and requires that, "the counsellor take a journey of self whereby he/she comes to know the personal self, as well as the self in the context of various systems" (p. 344). Hague nevertheless did not move beyond suggestion and provide guidelines to 'how' this personal integration can be achieved. Many others converge on this viewpoint, stating that it is a professional obligation for counsellors not only to be knowledgeable about various theories, but to integrate them in a personally relevant manner (Brabeck & Welfel, 1985; Beitman, 1989; Brammer et al., 1989; Combs, 1989; Drapela, 1990; Egan, 1990; Finch, Mattson, & Moore, 1993). However, similar to Hague, these authors do not propose specific directives as to how this can be accomplished.

Focus on Reflection in Counsellor Development

There has been apparent interest and emphasis on counsellor self-reflection for effective practice. Even so there appears inconsistency in extant literature as to the importance of reflective practice. In particular, there seems less of an emphasis on counsellor self-reflection after the 1990s. For instance, a 2001 publication edited by Bor and Palmer, A Beginners Guide to Training in Counselling and Psychotherapy asserted key personal qualities of the competent counsellor. Intelligence, memory, flexibility, and maturity were central; however, there was no mention of self-awareness or reflective practice. In contrast, Brammer elucidated characteristics of the helper in a 1979 publication The helping relationship: Process and skills. The key characteristic noted was

self-awareness and reflection for essential helper qualities. Likewise, in a 1978 national Canadian study, Jevne determined among counsellor educators, students, supervisors, and practicing counsellors that self-awareness was the most valued core competency of a professional counsellor.

As such, the importance of self-reflection to counsellor development remains inconsistently supported in literature. Additionally, the scant literature including specific guidelines or models of counsellor theory formation perpetuates the impression of theory as inaccessible, enigmatic, and obscure. Although a counsellor may not fully understand the theory she or he is operating from, she or he is undoubtedly behaving in terms of a set of assumptions (Combs, 1989; Horton, 1996). As stated by Horton, counselling interventions or strategies are not employed in a vacuum and “even a simple reflection of feeling... is underpinned by some theoretical rationale...” (p. 281). This view was echoed by Kramer (2000): “From the time we first think about becoming a therapist, we create and recreate an inner structure, a deeply felt framework, yet often we do so without much forethought. It behooves us to study what goes into the structure and how it evolves” (p. 15).

Although several authors have proposed stage models of counselling theory development (Kottler & Brown, 1992; Watts, 1993), they tended to neglect constructivism and the role of personal experience and self-reflection, which are foundational to a hermeneutic process of composing a personal theory of counselling. Indeed, the ways in which students can build personal theory has been neglected in textbooks (Brammer et al., 1989; Corey, 1991; Kottler & Brown, 1992) and in counselling education programs (Schwebel & Coster, 1998).

Brookfield (1994) and Gerson (1996) acknowledged the absence of support for self-reflection in formal counsellor education. They advocated the practice of reflection to be a primary aim of graduate programs. Several handbooks are available to guide students in this process. For example, Corey and Corey's (1989) and Kottler's (1996) published manuals, designed to augment counselling textbooks, encourage students' dynamic integration of personal insights with professional development. Although these textbooks describe the importance of self-reflection, they do not specifically inform students how to engage in this process (Brabeck & Welfel, 1985).

Constructing a Reflective Curriculum

A philosophy central to a reflective curriculum is problematizing the entire educational system, curriculum, counselling education, and thus inviting an overall critical approach to pedagogy. Freire (1970) and Zeichner and Liston (1987) proposed adopting a problematic view of education, which means acknowledging that education is a value-laden edifice. In this aim, Dewey (1933 as cited in Zeichner & Liston) distinguished between reflective action and route action. He defined reflective action as “entail[ing] the active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in light of the grounds that support it and the consequences to which it leads” (p. 24). In contrast, route action is guided primarily by “tradition, external authority, and circumstance” (p. 24). Dewey’s concept of reflective action can be utilized as the organizing principle behind a reflective curriculum. Furthermore, Van Manen (1977) distinguished among three different forms of reflection, each proposed for different purposes and depth to questioning and examining formal education. The third level, ‘critical reflection,’ is the deepest level of reflection and underscores a critical orientation to education. Critical reflection is distinguished as incorporating moral and ethical principles into the focus on practical actions underlying education. Central questions at this level include examining educational goals, experiences, and activities that lead toward living a just and equality based life in the world.

A ‘critical’ (inherent in the term ‘reflective’) reflective counselling program would seek to facilitate developing counsellors in becoming more aware of themselves and their environments. In this way, students would be empowered to be involved in their own learning and development and to be open to alternate perspectives (Zeichner & Liston, 1987). Student counsellors, in a reflective program, should also be able to negotiate their learning through collaboration about what is personally relevant. Zeichner and Liston emphasized that “non-negotiated curriculum breeds students that are relatively passive recipients of what is imparted... a refle[ctive] curriculum does not totally predetermine that which is to be learned but makes provisions for the self-determined needs and concerns of student teachers [counsellors] as well as the creation of personal meaning by students” (p. 27). Overall, a reflective curriculum necessitates that the staff,

curriculum, and institutional milieu express qualities of reflectiveness and engender the view that knowledge is socially constructed rather than objective and certain.

The following is a delineation of the Concentric Dynamic Model (CDM) of counsellor theory construction, which is proposed for a hermeneutic process of composing personal theory within a reflective counselling program. I begin by asserting the need for a holistic model of theory construction before elucidating the various dimensions that make up the whole. A central tenet of a reflective curriculum is that curriculum content is open for negotiation and not predetermined. It is important then to bear in mind that the dimensions within CDM are negotiable for personal relevance for each individual in the process of theory construction; elements can be added and re-negotiated. As such, the CDM is an organizing schema that invites reflection upon its very structure and content. It is my belief that the reflective dialogue itself about this model can promote self-knowledge and reflection in theory derivation.

Constructing a Holistic Model of Theory Formation

Holism and Human Ecology

Holism implies that development occurs within an interrelationship and interdependence of all phenomena- physical, biological, psychological, social and cultural (Capra, 1982; Lucas, 1985). The concept of holism challenges mechanistic and reductionist interpretations of the natural world and human beings (Allport, 1960; Lucas, 1985). In this perspective, construction of a personal counselling theory should not be dissected into parts. Unfettered by reductionist principles, holism engenders a unified scope and calls for a dynamic, holistic model of counselling theory formation.

Human Ecology acknowledges the dynamic interdependence and interrelationship between people and environmental factors (Conyne, 1985; Westney, Brabbe, & Edwards, 1988) and is a field of study guided by the concept of holism. Bronfenbrenner (1978) proposed a human ecological model which depicts an individual's environment as a set of ever-widening and interconnected concentric circles, "...each inside the next, like a set of Russian dolls" (p. 3). Based on their immediacy with respect to the developing individual, he proposed four levels of environmental systems which are illustrated in Figure 4.0: (1) microsystem (where individual development takes place); (2) mesosystem

(where informal structures such as daycare and schools exist); (3) exosystem (the larger institutional organizations); and (4) macrosystem (the broad ideological values, norms, and institutional patterns of a particular culture).

(Insert Figure 4.0 about here)

Adapting a human ecological perspective, personal counselling theory construction begins with the 'self' as the central core (microsphere) (see Figure 4.1). Extending from the self are unfixed dimensions of 'personal features' such as life experiences and character traits (mesosphere), surrounded by 'formal knowledge' like ethics and education (exosphere) which are encapsulated and boxed within the global 'socio-cultural context' (macrosphere).

