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What is the Experience and Meaning of Hope for People Who Have Made Profound Change?

By

Margaret Jo Anne Keen

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of **DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY** in **COUNSELLING PSYCHOLOGY**

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

SPRING, 2000

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FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled WHAT IS THE EXPERIENCE AND MEANING OF HOPE FOR PEOPLE WHO HAVE MADE PROFOUND CHANGE? submitted by MARGARET JOANNE KEEN in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY in COUNSELLING PSYCHOLOGY.

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DEDICATIONS

To My Dad,

Walter Gordon Hughes

-because death does not end a relationship.

To My Soul Mate,

Brian Donald Keen

- because there isn't any challenge we can't face together.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this hermeneutic-phenomenological study was to explore and understand the role of hope in the process of human change. This research began with the question, "What is the experience and meaning of hope for people who have made profound change? and focused on filling in the gaps between our working knowledge of hope and *how* hope works.

This study was conducted using a series of in-depth interviews with twelve co-researchers over a period of one year. Profound change has been defined as change from a destructive lifestyle to self and others to a constructive lifestyle. This change in lifestyle had been maintained over a period of three years, thus the co-researchers were considered to be models of hope to others. Prochaska's Stages of Change model was used to clarify the stages of lifestyle change. In order to obtain a deeper understanding of hope data collection included protocol writing, personal life stories and anecdotal narratives.

Two sets of findings have been presented. The first set of findings has described five themes of hoping. Inherent within each theme of hoping was a process of intrapsychic change. The underlying process within each theme has been described. The cumulative effect of these underlying processes has been labelled a *'change-in-self'*. This gestalt of processes was the experience and meaning of hope for the co-researchers of this study. The second set of findings explored the interaction between hope and Prochaska's Stages of Change model. The themes of hope and the inherent processes have been integrated into the stages of change.

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I would like to thank my family for being the people they are -----

To my husband Brian,

Thank you for anchoring our family. Your support to all of us has always been without questions or limits. Your love has been transforming.

To my children - Sarah, Brendan and Jenna,

Thank you for being there for each other and not demanding I grow old in your shadows. You are my greatest gifts in life.

To my mother, Freddie Hughes,

Your fierce loyalty makes me think I could do anything! I love you mom.

I would like to thank my supervisor, my mentor and my friend -----

To Dr. Ronna Jevne

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Special thanks to Nancy Goddard for her editing skills. My sincerest appreciation and gratitude to Josie Parentila and Cora Racelis for mothering our family through this time of transition. Thank you for your hard work and your love.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER

I. **INTRODUCTION** 1

Rationale for This Study 1

Overview of Chapters 4

II. **APPROACH TO THE LITERATURE REVIEW** 5

Literature Review Format 6

Historical Contextual Background of Hope 7

A Mythological Perspective of Hope 7

Critical reflection 8

Theological Perspectives of Hope 8

Early Christianity 9

St. Augustine 9

Thomas Aquinas 9

Critical reflection 10

Modern Christianity 10

Critical reflection 11

Philosophical Perspectives of Hope 12

Kant 12

Nietzsche 12

Bloch 13

Critical reflection 13

Emerging Clinical Perspectives of Hope 14

Gabriel Marcel 14

Critical reflection 15

Karl Menninger 15

Critical reflection 16

Paul Pruyser 16

Critical reflection 18

Frank Buckley 18

Critical reflection 19

Summary of Historical Contextual Background of Hope 20

Models of Hope 21

Unidimensional Concepts of Hope 21

Critical reflection 22

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Two Dimensional Concepts of Hope 23
Critical reflection 24
Multidimensional Concepts of Hope 25
Dufault and Martocchio (1985) 25
Critical reflection 26
Morse and Doberneck (1995) 27
Critical reflection 28
Nekolaichuk (1995) 28
Critical reflection 29
Summary of the Models of Hope 30
Integrative Studies of Hope 30
Nekolaichuk (1990) 30
Critical reflection 31
Ersek (1992) 32
Critical reflection 33
Keen (1994) 33
Critical reflection 34
Farran, Herth and Popovich (1995) 34
Critical reflection 36
Summary of Integrative Studies of Hope 37
Prochaska's Model Stages of Change 37
Introduction to Prochaska's Model Stages of Change 38
Validity, Reliability and Generalizability 39
Integration with Processes of Change 40
Support for the Use of Prochaska's Model Stages of Change 40
Strengths of Prochaska's Model 40
Exploration of Phenomena 41
Similarities between Studies 41
Concluding Remarks 42
Summary of the Literature Review 42

III. APPROACH TO INQUIRY 43
Chapter Overview 43
Methodology 43
Description of Hermeneutic-Phenomenology 43

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Synopsis of Historical Background of Phenomenology and Hermeneutics 44
Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834) 44
Wilhelm Dilthey (1831-1911) 45
Edmund Husserl (1859-1938) 46
Martin Heidegger (1889-1976) 46
Hans-Georg Gadamer (1900-199_) 48
My Preference for Using Hermeneutic-Phenomenology 49
Researcher's Worldview 49
My Beliefs as a Researcher/Therapist 50
My Experiences as a Researcher 51
Research Framework 52
Method 53
Etymological Sources of Hope 53
Turning to the Nature of Lived Experience 54
Presunderstandings 55
Hope 55
Change 56
Personal Experience of Hope and Change as a Starting Point 56
Ethical Issues 57
Orienting to the Phenomenon 58
The Fishes and Loaves Soup Kitchen 59
Narcotics Anonymous 60
Research Activities 62
Entering the Field 62
Sampling 63
Engaging Co-Researchers 65
Characteristics of the co-researchers 65
Generating Data 66
Protocol writing 67
Personal life stories 67
Stories /personal narratives as written text 68
Small group discussion 68
Thematic Analysis 69

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Trustworthiness 71
Procedures for Rigor of Methodology and Verification of Findings 72
Triangulation 72
Peer Debriefing or Review 72
Clarifying Researcher Bias 73
Member Checks 73
Rich Thick Descriptions 73
External Audit 73

IV. **PERSONAL LIFE STORIES OF HOPE AND CHANGE** 74
The Importance of Story 74
Chapter Overview 75
Bess 75
A "Storied Life" 75
Researcher's Reflections 75
Journal Entry 76
The Life Story 76
The Story of Hope 80
The Story of Change 81
Experiences of Hope Through the Lens of Change 84
Seeds of Hoping 84
Movement from Precontemplation to Contemplation of Change 84
Movement from Contemplation to Preparation for Change 85
Movement from Preparation to the Action Stage of Change 85
Elaine 86
A "Storied Life" 86
Researcher's Reflections 86
Journal Entry 86
The Life Story 87
The Story of Hope 89
The Story of Change 92
Experiences of Hope Through the Lens of Change 93

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Seeds of Hoping 93
Movement from Precontemplation to Contemplation of Change 93
Movement from Contemplation to Preparation for Change 93
Movement from Preparation to the Action Stage of Change 94
Dan 95
A "Storied Life" 95
Researcher's Reflections 95
Journal Entry 95
The Life Story 95
The Story of Hope 98
The Story of Change 99
Experiences of Hope Through the Lens of Change 100
Seeds of Hoping 100
Movement from Precontemplation to Contemplation of Change 100
Movement from Contemplation to Preparation for Change 101
Movement from Preparation to the Action Stage of Change 102
Kathy 102
A "Storied Life" 102
Researcher's Reflections 102
Journal Entry 103
The Life Story 103
The Story of Hope 105
The Story of Change 107
Experiences of Hope Through the Lens of Change 109
Seeds of Hoping 109
Movement from Precontemplation to Contemplation of Change 109
Movement from Contemplation to Preparation for Change 110
Movement from Preparation to the Action Stage

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of Change 111
Phillip 111
A "Storied Life" 111
Researcher's Reflections 111
Journal Entry 112
The Life Story 113
The Story of Hope 115
The Story of Change 118
Experiences of Hope Through the Lens of Change 119
Seeds of Hoping 119
Movement from Precontemplation to Contemplation of Change 119
Movement from Contemplation to Preparation for Change 119
Movement from Preparation to the Action Stage of Change 120
Doug 121
A "Storied Life" 121
Researcher's Reflections 121
Journal Entry 122
The Life Story 122
The Story of Hope 125
The Story of Change 125
Experiences of Hope Through the Lens of Change 128
Seeds of Hoping 128
Movement from Precontemplation to Contemplation of Change 128
Movement from Contemplation to Preparation for Change 129
Movement from Preparation to the Action Stage of Change 131
Summary of Personal Stories of Hope and Change 131

V. INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS 132
Chapter Overview 132

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Finding #1 - What is the Experience and Meaning of Hope for People Who Have Made Profound Change? 133
Precursors to the Lived Experience of Hope 134
Identity Crisis 134
Existential Crisis 136
Emergence of Hope 138
Five Themes of Hope 140
Theme #1-Hoping is a wish for life or a survival response. 140
Theme #2-Hoping is becoming open to the possibilities of change. 141
Theme #3-Hoping is becoming aware of one's strengths and potential. 142
Theme #4-Hoping is choosing to refocus and reframe one's experiences. 144
Theme #5-Hoping is understanding life has meaningful and value. 145
Summary of the Precursors of Hope, Emergence of Hope and the Five Themes of Hoping 147
Diagram #1-The Experience and Meaning of Hoping Is ... 150
The Importance of Relationships to Hoping 151
The Seeds of Hoping 151
Hope Nurturing Relationships from the Past
Childhood memories 151
Hope Facilitating Relationships in the Present
Adult memories 152
Hope Inspiring Relationships that are Projected into the Future
Spiritual relationships 154
Finding #2 - What is the Relationship between Hope and Change using Prochaska's Stages of Change Model? 156
Interaction of Personal Crises and Themes of Hoping with Prochaska's Stages of Change 157
Table #1 - Defining Features of the Experience of Hoping and the Characteristics of Change 160

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VI. DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS FOR COUNSELLING AND RESEARCH 161
Chapter Overview 161
Theme #1 - Hoping Is A Life Wish 161
What Hope Is 161
The Paradoxical Nature of Hope 162
Support from the hope literature 163
Challenge to the hope literature 163
Implications for Counselling 164
Recommendations for Research 165
What Hope Is Not 165
Goal Attainment 165
Support from the hope literature 166
Challenge to the hope literature 167
Implications for Counselling 167
Recommendations for Research 168
Theme #2 - Is Becoming Open To The Possibilities of Change 168
Support from the hope literature 169
Challenge to the hope literature 170
Implications for Counselling 170
Recommendations for Research 171
Theme #3 - Is Becoming Aware of One's Strengths and Potential 172
Support from the hope literature 172
Challenge to the hope literature 173
Implications for Counselling 173
Recommendations for Research 174
Theme #4 - Is Choosing to Refocus and Reframe One's Experiences 174
Support from the hope literature 175
Challenge to the hope literature 176
Implications for Counselling 176
Recommendations for Research 176
Theme #5 - Is Understanding Life has Meaning and Value 177
Support from the hope literature 178
Challenge to the hope literature 178
Implications for Counselling 179
Recommendations for Research 179

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Processes of Hoping Cumulatively Interpreted as a 'Change-in-Self' 180
Support from the hope literature 180
Challenge to the hope literature 180
Implications for Counselling 181
Recommendations for Research 181
Inter-personal Relationships 182
Development of Hope 182
Theoretical Background 182
Hoping Seeded from Childhood Memories 183
Support from the hope literature 183
Challenge to the hope literature 184
Hoping Facilitated by Relationships from Adult Memories 184
Support from the hope literature 185
Challenge to the hope literature 185
Hope Inspiring Thoughts for the Future 186
Support from the hope literature 186
Challenge to the hope literature 187
Implications for Counselling 187
Recommendations for Research 187
The Contributions This Study Makes to Our Understanding of Hope 188
Limitations of This Study 189

VII. BIBLIOGRAPHY 188

VIII. APPENDICES
Appendix A - A Proposed Study of Hope 208
Appendix B - Informed Consent 210
Appendix C - Oath of Confidentiality 212
Appendix D - Guidelines on How to Write A Reflection about your Experience of Hope 213
Appendix E - How to Write a Critical Incident on your Process of Change 214
Appendix F - How to Fill in your Significant Life Events Chart 215
Appendix G - Interview Guide 223

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Appendix H - Process of Uncovering Thematic Statements from One Co- researcher's Interview 226
Appendix I - Audit Trail 228

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LIST OF TABLES

TABLE 1: Defining Features of the Experience of Hoping and the Characteristics of Change 160

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LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE 1: "The Experience and Meaning of Hope Is ... " 150

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CHAPTER ONE

The purpose of this study was to explore and understand the role of hope in the process of human change. This qualitative research study entitled, "What is the experience and meaning of hope in the process of human change" has been conducted from a hermeneutic-phenomenological perspective. This methodological perspective allowed for both a description and interpretation of the themes of hope. The co-researchers were selected because they had made profound change. Profound change was defined as moving from a destructive lifestyle to a constructive lifestyle. These individuals represented 'models of hope' to others.

Rationale for This Study

> Few in clinical practice would argue that hope is essential to therapeutic outcome (Cousins, 1989; Cheren, 1989; Laney, 1969; Owen, 1989; Miller, 1989) and vital to healing (Frank, 1968; French, 1952; Manrique, 1984; Orne, 1968; Waklee-Lynch, 1989; Yalom, 1980). In other words, "Hope is a phenomenon closely linked with man's (and woman's) adaptive powers and meaningful human life" (Dufault cited in Jevne, 1990, p. 26).

Despite the acknowledgment of the importance of hope, the role of hope in the process of change has not been articulated. During the literature review for this study, no studies were found that explored the experience of hope in people who have made profound change. If hope is influential in positive human change and the goal of counselling is to assist the client in positive change (Mahoney, 1991; McWhirter, 1991), then it is plausible to speculate that the facilitation of hope is a key element in conducting effective therapy.

Early perceptions of hope imply a debate about the value of hope. It has been referred to as "the worst of all evils" (Nietzsche, 1878) and "an indispensible factor in treatment" (Menninger, 1959). Most of these philosophical queries, however, speculated that hope did make a positive contribution in people's lives (Marcel, 1962/1951; Bloch,

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1968/1959). The therapeutic value of hope has been anecdotally confirmed in the medical literature for the past forty years (Frankl, 1959; Menninger, 1959; Pruyser, 1963). The pursuit of hope became worthy of investigation as a psychological construct.

The research into hope began by exploring the nature of hope. Most of the writers attempted to describe hope as a way of thinking (Bettleheim, 1960; Bloch, 1968; Frank, 1968, Frankl, 1959: Menninger, 1959); a way of feeling (Buber, 1970; Lynch, 1974; Van Kaam, 1976) and a way of behaving (Lange, 1978; Stotland, 1969). This led to a proliferation of quantitative and qualitative studies which attempted to describe hope as: a multidimensional dynamic (Dufault & Martocchio, 1985), a multidimensional dynamic attribute of the individual (Nowotny, 1989), a cluster of attributes (Farran, Herth & Popovich, 1995), a concept with universal components (Morse &Dovernick, 1995), or a multidimensional conceptual structure (Nekolaichuk, Jevne & Maguire, 1996). In some way each attempt at further clarification of the concept, regardless of theoretical perspective, made some contribution to our understanding of hope. Either new information was uncovered or past information was expanded upon.

In the continuing struggle to refine the concept of hope, researchers attempted to elaborate the differences between hope and related concepts such as optimism (Marcel, 1962; Peterson & Bossio, 1991; Scheier & Carver, 1985), self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977, 1988, 1997), helplessness (Abramson, Seligman, & Teasdale, 1978; Miller & Norman, 1979; Roth, 1980; Weiner & Litman-Adizes, 1980; Seligman, 1990) and resourcefulness (Rosenbaum, 1980; Snyder, Irving & Anderson, 1991). Although some similarities between concepts existed, differences prevailed. None of the above concepts could capture the elusiveness and complexity of hope. The uniqueness of hope still presented an engaging research challenge.

As the interest in hope burgeoned, some academic research expanded to clinical practicality. Health care providers began to asked the question, how can hope be assessed? This led to research in instrument development which attempted to evaluate

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levels of hope in different populations (Herth, 1989, 1991, 1992; Hinds & Garruso, 1991; Miller & Powers, 1988; Nowotny, 1989; Snyder, Harris, Anderson, Hollerman, Irving, Sigmon, Yoshinobu, Gibb, Langelle & Harney, 1991; Staats, 1989; Stoner, 1988). Once hope could be measured then identifying strategies to enhance hope crested the research wave (Brockopp, D. Y., Hayko, D., Davenport, W., & Winscott, C., 1988; Carson, V., Soeken, K.L., Shanty, J., & Terry, L., 1990; Ersek, M., 1992; 1990; Foote, A. W., Piazza, D., Holcombe., Paul, P., & Daffin, P., 1990; Jevne, 1993; Kirkpatrick, H., Landeen, J., Byrne, C., Woodside, H., Pawlick, J., & Bernardo, A., 1995; Poncar, P. J., 1994).

The value of hope had been established. The multidimensionality of the concept was uncovered. Attempts to measure one's hope ushered in intervention studies which sought to identify hope facilitating strategies in specific populations. Yet, how people maintained hope while confronting adversity was still virtually unknown (Miller, 1989). "The task is no longer to demonstrate that hope makes a difference but to explore how those differences are made and how they can be engendered and sustained. This entails a deeper understanding of the structure of hope" (Nekolaichuk, Jevne & Maguire, 1996). In my view, this study moves into this next era of hope research. How does hope relate to the human change process? What is the dynamic within the experience of hope? We know hope can make a positive difference in one's life, but we do not know *how* hope makes a positive difference in one's life. The focus of this research is to fill in the gaps between our working knowledge of hope and *how* hope works.

I am both a researcher and a therapist. As a human science researcher, I am interested in conducting research which will make a theoretical contribution to the hope literature. As a therapist-practitioner, I have a desire to contribute something new to our understanding of hope which has the potential to make a difference in the way we help our clients.

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Overview Of Chapters

In Chapter One, I have introduced the rationale for this study. In Chapter Two, Approach to the Literature Review, I review the literature on hope from mythological, theological, philosophical and clinical perspectives. This thematic review of selected studies provides information about the study of hope from a historical and cross disciplinary perspective. In Chapter Three, Approach to Inquiry, the research method and the research activities are described. In Chapter Four, Personal Stories of Hope and Change from the six co-researchers are shared. In Chapter Five, Interpretation of Findings, I introduce the findings of this study. Two sets of findings will be presented. The first set of findings will describe the five themes of hope in the section entitled, What is the experience and meaning of hope for people who have made profound change? The second set of findings is described in the section entitled, What is the relationship between hope and change using Prochaska's Stages of Change model? The inherent processes in the themes of hope will be discussed and linked to a *'change-in-self'* process, which will contribute to our understanding of *how* hope works. A diagram will be presented which illustrates the processes in hoping which activated a *'change-in-self'*. A table will be presented that attempts to clarify the defining features of the experience of hope and the characteristics of change. In Chapter Six, Discussion and Implications for Counselling and Research, I attempt to expand our understanding of hope by integrating this research with the hope literature. Implications for counselling will be discussed and recommendations for further research will be addressed. The potential contributions this study makes to our understanding of hope will be stated. Limitations of this research will be acknowledged.

