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INDIVIDUAL EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND

FAMILY FUNCTIONING:

POSITIVE DISINTEGRATION AND THE

CIRCUMPLEX MODEL

by

ROSE MARIE CECELIA HAGUE

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

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Sincerely,

David H. Olson, Ph.D.
Professor

Enclosures

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and
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MODEL submitted by Rose Marie Cecelia Hague in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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External Examiner

Date . . . .

DEDICATION

To Bill, Carolyn and Daniel,

whose family love encourages

Ultimate Love.

ABSTRACT

The phenomenon of family as constituted of individual and

family system characteristics provides a unique opportunity for

the study of emotional development and family processes within an

individual-relatedness context.

The major purposes of this research were the following: to

study the relationship between individual emotional development

and family functioning; and to discern, within family interaction,

the thematic categories related to family cohesion, adaptability

and communication. The theory of Positive Disintegration and the

Circumplex Model of family functioning provided the conceptual

frameworks.

Sixteen families, consisting of 64 adolescents and parents,

comprised the respondent families. Eleven of these families

participated both as individual family members and as family

units.

A multi-method approach to data collection was utilized.

Family members responded as individuals to two research

instruments: the Verbal Stimuli Test as an assessment of

emotional development and the FACES II test of family functioning

related to cohesion and adaptability. The family as a unit also

participated in a family interaction session which was videotaped

and rated by two trained raters, utilizing a clinical Rating

Scale. A third source of data was a qualitative synthesis of

family functioning characteristics as revealed to the researcher in semi-structured interviews during the family interaction session. Data analyses consisted of a correlational analysis of the relationship between scores on the Verbal Stimuli Test and FACES II test, observer ratings of family functioning, and derivation of thematic categories from a synthesis of all data collected.

The hypothesis that there is a significant positive correlation between level of emotional development and perception of family functioning was not confirmed. Family members who had attained high levels of emotional development did not necessarily perceive their family system as balanced related to cohesion and adaptability. A discussion of this lack of relationship is provided, with emphasis upon the qualitative differences between lower and higher levels.

The major research findings of this study consisted of a qualitative syntheses of thematic categories of individual-family functioning. Qualities such as family love, constructive communication, individual-participation balance, adaptability balance and strength of marital dyad were evident.

A theoretical development of the implications of the theory of Positive Disintegration for family functioning is presented.

An important outcome of this multi-method research process was the engagement of family members in individual reflection and family communication to enhance individual-family relatedness.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to express my deep gratitude to the following persons who have contributed to the completion of this dissertation:

My family of origin, who first taught me the meaning of family love, of disintegration and reintegration.

To my present family, Bill, Carolyn, and Daniel who struggled with me during the "low" times and rejoiced with me during the "high" times of this study. I treasure their challenges - to unite action with profound reflection, to see life in its "newness," to experience the delight of a child's world, to trust the adolescent growth process. They have taught me to love myself, to love others, to love God.

The families who participated in this study, who dared to share the struggles and the joys of being family. They have inspired much reflection; personally and professionally I have been enriched.

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Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

"It is important never to lose the person in/for the system,

nor to forget the power of the system on the person, nor the

impact of a person upon a system."

(Duhl & Duhl, 1981, p. 489)

Statement of the Problem

Family constitutes that most critical of human contexts wherein, as

Tillich affirms, the individual engages the "courage to be as oneself"

and the "courage to be as part of" the family dance. Reflection upon

one's own families of origin and procreation as well as the

opportunities of being involved in therapy and enrichment programs renew

the conviction that there is need to reappraise the interface between

theories of individual development and concepts of family systems.

The present study addresses the problems of this interface by

considering the individual and intrapsychic phenomena as

important as the family system and interactional phenomena. Framo

(1981) states the problem succinctly:

> I do not agree that in understanding and treating family
> relationships we should discard everything we have known
> about dynamic psychology. What goes on inside people's heads
> is just as important as what goes on between them in their
> interpersonal relationships. Neither level can be reduced to
> the other; one does not have to make a choice which is more
> important. (p. 137)

Framo challenges the family systems perspective which

· 1

polarizes intrapsychic and interactional phenomena and which

stresses only interaction in theory and therapy. Jackson (1967)

has noted the movement "from individual to analysis of contexts,

or more precisely, the system from which individual conduct is

inseparable" (p. 139). Dell (1982) affirms the necessary shift

from an etiology or linear causation model to an evolutionary

paradigm which posits that aspects of a family system reflect a

certain coherence, fit, or general complementarity.

It is within this contextual coherence that the individual

system reflects a level of emotional development. As Duhl and

Duhl (1981) maintain:

> It is important to understand the individual people who make
> up the marital or family system and their individual
> developmental processes, as well as those of the family
> system as a whole....Systems do not experience, no matter how
> glibly, or anthropomorphically we describe them; individuals
> experience. (p. 489)

There is a value in bridging individual and family systems

concepts. As Olson, Russell and Sprenkle (1983) conclude " , . .

we support any efforts to relate individual dynamics to one's

current or past family system" (p. 80). The individual cannot be

lost in the system.

The statement of the problem expressed above in the words of

other scholars is reflected in my own experience as a

theoretician, professional counsellor and person. These

experiences are summarized as follows:

1. Philosophically, the dimensions of individuality and

relatedness pose a fascinating problem. Whitehead (1967, 1968), in his Process philosophy, has addressed the problem profoundly and in dimensions that are truly universal. Tillich (1951, 1952), the theologian, has transmitted his own enthusiasm for questions on individualization/participation, dynamics/form and on the problems of destiny/freedom. Gurdjieff, the mystic, has spoken of the necessity of a "third force" or a relationship balance between dialectical processes (Ouspensky, 1971). These thoughts are exciting.

2. Creative parallels begin to emerge between the theoretical concepts just noted and the Circumplex Model of marital and family functioning as proposed by Olson et al (1983), with its emphasis on dimensions of cohesion, adaptability and communication. The concepts of individuality and relatedness, individualization and participation appear related to cohesion, the concept of dynamics/form is reflected in the adaptability dimension. The relationship balance appears similar to the balance postulated within the Circumplex Model and facilitated by communication. Such parallels engender enthusiasm to apply great theory to humble practice.

3. Contact with Dabrowski and his theory of Positive Disintegration have offered the exciting possibilities not only of transforming family crises into developmental opportunities for individuals, but of seeing an evolutionary view of emotional

development. Abbve all, Dabrowski's concept of multilevelness

challenges one to an enriched appreciation of both individual and

family dynamics and to explore the relationships between the two.

4. The challenges of my own clinical practice in individual

and family counselling as well as developmental workshops for

divorced, separated and widowed people have led to a concern for

healthy marital and family functioning. The tensions between the

contemporary ethic of "doing my own thing" and the "let's get

together" values implicit in family functioning continue to pose

critical questions. We cannot get away from the fact that each of

us is a "being-in-relationship" and that one's choices are always

relational and within a contextual framework. Life as lived by so

many seems to be marred by individual/relational

problems--problems that emerge frequently within the family

system.

5. In my own life I have, with varying degrees of success,

faced personal challenges of balancing individual growth, marital

relationship fulfillment, and family responsibilities. These

personal challenges have provided the crucible of change and the

lure of developmental possibilities. This personal interaction of

individuality and family life has helped draw a clearer picture

and "statement of the problem" that is the topic of this research.

Research problems, exciting though they may be, require

definition and exploration into the feasibility of enquiry. The

present problem may be refined into the following research

questions: Is there a relationship between an individual's level

of emotional development and family functioning? Are more

adequate family functioning types related to high levels of

individual emotional development? What factors would account for

possible discrepancies between level of family functioning and

level of individual emotional development?

In embarking on the task of making an enquiry into the above

questions feasible, one is called upon to share the concern of

Gurman and Kniskern (1981) that, not only is there a need to

operationalize salient dimensions of family theory, but the

resultant measures must be conceptually sound as well as

meaningful to clinicians and families. The Circumplex Model of

family functioning (Olson et al, 1983) meets these requirements,

and provides a conceptual framework for understanding family

cohesion and adaptability appropriate to this research.

Concurrently there is a need to explore the lived-experience

of the individuals and families from a phenomenological

perspective. Such a perspective recognizes the critical

importance of understanding individual-family meaning experienced

by the researcher who has entered into a dialogal relationship

with each family (McLain & Weigert, 1979).

The study of individual development requires a conceptual

framework which gives consideration to individual evolution,

defines measurable developmental parameters, and emphasizes multilevelness of concepts as well as giving prominence to emotional development. The theory of Positive Disintegration (Dabrowski & Piechowski, 1977) provides such a conceptual model.

The theory of Positive Disintegration and the Circumplex Model provide not only conceptual frameworks for understanding individual and family functioning, but also valid and reliable instrumentation for exploring these concepts: the Verbal Stimuli Test for the theory of Positive Disintegration, and the FACES II test for the Circumplex Model of family functioning.

These tests, together with personal interviews, researcher and observer ratings, and synthesis of qualitative findings provided the data for the present research in which 16 families consisting of 64 members were assessed. This research had as its main purposes to study the relationship between individual emotional development and family functioning, and to discern within family interaction the thematic categories related to family cohesion, adaptability and communication. Levels of individual emotional development were explored in relationship to family functioning.

Significance of the Study

The results of this research should be of general interest to family therapists, developmental psychologists, parents and educators. With increasing awareness of the interactive effects

of individual and family system contexts there is need for greater understanding of the relationship between individual and system functioning. With the challenges to family life and the concern for family life education, both educators and parents require further information related to optimal family context types.

This study furthers the research related to positive disintegration and levels of emotional development, an area of significant interest to psychotherapists engaged in counselling individuals. Principles such as the evolutionary nature of development, multilevelness, and the positive value of disintegration, specific to Positive Disintegration theory, have parallels in family system concepts. This study delineates such parallel concepts.

Information obtained in this study should also provide valuable qualitative data to support the quantitative data. Such an approach affirms an appreciation of both kinds of data for comprehensive data collection (Denzin, 1970), and a respect for the "singularity" of each family (Elkaim, 1981; Hoffman, 1981). This study views the family as " . . . at one and the same time a deeply subjective experience and a powerfully objectivated social emergent" (McLain & Weigert, 1979, p. 174). The focus includes description as it appears in the consciousness of the real constituents of the family.

Overview of Chapters

This Chapter has provided a summary of the statement of the

research problems, concerns and significance of the study.

The theoretical background and literature related to the

theory of Positive Disintegration are presented in Chapter II. A

detailed description of the theory and literature related to the

Circumplex Model of family functioning are provided in Chapter

III. A development of the relation between Positive

Disintegration theory and family functioning theory is given in

Chapter IV. The methodology and research procedures, emphasizing

the multi-method approach, are delineated in Chapter V. Chapter

VI consists of a presentation of the data results and

interpretation. Conclusions, implication, limitations of the

study and suggestions for further research are provided in the

final Chapter.

Chapter II

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND RELATED LITERATURE:

THEORY OF POSITIVE DISINTEGRATION

Overview

The central themes of individual emotional development and

family functioning are presented in this Chapter and Chapter III.

Detailed descriptions of the basic conceptual models which provided

the theoretical framework for this study, the theory of Positive

Disintegration and the Circumplex Model of Family Functioning are

discussed in detail. Selected literature and research relevant to

the study are noted.

Theory of Positive Disintegration

The theory of Positive Disintegration provides a conceptual

framework for the study of the levels of emotional development of

individual family members.

Positive Disintegration theory (Dabrowski, 1964, 1966, 1967;

Dabrowski, Kawczak & Piechowski, 1970; Dabrowski & Piechowski,

1977) is a theory of human development which centers on the

concept of multilevelness of developmental phenomena. The theory

conceptualizes human development as evolutionary for the

individual rather than ontogenetic and is inclusive of emotional

development rather than restricted to cognitive development. The

theory has evolved from clinical observation, research and

theoretical reflection over some forty years by the Polish

Psychiatrist and Psychologist, K. Dabrowski. Influenced by the theories of Jackson, Jung and Rorschach which included multilevelness concepts, Dabrowski was equally disillusioned with the exclusion of such concepts in the theories of Pavlov, Watson, Adler, Janet and, to a great extent, Freud (Dabrowski, 1964). Bearing some resemblance to Erikson's (1968) epigenetic theory of psychosocial development, Werner's (1948) genetic psychology and Loevinger's (1976) ego-development theory, Positive Disintegration theory underscores several basic concepts. Borofsky (1981) has outlined distinctive elements:

1. <u>Development as dynamic process.</u> Positive Disintegration theory emphasizes the processual dimension of psychological development as continuous evolution, modification and transformation. This evolution is dynamic rather than static with homeostasis or equilibrium as temporary states, rather than the goal of development.

2. <u>Conflict as essential to development.</u> Both intrapsychic conflict and system conflict are considered to be critical motivators of psychological development in Positive Disintegration theory. The developmental process necessarily involves dimensions of intense inner conflict, disequilibrium, inherent anxiety, and depression. Only the lowest level of psychological development or primary integration, and the highest level or secondary integration experience a lack of such inner conflict.

3. Multilevelness: Hierarchization of developmental levels.

Positive Disintegration theory postulates a hierarchical

classification of constellations of intrapsychic processes which

constitute levels of development or 'developmental structures.'

In the developmental process, lower levels become subordinate to

higher levels, and are integrated by the developmental structures

of higher levels. For Dabrowski, multilevelness of development

implies the process by which unconscious, simple, reflexive,

automatic lower functions become integrated by and subordinate to

higher conscious, complex, inhibiting, voluntary functions.

Multilevelness has been designated as the central concept of

the theory of Positive Disintegration. As Dabrowski and

Piechowski (1977) emphasize, multilevelness offers a new paradigm

for understanding human behavior:

> It is now less meaningful to consider for instance
> aggression, inferiority, empathy or sexual behaviour as
> unitary phenomena, but it becomes more meaningful to examine
> different levels of these behaviors. Through this approach,
> we may discover that there is less difference between the
> phenomenon of love and the phenomenon of aggression at the
> lowest level of development than there is between the lowest
> and the highest levels of love or the lowest and the highest
> level of aggression. (p. 12)

Different levels are representative of values, arranged

hierarchically, with each level revealing a "distinctly different

range of a given phenomenon." As Dabrowski had observed in his

early research, disparate manifestations of behavior were evident

and generally did not coexist in the same person; e.g., primitive,

immobilizing fear shaped by external stimuli was distinct from and unrelated to existential fears arising from personal sensitivity to mankind's suffering.

4. Disintegration: Positive vs. negative. The major mechanism for psychological development is disintegration which results from the disequilibrium inherent in conflict. Disintegration of lower level psychological functioning is necessary for movement to and reorganization at higher functioning levels. Positive Disintegration theory postulates the important distinction between positive and negative disintegration. Positive disintegration is a developmental process marked by progressive breakdowns, transformations and reorganizations ultimately attaining secondary integration in very few cases. Dabrowski emphasizes that developmental dynamisms are present and empirically verifiable in positive disintegration, whereas such developmental dynamisms are absent in negative disintegration.

5. Integration: Primary and secondary. Consistent with the concept of multilevelness, personality integration may represent the lowest primitive level of development, primary integration, or it may consist of secondary integration at the highest advanced level. Such psychological experiential states as contentment and absence of conflict are qualitatively distinct at secondary as opposed to primary integration levels dependent upon the presence or absence of developmental dynamisms.

6. Overexcitability. The process of psychological

development is dependent upon the presence and quality of

overexcitability in the individual. Positive Disintegration

theory proposes the presence of overexcitabilities or heightened

quality of experiencing and responding evidenced in five forms:

psychomotor, sensual, intellectual, imaginational, and emotional.

Though present in all individuals to some degree,

overexcitabilities, especially of the emotional, imaginational and

intellectual form are experienced at the higher levels.

The forms of overexcitability are manifested in distinctive

expressions. As modes of experiencing, the forms of

overexcitabilities may be likened to information processing.

Summaries based on Dabrowski and Piechowski (1977) follow.

Psychomotor overexcitability, related to neuromuscular

functioning, is manifested in restlessness, aggressive games,

impulsive talk, and action. The emotional tension in psychomotor

expression is often reflected in such activities as chain smoking,

pacing, gesticulation, wanderlust, and throwing objects.

Sensual overexcitability, related to heightened sensory

pleasure, is evident in common examples of sexual excesses,

indulgence in food, comfort and luxury, superficial relationships,

and excessive attention-attracting behavior. Emotional tension is

transferred and expressed in sensual forms.

Imaginational overexcitability is described in two

manifestions: a "pure" form exemplified in vivid association of images and impressions, inventiveness, metaphorical and animated expression. As a "less pure" form imaginational overexcitability is evident in dreams, intermingling of fiction with truth, fantasized fears evident in nightmares or fear of the unknown.

Emotional overexcitability involves a heightened experiencing of emotional relationships, evident in strong affiliation with persons, other living things, and places. An important distinction prevails between emotional overexcitability that is developmentally significant and mere display of emotion as in object relationships. As Dabrowski and Piechowski (1977) emphasize, " . . . intensity of feelings and display of emotions alone are not developmentally significant unless the experiential aspect of relationship is present." (p. 34)

Relationships require this quality and usually necessitate restriction to friendship and love with a minimal number of persons or even exclusive relationship with one person. Emotional overexcitability is manifested in various ways:

> . . . inhibition (timidity and shyness), excitation
> (enthusiasm), concern with death, strong memory of feelings
> (affective memory), fears, anxieties, depressions, feelings
> of loneliness, need for security, concern for others,
> exclusive relationships, difficulties of adjustment to new
> environments. (Dabrowski & Piechowski, 1977, p. 35)

The forms of overexcitability usually appear in varying degrees in a person with one form predominant. Again, low level development or primary integration may reveal only sensual or

psychomotor forms or even a marked absence of distinct

overexcitability.

Sensual and psychomotor overexcitabilities are not

developmentally significant. It is the emotional, imaginational

and intellectual forms which are most developmentally significant.

> They give rise to psychic richness, the ability for a broad
> and expanding insight into many levels and dimensions of
> reality, for prospection and introspection, for control and
> self-control (arising from the interplay of excitation and
> inhibition). (Dabrowski & Piechowski, 1977, p. 36)

The inner psychic milieu with its structure of dynamisms is

dependent for its development upon these overexcitabilities.

7. Developmental dynamisms. Various intrapsychic

dispositions or traits, termed developmental dynamisms (Dabrowski,

1977), are present or absent at each level of development. These

developmental dynamisms (see Figure 1) reflect the pattern of

experiencing and the forms of overexcitabilities present. They

provide an empirical assessment of the current level of

psychological development, whether disintegration is positive or

negative, and the potential for higher level development. Though

there is merging of dynamisms at the interface of levels, higher

level dynamisms are considered to be discontinuous from next lower

levels; e.g., the dynamism of disquietude with oneself at Level

III is qualitatively distinct from the ambivalences characteristic

of Level II.

Figure 1

THEORY OF POSITIVE DISINTEGRATION

A Theoretical Pattern of The Distribution of Dynamisms
at Each Level of Development (Dabrowski, (1977)

DYNAMISMS   LEVELS

	I	II	III	IV	V

Personality Ideal
Autonomy
Authentism
Responsibility
IV   Education-of-Oneself
Autopsychotherapy
Self-Control
Self-Awarness
Inner Psychic Transformation
Third Factor
Subject-Object in Oneself

Positive Maladjustment
Feelings of Guilt
Feelings of Shame
III   Astonishment with Oneself
Disquietude with Oneself
Inferiority Toward Oneself
Dissatisfaction with Oneself
Hierarchization

Second Factor
II   Ambivalences
Ambitendencies

Creative Instinct
Empathy
Identification
C   Inner Conflict
External Conflict
Temperamental Syntony
Disposing and Directing Center

| Main Primitive Drive | Multiple Wills | Ascending and Descending | Unified | Personality Ideal |

8. <u>Developmental Potential</u>. Positive Disintegration theory denotes developmental potential as the sum of an individual's developmental dynamisms and psychic overexcitabilities given optimal environmental and physical conditions. Considering the changing forms of dynamisms over the course of development, the overexcitabilities are a more reliable determinant of developmental potential.

9. <u>Levels of Development</u>. The theory of Positive Disintegration proposes five empirically verifiable levels of development from the lowest to the most advanced: primary integration, unilevel disintegration, spontaneous multilevel disintegration, organized multilevel disintegration and secondary integration. It will be shown that these levels serve as a useful framework for assessing the emotional development of individual family members.

<u>Level I: Primary Integration</u>. As the most primitive, rigid level it is characterized by the absence of developmental dynamisms and lack of differentiation. Limited to awareness of externals, Level I development is marked by absence of reflectiveness, of guilt and of intimate emotional relationships. Despite adjustment to "what is" which may be taken as psychological health, Level I persons are prone to negative disintegration in conflict situations.