(Insert Figure 4.1 about here)

There is a reciprocal relationship between the environment and counselling theories. That is, environment (humanity and society) and counselling theories impact upon each other. Kramer (2000) adhered to this notion. He suggested that “we are influenced by the theories that we learn, not that we just influence the theories by our personality” (p. 22). The interweaving and multidimensional influences of the spheres (depicted as double-headed arrows in Figures 4.0 and 4.1) adequately capture counsellors' mutual influence and "synergistic interrelationship" (Lucas, 1985, p. 165) with their environment. Concurrently, dimensions within each sphere have mutual influence on each other and are independent.

In the hermeneutic process of reflecting back and forth in a dialogic with these levels of systems, students are encouraged to reflect upon their own actions, referred to as 'praxis' by Freire (1970), in an ongoing critical reflective manner. Counselling students guided by a hermeneutic approach to constructing their personal counselling theory are also strongly encouraged to revise the CDM for personal relevance, for example, to write, engage in artistic and creative modes of reflection, and to dialogue with others as to relevant dimensions within each system. This perspective is supported through constructivist learning theory, which suggests that questions posed to students must prompt their writing and/or creative mode of reflecting to connect with what they know and believe. Walker emphasized that, “When these connections are made, learners draw on what they know and reshape it in new and newly meaningful ways” (2002, p. 26).



Figure 4.0. Schematic configuration of the Human Ecological Model (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

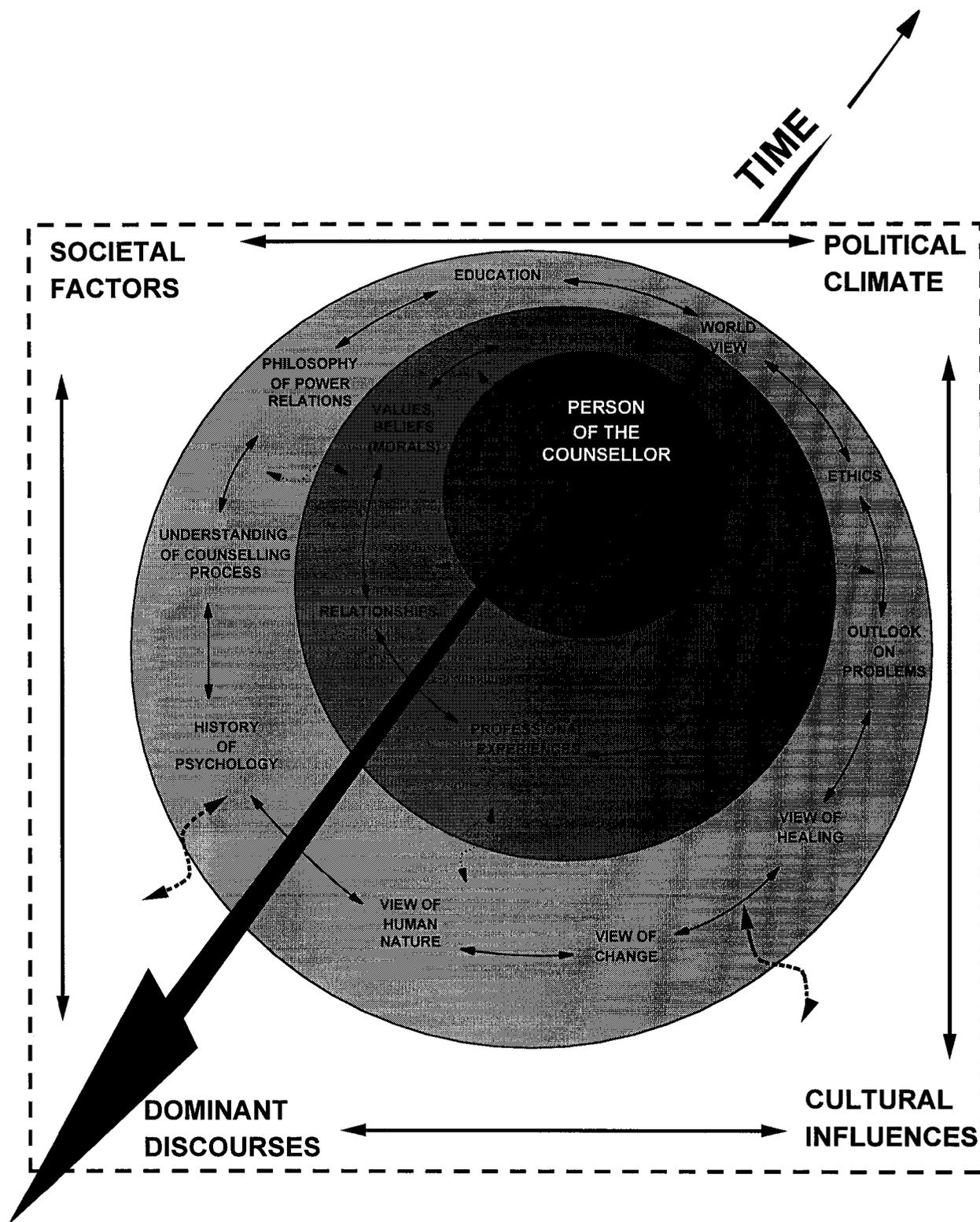


Figure 4.1. Schematic conceptualization of the Concentric Dynamic Model of Counsellor Theory Formation.

The following section entails a description of each sphere within the dimensions of the CDM. In each sphere, I offer an example of guiding questions for written and/or creative reflection and/or dialogue to stimulate personal reflection. These reflective suggestions are italicized in the following section and relate to the focus of each sphere. These suggestions serve as examples; counsellor educators and students are urged to derive reflective activities within each sphere that are personally meaningful and appropriate for her or his specific learning style, counselling program, course focus, and learning intent.

CDM of Counsellor Theory Formation

I. MICROSPHERE: Self

The central system in this model is the microsphere, which is defined as the primary and principle context in which individual development occurs (Bubolz & Sontag, 1993).

(a) Person of the counsellor. Kramer (2000) posited that, “The best therapists take command using their unique person, their style, their strengths. They imitated others along the way, but found that using anyone else’s style comes across as hollow and insincere” (p. 9). This single dimension in the microsphere illustrates the core context for development of the 'self.' Shotter (1985) described the postmodern self as a mosaic and that there are no fixed selves (Gergen, 1991). Shotter saw that “In postmodern everyday life... one occupies a multiplicity of standpoints (selves), each within at least a local community; and within such communities there are standards...to which one must conform if one is to be accounted as a member” (p. 70).

This dimension captures the individual’s constructed self within those communities and standards. Included in this constructed self are the stories of lived experiences and memories, which change over time and place. *Draw the various images you have of yourself in different contexts. Consider your ‘personal practical knowledge’ (Connelly & Clandinin, 1988) and reflect upon: “Who am I in my story of counselling?”; “Who am I in my story of being a student?”; “Who am I in my personal stories?” and so on (adapted from Connelly & Clandinin, 1999).*

II. MESOSPHERE: Personal Features

This level of system includes six dimensions. Each dimension captures unfixed personal attributes that inform an individual's construction of a personal counselling theory at a given time.

(a) Character traits. This dimension includes the counsellor's perspective of her or his personal styles of interacting, as well as personality, disposition and temperament. Hague (1989) and Kottler (1995) maintained that counsellors unearth a philosophy that fits with their personal characteristics. Kramer (2000) aptly articulated this notion.

Virginia Satir got everyone hugging and crying. Murray Bowen expounded intellectually about differentiating from each other. Don Jackson made puzzling contradictory suggestions. Fritz Midelfort spoke of religious values. Nat Ackerman plunged into the oedipal triangle. Yet families responded positively regardless of these differences. I gradually realized that each "method" was an accurate expression of each personality... They were being themselves, in their own distinctive style (p. xv).