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CHAPTER TWO

APPROACH TO THE LITERATURE REVIEW

Guided by the philosophy of hermeneutic-phenomenology this literature review will expose the landscape of the phenomenon so that a mutual horizon of understanding (Moustakas, 1994) is created between the readers of this study and myself, the researcher. Merriam (1988) reminds us that a

> literature review's impact on problem formulation is an interactive process. At one end of a continuum is reviewing the literature to find a problem; at the other end is reviewing the literature to see if the investigator's problem has ever been studied. (p. 65)

The focus of this literature review was the latter. This literature review was not used to focus the research question, because the research question for this study came directly from my curiosity (Moustakas, 1994) regarding the findings of my previous research into the experience of hope in people with HIV(Keen, 1994). In Keen's (1994), study people were caught in a seemingly hopeless situation. Hope was interpreted to be a dynamic process which led to a *'change-in-self'*. Now I am interested in exploring the relationship between hope and human change of *how* seemingly hopeless people changed from engaging in a destructive lifestyle to a constructive lifestyle.

Three styles of literature review are suggested by Cooper (1984): "Integrative reviews summarize past research; theoretical reviews focus on relevant theories; methodological reviews concentrate on research methods and definitions" (p. 62). This literature review is predominately theoretical and integrative and includes two perspectives: a historical contextual background and a review of the existing models of hope. The final section, Prochaska's Stages of Change Model, will introduce a stage model of change. This was necessary because, during data analysis, hope was found to be a process rather than a state or trait. Change is a process as well. In order

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to clarify the difference between hope and change, it was deemed appropriate to select a model to represent the process of change and differentiate it from the phenomenon of hope.

After each subsection within the perspectives, a critical reflection will review the contribution each makes to my understanding of hope and will speculate on theoretical questions that have not been addressed. In this way, I will "see if the investigator's problem has ever been studied" (Merriam, 1988, p. 65). The review has been conducted in the following manner.

Literature Review Format

Minimal review of the hope literature was conducted through data collection and data analysis phases, in order to not bias this researcher's thinking and openness to the emergent data (Patton, 1990). My personal reason for favouring this approach is that I open myself up to the "naive" descriptions (Moustakas, 1994) of the raw experience.

My initial review of the literature began with a computer search for studies which focused on change and hope. A review of the following computer data bases: Psychological Information (PsychINFO), Educational Resources Information Centre(ERIC), Dissertation Abstracts International (DAI), Mental Health Abstracts (MHA), Cancer (CANR), American Association of Retired Persons (AARP), National Council on Family Relations (NCFR), Medline, Cumulative Index to Nursing and Allied Health (CINAHL), and Master's Abstracts International (MAI) revealed scant information regarding the experience of hope and the process of human change, thus establishing a void in the hope literature about the relationship between hope and human change. I conducted the bulk of the literature review and data analysis simultaneously.

As Merriam (1988) stated "Knowing when to stop reviewing the literature is as important as knowing where and how to locate sources" (p. 65). Studies derived

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from existing models and whose purposes were hypothesis testing were reviewed but not included in this review. These included such studies as instrument validation studies (Gottschalk Hope Scale, 1974; Herth Hope Scale, 1992; Hope Index, 1989; Hope Index Scale, 1982; Hope Scale, 1975; Hopefulness Scale for Adolescents, 1991; Miller Hope Scale, 1988; Nowotny, 1989; Snyder, 1994; Stoner Hope Scale, 1982) and intervention and outcome studies (Brockopp, Hayko, Davenport & Winscott, 1988; Carson, Soeken, Shanty & Terry, 1990; Farran & Popovich, 1990; Kirkpatrick, Landeen, Byrne, Woodside, Pawlick & Bernardo, 1995; Laney, 1969; McGee, 1984; Poncar, 1994; Travelbee, 1971).

Historical Contextual Background of Hope

Previous to the 1960's, historical writings of hope, were philosophical and metaphorical in nature, sometimes secular, sometimes theological in content. Godfrey (1987) concluded from his examination of hope throughout history that "What has been written is quite disparate. Some see hope in an individualistic, often existential way and some in a social and political way" (p. XI).

The classic Greek mythology about Pandora introduces us to the controversy about the value of hope. Theology, philosophy and psychology continue to debate about the relative merits of hope. Theological scholars sought truth from scripture. Later, Kant, Nietzsche and Bloch provided early philosophical writings about hope. Its essential goodness or value were central to their views. Marcel, Menninger, Pruyser and Buckley presented later discussions from an increasingly clinical perspective.

A Mythological Perspective of Hope

Early Greek views toward hope were filled with questioning skepticism. Greek mythology offered a legend of how hope came to earth. The legend began with Zeus, the most powerful of all the Greek gods, seeking vengeance on humanity. Zeus was angry with Prometheus because he had stolen the knowledge of how to make fire

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from the gods and brought it back to earth to share with all humanity. Zeus' revenge was to send Pandora to earth with a box filled with evil creatures. Pandora's curiosity compelled her to open this mysterious box, unleashing upon humanity all the evil creatures - greed, fear, malice, envy, revenge, etc., responsible for human suffering and misery. The only creature which remained in Pandora's box was hope.

Critical reflection. The eternal question to be debated was: Is hope the worst curse of all or a blessing for humanity? Could hope only be an evil illusion that served to mask and blind one to reality or could hope be mankind's only salvation left to conquer maleficence in the world?

This questioning gave some insight into hope's elusive nature. These questions raised the possibility of the paradoxical nature of hope. In my view, the predominant theme of hope in Greek mythology was the querying of the value of hope. No answers were forthcoming. Unanswered questions regarding the value of hope revolved around developing a context for hope. What is the context that brings hope forth? When does hope make a difference in people's lives?

Questions revolving around the value, the nature and the context of hope have been the focus of historical and current debate from theological, philosophical and psychological perspectives. In medieval times, theologians were scholars who sought truth and understanding from scriptures. Fittingly, the nature and essence of hope was first didactically questioned from theological perspectives.

Theological Perspectives of Hope

Christian thought, the predominant theology in our culture, has seen the concept of hope move from being a gift from God to becoming an action of love toward others for the glory of God. This aspect of the review is limited to this single religious orientation. It is acknowledged, however, that a rich understanding of hope from multiple perspectives would be warranted and, in some cases, necessary for further studies.

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Early Christianity

Thomas Aquinas' Summa Theologiae (trans. 1947) began this theological perspective on hope by acknowledging humanity's subordination to the will of God/Higher Power. Early Christians, Thomas Aquinas and St. Augustine, debated the value and nature of hope.

St. Augustine.

St. Augustine did not consider hope to be a virtue,

> since the passion of hope like the other passions is subject to means and extremes ... further, virtue results from merit, since "God works virtue in us without us" ... but hope is caused by grace and merit. "Further, virtue is the disposition of a perfect thing." But hope is the disposition of an imperfect thing, of one, namely, that lacks what it hopes to have. (Summa Theologiae trans. 1947, p. 457)

Hope's susceptibly to circumstance and fluctuating nature were viewed by St. Augustine as less than perfect. Perfection was the required state of a virtue because a virtue was a gift from God; therefore, hope was not a virtue. Rather, St. Augustine concluded that hope was "a good movement of the soul" which flowed from love (Summa Theologiae, trans. 1947, p. 461).

Thomas Aquinas. Thomas Aquinas argued for the opposite, that hope was indeed a virtue. "Virtue in each thing is that which makes its subject good and its work good likewise. Consequently, whenever we find a good human act, it must correspond to some human virtue" (Summa Theologiae, trans. 1947, p. 457). Aquinas argued that every human act was good if it attained to reason or aspired to God. The act of hope aspiring to God must, therefore, not be a passion but a habit of the mind. Aquinas deduced hope to be "a movement of stretching forth of the appetite towards an arduous good" (Summa Theologiae, trans. 1947, p. 458). "Therefore, hope resides in the higher appetite, called the will and not the lower appetite, of which the irascible

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is a part" (Summa Theologiae, trans. 1947, p. 462). Hope was thought to be an automatic and sensitive force stemming from emotions that could be tempered by reason. Reason was lauded to be the seat of humanity's dignity and greatness.

During theological attempts to understand hope the relationship among faith, hope and charity were often discussed. Theologians postulated that faith preceded hope, and that out of hope charity toward others flowed (Thomas Aquinas, trans. 1947). Faith gave one the capacity to hope and charity was an expression of hope. One's own hope was increased through good acts towards others.

Critical reflection. Early theological debate inferred the cognitive, affective and behavioural components of hope. The cognitive components of hope were referred to as a habit of the mind, the will, and a higher appetite. The behavioural component was referred to as good human acts or charity. The affective component was referred to as a passion which was subject to means and extremes. Neither the existence nor the merit of hope were questioned. Theological debate aimed at understanding the process of hope from the perspective of what foundations supported hope and what means expressed hope. The goal of hope was never debated because the ultimate hope was to be reunited with the Creator. For me, the unanswered questions were: How are one's spiritual beliefs related to one's hope? Can hope exist without a belief in God?

Modern Christianity

The traditional goal of Christian hope was the salvation of the world and, more immediately, the unity of mankind which could be achieved by man's unity with God. Christian hope was based on love as modeled by Christ through his life and teachings. Christians accepted love as an unconquerable worldly force that created unity. Christian hope was derived from the experience of living in the here and now with the belief in, and acknowledgment of, Christ's presence. Hope was the belief in

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personal salvation or the triumph of life after death, as typified by the resurrection of Christ.

A shift in Christian thinking occurred with the advent of Theology of Hope, by J. Moltmann (1967). Moltmann in his writings proposed that hope should not be limited to being the "opium of the great beyond" (Moltmann & Moltmann-Wendel cited in Burnham, McCoy, & Meeks, 1988, p. 4). Rather hope should also be considered as "the divine power that makes us alive in this world" (Moltmann & Moltmann-Wendel cited in Burnham, McCoy, & Meeks, 1988, p. 4). Moltmann's opponents stated that this interpretation secularized hope and gave libertarians permission to become more worldly by turning expectations into present realities. Moltmann purported that this view of hope was not an either/or statement but that rather, hope was needed to augment daily living as well as orient eternal life. This view of hope was complementary, but not competitive, in giving human beings both "the courage to live and the comfort to die" (Moltmann & Moltmann-Wendel cited in Burnham, McCoy, & Meeks, 1988, p. 4). Christian "hope" became love in action toward others which was for the glory of God, not singularly soul redemption. In the wake of this interpretation, hope moved from personal salvation into the arena of public action for social justice.

Critical reflection. Themes in the experience of hope viewed through a Christian lens were: a belief in personal salvation through a relationship with God and a belief that hope was love in action and altruism toward others, or charity. This theological position informed this study of the nature of hope: altruistic, spiritual, harmonious, transcendent, futuristic, and giving meaning and purpose to life. Relationships were important, especially one's relationship to God/Creator. The action of hope was giving to others. The emotions of hope were love and trust. The cognitions of hope were a future orientation to time (transcendence of time) and the belief in a metaphysical component to life (transformation of being). The questions

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which still remain unanswered are: What is the importance of relationships to hope? What is the nature of a hope inspiring relationship? What are the qualities of a hope facilitating relationship? How is hope related to trust and love? How does having hope or not having hope affect one's thoughts, feelings and behaviours?

Theological thoughts about hope differed from philosophical speculations because the initial assumptions about the source of hope differ. In theology, hope germinated from a belief in God and proliferated through love and good acts. Philosophy attempted to deduce hope from higher order principles.

Philosophical Perspectives of Hope

Divergent philosophies about hope and its impact on humanity will be presented. Philosophical speculations about hope swing from accolades of foundational principles of living to it being the worst of all evils.

Kant

Kant (1724 -1804) espoused hope to be an innate principle of knowledge. Kant interpreted idealism as a universal knowledge of the mind, a knowing, independent of experience. The mind imposing "its own structures on the particulars of thought and perception" (Mahoney, 1991, p. 35). Hope was then a mental representation of a higher ideal, a 'universal truth' or principle to live by.

Nietzsche

Nietzsche (1844 -1900) spoke negatively about hope, maintaining that "hope is the worst of evils, for it prolongs the torment of man" (Menninger, 1959, p. 451). He rendered hope to be 'the opiate of the people', an example of human weakness. Hope was considered vile because it seduced humanity away from reality and lulled one into delusional thinking. Nietzsche interpreted the ideas of 'universal truths' as false assumptions. He argued that any claim to universal truths was done so as to oppress, exploit and dominate people. "Claims of truth are really claims of power" (Lemay & Pitts, 1994, p. 21). The menace of hope, for Nietzsche, was that it led

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people to not respond to the reality of a situation, thus denying one's higher instincts or will to power. Nietzsche believed hope fed humanity's striving for what was not rationally possible. He believed hope was the cause of senseless turmoil and much emotional suffering.

Bloch

Bloch (1885 -1977) claimed hope to be "utopia in the here and now," or existential salvation for human beings who experienced a disappearing present, while striving for the future 'not-yet' (Roberts, 1987). This post World War I Marxist philosopher's inquiry into hope was aimed at developing a basis for understanding the activating force that thrusts life forward into the future. Bloch believed that humanity was called to "concentrate on the possibilities in the world and to link the power of hope to the role of the future in our thinking: the Not-Yet" (Blain, 1970, p.92). Hope was the creative expectation in a world that has not yet been completed. Bloch conceived of hope as a metaphysical science which brings an awareness "that the presence which is usually called reality is surrounded by a tremendously greater ocean of objectively real possibility" (Blain, 1970, p. 98). The ultimate goal of hope was individual satisfaction. Bloch believed that individual satisfaction could only occur in a classless society.

Critical reflection. Controversies regarding the value of hope in these various philosophical interpretations revolved around the ability of hope to influence one's perception of reality. Hope was considered to be an instinctual drive (creative force). Hope allowed one to transcend time - moving beyond the present into future possibilities.

The unanswered questions about hope which arise were: How do culture, historical times and socio-economic status affect hope? Was a belief in hope connected to a different view of reality? What is the relationship of the past, present and future to hope? Does a different view of reality stimulate personal change? Although theology

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and philosophy explored the effects of hope, neither captured the essential structures of the experience.

Emerging Clinical Perspectives of Hope

The following writings bring the theological and philosophical perspectives into the realm of the clinical perspective. Researchers and writers investigating the experience of hope intuitively understood the importance of hope and sought to understand how hope impacted human experience.

Gabriel Marcel

Marcel's (1962) theoretical study of hope, Homo Viator, speaks to the conditions that precipitate hope and the process that describes hope. Marcel was "particularly interested in the interior creativity of the act of hope and in linking its mysterious toughness to its source in the Absolute Thou" (Marcel cited in Blain, 1970, p. 91). Marcel (1962) defined hope as :

> ... the availability of a soul which has entered intimately into the experience of communion to accomplish in the teeth of will and knowledge the transcendent act - the act establishing the vital regeneration of which this experience affords both the pledge and the first fruits. (p. 67)

For Marcel, hope happened within a condition of captivity and within a time of turmoil. The source of hope flowed from the I-Thou relationship which extolled as the ultimate experience a communion between the Creator and the created. Within the human community, the experience of hope was enacted through charity. "The nearer hope gets to charity the more it shares in the 'unconditional quality which is the very sign of presence' and 'this presence is incarnated in the 'us' for whom 'I hope in Thee'" (Marcel cited in Blain, 1970, p. 94). Questions for further clinical research into hope emanated from this scholarly work. Questions of the relationship between hoping and wishing, hope and optimism, hoping and relationships, hoping and reality, were precipitated.

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Marcel's study of hope (1962) suggested that hope was a process different from wishing. Hope was vague and diffuse, directed toward a global object such as deliverance, liberation or life. Wishing was directed toward a specific object with articulated contents and wishing demanded immediate gratification. Hope was also super-rational (cognitive) and super-relational (interpersonal) and connected with patience and humility.

Marcel also stated that hope differed from optimism because hope was reality based. Hope implied the acceptance of a subjective wider reality that allowed for transcendence of the present trauma. Optimism was not reality based. Optimism involved trying to escape reality through a reliance on externals outside the intimacy of self. Optimism is the vague feeling or firm conviction "that things tend to turn out for the best" (Marcel, 1962, p. 33).

Critical reflection. Marcel's writings contributed the following themes to the hope literature. The context for hope to occur was one of turmoil and captivity. The source of hope was having a spiritual relationship with God. The action of hope was in giving of self to others in acts of charity. Hope was reality based. However, because of its spiritual nature, the transcendence of trauma in the present was possible. The experience of hope was global, diffuse and vague, rather than specific and goal oriented. Hope was a positive orientation to life. These themes brought forth some unanswered questions. Does hope only come into one's awareness with trauma and turmoil? Is the acceptance of a wider subjective reality necessary for hope or a positive orientation to life? How can hope be simultaneously reality based and spiritually oriented?

Karl Menninger

Karl Menninger (1959), a psychiatrist, proposed that "hope reflects the working of the life instinct in its constant battle against the various forces that add up to self-destruction" (p. 454). Hope was the creative drive that implied a 'going forth', an adventurous and confident searching, which was unfettered by the ambiguity of past

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experiences. Menninger's source of hope was rooted in his personal values. He cited faith and love as sister values to hope. Faith sustained "our conviction that what we are doing is worth doing ... that our existence has meaning, and that our concern for one another reflects the concern of a creator" (p. 447). Faith solidified and created the foundation upon which to build hope. Love prepared the way and was hope in action. Hope inspired the process and moved people beyond their limits. Faith, love and hope moved people forward into the future.

From a therapeutic perspective, Menninger (1959) commented on the relationship between hope and the psychoanalytic process. He cited diagnosis as the process of observing the external and internal forces that impinge upon an individual and others and then searching for the underdeveloped potential in an individual. "Diagnosis was a 'hopeful search' for a way out. Treatment was as a hopeful strategy for 'self directed and self-administered change' .... The spirit of psychiatry was to replace unsound expectations - first with hope and then with sound expectations" (p. 460 - 461).

Critical reflection. Menninger's study informed the hope literature that hope was motivational - a process of searching for the underdeveloped potential in an individual, thus hoping oriented one to change. The essence of hope was described as a life instinct, a creative drive and a confident going forth into the future which was oriented to reality. The unanswered questions were process oriented: How are hope and human change interrelated? Is hope related to human potential? How important is hope in a therapeutic relationship and how is hope manifested in therapy?