Level II: Unilevel Disintegration. Psychological instability

characterizes Level II with hesitation, ambivalence,

ambitendencies and traits of excessive emotionality such as

dependence and jealousy in relationships. Level II development

reveals a disruption of Level I structures, but without internal

value orientations. Unilevel disintegration may result in

uncritical rebelliousness and shifts in decision-making with the

risk of affective, schizophrenic or psychotic disorders.

Level III:.Spontaneous Multilevel Disintegration. This level

is marked by structural and functional differentiation with

internal rather than external value orientations guiding

behaviors. Emotional relationships reflect greater intimacy and

others are valued as unique persons. Moral responsibility,

indicating a movement from "what is" to "what ought to be"

characterizes Level III with self-evaluation, existential anxiety,

search for ideals and reflection evident. As Dabrowski (1977)

cautions, Level III spontaneous multilevel disintegration

dynamisms may suggest neurotic, adjustment or personality

disorders but, in fact, are the essential dynamisms for higher

level development.

Level IV: Organized Multilevel Disintegration. This level is

marked by a consciously organized and integrated hierarchy of

values and goals. Compared with Level III it reflects less

intense conflict and less spontaneity with greater clarity of

definition of goals and conscious choice-making. The "what ought

to be" of Level III is transformed into "what ought to be will

be." Personality development at this level, reflects

"self-actualization" qualities (Maslow, 1970), very different from

Level I narcissistic self-perfection.

Level V: Secondary Integration. This highest level of

psychological development manifests an essential unity of emotional

and intellectual functioning. Secondary integration is

characterized by the absence of lower level conflicts, a

developmental level discontinuous with lower levels, and an

inherent stability preventing regression under stress.

Descriptive summaries of the five levels of development are

presented in Tables 1 - 4. A brief description of the dynamism as

expressed at each level is provided.

Table 1 - Positive Disintegration

Descriptive Summaries: Levels I, II (Adapted from Dabrowski & Piechowski, 1977)

LEVEL I - PRIMARY INTEGRATION	- rigid, narrow structure - most primitive
External Conflict	- blaming of others - lack of reflection on own behavior - lack of consideration - tends to humiliate and take advantage of others - respects, even abases self before stronger persons

Temperamental Syntony	- superficial, easy, immediately expressed feeling of
	  commonality with others
	- urge to behave as group;
	  (e.g., causes, drinking, athletics)
	- governed by mood
	- feeling of kinship easily replaced by aggression

Disposing and
Directing Center
	- behavior expressed and guided by dominant drive(s);
	  (i.e., ambition, craving for power, craving for
	  security, or financial gain, etc.)
	- selfish egocentrism, stressing one's own goals
	- absence of relationship feelings
	- absence of recognition of common hierarchy of values

LEVEL II - UNILEVEL DISINTEGRATION	- loose ahierarchic structure
Ambivalences	- changeable feelings, fluctuations of mood, alternations of excitation and inhibition
Ambitendencies	- changeable and conflicting courses of action - self-defeating behaviors
Second Factor	- susceptibility to social opinion and influence of others - acceptance of stereotyped values and ideas - relativism of values and ideas
External Conflict	- less aggressive than Level I, less self-advantageous - more variable, unpredictable
Internal Conflict	- beginnings of hierarchization introduce a multilevel conflict - generally conflicts still unilevel
Temperamental Syntony	- fluctuations from companionship to withdrawal - mood cyclicity determined by externals
Identification	- variable and partial identification with image of another; suggestibility, maybe obsessive
Creative Instinct	- impulsive, lack of connection to personal growth, lack of reflection, often stress on exotic or evil
Disposing and Directing Center	- external sources control behavior, vie for dominance

Table 2 - Positive Disintegration
Descriptive Summaries: Level III (Adapted from Dabrowski & Piechowski, 1977)

LEVEL III - SPONTANEOUS MULTILEVEL DISINTEGRATION	- inner psychic milieu is a hierarchic structure - conflict between "what is" and "what ought to be" - split between "lower" and "higher" not entirely clear to person (spontaneous)
Hierarchization	- a recognition of higher and lower levels of experiences and phenomena - beginning of critical perception and evaluation
Dissatisfaction with Oneself	- frustration and anger with oneself - strong discontent with one's conduct - one of most highly significant indicators of accelerated development
Inferiority toward Oneself	- frustration with what is lacking in self - awareness of disparity between actual level and ideal level - desire to bring about developmental change
Disquietude with Oneself	- agitation, fear, anxiety, uneasiness with what is - uneasiness due to awareness of lack of control, compulsions, worries about sanity
Astonishment with Oneself	- surprise and shock at what is, at the unexpected, and strange in oneself and others - sense of wonder - beginning of critical attitude toward oneself; forerunner of subject-object (Level IV)
Feelings of Shame	- self-conscious distress and embarrassment over deficiencies - often somatic component, need to hide away - usually associated with inferiority towards others
Feelings of Guilt	- discomfort or anguish over moral failure - arises on basis of relationships with other(s) - forerunner of higher dynamism of responsibility
Positive Maladjustment	- protest against violation of intrinsic ethical principles - critical reaction and opposition to environment when incompatible with growing awareness of higher values
Creative Instinct	- shaped by emerging hierarchy of values - longing for ideal, heroic struggle of human drama - opposition to relativism of values
Identification	- growth of understanding and feeling for others - more directed toward deeper relationships
Empathy	- syntony transformed into empathy, genuine acceptance of others as unique persons
Inner Conflict	- hallmark of Level III: conflict between "what is" and "what ought to be;" extreme form may lead to suicide or psychosis
External Conflict	- gradual decrease, but exists when conflict of moral principles or to defend oppressed or weak
Disposing and Directing Center	- alternates between personality ideal and primitive drives

Table 3 - Positive Disintegration
Descriptive Summaries: Level IV (Adapted from Dabrowski & Piechowski, 1977)

LEVEL IV
ORGANIZED (DIRECTED)

MULTILEVEL DISINTEGRATION	- synthesis and increasing organization - inner conflicts abate; personality ideal intensifies
Subject-Object in Oneself	- process of looking at oneself as if from outside and of perceiving the individuality of the other - includes critical self-evaluation coupled with conscious need to develop oneself
Third Factor	- dynamism of conscious choice, valuation in developing consciously an autonomous hierarchy of values and internal standards
Inner Psychic Transformation	- inner restructuring: transcending age-related changes and one's psychological type (involves deep reflection and concentration)
Self-awareness	- awareness of one's uniqueness and of continuity in oneself, of one's existential responsibility
Self-control	- conscious bringing order and unity into one's development (with increasing calmness and confidence)
Auto psychotherapy	- conscious engaging of preventive measures, changes or self-healing process (solitude and concentration often important)
...ion-of-oneself	- conscious alertness and activity of converting one's experiences and actions toward personal growth - systematic development based on autonomous value hierarchy
Creative Instinct	- distinguished by existential, religious, and transcendental elements - deals with lasting, unchangeable and unique emotions - requires high level of self-awareness
Self-perfection	- systematic development of moral and empathic dimensions
Identification	- strong and full identification with oneself but dis-identification with lower levels of one's personality structure - identification with others replaced by empathy
Empathy	- tends towards profound universal love but with slight reservation - deep enduring bonds of love and friendship
Inner Conflict	- strong inner conflicts at interface of levels III and IV (i.e., doubt, depression, anxiety) are converted into developmentally positive action - systematic organization of conflicts including existential, philosophical and transcendental conflicts - powers of inner conflict seen as positive, serving personality ideal
Disposing and Directing Center	- personality ideal and third factor dominate - unified as organizing and systematizing agent of development

Table 4 - Positive Disintegration

Descriptive Summaries: Level V (Adapted from Dabrowski & Piechowski, 1977)

LEVEL IV - V	
TOWARD SECONDARY INTEGRATION	- level of personality: a self-aware, self-chosen and self-affirmed structure
	- at interface of levels IV and V, third factor carries out function of directing and disposing center; at level V personality ideal is completely united with the DDC
Responsibility	- toward personality and its ideal
	- has sources in highest level of empathy, universal love, and need to express love in action
Authentism	- retention and development of experientially unique individual qualities combined with universal human qualities
Autonomy	- freedom from lower level drives and environmental influences (yet responsive to needs)
Personality Ideal	- realization of highest, self-chosen, self-affirmed and self-aware personality structure
	- dynamization of personality ideal, striving to unite self with highest levels discovered in experience
	- discovery of ideal as goal of personality development
	- primary source of both inner life and behavior
Empathy	- achieves highest expression in self-sacrifice of life for others
	- toward all that exists, especially the hurt and humiliated, as well as toward one's highest strivings
	- expressed as highest level of an authentic "I" in relationship with an authentic "thou"
Self-perfection	- synthesis of level IV development
	- intuitive grasp of ideal (meditation and mystical experiences)
	- hierarchy of values based only on personality ideal
	- full harmony achieved in self-perfection and perfection of others
Inner Conflict	- cessation of inner conflict, only memory of internal struggles remain
	- fruits of earlier struggles utilized in personality ideal development
Disposing and Directing Center	- totally unified and identified with personality ideal

The levels of development as described in Positive

Disintegration theory bear some resemblance to other theoretical

positions. Most noteworthy is the ego-development theory expounded

by Loevinger (1976). Parallel theoretical positions are given in

Table 5 with parallels between stages or levels provided,

including resemblances to Kohlberg's moral development theory,

Maslow's motivation theory, and Loevinger's ego-development

theory. As Dabrowski and Piechowski (1977) note, drawing

parallels between distinctive theoretical positions is usually

inexact; however, noting the similarities between Positive

Disintegration and other theories is presented here to support

credibility of that theory.

Summary

The theory of Positive Disintegration has been presented in

detail in this Chapter. The merits of this theoretical model for

this research include the conception of individual evolution,

multilevelness, emotional development, role of conflict as well as

the provision of measurable developmental parameters for the

individual. The theoretical parallels between Positive

Disintegration theory and other developmental theories lend

support to its usefulness.

Table 5

Theoretical Parallels Between Positive Disintegration and Other Theories

Positive Disintegration (Dabrowski)	Ego-Development (Loevinger)	Moral Development (Kohlberg)	Motivation (Maslow)
LEVEL I PRIMARY INTEGRATION	IMPULSIVE - concerns basic needs and drives SELF-PROTECTIVE - control and domination over others - rules obeyed to avoid trouble CONFORMIST - concern over similarity between oneself and others - external appearances	SOCIAL ROLE TAKING 1) OBEDIENCE & PUNISHMENT 2) NAIVE INSTRU- MENTAL HEDONISM 3) GOOD BOY- GOOD GIRL 4) AUTHORITY MAINTAINS MORALITY	DEFICIENCY (D) NEEDS - physiologial - safety - love and belonging - esteem
LEVEL II UNILEVEL DISINTEGRATION	CONSCIENTIOUS - guilt at wrongdoing - responsibility for rule violations - emerging ideals - developing sense of inner self - self-criticism	5) MORALITY OF CONTRACT, IND. RIGHTS & DEMOCRATICALLY ACCEPTED LAW	
LEVEL III SPONTANEOUS MULTILEVEL DISINTEGRATION	AUTONOMY - can tolerate opposing opinion and viewpoints		GROWTH OR BEING (B) NEEDS - desire to know and understand - aesthetic needs
LEVEL IV ORGANIZED MULTILEVEL DISINTEGRATION	INTEGRATION - self-acceptance of ego development (strengths, weaknesses successes, failures)	6) MORALITY OF IND. PRINCIPLES OF CONSCIENCE	SELF-ACTUALIZATION - efficient reality perceived - acceptance of self and others - freedom from cultural and self-imposed restraints
LEVEL V	- peace - recognition of one's total being - appreciation of individualness of others	UNITY INTEGRATION	- problem-solving ability - brotherly love - creativity - development of intimate personal relationships

Chapter III

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND RELATED LITERATURE:

THE CIRCUMPLEX MODEL

Overview

The theory of Positive Disintegration has provided a
conceptual framework for understanding individual emotional
development. The model utilized to conceptualize family system
functioning is the Circumplex Model. This model provides the
basic theoretical underpinnings for the study of family
functioning as related to cohesion, adaptability and
communication. Merits of the Circumplex Model for this research
include its theoretical salience, integrative nature, clinical
relevance, and empirical validation. Related family literature
and philosophical parallels are noteworthy.

The Circumplex Model

The Circumplex Model (Olson, Russell & Sprenkle, 1979, 1980,
1983) has been developed as an attempt to provide a conceptual
integration of the basic constructs inherent in the theoretical
and clinical appraisals of marital and family systems. From a
conceptual clustering of related concepts, the Circumplex Model
postulates three underlying dimensions of family process: family
cohesion, family adaptability, and family communication.

Table 6

Family Cohesion Dimensions (Olson, D. & McCubbin, H., 1982)

	DISENGAGED (Very Low)	SEPARATED (Low to Moderate)	CONNECTED (Moderate to High)	ENMESHED (Very High)
Emotional Bonding	Very Low	Low to Moderate	Moderate to High	Very High
Independence	High independence of family members.	Moderate independence of family members.	Moderate dependence of family members.	High dependence of family members.
Family Boundaries	Open external boundaries Closed internal boundaries. Rigid generational boundaries.	Semi-open external and internal boundaries. Clear generations boundaries.	Semi-open external boundaries. Open internal boundaries. Clear generational boundaries.	Closed external boundaries. Blurred internal boundaries. Blurred generational boundaries.
Coalitions	Weak coalitions.	Marital coalition clear.	Marital coalition strong.	Parent-child coalitions, usually a family scapegoat.
Time	Time apart from family maximized (physically and/or emotionally).	Time alone and together is important.	Time together is important Time alone permitted for approved reasons.	Time together maximized. Little time alone permitted.
Space	Separate space both physically and emotionally is maximized.	Private space maintained; some family space.	Family space maximized. Private space maximized.	Little or no private space at home.
Friends	Mainly individual friends seen alone. Few family friends.	Some individual friends. Some family friends.	Some individual friends. Scheduled activities with couple and family friends.	Limited individual friends. Mainly couple or family friends seen together.
Decision Making	Primarily individual decisions.	Most decisions are individually based, able to make joint decisions on family issues.	Individual decisions are shared. Most decisions made with family in mind.	All decisions, both personal and relationship must be made by family.
Interests and Recreation	Primarily individual activities done without family. Family not involved.	Some spontaneous family activities. Individual activities supported.	Some scheduled family activities. Family involved in individual interests.	Most or all activities and interests must be shared with family.

Family cohesion is defined as the degree to which a family member is separated from or connected to the family unit or system. Family cohesion is "the emotional bonding that family members have toward one another" (Olson, Russell & Sprenkle, 1983, p. 70). Specific variables comprising this dimension include emotional bonding, coalitions, time, space, boundaries, decision-making, friends, recreation and interests. A summary of the subtopics comprising family cohesion is provided in Table 6. Varying degrees of emotional, intellectual, and/or physical closeness constitute family cohesiveness (Russell, 1979). The range of cohesiveness from extremes of very low or disengaged to very high or enmeshed, also includes two more moderate levels--the separated and connected.

Family adaptability is defined as "the ability of a family system to change its power structure, role relationships, and relationship rules in response to situational and developmental stress" (Olson, Russell & Sprenkle, 1983, p. 70). Variables included within the adaptability or change dimension consist of relationship roles, rules, negotiation style, and family power as expressed in discipline, control and assertiveness. The range of adaptability includes four levels ranging from extremes of very low or rigid to very high or chaotic with two moderate levels--structured and flexible. A summary of the dimensions comprising family adaptability is presented in Table 7.

Table 7

Family Adaptability Dimensions (Olson, D. & McCubbin, H., 1982)

	Assertiveness	Control	Discipline	Negotiation	Roles	Rules	System Feedback
CHAOTIC (Very High)	Passive and Aggressive styles.	Limited leadership.	Laissez faire. Very lenient.	Endless negotiations. Poor problem-solving.	Dramatic role shifts.	Dramatic rule shifts. Many implicit rules. Few explicit rules. Arbitrarily enforced rules.	Primarily positive loops; few negative loops.
FLEXIBLE (High to Moderate)	Generally Assertive.	Egalitarian with fluid changes.	Democratic. Unpredictable consequences.	Good negotiation; good problem-solving.	Role making and sharing. Fluid change of roles.	Some rule changes. More implicit rules. Rules often enforced.	More positive than negative loops.
STRUCTURED (Moderate to Low)	Generally Assertive.	Democratic with stable leader.	Democratic. Predictable consequences.	Structured negotiations; good problem-solving.	Some role sharing	Few rule changes. More explicit than implicit rules. Rules usually enforced.	More negative than positive loops.
RIGID	Passive or Aggressive styles.	Authoritarian leadership.	Autocratic. Overly strict.	Limited negotiations; Poor problem-solving.	Role rigidity. Stereotyped roles.	Rigid rules. Many explicit rules. Few implicit rules. Strictly enforced rules.	Primarily negative loops; few positive loops.

The combination of the four levels of cohesion and the four levels of adaptability forms a circumplex of interconnections resulting in sixteen types of family systems (see Figure 2). A central postulate of the Circumplex Model is that moderate levels of cohesion and adaptability tend to result in functional family systems. Extremes of each dimension tend to be problematic and produce dysfunctional family systems. Recent theoretical work has noted the element of family member concurrence or disapproval with the family system type as critical for optimal family functioning (Olson & McCubbin, 1982). Thus an apparent extreme family type, provided it is approved of by all family members, may result in a functional family system. As with any circumplex model, moderate types tend to be more common.

Family communication, as the third dimension of the circumplex model, facilitates movement on the cohesion and adaptability dimensions. Optimal facilitation would imply communication qualities such as reflective listening, empathy and supportive interaction as opposed to such destructive patterns as negative criticism, double binds, and double messages (Olson, Russell & Sprenkle, 1983, p. 71). The communication dimension as a facilitative dimension promotes or restricts family system functioning.

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Figure 2

Sixteen Possible Types of Marital and Family Systems
Derived from the Circumplex Model (Olson et al., 1979)

←— low —— COHESION —— high —→

DISENGAGED   SEPARATED   CONNECTED   ENMESHED

CHAOTIC

high
ADAPTABILITY
low

FLEXIBLE

STRUCTURED

RIGID

OPEN
CLOSED
RANDOM

Related Family Literature

Supportive theoretical paradigms and clinical research generally underscore the construct validity of the Circumplex Model. With General Systems Theory (Buckley, 1967; Bertalanffy, 1968, 1969) providing the basic tenets for the Circumplex Model, similarities to other family typologies are evident. Kantor and Lehr (1975) have proposed three basic family functioning types as closed, random and open systems which contain similar constructs to those in the Circumplex Model (see Figure 2). Wertheim (1973, 1975) has also typified family systems in a grid model of structural and process variables related to morphostatic and morphogenetic dimensions. A cross-sectional process model with three levels of family organization, centripetal, mixed, and centrifugal, which implies growth from less to more workable structures is that of Beavers (1977) and Beavers and Voeller (1983). The recent work of Hoffman (1981) in presenting an evolutionary model depicting family organization in spiral platter formations also incorporates ideas related to cohesion and adaptability, although postulating the need for discontinuous change within the paradigm. Beavers and Voeller (1983) have provided a critical analysis of the Circumplex Model, suggesting that the concept of adaptability be placed on a continuum of competence from dysfunctional to optimal. However, the Circumplex Model conceptualizes adaptability more as "change and hypothesizes

a curvilinear relationship with too little or too much being potentially problematic" (Olson, Russell & Sprenkle, 1983), p. 98). This latter position is considered more conceptually sound for the purposes of this study.

Family theorists and therapists have provided various formulations of the cohesion dimension as being important in family assessment. Minuchin (1974) and Minuchin and Fishman (1981) have described extremely low levels of cohesion as disengagement and extremely high levels of cohesion as enmeshment. Bowen (1961) has termed similar aspects emotional divorce or emotional fusion and undifferentiated family ego mass. Reiss (1971a, 1971b) refers to consensus sensitive families; Scott and Askworth (1967) describe the extraordinary mutual involvement operative in some family systems. Concepts such as differentiated self (Bowen, 1961; 1978), mutuality (Wynn et al., 1958) and interdependence (Olson, 1972; Olson & McCubbin, 1982) suggest moderate levels of family cohesion.

The dimension of family adaptability or change quality of the family system has been described by Speer (1970), Wertheim (1973; 1975), Hoffmann (1981), and Minuchin and Fishman (1981) who emphasize the morphogenetic or change capacity as well as stability of the family system. The systems concept of morphostasis or rigidity to change in families has been stressed by Haley (1962, 1963, 1964). A basic postulate of the Circumplex

Model is the importance of an appropriate balance between

stability and change with extreme degrees leading either to

rigidity or to chaos. The more recent work of Haley (1969, 1980)

supports such a position.