Kottler suggested that counsellors stay in the present or the past, incorporate confrontation or support, and/or adopt a directive or passive role consistent with their personality style. Additionally, one's attitude, sense of humour, optimism, and hope are important influences upon one's theory composition. *Write in a journal after your counselling sessions with clients and reflect on when you feel comfortable, when you feel challenged, tired, frustrated, etc. What self-knowledge informs you of why those instances affect you in such ways?*

(b) Spirituality. Our views about the meaning of life, our religious convictions (or lack thereof), and perceptions of death contribute to a personal theory of counselling. Kramer underscored this belief, "Our philosophy of life, our assumptions about mind and spirit, are the foundation upon which we can build unique methods to enhance creativity and personal development" (2000, p. xii). For instance, Frankl theorized existential therapy, which is premised on the significance of a search for personal meaning in life. This exemplifies the relevance of one's spiritual beliefs and how central these beliefs may be in organizing a counselling theory. *Carry a camera with you everyday for several days/weeks and take snapshots throughout the day. Choose among these photographs, give them titles, and consider what these photos tell you about what is meaningful to you and your spiritual beliefs.*

(c) Professional experiences. This dimension acknowledges the highs and lows of professional development as significant learning experiences (Cormier, 1988).

Professional development activities such as: participating in and conducting research; reading academic counselling literature; attending workshops and conferences; and being involved in professional associations, impact upon our understanding of psychology and our place within it. Additionally, the hands-on experience of counselling clients is central to creating a personal theory. *Dialogue about the stories of professional experiences that have been significant in your development?*

(d) Relationships. Cormier (1988) believed that counselling students' exposure to books and practicums was unlikely to be meaningful without the presence of a significant mentoring relationship. Roehlke (1988) discussed relationships as a central catalyst in counsellor self-discovery and development. All relationships-- past, present, and future-- whether personal or professional, inform and alter our theory of counselling. Through our connection to others, a wealth of insights into inter- and intra-human processes is gleaned. *Write a letter or draw a picture for a mentor or someone with whom you have a significant relationship. Share the ways in which she or he has impacted you as a person and counsellor.*

(e) Beliefs/values. In connection to all dimensions within the mesosphere, our beliefs undergird our personhood, relationships, experiences, and theoretical preferences. Postmodern thinking infused in therapeutic practice highlights counsellors' personal value system "which formerly may have been obscured by bodies of theoretical knowledge and techniques" (Chapman, 1993, p. 58). Egan (1990) insisted that counsellors critically examine personal assumptions, values, and beliefs, as they are central to how we navigate ourselves in the world. Similar to spirituality, perceptions of beliefs, values, and morals filter the genesis of a personal theory and guide us to identify with certain counselling theories at a given time. For instance, one may value women's voices and thus adopt feminist tenets within his/her theory. *Write and dialogue about three meaningful experiences you have had in your life. What beliefs and values have these experiences shaped and how do they influence your professional style?*

(f) Life experiences. Life experiences are pivotal in the composition of personal theory. Theories are extensions of personalities and significant life experiences of their

originators (Larsen, 1999; Drapela, 1990). Underscoring the power of life experiences is a burgeoning of literature that richly exposes the underbelly of counsellor's personal healing (Kottler, 1995), critical and tragic life experiences (Gerson, 1996), and integration of personal and professional lives (White & Hales, 1997).

Connelly and Clandinin (1988) proposed 'personal practical knowledge' for teacher knowledge, which is "found in the teacher's practice... a particular way of reconstructing the past and the intentions of the future to deal with the exigencies of a present situation" (p. 25). Adopting their view, developing counsellors are also encouraged to reflect upon their personal practical knowledge and the stories that hone the craft of their counselling practice. *Go through your memory album and choose four snapshots that call to you... Perhaps share these in dialogue and/or compose the stories of these snapshots. Reflect upon whether and in what ways these stories may shape your professional counselling practice.*

III. EXOSPHERE: Formal Knowledge

This is the level in the system that incorporates external structures into the scheme of a personal theory of counselling. There are ten different components in this level, all representing a variety of influences to which the counsellor has been exposed, or ideas that the counsellor has about the world.

(a) Education. Counsellors will participate in many different academic experiences throughout their lifetime. These encompass training programs completed, degrees earned, and specific courses taken, such as social psychology, learning theory, human development, personality theory, and cognition (Kottler & Brown, 1992). Courses in philosophy and sociology, as well as practical instruction in individual, family, and group therapy are also influential to one's personal theory of counselling (Drapela, 1990). Furthermore, our knowledge of various counselling theories is considered to be extremely important, as this knowledge provides a relevant foundation to personal theories of counselling (Brammer et al., 1989; Horton, 1996; Kottler & Brown, 1992). *Notice and reflect in dialogue with classmates about the theories that have been emphasized in your training. What theories did your supervisors espouse? How did (do) they impact your work?*

(b) Worldview. Worldview refers to the philosophical outlook or epistemic style that one holds about the world and how people come to know reality (Neimeyer, Prichard, Lyddon, & Sherrard, 1993). For instance, divergent and disparate epistemologies are evidenced in modernism versus postmodernism and scientism versus humanism. Scientism focuses on observation, objectivity, and laboratory studies, while humanism concentrates on experience, subjectivity, and phenomenology (Messer, 1989). As Neimeyer et al. surmised through their research, counselling students' epistemic styles influenced their preferred theories, techniques, and beliefs. *Attend a popular culture event (e.g. sport or concert) and in the role of an ethnographer consider how popularity of the event is maintained; who has organized the structure of the event; and what does the event mean to you? Share your observations in dialogue.*

(c) Ethics. Corey (1991) wrote that, "It is important for counsellors to develop a sound basis of ethical decision-making as it is inevitable that we will be faced with ethical dilemmas throughout our career" (p. 49). This dimension encompasses counsellors' knowledge, understanding, and adherence to ethical guidelines and theory. Professional as well as personal ethics inform our derivation of a theory of counselling. *Develop a roleplay with your classmates representing an incident when your boundaries were overstepped. Demonstrate literally or figuratively what happened and what personal or professional ethic felt compromised.*

(d) Outlook on problems. Horton (1996) and Ward (1983) substantiated that counsellors should strive towards clarity about their views of human nature as well as the definition, function, and maintenance of problems. These views influence a counsellor's practice by either restricting her/his focus to one area of the client's life, or attempting to address all aspects of life (work, leisure, intimacy, sexuality, education) that may impinge on the problem (Nelson-Jones, 1985). *Compose a letter to yourself about a problem you have, or have faced, in your life. Include details about what helped maintain the problem and suggestions for how you will, or have, resolved the issue. Reflect and dialogue about how your experience of dealing with a problem contextualizes how you help clients.*

(e) Views of healing. As counsellors, views about healing have a great impact on developing a theory of counselling. Nelson-Jones (1985) asserted that in counsellors' treatment of client problems it is important for balance in the three rudimentary

components of human behaviour: feelings, thoughts, and actions. Counsellors can decide how each of these aspects is critical in the healing process and thus employ interventions that, in their view, best facilitate healing. For example, healing may occur through the therapeutic relationship, a release of emotion, reinforcement of client strengths, confrontation, desensitization to fears, or skills building (Horton, 1996). *Reflect on your positive experiences as a client in counselling. What is your perspective of what was helpful and how healing was promoted. Consider what focuses the counsellor maintained.*

(f) Views of change. Horton (1996) maintained that counsellors have basic assumptions that influence their views on the change process. Beliefs about change influence counsellors' focus in their practice and their notions of counselling progress. Horton further suggested that counsellors possess ideas about the processes that facilitate client change and that these ideas inspire the interventions employed by counsellors. Furthermore, our views of change encompass our ideas of personal agency, self-concept, and choice (Nelson-Jones, 1985). *What are the stories of adapting to change in your life?*