Paul Pruyser

Pruyser (1963), as a psychologist, was interested "in the phenomena of hope, its conditions and how it works ..." (p. 86). He chose to synthesize and theoretically discuss the viewpoints of multiple disciplines and the connotations of various authors to arrive at the speculation that hoping is both dynamic and dialectical (French, 1952; Marcel, 1962; Menninger, 1959; Rapaport, 1951; Richter, 1957; Scott, 1959): dialectical because the

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"experience of hoping presupposes the experiences of doubting, fearing and despairing" (p. 92); dynamic because "the forces of despairing co-determine the dynamics of hoping " (p. 93). Pruyser concluded that "hoping is not a denial of reality , but a continued re-evaluation of its content in contrast to other evaluations" (p. 93).

> This need not be a view of two worlds - it is more likely to be two views of one world.... The moment hoping sets in, the hoper begins to perceive reality as of larger scope than the one he has hitherto dealt with ... When one sees the world with oneself in it as an open-ended process, finiteness refers only to the crystallized things of the past, and all knowledge becomes only a knowledge of parts. But the summation of knowledge of parts does not yield the knowledge of the whole. (Pruyser, 1963, p. 93)

Pruyser (1963) was influenced by Richter's 1957 physiological endurance studies on animals as a prototype for human behaviour while under stress. Tests of endurance were conducted with domesticated and wild rats swimming in water jars until death. On several occasions, the rats that had been held briefly and repeatedly for short periods and then released before being immersed again, swam significantly longer before death than rats which had not been held. Richter interpreted this to mean one brief moment of escape from certain death instilled "new hope" of escape in the organism and signs of "giving up" were curtailed. Pruyser extrapolated Richter's observations, paralleling this animal behaviour with the experience of hoping in human beings. "One little ray of hope in a world of darkness is enough to invigorate some people. One moment of release from unbearable stress makes the world appear in a different image" (p. 94).

Pruyser (1963) agreed with Marcel's (1962) thesis that hope was not related to attainment of specific objects, but rather to "ontic" states such as deliverance, joy, and freedom. Hope represented an internal battle between one's self-love (narcissism) and altruistic action. Hope supported altruistic action over narcissism without a decrease in

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one's self-esteem. Hoping meant "surrendering to reality-up-till-now, but also to reality-from-now-on" (p. 94).

Pruyser (1963) stated that the language of hoping is filled with "verbs of relationships and receptivity. A hope is found, it is given, it is received.... Hoping is basically a shared experience" (p. 95). Pruyser would agree with Marcel (1962) that the essential qualities of hope were modesty, humility and chastity. Hope was also acknowledged to be a "creative process which produces novelty, even if the novelty is only the awakening of dormant potentialities" (Pruyser, 1963, p. 95).

Critical reflection. This writing informed the hope literature of the dialectical and dynamic nature of hope. Thematically, the dialectic of hope was a response to tension between two opposites, for example, between self-love (narcissism) versus care of others (altruism), between the present and the future, between reality and fantasy, between necessity and possibility. The dynamic of hope was the inherent process that resolves this conflict. The unanswered questions became: How is hope related to paradox? How does hope relieve the inherent tension in co-existing paradoxes? Is the dynamic of hope to reduce tension and anxiety? What are the processes that resolve the tension between these conflicting opposites?

Frank Buckley

Frank Buckley (1977), a psychiatrist, in his essay, Hope and The Myth of Success, defined hope as "the living and deeply moving *human experience of presence*" (p. 340). Presence "represents an attitude of humility, vulnerability, and openness which invites mutuality and intense sharing (Goddard, 1995, p. 105).

Buckley (1977) believed the source of hope was in the acknowledgment of life's dialectical nature and thus the process of hope was an active process of accepting the paradoxes in life. Life is full of contrast and diametrically opposed opposites. The dialectics of the seasons was nature's explicit testimonial to hope. "The season of Spring directly speaks the language of earthly hope" (Buckley, 1977, p. 339). Spring is the time

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pregnant with expectation. Summer is the time leaping with active fullness. Fall is the time heavy with mellow ripening. Winter is a time of bleak resignation and arrested germination. And then the cycle begins again. These alternating polarities, these cyclical successions describe life and inform us that this is life. Life is full of constant change. The primary access to hope was interpersonal, a "moving toward the experience of presence with another with all its attendant difficulties and resistances ..." (p. 344). A relationship founded on hope was "an affirmation of, and actional re-sponse to being ... a call to saying yes to life and love of - Being" (Buckley, 1977, p. 344 - 345). Hope was the "primitive assurance" (Marcel cited in Buckley, 1977) that life moves forward through combat and concord with serenity and a willingness to fight on.

Critical reflection. Buckley's essay on hope informed the hope literature of the dialectical and cyclical nature of hope. The imagery of the changing seasons or cycles in nature provided an explicit visual dynamic of change and an implicit metaphor of hope - a belief that change is possible. The dialectics of hope were reflected in the tension between opposites, e.g. the death cycle of winter was followed by the birth cycle of spring. This visual imagery subtly suggested the importance of nature to the visual reinforcement of hope. Hope came from understanding the larger view of reality.

The importance of relationships, particularly the experience of intense sharing or "presence" with another person, also informed the hope literature. The attitude of being connected to others through relationships of engagement and giving was important. The experience of hope was considered to be a primitive assurance for survival.

The unanswered questions revolved around the temporality, sensuality and metaphysics of hope. Is hope instinctual or developmental? How does our sensory stimulation affect our hope? If the metaphor of nature and seasonal change is related to hope, what visual imagery stimulates hope? How are the experience of hope and human presence related?

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Summary of Historical Contextual Background to Hope

In summary, this historical background has provided a context to the hope research by giving a cursory overview of cross disciplinary thought which sensitized one to the breadth and depth of interest in hope, as well as the divergent views regarding this phenomenon. This is the landscape from which hope research was cultivated.

The Christian theological literature described a belief system which supported the spiritual and relational qualities of hope. These recorded didactic conversations cited the source of hope as a belief in, and relationship with, God, the means of hope as altruistic acts toward others and the outcomes of hope as social justice and personal salvation.

The philosophical literature on hope developed sociological, environmental and secular contexts for hope. The importance of history, culture and socio-economic times in influencing one's hope and views of reality were touched upon.

The literature reviewing the increasing clinical interest in hope outlined the shift from the external influences to one's hope to searching for the psychological processes of hope within the individual. Marcel discussed the necessity for a context of trauma or turmoil to prompt feelings of anxiety or captivity within an individual before hope could be elicited. Menninger acknowledged the process orientation of hoping and equated this movement to the realization of human potential. Pruyser explored how hope worked and speculated on the dialectics and dynamics. Buckley described temporal and cyclical metaphors of hope within nature. This shifted my understanding of hope from escape from, to acceptance of, tension as a part of life. Thus the experience of hope encouraged individuals to embrace life.

These tributaries of thought from mythology, theology, philosophy and clinical perspectives cumulatively created the wellspring of scholarly thought from which the conceptual phenomenon of hope has emerged. The following section will represent the progression of the development of hope research models in psychology.

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Models of Hope

Explorations of hope have yielded unidimensional, two dimensional and multidimensional models (Nekolaichuk, 1990). Unidimensional models of hope focused on hope as the expectancy of goal attainment or generalized positive expectations about the future. Two dimensional studies focused on goal attainment and the strategies perceived in obtaining the goal or the cognitive and affective components of hope. Multidimensional studies focused on defining the concept, construct or attributes of hope, yet acknowledged the existence of processes within hope. Most of these studies were qualitative in nature.

Unidimensional Concepts of Hope

Early academic views defined hope as an individual's expectancy of goal attainment. These values-based theories predicted that behaviour was dependent upon what an individual wanted or desired. The hoping process was speculated to be a unidimensional construct involving the overall perception that goals can be met (Cantril, 1964; Erickson, Post & Paige, 1975; Farber, 1968; Frank, 1968; French, 1952; Gottschalk, 1974; Lewin, 1938; Melges & Bowlby, 1969; Mowrer, 1960; Schachtel, 1959; Stotland, 1969 cited in Synder et al., 1991). These early theories focused on goal attainment but disregarded the means which an individual perceived as achieving the goal.

Stotland's (1969) theory of hope provided the conceptual foundation for a number of studies and scales of hope (Erickson, Post, & Paige, 1975; Stoner Hope Scale (SHS), 1982; Staats Hope Index (HI), 1989). As such, I believe, it has a place of privilege in hope research. He developed a theory about hope that was based on his experience as a therapist: "... hope is an expectation greater than zero of achieving a goal. The degree of hopefulness is the level of expectation or the person's perceived probability of achieving a goal" (p. 2). Stotland believed hope to be a mediating process, or some aspect of

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motivation, that tied together antecedent and consequent events. The theory was formulated on a set of general propositions.

>Hopefulness is a necessary condition for action (p. 7).

>The higher an organism's perceived probability of attaining a goal and the greater the importance of that goal, the greater will be the positive affect experienced by the organism (p. 8).

>The lower an organism's perceived probability of attaining a goal and the greater the importance of that goal, the more will the organism experience anxiety (p. 9).

>Organisms are motivated to escape and avoid anxiety; the greater the anxiety experienced or expected, the greater the motivation (p. 10).

>The organism acquires schemas as a result either (1) of his perception of a number of events in which examples of the same concepts are associated ; or (2) of communication from other people (p. 11).

>A schema is invoked by the organism's perceiving of an event similar to a constituent concept of the schema or by the individual's receiving a communication from another directing him to invoke the schema: the greater the similarity between the event and the constituent concept, or the greater the importance of the person directing him, the more likely is the schema to be aroused (p. 12).

>The probability that a schema will be invoked and remain aroused is, in part, a positive function of the number of times that it has been invoked previously; of the number of events previously perceived as consistent with the schema; of the importance of the organism of the person, if any, from whom one acquired the schema (p. 12).

Critical reflection. Unidimensional hope research informed the hope literature of the importance of goals to the experience of hope. Cognitive expectation was sufficient to drive behaviour. This cognitive-behavioural approach to the study of hope was

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influenced by the rise in importance of the scientific method. Reducing hope to a unidimensional perspective, such as behaviour, made hope more amenable to empirical scientific investigation. Behaviour was observable, reducible, repeatable, and generalizable to other situations. This beginning investigation into the experience of hope set the direction of future research efforts in psychology. Previous questioning about the nature of hope, the qualities of hope, and the experience and meaning of hope were overshadowed. It was as if the wellspring of hope which was fed by philosophical thinking and theological debating had dried up.

As a result of increasing interest in stress and the ameliorating effect of positive emotions on stress, coping and illness, in the mid 1970's, a renewed academic interest in hope began. The need to understand the cognitive and affective components of hope was the underlying thrust of two dimensional studies.

Two Dimensional Models of Hope

More recent research drew on analyzing hope from the perspective of goal-setting theory (Pervin cited in Synder et al., 1991) in an attempt to incorporate both an individual's goal and the strategies by which an individual envisions that the goal can be met. (Synder, C.R., Harris, C. B., Anderson, J. R., Gibb, T., Yoshinobu, I., Langelle, C., Harney, P., Hollerman, S., & Irving, L. M., 1989 cited in Synder et al., 1991). Synder et al. (1989) proposed that two interrelated processes describe hope: the agency component - a sense of successful goal directed determination and the pathways component - a successful sense of planning to meet one's goals. Hope was thus defined as setting goals (agency) then planning strategies (pathways) to accomplish goals.

Synder (1994) stated in his book, The Psychology of Hope, that his model of hope began with the simple idea that hope must be anchored to a concrete goal, but evolved into a two dimensional model - using 'willpower' and 'waypower' to achieve the goal. Hope involved accepting the perception that one's goals can be met and the

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key to understanding hope was how we thought about reaching those goals. Hope was defined as "the sum of the mental willpower and waypower that you have for your goals" (p. 5). Hope, therefore, consisted of two mental components willpower and waypower. Willpower was defined as the force behind hopeful thinking. This force was a source of mental energy, a reservoir of determination and commitment that propelled us over time toward a goal. Willpower was the perception that we can initiate and sustain actions directed toward a desired goal.

The difference between Staats and Stassen's (1986) hope model and Synder's (1989) was that Staats and Stassen's hope model did not reference goal directed behaviours, focusing instead on expected positive affect, whereas Synder's conceptualization of hope centered around goal-related agency and planning, without reference to positive global affect such as happiness or contentment (Synder et al., 1991).

For Korner (1970), Lang (1978), and Staats and Stassen (1986) stress was placed on the affective component of hope, which was defined as the difference between expected positive and negative affect. Hope was referred to as "future referenced events that are wished for, have positive affect and have some cognitively perceived probability of occurrence" (Staats cited in Snyder et al., 1991, p. 366).

Two dimensional studies of hope focused on the ability to set goals then envisioned ways to meet those goals which facilitated positive expectations about the future. The significant contribution of this information was that, in order to clarify the concept of hope, researchers launched into comparing the differences between hope and hope related terms such as optimism, desire, resourcefulness, self-efficacy, etc.

Critical reflection. Although, goal expectancy attainment and positive expectations for future outcomes could be identified as components of hoping, in my view, they did not sufficiently capture the complexity of the overall dynamic process.

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To me, these studies did not highlight the significance of a person's perception of self and one's ability for creative envisioning. All the unanswered questions revolved around these processes: How does one's perception of self relate to one's hope? Is a creative person a more hopeful person? or vice versa?

Multidimensional Models of Hope

Multidimensional studies attempted to capture the qualities, the structures and the components of hope. Following are data based theories which recognized the complexity of hope and lay the necessary groundwork for a more comprehensive understanding of the hoping process.

Dufault and Martocchio (1985)

Dufault and Martocchio (1985) derived their model from their ground breaking descriptive qualitative study on hope in cancer patients. The data were collected over a two year period. The intent of this study was to assist nurses in recognizing, maintaining, and restoring patients' hope, since hope was recognized in the medical literature as important for healthy living.

In this study, hope was defined as "a *multidimensional* life force characterized by a *confident* yet *uncertain* expectation of achieving a future *good* which, to the hoping person, is *realistically* possible and *personally significant* " (Dufault & Martocchio, 1985). In order to capture the richness of the process, Dufault and Martocchio developed a multidimensional model of hope that saw hope not as a single act but as a complex of many thoughts, feelings and actions that changed over time. Hope was conceptualized as two concentric circles - generalized (outer) and particularized (inner). These two spheres shared six overlapping dimensions: affective, cognitive, behavioural, affiliative, temporal, and contextual.

Generalized hope related to some future beneficial, but indeterminate, developments. Broad in scope, it imparted an overall motivation to carry on life's

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responsibilities with flexibility and an openness to changing events. Generalized hope provided the context for particularized hope to develop.

Particularized hope was concerned with a specific valued outcome, good, or state of being which could be referred to as a hope object. Particularized hope clarified, prioritized, and affirmed for an individual what was most meaningful in life. When particularized hope becomes threatened or abandoned, generalized hope is called upon to sustain an individual through the crisis.

The six dimensions of hope were depicted by Dufault and Martocchio (1985) as overlapping within both spheres of hope. The spheres and dimensions of hope cumulatively rendered the gestalt of hope. The affective dimension focused upon the sensations and emotions of the hoping process. The cognitive dimension focused upon the processes by which an individual thinks, imagines, perceives, remembers, learns, generalizes, judges and interprets hope. The behavioural dimension focused upon psychological, physical, social and religious actions which an individual attributed to hope. The affiliative dimension focused upon the sense of relatedness beyond self to others, God (Higher Power), and other living things. Social interaction, mutuality, intimacy, and self-transcendence typified the affiliative dimension. The temporal dimension focused on the hoping person's experience of time - past, present, and future, Hope was defined as being oriented towards future good and the hoping process was involved in the present and the past. The contextual dimension focused upon life situations that surround, influence and are a part of an individual's hope. Goal setting, readjusting goals or plans, reminiscing and reviewing one's life, considering values and meaning of life and anticipating and preparing for death were components of the contextual dimension.

Critical reflection. Default and Martocchio's (1985) Model of Hope was multidimensional and comprehensive. This study informed the hope literature of the necessity of thoughts, feelings and behaviours to the experience of hope. The themes of

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hope were expressed as a sense of trust, a future orientation, realistic assessment, personal meaningfulness and responsiveness to an innate life force. The question still to be answered is: How do these themes relate and interact to each another?

Morse and Doberneck (1995)

Morse and Doberneck (1995) have explored and refined the concept of hope from interview data using concept analysis, a qualitative methodology. The groups interviewed were patients undergoing heart transplants, spinal cord injured patients, breast cancer survivors, and breast feeding mothers intending to continue nursing while employed. The *conceptual components* of hope were identified as common attributes which needed to be *universal* and *abstract* in every particular situation that hope could be applied to. The exemplar incident from which a framework for the concept of hope was derived was a one hour documentary depicting the plight of a young family lost and stranded by a blizzard in the Rocky mountains. Testing of these concepts included searching other data for similarities and commonalities that fit with this inductively derived prototype, and then comparing of data to discern any differences.

Seven universal and abstract components of hope were identified:

1) A realistic initial assessment of the predicament or threat.
2) The envisioning of alternatives and the setting of goals.
3) A bracing for negative outcomes.
4) A realistic assessment of personal resources and of external conditions and resources.
5) The solicitation of mutually supportive relationships.
6) The continuous evaluation for signs that reinforce the selected goals.
7) A determination to endure. (Morse & Doberneck, 1995, p. 277)

Various patterns of hoping were derived from these data: "hoping for a chance", the acknowledgment that there was no other goal or pathway available to the person; "incremental hope", acknowledging that the required pathway to a goal was via small

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incremental gains demanding extraordinary self discipline; "hoping against hope", a continuous fight against negative thoughts that various barriers could emerge to block a pathway towards the goal; and "provisional hope", the envisioning of a number of alternatives or back up plans to ensure success in reaching the goal.

Hope was defined as:

> A response to a threat that results in the setting of a desired goal; the awareness of the cost of not achieving the goal; the planning to make the goal a reality, the assessment, selection, and use of all internal and external resources and supports that will assist in achieving the goal; and the reevaluation and revision of the plan while enduring, working, and striving to reach the desired goal. (Morse & Doberneck, 1995 p. 284)

Critical reflection. The various patterns of hoping in this study informed the hope literature of the fluctuating nature of hope. The themes of hope focused more directly on the context of anxiety and the ensuing efforts to problem solve in the present - realistic goal planning, devising small increments to attain a goal so that incremental success became a positive reinforcement towards the goal, and alternative strategies for goal attainment. These themes of hope do reflect a process orientation, but do not reflect a relationship among the past, the present and the future. The questions left unanswered are: Is hope always based in reality and realistic assessment? Is hope simply problem solving? Is hope all goal and no soul? If hope is universal and abstract, then why is the reinforcement for hope concrete, specific, and success oriented? If hope is dependent upon success in achieving a goal, then why are people who know they are dying hopeful?