Within the Circumplex Model, communication is posited to be a

facilitating dimension which makes possible the dynamic movement

along the cohesion and adaptability axes.

> Positive communication skills . . . enable couples and
> families to share with each other their changing needs
> and preferences as they relate to cohesion and
> adaptability. Negative communication skills . . .
> minimize the ability of a couple or family members to
> share their feelings and, thereby, restrict their
> movement on these dimensions. (Olson et al, 1983, p. 49)

The importance of functional communication has been

emphasized by most family theorists and therapists including

Bowen (1978), Duhl and Duhl (1981), Haley (1980), Jackson (1968a,

1968b), Minuchin (1974), Riskin and McCorkle (1979), Satir (1967,

1972), and Watzlawick, Beavin and Jackson (1967). Exemplifying

the position of the centrality of communication is Satir (1972)

who views communication as the greatest single factor affecting

personal health and interpersonal relationships. The family as a

rule governed system with members in the process of defining their

relationships, of exchanging information and relating at various

communication levels as well as established channels has been

described by Watzlawick, Beavin and Jackson (1967). Systems

theorists have given special prominence to communication in
family interaction.

The social learning approach to improving marital and family
functioning (Patterson, 1976) has a specific emphasis on
communication skills relevant to theory and practice.

Olson et al. (1983) have concluded from their national sample
of "healthy" families that family cohesion and adaptability appear
to follow a developmental life cycle. At the beginning stage when
the couple is childless, cohesion and adaptability tend to be at
the highest level reflecting strong bonding in couple
relationship building as well as in adopting workable stable roles
and rules. Most significant for the subject of this research is
the conclusion by Olson et al (1983) that family life at the
adolescent stage tends to be characterized by low levels of
cohesion and adaptability.

> It is during the adolescent and launching years, when
> teenagers are seeking freedom to develop their own
> separateness from their family and to make the family
> rules more flexible, that cohesion and adaptability are
> lowest. (p. 91)

It is also noteworthy that in the above study, parents tended to
rate their family functioning as more balanced than did the
adolescent members of that family. "The adolescents reported even
lower levels of cohesion and adaptability than their parents did."
(p. 91) The differing norms for adolescent and parent groups are
reported in Chapter V of this thesis.

...cal Parallels to Circumplex Model Concepts

...ppreciation of philosophical parallels or underpinnings
...retical constructs related to the Circumplex Model of
...ly functioning provides a necessary framework for
...derstanding. The philosophical developments of the
...ilosopher-Theologian P. Tillich (1951) and Process-Philosopher
A.N. Whitehead (1967) merit consideration.

Hunter (1982) has noted that there are evident parallels
...etween the two dimensions of cohesion and adaptability as
...roposed within the Circumplex Model of family functioning and th...
...ological elements of individualization-participation and
dynamics-form as presented by Tillich (1951a; 1951b).

...lich conceives of reality in processive terms. For
...ch (1951a), being itself and all creative processes are
fundamentally dialectical in nature. The ontological elements of
individualization and participation, dynamics and form as well as
freedom and destiny are conceptualized in dipolar terms. Each
element must be understood in terms of polarities in process.
Polarity, in Tillich's view of reality, emphasizes that "each pole
is limited as well as sustained by the other one. A complete
balance between them presupposes a balanced whole. But such a
whole is not given" (Tillich, 1951a, p. 198). In itself, the pole
lacks meaning; it is meaningful "only in so far as it refers by
implication to the opposite pole" (1951a, p. 165). Relationship
balance and wholeness appear critical to dialectical processes.

For Tillich ". . . everything is an embracing, but transitory unity of two opposite forces which, if disrupted leads to ". . . the anxiety about the breaking of the ontological tensions and the consequent destruction of the ontological structure" (1951a, p. 199).

The Circumplex Model postulates the need for balance within the two dimensions of cohesion and adaptability for optimal family functioning, with extremes considered problematic. Balanced degrees of cohesion and of adaptability are most conducive to individual well-being as well as effective family system functioning (Olson, Sprenkle, & Russell, 1979). The cohesion dimension parallels Tillich's individualization-participation element; the "courage to be as oneself" and "the courage to be as a part" (1952). Interdependency prevails: "The separation of individualization from participation is a mark of estrangement generally" (Tillich 1951b, p. 66). The adaptability dimension parallels Tillich's dynamics-form element. Tillich's balance between dynamics, potentialities or the vitality to create new forms and transcend present structures, and the form or structure of "what is" correspond to the ability to change and yet maintain structures within the family; morphogenesis and morphostasis. Again a relationship balance is required. As Hunter (1982) notes,

> In human affairs form without dynamics leads to a
> sterile legalism. Affirming the pole of "dynamics"

without regard for form, on the other hand, gives rise
to chaos. (p. 58)

As Hunter notes further, the third ontological element,

freedom/destiny is not a distinct dimension within the Circumplex

Model. For Tillich, human beings are capable of acting freely,

assuming responsibility in activity, yet the "free acts" exist in

a given context which is destiny. Thus, freedom and destiny in

interrelationship constitute a polar unity which when lost ". . .

freedom is distorted into arbitrariness" and "destiny is distorted

into mechanical necessity" (1952b, 63). The freedom/destiny

question, often deemphasized in family systems theory, poses a

critical dilemma. Is the family system context determined by

system characteristics so individuals who comprise that system are

incapable of free acts? Or does individual freedom prevail? This

concern will be addressed in a subsequent section of this study.

Balance and wholeness, individual and relatedness, concepts

of the Circumplex Model are also reminiscent of A.N. Whitehead's

philosophy (Whitehead, 1968).

Whitehead's processive model of reality posits individuality

and relatedness as two principles inherent in every actuality.

These two principles not only are compatible, but support,

enhance, and require each other such that one is not more "real,"

more important or of greater value than the other (Whitehead,

1967). The fundamental importance of individuality and

relatedness receives special emphasis within Whitehead's

metaphysics. He affirms that the more unique an "occasion's" individual satisfication is, the greater and more valuable is its potential contribution to the world. Conjointly, the "more profound and complex an occasion's relationship to the world from which it arises, the greater the opportunity to achieve unique value for itself" (Whitehead, 1967). The cohesion balance in family functioning, of individuality and relatedness for individual family members and for the family as a unity, necessitates such an appreciation.

The process of dialectical thinking is also a central concept in Jungian psychology. "Self" attainment, the goal of psychic development is essentially a balancing of opposites, a "wholeness" or "balanced unification of polar elements with varying symbolization" (Hunter, 1982). Life, itself, needs the opposites; without opposition, there is no energy (Wickes, 1963).

That dialectical conceptualization requires a third dimension has been underlined by Gurdjieff (Ouspensky, 1971). What is important in understanding processes in a dialectical manner is not affirming one pole quantitatively or qualitatively above the other in a more/less dichotomy but of realizing a "third force," a relationship balance which is a dimension in its own right. Thus, not two, but three forces are elements operative in the process. The "third force" in Gurdjieff's system reflects a sense of wholeness, of dynamic energy.

Within the Circumplex Model of family functioning, the

question of the existence of a third force must also be posited.

The balancing of the individuality/relatedness polarity is

inherently incomplete without the facilitating third force of

communication or even of communion.

Dialectical unity as postulated by Tillich and Whitehead is

reminiscent of the philosophy of Heraclitus for whom dialectical

unity implies the coexistence of contraries:

> Men do not understand how that which is torn in
> different directions comes into accord with itself -
> harmony in contrariety, as in the case of the bow and the
> lyre. (Bakewell, 1907, p. 31).

For Cassirer (1970) the "various forms of human culture are not

held together by an identity in their nature but by conformity in

their fundamental task.

> If there is an equipoise in human culture it can only be
> described as a dynamic, not as a static equilibrium; it
> is the struggle between opposing forces. (Cassirer, p.
> 246)

This dynamic equilibrium may often be a "hidden harmony" which,

indeed "is better than that which is obvious" (Bakewell, 1907, p.

31).

> Man's social consciousness depends upon a double act, of
> identification and discrimination. Man cannot find
> himself, he cannot become aware of his individuality,
> save through the medium of social life. (Cassirer,
> 1970, p. 246).

The family context provides such a fundamental medium; there is

submission to rules but also an active capacity to transform, to

change the form of that family functioning. Cassirer (1970) has

suggested that in rudimentary stages of human society the active

power of transformation is scarcely perceptible. Within family

functioning one can posit a similar early developmental stage

wherein transforming capacity or morphogenesis remains at a

minimum; morphostasis or sameness in submission to invariable

rules applies. In "higher level family functioning" a new

"dynamic form" arises with fresh perspective in which individual

creative capacity balances and supports stabilization. From rigid

conservation and traditionalism the family evolves to a more open

system (Satir, 1967). Again, the question must be posed: does

morphogenesis gain preponderance over morphostasis? Does

individuality emphasis destroy relatedness or relatedness destroy

individuality? To what extent can each of these dimensions,

individuality and relatedness, coexist in healthy family

functioning?

Finally, critical questions of concern for the modern family

become evident. To what extent can the family system survive

overemphasis of change with a loss of tradition, stability and

conservation of values? To what extent can the family system

survive an underemphasis of change in a rapidly changing society

with its demands for renovation, rejuvenation, evolution and

creative forces? It would appear that the family unit cannot

remain content with mere repetition or reproduction of traditional

forms but must incorporate into its very life form an originality,

individuality and creativeness. Cassirer's reference to human

culture is applicable to family functioning: the search for

fundamental unity, the dissonant in harmony with itself,

contraries not in mutual exclusivity, discord or disharmony, but

in interdependence and creative complementarity.

Summary

The Circumplex Model has been depicted as an appropriate

conceptual framework for understanding family functioning with

specific emphases given to cohesion, adaptability, and

communication. Philosophically and within related family theory,

the Circumplex Model appears well grounded.

Chapter IV

POSITIVE DISINTEGRATION THEORY AND FAMILY FUNCTIONING THEORY

Overview

Maybe relieving the pain will prevent the formation of a
pearl. ·(Whitaker, 1983, p. 319).

The theory of Positive Disintegration has implications for

family theory. Such Dabrowskian concepts as dynamic process,

conflict, disintegration, transforming capacity, multilevelness,

integration, developmental potential, as well as patterns of

emotion and belief are applicable to family functioning theory.

Dabrowskian Principles and Family Functiong Theory

Just as individual development is viewed as dynamic process,

so family functioning must be viewed as processual, as continuous

evolution, dynamic rather than static. For the individual,

homeostasis and equilibrium are only temporary states rather than

goals of development, so for the family system homeostasis is

temporary; morphogenesis coexists with morphostasis (Speer, 1970;

Andolfi, 1980. Family theorists, Dell, (1982) and Elkaim (1981),

influenced by the physicist, Prigogine (1980), have underlined the

capability of family processes to move in a negentropic direction,

with increasing complexity and newness. This non-equilibrium

model of dynamics is critical of a cybernetic model which

emphasizes the preservation of system equilibrium, entropy, or

sameness while disregarding evolutionary feedback and system

instabilities. As Hoffman (1981) notes:

A movement that is only a fluctuation in a system at one time can suddenly become the basis for an entirely new arrangement of the system at another time. (p. 340)

The self-organizing processes inherent in a family system can lead it to new levels of integration that are often unpredictable, and a discontinuous change that is also irreversible (Dell, 1982).

For the individual, conflict is essential to development. In fact the presence of intense conflict, disequilibrium and painful affect are primary to the developmental process in Positive Disintegration theory. Even intense anxiety and depression become part of development integrated with a capacity to endure and transform such conflict at a higher level of reintegration. For family processes, conflict is equally essential as a critical motivator for reorganization and transformation. The disorganization, disequilibrium, instability, imbalance, and dysfunctional relationships experienced within the family system become inherent features of its transformation capacity. Rather than viewing symptomatic behavior as deviance or families with symptomatic members as pathogenic, such deviation provides the possibility for the derivation of new information and the evolution of new structures, as well as change. Hoffman (1981) has aptly described symptoms as "harbingers of change."

> We must add positive to the usual negative
> interpretations of symptomatic behavior, not just as a
> strategy for change, but because doing so adds a layer
> of complexity that guards against linear thinking.
> Instead of assuming that a symptom is a kind of a minus
> sign indicating a dysfunctional family, we may regard it

instead as the one factor that keeps pushing the family
toward a new and different state. . . . In addition, one
can often construe the symptom as a solution, however
uncomfortable or destructive it may seem, to a dilemma
faced by the family on its evolutionary path. (pp.
346-347)

For Erikson (1968) crisis is "a turning point, a crucial

period of increased vulnerability and heightened potential (p.

96). That crisis contains inherent danger and opportunity is

symbolized in the Chinese ideogram for crisis. Crisis may be

considered a time of "pain and possibility." Whitehead (1967)

emphasizes, "Progress is founded upon the experience of discordant

feelings. The social value of liberty lies in its production of

discords" (p. 257). The contribution of discord is ". . . the

positive feeling of a quick shift of aim from the tameness of

outworn perfection to some other ideal with its freshness still

upon it" (p. 257). Discord prevents the tedium of outworn

repetitions and cycles with only finite possibilities. Discord,

crises or conflict offers the possibility for a new and infinite

group of possibilities, with a renewed zest, vigour and adventure.

Family life requires this progress founded upon discordance. As

with Whitehead's civilization so a family requires "Adventure,"

the search for new perfections, a new "Beauty,"

The discord enhances the whole, when it serves to
substantiate the individuality of the parts. It brings
into emphatic feeling their claim to existence in their
own right. It rescues the whole from the tameness of a
merely qualitative harmony. (Whitehead, 1967, p. 282-3)

Again to paraphrase Whitehead, family discord may take the form of

freshness and hope inherent in the pain or horror and despair

destructive of transformation possibilities.

What must be noted is that family members as individuals have

the capacity to choose less valuable alternatives. Whitehead's

view of evil emphasizes such freedom as Barbour (1971) notes:

> . . . he sees evil as arising not simply from the
> incompatibility of alternative potentialities or the
> unavoidable conflict among a multiplicity of beings; it
> also stems from the choice of less valuable alternatives
> by individual beings. (p. 345)

Family dysfunction and disorder, seen within each family's

idiosyncratic paradigm may engender self-healing. As Reiss (1980)

proposes:

> . . . family crisis fills a positive function in the
> life of every family. Though filled with risks, it
> ultimately opens the family to new experience, altering
> their sense of themselves and the outside world and
> thereby transforming a paradigm which may have guided
> them for years. (p. 32)

The therapeutic value of inducing a crisis in a family has

been noted by family therapists such as Minuchin and Barcai

(1969), and Andolfi (1980).

The major mechanism for movement from lower to higher level

development in individuals is disintegration, resulting from

disequilibrium related to conflict. In family processes,

parallels are evident. The necessary disintegration of system

functioning at a lower level, with attendant disequilibrium

arising from family stress or conflict, becomes the major

mechanism for movement to more optimal system functioning.

Interactional family therapists such as Haley (1967), Minuchin

(1974), Whitaker (1975) and Selvini et al. (1978) in varying ways

work to increase the complexity of family situations by

encouraging new personal and interpersonal experiences.

Techniques such as redefinition of the problem, reframing and

giving a positive connotation to the interactional network

facilitate the family to move beyond a limited view of symptom

scapegoating and family self-blame to discover its transforming

capacity.

As Andolfi (1980) notes, the family becomes the protagonist

in its own process of growth. As with the emphasis on individual

self-education and autopsychotherapy in Positive Disintegration

theory, so the family is encouraged to take charge and restore

system competence. The objective of any therapy would be, as

Andolfi (1980) suggests,

> . . . to unbalance the equilibrium of the system and of
> each of its members in order to activate the system's
> inherent capacity to evolve new forms of encounter and
> participation. The ultimate goal of therapy is the
> attainment of a new equilibrium between self and
> function on an individual and on a systemic level. (p.
> 13)

The concept of multilevelness, central to the theory of

Positive Disintegration, maintains that a given phenomenon such as

anxiety is not unitary and static but is significantly different

at different developmental levels. So, with family processes, one

may posit hierarchical constellations of interactional processes.

Phenomena such as communication and change are not unitary

processes, but bear a different significance at different levels.

Communication at a high level of family transformation may become

silent communion. As with individual development, so with family

processes, lower levels of developmental process are subordinate

to and integrated by higher levels.

Positive Disintegration theory emphasizes an important

distinction between integration at the primary, lowest level and

integration at the secondary, highest level. With family

developmental processes, a low level system arrangement, with

absence of conflict, may appear superficially similar to a high

level system integration. As Dell (1982) has emphasized, high

level integration is discontinuous with earlier levels and

irreversible, so that regression to lower levels is impossible

even under extreme stress. Low level family integration and

change would lack such qualities and leave the family prone to

disintegration under stress.

Individual developmental potential in Positive Disintegration

theory is dependent upon genetic endowment accounting for

individual differences. It is defined as the sum of psychic

overexcitabilities and developmental dynamisms present in the

individual. For family developmental potential, one may theorize

family differences dependent upon certain dynamisms. Since the

family system constituents are individuals one basic dynamism may

be the developmental potential of those constituents.

Evolutionary feedback and the self-organizing processes within a

family are basically related to the fit or coherence of the

behaviors occurring in the family system. As Dell (1982)notes:

> Without making reference to etiology or causation, fit
> simply posits that the behaviors occurring in the family
> system have a general complementarity; they fit
> together. (p. 21)

Whitehead (1967) concludes that civilization is constituted

out of four basic elements: patterns of behavior, patterns of

emotions, patterns of belief, and technologies. All four

constitutive elements are interactive, but ". . . patterns of

behaviour are in the long run sustained or modified by patterns of

emotion and patterns of belief" (p. 171). A similar affirmation

may be made for family functioning: patterns of family behavior

are in the long run sustained or modified by <u>patterns of emotion</u>

and <u>patterns of belief</u> experienced by the family members.

Positive Disintegration theory, as noted previously, affirms the

value of emotions. Indeed, high level functioning is

characterized by emotional overexcitability. Within family

contexts, the creative energy necessary for modifying patterns of

behavior and sustaining them may be dependent upon patterns of

emotion and belief as experienced and expressed by the individuals

who comprise the family.

Relationship Between Levels of Emotional Development and Family Functioning Type

After reviewing basic tenets of Positive Disintegration Theory and the Circumplex Model of Family Functioning several questions may be posed:

Is there a relationship between individual emotional development level and family functioning type?

Do low level individuals (i.e., Level I), according to Positive Disintegration Theory, comprise mainly dysfunctional family types as depicted by the Circumplex Model?

Do high level individuals (i.e., Levels IV, V) comprise the most functional family types?

Do Level II and III individuals tend to comprise families with moderate levels of cohesion and adaptability?

What meaning does the family, as a unit, give to the qualities of cohesion and adaptability as applied to itself? Is there a shared meaning?

Do the perceptions of family member constituents differ in relation to their experiences of cohesion and adaptability within the same family?

Is there a relationship between the quality of communication and family type?

What patterns, if any, prevail?

Theoretically Level I persons and Level IV-V persons, the lowest and highest levels, could possibly experience difficulties with family life demands. Level I persons, in their lack of consideration for others, absence of relationship feelings and emphasis on individual goals would be expected to experience difficulties in family functioning as expressed in cohesion and adaptability qualities.

Level IV-V persons who tend to like solitude and privacy, and may express unconventional values could also be expected to face challenges within a family system. However, these high level persons also exemplify appreciation of the individualness of others and experience deep relationships with few persons which should enable them to constitute optimally functioning family systems.

Of central importance may be the following questions: How do family members interact with other family members who are at different levels of emotional development? Is there a tolerance for differentness? Is there even a recognition that individual members are at different levels? What is the family's view of individual and family conflict: as negatively destructive or as "potential for growth" and "harbinger of positive change?"

Finally, multilevelness of phenomena must be considered. For example, the family cohesion experienced by a Level IV or V person would be qualitatively distinct from that experienced by a Level I

person.

From these questions one could structure the following hypothesis.

Hypothesis

There will be a positive correlation between the individual level of emotional development as measured by the Verbal Stimuli Test and the perceived quality of family functioning as measured by the FACES II test.

Summary

A discussion of the implications of the theory of Positive Disintegration for family system functioning theory has been presented in this chapter. Important research questions have been posed related to the theories of Positive Disintegration and the Circumplex Model of family functioning. An outline of the methodology and research procedures are provided in Chapter V.