(g) Views of human nature. Our outlook on the nature of humankind informs our theoretical preferences and the counselling strategies we choose. Brammer et al. (1989) asserted that views of human nature include one's opinions about whether people are inherently good or evil and one's conception of a fully-functioning and mature person. According to Allport (1960, as cited in Drapela, 1990), people often gravitate toward one or another philosophical assumption regarding the nature of man (sic), often without being fully aware that they are doing so. These gravitations guide a counsellor's respect for the uniqueness, and complexity of each client (Larsen, 1999). *Pick several pieces of music (preferably with lyrics) that are meaningful to you. Write and/or dialogue about what the lyrics or piece means to you and what type of perspective into human nature the music supports.*

(h) History of Psychology. This dimension provides a backdrop to the varieties of counselling theories. What has gone before us such as significant trends, frameworks, theories, and practices that have dominated the field at different points of time expand and limit our choice of theory. Awareness of these ideas and the founders of psychological tenets may be realized by engaging in coursework, readings, seminars, and

discussion with colleagues (Kottler & Brown, 1992). It is important to critically consider how these tenets gained foothold in psychology and counselling. *Reflect on the various theories that have predominated at various points in time and the impact on the profession and on your counsellor education.*

(i) Understanding of counselling process. Our understandings about the counselling process ultimately influence our personal theory. Related beliefs affect notions of the therapeutic relationship, the content of therapy, therapeutic goals, and stages of therapy (Beitman, 1989; Daniluk, 1989; Horton, 1996; Kottler & Brown, 1992). Horton and Daniluk suggested that understanding the counselling process involves a counsellor's periodic evaluation of effectiveness and reflection of therapeutic plans, progresses, techniques, outcomes, and goals. Included in this dimension are Beitman's ideas about the counsellor's flexibility in her/his use of techniques, depending on how well suited they are to client needs. *What have you noticed about the counselling process in your own therapy as a client? Keep a journal log for your counselling work with a particular client. Journal about the counselling process and its evolution over time.*

(j) Philosophy of power relations. Divergent views of power emerge from various paradigms that exist in our culture. One's paradigm influences the way a counsellor views his or her role in counselling and the way that she or he approaches psychological problems. For example, a counsellor may subscribe to the medical model, which advocates counsellors as 'expert.' Alternatively, a counsellor may subscribe to more feminist or humanistic tenets and value 'shared power,' which implies that clients and counsellors mutually hold power in the relationship (Kottler & Brown, 1992). It is also important to consider the view that counselling theories and approaches themselves can be oppressive toward and dismissive of clients (Chapman, 1993). *Dialogue with a classmate on the issue of power. Continue the dialogue about how you negotiate power in counselling relationships.*

IV. MACROSPHERE: Socio-Cultural Context

This level of system, including four dimensions, involves the global mosaic that we are a part of and contribute toward. The socio-cultural context limits and expands our ways of knowing about the world and filters our theoretical ideas of counselling. As such

it is essential to be critically conscious and reflective about such things as politics and the power of therapy (Chapman, 1993).

(a) Dominant discourses. Gergen (1985) maintained that one's theory is inseparable from socially constructed knowledge. The worldview of a nation, the socially constructed 'realities,' and the reified cultural 'truths' tint the landscape of psychological theories. Our lives are continuously shaped by the cultural stories of our race, gender, and social class (Freedman & Combs, 1996). Whether deconstructing in a postmodern perspective or absorbing from a modernist paradigm, we are fettered to the dominant discourses of our culture. Patriarchal, religious, and constructed narratives of 'success,' 'family,' or 'disease' are some examples of the edifices which imbue our lives and theories. *Compose a written dialogue between yourself and a dominant narrative, such as 'success,' 'disease,' or 'family.'* Ask it questions about how it keeps itself strong and alive and what weakens and threatens its existence in society.

(b) Cultural influences. The cultural context weaves the fabric of our existence and influences the psychological theories that are embraced, valued, and supported. Furthermore, the cultural landscape richly informs notions of healing. While one culture may collectively attribute value to verbalizing pain and feelings, another may operate from different paradigms such as a 'sweat lodge' for healing and discovery. Furthermore, there can be divergent cultural value systems from the western cultural perspective. *Dialogue with classmates about your personal value of individualism (personal freedom of choice) versus collectivism (family honour). How might you be imposing this cultural value onto clients unwittingly? How do you practice as a multicultural counsellor?*

(c) Political climate. The politics of a nation has consequential effects on a fundamental theory of counselling. Our human rights, personal freedom, and democratic environment influence the issues that people face and consequently alter our scheme of counselling. A threat or state of war would affect the profession and practice of psychology in ways that would likely infuse our theoretical stance. Influenced by the climate in which we exist, a capitalist or socialist political environment similarly provides context for our work as counsellors. During the Chinese Cultural Revolution, for instance, the government closed the nation's psychology departments and research institutes (Clay, 2002). Psychology itself was "dismissed as a bourgeois pseudo-science

promoting false ideology of individual differences” (p. 64). This ideology brought with it a devaluing of psychology and counselling, which has greatly affected views of counselling in China even in present day. Presently, the Chinese government has declared psychology a high priority in government funding in attempts to reinstate the discipline. *Dialogue or write about the political ideologies of your nation and how they affect and shape the profession of psychology?*

(d) Societal factors. Existing social programs, legal provisions, and economic factors are connected to dominant discourses and our political and cultural climate. Social factors can govern client problems, as well as who can access counselling services, and the ways that we can operate as practitioners in public or private agencies. Our social environment is thus reflected in our personal theory of counselling. *Dialogue with classmates about how clients, in general, access counselling services. What factors enable people to access counselling in our society? Reflect on how you will (or will not) make your services more accessible.*

V. CHRONOSPHERE: Time

The final system is the chronosphere (see Figure 4.1), which depicts the dimension of time and symbolizes the fact that changes in one's personal theory are inevitable and natural over the course of a career (Combs, 1989; Hague, 1989). This dimension is integral to the holistic model, as it represents a constructivist belief that the person of the counsellor continues to develop and change over time as one's perspectives about self and the world continue to shift. *Compare your CDM reflections every few years to recognize how your perspectives have altered over time and the experiences that have impacted these changes.*

Implications for Counsellor Education and Development

Introducing counselling students to the CDM and facilitating a hermeneutic process of self-inquiry in theory construction may help demystify the formation of a personal counselling theory. Structuring a reflective counselling curriculum to empower students on this journey through open-dialogue, critique about the model itself, and by practicing critical reflective teaching, students may feel more in control of their counsellor development. Engaging students to think and reflect upon important aspects of

themselves, as well as the field of counselling and broader societal influences may enlighten the daunting task of theory construction. Each student can start on the hermeneutic journey where it is personally relevant and weave back and forth in various directions. In addition, this model may foster the recognition that a theory composite may take time to emerge and that there is not necessarily one 'right' or 'better' theory.

Nevertheless, in recognizing that counselling is political and that it can be a vehicle for addressing some of the injustices that occur in society, it is vital for students, once the search for theory is turned inward, to then consider the influence of this chosen theory and its impact on all outer spheres. This is consistent with the 'Just Therapy' approach that is practiced and advocated by therapists at The Family Centre in Lower Hutt, New Zealand. They contend that in choosing not to address the political issues of therapy, therapists may be inadvertently replicating, maintaining, and even furthering, existing injustices. Considering that counsellors can perpetuate dominant views or can be agents who invite people (clients) to critically question dominant messages (Waldergrave, 1990) we have a socio-political responsibility to social justice (Freire, 1970) in counselling practice. The CDM is unique in that it invites a critical social consciousness to examine one's personal theory of counselling.

Directions for Integration and Research of CDM

One potential of the CDM organizing schema that requires exploration through application and research is the possibility that CDM has universal applicability. For example, counselling students in various countries around the world can be exposed to CDM and dialogue can begin as to what is personally relevant and what is not. The meaningfulness and applicability of this model may be understood from perspectives of student counsellors of diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds, who are at different life stages and circumstances, and who hold unique beliefs about people and the world. Furthermore, since theory is everchanging as is our self-conception, this model may be meaningful for counsellors at any phase during their career (Brammer et al., 1989; Combs, 1989). This can be explored by conducting focus group discussions with veteran counsellors and with novice counsellors to discuss the model.