Nekolaichuk (1995)

The study entitled, Structuring the Meaning of Hope in Health and Illness, by Nekolaichuk (1995) identified a structure for hope based on personal meaning. The researcher attempted to develop a conceptual framework for hope that was derived from a context of illness and health. Osgood's, Suci's and Tannenbaum's (1957) semantic

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differential technique was used to explore personal and connotative meaning of hope experiences using concepts related to the domain of interest. These concepts are rated against a continuum of opposite adjective pairs.

> Each adjective pair forms a scale that provides a set of alternative responses, ranging along a continuum from one extreme of the adjective pair to the other. The quality and intensity of meaning that the individual places on the concept can be determined by the direction and distance of these responses for a set of scales. (p. 6)

This well validated research tool was administered to three voluntary subsamples: healthy adults, (n=146), adults with chronic and life-threatening illness subsample (n=159), a adult caregivers subsample (n=206).

Hope was identified using principal component analysis as a *multidimensional structure*. The three interrelated factors which defined the structure were: *personal spirit* (personal dimension), which involved hope elements revolving around a core theme of meaning; *risk* (situational dimension), which was characterized by predictability and focused on boldness; *authentic caring* (interpersonal dimension), which integrated credibility and comfort.

Critical reflection. The factors in this study (personal spirit, risk, and authentic caring) inform the study of hope by viewing the experience and meaning of hope as a process revolving around a core of personal meaningfulness. This study found that hope tends to be experienced, first, inside self (intrapersonally), secondly, as a stabilizing force for situational uncertainty (environmentally), and finally, as a means to reach out to others for comfort (interpersonally). This study informed the hope literature that the experience of hope has a sense of ecology, flow or continuity, reaching first within side self, then outwardly to the environment and others. The unanswered questions revolve around: How does the meaning of hope develop intrapersonally? What is the relationship among the intrapersonal, situational and interpersonal? What situations

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precipitate hope? What are the qualities of interpersonal relationships that convey hope? What is authentic caring?

Summary of the Models of Hope

In summary, movement from the unidimensional studies of hope to multidimensional studies signified an appreciation for the complexity of hope as a process. Unidimensional models tended to conceptualize hope as a mediating process from a behavioural perspective described as goal attainment. Two dimensional studies introduced both the cognitive and affective components of hope. The cognitive components reflected the capacity one had for processing information, planning, organizing and setting goals. The affective components of hope were the amounts of positive energy, determination, commitment one had to pursue goals. Hope was tied to success in overcoming previous difficulties and past goal attainment. Multidimensional models focused on more than two concepts to describe hope i.e., contextual, relational and intrapersonal. Multidimensional studies were important in the study of hope because they described a number of static concepts which set the stage for researchers to investigate the integration and interaction among these various components.

Integrative Studies of Hope

The following studies have been generated from experiential data. These studies have been selected because their findings uncover underlying processes which describe the experience of hope. Typically, hope was experienced in a context of anxiety and the underlying processes were descriptions of the assertion, integration and congruence of self.

Nekolaichuk (1990)

Nekolaichuk's (1990) exploratory descriptive study focused on the relationship between hope and medication compliance in the chronically ill. Nekolaichuk's findings suggested that *two separate yet concurrent processes* emerged from the participants'

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experiences. The process of hoping was understood to be a maintaining of the hoping self and the process of coping, or learning to live, with uncertainty.

Nekolaichuk (1990) suggested that the hoping process was represented within the framework of a hoping network. The hoping network consisted of the following components: the hoping self, hoping resources, hoping inhibitors, and hoping objects. The hoping process was defined as:

> ... a dynamic, interactive process, which helps bring some certainty into one's life. Its dynamic, interactive nature is reflected in changes in the hoping self and other components of the hoping network which occur over time. This process is best described as a process of maintaining the hoping self. (p. 130)

The origins of the hoping self were considered to be ambiguous, but the process of maintaining the hoping self was identified by three phases: "(1) assessing of hope and the hoping self; (2) strengthening the hoping self; and (3) maintaining the hoping self" (Nekolaichuk, 1990, p. 130).

The assessment of hope in any given situation was dependent upon three factors. The three factors were: an individual's past reactions to similar situations, life experiences, and an internal belief system which would be less affected by external sources. The strengthening of the hoping self was found to be affected by an individual's rejection or acceptance of uncertainty, the duration of the uncertainty, and the degree of trust and confidence that was experienced in relationships with others. The maintaining of the hoping self involved a greater awareness and acceptance of the limitations of illness represented by a possible shift in belief system. It was speculated that this shift in the belief system may alter values, thus creating new priorities in life which, in turn, create new meaning to life, the setting of more realistic goals, and renewed enjoyment of the simple and ordinary.

Critical reflection. This study informed the hope literature that hope was experienced as two concurrent processes which were dynamic and interactive: the

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maintaining of the hoping self, and learning to live with uncertainty. This was the first time the self had been addressed as integral to the experience of hope. This study suggested that the hoping self reduced anxiety in the environment through a shift in beliefs. This shift facilitated a change in how one felt about oneself, how one acted toward others and how one found meaning, value and purpose in life. The unanswered questions were: What is the hoping self? How does the hoping self evolve? Is the hoping self related to a primitive instinct for survival or a belief system? How is the hoping self strengthened and maintained?

Ersek (1992)

The purpose of this grounded theory study was to understand the processes of hoping in adults who were undergoing bone marrow transplants for leukemia. The central process, The Dialectic of Maintaining Hope, was described by *two contradictory processes* - Keeping It in Its Place and Dealing With It. The Dialectic of Maintaining Hope was defined as "the process of reconciling, but not eliminating, the tension between" (Ersek, 1992, p. 885) these two opposing processes.

Dealing With It was described as the confronting of negative possibilities by appraising the threat of the loss and death in the illness, experiencing the emotional responses of fear, anxiety, sadness and depression, and then finding ways to limit the impact of the threat, and finally to move on, thus providing temporary closure to the threat. A strategy to deal with negative information was to incorporate the negative information into a broader informational picture, thus diluting and neutralizing its threat.

Keeping It in Its Place was described as the process of appraising the threat as a positive experience or a challenge. Emotions were limited or shifted to become more manageable feelings. Seemingly contradictory strategies were used, such as fighting it versus accepting it; gaining control by either maintaining control (staying fit, watching diet, etc.) or relinquishing control (to a higher power - God, medical science, doctors); managing future uncertainty by living day-to-day, or focusing on long term goals. The

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Dialectic of Hope was discerned to be a delicate interplay between the ways in which a person learns to limit a threat through positive appraisal.

Critical reflection. This study informed the experience of hope that the central process of hope was in the reconciliation of tension between dealing with the anxiety of a life threatening situation and keeping fear under control. Access to more information and cognitive reappraisal of fear by shifting from negative thinking to positive thinking reduced anxiety. The unanswered questions were: Is there a sequencing to hoping? Which comes first in the experience of hope - a thought, a feeling or an action? Is hope an antidote (solution) to anxiety or an anecdote (story) of anxiety? Is the process of hope about the self maintaining control?

Keen (1994)

The focus of this hermeneutic-phenomenological study (Keen, 1994) was to describe and interpret the experience of hope for people with HIV/AIDS. Hoping was described as a *dynamic process* of transformation or a *'change-in-self'*. *'Change-in-self'* evolved out of two underlying processes characterized as transcendence in time and transformation of being. These conceptual processes were developed into a model called the Dynamics of the Hoping Process which served to illuminate the three phases of *'change-in-self'*.

Phase I - Transition was labeled, I am different, because of the trauma of receiving an HIV positive diagnosis. The focus of this phase was the disintegration of self which became the impetus for a changing identity.

Phase II - Transcendence was labeled, We are the same, because the experience of sharing in an equal relationship moved one to risk personal introspection. The focus of this phase was the movement towards resolving past unfinished business through reflection and action (moving in), the movement towards integration of past, present and future through developing a holistic, integrated and spiritual view of life (moving out),

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and, finally, the shift of self evaluation from an external to an internal frame of reference. This emancipation of self fostered the emergence of a new identity.

Phase III - Transformation was labeled, I can make a difference. The focus of this phase was growing into the skin of who I really am. The emergence of this new identity gave new meaning and purpose to life, strove for congruency among thoughts, feelings and behaviours and moved one into the sphere of actively pursuing altruistic action.

These three change phases paralleled a *'change-in-self'*, thus the gestalt of the hoping experience appeared to be synonymous to a fundamental integration in self.

Critical reflection. This study informed the hope literature of two processes - transformation of being and transcendence of time which contributed to a *'change-in-self'*. This new identity emerged with a congruence in thoughts, feelings, and actions, an internal frame of reference and a focus beyond self to others.

The unanswered questions which germinated the idea for this study were: How is the experience and meaning of hope related to the human change process? Is hope related to a change in self? How are the nature of hope, the conceptual understanding of hope and the lived experiences of hope related to each other? What processes describe the lived experiences of hope?

Farran, Herth and Popovich (1995)

Farran, Herth and Popovich (1995) in their book, Hope and Hopelessness, have formulated theoretical constructs of hope intuitively derived "by teasing out information from available publications and the author's own research and clinical experiences" (p. ix). The major purpose of attempting to present, integrate, and synthesize the construct of hope was to make this necessary, yet elusive, concept visible to health care providers in a variety of clinical settings. Hope has been described as:

> An essential experience of the human condition. It functions as a way of feeling, a way of thinking, a way of behaving, and a way of relating to oneself and one's world. Hope has the ability to be fluid in its expectations, and in the

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> event that the desired object or outcome does not occur, hope can still be present. (Farran, Herth, & Popovich, 1995, p. 6)

Farran et al. have summed up the cross disciplinary literature on hope by ascribing the following central attributes to the concept. Hope is:

> (a) an experiential process, (b) a spiritual or transcendent process, (c) a rational thought process, and (d) a relational process. We might think of the experiential process as the *pain* of hope, the transcendent or spiritual process as the *soul* of hope, the rational process as the *mind* of hope, and the relational process as the *heart* of hope. (Farran, Herth & Popovich, 1995, p. 6)

Hope as an *experiential process* probes the dialectical relation between hope and hopelessness. That is to say that, in order to know hope, one must first experience hopelessness. Many writers have stressed the trial, captivity and suffering are more than just stressful life events (Fromm, 1968; Marcel, 1962; Moltmann cited in Farran et al., 1995) and that the context of trauma must include "a sense of powerlessness ... associated with the inability to change one's external circumstances" (Frankl cited in Farran et al., 1995, p. 6). The means of overcoming a "trial" was through imaginative and creative processes which expanded the boundaries of the possible beyond any previous regimented absolutes (Lynch cited in Farran et al., 1995).

Hope as a *spiritual or transcendent process* has been described as the ability to rise above difficult circumstances, have "faith in oneself and others, a conviction about something that has not yet been proven, or a sense of certainty about that which is uncertain" (Farran, et al., 1995, p. 8). Hope has been characterized as transformational, creating another view out of the present reality so that one may not be overcome by the absoluteness of the present. With the ability to make expectations fluid, hope gave one the mind set to experience a greater aliveness in the present reality (Fromm, 1968; Lynch, 1965; Marcel cited in Farran et al, 1995).

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Hope as a *rational process* provided a "groundedness", a reality base. GRACT an acronym was developed by Farran, Herth and Popovich (1995) to identify the components of this attribute of hope. G=subjective goals were combined with what was objectively possible, thus hope was realistic. R=resources (internal and external) must be acknowledged, accessed and utilized. A=active process or self involvement must happen in order to move towards the procurement of one's goals. C=control over one's destiny must be learned and experienced. T=time, a perspective of - past, present, and future must be available in order to transcend the present .

The *relational process* of hope has been described as significant interpersonal relationships. These relationships which were inspired by love (Marcel cited in Farran, et al., 1995) can influence hope through the gift of presence or communicating positive expectations (Stotland cited in Farran, et al., (1995). The building of one's self confidence happened when a significant person believed in one, even when one could not believe in him/herself. The relational aspects of hope had often been reported by individuals as having been pivotal to him/her making it through a difficult life experience.

Critical reflection. The findings in this book informed the study of hope by identifying various processes - experiential, spiritual, rational and relational - which cumulatively represented the experience of hope. The experiential process incorporated the dialectics of hope, the implicit anxiety and the response to reducing anxiety, and creative imagining. The spiritual process subsumed transcendence of trauma in a present situation with the response of creating a new reality through a change in one's perception and attitude. The mechanism of the rational process was goal attainment and problem solving with the self being actively involved and gaining 'control' of the situation. The relational process found expression through the building of one's self esteem, the gift of 'presence', and love between self and significant others. Curiously, the processes of hope were described with characteristics of what makes humans unique: a mind, a soul, a heart

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and the ability to experience and express emotional pain. These findings stimulated unanswered questions such as: What is the interaction among these processes? Could these processes be grouped differently into intrapersonal and interpersonal human experiences? Is hope a gestalt of many processes? If these are the processes, then *how* do the processes work?

Summary of Integrative Studies of Hope

The integrative studies of hope have deepened our understanding of the interaction among the components of hope and make visible the intrapersonal processes of hope. If intrapersonal processes are central to the hope experience, then inquiry into understanding what are the dynamics or shifts that occur intrapersonally is needed. We think we understand the potential importance of the tremor of a butterfly's wings to influence global weather patterns, yet we have just begun to fathom the potential impact of hope to the human experience.

When people experienced hope they changed, but people can change without hope. The relationship between hope and change was intricate. During data collection, the stories of hope were found to be different from stories of change. However, during data analysis it became increasingly clear that hope was an amalgamation of processes. The interaction between the processes of hope within the experience of hope and the stages of change for the co-researchers of this study will be discussed in Chapter Five. To enhance the trustworthiness of this study and in the interests of clarifying the differences between hope and change, the decision to adopt Prochaska's Stages of Change model was made. Following is a brief summary of Prochaska's Stages of Change model.

Prochaska's Model Stages of Change

This research study explored the experience and meaning of hope for people who have made profound change. Profound change has been described as having moved from a destructive lifestyle to self and others, to a constructive and meaningful

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lifestyle for self and others. During my review of the literature on the process of human change, I came upon a series of articles by J. O. Prochaska et al., *In Search of How People Change* (1992); *Stages of Change and Decisional Balance for 12 Problem Behaviours* (1994); *Strong and Weak Principles for Progressing From Precontemplation to Action on the Basis of Twelve Problem Behaviours* (1994), which described and explored the viability and applicability of a comprehensive model of human behavioural change derived from integrating diverse theories of psychotherapy.

Introduction to Prochaska's Model Stages of Change

These articles and the subsequent transtheoretical model of change have been based upon the results of a twelve year research program, which focused upon investigating "how people intentionally change their behaviours with and without psychotherapy" (Prochaska, DiClemente, & Norcross, 1992, p. 1102). The model, labelled by Prochaska et alas., Stages of Change was derived from how people modify addictive behaviours. Briefly, the authors viewed change as a process which involved progression through five stages - precontemplation, contemplation, preparation, action and maintenance. The stages were defined as follows: precontemplation - the stage at which there is no intention to change behaviour in the foreseeable future; contemplation - the stage where an individual has an awareness of a problem but is not seriously thinking of overcoming it; preparation - some reduction in their problem behaviours, but no definitive criterion for nor commitment to effective action; action - modification of behaviours, experiences or environment in order to overcome problems, commitment of time and energy; maintenance - continuation of change and consolidation of gains over time. Typically, individuals recycled through these stages several times before termination of the problem behaviour occurred.

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Change was discussed in terms of two complementary principles - the strong principle and the weak principle. The strong principle stated that "progression from contemplation to action is a function of approximately a 1 standard deviation increase in the pros of a health behaviour change" (Prochaska, 1994, p. 47). The weak principle stated that "progression from the precontemplation to action is a function of approximately a 1/2 standard deviation decrease in the cons of a health behaviour change" (Prochaska, 1994, p. 47). This stage model of change, which offered an integrative perspective on the structure of intentional change, had been well supported in the literature on addictive behaviours.

Validity, Reliability and Generalizability

Precursors to Prochaska's model Stages of Change were found in the studies of Horn and Waingrow (1966), Cashdan (1973) and Egan (1975). Variations of, and alternatives to, this model of change were cited by the following researchers in their work: Beitman (1986); Brownell, Marlatt, Lichtenstein and Wilson (1986); and Marlatt and Gordon (1985). The validity and reliability of core constructs for this model were also supported in other studies (McConnaughy, DiClemente, Prochaska, & Velicer, 1989; McConnaughy, Prochaska, & Velicer, 1983; Norcross, Prochaska, & Hambrecht, 1985; Prochaska, Velicer, DiClemente, & Fava, 1988). Generalizability of this stage model had been substantiated through the research of Prochaska, Velicer, Rossi, Goldstein, Marcus, Rakowski, Fiore, Harlow, Redding, Rosenbloom, and Rossi in an 1994 article entitled, "Stages of Change and Decisional Balance for Twelve Problem Behaviours." The sample included addictive and nonaddictive behaviours, legal and illegal actions, public and private actions, as well as socially acceptable and less socially acceptable actions. The frequency of problem behaviours ranged from several times a day to once annually. The selection of a broader based sample drawn from a variety of problem behaviours provided more credibility and generalizability to this stage model of change.

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Integration with Processes of Change

This stage model of change also delineated a finite and common set of change processes that people appear to use to progress through the stages of change. These processes of change included: consciousness raising, self-liberation, helping relationships, counterconditioning, stimulus control, reinforcement management, self-evaluation, dramatic relief, environmental reevaluation, and social liberation. "These processes of change were theoretically identified from a comparative analysis of the leading systems of psychotherapy "(Prochaska, 1979, cited in Prochaska, 1992, p. 1107), then quantitatively confirmed through principal component analysis (Norcross & Prochaska, 1986; Prochaska & DiClemente, 1983; Prochaska & Norcross, 1983; Prochaska, Velicer, DiClemente & Fava, 1988).

Support for the Use of Prochaska's Model Stages of Change in this Study

Strengths of Prochaska's Model

The value of adopting Prochaska's model Stages of Change as a representation of human change came from the illumination of a progressive stage model for change integrated with inductively and deductively derived processes of human change. This model gained trustworthiness because it derived its processes of change from many different psychotherapies. Processes of change were defined as "any activity that you initiate to help modify your thinking, feeling, or behaviour" (Prochaska, Norcross & DiClemente, 1994, p. 25). The stages of change were derived from a sample of two hundred people who had successfully quit smoking on their own. The stages were inductively derived and change appeared to unfold in stages. The comprehensiveness of this model included illuminating the temporal dimensions of change which allowed one to understand when the processes of change should interacted with the stages of change to produce successful change. What was not discussed was *how* the shifts in intentions, attitudes, and behaviours occurred. The unanswered issue in this model of

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change that begged to be addressed was why human beings change. Could it be hope?