Chapter V

METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH PROCEDURES

Overview of Multi-Method Approach

A multi-method approach of utilizing different sources and
methods consisting of family members' perceptions, objective
measures and expert observer ratings was employed in this study.
This multi-method approach was considered more advantageous than a
single method approach to assess the richness and complexity of
the family system (Olson & McCubbin, 1982). As Fiske (1975)
notes, "A source of data yields observations from a distinctive
role providing distinctive experience" (p. 20). The present study
attended to the perceptions of both "insiders" and "outsiders"
(Olson, 1977). "Insiders" consisted of the family members who
provided information on their thoughts, feelings and behaviors as
well as their perceptions of the family unit comprising those with
whom they have been in relationship. "Outsiders" consisted of
professional raters who participated as external observers of the
interaction of the family members.

Both sources of information were considered especially
valuable for this study. As Fiske (1975) notes, "instead of
seeking to minimize [differences in perceptions] researchers
should seek to identify the unique components of the perceptions
and judgments from each source" (p. 23). In this study,
respondent self report data were valued as well as professional

observer ratings, with consideration given to their similar or

differing observations. As Gurman and Kniskern (1981) underline,

one is not superior to the other or more objective, but only so

relevant to certain theoretical perspectives (p. 769). Each

provides valuable information enhancing completeness of the data

attained from the differing perspectives. 🐦

Towards a Comprehensive Methodology

> A more encompassing view is to see each perspective
> . . . as only partial glimpses of the whole picture.
> (Keeney, 1983, p. 3)

This study reflects a challenge to researchers to appreciate

both qualitative and quantitative data without a reductionistic

approach that demands total exclusion of one to the other.

Polanyi (1958) has argued against such an exclusivist approach:

> Today, when any human thought can be discredited by
> branding it as unscientific, the power previously
> exercised by theology has passed over to science; hence
> science has become in its turn the greatest single
> source of error. (Polanyi, 1958, p. 91)

Maslow (1970) affirms a similar view that many intellectuals

". . . lose faith in positivistic, nineteenth-century science as a

way of life" (p. 43).

Rather than a dualistic Cartesian split between objective and

subjective, between behavior which can be observed, measured and

verified as opposed to that which is experienced, a more holistic

research paradigm is suggested in this study. As Valle and King

(1978) propose:

> To begin to deal with the important questions . . .
> questions relating to human experiences as well as human
> behavior, we must turn to a new approach in order to
> complement (not replace) natural scientific methodology.
> (p. 6)

It is not a question of less rigour, but of greater rigour, and of

making the human sciences more meaningful (Giorgi, 1970).

> Logical-empiricism collapsed the dialectic of subjective
> and objective meaning by opting for "objective meaning"
> as the only true and meaningful account of events.
> Subjective meaning for all intents and purposes was
> ignored. . . . (Sullivan, 1980, 0. 23)

Structuralism, in emphasizing organic wholes rather than causal

events, attempts to discover the underlying structure of phenomena

by interpretive analysis (Wilden, 1975). However, as Sullivan

(1980) notes: "In eschewing human consciousness and subjective

interpretation it is therefore not overly interested in the

'conscious intentions' of the actors it studies" (p. 46). As

Turmel (1983) concludes, the deficiencies become clear:

> . . . any scientific system which becomes closed
> eventually begins excluding data that does not conform
> to its parameters. At best such data may be distorted
> in order to fit the requirements of the paradigm and the
> emerging truths then bear little resemblance to their
> experiential origins. (p. 236-237)

Positivistic psychology, as well as structuralism, is being

challenged by existential-phenomenological psychology with its

emphasis on dimensions of experience (Giorgi, 1970; Giorgi, Fisher

& Murray, 1975; Valle & King, 1978). That human research data

requires consideration of life experience of the subject has been

noted by Allport (1955). Similarly, in family research, the

familial experiences of the "real life actors" who compose that family grouping require attention (McLain & Weigert, 1979). The family members are the "insiders" to the family functioning scene and their subjective experiences cannot be disregarded without distorting the data.

Through disciplined reflection and description, the form of human experience as individual and as family member, or rather as "being-in-the-family" was explicated in this study. Expressions of individual thoughts, self-understandings, feelings, conscious intentions, and valuations comprised material for interpretation as did the quantitative data derived from test scores and observer ratings.

As researcher, my "involvement" in the research act also became material for reflection. This self-reflection as to presuppositions and values became a part of the interpretive activity (Sullivan, 1980). Even more so than in natural science research wherein that which is analyzed is affected by the researcher (Brugh-Joy, 1979; Kuhn, 1962), in human research this effect must be recognized, in fact, as a mutual affecting. The "co-constitutionality" of the individual and environment, the "dialogal relationship" of person and world, both basic tenets of phenomenology, apply to this research methodology as well. Gauld and Shotter (1977) emphasize the difference between the natural scientific "standing apart" from the subject-matter and a

hermeneutical approach in which the researcher must be within, a participant in the hermeneutical circle or circle of interpretation, to understand the meaning of the agent's actions (p. 9). Gadamer (1975) has also cautioned against "alienating distanciation" (verfremdung) which under the posture of detached observation actually detracts from human understanding. It is the view of this researcher that meaning can be synthesized by looking and attempting to gain understanding from differing perspectives and participations. As researcher, my participation ranged from inviting, interpreting written responses and reflections from individuals, interpreting the family in interaction as seen by observers, to being a participant-observer in a dialogue situation and interpreting within this "circle of understanding." Such an approach required a disciplined reflection and critical synthesis as well as a sensitive awareness. It became a challenge to refine a "dialectic of participation and distanciation." As Sullivan (1980) recommends,

> The researcher in interpreting certain shared meanings
> (i.e., share meanings) would be expected to bring some
> new and critical understanding to this already existing
> "shared relation" or meaning. His own interpretation
> would have to be sensitive to the already existing
> shared understanding and not potently contradictory to
> it. As a critical interpretation, it could challenge a
> set of shared subjective meanings (i.e., intersubjective
> meaning), but it ultimately could not be
> counter-intuitive to those persons or groups whose
> actions or expressions are being interpreted.
> (pp. 66-67)

Description of Sample

The sample of this study consisted of the parents and adolescent members of 16 families in a large urban center in Alberta, Canada. The subject families were required to have at least one adolescent member. For the purposes of this study, adolescent was defined as "a family member between the ages of 14 - 22 years." Only family members currently living at home were included in the study. Family members under 14 years of age were not included due to the complexity of the research instruments utilized.

The subject families consisted of families who responded to the researcher's invitation to "learn more about families." Only two parent families were included in this study. An attempt was made to obtain an equal representation of male and female adolescent members. Subject families consisted of families known to the researcher or recommended by other persons as potential subjects. No attempt was made prior to the study to define the family as functional or dysfunctional. No families contacted by the researcher refused to participate; however, five families initially contacted by other persons declined the invitation to participate in the study. The main reasons cited for refusal were the personal nature and time requirements of the study.

The 16 subject families consisted of 64 individuals with the families ranging from three to six members with a mean of four

members per family (S.D. = 9). The 32 parental members ranged in age from 37 to 62 years with a mean age of 46.5 years (S.D. = 6.2). The 32 adolescent members included 19 females and 13 males. The adolescents ranged in age from 14 to 22 years with a mean age of 17.5 years (S.D. = 2.3). The mean education level of the fathers was 13.6 years (S.D. - 2.7) and the mean education level of the mothers was 12.5 years (S.D. = 1.9). According to occupational status (Statistics Canada, 1981) 13 of the 16 families would be considered as middle class, one family as upper middle class, and two families as lower middle class. All of the subject families were Caucasian. Although no attempt was made to obtain information as to religious affiliation, several families alluded to the topic of religion, indicating a variety of religious affiliations. Sample characteristics are provided in Table 8.

Subjects were asked to provide the following demographic data: gender, age, present occupation, and highest level of education attained. The data were collected over a two month period, during February and March, 1984.

The three phases of the data collection process are outlined in a subsequent section of this chapter. All 16 families comprising 64 individuals provided responses to the Verbal Stimuli Test and the FACES II test. Eleven of the 16 families comprising 46 individuals also participated in the video-recorded Phase III session.

Table 8

Sample Characteristics

	Number		Mean Age		Mean Years of Education	
	Parents	Adolescents	Parents	Adolescents	Parents	Adolescents
Male	16	13	47.8 (S.D.=5.6)	17.8 (S.D.=2.8)	13.6 (S.D.=2.7)	11.8 (S.D.=2.0)
Female	16	19	45.3 (S.D.=6.6)	17.3 (S.D.=2.0)	12.6 (S.D.=1.9)	11.3 (S.D.=1.9)
Total	32	32	46.5 (S.D.=6.2)	17.5 (S.D.=2.3)	13.1 (S.D.=2.3)	11.5 (S.D.=1.9)

Data Collection Procedure

A pilot study was conducted with one family to test the research procedures. Since no problems were encountered the three-step data collection procedure was employed as outlined below.

1. Phase I - Initial contact was generally made by phone to explain the purposes of the research and to invite the family to participate.

2. Phase II - This phase involved personal contact time with the family, generally in their home, to further explain the requirements of the study and to collect the written self-report data for the Verbal Stimuli Test and FACES II test. This session proved to be a valuable time to gain the confidence of the family members as well as to observe family interaction. The time spent in Phase II was $\frac{1}{2}$ to $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours of contact time.

3. Phase III - The interview phase provided the main personal contact time. Again the family home was selected as the most appropriate, as the natural setting for the comfort of family members and as least disruptive to their schedules. The time required for Phase III ranged from $1\frac{1}{2}$ to $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours. The session was video-recorded for future analysis by two expert raters as well as review by the researcher. Phase III consisted of two parts.

Part I – family interaction time during which family·

members were instructed to "choose two items on the FACES II

test that stand out as describing your particular family.

Explain your choices to the other family members." The

researcher allowed the family to interact for approximately ½

hour without intervening.

Part II – a semi-structured interview conducted by the

researcher. This session proved to be a valuable time for

the researcher to participate in a dialogal relationship with

the family. She was able to probe more intensively and

extensively as to the phenomena of individual family

functioning relating more specifically to cohesion and

adaptability.

The main interview questions consisted of the following:

1. Your family is made up of n people, how have you

managed to work together as a family?

2. What brings you together?

3. How do you handle differences?

4. Describe the happiest experience you have had in this

family.

5. Describe one aspect of your family life that was an

unhappy experience.

6. What would you recommend for families today?

In general, the data collection procedure was conducted in a relaxed atmosphere with the family members participating well. A detailed reflection on the research process is provided in Chapter VI.

Research Instruments

For the purposes of this study, the following research instruments were utilized: (a) Verbal Stimuli Test - modified form (see Appendix A); (2) FACES II (see Appendix B); (3) Clinical Rating Scales for Family Functioning (see Appendix C). These instruments were selected because of their empirical validation of the constructs of the Dabrowskian levels of emotional development and the Circumplex Model of family functioning specific to the purposes of this research. A description of the research instruments follows.

Verbal Stimuli Test

The first research instrument employed in this study was the Verbal Stimuli Test (Dabrowski & Piechowski, 1977) which was designed to assess levels of individual emotional development based on the concepts of Dabrowski's theory of Positive Disintegration. The test consists of specific stimulus words which elicit subject responses providing experiential and conceptual information for diagnostic purposes. The stimulus words selected for the Verbal Stimuli Test yield response data relevant to basic dimensions of human experience such as joy,

sadness, success, death and inner conflict. Nine of the original

twelve stimulus words suggested by Dabrowski and Piechowski (1977)

were selected on the basis of ease of understanding and higher

inter-rater reliability of .73 for the combined verbal stimuli.

An additional stimulus word "family" was included to elicit

personal response data related to the way each individual

experiences family, a topic specific to this study. The modified

form of the Verbal Stimuli Test, utilized in this research, thus

consisted of ten stimulus words (Appendix A).

The rating procedure for the Verbal Stimuli Test consists in

differentiating the levels of emotional development reflected in

response units and assigning a level value from 1 to 5, as well as

half units, consistent with the description of levels and

dynamisms presented in Dabrowski and Piechowski (1977). Two

psychologists who are knowledgeable in the area of Positive

Disintegration theory and are experienced raters, rated the

responses utilizing the method of auditing to gain an acceptable

level of reliability. Auditing, as recommended by Guba (1978) and

Guba and Lincoln (1981), requires a second person or judge to

verify that the data categories make sense and have been

appropriately arranged into the category system.

This method of auditing, as demonstrated by Piechowski and

Tyska (1982), has been effective in categorizing descriptive

personality data. As Scott (1955) and Holsti (1968) have

affirmed, for a content analysis study, the reliability is dependent upon the raters' skills, insight and experience. The level of inter-rater reliability deemed acceptable for this study was 85%. A description of the Verbal Stimuli Test scoring procedure is presented in The Analysis of Data section of this chapter.

The Verbal Stimuli Test, as a method of ascertaining levels of emotional development has been employed in various studies including a construct validity study (Bain, 1975), individual emotional development (Dabrowski and Piechowski, 1977), musicality and emotional development (Platt, 1982), and friendships and levels of emotional development (Dawson, 1983).

FACES II

The second research instrument which was utilized in this research was the Family Cohesion and Adaptability Evaluation Scales or FACES II (Olson, Bell & Portner, 1978). FACES II, as a 30-item scale, is a modified form of the original 111-item and 50-item instruments. The FACES II instrument overcomes limitations of the earlier versions (Olson, Russell & Sprenkle, 1983). The thirty items were selected on the basis of reliability checks and factor analysis. This self-report inventory was designed to provide an empirical assessment of the concepts derived from the Circumplex Model of family functioning. The

assessed variables are specifically related to the cohesion and

adaptability dimensions of the model.

FACES II is comprised of 16 items assessing the cohesion

dimension and 14 items assessing the adaptability dimension. The

cohesion dimension consists of items related to family emotional

bonding, coalitions, space, time, decision-making, friends,

boundaries, recreation and interest. The adaptability dimension

consists of items related to family roles, assertiveness,

leadership, negotiation, discipline and rules.

FACES II uses a simplified language, permitting understanding

as low as the grade seven reading level, and allows for a double

administration to obtain ideal as well as actual family

functioning scores. The items consist of statements requiring

responses on a 5-point Likert type scale ranging from "almost

never" to "almost always" referring to the degree that the family

system characteristics are perceived to be present in one's

family. Scoring of FACES II, as outlined in the manual (Olson, et

al, 1982) allows for separate scores for cohesion and adaptability

as well as a combined score. Cutting points and ranges are

provided for designation of family type (see Appendix B). The

derivation of family scores is described in the section on

Analysis of Data. Separate norms are provided for parents and

adolescents with a parental mean score of 64.9 (standard deviation

8.4) for cohesion and mean score of 49.9 (standard deviation of

6.6) for adaptability based on 2,030 respondents. The adolescent

mean scores are 56.3 (standard deviation of 9.2) for cohesion and

45.4 (standard deviation of 7.9) for adaptability based on 416

respondents.

Reliability and validity data are provided in the manual.

The authors report a high test-retest reliability score of .83 for

cohesion, .80 for adaptability, and .84 for the total scale

(Pearson correlations). Internal consistency checks, based on two

equal subgroups of a national sample of 2,412 respondents, yielded

Cronbach Alpha figures for the samples as follows: cohesion, .88

and .86; adaptability, .78 and .79 with a total scale Alpha of

.90.

High content and construct validity levels are also reported

in the manual. Factor analysis results are presented with

cohesion items loading primarily on Factor I and adaptability

items loading mainly on Factor II.

The FACES II assessment instrument has proven useful both

empirically and clinically for families as well as couples.

Studies have compared clinic and non-clinic samples, actual versus

ideal levels of family functioning, individual/family member and

total family responses. Research has ranged from studies of

families with infants (Olson & McCubbin, 1982), clinical and

non-clinical families (Portner, 1981), families with runaways

compared with non-problem families (Bell, 1982), application of

the Circumplex Model to chemically dependent families (Killorin & Olson, 1980), perceptions of family of origin types (Newman & Craddock, 1982), and a national study of "normal" families (Olson et al, 1983).

Clinical Rating Scales

The Clinical Rating Scales for family functioning (Olson & Killorin, 1983) comprised the third assessment tool for this study. These rating scales are also based on the concepts of cohesion, adaptability and communication germane to the Circumplex Model of family systems. The constructs relevant to the theory are indicated in Appendix C. The Clinical Rating Scales were utilized to rate the family functioning as observed during the family interaction time of Phase III, outlined in the Data Collection Procedure of this chapter.

The Phase III family interaction was video-recorded for subsequent analysis by two trained expert observers, knowledgeable in family systems theory, who rated the family functioning according to criteria contained in the Clinical Rating Scale (Appendix C). Computation of total scores enabled classification of the family according to the Circumplex Model. An inter-rater reliability of .80 was obtained in the analyses.

A family communication rating scale (Olson & Killorin, 1983) was employed to assess the quality of communication evident in the family interactions (see Appendix D). This rating scale has been

included because communication has recently been considered a

facilitating dimension in the Circumplex Model (Olson, Russell &

Sprenkle, 1983). Positive communication skills such as respect,

empathy, clarity, continuity tracking, and freedom of expression

which facilitate family functioning were rated in this study by

the expert observers as well as by the researcher.

Analysis of Data

The analysis of the data collected in this study involved the

utilization of several scores: A Verbal Stimuli Test score to

indicate the level of psychological development of each family

member; FACES II individual and family scores; and observer rating

scores derived from the Clinical Rating scales. A brief

explanation of the derivation of each score follows.

Verbal Stimuli Test Scores

The responses to the ten verbal stimuli which were collected

in written form, were divided into response units. A response

unit was defined as "the smallest amount of text, a sentence or

several sentences, which could stand out of context and remain

intelligible . . . " (Dabrowski & Piechowski, 1977). Each

response was assigned a level value according to the theoretical

definitions of the levels. Half levels were also rated, providing

response units with values of I to IV or half units of I-II,

II-III, III-IV.

The formula utilized for the Verbal Stimuli Test Score was a

Level Index Score.

$$\text{Level Index} = \frac{\text{Sum (Level X Number of Ratings)}}{\text{Total Number of Ratings}}$$

FACES II Family Scores

The difficulty in attaining family scores on FACES II that are conceptually and empirically sound has been noted by Olson et al (1983). For purposes of this research, which was a study of the individual and of the family unit, both individual scores and family scores were presented to reveal commonalities and discrepancies.

The method for computing family scores on FACES II was essentially similar to that employed by Olson et al (1983). Two family scores were computed: a "family distance from center" (FDFC) score and a "family discrepancy score" (FDS).

The FDFC score was used to classify the family as balanced, mid-range, or extreme according to the Circumplex Model. The FDFC score was designed as "the distance from the center of the Circumplex Model to the family centroid, which is the point in the model at which the family mean adaptability and family mean cohesion scores meet" (Olson, 1983, p. 279). This score provided a single measure of family unit functioning based on three or more individual family members' scores. A correlational analysis was thus possible for purposes of this study.

The FDS score was defined as "the degree of agreement among family members on how tightly family members' scores are dispersed

about the family centroid" (Olson, 1983, p. 279). The FPS scores

provided an indication of the level of agreement among individual

family members based on their perception of the functioning of

their family system. In calculating the family scores, the

individual cohesion and adaptability scores were converted to Z

scores, based on differing norms for parents and adolescents. The

formulas for the two family scores are provided in Table 9.

<div align="center">Clinical Rating Scale Scores</div>

Family Scores based on the rated observations as provided in

Appendix C, Cutting Points for the Clinical Rating Scale, were

utilized. Separate scores for cohesion, adaptability, and

communication were derived, as well as a mean score for each

family. The clinical rating scale family scores were derived

independently by two expert observers and by the researcher who

served as the participant observer.

Content Analysis

In addition to the quantitative analysis of the individual

and family scores described previously, a content analysis of

family functioning was also carried out. The family interaction,

video-recorded during Phase III of the data collection procedure,

was transcribed by the researcher. These transcriptions of the

verbal response material, as well as non-verbal visual data were

utilized to derive thematic categories for each of the 11

families.

Table 9
Family Distance and Family Discrepancy Scores on FACES II
(Reproduced from Olson, D.A., McCubbin, H.I. et al, 1983)

Family Distance from Center (FDFC):

$$FC = \frac{HC + WC + AC}{3}$$

FC = Family mean cohesion z score
HC = Husband's cohesion z score
WC = Wife's cohesion z score
AC = Adolescent's cohesion z score

$$FA = \frac{HA + WA + AA}{3}$$

FA = Family mean adaptability z score
HA = Husband's adaptability z score
WA = Wife's adaptability z score
AA = Adolescent's adaptability z score

$$FDFC = \sqrt{FC^2 + FA^2}$$

Norms for Family Distance Scores:

Family Type	Distance Cutoff Point	Adjusted Percentage
Balanced	FDFC 2.7 or less	52.4
Mid-Range	>2.7<4.6	32.1
Extreme	<4.6	15.5
		100.0

Family Discrepancy Score (FDS)

$$HDS = \sqrt{(HC - FC)^2 + (HA + FA)^2}$$
$$WDS = \sqrt{(WC - FC)^2 + (WA - FA)^2}$$
$$ADS = \sqrt{(AC - FC)^2 + (AA - FA)^2}$$

FDS = HDS + WDS + ADS

HDS: Husband's distance scores from the family centroid.
WDS: Wife's distance score from the family centroid.
ADS: Adolescent's distance score from the family centroid.
FDS: Family Discrepancy Score is a sum of the discrepancies for each family member.
A mean FDS can also be used by dividing the total by the number of family members.