The CDM also requires field-testing to verify whether the organizing schema assists to engender students to incorporate a self-reflective, holistic view of themselves in

devising theory. Self-reflection is critical to counsellors' acting with professional integrity. As such, it is important that self-reflection is fostered early in a student counsellor's career. This view was underscored by Combs (1989) and Hague (1989) who espoused that counselling programs should transcend mere theory and skills acquisition and focus on student exploration and refinement of personal beliefs. Indeed, knowing oneself is integral to counsellor development; but the field has "emphasized techniques and theories for *doing* therapy and has virtually ignored techniques and theories for *becoming* a better person and therapist. As a result, we teach and learn the less essential while downplaying the heart of therapeutic change" (Kramer, 2000, pp. xv).

Promoting self-awareness in counsellor theory formation, CDM is strong in its emphasis on becoming a reflective person and professional. It was designed to portray counsellor theory formation, counsellor development, and self-development as one in the same and to depict the intricacies, complexities, and the continuous process of theory derivation. Thus, the search for theory is turned inward and then outward as the model invites a continuous hermeneutic dialogue between self and the world. As such, the model has pedagogical implications for shifting and rebalancing the focus of counsellor education programs to include the 'inner'/ subjective world of counselling.

Before CDM can be employed as a tool to facilitate students' theory construction, field-testing is imperative to ensure its appropriateness and usefulness for guiding students. By experimenting with CDM, the model may be refined and improved to substantiate its accessibility and utility. Future research investigating the usefulness of this theoretical road map with beginning counselling students is necessary. Informal group discussions and student reflections of the inquiries in each of the dimensions of the CDM are integral to substantiating the model. For instance, Masters students in a counselling theories course could be offered the CDM as a working model for theory derivation. Course assignments could involve each student choosing several dimensions to reflect upon. Each student could use her or his creativity to reflect on the dimensions in a personally relevant manner or to respond to the suggested reflective questions. At the end of the course, a focus group discussion and/or individual research interviews with students can assist in determining the model's effectiveness in guiding the genesis of personal counselling theory. Furthermore, seasoned counselling professionals could be

interviewed to provide input into whether the model resonates with their experience of personal theory derivation and to assist in model refinement.

Conclusion

Constructing one's counselling theory consists of a hermeneutic journey that can be facilitated by the CDM. This paper proposed the CDM of counsellor theory formation as a navigational tool in the journey of composing a personal theory of counselling. Through the refinement of the CDM and a view of theories as reflections of the self, students may be better equipped to construct a consistent, comprehensive, and defensible personal theory of counselling and thus increase their accountability as professional counsellors. Counselling programs with an orientation to reflective teaching also provide a fundamental basis and epistemic orientation to engender reflexive counsellor development. Emphasis on the value of the person of the counsellor promotes the practice of self-reflection, which McMullen (2001) asserted as integral to a more personally fulfilling and enduring professional path.

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Figure Captions

Figure 4.0. Schematic of Bronfenbrenner's (1978) Human Ecological theory, depicting the systems of interrelation from the individual to the global-social context. See text for details.

Figure 4.1. Schematic of the Concentric Dynamic Model of Counsellor Theory Formation. See text for details.

EPILOGUE DISCUSSION & REFLECTION

Education is not reducible to a mechanical method of instruction. Learning is not a quantity of information to be memorized or a package of skills to be transferred to students. Classrooms die as intellectual centers when they become delivery systems for lifeless bodies of knowledge... a Freirean class invites students to think critically about subject matter, doctrines, the learning process itself, and their society" (Shor, p. 25, 1993)

Shor (1993) captured Freire's powerful views on education and echoed what this research attempted to convey—that it is imperative to engender reflective practitioners. Shaull declared in his foreward in The Pedagogy of Oppressed: “Fed up as I am with the abstractness and sterility of so much intellectual work in academic circles today, I am excited by a process of reflection...” (p. xi, 1970). Freire's seminal work has engaged people in a methodology of reflection and action (praxis) to counteract and critically evaluate that education itself can be a subversive force: a mechanistic ‘filling’ of student ‘receptacles’. Praxis as “reflection and action upon the world in order to reform it” (p. 32) must emerge from within to turn upon the abstractness, sterility, and mechanistic views touted in educational practices. Friere called for critical reflective practice as the essence of this inward and outward turn. Glasgow (1997) concurred that “creating greater relevancy and authentic context in academic classroom activities facilitate[s] self-directed and self-motivated learning styles” (p. xvii).

Through this research endeavor it was suggested through a review of extant literature that formal counselling education programs were slow to embrace a reflective curriculum as compared to teacher, nursing, and home economics programs. It became clear through this research involving five co-researchers that certain conditions better assist the growth of reflective counselling practitioners. Ensuring that facilitative reflective practice opportunities exist in counsellor training includes honoring spaces in educator/supervisor/administrator knowledge and within curriculum for developing trusted interpersonal relationships (between student-student; student-instructor; student-supervisor; student-administrative personnel) and for enhancing and encouraging student self-risk and involvement in reflective tasks. It was determined that a reflective turn

(Schon, 1991) in counsellor pedagogy is an essential epistemic shift that would provide a solid foundation, which would enable reflective practice to live on in counsellor education rather than living through only particular counsellor educators and supervisors.

The Concentric Dynamic Model (CDM) of Counsellor Theory Construction was one organizing schema, which invites a hermeneutic process of self-inquiry; and is proposed for such a reflective turn in curriculum. This manuscript was a point of departure from the previous manuscripts; however, with its evolution, the fundamental ideas were reflective of the learnings from those manuscripts. The CDM could assist to induce a shift in pedagogical orientation to the inner world of therapy and the person of the developing counsellor. Within reflective counselling curriculum, engaging students to think and reflect upon important aspects of themselves, as well as the field of counselling and broader societal influences was proposed to enlighten the daunting task of theory construction.

Reflections

As I reflect back on this research, further thoughts come to mind. What follows is an account of these reflections and awakenings, particularly to the politics of education. Within this view of education as political, a reflective-constructivist orientation in counsellor education is further emphasized as a way to challenge, rather than buttress the edifice of education. As well, the problematic nature of licensing and accreditation standards are reflected upon as well as the personal angst I experience given these external exigencies. This angst is highlighted through my experience in narrowly defining academic rigor. In closing, I reflect upon how reflective practice in counsellor education fosters and engenders a 'we' perspective.

Education as Problematic and Political

A philosophical shift to problematizing education invites a critical approach and coincides with a democratic view of education asserted by Shor and Freire: "Education is politics!" (1987, p. 46). This view substantiates education as controlled and governed from top down by an elite that imposes its culture and values as the standard through required syllabuses, mandated textbooks, standardized exams, and tracking. In counsellor education this standard is also regulated by accreditation and licensing requirements. Without problematizing and politicizing counsellor education, we collude with the

problem and become passive and complacent recipients of an imposed education. Shor supported this view of education as political and eloquently remarked:

[Politics] is also in the method of choosing course content, whether it is shared decision or only the teacher's prerogative, whether there is a negotiated curriculum in the classroom or one imposed unilaterally... Politics also resides in the discourse of the classroom, in the way teachers and students talk to each other, in the questions and statements from teachers about the themes being studied, in the freedom students feel when questioning the curriculum, in the silences typically surrounding unorthodox questions and issues in traditional classrooms. Further, there is politics, in the physical conditions of classrooms and buildings which send messages to students about their worth and place in society" (1993, p. 27).