Exploration of Phenomena

The experience and meaning of hope may be one of the plausible answers to why and how people make profound change. Prochaska searched for the structure of change that underlies both self-mediated and treatment-facilitated modification of problem behaviours. This research concentrated on the *phenomenon* of intentional change as opposed to societal, developmental, intrapsychic, or imposed change. My doctoral research explores the phenomenon of hope in people who have made profound change. The advantage of using Prochaska's Stages of Change as a model for human change is that the stages of change have been given a structure. The stages of change will be contrasted with the experiences of hope with the intention of making the phenomenon of hope more distinct and visible. I believed this would enhance and facilitate understanding if a relationship between hope and change exists and potentially help to clarify the nature of this relationship. Other advantages to adopting this model of change should also considered.

Similarities between Studies

Several parallels existed between Prochaska's research studies and my study. Prochaska's 1992 research study sampled individuals with addictive behaviours. My study included people who had been addicted to drugs and alcohol. The criteria for participants who have made profound change in my study was similar to the criteria Prochaska used in his study - overt modification of target behaviour toward the acceptable criterion which was regarded as positive action. Lifestyle change in my study needed to have been maintained for a period of three years. Prochaska specified that behavioural action needed to be stabilized over time. This was the definition of the maintenance stage of change. However, the most enticing aspect of this model of change was in the spiraling schematic visual representation that

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Prochaska developed to depict the process of change. It was almost the same visual representation of the process of change that I had gleaned out of my own study's data when I was in the process of data analysis. Therefore, Prochaska's model Stages of Change made sense to me from the following perspectives: theoretical and/or intuitive; grounded and/or experiential; phenomenologically and hermeneutically.

Concluding Remarks

In view of this serendipitous sequence of events, using Prochaska's Stages of Change will enable me to strengthen the credibility and the trustworthiness of my study. The transtheoretical processes of change have been delineated and stages of change identified, thus freeing me to focus on developing a better understanding about the relationship between hope and change. This inductively derived model of the human change process and a hermeneutic-phenomenological approach to understanding the experience of hope in relationship to profound human change is methodologically, a 'good fit'.

Summary of the Literature Review

Throughout this literature review I have attempted to share with you, the reader, some of the unanswered questions I wrestled with from the hope literature. I have described the landscape of the phenomenon from mythological musings, theological teachings, philosophical reflections and psychological investigations. The review has demonstrated that the specific relationship between hope and human change has not been previously investigated. This study will contribute to the hope literature an understanding of the experience and meaning of hope within the human change process through the lens of Prochaska's Stages of Change model.

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CHAPTER THREE

APPROACH TO THE INQUIRY

Chapter Overview

In this chapter I will discuss the methodology I used and my preference for it. I will situate myself in the research process and then outline, in the Methods section, my research activities. The following activities will be described: preunderstandings, ethical considerations, entering the field, sampling, engaging co-researchers, generating data and thematic analysis. A final section entitled Trustworthiness will complete this chapter.

Methodolgy

In this section I will provide both a description and historical backdrop to the experience of hoping.

Description of Hermeneutic-Phenomenology

The research question which guided this study was What is the experience and meaning of hope in the process of human change? A hermeneutic-phenomenological perspective was used. As such, this study is reflective in nature. Hermeneutic-phenomenology has allowed me, the researcher, to both describe the themes of the experience of hoping for people who have made profound change and then to interpret these themes for deeper meaning.

> The point of phenomenological research is to 'borrow' *other* people's experiences and their reflections on their experiences in order to better be able to come to an understanding of the deeper meaning or significance of an aspect of human experience in the context of the whole human experience.... But why do we need to collect 'data' of other people's experiences ? *We gather other people's experiences because they allow us to become more experienced ourselves.* (van Manen, 1990, p. 62)

Hermeneutic-phenomenology is a hybrid methodology that attempts to enhance understanding of human experience by "... reintegrating the part and the whole, the

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contingent and the essential ..." (van Manen, 1984, p. 8). "Phenomenological inquiry focuses on the question: 'What is the structure and essence of experience of this phenomenon for these people?" (Patton, 1990, p. 69). Phenomenology is directed toward giving an accurate descriptive account of shared human experiences through focusing on how things appear, desiring to let things speak for themselves. Hermeneutics, on the other hand, "seeks to elucidate and make explicit our practical understanding of human actions by providing an interpretation of them" (Packer, 1985, p. 1088).

> The implied contradiction may be resolved if one acknowledges that the (phenomenological) 'facts' of lived experience are always already meaningfully (hermeneutically) experienced. Moreover, even the 'facts' of lived experience need to be captured in language (the human science text) and this is inevitably an interpretive process. (van Manen, 1990, p. 181)

Thus, the seemingly divergent foci of these two methodologies complement each other by providing a comprehensive wellspring from which a rich understanding of human lived experience can be drawn.

Synopsis of Historical Background of Phenomenology and Hermeneutics

Originally, in the seventeenth century, hermeneutics was used to interpret Biblical scriptures. The aim of this discipline was to uncover and reconstruct God's message in order to provide enriched meaning to, and enlightened understanding of, Biblical texts.

Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834)

Friedrich Schleiermacher was the first person to give consideration to using hermeneutics as a methodology. It was he who considered the importance of interpreting a literary text in the sociocultural context in which the work was created. Schleiermacher first described the "hermeneutic circle" as representative of the circular dialectical movement of understanding, since understanding always involves reference to a previous point and understanding never can be separated from its context or interpreter (Chessick, 1990).

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Wilhelm Dilthey (1831-1911)

It was Wilhelm Dilthey, the father of modern hermeneutics, who applied the art and science of hermeneutics to developing an understanding of human motivation and behaviour (Chessick, 1990). Dilthey, who's ideas were inspired by Vico's concepts of "inner" and "outer" knowledge, presented the viewpoint that there are two ways of experiencing the world: (a) a detached observation of things in the world and (b) living in the world. Detached observation of the world corresponded to rigorous scientific knowledge or the gaining of information about the causal laws of natural phenomena. Living in the world was a consequence of our being-in-the-world and reflected an inner mental life filled with a value-laden and meaningful interpretation of our existence (Chessick, 1990). In his book, Introduction to the Human Sciences (1883), Dilthey, however, further refined his views on the nature of reality (ontology) and the origins of knowledge (epistemology).

> ... only in inner experience, in the facts of consciousness, have I found a firm anchor for my thinking .... All science is experiential; but all experience must be related back to and derives its validity from the conditions and context of consciousness in which it arises, i.e., the totality of our nature. We designate as 'epistemological' this standpoint which consistently recognizes the impossibility of going behind these conditions .... Modern science can acknowledge no other than this epistemological standpoint. (Dilthey cited in Bambach, 1995, p. 132)

For Dilthey (1831-1911), the hermeneutic circle of understanding in the human sciences was "based on an empathetic identification with the subject under study rather than an attempt to remain separate and 'objective'" (Chessick, 1990, p. 260). This interpretation led to the notion that understanding begins with a whole, then moves to an ever increasing probing analysis of the parts, which, in turn, leads to a synthesis of parts which evolves into a new conceptualization of the whole.

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Edmund Husserl (1859 - 1938)

Edmund Husserl was the founder of phenomenological movement. "Phenomenology in our sense is the science of 'origins,' of the 'mothers' of all cognition: and it is the maternal-ground of all philosophical method: to this ground and to the work in it, everything leads back" (Husserl cited in Cohen & Omery, 1994, p. 137). Phenomenology is derived from a Greek word, *phenomenon*, meaning "to show itself" or make visible (Heidegger, 1962). Phenomenology asks the epistemological question, how do we know? seeking to describe and clarify the essential structure of the lived world and disclosing the essential meaning of human endeavours through reflexive meditation and conscious thought (Ray, 1994). Husserl claimed that the description of absolute "essences " could be achieved through "transcendental subjectivity," which was possible "by using the method of epoche or bracketing (holding in abeyance) one's presuppositions or theories by deep reflection, one could seek the roots of beginnings of knowledge in the subjective processes, by turning to 'in the things themselves'" (Ray, 1994, p. 119). "Husserl's phenomenology studies experience to reveal consciousness. With the use of phenomenological reduction, we can uncover and describe the fundamental structures of our life world" (Cohen & Omery, 1994, p. 139).

Martin Heidegger (1889 - 1976)

Martin Heidegger was Husserl's student. His contribution to the understanding of human science has been reflected in his literary work, Being and Time. (1927), which radically reinterpreted phenomenology. Heidegger did not believe in the essential structures of human experience because he believed previous knowledge could not be suspended or bracketed. Rather, for Heidegger, the importance of previous knowledge was in exposing and laying bare the foundations of thinking through the acknowledgment and declaration of presuppositional thoughts. Thus hermeneutics became an expansion of understanding the meaning of being-*in*-the-world rather than reducing lived experiences

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to essences through transcendental (presuppositionless) thinking which focused on being *of* the world.

Heidegger also moved away from epistemological questioning of lived experience (how do we know what we know?) to ontological questioning (what is the nature of reality?) when he proposed that the ontological grounds of hermeneutics reflects the attempt to think through the basic primordial conditions of existence called Being (Lemay & Pitts, 1994). Being is a necessary condition for all other entities or beings to exist in the world. Thus, hermeneutic inquiry seeks to understand Being through the experiences of beings-in-the-world. "Heidegger proposed that hermeneutic phenomenology is the method of investigation most appropriate to study human action" (Packer, 1985, p.1081). These experiences of being-in-the-world, or practical everyday living events, are a primary source of knowledge. Being may be compared to the "whole" of existence. Without Being there is nothing. Individuals are beings which are a part of the whole. Individuals are the product of their world which is rooted in a specific culture and historical time. Therefore the study of beings in their "average-everydayness" in their life world, becomes a connection to the mystery of existence or Being.

Heidegger's contribution to the human sciences was the idea of studying human beings in their everyday practical engagements within a sociohistorical context (Packer, 1985). Ordinary human action became the text for understanding what it means to be human. "In the famous section 'Existential Analytic' of Being and Time ..., the thesis is advanced that all scientific activity arises in a context of preunderstanding that derives from practical dealings in the lived world of various activities" (Chessick, 1990, p. 260). Hence detached knowing was impossible. All human beings lived in context or cultural totality, a horizon of customs, institutions and language within a specific time. These "preunderstandings" become the prism through which an individual views life.

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Hans-Georg Gadamer (1900-199?)

Hans-Georg Gadamer, a student of Heidegger's, expanded Heidegger's notion of preunderstandings to include the "prejudices" of the reader, or interpreter, of the human action in his major work Truth and Method (1975).

> If the hermeneutic circle is the critical way in which human meaning, interpretation, and knowledge arises, then of course" prejudices" or "foreknowledge" is always present and always must be present and required to provide devices to organize and orient the perception and collection of data. (Chessick, 1990, p. 262)

It was a "critical openness" to each other, the interpreter and the interpretee, that fostered the merging of horizons which gave rise to mutual understanding, thus moving one beyond idiosyncratic prejudices. Language and uninterrupted listening were at the center of understanding human experiences. The horizons of understanding constantly change, and therefore, there is no such thing as absolute truth of final knowledge because

> To reach an understanding with one's partner in a dialogue is not merely a matter of total self-expression and the successful assertion of one's point of view, but a transformation into a communion, in which we do not remain what we were. (Gadamer, 1984, p. 341)

The cultivation of the text of human activity was viewed as a dialogue between the past and the present. Language was the universal carrier of cultural-historical influences and was fundamental to the process of understanding.

> The present is only understandable through the past, with which it has a living continuity. The event of understanding comes when our horizon of historical meanings and assumptions fuses with the horizon within which the text or narrative is placed. (Chessick, 1990, p. 263)

The hermeneutic approach provided a valuable contribution to human science research because it provided a way to understand human action semantically without

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reference to causal or logical organization. The study of human experience was oriented toward researching the lived experiences of individuals from the perspective of attempting to understanding the world though "their" eyes.

My Preference for Using Hermeneutic-Phenomenology

The trustworthiness of any study begins with the insightfulness and qualifications of the researcher to both understand a theoretical perspective and then to adhere to a particular methodological approach. In human science research, "The way the question is asked is a reflection of the ontological base from which the researcher is approaching the study of the phenomenon. Ontology and methodology are congruent in a properly designed study" (Parse, 1990, p. 9). This study's research question "What is the experience and meaning of hope in the process of human change?" reflected the bias of this researcher in seeking to understand the nature of hope through the co-researchers' experiences' of being-in-the-world.

Researcher's Worldview

Ontology refers to the study of the nature of reality and existence (Mahoney, 1991). My beliefs about the nature of reality are similar to a constructivist view of the world. This view emphasizes a person's active ongoing involvement in interpreting, analyzing and giving meaning to the events of one's life. In my opinion, reality is based on how one experiences the world. Knowledge is, therefore, evolutionary and life is the process of becoming. The social, cultural and historical milieus of one's lifetime are the filters which influence an understanding of one's life experiences. Human beings are shaped by their past hence, all new incoming information is filtered through previous experiences, rendering reality subjective and evolutionary.

In the social sciences *constructivism* has been used with two different meanings: as a portrayal of the organisms as an active agent in its own ongoing development, and as a means of highlighting the social contexts that construct and orient our efforts at knowing, communicating, and becoming (Doise, 1989; Gergen, 1985; Holmes, 1986;

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Kegan, 1982; Scarr, 1985; Segal, 1986; Watzlawick, 1984 cited in Mahoney, 1991, p. 96). The philosophical thoughts of hermeneutic-phenomenology are closely aligned with the tenets of constructivism. For example, a person is shaped by life, reality is ever changing, and no absolute truth exists.

The understanding of the theoretical perspective of a methodology and the philosophical views of the researcher are important because the formulation of the research question, the choice of methodology, application of this study's research methods and the interpretation of the data are directly influenced by these sources.

This research study was meant to be theoretically informative and practically oriented. In the next section, I will expand on my belief system and how the dual focus of being a therapist and a researcher is complementary to conducting qualitative research. Also, my experiences as a researcher will be addressed.

My Beliefs as a Researcher/Therapist

I believe truth is in you as much as it is in me. Understanding is more important than facts. I value understanding human interaction from a holistic, integrated and first person perspective. For me, reflection and participant observation provided more powerful research experiences and harvested richer and more meaningful data, than selective hypothesis testing and researcher objectivity.

I believe human science research must be grounded in "lived experience." As a researcher, I accept the importance of uncovering the themes or structures of a universal human experience by striving to describe subjective lived experiences, but as a therapist I want to understand what meaning those stories bring. Stories are the lived experiences of yesterday. Stories give depth to life. They have the power to shape the course of a life.

As a therapist, I believe stories are direct links to a person's reality. Stories are one way a person conceptualizes, understands and responds to the world. Since stories are the primary means to access a person's world, I feel qualified to collect the co-researchers' experiences of hope through their stories and describe, analyze and then

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interpret them with my co-researchers for a greater awareness of meaning. Stories during the interviews were the bulk of the data collected for this study.

The advantage of being a researcher and therapist is that I have acquired over ten years of experience in developing my technical skills in observation, active listening and rapport building. I use open ended questions to listen for what is being said, what is not being said and what is being said non-verbally. I think my skills in asking questions as a therapist enhance my interviewing technique.

My Experiences as a Researcher

My educational background includes both quantitative and qualitative research methods courses. My previous research experience includes co-researching a quantitative study entitled, A Sociological Interpretation of Child Development in the Daycare Setting, and conducting a qualitative research project for my master's thesis.

My Master's thesis was "What is the experience of hope in people with HIV?" for which I was awarded the Outstanding Master's Thesis in 1995 from the Canadian Guidance and Counselling Association. Subsequently, I was awarded a Social and Sciences Humanities and Research Scholarship for 1997 and 1998 to conduct this research study. I, therefore, have demonstrated some experience and expertise in qualitative research.

I have pointed out how my worldview parallels a constructist view of the world and the importance of selecting a methodology which reflects a researcher's understanding of the nature of reality. I have shared how my beliefs as a therapist/researcher have led me to conduct research within the qualitative paradigm. I have disclosed how my experiences as a researcher and skills as a therapist support conducting research in the qualitative paradigm. I will now review Van Manen's framework of hermeneutic-phenomenology, which is the theoretical perspective I have chosen for this study. A summary of the research activities will be reviewed in the Methods section of this chapter.

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Research Framework

Max van Manen's (1990) Researching Lived Experience outlines a human science research approach which utilizes methods based on a hermeneutic-phenomenological framework. This study was conducted primarily using Van Manen's methods for researching lived experiences. This study's findings describe the themes of the experience of hope, but do not offer a phenomenological description of the experience of hope, opting, instead, to render a hermeneutic interpretation of the meaning of hope in relationship to human change. Van Manen (1990) acknowledged in conducting hermeneutic-phenomenology

> that the method of phenomenology is that there is no method, yet there is a tradition, a body of knowledge and insights ... considered as a set of guides and recommendations for a principled form of inquiry that neither rejects or ignores tradition, nor slavishly follows or kneels in front of it. It is hoped then that this text will be helpful in describing some methodological themes and methodical features of human science research, which will enable the reader to select or invent appropriate research methods, techniques, and procedures for a particular problem or question.... Discussions of method and methodology are not meant to prescribe a mechanistic set of procedures, but to animate inventiveness and stimulate insight. (p. 30)

In keeping with spirit of the above quote, I have selected the following research activities to comprise the Method section of this study: Etymological Sources of Hope, Turning to the Nature of Lived Experiences, Preunderstandings, Ethics and Orienting to the Phenomenon. The final subsection, Research Activities, will include: Entering the field, sampling, engaging co-researchers, generating data, thematic analysis, and trustworthiness issues. Limitations will be addressed at the end of this chapter.

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Method

Etymological Sources of Hope

The etymological sources of hope can be traced back to the Greek, Hebrew, English, German, Dutch and French languages. In the source book, An Intermediate Greek-English Lexicon (1900), hope was cited as a verb "to look for" or "to expect" (p. 251 - 252). Generally, fear was the motivation behind hope, therefore, hope was perceived to be an anxious expectation.

The Bible provided a wide range of meanings for hope. In the Old Testament hope was translated from Hebrew. Hope was predominately used in theological contexts. "The existence of hope springs from the covenants made by God with his people. Hope links together the two parties of the covenant: God is man's hope; therefore, man hopes in God" (The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, 1962, p. 640). Hope was connected to four attitudes: 1) to trust in God, which brought serenity and peace into one's present life; 2) a ready eagerness, which provided a speedy deliverance from one's foes; 3) a confident expectation of future good, which created spontaneous rejoicing in the present; 4) a waiting, which prompted patience and courage to face present adversity. The human responses to hope prompted feelings of security, prosperity, complacency and self sufficiency. In the New Testament, "Hope is God-grounded, God-sustained, and God-directed .... Hope derives its inner structure from the victory over death wrought in the death-resurrection of Jesus Christ" (The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, 1962, p. 641 - 642). The Holy Spirit conveyed the power of hope which was symbolized as communion between man/woman and the Holy Spirit. Believers in God lived in "new life" because Christ lived in them. The human response to God's in-dwelling was unshakable confidence with rejoicing, and steadfast endurance with freedom, peace and love.