The thematic categories were supported by verbatim responses of the family members as well as non-verbal descriptive data. It was realized that as Van Manen (1984) has cautioned:

> As such, a so-called thematic phrase does not do justice to the fullness of the life of a phenomenon. A thematic phrase only serves to point at, to allude to, or to hint at, an aspect of the phenomenon. (p. 28)

Commonalities and variations in family experience were also extracted based on a comparative analysis of the portrayal of family experience by the family members.

Summary of Data Analysis

The qualitative and quantitative data collected in this study were recorded. Individual and family profiles were drawn to illustrate individual emotional development level, family functioning type and description of family functioning qualities observed by the raters and researchers. Themes were derived from this cumulative data, noting similar and differing perceptions of the family unit by its constituents. Unique as well as general family functioning qualities were noted. Pearson product-moment correlation(s) coefficients were employed to determine if there was a positive correlation between level of emotional development as derived from the Verbal Stimuli test and family functioning type as derived from the FACES II test.

Chapter VI

INTERPRETATION OF DATA

Overview

A general description of test results and discussion of the
hypothesis as well as detailed individual family research findings
are presented in this chapter. Researcher preunderstandings,
self-reflection and reflection on the research process are
discussed.

Discussion of Test Results

FACES II Test Results

The FACES II test results are provided in Tables 10 - 12.
The number of respondents who perceived their family functioning
according to each of the 16 family types based on the Circumplex
model are presented in Table 10.

Percentage respondents of individual perception of family
functioning, grouped as balanced, midrange and extreme are
provided in Table 11. Parent and adolescent percentages are
indicated.

The mean scores based on the perception of family functioning
FACES II results are presented in Table 12. Separate mean scores
for cohesion and adaptability are indicated for parents and
adolescents. The parent cohesion mean score of 60.2 of this
sample is somewhat lower than the mean of 64.9 reported in the
FACES II manual of norms. The parent adaptability mean score of

Table 10

Individual Perception of Family Functioning

Parents and Adolescents Combined (n=64)

		low COHESION high			
		DISENGAGED	SEPARATED	CONNECTED	ENMESHED
	CHAOTIC	CHAOTICALLY DISENGAGED (1)	CHAOTICALLY SEPARATED (1)	CHAOTICALLY CONNECTED (0)	CHAOTICALLY ENMESHED (1)
high A D A P T A B I L I T Y low	FLEXIBLE	FLEXIBLY DISENGAGED (2)	FLEXIBLY SEPARATED (7)	FLEXIBLY CONNECTED (11)	FLEXIBLY ENMESHED (3)
	STRUCTURED	STRUCTURALLY DISENGAGED (5)	STRUCTURALLY SEPARATED (13)	STRUCTURALLY CONNECTED (8)	STRUCTURALLY ENMESHED (1)
	RIGID	RIGIDLY DISENGAGED (5)	RIGIDLY SEPARATED (5)	RIGIDLY CONNECTED (0)	RIGIDLY ENMESHED (1)

Table 11
Individual Perception of Family Functioning
Percentage Respondents

Type	Parents (n = 32)	Adolescents (n = 32)	Combined (n = 64)
Balanced	56	66	61
Mid-range	31	22	.27
Extreme	13	13	13

Table 12
Perceived Family Functioning (FACES II)
Mean Scores

	Cohesion	Adaptability
Parents	$\overline{X}$ = 60.2 (S.D. = 8.2)	$\overline{X}$ = 47.0 (S.D. = 6.1)
Mothers	$\overline{X}$ = 60.3 (S.D. = 8.5)	$\overline{X}$ = 46.3 (S.D. = 6.2)
Fathers	$\overline{X}$ = 60.1 (S.D. = 8.2)	$\overline{X}$ = 47.7 (S.D. = 6.0)
Adolescents	$\overline{X}$ = 55.8 (S.D. = 9.2)	$\overline{X}$ = 45.9 (S.D. = 5.5)
Daughters	$\overline{X}$ = 56.6 (S.D. = 8.9)	$\overline{X}$ = 45.8 (S.D. = 5.9)
Sons	$\overline{X}$ = 54.6 (S.D. = 9.9)	$\overline{X}$ = 46.0 (S.D. = 5.1)

47 compares with the mean of 49.9 reported in the FACES II manual.

The adolescents" cohesion mean score of 55.8 and adaptability mean

score of 45.9 compare favorably with the general cohesion mean of

56.3 and the adaptability mean of 45.4 reported for normal

populations (Olson et al, 1982).

No significant difference between the mean scores of mothers

and fathers or between the mean scores of daughters and sons was

indicated.

<div align="center">Verbal Stimuli Test Results</div>

The Verbal Stimuli Test results are provided in Tables 13 and

14. Of the 64 respondents, 84 per cent scored below level III

which is comparable to the proportion of the general population

scores as suggested by Dabrowski. Only one of the 64 respondents

scored at level IV with none scoring at level IV-V or level V.

Comparable parent and adolescent scores are presented in Table 13.

Whereas only six per cent of the parents scored at level I, 22 per

cent of the adolescents scored at this level. Nineteen per cent

of the parents scored at level I-II, a critical transitional stage

between primary integration and unilevel disintegration. Only 9

per cent of the adolescents received scores at this level.

The number of respondents at each level of emotional

development and perception of family functioning type is indicated

in Table 14. Of the 64 respondents, 61 per cent perceived their

family functioning as balanced, 27 per cent as midrange and 13 per

Table 13
Emotional Development Level
Percentage Respondents

Level	Parents (n=32)	Adolescents (n=32)	Combined (n=64)
I	6	22	14
I - II	19	9	14
II	53	41	47
II - III	6	12	9
III	10	16	13
III - IV	3	0	2
IV	3	0	2
IV - V	0	0	0
V	0	0	0

Table 14
Emotional Development Level and
Perception of Family Functioning Respondents
(n=64)

	Family Functioning		
Level	Balanced	Midrange	Extreme
I	6	1	2
I - II	6	2	1
II	19	8	4
II - III	4	1	1
III	4	4	0
III - IV	0	1	0
IV	1	0	0
IV - V	0	0	0
V	0	0	0

cent as extreme.

The majority of respondents who perceived their families as balanced or midrange families scored below level III on The Verbal Stimuli Test. Thirty-four of the 39 respondents in the balanced. group and 12 of the 17 respondents in the midrange group scored below level III. All eight respondents who perceived their family functioning as extreme scored below level III on the Verbal Stimuli Test.

Discussion of Hypothesis

The general hypothesis of this study was that there would be a positive correlation between individual level of emotional development and perception of family functioning. This hypothesis was not confirmed. The correlation was .02 (r - .02) indicating a lack of correlation between the two variables for this sample. A scattergram also revealed a lack of relationship between the Verbal Stimuli Test scores and the FACES II test scores. These data indicate that the two scores are relatively independent. High level emotional development individuals did not necessarily perceive their family functioning as balanced. Low level emotional development persons some █████ perceived their family functioning as balanced.

Several important considerations follow. The finding of a lack of positive correlation does support a supposition that persons with high levels of emotional development would experience

a dissatisfaction with dysfunctional family functioning. As with normal populations, individuals rated as levels III and IV would be considered high emotional development level persons. These persons, keenly aware of "what ought to be" in their individual development would also be sensitive to "that which ought to be and is not" in their family system. Only at the highest level V, according to the theory of Positive Disintegration, is there a unity, a harmony, wherein the "what ought to be becomes what is." Level IV persons, as Maslow's self-actualizing individuals, tend to like solitude and privacy and establish deep relationships with few persons. The difficulties in family living wherein such solitude is not respected or individuals are excluded from deep emotional relationships become evident. The challenges to family interaction are critical. For low level emotional development individuals, levels I or I-II, a lack of reflectiveness of "what ought to be" may manifest a satisfaction with "what is." These individuals thus would perceive as functional some dysfunctional family interactional patterns.

Since no level V persons were found in this study, further research is required to determine if there is a relationship between this highest level of emotional development and balanced family functioning.

The importance of agreement or lack of agreement about family members as to their perception of family functioning was also

considered.

A correlational analysis was undertaken to determine the agreement between family members on the FACES II and Verbal Stimuli tests. The correlations are provided in Table 15. That family members perceived their families differently was obvious with adaptability lacking any statistically significant correlations. This finding of diversity of perception of family functioning by individuals was also reported by Olson et al (1983). For the Verbal Stimuli Test scores only the mother-adolescent scores were positively correlated (r = .57) and the adolescent-adolescent scores were negatively correlated (r = -.60). The differences in perception of family functioning and emotional development levels of family members may also be an important factor relevant to the question of the relationship between emotional development level and family functioning.

Individual-Family Research Findings

The research findings for the eleven respondent families who participated in all three phases of the data collection procedure are presented in the following section. Detailed descriptions supported with verbatim response data of two families are presented as illustrative of the data analysis procedure undertaken for all eleven families. The data analyses of the remaining nine families are presented in summary form. All individual and family names utilized in the data reports of this study have been changed.

Table 15

Agreement Between Family Members

(Correlations)

Scale	Mother-Father	Mother-Adolescent	Father-Adolescent	Adolescent-Adolescent
FACES II				
Cohesion	r=.52*	r=.61*	r=.40	r=.61*
Adaptability	r=.38	r=.36	r=-.07	r=-.23
Verbal Stimuli Test	r=0.30	r=.57*	r=.27	r=-.60

* p<.05

The detailed research findings of the two families are

presented according to the following format: general

characteristics, family atmosphere, emotional development levels

of family members, perception of family functioning, and family

thematic categories derived from integration of all data sources.

As outlined previously, the three main sources of data considered

in this study included the individual Verbal Stimuli and FACES II

test scores, observer ratings of family functioning, and

participant-observer or researcher analysis of family functioning.

Scoring procedures are described in the data analysis section of

this thesis. Theoretical explanation of the levels of emotional

development according to the theory of Positive Disintegration as well as the theory of family functioning based on the Circumplex Model are described in previous chapters.

The Green Family

The first family to be described in detail is the Green family, which is comprised of two parents, three adolescents and a younger child. The mother is a full-time homemaker, and the father is employed as a social services manager. The three adolescents, a son and two daughters, are students. A profile of the Green family is presented in Table 16. The atmosphere or family ambience was generally optimistic, caring, and sensitively affectionate with a good sense of humour. Interest in self-reflection and family functioning were expressed. As individuals, the Green family members scored at levels II and II-III on the Verbal Stimuli Test. Verbatim responses illustrating the attendant level of emotional development are provided as follows:

> Level II-III - Suicide
> I have experienced the result of suicide in people close to me on two occasions. My first reaction was anger; anger for the extreme hurt and sorrow inflicted on others . . . . anger was quickly dissolved by sorrow, regret, guilt. To realize that someone can be so totally desperate, driven to such extreme despair to see no workable solution but to want to escape by death is still difficult for me to understand. I have to question if I could have been more "present" to these people. I cannot go back and offer kindnesses in these cases, but I have firmly vowed to take that extra step in "unacceptable" situations; e.g., alcoholism, homosexuality, and let the person know I care. (Mother)

Table 16

Profile of Green Family

MEMBER	GENDER	AGE	EDUCATION	EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT LEVEL	FAMILY FUNCTIONING SELF-REPORT (FACES II)		FAMILY FUNCTIONING	
					PERCEIVED	IDEAL	OBSERVER RATING	PARTICIPANT-OBSERVER RATING
PERSON I (MOTHER)	F	44	Gr. X	II - III	Structurally Enmeshed	Chaotically Enmeshed	Structurally Connected	Structurally Connected
PERSON II (FATHER)	F	44	B.S.W.	II - III	Rigidly Disengaged	Flexibly Connected	Family Distance From Center Score	
							Balanced	
PERSON III	M	21	1st year Tech. School	II	Flexibly Enmeshed	Chaotically Enmeshed	Mean Family Discrepancy Score	
							Medium	
PERSON IV	F	17	Gr. XI	II	Flexibly Enmeshed	Chaotically Enmeshed	Family Communication Quality	
							Excellent (5)	
PERSON V	F	16	Gr. X	II	Structurally Connected	Chaotically Enmeshed		

Level II-III - Success

     Success means to be able to get up in the morning
and to look forward to the day ahead. It is
accomplishing something meaningful in my life. It is
teaching my children values and a sense of
responsibility that will help them to be productive
members of society, that they might contribute to making
society a little better place. Success means providing
for the material needs of my family. (Father)

Level II - Solitude

     Being left totally alone, having no communication
with the outside world whatsoever. (Son)

Level II - Loneliness

     Only experience I can think of involving loneliness
is at the beginning of grade ten. At school I didn't
know anyone. Was a terrible feeling. Felt terribly
alone, very scary. Other than that I've always been
fortunate enough to have people I care for around me.
(Daughter)

Level II-III - Inner Conflict

     I think inner conflict is very good. If we did not
have this how could we know what is right and wrong and
how could we make decisions. We would be totally
irrational people . . . I have a lot of inner conflict
right now in terms of career decisions and more so with
morals. I feel inner conflict is very healthy for the
soul; to discover who we really are. (Daughter)

Each member of the Green family provided at least two

responses that manifested the beginnings of internal value

orientations or level III development. The hesitation,

ambivalence and ambitendencies of level II with external value

orientations appear in the process of being replaced by more

structural and functional differentiation with internal value

orientations. The response to the stimulus word "inner conflict,"

cited above illustrates such a process. The presence of such

developmental dynamisms as reflectiveness, guilt, and intimate

emotional relationships were evident. The level III

characteristic of moral responsibility, the "what is" becoming

"what ought to be," was exemplified in the mother's active

expression of valuing others as unique persons despite her lack of

understanding of their actions. The intimacy level experienced by

the Green family members was expressed by one of the daughters as

follows:

> Family: having people around you who love and care
> about you. Not having to worry about how you look or
> what you say. To be able to remove all masks and
> totally be yourself. Family allows you to be totally at
> ease and allows you to express your feelings. I love my
> family very much and I feel extremely fortunate to be a
> part of them. My family sticks together through the
> good and bad. Throughout the years we have bonded a
> very close relationship which I feel will never be
> broken.

The average emotional development level of the parents was II-III

and that of the adolescents was level II.

The individual perceptions of family functioning given by the

Green family members as responses to the FACES II test are

indicated in Table 16. Noteworthy is the fact that each of the

family members provided differing perceptions of their family

experience. Two of the adolescents rated their family as balanced

according to the cohesion and adaptability scores: flexibly

connected or structurally connected. The observers and the

researcher as participant observer also rated the Green family

functioning as structurally-connected, a balanced type. The third

adolescent rated the family as flexibly enmeshed, a midrange

category. The parents rated their family functioning in very different ways. The mother perceived the family to be extremely high in cohesion or enmeshed, whereas the father perceived the family to be extremely low in cohesion or disengaged. Family adaptability was also rated differently by the parents. The mother perceived the family adaptability as structured, a balanced category, whereas the father rated adaptability as rigid, an extreme category. Interestingly, only the father rated the ideal family as flexibly-connected, a balanced category. The other family members all selected as ideal extremely high levels of cohesion and adaptability, rating their ideal family functioning as chaotically-enmeshed. Extreme closeness appears to be most desirable as does extreme individualism, categories considered problematic according to the tenets of the Circumplex Model.

The family scores, family distance from center score and the family discrepancy score are provided in Table 16, as balanced and medium respectively. The communication score of 5 according to the clinical rating score was considered excellent with open discussion of self, feelings and relationships; respect, and empathy evident with clear verbal messages and the absence of non-congruent messages.

The thematic categories derived from an integration of all data sources provide a rich phenomenological description of the Green family functioning. These categories convey emergent

properties of the Green family experience, derived from a careful

reflection and analysis of individual member perceptions, as well

as family functioning patterns not reducible to the perceptions or

reactions of individual members. The six thematic categories

descriptive of the Green family include family closeness, crises

handling ability, empathic communication, marital dyad strength,

religious values and traditional role delineation. Verbatim

response data are provided as illustrative of these thematic

categories.

Family closeness, cohesion or emotional bonding was

characteristic of the Green family:

> We feel very close to each other, we are blessed and
> fortunate, rarely do we look outside the family to
> discuss problems - on the whole we turn to each other.
> (Mother)

> Family members know each others close friends.
> (Daughter)

> We're interested in each other's activities and ask
> about them - sports, Dad's work. (Son)

> I know if I ever came home pregnant, she wouldn't just
> say, "shame, shame;" we know Mom wouldn't kick us out,
> whatever happened she'd be there. (Daughter)

The "being there for each other" was manifested non-verbally as

well by attentive facial expressions, nods of agreement, smiles of

recognition as well as expressions of concern for comfort of

individual members during the videotaping session.

Crisis handling ability was an evident strength for the Green

family. The father and mother took turns describing the critical

illness of their youngest son during his infancy years.

> Our youngest child had medical problems during the first
> year. This was very hard especially for my wife.
> (Father)
>
> I felt guilty that this child was here because I had
> been told I shouldn't have any more, I was really angry.
> Why? Now I had to put everything I had into caring for
> him, without much sleep. I was so tired I couldn't even
> organize my thoughts . . . . When I couldn't fight any
> more, my husband had the strength. He finally got the
> right medical help. He wasn't demanding. (Mother)
>
> This type of difficulty should draw people closer
> together, a time of mutual support. We needed and got
> support from extended family, had that relief to draw
> from. (Father)

The adaptability manifested in "mutual support" and "getting help

as a relief" proved to be critical components in the crises

handling ability of the Green family. The view that something

good would come out of it; the possibility in the pain provided

the necessary optimism.

Empathic communication was in evidence throughout the

sessions spent with the Green family. As the youngest son, who

joined in the family interaction time, noted, "It is easy to

express our own opinions." No family member was excluded from

participation. Qualities of openness, trust and compromise were

expressed and demonstrated.

> Openness has brought us together. We can tell each
> other how we really feel, get to know what is on each
> other's minds and know where we stand. (Daughter)
>
> Right from the beginning, Mom and Dad were very flexible
> people - no generation gap. (Son)

> Important to communicate, to express feelings and
> differences without cutting each other off. (Father)

> I have a good feeling, a good relationship with my
> daughters, established when they were very young. I
> trust them. (Mother)

> . . . if Jane and I have arguments, later it just works
> out, have major differences, yelling and shouting - each
> knows other's opinion, able to express feelings, no
> grudges carried . . . . (Daughter)

A trusting openness appears to provide an ease of empathic

communication for the Green family; a forthright honesty tempered

with caring concern.

Strong marital commitment to each other, or marital dyad

strength was often in evidence between the Green wife and husband.

Most often unexpressed, but perceived as strongly present, the

high regard that wife and husband had for each other, a mutuality,

a committed love was evident. It was as though this quality was

so present it did not need verbal confirmation. Two expressions

sum up this strength of the marital dyad quality the Green

couple:

> . . . a partnership, a quality, difficulties should
> draw a couple closer together . . . needs to be mutual
> support; that's what marriage is all about. (Father)

> Main structure of family is parents; if don't have kind
> and loving parents you're at a loss to begin with.
> (Son)

Strong religious values also characterized the Green family.

A "lived-faith" seemed to permeate the family atmosphere,

providing focus, strength and guiding values.

[During son's illness] . . . feel somehow God used me, the answer was within, He was guiding me. My husband also has strong faith - know God always there. (Mother)

. . . values and morals that Mom and Dad have given us, they taught us right and wrong when we were younger, now we have to choose for ourselves. (Son)

A final thematic category descriptive of the Green family was that of traditional role delineation. The mother, as full-time homemaker, clearly regarded her job "inside the home" as wife and mother.

> For me creating family, being a wife and mother is a
> very noble profession and I need no other to find
> fulfillment. I strongly resent the attitude society has
> adopted, and I feel we can make no greater mistake as a
> society than to devalue the importance of family.
> (Mother)

For Mrs. Green outside activities comprise traditional volunteer service.

> When and if I am involved outside my home, it is in
> something involving a sense of family, whether it be in
> the school or church community. (Mother).

As noted earlier, the Green adolescents value their parents' dedication to family. However, the role delineation was problematic for the girls who expressed resentment at the lack of sharing of household responsibilities.