Constructivist Education

The problem and politics of education cannot be resolved. That is, we cannot change the social order but something can be done to empower educators to reflect critically upon the educational system, their own life experiences (Greene, 1978, as cited in Zeichner & Liston, 1987), the field of counselling, and broader societal influences that regulate the profession and to challenge injustices within the system. Educating through a social constructivist epistemology means acknowledging that education is political and means striving to influence educators and those who influence educational policy to “choose integrity over urgency, autonomy and discretion over control, complexity over simplicity” (Lambert, 2002, p. 9).

Constructivist educating, as proposed in Constructivist Leader (2002) enlists individuals and organizations to bring life experiences and beliefs, as well as their cultural histories and world views, into the process of learning; all of these shape how we encounter and interact with new ideas in the learning process. Lambert expressed that, “As our personal perspectives are mediated with the world through inquiry, we construct and attribute meaning to these encounters, building new knowledge in the process. The constructive, interpretive work is facilitated and deepened when undertaken with others and with reflection” (p. xvi).

A constructivist approach to counsellor education would underscore a reflective curriculum and mean consciously engaging students to imbue experiences with meaning. That is, assignments and course expectations should mandate or facilitate students

gaining access to their experiences, knowledge, and beliefs (Walker, 2002). In this way, constructivist approaches to counsellor education empowers students to reflect upon their knowledge and experiences and to use what they know to interpret new information and construct new knowledge.

Chartering and Accreditation

The problematic nature of counsellor education and the politics of guided standards from a top-down approach are exacerbated with expectations and regulations invoked through licensing and accreditation of programs. Larsen (1999) highlighted the problem of accreditation requirements and the restrictive focus this standard maintains in the profession. She wrote:

Accreditation criteria place strict requirements on the kinds and content of course offerings for an accredited degree... accreditation holds the potential to create a hegemony over professional practice and scholarly thought—sanctioning some ways of knowing and dismissing others, by their absence, other ways of knowing (p. 293)... If anything, accreditation may hold the potential to undermine the best intentions and abilities of the academic community forcing rigid ways of practicing and researching onto both faculty and students alike” (p. 294).

In a similar fashion, the process of chartering as a psychologist means adhering to standard courses and meeting particular requirements that could also be considered sanctioned ways of knowing.

Nevertheless, I find myself torn; I am living the angst in appreciating that I come from an accredited counselling program and am thankful for the status and shelter this provides me in the competitive world of professional counsellor development. Likewise, I plan to earn my license as a psychologist to complete the process of my formal counselling education journey. Some might believe these contradictions to be hypocritical. Perhaps this is the case; however, I believe the inconsistencies that live within me speak to the strength of hegemonic forces within our profession and the far stretch we are from creating inroads to a reflective (and constructivist) formal counsellor education program.

I contend that there are ways in which standards and regulatory bodies can exist to enhance and support reflective practice rather than enforce and legitimate types of knowledge. This can be made possible with administrators, provisional licensing board

members, Canadian psychology and counselling association board members, and other powerful figureheads embracing a constructivist-reflective orientation and an openness to reflective counselling pedagogy. I believe that there are such individuals in these positions of power and I wholeheartedly respect that they are juggling all the demands of the profession as well as fighting to turn the tides toward reflective formal counsellor practice and education.

Academic Rigor

Further emphasizing my experience of personal angst were my thoughts in presenting this research for an academic position; I found myself struggling not to succumb to the dominant message that deems the 'inner' world of therapy as less scholarly in the dominant academic milieu. My struggle reverberated the tensions and deprecatory view of reflective practice in academy. Dominant discourse on what is considered 'valued knowledge' constitutes the formalistic basis on which counsellor pedagogy rests. We can begin by empowering ourselves and each other to 'voice' and 'reflect' and to stand firm with 'open-reflective' stances in more and more professional counsellor settings.

It is my hope that this research on reflective practice and counsellor education will spark new dialogues and considerations within counselling pedagogy and curriculum. The counsellor student stories included in this research reinforce the deep connection between personal and professional. Perhaps new endeavors will be launched to integrate the personal into the professional in ways that have integrity and ethics (Larsen, 1999). A call for a reflective development focus in counselling pedagogy is resonant with other relevant works, perhaps this research will deepen the sound of that call by asserting aspects that engender reflective practice on the landscape of counsellor education programs.

Fostering a 'We' Perspective

The role of counsellor assumes knowledge about the human condition, human personality, human suffering, human development, and human relationships to name just a few. Responses to this role can take the form of counsellor as expert; however, I argue the role is best met by acknowledging that counsellors are human and as fallible, prone to adversity, poor judgment, hardships, etc. as anyone else. Recognizing and accepting that

we live stories and plot lines similar to clients, and that we are clients ourselves, allows the capacity to humanize our approach and takes us down from the Ivory Tower.

Promoting reflective practice in counsellor education and development may assist to break down—crumble this tower and dissolve the ‘us’ versus ‘them’ distinction and foster a ‘we’ perspective. Although a near impossible feat, it is meaningful to attempt to equalize the balance within hierarchical relationships (Bird, 2000).

Developing and practicing as reflective counsellors and counsellor educators can assist to bring us steps closer to this equalization as we critically reflect on justice and equality in our profession. Recognizing the significance of embracing reflective practice has implications for minimizing the objectifying of people (clients) as ‘other’. Bird (2000) speaks to the inevitability that we cannot stand at all places all of the time; that we stand in our own position with our experiences of culture, gender, and perspectives. We are able to better stand, empathically, in others’ lived experiences if we have solid footing within our own.

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APPENDIX A

Written Informed Consent Form

Research Study Title:

REFLECTING ON THE EDUCATIONAL LANDSCAPE: COUNSELLING STUDENTS' STORIES

Researcher:

Gina Wong-Wylie,
Ph.D. Candidate,
Department of Educational Psychology
University of Alberta
Telephone: 435-8467

Supervisor:

Dr. Ronna Jevne,
Professor,
Department of EdPsych
University of Alberta
Telephone: 492-7273

Research Purpose:

The purpose of this two-phase research is to explore reflective practice in the context of counsellor education and to capture personal and professional stories of counselling students.

When participating, you will be asked to discuss your views of self-reflection and to recount meaningful experiences of self-reflection in your counsellor education. These accounts are those that you feel especially stood out in your experiences. Subsequently, I will talk with you to further understand your perception of each incident. The information that you share will be used for research and educational purposes only and may be presented at professional conferences and through published works. This information will be kept in a locked filing cabinet. All materials will be destroyed after one year following the completion of this study. Files will be identified by code only; no names of persons or identifying information will be included.

As a co-researcher you are being asked to be involved in four specific ways:

1. To be available for the 2 phases of the study consisting of 2-3 hour meetings each.
2. To complete a demographic sheet.
3. To write specific incidents in your counselling education that are salient to you and be involved in a conversation about those incidents.
4. To share personal and/or professional stories with the researcher and engage in discussions about those stories.

Your involvement as a co-researcher in this study is your own choice. This means that you:

- May verify your transcriptions and representations of your experiences at least once to ensure their accuracy.
- May opt out of answering any question(s) and/or discuss any topic(s) during conversations.
- May stop the conversations at any point in time.
- Can withdraw from the study at any time either before or after consent of participation. The information that you have shared with me prior to your withdrawal will be used only with your permission. If you decline this permission, I will destroy all written materials and erase audio-recordings of conversations and destroy all verbatim transcripts.

I may use anonymous excerpts when presenting the research. Accounts in the study will not include your name; rather, you will be identified by a fictitious name, which you may choose or will be assigned at my discretion.

As a co-researcher of this study, you will have a chance to ask any questions concerning this study. These questions will be answered to your satisfaction prior to beginning and throughout your involvement in the study.