Hope was first recorded in Old English around 1000 A.D. Various written forms of hope have been found: hopa, hoppe, hape, hop, hoype, howpe, hoop, hoape, hoip,

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houpe, houp, howp. This word originally appeared in Anglo Saxon texts and later appeared in Lower German dialects spreading, eventually, to Higher German and Scandinavian. In Old English, the meaning of hope was reported as "a small land-locked bay or inlet, salt at flood tide and fresh at ebb" (The Oxford English Dictionary, Vol. VII, 1989, p. 377). Over time hope was also used to describe a small enclosed valley. In Middle English, hope was modified to mean an expectation of something desired, or to look (mentally) with expectation, or to have confidence and trust.

Throughout time and across cultures, hope has been connected to despair. In the book, Dictionary of Word Origins (1959), hope was cross referenced with desperado. The meaning of desperado was "a cornered rat fights; it cannot run away" (p. 114). Desperado came from the Latin 'desperare' which meant without 'positive sper' (hope). "It is a sad reflection on human hopes that the word 'sper' has come to us only in its negative form" (Dictionary of Word Origins, 1959, p. 114).

Two other cultural expressions of hope have been found. The Dutch have used the phrase 'verloren hope' to mean lost squad. 'Verloren hope' has been translated into the Anglo Saxon expression 'forlorn hope'. "At one time, this was the technical term for the leading squadron of infantry in an advance" (Dictionary of Word Origins, 1959, p. 114). "The French have called this band of death-defiers, 'enfants perdues' or lost children" (Phrase and Word Origins, 1936/1961). The mispronunciation of 'forlorn hope' to 'flowing hope' by English sailors still further disguised the original phrase.

The etymology of hope has come from many sources. Hope appears to have been most commonly used as the antithesis of fear, despair or captivity.

Turning to the Nature of Lived Experiences

"Lived experience has first of all a temporal structure, it can never be grasped in its immediate manifestation but only reflectively as past presence" (van Manen, 1990, p. 36). The lived experiences of hope for my co-researchers were only accessible to me through memory, reflection, introspection, interview and story. The aim of this study was

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to transform the essences, or themes, of lived experience of hope into a "reflexive re-living and a reflective appropriation of the meaning" (van Manen, 1990, p. 36) of hope in the process of human change.

The lived experiences of my co-researchers are influenced by my preunderstandings of hope and change, and my lived experience of hope in the process of change. In the next section, I will share with the readers of this research what I believed about hope and change prior to beginning this study.

Preunderstandings

Hope

> At the beginning of my master's thesis I stated my preunderstandings of hope. Hope is such an intimate and integral part of the experience of living that much of the time I am oblivious to it, much in the same way I am oblivious to the act of breathing or the air that I breathe. I do not think about breathing until I am at risk of losing the ability to do so, or until the air I breathe runs out and I experience the panic and terror of losing it. Could hope be my breath of life? (Keen, 1994, p. 8)
>
> Hope permeates the process of living. To live is to hope. To hope is to live. The process of living demands change. The process of positive change demands hope. The process of hope influences how we think, how we feel and how we act. (Keen, 1994, p. 1)

After the completion of my master's thesis and from the findings my master's research, I believed that hope was a dynamic process leading to transformational change. The experience and meaning of hope (for HIV positive individuals) was embedded in two simultaneous processes thematically derived and conceptually conceived as - the transcendence of time and the transformation of being.

This 'foreknowledge' enters the hermeneutic circle of understanding and critically informs my research question, data collection, data analysis and interpretation of this current research study. In the first study, what is the experience of hope for people with

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HIV? I studied how people in a hopeless situation experienced hope. Hope was experienced as a process of change. In this second study, what is the experience and meaning of hope for people who have made profound change? I have studied how hopeless people make change, thereby becoming 'models of hope' to others.

Change

Change happens to you, inspite of you and because of you. Change has always interested me because I have seen some people welcome change and eagerly anticipate and embrace the challenge of the unknown. I have watched other people flounder and buckle under the fear of change paralyzed by feelings of being isolated, directionless and cut off from life.

Personal Experience of Hope and Change as a Starting Point

In my own life there are times when I hoped for change. One of those times was when I returned to graduate school either to finish things I had left undone or to begin things that needed to be started. I don't really know. Probably both are correct. I had to go, there really wasn't any choice. If I stayed where I was in life, I felt like I would wither and die.

> I am a Psychologist. I attempt to help people make change in their lives; therefore, it is not surprising that I am keenly interested in the process of change. Change in my own life has been a constant.
>
> At forty, I was a frustrated middle-aged housewife, who vacillated between anger and crying a great deal of the time, because I felt stunted and dead ended in my life. I felt as though all my life energies were being sucked away by others. I knew I had undeveloped talents and unrealized intellectual abilities. Even though I was the mother of three beautiful children and the wife of a good man I did not want to always be coaching from the wings of life. I wanted to do and to become.
>
> I decided the root cause of my emotional volatility was lack of intellectual stimulation or fulfillment. To excise this venom, I threw caution to the wind, jumped into the midst of my greatest fear, the fear of failure. I decided to go back to university to finish my Master's in Counselling Psychology which I had begun and had failed to complete twenty years earlier.
>
> I thought I needed the approval of significant others around me, but when push came to shove I was going to go back to university and get my Master's degree with or without any one's approval. What I didn't realize was those who loved me supported me implicitly, albeit hesitantly and with self sacrifice. I knew

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> my expectations were demanding, and I wasn't oblivious to the potential for personal damages around me. I simply ignored it. I was driven to complete my Master's then my Doctorate in order to become a Psychologist. Why? To the outside world I had the world by the tail, but I existed under the labels pinned on me because of my association with others. I was a wife, a mother, a teacher, a volunteer, etc. Who was I? What was I capable of? What would be the meaning of my life at its end? I had no conscious awareness of hope in my life. I felt desperation but I knew I would and could do it. (Personal Reflection, June 25, 1996)

Hope has always been with me. I can't imagine life without it. My process of change has been so sweeping that I could never have anticipated the end point. It is only hindsight that reminds me of the magnitude. The majority of the changes have been good, but I do look back and see the fallout, ask the what if's. Would I change anything? Yes, some things I would, but I wouldn't change where I have arrived at and who I am now.

In summary, I have briefly presented my preunderstandings of hope, change, and my personal experience of hope and change. I somehow did not feel that my experiences of hope and change, had the same intensity as people who had moved from a destructive lifestyle to self and others to a constructive lifestyle to self and others. I felt as though I did not know enough! Based on these feelings and assumptions, I decided to immerse myself in environments where hopeless people and people in various stages of change may congregate. I just wanted to observe and to get a feeling for what might be happening.

However, before this was possible I need to draft my research proposal and ethical forms and then submit this outline to the Ethics Review committee in the Department of Educational Psychology at the University of Alberta for ethical approval. Permission to conduct this study was granted. The following ethical issues were addressed throughout this study.

Ethical Issues

Special consideration was given in selecting volunteers who were physically and emotionally stable and who fit the selection criteria. A form, entitled A Proposed Study

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of Hope (Appendix A), contained an outline of the purpose of this research study, expectations of participation, as well as the information that all interviews would be transcribed and taped. All co-researchers signed written consent forms, entitled Informed Consent Form (Appendix B), before participating in the study. Voluntary participation was explained and it was emphasized that all individual's had the right to withdraw from the study at any time. The co-researchers were informed about the right to refuse to answer any questions at any point in time.

Confidentiality guidelines were explained. It was also explained that information shared in the interviews would not be shared with others, except for the purposes of the study. Anonymity would be maintained using fictitious names and identifying titles of institutions would be omitted. (An interesting aside is that all the co-researchers with the exception of one, wished to and did have their real names used in the final document). The transcriber who typed the audio recordings was asked to sign an Oath of Confidentiality (Appendix C).

A potential risk to the co-researchers of the study was emotional anxiety, due to revisiting trauma from the past. Consequently, all co-researchers needed to be currently in contact with a counselor or amenable to contacting help if the need arose. The focus of the study was on positive change, but the inherent meaning of paradoxes did have the potential to engender thoughtful questioning. All co-researchers had a support network. I did monitor co-researchers' reactions during the interview process for signs of distress and fatigue. Basic counselling skills were utilized if signs of distress developed.

After obtaining ethical approval, I began this research study by attempting to orient to the phenomenon of hope in the process of human change.

Orienting to the Phenomenon

I decided I would attempt to meet people stuck in a seemingly 'hopeless' lifestyle. After calls to various agencies who worked in the community to help homeless and hopeless people (i.e., the Salvation Army, Women's Emergency shelter), I decided to go

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to a soup kitchen, The Fishes and Loaves. My reason for choosing this venue was because the woman who answered the phone was so friendly. She invited me to participate in any way I was comfortable. It meant I could sit back and observe what was going on. I took my eight year old daughter with me. In retrospect, I surmise I did this because I thought I was going to feel uncomfortable and out of place. In fact, I did feel out of place.

The Fishes and Loaves Soup Kitchen

In the parking lot, the cars were parked in a haphazard fashion not tucked up in neat little rows side by side. When I got out of my car, I locked it. I didn't know whom I could trust. These people must be really down and out if they couldn't even afford to feed themselves. No telling what they might do. I descended into the bowels of the building's basement. The friendly woman on the phone said, "hello", but didn't really have time to talk. It was almost supper time. She said, "help yourself to coffee and a doughnut". I took the coffee but left the cut-up day old doughnuts for somebody else. A few pairs of eyes darted my way. I felt conspicuous and I was. I latched onto the first person who paid me any heed. We talked a little. She told me she stopped at the food kitchen because it was too far to go home for supper. It was a matter of convenience not necessity. She was a regular, but she didn't know anyone else's name.

> I ate greasy sausage and huge doughy pancakes slathered in butter and floating in sugary syrup with the homeless and the hungry. I talked easily with the milling volunteers. Most of the eaters eyed me with contempt from their small clutches. This was not a group. It was a number of isolated human beings eating in the same place. The goal was survival. The means was food. The affect was flat. The heavy silence was only permeated by a booming grace and the occasional burst of forced laughter. (Personal Reflection, June 10, 1996)

This experience sensitized me to the isolation of hopelessness and the inability for people coping with crisis and in the process of change to be distant enough from their own turmoil and pain to reflect on their lived experiences. This realization helped me finalize my sampling procedure. Originally, I knew I would be using purposive sampling, but now I decided to further refine my sampling procedure to intensity

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sampling. Intensity sampling would allow me to select cases of special interest. I would select exemplar cases of people who had already successfully moved from a destructive lifestyle to a constructive lifestyle. I would approach counselling professionals individually (psychologists, psychiatrists, mental health workers, social workers, etc.) for the names of information rich cases or 'models of hope' (An explanation of the reasons for this procedure is available in the subsection Sampling).

After the first two interviews which formed the pilot study for this research, I decided to gain some further background experience. The reason for this was that both co-researchers in the pilot study had drug and alcohol addictions. I decided to attend a Narcotics Anonymous meeting because this organization had played a role in these co-researchers' experience of hope and process of change.

Narcotics Anonymous

I decided to attend an open Narcotics Anonymous meeting, because these individuals were presumably in a different stage of change from the people who ate in the soup kitchen. The reason for this assumption was that these people attending the various self-help groups had admitted they had a problem and were attempting to seek help from others who might understand.

> I'm surprised how nervous I feel about this meeting tonight. I have been thinking about it all day. I keep mulling over and over in my head should I tell the truth about who I really am and why I am here. I feel like an intruder who has come to gawk at some segment of our species.
>
> I jump out of the car. I can see there is no light on in the meeting room. Damn, maybe this is the wrong place, time, night ... Oops! I round the corner and there they all are. In a tight knit circle smoking their brains out. The low rumble of the conversation stops. All eyes are on me. I smile tightly and give a curt nod and a clipped hello in their general direction. I descend the stairs, open the door and look for the chair that is closest to the door. I may have to be home sooner than I thought.
>
> I slip into a chair by a man wearing a green shirt over his watermelon belly. Others start coming into the room. All are seated. The chairperson announces that she is ....., a recovering addict and that this is a non-smoking candle light open meeting of Narcotics Anonymous. All are welcome. We are asked to rise and recite the Serenity prayer. Everyone knows it but me. I fake it and stumble along. Everyone sits down and the chairperson asks for topics of discussion for tonight. Watermelon man volunteers the topic of honesty. I gulp.

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> Other topics suggested are anger or self esteem. Honesty wins out, but no one really pays attention to the topic anyway. Everyone has come to empty themselves and share their pain. It is done in their own time and their own way.
>
> I sit and listen to the anger of someone who is just finishing a drug rehab program. He feels abandoned, like he is being spit back into the world before he is ready and fears he will fail yet again. I listen to the despair of a cocaine addict who has just lost his family, his home, and his job because he lied about spending money to buy drugs. I listen to the restless agitation of a junkie who finally bolts for the door deciding to not stay for any more. I listen to the testimonial of a seven month pregnant woman who shares her story of being clean for three months, looks directly at me then states that newcomers are welcome to share but don't have to. She excuses herself to go outside for another smoke.
>
> The pressure is mounting in the weighty silence. I break. "My name is JoAnne. I am not an addict. I have come here tonight to try and understand what it is like to be addicted". Uncomfortable silence. The chairperson moves back in her chair and says "Welcome JoAnne. Here is a list of our names and addresses". I am not sure if this is a formality or a small measure of some acceptance. Somehow it makes me feel better. The meeting is adjourned.
>
> I see watermelon man in the hallway. I say "Good Luck". He mumbles back "thanks". He and I both know it will take more than luck to get him over his addiction. (Personal Reflection, July 24, 1997)

This sensitized me to the struggles of human change. From my attendance at this meeting, I decided that human change was so consuming and arduous that speculation about hope might be a frivolous pursuit in this context, if not a cruel joke. What I did notice in the meeting, was the validation and respect for each one's journey, the struggle to be honest and open, the bonding to each other because of their shared pain and desperate need for acceptance by someone, somewhere, at some point in time. I also recorded in my field notes the image of the flickering candle in the dark room and the opening prayer to whatever one's concept of a higher power might be.

In summary, from these brief encounters, I chose to restrict my sample to people who had already made profound change. I decided I wanted to interview people who had been involved in a constructive lifestyle for a minimum of three years because of the tendency for change to happen in stages with frequent relapses before permanent change was possible. I also decided to use key informants to locate my sample, because people involved in change were so immersed in the process that they were not always the best

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judges of where in the change process they were. The significance of the struggle for change had impacted me. I had witnessed and felt their desperation, but not their hope.

Research Activities

Entering the Field

Originally, entry into the field was difficult because I needed to rely on strangers' interpretations of who were 'models of hope'. I went to various organizations such as Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous, the Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission, Women's Outreach Society of Central Alberta, Alberta Social Services, etc. to present my research proposal. This brought forth no potential co-researchers. In retrospect, I believe the reason for this was because 'models of hope' either do not recognize themselves as such - a sense of modesty (egolessness), or a need for confidentially. Perhaps they were still in the process of change. Perhaps the memories were too painful to remember. Perhaps research was a foreign and not valued endeavour.

After my decision to ask other professionals whom I personally knew to help me find potential co-researchers, the prospects of finally beginning this research were realized. Several names were put forth but, due to constraints of confidentiality, each professional chose to approach the individual first, and then have the person contact me to find out more about this study.

This approach had many advantages. First, I wanted my sample to be preliminarily screened by people who through their work were constantly in touch with people (clients/patients) who were in the process of change or whose lives have changed. I felt this was important because therapists would be relatively well informed about where in the process of change a potential co-researcher was. Second, trained professionals would probably be "good judges" (experienced experts) in determining and authenticating whether a person had maintained a meaningful and constructive lifestyle for a minimum of three years. These professionals would also have an opinion about whether potential co-researchers would have the abilities to be open, honest, reflective

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and insightful, as well as being willing to communicate in an effective manner. Third, I wanted to ensure that any potential co-researchers would have some established contact with a therapist or support group so that my role as qualitative researcher would be limited to directing my co-researchers to seek help/support if the need arose. The last reason for choosing this way to enter the field was dictated to me through the criteria for my sample which specified that my co-researchers should be considered 'models of hope' to others. An unanticipated, but not unreasonable, quirk to this approach to field entry was that a few counsellors themselves came forward to volunteer to be a part of this study.

Sampling

Qualitative research typically focuses on a small number of cases. "The logic and power of purposeful sampling lies in selecting information-rich cases for study in depth" (Patton, 1990, p. 169). During the preparatory phases of this research, I decided to further refine my sampling procedure to intensity sampling. This approach allowed me to select co-researchers who could be called 'models of hope' by others, but not so extreme to be considered deviant cases. Key informants (psychologists, psychiatrists, etc.) were used to help preliminarily screen potential co-researchers but snowball, or chain sampling was not utilized. Some cross referencing of co-researchers did inadvertently occur during the sample selection, but it was not intentional at the outset. Key informants were advised of the following guidelines to help identify this type of sample.

The definition of profound human change was identified as change from a destructive and harmful lifestyle to self and others to living a constructive and meaningful lifestyle to self and others. This change of lifestyle needed to have been maintained for a minimum of three years, in order to ensure stability of change.

After the initial contact with a potential co-researcher and if an interest was expressed to participate in this study by the same, I gave the individual an informational summary, of this study entitled A Proposed Study of Hope (Appendix A) and an

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Informed Consent form (Appendix B). The following list of criteria was printed on the information sheet. These specific criteria were also given to the key informants, prior to approaching potential co-researchers.

Criteria for participation in this study:

1) to be identified by others as 'models of hope' (*not included in original handout, but intended for the reader's information; others, were the ten therapists who contacted me to say they had thought of potential co-researchers)

2) having had a lived experience of profound change

3) a willingness to engage in both written and verbal explorations of their experiences

4) a willingness to commit the necessary time and work involved in this study

5) a willingness to be tape recorded

6) a willingness to allow the use of direct quotations for thick descriptions in the final document of this study

7) a willingness to allow articles/presentations from this dissertation to be published

Diversity among the characteristics of the sample included a mix of gender, race, age, socio-economic background and education level.

Others' views of the co-researchers' change process were important because the co-researchers' sometimes did not view their own change process as anything exceptional. In some ways, they did what they had to do. Many times there was a humility and shyness that accompanied the sharing of their stories, and sometimes skepticism about how significant their change process had been. Always there was openness and blunt honesty. There was, however, never any questioning about how much their lives had changed.