> Personally I don't like that; I think each one should
> help; I don't see anything wrong with guys helping . . .
> after supper we're just as busy, yet we do the cleaning
> up. (Daughter)

The father expressed his view of role delineation.

> This family is in a traditional role. I'm responsible.
> I see housework as a female type role. I don't see it
> rigid - when someone is sick - yet from my perspective
> when I come home at night I don't jump in. (Father)

In summary, as individuals, the Green family members revealed
similar levels of emotional development, with no one being
strikingly atypical. Noteworthy are the differing perceptions of
family functioning given by the individuals. Strong agreement on
family support and caring were most evident as was a family growth
mentality, characteristics related to cohesion and adaptability
facilitated by empathic communication. As Mr. Green concluded,
"Family has the responsibility to help each other grow." In word
and in action the Green family seemed to exemplify this quality of
individual and family growth.

The Alton Family

The second family presented in detail is the Alton family.
This family is comprised of two parents, two adolescents and two
younger children. The mother is employed as a health care
professional and the father as a blue collar worker. The two
adolescents, a daughter and a son, are students. A profile of the
Alton family is provided in Table 17. The family atmosphere was
one of friendliness, yet oppositional distrust and pessimism
seemed to prevail.

The Alton family members scored at levels I to III on the
Verbal Stimuli Test. Both parents obtained level II scores,
whereas one adolescent obtained a level I score and the other
obtained a level III score. Verbatim responses are provided to
illustrate the differing levels of emotional development:

Table 17

Profile of Alton Family

MEMBER	GENDER	AGE	EDUCATION	EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT LEVEL	FAMILY FUNCTIONING SELF-REPORT (FACES II)		FAMILY FUNCTIONING	
					PERCEIVED	IDEAL	OBSERVER RATING	PARTICIPANT-OBSERVER RATING
PERSON I (MOTHER)	F	39	Nursing Diploma	II	Rigidly Disengaged	Chaotically Connected	Chaotically Connected	Chaotically Disengaged
PERSON II (FATHER)	M	49	Gr. XII	II	Structurally Disengaged	Chaotically Separated	Family Distance From Center Score	
							Midrange	
PERSON III	M	15	Gr. X	I	Rigidly Disengaged	Chaotically Connected	Mean Family Discrepancy Score	
							High	
PERSON IV	F	14	Gr. IX	III	Structurally Disengaged	Chaotically Enmeshed	Family Communication Quality	
							Fair (2)	

Level 1 - Success
     I think that anyone can be a success if they want
to be. (Son)

Level II - Great Joy
     The time of great joy has been the day of my
graduation, my wedding day, the day our children were
born. Also I am so overjoyed and proud when one of us
achieves an award or a good grade. (Mother)

Level II - Solitude
     It can be a way people can get relaxation in their
daily lives or it can be close to loneliness, not being
able to make friends. (Father)

Level III - Ideal
     My ideal self would be a loving, understanding,
caring, trustworthy, honest and a true blue friend. I
would like to have a family who loves me and whom I
love. An honest life, a good job, a house, and most of
all a sense of usefulness and pride. (Daughter)

The Alton family members manifested strikingly different

levels of emotional development. The absence of guilt and the

absence of reflectiveness characteristic of level 1 primary

integration were evident in some members. These absences were in

sharp contrast to a keen awareness of moral responsibility, of

"what ought to be" characteristic of the level III family member.

The level II family members displayed ambivalence and hesitation

characteristic of level II unilevel disintegration. The differing

value orientations and developmental levels of the Alton family

appeared to promote disharmony. As expressed by the daughter:

     Another thing that gets me down is the frequent
     dishonesty in our family. I realize it really hurts my
     parents especially my Mom and that hurts me - it's
     enough to tear my family apart.

The perception of family functioning given by individual

members of the Alton family as responses to the FACES II test are indicated in Table 17. Noteworthy is the fact that all four members perceived the family as disengaged, an extremely low cohesion category. The mother and adolescent son perceived their family as extremely rigid, an extremely low adaptability category. The father and the daughter rated their family adaptability level as structured, a balanced category. Both parents and adolescents rated the ideal family as possessing an extremely high adaptability level or chaotic according to the Circumplex Model. For three family members ideal cohesion levels were perceived to be connected or separated, both balanced categories. Only the daughter rated ideal family cohesion as enmeshed, an extremely high cohesion category. Extreme individualism appears to be most desired by the Alton family.

The observers and researcher as participant observer rated the Alton family adaptability as extremely high or chaotic. The family cohesion was rated differently by observers and researcher. The observers regarded the family as connected, a balanced cohesion category, whereas the researcher observed the family to be disengaged, an extremely low cohesion category.

The family scores, family distance from center score and family discrepancy score are presented in Table 17 as midrange and high respectively.

The communication score of 2 according to the clinical rating

scale was considered fairly good. Disqualifying verbal and
distracting non-verbal responses with a lack of respect for the
feelings and messages of others were evident. The Alton family
was quite open in discussing self, feelings and relationships.
However, the feeling of "how I would like to be treated if that
were me" empathic communication was seldom evident. No meta
communication was manifested in the family interaction session.

The thematic categories derived from an integration of all
data sources provide a comprehensive description of the Alton
family. Careful reflection and analyses of individual family
member responses as well as of system characteristics of the
family were undertaken. The five thematic categories descriptive
of the Alton family include emotional separateness, dysfunctional
communication, lack of clear generational boundaries, inefficient
problem solving ability and concerned hopelessness. Verbatim
response data are provided to support and illustrate the thematic
categories.

An emotional separateness seemed to characterize the Alton
family. This extremely low cohesion quality was often indicated
more non-verbally than verbally. Attempts to be together
physically were rebuffed. A general lack of "esprit de corps"
prevailed:

> Everyone goes his or her own way. (Mother)

> I know that might sound selfish, but because I usually
> don't get that much recognition from my family, I am

usually the one who encourages myself.   (Daughter)

Family members are closer to_people outside . . . find
it easier to speak to friends than to family.
(Daughter)

The lack of family accord was especially evident in the

dysfunctional communication which pervaded the family interaction.

Initial. critical remarks about the amount written on the Verbal

Stimuli Test were aimed at each other:

Did you include a plot, too?   (Daughter)

Disqualifying comments such as "that's not the way it is," "that's

not true," and "who cares?" were frequently levelled at each

other. Defensive attempts to protect oneself with such remarks as

"I'm not the only one" as well as sullen, defiant looks were

common . A striking feature of the Alton family communication

appeared to be desperate pleas for recognition without

consideration of other family members. As the father concluded,

"they want to see only their own part to their advantage."

Although there seemed to be a good relationship between the

marital dyad in the Alton family, with respect shown toward each

other, a lack of clear generational boundaries was evident. The

adolescents in the family often seemed to disregard any

parent/child hierarchy. In fact, the lack of parental leadership

was noteworthy and a source of concern for the parents. As one of

the younger children noted, "nobody obeys the rules." Confusion

of generational boundaries and ineffective adult leadership proved

disruptive.

Inefficient problem solving ability was evident.

Words fly, the war is on - one insists on getting this,
the other wants it - the war is on. (Father)

Takes more time and effort to be after them all the time
to come and help so I just end up doing it myself.
(Mother)

The evasion of responsibility was illustrated not only in lack of

sharing of household responsibilities, but in behavior as well.

A concerned hopelessness characterized the Alton family.

However, most positive was a willingness to elicit assistance in

solving their family difficulties, a seeming paradox:

[The difficulties in our family], the attitude toward it
all and the way [it] is expressed has me very saddened
and very worried. (Mother)

One wish for our family would be to remember the golden
rule . . . think of other person first. (Father)

One thing that gets me down is the frequent dishonesty
in our family . . . enough to tear any family apart
. . . . makes me very happy when everyone in our family
does something together and gets along. (Daughter)

A growing glimmer of hope seemed to appear toward the end of the

sessions with the Alton family. As the son noted, "My family is

not the best, but we try so I guess that means we're O.K."

In conclusion, the Alton family seems not yet to have

achieved the balanced cohesion and adaptability spoken of by the

father.

A family should be a close group, yet each person should
live their own life. They need to have need for each
other, while friends should be different.

The struggle to accept individual differentness in relation to

abilities and specifically to emotional development was paramount.

It is the researcher's view that with supportive challenge and

encouragement the Alton family crises has the potential to be the

very catalyst to transform their system functioning. Rather than a

"minus sign," the crisis is a "harbinger of change," the

possibility of reintegration at a higher level through

disintegration of lower level functioning. This positive

disintegration view related to individuals is also applicable to

family functioning. That there is "possibility in pain" was my

parting impression of the Alton family. Interestingly, it was the

Alton family who had graciously invested considerable time and

effort in preparing homemade baking to share with us. A warm

friendliness was evident in response to our appreciation and

encouragement. As researcher, I must conclude that I hurt with

them and hoped with them; I was and am deeply moved!

Family Profile Summaries

The remaining nine families who participated in the three

phases of the data collection procedure are presented in summary

form. The same careful reflection, detailed analysis and

integration of all data sources as undertaken for the Green and

Alton families was also undertaken for these nine families.

The Drapeau Family

A profile of the Drapeau family is provided in Table 18. The family is also composed of two older children who live away from home, the adolescent included in this study being the youngest of the three children. The family atmosphere was warmly welcoming, with affiliative trust, intense emotional expression, and profound sensitivity.

The family members achieved average scores at levels II and II-III on the Verbal Stimuli Test. A high level III-IV emotional development level was illustrated in the following response given by the son:

> Inner Conflict - An experience of loneliness,
> frustration and uncertainty. My sister was seriously
> involved in a relationship, talking seriously about
> marriage and future plans. However, being the
> protective little brother, I saw some traits in him
> that I really objected to that either my sister did not
> know about or refused to acknowledge. The inner
> conflict was do I tell her or do I not? Is it my own
> selfishness that I would not accept him or do I have a
> right to my opinions? If I do have valid opinions do I
> have the right to tell my sister? Will it make her
> decide between him and me? Love carries what
> responsibility?

The Drapeau family members perceived their family functioning to be within the balanced categories of cohesion and adaptability. The observers and researcher rated the family as structurally-connected, a balanced category. The family communication was perceived to be excellent.

Table 18

Profile of Drapeau Family

MEMBER	GENDER	AGE	EDUCATION	EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT LEVEL	FAMILY FUNCTIONING SELF-REPORT (FACES II)		FAMILY FUNCTIONING	
					PERCEIVED	IDEAL	OBSERVER RATING	PARTICIPANT-OBSERVER RATING
PERSON I (MOTHER)	F	49	Business College	II	Structurally Separated	Chaotically Connected	Structurally Connected	Structurally Connected
PERSON II (FATHER)	M	52	M.Sc.	II	Structurally Separated	Flexibly Connected		
PERSON III	M	22	B.A.	II - III	Flexibly Connected	Chaotically Connected		

Family Distance From Center Score

Balanced

Mean Family Discrepancy Score

Low

Family Communication Quality

Excellent (5)

The five thematic categories derived from integration of data relating to the Drapeau family included family togetherness, struggle for individuality, spiritual values, empathic communication and affirmation of self and others. The Drapeau family manifested a very cohesive family spirit in terms of shared family time, shared meals, knowing each other's friends. Expressions such as "We are a very close family," "I want to do what is best for me - I've always been compared to the two older children," "We have always tried to talk things out," and "It has been important for us to be active in a community church" exemplify the Drapeau family qualities. The struggle for individuality provided a necessary balance to extreme cohesion manifested at times. A necessary adaptability according to developmental level, a yearning for individuality as well as participation was evident.

The Eisler Family

A profile of the Eisler family is presented in Table 19. The family consists of an older child as well as the family members listed. The family atmosphere was friendly and responsive though initially somewhat guarded.

Interestingly, the five Eisler family members all scored at level II on the Verbal Stimuli Test. Two individuals manifested evidence of movement between levels II and III. The following verbatim response is illustrative:

Table 19

Profile of Eisler Family

MEMBER	GENDER	AGE	EDUCATION	EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT LEVEL	FAMILY FUNCTIONING SELF-REPORT (FACES II)		FAMILY FUNCTIONING	
					PERCEIVED	IDEAL	OBSERVER RATING	PARTICIPANT-OBSERVER RATING
PERSON I (MOTHER)	F	50	Business College	II	Flexibly Connected	Flexibly Connected	Flexibly Separated	Structurally Separated
PERSON II (FATHER)	M	51	B.Sc.	II	Flexibly Connected	Flexibly Connected		Family Distance Center Score
							Balanced	
PERSON III	M	21	2nd year M.D. program	II	Structurally Separated	Chaotically Connected		Mean Family Discrepancy Score
							Low	
PERSON IV	M	19	1st year University	II	Structurally Separated	Structurally Connected		Family Communication Quality
							Very Good (4)	
PERSON V	M	16	Gr. X	II	Flexibly Separated	Chaotically Connected		

Loneliness – The absence of love. The times I could not
give. You could be in a room filled with people and
still feel terribly alone. I do feel though that
because of these times I matured a lot and learned a lot
about myself. (Mother)

The Eisler family members perceived their family functioning

to be within the balanced categories of cohesion and adaptability.

The family cohesion and adaptability were also rated within the

balanced categories by the researcher. Two of the adolescents

regarded extremely high levels of adaptability as ideal family

functioning qualities. Family communication was rated as very

good.

The thematic categories derived from all data relating to the

Eisler family included marital and family commitment, family

pride, shared activities, respect for individual value choices,

strong competitiveness and value of discord. Expressions such as

"care and concern for people," "everyone has right to be self, yet

can't impose upon the others," and "once you get married and have

a family you need to make a tremendous commitment" characterize

the Eisler family. The acute competitiveness experienced more

intensely by some family members than others was balanced by

family closeness and acceptance.

The Ford Family

A profile of the Ford family is provided in Table 20. In

addition to the members listed in the table, this family also is

comprised of a fourth child, an older son. An atmosphere of

Table 20
Profile of Ford Family

MEMBER	GENDER	AGE	EDUCATION	EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT LEVEL	FAMILY FUNCTIONING SELF-REPORT (FACES II)		FAMILY FUNCTIONING	
					PERCEIVED	IDEAL	OBSERVER RATING	PARTICIPANT-OBSERVER RATING
PERSON I (MOTHER)	F	58	Sr. Matric Bus. College	III	Structurally Separated	Chaotically Enmeshed	Structurally Separated	Rigidly Connected
PERSON II (FATHER)	M	53	B.Sc.	II	Rigidly Separated	Flexibly Connected	Family Distance From Center Score	
							Balanced	
PERSON III	F	20	3rd year University	II	Chaotically Enmeshed	Flexibly Enmeshed	Mean Family Discrepancy Score	
							Medium	
PERSON IV	F	19	2nd year University	II	Structurally Separated	Flexibly Connected	Family Communication Quality	
							Very Good (4)	
PERSON V	F	17	Gr. XI	II - III	Flexibly Enmeshed	Chaotically Enmeshed		

humour, warmth, and friendliness characterized the Fords.

The Verbal Stimuli level scores ranged from level II to level III for the family members. Some movement to level IV was evident as exemplified in the following response:

> Death - sadness for those left, especially when a child dies, or when a parent of a young family dies.
> Relief - in the case of someone who has been suffering great pain for a long time.
> Sometimes fear - when thinking of intentions thought about and never carried out [e.g., Bible lesson, never did put that oil in the lamp]. (Mother)

The Ford family members rated their family functioning in strikingly different ways. The individual perceptions of ideal family functioning was rated within balanced categories by three members and within extreme categories by the other two. The family cohesion was also rated differently by observers and researcher. The open, responsive communication quality was rated as very good.

Thematic categories derived from an integration of all data sources consist of the following: marital and family commitment, family togetherness, faith-based values, developmentally geared discipline. Brief responses illustrate these themes: "When we got married we made commitments . . . realized there would be days when the roses would wilt and cream would sour," "rules always clearly, firmly laid down," "We have tried to teach them, then at age 18 they are on their own," "shared holidays, a lot of mutual friends." The struggle for individuality may be

summarized by the following response by one of the Ford daughters.

> Many (many!) times I have disagreed with things Mom and
> Dad would or wouldn't let me do, or their decisions.
> Now I am beginning to see some of the things they did
> and why . . .

The Juneau Family

A profile of the three members of the Juneau family is presented in Table 21. This family is also comprised of five older children, all living away from home. The family atmosphere was one of friendliness, formality and trust.

The Verbal Stimuli level scores were either level II or II-III. The level II-III movement to "what ought to be" is exemplified in the Juneau daughter's reflection on family:

> Your family will be behind you when others have left and
> be supportive of whatever you are doing. They seem to
> understand you better because they have been brought up
> the same way. They are the hardest on you because they
> care the most. It is very upsetting to see how someone
> . . . is treating one of your family members and they
> not realize it.

Family functioning within the Juneau family was considered similarly by the mother and daughter, as being balanced relevant to cohesion and adaptability. The father perceived family adaptability to be more extreme or chaotic. The family functioning ideal was rated as a balanced cohesion level with a very high adaptability level. The communication was rated as good.

Table 21

Profile of Juneau Family

MEMBER	GENDER	AGE	EDUCATION	EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT LEVEL	FAMILY FUNCTIONING SELF-REPORT (FACES II)		FAMILY FUNCTIONING	
					PERCEIVED	IDEAL	OBSERVER RATING	PARTICIPANT-OBSERVER RATING
PERSON I (MOTHER)	F	58	Gr. X	II - III	Flexibly Separated	Chaotically Separated	Rigidly Disengaged	Rigidly Disengaged
PERSON II (FATHER)	M	62	Secondary School	II	Chaotically Separated	Chaotically Separated	Family Distance From Center Score	
							Balanced	
PERSON III	F	19	Gr. XII (Matric.)	II - III	Flexibly Connected	Chaotically Connected	Mean Family Discrepancy Score	
							Low	
							Family Communication Quality	
							Good (3)	

The following thematic categories were derived for the Juneau
family: family loyalty, struggle for individuality, marital
commitments, traditional role delineation, and stress on
compromise. Themes such as "security, love and loyalty" were
often expressed by the Juneau family members. The age
differential between parents and daughter was noted as a "fair
generation gap - from 19 to 60's - I have different opinions from
theirs." This struggle for individuality was accepted by the mother
as "They have to live now, not in the past; some of their ideas I
don't agree with. Yet they have to live with it." The family themes
of "pulling together," " working hard to be successful" and
"compromising to make a go of it" were evident. The Juneau marital
commitment was reflected in expressions such as "tolerance for each
other's mistakes," "need to sacrifice, forgive," "need to be
balancing force." The traditional roles of father as provider and
mother as "being home" to provide "consistent, secure environment"
were emphasized. The Juneau family cohesion and adaptability were
exemplified in the following response by the mother:

> As a child I did not feel very close to my family or
> feel that I was loved in any way. Now I have my own
> family and feel it's very important that we see and help
> each other as often as possible, which I'm sure we do.
> We are also very critical of one another, but maybe this
> is a help rather than a hindrance.

The Halwin Family

A profile of the Halwin family is presented in Table 22. The family atmosphere was friendly though somewhat reserved. The Halwin family Verbal Stimuli level scores were quite diverse, ranging from I-II to III. The high emotional development level III is exemplified in the following response by the Halwin mother:

> Great Joy - Much has to do with the growing relationship between my husband and me. Last summer we spent two beautiful intimate days at the lake where I felt a closeness to him that even now brings tears to my eyes. It was as if two souls were united as one, a feeling which sustains through the more difficult day-to-day realities . . . .

Three of the Halwin family members perceived their family functioning within balanced categories. The mother assessed her family as chaotically-disengaged, with very high adaptability but very low cohesion. The family functioning ideals were assessed in differing ways. The communiqation quality was rated as very good.

The following thematic categories were derived for the Halwin family: emotional closeness, privacy value, growth through crisis, sense of humour and responsibility. The following expressions are illustrative: "we're rather close, when one has problems others are aware and concerned," "we certainly value our private time, often don't spend free time together," "we should look after each other no matter what - I've had to come home with some big problems - I've grown a lot . . . " "a good sense of humour," and "I make decisions as to what is reasonable; Mom and

Table 22

Profile of Halwin Family

MEMBER	GENDER	AGE	EDUCATION	EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT LEVEL	FAMILY FUNCTIONING SELF-REPORT (FACES II)		FAMILY FUNCTIONING	
					PERCEIVED	IDEAL	OBSERVER RATING	PARTICIPANT-OBSERVER RATING
PERSON I (MOTHER)	F	37	2nd year University	II	Chaotically Disengaged	Chaotically Separated	Structurally Disengaged	Structurally Disengaged
PERSON II (FATHER)	M	40	Gr. XII	I - II	Structurally Separated	Flexibly Separated	Family Distance From Center Score	
							Balanced	
PERSON III	F	17	Gr. XI	III	Flexibly Separated	Chaotically Connected	Mean Family Discrepancy Score	
							Low	
PERSON IV	F	16	Gr. IX	I - II	Flexibly Separated	Chaotically Enmeshed	Family Communication Quality	
							Very Good (4)	

Dad trust me." The marital cohesion may be summarized in this
conclusion by Mr. Halwin related to his wife's completion of
studies:

> At the beginning it was strange, I felt threatened . . .
> Now, this spring she's getting her degree; I feel like
> I'm getting my degree.