There are no known risks to individuals participating in this study and it will not affect your standing as a counselling student or your standing as a practicing counselling psychologist. There is also no financial compensation for participating in this research project. However, it is hoped that you will find it worthwhile to share personal stories and also to discuss your experiences of reflecting. Your participation in this study may help to further understand the lived experiences of counselling students as well as the phenomenon of reflective practice and its integration in counselling education.

I, _____ certify that I have read (or have been read) and fully
(print name)

understand the above consent form. I agree to participate in this research and have a copy of this form to keep.

(Co-researcher's signature)

(Date)

(Researcher's signature)

APPENDIX B

Conversation Guide: PHASE I

REFLECTING ON THE EDUCATIONAL LANDSCAPE: COUNSELLING STUDENTS' STORIES

The goal of this conversation is to understand the meaning of self-reflection in the personal and professional lives of counsellors and counselling students and to further the descriptive richness of salient experiences of self-reflection in their counsellor education.

Background on Self-Reflection

- What does self-reflection or reflective practice mean to you?
- Would you say you are a reflective person?
- In what ways are you or are you not reflective?
- What types of things do you reflect about?
- Do you feel that reflecting is important for personal and/or professional development of counsellors?
- Has it been important to you?
- What rating of importance would you assign to reflective practice and its impact on your development as a counsellor (1-10)?
- What rating of importance would you assign to reflective practice and its impact on your development as a person (1-10)?
- In what ways has reflection impacted your personal or professional self?
- Complete the following sentence as many times as you would like: “With regard to self-reflection my counselling education has _____.”
- Do you feel that your counsellor training thus far has supported or not supported reflective practice? Why or why not?
- What emphasis do you feel counsellor education should place on preparing self-reflective counsellors?
- If you could design the ideal counsellor education training setting, what would it look like?
- Have you had any powerful experiences of self-reflection being facilitated or hindered in your counselling education?
- If you have had any, could you describe each in as much descriptive detail as you can—could you write about each one? I will remain silent as you do this so that you have a chance to focus your concentration on the experiences.

After reading each written account:

- What was the approximate length of time over which the specific incident occurred?
- At what stage in your counselling education did the incident occur?

- Can you describe the environment in which the incident occurred? What was your general mood at that time?
 - Who was present during the incident?
 - What were you feeling?
 - What did you say and do and what did others say and do?
 - What impact, if any, has this experience had on you?
 - Is there anything you'd like to tell me to further capture this incident?
 - Is there anything else you'd like to add about your reflective self or your educational experiences?
-

Concluding Remarks:

- Invite co-researcher to get in touch with me if she/he thinks of anything to add or if they have any questions, concerns, or changes to our conversation she/he would like to discuss.
- As if I could contact them if I have verification questions.
- Assure co-researcher that they can review and edit the text of the conversational transcripts.
- Schedule Phase II meeting and invite co-researcher to bring written reflections, journal excerpts, photos, letters, or anything she/he would like to share of personal or professional stories and that I will do the same.

Note: These conversation guides will not lead the discussion. Conversations will unfold at the pace and guidance of co-researchers.

Conversation Guide: PHASE II

This conversation is unstructured, but is focused on discussing the person of the counsellor. This conversation is shaped by the co-researcher's poignant personal and professional stories.

Concluding Remarks:

Invite co-researchers to share stories about her/his personal and professional life and engage in discussions about these stories at the co-researcher's comfort. Discuss personal theories of counselling and counselling approaches.

APPENDIX C*Demographic Sheet***REFLECTING ON THE EDUCATIONAL LANDSCAPE: COUNSELLING
STUDENTS' STORIES**

Code _____

Special Instructions (e.g., not phoning after certain hours):

General Information:

Age ____ Gender _____

Ethnic background (e.g. Chinese) _____

First Language _____

Other languages spoken _____

Place of birth _____

Educational background

Gina Wong-Wylie

Curriculum Vitae

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

- Ph.D.** **August 19/01-August 19/02:** Completed 1600 hours of pre-doctoral counselling internship at the University of British Columbia, Student Counselling Services, Room 1200, 1874 East Mall, Vancouver, B.C.
- September 7/99:** Completed doctoral candidacy. Dissertation topic: Reflective Practice: Counsellor Education & Development.
- September 1997:** Admitted to the University of Alberta, Ph.D. program in the department of Educational Psychology, Division of Counselling Psychology.
- M.Sc.** **1996-1997:** Completed M.Sc. at the University of Alberta in the Department of Human Ecology, Family Ecology & Practice. Thesis entitled: Family Incidents: Impacting Hope of Persons Living with HIV/AIDS.
- B.A.** **1989-94:** Completed B.A. at the University of Alberta in Linguistics with a minor in Psychology.

ACADEMIC AWARDS / SCHOLARSHIPS

2001-02	Dissertation Research Fellowship,	University of Alberta
2002	Graduate Student Research Travel Fund,	University of Alberta
1998-01	Walter H Johns Graduate Fellowship,	University of Alberta
1998-01	Social Science and Humanities Research Council,	Canada
1998	Ed Psych Conference Funding Support,	University of Alberta
1997-99	Honorary U of A Ph.D. Scholarship,	University of Alberta
1997-98	Province of Alberta Graduate Fellowship,	Alberta Heritage
1997	J Gordin Kaplan Graduate Student Award,	University of Alberta
1997	Hope Foundation Research Scholarship,	Hope Foundation
1997	Province of Alberta Graduate Scholarship,	Alberta Heritage
1997	Mary A. Clarke Graduate Scholarship,	Canadian Home Ec
1996-97	Graduate Studies and Research Scholarship,	University of Alberta
1996	Mary Louise Imrie Graduate Award,	University of Alberta
1996	Doris Badir Graduate Research Fellowship,	University of Alberta

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INVITED ADDRESSES:

Wong-Wylie, G. (2001, July). Reflective Practice & Hope. Presented to Hope and Helping Relationship 497/597 seminar, University of Alberta, Edmonton.

Wong-Wylie, G. (1999, May). Hope and Critical Illness: The Centrality of Relationship in Patient/Doctor Interactions. Paper presented at the Canadian Association of Psychosocial Oncology Annual Conference, Symposium "Rays of Hope" Edmonton, Alberta.

Wong-Wylie, G. & Jevne, R. (1998, October). Stories of Hope. Presentation at the Faculty of Education Research Symposium, University of Alberta, Edmonton.

Wong-Wylie, G. (1998, September). Preparing Successful SSHRC Applications. Presented in a panel discussion to graduate students in the Faculty of Education, University of Alberta, Edmonton.

Wong-Wylie, G. & Norris, D. (1998, June). Coming together in hope: The implications of hope in health care practice for people living with HIV/AIDS. Presented a seminar to physicians and nurses at the UofA Hospital and the Royal Alexandra Hospital, Edmonton. Sponsored by Hoffman-Laroche Pharmaceutical Company.

Wong-Wylie, G. & Norris, D. (1998, January). Still Hope in Living with AIDS. Presented at the Hope Research Meeting at the Hope Foundation of Alberta, Edmonton.

Wong-Wylie, G. (1997, September). Journey to Research Inquiry. Guest lecturer to Ed 510, UofA, Edmonton.

Wong-Wylie, G. (1996, December). The Publishing Process: A Student's Perspective. Guest lecturer to HeCol 601, University of Alberta, Edmonton.

Williamson, H., **Wong-Wylie, G.** & Kennedy, M. (1996, November). Exploring Hope. Workshop to Canadian Federation of University Women at their provincial meeting of executives, Sherwood Park. Alberta.

Wong-Wylie, G. (1995, October). Hope. Presentation to Northern Alberta Brain Injury Society, Edmonton.

INSERVICE PRESENTATIONS

Wong-Wylie, G. (2002, April). Affirming Asian Canadian Women: Issues of Race, Gender, and Identity. Presented to practicum counsellors at the University of British Columbia, Counselling Services, Vancouver, British Columbia.