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The sample was drawn from people who are known by others to be 'models of hope', because their lives represented the ability of human beings to make profound change. Following are my pre-understandings of what it means to be a 'model of hope'.

> For me, 'models of hope' are exemplars of what it really means to be human - who by their presence remind me of the undauntedness and tenacity of the human spirit. Who by their actions teach me what is possible, such that I need not be anchored by the past nor riveted to the present. Who open me to an infinite range of possibilities and challenge me to creatively forge my own opportunities. In short 'models of hope' make the seemingly impossible possible. They lift me. They inspire me. They challenge me to be more than I ever thought I could become, through their actions and being. (Personal Reflection, Feb. 12, 1996)

Preunderstandings are "at this moment interpretations" of one's understanding of a phenomenon. Preunderstandings are never fully developed, because as more information becomes available a new understanding emerges, which is the interpretative process described in the "hermeneutic circle" of understanding.

Engaging Co-Researchers

Twelve people volunteered to be a part of this study and were interviewed. The first two interviews were used as a pilot study to develop an interview guide (Appendix G) and the Significant Life Events Chart (Appendix F). The following six consecutive interviews were used in the data analysis. No new themes emerged after these six interviews so saturation was deemed to have occurred. The last four interviews were transcribed and have been retained. One of these interviews was used for consensual validation purposes (Eisner cited in Creswell, 1998) by an external qualitative researcher to verify the presence of the themes of hoping for this study and to substantiate the findings. The other three interviews have been placed in a locked filing cabinet for the next seven years.

Characteristics of the co-researchers. The transcripts of three men and three women were used in the data analysis of this study. The following characteristics describe the sample. Three people were Caucasian. Two people were of Aboriginal descent and one was Metis. The ages ranged from late twenties to early fifties. Some had obtained post secondary education after their profound change. All were successfully

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employed in jobs they loved. All worked in direct service to others in a helping capacity. Two people acted as volunteers and four acted in professional capacities.

They all lived intensely, fully engaged in the process of living. They never thought of themselves as better than anyone else and were quite surprised when someone thought they might be a 'model of hope' to others. Their reasons for deciding to participate in this research study was to better understand their own experiences of hope and process of change, especially if this would help someone else make change happen in their life. Most of the destructive lifestyles included multiple problems with the abuse of alcohol or drugs, a violent relationship either as a perpetrator or victim and, in some cases, involvement with criminal activities.

Generating Data

Five sources of data for this study were collected from each co-researcher: 1) reflective writing about a personal experience of hope (Appendix D); 2) reflective writing about a critical incident in the process of change from a destructive and meaningless lifestyle to a constructive and meaningful lifestyle (Appendix E); 3) completion of a Significant Life Events Chart (Appendix F); 4) an in-depth semi-structured interview (Appendix G); 5) a small group discussion (three of the six co-researchers were present) to confirm and validate the findings of this study. Triangulation from multiple data sources and methods of collection (Lather cited in Creswell, 1998) was used to enhance the trustworthiness of this study.

The primary data collection technique used was semi-structured in-depth interviewing. One, two hour interview with each co-researcher was audio-taped and then transcribed. Field notes, memos and journalling kept by myself provided other sources of data. Consultation with the co-researchers during the data analysis served to verify the credibility of the emerging themes and the plausibility of the theoretical implications.

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At least four contacts were made with each co-researcher: initial contact, conducting of interview; second contact, to clarify data; third contact, small group discussion to verify findings, and fourth contact, to review the draft document for feedback purposes.

After the pilot study, as data collection proceeded and before rigorous data analysis began, it became evident that the experience of hope and change were separate but connected human experiences. Hence it was deemed appropriate to adopt Prochaska's Stages of Change model into this study, in order to highlight the differences between hope and change as well as to gain some understanding of the relationship between these two human experiences.

An explanation of the adaptation of van Manen's (1990) data sources - protocol writing, personal life stories, the in-depth interview - as well as an explanation of stories or personal narratives used as written text follows.

Protocol writing. Before the interviews for this study began, the co-researchers were asked to write about two different experiences that is, a reflection on their lived experience of hope and a critical incident on their process of change. The reason for separating these two experiences was to see if there was any overlap, or replication, between the two descriptions. There was not.

Personal life stories. Personal life stories were gathered in two ways: the Significant Life Events Chart and during the interview. The interview had a conversational tone with many anecdotes, stories and incidents which provided rich information relative to the research question. The semi-structured in-depth interview, as literary text to be analyzed, is not identical to the written texts in traditional hermeneutics. The following differences needed to be noted prior to data analysis.

Kvale (1984) suggested that the interview was a work in progress which involved the generation of text as well as ongoing and negotiated interpretation between the interviewer and interviewee. In contrast, written text (reflective) is a finished piece of work read outside its context. Interviews are situation specific, spontaneous and context-

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bound, hence influenced by non-verbal forms of communication between the interviewer and interviewee. Written text is generally well articulated and condensed. Interviews are often vague, repetitious, and have many digressions. Digressions typically take the form of stories or personal narratives. Many times during this research study an interview question became the launching point for stories or personal narratives.

Stories/personal narratives as written text. The meaning of narrative as text has been referred to as any data which are in the form of natural discourse or speech (Polkinghorne, 1994). In this study, I have used the dialogue in the transcriptions of an interview along with written reflections, memos, field notes, etc. as text to be analyzed. In this study, dialogue often came in the form of a story.

> What matters is that lives do not serve as models; only stories do that. And it is a hard thing to make up stories to live by. We can only retell and live by stories we have read or heard. We live our lives through texts. (Heilbrun cited in Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, p. 2)

Since stories are based on human action they preserve the complexity of human action with interpersonal relationships, human motivation, chance happenings and environmental contexts (Polkinghorne, 1994). In this study, stories were reflective and reflexive. As the co-researchers put their stories of hope to words, they were both reflecting their past as well as trying to explain the meaningfulness of this life event through story. The importance of understanding story to this research was that stories are past reflections of here and now experiences. Stories are "meaning making vehicles" which people use to make sense out of life's events. Stories represent standpoints in time. In terms of the "hermeneutic circle" of understanding, I was able through stories to grasp some understanding of how my co-researchers experienced hope.

Small group discussion. Originally, a focus group was planned to verify the themes of this study. Due to various time commitments of the co-researchers and geographical distance, all the co-researchers were not available to take part in this focus

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group. A small group discussion was undertaken with three of the six participants. No new themes were forth coming.

Thematic Analysis

The purpose of hermeneutic-phenomenological research is to grasp the essential meaning of a phenomenon (van Manen, 1990). Difference, however, exists between our pre-reflective lived understanding of a phenomenon and the insight we gain from discovering the essence of meaning of that lived experience. Thematic analysis is the process of uncovering the themes by researcher and co-researcher to discover the essential meanings that are embodied in lived experience. "Phenomenological themes are not objects or generalizations; metaphorically speaking they are more like knots in the webs of our experiences around which certain lived experiences are spun and thus lived through meaningful wholes" (van Manen, 1990, p. 90).

> In human science research the notion of themes may best be understood by examining its methodological and philosophical character. Too often theme analysis is understood as an unambiguous and fairly mechanical application of some frequency count or coding of selected terms in the transcripts or texts, or some other break-down of the content or protocol or documentary material.... Making something of a text or of a lived experience by interpreting its meaning is more accurately a process of insightful invention, discovery or disclosure - grasping and formulating a thematic understanding is not a rule-bound process but a free act of "seeing" meaning.... Phenomenological themes may be understood as the structures of the experience. (van Manen, 1990, p. 79)

Thematic analysis in this study was conducted in the following manner. I read and re-read the protocol writings and Significant Life Events Chart prior to conducting the interview. I explored each line for the information it revealed regarding a description of the phenomenon.

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The interviews were analyzed in the same order that they took place. Analysis of each interview was done consecutively. Thematic analysis of the interviews began by using a holistic approach in order to capture the fundamental meaning of the text. The broad identification of significant events that lead up to change and the circumstances that precipitated hope were noted. A more refined procedure, the selective or highlighting approach (van Manen, 1990) was used to actually isolate the themes of hope and capture the stages of change. This technique uses the approach of reading a text several times and delineating what statements or phrases seem particularly essential or revealing about the experience being described. This was a reflective and intuitive process.

Significant paragraphs, statements and words were highlighted and colour coded - pink for hope, yellow for change. The meaning of the highlighted data was not always readily apparent. The highlighted phrases and statements were paraphrased into meaningful units. These meaning units were then clustered under conceptual labels. These conceptual labels formed the basis for the themes of hope. (For an example of this process see Appendix H, Process of Uncovering Thematic Statements from a Co-researchers' Interview Data.)

"Expressing the fundamental or overall meaning of a text is a judgment call. Different readers might discern different fundamental meaning" (van Manen, 1990, p. 94). "Meaning is multi-dimensional and multi-layered" (van Manen, 1990, p. 78). The emergent themes were verified by the co-researchers of this study and an external reader (a Ph.D. graduate student from the Faculty of Nursing, who is conducting research using hermeneutic-phenomenology).

The difference between essential and incidental themes was determined through collaborative analysis with the co-researchers (member checking) and free imaginative variation with a colleague (peer debriefing). Essential themes were described as those without which the phenomenon could not be what it is. Free imaginative variation is the

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task of "seeking possible meanings through the imagination, varying the frames of reference, employing polarities and reversals, and approaching the phenomenon from divergent perspectives, different positions, roles or functions" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 98).

These practices, member checks and peer debriefing have strengthened the trustworthiness of this study by providing the opportunity for the emerging themes to be verified. Saturation was achieved when no new themes emerged from the data. Multiple re-readings and returning to the raw data still were required during the writing up of this study.

Hermeneutic inquiry "aims at progressive uncovering and explication (which is, of course, never fully completed) of the researcher's practical understanding of what is being studied" (Packer, 1985, p. 1089). A hermeneutic interpretation is "working out of possibilities projected in understanding" (Heidegger, 1927/1962, p. 189).

Reflection and in-dwelling were the primary creative processes I used to gain insight into the essence of the lived experience of hope in the process of human change. Reflection was the process of going back to the data, of thinking and attempting to make connections between ideas. In-dwelling was the creative process of living with the data constantly in one's mind until some insight occurs. These processes transcended factual accounting and moved the data into the interpretative realm. These creative processes invited me, the researcher, to expand upon the thematic description of hope from essences to processes of hoping.

Trustworthiness

The issue of trustworthiness ultimately results in the researcher and readers of the study asking the question; How can I know if the findings of this study are believable, accurate and 'right'? (Creswell, 1998) In this study, the issues of trustworthiness and rigor were addressed at every step of the research process, from genesis to completion, in order to enhance verification of the findings. Rigor is the degree of accountability and accuracy with which a study has been methodologically conducted and analytically

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assessed. Verification is "a *process* that occurs throughout the data collection, analysis, and report writing of a study and standards as *criteria* imposed by the researcher and others after the study is completed" (Creswell, 1998).

Trustworthiness comprises a number of issues such as: How qualified is the researcher to interpret the data? Is the researcher aware of his/her own biases at the onset of the study and have these been made explicit ? Does the methodology of the research fit the research question? Has the methodology been rigorously adhered to throughout the study? What verification procedures have been used to confirm the findings of the study?

Procedures for Rigor of Methodology and Verification of Findings

Various methods have been developed to ensure trustworthiness of qualitative research (Lather, 1993; Lincoln, 1995; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Wolcott, 1990. For the purposes of this study, I used the framework for trustworthiness of qualitative research suggested by Creswell (1998). This framework was developed from a review of major studies and presents a classification of procedures found irrespective of perspectives and terms. This framework entails: triangulation, peer review or debriefing, clarifying researcher bias, member checks, rich thick descriptions, external audit.

Triangulation

Triangulation among different information sources allows for data interpretation to be cross referenced. Data sources were the co-researchers' interviews, protocol writings, anecdotal narratives, personal life stories, the Significant Life Events Charts, and the hope literature.

Peer Debriefing or Review

This study was reviewed by another qualitative researcher. The data were reviewed for substantiation of emergent themes and rigorous adherence to the method.

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Clarifying Researcher Bias

Researcher bias was clarified in the section entitled Preunderstandings. Other prejudices were included in the sections throughout this study entitled Personal Reflections.

Member Checks

The member checks for this study included having the co-researchers review their personal stories for content accuracy, review of the emergent themes for credibility and corroboration of the relationship between hope and change as cited in both stories and Table #1.

Rich Thick Descriptions

Detailed descriptions were used in Chapter #4 to create the stories of hope and process of change. Direct quotations and case exemplars were used in Chapter #5 to support the emergent themes.

External Audit.

An audit trail has been included in this study (see Appendix I). An external auditor was used to examine the process and product of this study in order to ensure the findings, the interpretations, and the conclusions were accurate.

In conclusion, the findings of the study are firmly grounded in the data. The attention to rigor has been intentional and ongoing. The academic discourse which surrounds the standards and verification of qualitative research rages on. Some authors such as van Manen (1990), suggest thtat there really is "not a 'method' understood as a set of investigative procedures that one can master relatively quickly. Indeed, it has been said that the method of phenomenology and hermeneutics is that there is no method!" (p. 29 - 30). Sandelowski (1993) suggests "Rigor is less about adherence to the letter of rules and procedures than it is about fidelity to the spirit of qualitative work" (p. 2). In the final analysis, the candidness and relevance of this research will be independently judged by the readers of this study.

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CHAPTER FOUR

PERSONAL LIFE STORIES OF HOPE AND CHANGE

The Importance of Stories

Interview questions were used to guide an in-depth semistructured interview. These questions, however, ultimately became stimuli for personal narratives or stories. Stories were reconstructed "facts" or "truths" filled with personal meaning. Therefore, stories became more informational than the exact recall of events. "Ultimately, all genuine, and, in particular, all scientific knowledge, rests on inner experience: as far as such evidence extends, the concept of knowledge extends also" (Husserl cited in Moustakas, 1994, p. 26).

The importance of stories is that they are common forms of communication that occur naturally, yet they are highly personalized. "Only one source of certainty exists, what I think, what I feel, in substance, what I perceive (Lauer cited in Moustakas, 1994, p. 26). In order to understand individuals' lived experiences, it is important to listen to their stories because it is through their stories that they construct or make meaning from the events of their life (Bruner, 1990). The making of meaning from lived experiences is uniquely human. Listening to stories, then, becomes important as we attempt to develop a deeper understanding of what it means to be human (van Manen, 1990).

> The sense of self is an essentially narrative phenomenon; people conceive of themselves in terms of stories about their actions in the world, using them to make sense of the temporal flow of their lives. We find identity and meaning as a result of the stories we tell about ourselves or what others tell about us. Therefore, a narrative approach to self-understanding is not a distortion of reality but a confirmation of it. (Stivers, 1993, p. 412)

What follows are the "storied" lives of the co-researchers, followed by their stories of hope and their stories of change.

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Chapter Overview

"Storied" Lives will begin with my impressions of each person prior to beginning this study. The subsection entitled "Researcher's Reflection" will give the reader some sense of what "others" conveyed to me about what was important about this person in order for him/her to be called a "model of hope". The second subsection, Journal Entry, will focus on my impressions of each co-researcher after our first interview. The third subsection, The Life Story, will be a synopsis of their life from earliest childhood memories until the turning point of change. The fourth subsection, The Story of Hope, will be stories about each co-researcher's recalled memories of hope. The last subsection, The Story of Change, will capture how each individual changed from a destructive lifestyle to a constructive lifestyle.

The final section, The Experiences of Hoping Through The Lens of Change, has focused on the role of hope as one moved through Prochaska's stages of change and describes how the experience of hoping prepared one, cognitively and emotionally, to risk behavioural change or to act differently.

Bess

A "Storied" Life

Researcher's Reflections

People talked to me about Bess in quiet tones. There was deep respect and some urgency about their need to tell me all about her, because they knew she would not do that herself. Not because she chose not to, but because she didn't realize what a remarkable woman she was. She simply chose to live her life directed by what she thought was important in life. Her goal was simple, to help others, especially women who were struggling to get out of an abusive relationship.

> They just need ... somebody else believing in them, pretty soon they start believing in themselves, they start to think if she believes in me then maybe I need to start believing in me and you know you foster a growth and then they tend

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their own garden is what happens, is the way I see it. But if they don't have that hope that things can change they won't change. (Bess, p. 6)

Bess would open her ears to listen, her heart to understand and sometimes even her home if she knew it would make a difference. She had a special gift as a healer, but it had not come without a price. Her sensitivity and understanding came from experiencing the gnawing fear of being mentally terrorized and physically tortured by her husband. If she had stayed in this marriage she would have been dead by now - spiritually for sure, physically possibly. Bess was a model of hope to others because she acted on her beliefs with conviction.

Journal Entry - August. 25. 1997.

> We had talked on the phone a few times, setting up convenient times to meet then cancelling them due to unforeseen circumstances. Sometimes it was at her request sometimes at mine. Both of us seemed to flow with the situation never feeling flapped or wired because we couldn't connect due to busy work schedules. I suppose with all those conversations it isn't surprising that when I finally did meet Bess I felt like I knew her. I looked forward to meeting her.
>
> There was a comfortable familiarity about her. She was quiet and soft spoken. She liked animals and children. Hated violence and unfairness. Protector of the vulnerable. She believed in the ones that others had given up on. She had been one of those, so she knew the impossible was possible. She was more than a survivor. She was an icon. She was a living testimonial of hope.

The Life Story of Bess

I came from an abusive home. My mother was wonderful, but my father was emotionally and physically abusive to both my mother and my self. My sister got along just fine because she wasn't as stubborn as I was. My father thought he could beat that stubborn streak out of me, but he never could. He just drove it deeper and deeper inside of me. But it never left.

I enjoyed school because it was an escape from home. I was always scared to do anything wrong at school because it meant, when I got home I would be in trouble. My father died when I was 16. I felt relief, then sadness. I got married at 23. I thought this marriage would be wonderful, like a fairy tale. I thought he really cared, because he wouldn't let me out of his sight. All of this "caring" suddenly felt like a noose around my

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neck. It wasn't caring. It was jealousy. He put me on a pedestal to keep me away from other people. I was his possession. He owned me.

There was no happily ever after to this supposed fairy tale marriage. It was very, very, destructive. Physically, on my body I got the scars to prove it - lots of cigarette burns, broken bones and slashes from knives. The mental scars don't show, but I still remember ... like it was yesterday. I remember one time when we were out on the trapline and he needed me

> ... to run back for the pliers or something. I did not get going fast enough so he started shooting at my heels and like you could feel it right behind you .... He didn't want to kill me. He wanted to terrify me - to show me who was the boss. ... guns absolutely terrify me. (Bess, p. 18)

We moved away from all my family and friends, way up north. I didn't want to go. I was afraid. We moved just seven miles out of town, might as well have been seven hundred miles.