The Cohn Family

A profile of the Cohn family is provided in Table 23. This
family is also comprised of a younger son and daughter in addition
to the family members listed. The family atmosphere was warmly
welcoming, open and caring.

The Verbal Stimuli Test scores for the Cohn family members
were similar, either level I or level I-II. An example of a level
I-II emotional level response is the following response to success
given by the Cohn father.

> For me a broad definition of success would go like this:
> understanding and implementing "God's will" in my life.

Such responses considered as "external religiosity" were given low
level ratings. The religious convictions of the family were
perceived by the researcher to be of a higher level with evidence
of "internal religiosity."

The perceptions of family functioning given by the three Cohn
family members were all within the balanced category. Their
perceptions of ideal family functioning varied. The quality of
family communication was rated as good.

Table 23

Profile of Cohn Family

MEMBER	GENDER	AGE	EDUCATION	EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT LEVEL	FAMILY FUNCTIONING SELF-REPORT (FACES II)		FAMILY FUNCTIONING	
					PERCEIVED	IDEAL	OBSERVER RATING	PARTICIPANT-OBSERVER RATING
PERSON I (MOTHER)	F	38	Certified Nursing Assistant	I - II	Structurally Separated	Flexibly Enmeshed	Structurally Connected	Structurally Enmeshed
PERSON II (FATHER)	M	43	M.A.	I - II	Flexibly Separated	Chaotically Connected	Family Distance From Center Score	
							Balanced	
PERSON III	M	15	Gr. X	I	Flexibly Connected	Flexibly Connected	Mean Family Discrepancy Score	
							Low	
							Family Communication Quality	
							Good (3)	

The following thematic categories were descriptive of the Cohn

family: shared religious values, father as authority, marital

commitment, and supportiveness. Expressions such as the following

are illustrative of these themes: "Our Christian experience

overrides everything else," "obeying my parents is one of the Ten

Commandments,""The final decision is always the husband's, as head of

the home," "I'm his helpmate, to back him up," "[rules] almost

imposed upon the children, we don't feel harshly though," "I choose

to meet my spouse's needs, to make some effort,""we've helped each

other."

The Ingstrom Family

A profile of the Ingstrom family is presented in Table 24.

The family atmosphere was warm, caring, and responsive.

The emotional development levels were very close consisting

of level I-II and level II. The following response given by the

Ingstrom mother exemplifies a level II response:

> Loneliness - I feel most lonely when I've lost my
> enthusiasm, when I let things get to me and I feel
> depressed - world situation, nuclear war, man's
> inhumanity to man, etc. In those times I almost forget
> all the beautiful people I know. God's spirit seems far
> away and I am in a desert.

Three of the Ingstrom family members perceived their family

functioning to be at the balanced level. The daughter perceived

her family functioning as rigidly-disengaged with very low

cohesion and adaptability. All family members expressed as ideal,

Table 24
Profile of Ingstrom Family

MEMBER	GENDER	AGE	EDUCATION	EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT LEVEL	FAMILY FUNCTIONING SELF-REPORT (FACES II)		FAMILY FUNCTIONING	
					PERCEIVED	IDEAL	OBSERVER RATING	PARTICIPANT-OBSERVER RATING
PERSON I (MOTHER)	F	41	Gr. X	II	Structurally Separated	Flexibly Separated	Structurally Connected	Structurally Connected
PERSON II (FATHER)	M	43	M.Sc.	II	Flexibly Separated	Flexibly Connected	Family Distance From Center Score	Balanced
PERSON III	M	16	Gr. XI	I - II	Flexibly Connected	Chaotically Separated	Mean Family Discrepancy Score	Low
PERSON IV	F	14	Gr. IX	I - II	Rigidly Disengaged	Chaotically Separated	Family Communication Quality	Excellent (5)

balanced levels of cohesion. The two adolescents would prefer a very high adaptability level. Family communication quality was rated as excellent.

The thematic categories descriptive of the Ingstrom family derived from integration of all data consist of the following: family commitment, open communication, spirituality, struggle for individuality and emotional closeness. The following responses illustrate these themes. "Great joy for me - the growth in my marriage relationship," "In last year [I've] had a stronger concern about what the father in a family might be," "we discuss and compromise," "I feel closer to some friends than to family,""I probably would want to go more often if [he] didn't push; wouldn't feel forced," "we as family support each other whether difficult times or not." As the Ingstrom father concluded,

> Family is a most important vehicle for the continuation of a strong, health society. I look forward to our family getting older and better . . .

The Steves Family

A profile of the Steves family is provided in Table 25. An atmosphere of friendliness with a tentativeness characterized the family.

Responses on the Verbal Stimuli Test were rated between levels I and II. The following level II response is illustrative:

Table 25

Profile of Steves Family

MEMBER	GENDER	AGE	EDUCATION	EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT LEVEL	FAMILY FUNCTIONING SELF-REPORT (FACES II)		FAMILY FUNCTIONING	
					PERCEIVED	IDEAL	OBSERVER RATING	PARTICIPANT-OBSERVER RATING
PERSON I (MOTHER)	F	43	Registered Nurse	II	Rigidly Separated	Flexibly Connected	Rigidly Separated	Rigidly Separated
PERSON II (FATHER)	M	49	B.Sc.	I	Structurally Separated	Flexibly Separated	Mean Family Discrepancy Score	
							Balanced	
PERSON III	F	18	Gr. XII	II	Flexibly Connected	Chaotically Connected	Mean Family Discrepancy Score	
							Low	
PERSON IV	M	16	Gr. X	I ~ II	Flexibly Enmeshed	Flexibly Enmeshed	Family Communication Quality	
							Good (3)	

> Great Joy - a feeling of bursting, excited, overflowing. An
> experience at summer camp, being with people you like and they
> like you for what you are. (Daughter)

Some high level II-III responses were given by the Steves family

members as shown in the mother's reflection on inner conflict:

> Inner conflict is a struggle for me very often. There seems to
> be two forces at work. One is the selfish inward desire of
> wanting things and plans to go my way. The other is the "good"
> that I know I should do - even if it means giving up something
> pretty important to me.

The Steves family members perceived their family functioning in

varying ways. Family cohesion was perceived to be balanced by three

members, but perceived to be extreme or enmeshed by the son. The

mother perceived family adaptability as very low or rigid, whereas

the other members perceived adaptability to be balanced. The parents

rated as ideal more balanced family functioning, whereas the daughter

selected as ideal very high adaptability. Interestingly, the son

appeared satisfied with the flexibly-enmeshed family functioning as

he perceived it. The communication quality was rated as good, though

with unequal participation.

The following thematic categories are descriptive of the Steves

family: family commitment, traditional role delineation, spiritual

values, with some diffuse personal boundaries and struggle for

individuality. Expressions such as the following are illustrative:

"Family is basic for me - it spells finding out who I am, my

reativity - it supports, sometimes negatively, but it is my

roots,""church is like extended family,""God isn't very far, He's

very near, within," "we don't shift household responsibilities,"

"[when I] disagree with the other three, there is nothing much I can

do."

The Barlow Family

A profile of the Barlow family is provided in Table 26. The

family also consists of a younger son in addition to the members

listed. A sense of trusting openness, sensitivity and friendliness

characterized the Barlow family.

The levels of emotional development of the family members ranged

from level I to level II to IV. The level I responses for one member

were often too brief to be rated reliably, which may have contributed

to the low level designation. The high level III-IV response is

exemplified in the following statement by the Barlow father on death:

> I think of old people, suffering, sick and seeing a release in
> death . . . of my father's death; it's so final, yet you must
> accept it . . . . I'm probably quite brash and calm about death
> yet I fear it not knowing how I would accept it, or, to any in
> my family. I hope and trust that the way I live will be the way
> I accept death.

All of the Barlow family members perceived their family

functioning cohesion level within balanced categories. However, the

family adaptability was perceived differently with the adolescents

rating it as balanced whereas the parents regarded it as very low or

rigid. The family members expressed widely different ideal types of

family functioning. The family communication quality was rated as

excellent.

Table 26

Profile of Barlow Family

MEMBER	GENDER	AGE	EDUCATION	EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT LEVEL	FAMILY FUNCTIONING SELF-REPORT (FACES II)		FAMILY FUNCTIONING	
					PERCEIVED	IDEAL	OBSERVER RATING	PARTICIPANT-OBSERVER RATING
PERSON I (MOTHER)	F	44	1 year University	II	Rigidly Separated	Chaotically Connected	Structurally Connected	Structurally Connected
PERSON II (FATHER)	M	44	Gr. XII (Matric.)	III – IV	Rigidly Separated	Flexibly Connected	Family Distance From Center Score	
							Balanced	
PERSON III	M	22	B.Com.	I	Structurally Connected	Chaotically Connected	Mean Family Discrepancy Score	
							Low	
PERSON IV	F	21	3rd year University	III	Structurally Connected	Flexibly Connected		Family Communication Quality
								Excellent (5)
PERSON V	F	19	Student Nurse 2nd Level	II	Flexibly Connected	Flexibly Enmeshed		
PERSON VI	M	16	Gr. XI	II	Structurally Connected	Chaotically Enmeshed		

The following thematic categories were derived from an integration of all data sources as descriptive of the Barlow family: family belonging, marital and family commitment, competitiveness and conflict resolution ability. Brief excerpts of responses are noted to illustrate these themes: "Family is my 'raison d'etre'," I feel I have succeeded if I can be available when my family needs me and if home offers love and security," "I get goose bumps when I see my whole family . . . " "fortunate to have a loving and understanding husband," "I value my spouse and my family in preventing personal loneliness,""I didn't get a chance, everyone was talking,""eventually people opened up and said what was on their minds,""sometimes you treat us like we're little kids." A balanced cohesiveness and adaptability were evident, facilitated by effective communication.

Researcher Preunderstandings and Self-Reflection

As a researcher I have participated in a dialogal relationship with the families involved in this study. My involvement in the research is recognized and requires reflection. As noted earlier, that which is analyzed is affected by the researcher. My preunderstandings, presuppositions and values stand as important dimensions not only of the data collection process, but of the interpretive process as well.

The following section will consist of a critical reflection of preunderstandings related to four dimensions: family of origin, present family situation, values and research attitudes. These

dimensions are considered especially relevant for a study of families.

My family of origin as a dual parent family with five children, was probably the major influence of my life. As the middle child, I grew up with an older brother and sister who are twins and two younger brothers. Strong adherence to Roman Catholicism was mandatory. Strict observance of the Catholic rules of the 1940's and 1950's was required with emphasis upon punishment and reward. My parents were both German speaking with my father having emigrated from Bavarian Germany in his late 20's and my mother the child of German-Russian peasants who had emigrated from Odessa, Russia one year prior to her birth.

German customs, food and language were dominant aspects of our lifestyle. As a rural farm family, hard work was demanded of each member with often little recompense due to early frosts, poor soil conditions and low produce prices.

Certain dimensions of my family of origin are specifically relevant to the concepts of cohesion and adaptability central to this study. My perception is that we were probably a "rigidly enmeshed" family, according to the Circumplex Model. Characteristics such as authoritarian leadership, autocratic discipline and role rigidity resulted in limited negotiation and problem-solving ability. Communication patterns of negative criticism without supportive interaction or reflective listening resulted in dysfunctional tension

and frustration for me. However, an underlying awareness of love and concern were evident despite the tensions and authoritarianism.

As I reflect on these early experiences I realize that I have made a conscious decision to strive for a different style of family functioning in my family of procreation. This present family consists of two children, a girl aged twelve years and a boy aged five years, with two parents - my husband and myself. Within this family, I have made a conscious effort to achieve a democratic style of functioning with role flexibility, yet with strong generational boundaries. I value balanced respect for individual as well as relationship needs. That individual growth and fulfillment correlates positively with optimal marital and family functioning is a central conviction for me. I also value gender equality, with shared parental leadership and shared decision-making. Our present family functioning may be characterized by qualities similar to those within the "structurally connected" type of the Circumplex Model. Noteworthy is the realization that, in practice, these values and ideals are not always maintained. Despite conscious efforts to attain optimal communication within the spousal dyad as well as within the family, personal and situational factors sometimes lead to lack of empathy, lack of reflective listening and absence of supportive interaction. However, within this present family, I have experienced a strong love: the "consensual reality" created with the other family members, the "transcendence of my individual loneliness"

of which Maturana (1978) speaks. My experience is that of

encouragement to be "as oneself" and to be "as a part" noted earlier

(Tillich, 1952); as a family working to attain flexibility as well as

to affirm values and traditions; as a family member in some sense

determined by system characteristics but ultimately free to choose

the attitude toward the system.

An awareness of my bias for democratic values noted above,

concern for family health, respect for persons as well as strong

religious values has challenged me to adopt several attitudinal

stances throughout the data collection and interpretation process of

this study. Among these attitudinal stances, four are noteworthy: a

respect for each individual's perception of self and family unit, a

regard for differing ways of "being family," a realization that each

family has strengths as well as weaknesses, and care in making

interpretations based on differing perspectives and theoretical

assumptions. As a researcher, my hopes that the family members would

respond to my concern and respect for their "way of being family"

became reality.

Reflections on the Research Process

To enter into a dialogal relationship with individuals and

family units; to become a sharer in the individual and family life

stories has been a challenging experience for me as researcher. In

general, the research process has been a time of reflection,

sensitivity and increasing respect for differing ways of "being

family." As a researcher, I have become aware that I have been allowed only a partial glimpse into the real life experiences of the family members. I realize also that the conceptual categorizations that I have drawn with specific reference to cohesion and adaptability dimensions of family life comprise one viewpoint out of an infinitely variegated museum of possible distinctions (Varela, 1979). This research procedure has further confirmed the view that an observed family may categorize its experience in an entirely different way than does the observer" (Keeney, 1983, p. 27). Indeed there is great diversity in the ways individual family members categorize their experience of the family system.

As a researcher, I was impressed with the willingness and openness of family members to share their experiences, sometimes with profound emotion-filled expression. I was also aware that other members were less able or willing to reveal their perceptions and experiences. However, the general data collection atmosphere was relaxed, with very good participation by the family members. Assurances of anonymity and the use of the family home seemed to contribute to the relaxed atmosphere. An additional factor, especially with the adolescent family members, was the friendliness of the video equipment operator and his willingness to explain as he elicited help in setting up the equipment. Interest in the research findings and concern for family life today were often expressed by the family members following the video-recording. As a researcher I,

as well as the video-recorder who is also a psychologist, responded

to the family concerns, often shared food, as well as family

souvenirs and artifacts. This time served as a debriefing session

and an additional time to learn more about the family interaction, to

share in their "lived experience of being family."

One of the secondary, yet critically important goals of this

research process was a consciousness-raising of families to greater

awareness of family functioning with possible remediation of less

functional interactional patterns. Almost all of the research

families reported that the individual and family research assignments

of the study were interesting and stimulating. Responses included

the following typical assessment:

> . . . Doing this has made us think about these important family
> topics;

> . . . made us wonder how we were doing as a family;

> . . . stimulated us to do some sharing that we've not done
> before;

> . . . it was really interesting to see where we agreed or
> disagreed;

> . . . every family should have this opportunity, it really made
> me evaluate what I was doing as a father in this family.

One family reported that "we spent about four hours talking after you

left." Another mother reported that it gave her a long awaited

opportunity to answer her son's questions about his illness as an

infant, that it was a special time of closeness and wonderment for

her son as well as for herself. Several families requested to view

the videotape of their family and to purchase a copy for themselves.

Noteworthy, too, was the interest, effort and time invested by family members. The data collection procedure required a minimum of two hours spent in responding to the written tests and participating in the video-recorded session. The demands of expressing one's own emotional associations and experiences on the Verbal Stimuli Test rather than just checking off a pre-defined descriptive category was also recognized. About 20% of the respondents expressed concern about their ability to accomplish this. Ninety per cent of the respondents wrote a minimum of one response per stimulus word, with 70 per cent of the respondents providing at least two response units per stimulus word.

The video-recording was also a demanding requirement of the data collection. Although several family members expressed initial concern about being "filmed," the efforts of this researcher and the video-recorder to implement a non-threatening interview session proved successful. Often younger children in the family requested and were given an opportunity to be included.

In experiencing the research process and interpreting the data, I recorded and made explicit feelings and preconceptions which were "bracketed" or suspended. Noteworthy was a bias for egalitarian husband-wife roles with a less favorable feeling toward an authoritarian style of leadership. Three families reported the husband as "head of the household," as "captain of the ship," or as

"having more wisdom." As a researcher, my interpretation of the family functioning of these three families required a consideration of my bias for non-authoritarian leadership patterns.

Finally, the reporting of the findings from different perspectives and methodological approaches proved to be challenging. The urge to give verbatim responses, as Husserl's "zu den Sachen Selbst," of letting the words speak for themselves, was restricted only by the limitations of space.

Concerns of anonymity also restricted the presentation of some very personal anecdotal response material. Such material was reported in more general terms and thematic categories. That each family has a uniqueness or singularity not reducible to typing was evident, yet thematic categorization revealed certain commonalities among the families. Individual family experience was shown to be a microcosm of human relationships; indeed it pointed toward a philosophy of human experience.

Chapter VII

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

A summary of theoretical conclusions and implications of this

study which support the results presented in the foregoing chapter

are provided in this chapter. Limitations of the study as well as

ethical considerations are presented. Suggestions for future

research are delineated.

Theoretical Implications

The major purpose of this research was to study the relationship

between individual emotional development and family functioning. The

data collection procedure involved "insiders" and "outsiders" views

of the family: self-report test scores, observer ratings and

participant-observer analysis. The integration of all data sources

provided a rich complexity of individual and family functioning data.

The inclusion of adolescents as well as parental family members also

provided a more complete family profile. The intensive detailed

study of the families and derivation of thematic categories provided

much material for understanding family cohesion, adaptability and

communication. The theory of Positive Disintegration and the

Circumplex Model provided useful theoretical frameworks.

The lack of confirmation of the hypothesis of a positive

correlation between perception of individual emotional development

and family functioning poses important questions. There appears to

be a lack of statistically significant relationship between

individual emotional development and family functioning. Low level individuals sometimes assessed their family functioning as balanced, whereas high level individuals perceived their family type as extreme. Theoretically, this finding could be accounted for by the fact that level I and level II individuals lack reflectiveness or awareness of "what ought to be", thus could remain satisfied with dysfunctional family interactional patterns. Levels III and IV individuals, considered high level in this study, experience dissonance and dissatisfaction with "what is" as well as an awareness of "what ought to be." This striving for higher level integration would account for a perception of family functioning as less than ideal and as not balanced. These persons have not yet reached the level V stage characterized by harmony and unity.

The lack of a positive correlation between individual emotional development and family functioning also poses further questions. How easy is it to live harmoniously as a family when family members are at markedly different levels of emotional development as was manifested in several of the research families? Lack of understanding and lack of similarity of value orientation seemed to contribute to dysfunctional communication. As exemplified by the Alton family described in Chapter VI, the "courage to be oneself and the courage to be as a part" provide a critical challenge to family living. To be considerate, respectful and empathic toward family members at emotional developmental levels other than one's own

requires a universal love characteristic of very high level

functioning. In addition, persons at the disintegration levels, such

as level II, often manifest rebelliousness or neurotic

characteristics in their experience of inner conflict necessary for

movement to higher level reintegration. This stage, so difficult,

yet growth producing for the individual, would also be problematic

for family functioning As one level IV mother responded:

> The specifics of the definition of growth are confusing and the
> experience painful. And for most of us unavoidable. In order
> to grow, in order to be "better" people we seem to need to be
> shaken up, to experience trauma, to experience the death of many
> things, the death of many of our beliefs and ways of being and
> doing. To find a necessary connection between growth and death
> is an astonishing paradox.

Framo (1980) has outlined ten characteristics of healthy family

functioning including encouragement of identity development and

autonomy for all family members. Such qualities appear to be

critically dependent upon the level of emotional development of the

individuals. As Bowen (1978) suggests, differentiation of self can

occur only in a context of responsibility or relatedness. Buber

(1970) exemplifies such a position in describing "I-thou"

interrelationships. Implications for family functioning are evident.