Wong-Wylie, G. (2002, January). Reflective Practice in Counsellor Education. Presented to counsellors and psychologists at the University of British Columbia, Counselling Services, Vancouver, British Columbia.

Wong-Wylie, G. (1999, March). Narrative Therapy with Women Survivors of Childhood Sexual Abuse. Presented to counsellors at the Sexual Assault Centre of Edmonton.

Wong-Wylie, G. (1998, November). Effects of Sexual Abuse/Assault on Women's Sexuality: An Overview of Clinical Interventions. Presented to counsellors at the Sexual Assault Centre of Edmonton.

Wong-Wylie, G. & Edey, W. (1998, March). Hope Takes the Stand: A Counselling Perspective. Presented to psychologists at the University of Alberta Student Counselling Services, Edmonton.

Wong-Wylie, G. (1998, January). A Hope Focuses Approach to Counselling. Presented to psychologists at the University of Alberta Hospital, Department of Clinical Psychology, Edmonton.

COUNSELLING EXPERIENCE

Provisional Chartered Psychologist (College of Alberta Psychologists): October 2001

COURSES TAKEN

Advanced Personality Assessment: Objectives and Projective Testing; Advanced Psychological Assessment: Theories & Models; Individual Psychological Assessment; Specialization in Couples' Counselling & Sexuality; Group Counselling; Advanced Family Counselling; Introductory level training in Clinical Hypnosis (20 hours) (The Canadian Society of Clinical Hypnosis).

Skilled in Administering, scoring, and assessing

Intellectual Tests: Stanford Binet (SB-IV); Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children (WISC-III); Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Adults (WAIS III), WASI.

Personality Tests: Myers-Briggs Type Indicator; Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI-2); Personality Assessment Inventory (PAI), MCMI-II, Projective Drawings

Cognitive/Memory: RBANS, TOMM, MAS

Malingering Tests: CARB

Achievement Tests: Canada Quick Individual Educational Test (Canada QUIET); Wide Range Achievement Test - Revision 3 (WRAT 3); Wechsler Individual Achievement Test (WIAT); Woodcock Johnson Psychoeducational Test Battery; Woodcock Mastery Reading Test.

Perceptual-Motor Tests: Beery-Buktenica; Developmental Test of Visual-Motor Integration (VMI).

Behavior and Emotions Rating Scales:

Behavior Rating Scales for Children (BASC); Self-Report Incomplete Sentences Blank- High School Form; ADD and ADHD Adult Rating Scale; Adult ADD Evaluation Scale (A-ADDES); Swanson ADHD (SNAP); Beck Depression Inventory (BDI); Culture-Free Self-Esteem Inventories- Second Edition (Form AD); Structured Interview for Diagnostic Assessment of Children-Revised (SIDAC-R).

Dyslexia Screener: Jordan Left-Right Reversal Test- III-R.

Career Assessment: Strong Campbell Interest Inventory.

PRE-DOCTORAL INTERNSHIP***University of British Columbia, Counselling Services (Aug 2001-2002)***

- ▶ Provided ongoing individual, couple, and group psychological counselling support for graduate and undergraduate students.
- ▶ Provided weekly supervision to two Masters counselling practicum students for 8 months.
- ▶ Facilitated two 10 hour Career Development Groups.
- ▶ Presented to Residence Assistance on "Identifying At-Risk Residents".
- ▶ Presented orientation on Counselling Services to Law students.
- ▶ Facilitated "Improving Your Concentration" workshop to students.
- ▶ Facilitated "Polishing Your Presentation" workshop to students.
- ▶ Facilitated "Creating Understanding: Developing Empathy" workshop to students.
- ▶ Co-facilitated "Breaking Free from Disordered Eating" a drop-in counselling process group.
- ▶ Co-facilitated and developed "Affirming Asian Women" a 10-week counselling process group.
- ▶ Co-facilitated "Identifying Students At-Risk" workshop to UBC faculty members, TAG series.
- ▶ Trained as a "Positive Space" Resource person.
- ▶ Trained and certified in "Rape Aggression Defence".

COUNSELLING PRACTICUM

- ▶ **Grey Nuns Hospital, Psychiatry Department**, conducting personality and cognitive assessments on adult inpatients, December 2000-April 2001. Supervisor: Steve White.
- ▶ University of Alberta, **Educational Clinical Services**, conducting intelligence and behavioural assessments on children, adolescents, and adults, May 1999-August 1999. Supervisor: Dr. Henry Janzen.
- ▶ University of Alberta, **Educational Clinical Services**, providing counselling for a wide range of issues, Sept 1998-April 1999. Supervisor: Dr. Jim Evans
- ▶ **Sexual Assault Centre of Edmonton**, counselling adult survivors of sexual assault, Sept 1998-April 1999. Supervisor: Dr. Barb Mackenzie
- ▶ University of Alberta, **Educational Clinical Services**, specialization course in providing **couples' counselling** with a focus on sexuality, Jan 1999- April 1999. Supervisor: Dr. Jim Fields.
- ▶ University of Alberta, **Educational Clinical Services**, specialization in **family counselling**, April 1998-June 1998. Supervisor: Dr. David Pare.
- ▶ University of Alberta, **Educational Clinical Services**, providing counselling for a wide range of issues, Oct 1997-April 1998. Supervisors: Drs. David Pare & Barbara Paulson.
- ▶ **University of Alberta Hospital**, Department of Psychology, **counselling clients living with HIV or AIDS**, Oct 1997-April 1998. Supervisor: Dr. Lynda Phillips.

PSYCHOTHERAPY GROUPS FACILITATION

- ▶ **Affirming Asian Women**. A 10-week counselling process group offered to Asian women to affirm race/cultural identity and to increase self-efficacy, University of British Columbia, Counselling Services.
- ▶ **Breaking Free from Disordered Eating**. A drop-in Narrative Therapy counselling group for women challenged by disordered eating (24 weeks), University of British Columbia, Counselling Services.
- ▶ **The Eating Wellness Group**. A 10-week psychoeducational group offered to women challenged by eating disorders and/or body image issues, University of Alberta, Educational Clinical Services, February 3 - March 17 1999. Supervisor: Dr. Jim Evans.
- ▶ **Teacher Hope Initiative Group**. An ongoing therapy group for teachers whose careers have been affected by illness, The Hope Foundation of Alberta, Jan 1998-April 1998. Supervisor: Wendy Edey.
- ▶ **Eating Disorders: Interpersonal Relationship Development Group**, University of Alberta Hospital, Eating Disorders Unit, Feb 1998-April 1998. Supervisor: Dr. Crystal Cooligan.

VOLUNTEER:

- **Association for Women in Psychology**, conference planning committee member and co-ordinator of Women of Color Caucus. Affirming Diversity Conference, June 20-23, 2002, Vancouver, British Columbia.
- **AAS:UA Teaching and Learning Committee**, initiatives to improved teaching at the University of Alberta, **Graduate Student Representative** (October 2000).
- University of Alberta, FGSR, **Academic Appeals committee member** (1996-99)
- University of Alberta, Department of Human Ecology, **Faculty of Graduate Studies & Research representative** (1996-97).
- **Conversation volunteer** at the Institute for Stuttering Technology and Research (ISTAR) 1990-99.
- **Peer Educator** with Peer Health Education, University of Alberta (1992-95): *Media Coordinator* from 1994-95.
- University of Alberta **Student Orientation Leader** (SORSE) (1993-95).
- **National Eating Disorders Awareness Screening Day**, assisting with screening, Student Counselling Services at the University of Alberta (02/25/98).
- Trained at the **Sexual Assault Centre of Edmonton** (SACE) 1998.
- Trained with Support Services as a **Distress Line** volunteer (1997).
- AIDS Network of Edmonton, Support Services and HIV/AIDS Ethics and Bereavement Issues (1993-96).