The mutual respect, caring, and responsible relating of individual to

individual within the family context demands a level of individual

development consistent with such qualities. Individuals are the

actors, dynamically becoming family system with all its system

characteristics such as recursiveness. The classic free will-

rminism question again comes to the fore. To what extent could a level emotionally developed person effect system change?

Other important considerations arise: Is there value in family mbers possessing different levels of emotional development as facilitative of transformation. Homogeneity of individual emotional development levels may be conducive to family harmony or conducive to non-movement to higher level functioning. This research found evidence of each position. Does family dysfunction, interactional conflict or even disintegration promote high level secondary integration individuals? Certainly it would appear that some individuals in this study have been influenced in this way.

The major research findings of this study centered upon a synthesis of individual-family functioning themes. Qualities such as ly love, constructive communication, individual-participation balance, adaptability balance and strength of marital dyad were evident. The respondent families that were rated as most balanced also manifested unique qualities related to their family unit such as unique crisis handling ability and spiritual values.

The differing perceptions of family members as to their experiences of cohesion and adaptability are noteworthy. This study found that often there was not a shared meaning; indeed a variety of assessments of family functioning quality were often given by family members. The difficulties involved in deriving family scores that truly describe the family have been noted earlier in this thesis.

This study included a theoretical development of the implications of the theory of positive disintegration for family functioning theory. Such concepts as dynamic process, conflict, disintegration, transformation capacity, multilevelness, integration, developmental potential, as well as patterns of emotion and belief have specific relevance to family functioning theory.

The respondent families manifested differing developmental stages. Some families appeared to be at early developmental stages wherein transforming capacity appeared to be at a minimum with submission to invariable rules or sameness predominant. Other "higher level" functioning families revealed a dynamic form in which individual creative capacity balances and supports stabilization. Individuality and relatedness as well as adaptability and stability appeared to coexist in healthy families.

This study has also addressed critical concerns of modern family survival. It would appear that the family unit cannot remain content with mere repetition of traditional forms or reproductions of earlier types. The family system is unable to endure an underemphasis of change in a rapidly changing society with its demands for renovation, rejuvenation, creative movement and evolution. Similarly, the family system cannot survive overemphasis of change with a loss of tradition, stability, and conservation of values. The modern family unit must incorporate into its life system an originality and

creativeness exemplifying interdependence and complementarity in its search for fundamental unity.

Finally, an important purpose and outcome of the multi-method research process of this study was the encouragement of family members to engage in individual reflection, family consciousness and communication to enhance individual-family functioning.

Limitations and Delimitations of the Study

This study was restricted to the individual and the nuclear family system within the stated parameters with external systems such as education, employment, religion and community considered beyond the scope of this research.

No attempt was made to assess stages of identity development and identity crises specific to adolescent development.

In reference to the levels of emotional development, the difficulty of assigning level values at the higher levels has been noted in previous studies. A similar difficulty was evident in this research with no level V responses being found.

It is recognized that the more varied the perspectives from which data is collected, the greater the possibility for lack of agreement, with subsequent decreased reliability. However, the increased richness and comprehensiveness of the data attained provides justification for the multi-method approach adopted in this study.

Two of the instruments employed in this study consist of responses requiring self-report data. The video-recorded family interaction phase also required typical interactional patterns and response data. Only to the extent that such responses represented the authentic attitudes, experiences and behaviors of the respondents may they be considered valid assessments.

The Verbal Stimuli test and the FACES II test, though useful instruments, have certain limitations. The Verbal Stimuli test requires an ability to express oneself in written form. This ability was not shared equally by all respondents. The FACES II test items are too limited to assess the complexity of qualities such as family cohesion and family adaptability.

Since the study was restricted to a limited number of subjects, the resultant findings will have limited generalizability.

Ethical Considerations

The ethical considerations of the study were of concern with respect to presentation of the research findings. Concerns of anonymity, especially with critical personal information was revealed in the response data, required careful consideration of ethical and legal implications (La Rossa, Bennett & Gelles, 1981).

Certain personal response data were omitted to protect the family members involved. The researcher provided a debriefing opportunity for the subject families and responded to any concerns related to family functioning. Where deemed appropriate, it was also

recommended that therapy be provided for any individuals or families manifesting a need.

Suggestions for Further Research

Since this study has assessed only 16 families from one urban center, Edmonton, Alberta, future research could include a larger number of families to increase generalizability.

Comparisons with families in rural areas of Alberta would also be of interest, as would comparisons with families from other urban centers.

The developmental nature of individual emotional development and family system functioning could be assessed by longitudinal studies assessing changes over five or more years.

With the current critical awareness and concern about challenges to family functioning, a study comparing family of origin functioning of parents as compared to family of procreation functioning of parents would be of interest.

With the increasing variety of family life style, a valuable further research project could be a study of one-parent families, as well as reconstituted or blended families to discern relevant dimensions of individual emotional development and family functioning.

Further research centered on a comparative assessment of the effectiveness of individual and family counselling is required to understand more clearly the relative merits of each approach.

Finally, further theoretical analyses are required to ascertain the interconnectedness between individual and system components related specifically to family functioning. Questions related to individual-participation, dynamics-form, and freedom-determination require greater elucidation relevant to family system functioning.

Conclusion

In categorizing families into various typologies it is important to realize that family processes tend to fluctuate with such variables as situation, space and time. The developmental stage of the family life cycle, the current situation or particular context are considerations affecting the observers' attempts at description. In addition, a specific family has its own unique combination of processes, a singularity not reducible to categorization. The mystery in the complexity of evolutionary processes defies categorization, yet descriptive terminology such as optimal and functional related to family processes suggest a value hierarchy. It is the position of this researcher that such a hierarchy of values in relation to family functioning and development is apt.

Positive Disintegration theory proposes a hierarchy of values as Dabrowski observes, individuals at the highest levels of development evidence a striking convergence in terms of value sets and valuing process. Individuals at the higher levels also express an awareness of "that which is higher" and "that which is lower" in themselves. Within family systems, evaluative descriptors such as "normalcy" have

often been criticized (Hoffman, 1981). Yet, in the experience of
this researcher, families at the higher levels of integration display
a striking similarity in terms of general functioning, of
cohesiveness, adaptability and communication. The Circumplex Model
in fact suggests not "the more the better," but a balance, an
equipoise related to developmental life stages and situation. This
may be termed a "goodness of fit," a coherence of a high order; a
communion that unites the individual members of the family system.
As Maturana (1978) affirms:

> Every human being, as an autopoietic system, stands alone. Yet
> let us not lament that we must exist in a subject-dependent
> reality. Life is more interesting like this, because the only
> transcendence of our individual loneliness that we can
> experience arises through the consensual reality that we create
> with others, that is through love. (p. 62-63)

The consensual reality being created in the "dance" of family
evolutionary processes becomes love. Such a dynamism is not
reducible to empirical analysis, but yielding of phenomenological
data. Recent studies on family strengths such as that of Otto (1979)
and Stinnet et al (1981) have included love as a characteristic of
strong families. A most evident conclusion of this research from
self-report data, observer ratings and participant-observer analysis
was the central importance in functional individual-family experience
of caring concern; of love as a lived reality, a communion. This
"love-communion" of family members was experienced most intensively
by the researcher when the "alienating distanciation" between herself

as observer and the family as observed had vanished. As researcher,
I, too, had participated in the individuality-relatedness continuum;
I, too, participated for a brief time in a new consensual reality
with each family.

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APPENDICES

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APPENDIX A

VERBAL STIMULI TEST

Please describe freely in relation to each word listed below your emotional asssociations and experiences. Since I need your individual experiences, please do not discuss with anyone else before answering.

Use the lined paper provided, and use as much space as you feel you need.

1) Great Sadness

2) Great Joy

3) Death

4) Loneliness

5) Solitude

6) Suicide

7) Inner Conflict

8) Ideal

9) Success

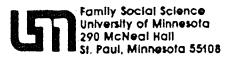10) Family

APPENDIX B

FACES II

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FACES II ITEMS

by
David H. Olson, Joyce Portner, and Richard Bell

1. Family members are supportive of each other during difficult times.
2. In our family, it is easy for everyone to express his/her opinion.
3. It is easier to discuss problems with people outside the family than with other family members.
4. Each family member has input in major family decisions.
5. Our family gathers together in the same room.
6. Children have a say in their discipline.
7. Our family does things together.
8. Family members discuss problems and feel good about the solutions.
9. In our family, everyone goes his/her own way.
10. We shift household responsibilities from person to person.
11. Family members know each other's close friends.
12. It is hard to know what the rules are in our family.
13. Family members consult other family members on their decisions.
14. Family members say what they want.
15. We have difficulty thinking of things to do as a family.
16. In solving problems, the children's suggestions are followed.
17. Family members feel very close to each other.
18. Discipline is fair in our family.
19. Family members feel closer to people outside the family than to other family members.
20. Our family tries new ways of dealing with problems.
21. Family members go along with what the family decides to do.
22. In our family, everyone shares responsibilities.
23. Family members like to spend their free time with each other.
24. It is difficult to get a rule changed in our family.
25. Family members avoid each other at home.
26. When problems arise, we compromise.
27. We approve of each other's friends.
28. Family members are afraid to say what is on their minds.
29. Family members pair up rather than do things as a total family.
30. Family members share interests and hobbies with each other.

FACES II ANSWER SHEET

INSTRUCTIONS: Complete Part I completely, and then complete Part II.   Please answer __all__ questions, using the following scale.

1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
ALMOST NEVER	ONCE IN A WHILE	SOMETIMES	FREQUENTLY	ALMOST ALWAYS

PART I:

PART II:

How Would You Describe Your Family __Now?__

How Would You Like Your Family __TO BE?__

1. ___	2. ___	31. ___	32. ___
3. ___	4. ___	33. ___	34. ___
5. ___	6. ___	35. ___	36. ___
7. ___	8. ___	37. ___	38. ___
9. ___	10. ___	39. ___	40. ___
11. ___	12. ___	41. ___	42. ___
13. ___	14. ___	43. ___	44. ___
15. ___	16. ___	45. ___	46. ___
17. ___	18. ___	47. ___	48. ___
19. ___	20. ___	49. ___	50. ___
21. ___	22. ___	51. ___	52. ___
23. ___	24. ___	53. ___	54. ___
25. ___	26. ___	55. ___	56. ___
27. ___	28. ___	57. ___	58. ___
29. ___		59. ___	
30. ___		60. ___	

36 + [ ] – Sum 3, 9, 15, 19, 25, 29
[ ] + Sum all other odd numbers plus item 30
[ ] TOTAL COHESION

12 + [ ] – Sum 24 & 28
[ ] + Sum all other even numbers except item 30
[ ] TOTAL ADAPTABILITY

[36] + [ ] – Sum 3, 9, 15, 19, 25, 29
[ ] + Sum all other odd numbers plus item 30
[ ] TOTAL COHESION

[12] + [ ] – Sum 24 & 28
[ ] + Sum all other even numbers except item 30
[ ] TOTAL ADAPTABILITY

FACES II: Cutting Points

COHESION

	DISENGAGED	SEPARATED	CONNECTED	ENMESHED
	PARENTS (56.9 or below) ADOLES. (47.9 or below)	PARENTS (57.0-65.0) ADOLES. (48.0-56.0)	PARENTS (65.1-73.0) ADOLES. (56.1-64.0)	PARENTS (73.1 and a... ADOLES. (64.1 and a...
CHAOTIC PARENTS 56.1 or above ADOLES. 52.1 or above				
FLEXIBLE PARENTS 50.1-56.0 ADOLES. 45.1-52.0				
STRUCTURED PARENTS 44.0-50.0 ADOLES. 38.0-45.0				
RIGID PARENTS 43.9 or below ADOLES. 37.9 or below				

ADAPTABILITY

In plotting the couple or family's cohesion and adaptability scores into the Circumplex Model, try to mark the specific location within the particular type that most accurately reflects the actual scores.

	Parents (n=2,030)		Adolescents (n=416)	
	$\bar{X}$	SD	$\bar{X}$	SD
Cohesion	64.9	8.4	56.3	9.2
Adaptability	49.9	6.6	45.4	7.9

NAME: _____
FAMILY MEMBER: _____
SEX: _____ AGE: _____
DATE: _____
EVALUATION: _____ (Pre/Post/FU)

TOTAL COHESION: _____
TOTAL ADAPTABILITY: _____
FAMILY TYPE: _____

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APPENDIX C

CLINICAL RATING SCALE

TABLE 1: FAMILY COHESION

COUPLE OR FAMILY SCORE	DISENGAGED (Very Low) 1–2	SEPARATED (Low to Moderate) 3–4	CONNECTED (Moderate to High) 5–6	ENMESHED (Very High) 7
EMOTIONAL BONDING	Extreme emotional separateness; Lack of family loyalty; Infrequent affective responsiveness between members.	Emotional separateness; Occasional family loyalty; Some affective responsiveness is demonstrated	Emotional closeness; Loyalty to family is expected; Affective interactions encouraged and preferred.	Extreme emotional closeness; Loyalty to family is demanded; Affective dependency is demonstrated
PARENT-CHILD COALITIONS (For families only)	Lack of parent-child coalition.	Clear sub-system boundaries	Some sub-system boundaries with possible generational intrusion	Parent-child coalition. Lack of clear generational boundaries
MARITAL RELATIONSHIP	Extreme emotional separateness	Emotional separateness	Emotional closeness	Extreme emotional reactivity
FAMILY INVOLVEMENT	Very low involvement or interaction between members; Individual definitions of reality are predominant	Involvement is acceptable but personal distance is preferred	Involvement is emphasized but personal distance is allowed	Very high symbiotic involvement, members very dependent on each other; Shared or imposed definition of reality
INTERNAL BOUNDARIES — Personal Boundaries	Personal separateness predominant; Rigid personal boundaries.	Some personal separateness encouraged; Clear personal boundaries	Need for separateness is respected but somewhat discouraged; Personal boundaries at times unclear.	Lack of personal separateness; Diffuse and weak personal boundaries
Time (physical & emotional)	Time apart from family maximized. Rarely time together.	Time alone important. Some time together.	Time together important and scheduled. Time alone permitted.	Time together maximized. Little time alone permitted
Space (physical & emotional)	Separate space needed and preferred.	Separate space preferred; Sharing of family space	Sharing family space preferred. Private space respected.	Little or no private space permitted
Decision Making	Independent decision making.	Individual decision making preferred but joint decisions possible.	Joint decisions preferred but not necessary	Decisions subject to wishes of entire group

EXTERNAL BOUNDARIES				
	Closed to outside influences	Somewhat closed to outside influences	Somewhat open to outside influences	Open to influences from outside the family
Friends	Family friends preferred with limited individual friends	Individual friendships allowed and shared with family.	Individual friendships preferred and seldom shared with family.	Individual friends seen alone.
Interests	Joint interests mandated.	Joint interests preferred	Seldom shared with family.	Disparate interests.
Recreation	Joint recreation mandated.	Joint recreation preferred	Separate interests and recreation but joint participation allowed.	Separate recreation.
GLOBAL COHESION RATING (1-8)				

TABLE 2: FAMILY ADAPTABILITY

COUPLE OR FAMILY SCORE	RIGID (Very Low) 1 2	STRUCTURED (Low to Moderate) 3 4	FLEXIBLE (Moderate to High) 5 6	CHAOTIC (Very High) 7 8
LEADERSHIP (Control)	Authoritarian leadership. Parent(s) highly controlling.	Primarily authoritarian but some equalitarian leadership.	Equalitarian leadership with fluid changes.	Limited and/or erratic leadership. Parental control unsuccessful, rebuffed
DISCIPLINE (For Families Only)	Autocratic, "law & order". Strict, rigid consequences. Not lenient.	Somewhat democratic. Predictable consequences Seldom lenient.	Usually democratic. Negotiated consequences. Somwhat lenient.	Laissez-faire and ineffective. Inconsistent consequences. Very lenient.
NEGOTIATION	Limited negotiations. Decisions imposed by parents.	Structured negotiations. Decisions mainly made by parents.	Flexible negotiations. Agreed upon decisions.	Endless negotiations. Impulsive decisions.
ROLES	Limited repertoire; strictly defined roles.	Roles stable, but may be shared.	Role sharing and making. Fluid changes of roles.	Lack of role clarity, role shifts and role reversals.
RULES	Unchanging rules.	Few rule changes.	Some rule changes.	Frequent rule changes.
	Rules strictly enforced.	Rules firmly enforced.	Rules flexibly enforced.	Rules inconsistently enforced
GLOBAL ADAPTABILITY RATING (1-8)				

CUTTING POINTS FOR THE CLINICAL RATING SCALE (CRS)

C O H E S I O N

SCORE	DISENGAGED (9 - 26)	SEPARATED (27-40)	CONNECTED (41-54)	ENMESHED (55-72)
CHAOTIC (37-48)				
FLEXIBLE (27-36)				
STRUCTURED (18-26)				
RIGID (6-17)				

(left axis label: A D A P T A B I L I T Y)

In plotting the couple or family's cohesion and adaptability scores into the Circumplex Model, try to mark the specific location within the particular type that most accurately reflects the _actual scores_.

RATER: _____

FAMILY: _____
   (Name or Number)

DATE: _____

EVALUATION: _____
   (Pre/Post/FU)

TOTAL COHESION: _____

TOTAL ADAPTABILITY: _____

FAMILY TYPE: _____

APPENDIX D

FAMILY COMMUNICATION RATING SCALE

TABLE 3: FAMILY COMMUNICATION

COUPLE OR FAMILY SCORE	1	2	3	4	5	6
CONTINUITY TRACKING	Little continuity of content;		Some continuity but not consistent across time or across all members;		Members consistently tracking;	
	Irrelevant/distracting non verbals and asides frequently occur;		Some irrelevant/distracting non-verbals and asides;		Few irrelevant/distracting non-verbals and asides; facilitative non-verbals;	
	Frequent/inappropriate topic changes;		Topic changes not consistently appropriate;		Appropriate topic changes;	
RESPECT & REGARD	Lack of respect for feelings or message of other(s), possibly overtly disrespectful or belittling attitude;		Somewhat respectful of others but not consistent across time or across all members;		Consistently appears respectful of others' feelings and message;	
CLARITY	Inconsistent and/or unclear verbal messages;		Some degree of clarity; but not consistent across time or across all members;		Verbal messages very clear.	
	Frequent incongruencies between verbal and non-verbal messages;		Some incongruent messages;		Generally congruent messages;	
FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION	Infrequent discussion of self, feelings and relationships;		Some discussion of self, feelings and relationships;		Open discussion of self, feelings and relationships;	
COMMUNICATION SKILL						
Listeners' Skills						
Empathy	Seldom evident		Sometimes evident		Often evident	
Attentive Listening	Seldom evident		Sometimes evident		Often evident	
Speakers' Skills						
Speaking for Self	Seldom evident		Sometimes evident		Often evident	
Speaking for Others	Often evident		Sometimes evident		Seldom evident	
Intrusions/Interruptions						
Premature Closure	Often evident		Sometimes evident		Seldom evident	
GLOBAL FAMILY COMMUNICATION RATING (1-6)						

APPENDIX E

FIGURE 1 NOTES

1. Roman numerals refer to levels.

2. C refers to dynamisms common to several levels.

3. Dark shading indicates tension in the operation of a dynamism.
    Tension abates towards higher levels <u>except</u> for <u>personality
    ideal</u> which increases in significance and power as development
    advances.

4. Spindle shapes indicate the incipience and disappearnce of a
    dynamism.

APPENDIX F

INFORMATION AND CONSENT FORMS

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

FACULTY OF EDUCATION
THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

Jan. 5, 1984

Dear Family Members,

We are currently conducting a study of families in the Edmonton area. The purpose of the study is to understand more clearly how family members function as a group. Your family is being invited to participate.

We would sincerely appreciate your cooperation. By participating in the study, you will be assisting us to help other families. Your names will not appear on any of the questionnaires and all information is completely confidential.

If you have any questions about this research project, please contact Rose Marie Hague at 432-5387 or 435-4398 after 6 p.m.

Thank you.

Rose Marie Hague

H.W. Zingle, Ph.D.

Supervisor

CONSENT FORM

I, the undersigned, voluntarily consent to participate in the study being conducted by Rose Marie Hague, a doctoral student in the Department of Educational Psychology, University of Alberta. My participation will include two written questionnaires and a family discussion session which will be video-recorded.

I understand that my responses will be used for a Doctoral Dissertation by Rose Marie Hague, and will be treated as confidential.

_____   _____

       Signature   Date

_____   _____

       Address   Phone Number

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

FACULTY OF EDUCATION
THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING:

GENDER: MALE _____   FEMALE _____

AGE: _____

PRESENT OCCUPATION _____

HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION ATTAINED _____

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this study.