> I didn't want to leave the city because something deep inside of me really knew this wasn't going to be healthy for me and in a lot of poems that I wrote at the time I wasn't ready to go, no I shouldn't have gone. (Bess, p. 2)

Moving

I don't want to move from here
But I packed my clothes, and you smiled.
I don't want to leave my job
But I sorted dishes, and you smiled.
I don't want to leave my mother
A dread; a fear fills me
When I think of being isolated
But I folded towels, and you smiled.

I don't want to leave my friends
They support me and see me through
Tough times and good times
But I stacked the boxes, and you smiled.

Why do I fear leaving all I know
When I'm leaving with one I love?
Why do I fear being alone with you?
But I packed the lamps, and you smiled.

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You know I'll miss this place
It's all I have ever known
To go someplace unknown and be unknown
So I pack the sheets, and you smiled.

But I'll be with you, you'll support me
We'll be side by side forever
And start a family new
So I moved the furniture, and you smiled.

We round the bend to land unknown
The dread I feel seems so real
I won't be alone, you'll be there
So we stop the truck, and you smile.

Your fist is clenched, my eardrum breaks
And you smile, for we are alone
It's started, I knew it would.
The dread I felt was real.

My mother's gone, my friends are too
There's you and me. I try to smile.
I'll make it through, I'm sure I can
Oh, God, make him stop that smile.

By that time, I had tiny babies and no money. He would take the phone with him and the car battery out of the car just to make sure I couldn't get out of there. "The isolation was just devastating, because no matter how loud I screamed, nobody was there to help me" (Bess, p. 3). I never knew when he would come back. I never felt safe.

I remember ... the terror of waiting.

What ???

I sit and wait
For what? I don't know
To hear the truck drive up
The door slam and my heart to jump

Will it be another night of fear
Or will he spare me one more time?
I don't know how it will be
But the waiting is the worst
Waiting, always alert, but why?
I do not know what waits for me
So why do I sit and wait for "it?"
"It," is a tiny word full of fear

For "it" could mean a broken bone,
Or one more scar to join the rest
Or it could be a hug, a kiss, a caress

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But the waiting, the waiting ...

We never knew what mood he'd be in. There was one night he came home from the bar and I had two half grown kittens. He came in with the gun. He looked at me and pointed at me. He said to me, he said,

> 'You know you're not even fucking worth killing.' And he shot my kittens right through here so that it took them about twenty minutes to die and I had to sit on the couch and watched them, flipping around with their pinkish blood spurting out (Bess, p. 18).

He thought it was funny. Him being a trapper and hunter, he knew very well where to shoot to kill. He just wanted to maim them and watch them suffer. I had to sit there and watch the whole time. I couldn't move. He wouldn't let me.

I remember ... when he gave that 'look' and one of those smiles the bile would rise in my stomach. The fear just builds and builds you know. "Like it goes past being afraid. It goes past being scared, you're absolutely terrified ... you get so afraid you get diarrhea automatically and you throw up ... you lose bodily functions" (Bess, p. 32).

Sickness

Scared to leave, scared to stay
Scared to make a decision today
The fear is constant now
The fear is etched in my brow

I'm losing weight and sleep so light
I vomit, I'm sick, sick from fright.
No one wants to know of sickness
Of pain and shame, only bliss

Diarrhea hits me daily, way too often
It seems I'm always nervous, coughing.
My friends though, think I'm on diet
I tell them yes, and hope they'll leave it

Few know the disgusting side
Of abuse that we all try to hide.
We lose our pride and dignity
To be reduced to fear eternity.

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You know you can't go anywhere. Lots of times the kids and I would go out and hide in the bush. Just waiting for him to either leave or try to find us. Those poor little kids, they knew to not make a sound. They just sat there like mice. That's the worst part, the waiting. Sometimes he'd yell,

> You're such an ugly bitch that I'm going to kill myself, then he'd go into the shed and shoot the gun. I'd sit and wait and wait and wait! I could never out wait him. Finally, I'd go out there and open the shed door and then he would shoot at my feet and laugh. He would think that was so funny. (Bess, p. 23)

I hate guns. They absolutely terrify me.

> I got to the point in my life and it's always been very very clear to me. I started sleeping with 243, a gun, under my bed. I had decided if you hit me one more time I'm going to kill you and I got to the point where I was considering murder and I thought, my God, what has happened to me. I was a nice person, where am I ... I didn't even know who I was any more. So that was the start of my thinking that I had to go. (Bess, p. 3)

The Story of Hope

"Hope to me was seeing that light get bigger and know that it's bigger and it's getting bigger" (Bess, p. 40).

If I did not have hope, I would not have changed. I would have been destroyed more or destroyed myself. I became aware of hope the moment ... the moment, I believed I could somehow leave. My conscious decision to leave was not acted upon until after my mother died. I was grieving for my mother when I spontaneously blurted out to my sister, what I had written silently so many times before both to my mother and in my poetry, "I'm going to leave" (Bess, p. 20). I got the courage to say this to my sister because I was angry that my mother never lived long enough to see me leave this abusive marriage.

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Making that statement, outloud to my sister, became a turning point for me. My belief that I would leave became a commitment to action. I had made a commitment that I knew I would keep. Giving voice to what was in my heart filled me with "well, hope I guess is the only word that you can use .... It gave me a new, new feeling ... peace" (Bess, p. 20). From that point on, I knew somehow that we would get out of there. "After saying that out loud, I went back with a lot more ideas in my head and hopes and dreams that it was going to be different " (Bess, p. 20).

It was different. I was different. Having hope gave me the ability to think and to plan - about the future. I could now endure anything that happened in the present because I knew the future, not could be, but would be different. I would make it different. What seemed impossible before was possible now, because I had found my power. I had stepped out from under the burden of living with constant fear, terror and powerlessness, simply because I had nowhere else to go.

In reflecting back on my experience of hope my mother's death jolted me back into the reality that only death could be the final arbitrator of my life because in death there is no power, no choice, no opportunity for change. I could hear my mother's words "you should stop complaining because you're going to have lots of time to sleep when you're dead ..." (Bess, p. 34) and feel her nudging me towards choosing life.

I think I got my hope from my mother's whispered words of encouragement to me "You'll be all right, you can do it ... don't worry, you'll do it, you'll be okay, you'll do it" (Bess, p. 35).

<u>The Story of Change</u>

But if we don't have that hope that things can change they won't change" (Bess, p. 6).

The conscious thought, I want to kill, and the knowledge that I was capable of such an action scared me a great deal. The realization, that I was capable of performing the acts of the monster I lived with, jolted me back into reality. "... then I realized Oh, my God, what kind of a person am I? ... you've got to start thinking. You've got to get going"

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(Bess, p. 16). From that point, my thinking became very clear. The stark reality of the consequences of attempting murder or committing suicide flashed through my mind. " I can't kill him, I'm gonna go to jail. I can't commit suicide, good God, he's gonna get custody of them (their children)" (Bess, p. 43). In pondering this situation, I recall that

> I needed to come to the crisis. I needed to come to the end of my rope. I had to walk out of there and be able to say to myself, okay, I've done the best I can ... but I can stay till Tuesday and nothing is going to change. (Bess, p. 27)

Her decision to leave was prompted by watching

> ... the deterioration around me, watching myself deteriorate, watching my kids deteriorate, watching them withdraw more and more, watching them become unchildlike (Bess, p. 27).
>
> When I decided to change I knew I needed hope and determination. I knew somehow I had to believe in my own strength (Reflection on Process of Change, Aug. 24, 1997).

This decision to leave was my first realization that I had hope. At this moment in time my unconscious hope became conscious.

The escape plan. When I really did leave was probably a few months after that. All the circumstances fell into place. Everything just went boom, boom, boom. I was in the hospital in another town. I was supposed to be getting my gallbladder out. I had phoned back to make sure he was doing all right with the kids. His mother was supposed to be coming up to look after them, while I had this operation but there was no answer when I phoned home. So I phoned the bar and said, "'Is my husband in there?' They said, 'Yea' and I said 'where are my kids?' They said, 'We don't know'" (Bess, p. 58). So I hitchhiked fifty miles to get back home and I went to find my kids. Then I did the bravest thing I ever did in my whole life. I went to the bar and I stole his truck. I went to my friend's house and she told me to get the heck out of here. "We don't want you here,

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he will kill all of us. So she drove me to the bus depot and I had $20.00 and three kids and we left and we never looked back" (Bess, p. 4).

All the time we were riding on the Greyhound bus escaping from him "I kept saying, you can do it, you know you can do it. We'll do it. We'll make it" (Bess, p. 46). I had hidden enough money to get us as far as _____. He never gave me any money so it was a matter of picking his pants up by the pant legs and the change would roll out of his pockets onto the floor. I didn't steal from him by picking his pockets, I just picked up the change off the floor. I did have big plans for when we arrived at the end of the bus ride. I thought my sister would come and get me. I thought she'd let us live in her basement suite and it would all work out fine. So I remember "... I phoned my sister ... and said, 'Well, I'm here ... and she said, 'Well don't come here, I don't want you.' Reality struck with brute force. I thought 'Oh my God, what have I done?'" (Bess, p. 37). I've never forgotten that feeling. It was like the bottom had dropped out of all my dreams, "I was hanging on this plan and all of a sudden, you know somebody popped it" (Bess, p. 37). Sitting in the phone booth after I'd had my cry, I thought

> well we've come this far, you're going to do it, you'll do it. And once that got into my mind it was like, yea the hope was there, you are going to do it. You will do it and you are doing it. (Bess, p. 46)

Then I phoned his mother, told her the truth. She had seen him beat me up and throw me down the stairs. So I told her "I'm leaving ... I have to get out ... I have no where to go, can I come to your place? She said, 'No ... the kids can come but you can't'" (Bess, p. 37). So I decided to stay at one of those awful downtown hotels. It's all kind of a blur. I went to Social Services, they helped me with my first month's rent. Then I started walking the streets looking for a job. I found a job as a waitress that day, started working the next, went day by day basically.

After we left, he continued to torture me for five years. He would phone me almost weekly and say "Gee it's pretty dark when you come out of that restaurant at night

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isn't it? ... did you know it only costs $50.00 to get a knee broken" (Bess, p. 4). He threatened to take the kids away. That was my biggest fear because his parents were rich. I can remember the night he was killed in a three-wheeled bike accident. They phoned me, told me he had died. I felt instant relief, then I felt guilty, because I didn't feel sad. I felt only relief. After that I could concentrate a lot more on our lives rather than just merely surviving.

Experiences of Hope Through the Lens of Change

Seeds of Hope

The development of Bess's hope involved relationships with other people. Her doctors provided the "little pokes of reality" (Bess, p. 3), some friends provided unspoken support by just being there, but it was her mother's spoken words that gave Bess the belief that change could happen and choice was possible. "Don't worry, just don't listen, you can do it, you'll prove it to him ... you'll do it, you'll be okay, you'll do it" (Bess, p. 35). Her hope came from feeling a part of nature because so much of her safety depended upon being able to walk quietly in the grass and to hide in the trees.

Movement from the Precontemplation Stage to the Contemplation Stage of Change

An identity crisis preceded her experience of hope. Bess had begun sleeping with a gun under her mattress knowing full well that she had every intention of using it, if her husband hit her one more time. "I thought my God what has happened to me. I was a nice person, where am I ... I didn't even know who I was any more" (Bess, p. 3). She would willingly commit murder or suicide to escape the insanity of her circumstances. Bess remembers this reality check. It "was the start of my thinking that I had to go. When I really did leave was probably a few months after that ..." (Bess, p. 3). This crisis represents Bess's culmination of her contemplation stage of change. She was aware a problem existed but had found no effective means to make change happen.

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Movement from the Contemplation Stage to the Preparation Stage of Change

Her silent hope was precipitated into conscious awareness by a crisis, the death of her mother. The existential meaning of life came into question. In the anguish of her grieving Bess said to her sister, I'm going to leave, I will get out of here. This "will to live" sprang forth in answer to her existential questioning and gave birth to Bess' experience of hope. It was this experience of hoping that moved Bess into the preparation stage for her lifestyle change to happen. The verbalized statement to her sister that she was going to leave her abusive marriage became a commitment to action.

> I used to write it to my mother, but somehow writing isn't the same as saying something out loud ... like once you say something out loud, you've said it ... my sister is a very doubting person so to me it was almost like a proving thing. (Bess, p. 20)

Bess's hope flourished. The means for finding ways to leave this marriage was simply a matter of waiting for the right time. Voiced hope prompted her decision to leave. She knew she would do it. It was a 'fait de complet'.

Hoping gave Bess the impetus to change. She fortified her new found hope by talking to her children as they slept "... and making promises to them ... we'll get out of here, we'll get out of here" (Bess, p. 33). She could not develop a specific plan but she was sensitized to waiting and watching for an opportunity to escape. Clear thinking and planning small steps such as having a duplicate car key cut, shaking the loose change from her husband's pant pockets all represent the Bess's preparation stage of change.

Movement from the Preparation Stage to the Action Stage of Change

As Bess experienced a change in self she was able to clearly recognize the correct circumstances to escape this destructive lifestyle. Armed with hope, Bess was psychologically prepared to risk. The correct circumstances happened when Bess needed to go the hospital for surgery in another town. She phoned home after arriving at the hospital and found out that there was no one babysitting her children. Her husband was

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in the bar, again. She knew he would be there for hours. The time was "right". The cons to stay in this relationship outweighed the pros to stay. Bess hitchhiked back home, stole her husband's truck, found her children, boarded a bus and left, bound for a new life.

Elaine

A "Storied" Life

Researcher's Reflections

Elaine was so eager to be a participant in this study. She had even phoned me to check on the potential times that we could meet to be sure she wasn't working. She had lived through an abusive marriage, had been addicted to alcohol and drugs and estranged from her family of origin because she couldn't make her marriage work.

I first met her at the hospital where she was doing a practicuum for her nursing diploma. We sat outside on a picnic table in the sun. I felt like my interview was slipping away because she was offering so much information in our first meeting. She was so open and giving. I wished I had brought my tape recorder. Later, when I went over to her house I noticed the many flowers in the yard. It amazed me how someone could be a college student, a nurse, a wife and obviously a gardener all at once. When she greeted me she apologized for the mess at the back door. I really didn't see much out of place. She explained that they were just getting ready to go away camping for their holidays. I had come to drop off materials for her to finish prior to our interview. She said she wasn't sure she had enough time to complete this task before her holidays. However, she wanted to do the interview before she left because she felt it was very important. She stated she would complete the written portion during her holiday when she had more time. I had no doubt she would do just that, so we agreed to this plan.

Journal Entry - July 23, 1997.

> I was struck by Elaine's face. How animated it was when she filled with emotion. When she was happy it lit up and blushed with life. When she was sad it drained to putty gray and went flat. Sometimes she cried. Always she was open and ruthlessly honest even when it hurt. She readily admitted her part in her own self destructiveness. It was as though this interview was a purging for her soul. She wanted to vomit out all the ugliness in her life and critically examine all the

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remains. She did this because she had to. Being a participant in this research study was an opportunity for her to recall and maybe understand her experience of hope and process of change. We were excavating her life together. She was an eager adventurer.

When I sat with her and listened to her story I kept thinking how one really never knows what goes on in another's life. How could this vibrant, vivacious, dynamic woman who sits before me have been locked away in a dank and drippy cellar with slimy toads as a kid, lead a life ensconced in drugs, alcohol and abuse as an adult, then gone on to become a model of hope?

The Life Story of Elaine

I was the oldest of four children. My family life was good until my brother passed away. I was about six years old. We lived in a lumber mill camp. My brother and I were playing, sliding down a sawdust pile. The lumber was piled on top of the hill and there was a horse and sleigh waiting to go up the hill to dump off some trimmed lumber ends. Something spooked the horses. The horses took off and the sleigh hit the lumber pile. The lumber started to rumble down the hill. I could see it coming. It hit my brother and I saw him underneath it right in front of me. It just touched my toes. By the time the guys from the mill ran over, my brother was flat and had turned all blue. I was in shock.

I was old enough to understand what had happened but I could not understand the impact it had on my mother. She yelled at me that we were not suppose to be playing on the sawdust pile. I felt it was all my fault and that I had killed my only brother. It entirely changed my relationship with my mother. She hated me. She became mean and cruel. She would beat on me with belts and lock me in the cellar for any little thing I had done. I still shudder remembering the dripping water in the basement and the slimy toads that would croak in the darkness. I hate toads.

I would sit up in the hayloft for hours and wait for dark so I could go to bed and not be bothered by my mother. All through this I kept thinking if I could only kill myself everything would be all right. I was a chronic run away. When anyone would come to visit I would beg to go home with them. I just didn't want to be there. I lived with an

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aunt and an uncle for a short time, then I moved back home. Two days after I had finished grade twelve I left home permanently.

I went to work in Banff for the summer. I met my husband that summer and that was when I started to drink. "I did everything you weren't suppose to do and everything that I really didn't want to do, ever" (Elaine, p. 7). Drinking made me sick, but I did it to be part of the gang. I was terribly jealous of my husband and if someone was flirting with him and it rubbed me the wrong way I would follow her into the washroom and tuned her in. Sometimes I would pick up her purse and coat and go drop it off in another bar. Nobody ever reported me, but I later learned that some guy went to jail, because they found a purse and coat under his chair.

Right from the start the marriage was wrong. I was five months pregnant when we got married. My husband told me lies from the beginning. He would drop me off at home after we'd gone out and then go and party with his girlfriends. I knew something was wrong but my husband would convince me of the opposite. My husband would lie all the time. I felt like I was going out of my mind.

When our first daughter was six months old he took her away from me for one month. I didn't know where she was. Later I learned she had been at his parents. We never talked about it. He would threaten to take her away again if I didn't do what he wanted me to do. Sometimes he would wire all the doors shut in the house from the outside so I was trapped inside. Other times he would lock me out and I would have to sneak into hotels or lodges to sleep on a couch for a few hours. I stole food to eat. This carried off and on throughout the marriage.

I started to wait tables to escape being home. By this time I was drinking a lot and hooked on prescription drugs. I wanted to get even with my husband so I started running around with a guy I met. I got pregnant. To protect myself and my children I got an abortion. I knew I was doing the wrong thing for the right reason. I felt so guilty about everything I did. I felt so awful. I even went to a doctor, a social worker and a

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minister but nobody gave me any answers. I wanted to take my children and leave, but I was so afraid because he would threaten to take them from me all the time. I had no money and no place to go. I trusted no one.

I would go to work at night and leave him with the kids. He would go out drinking. Finally my family called Social Services to investigate us for child neglect. We were fighting all the time. Things just got worse and worse. I was drinking all the time and he was drinking even more. The crisis came when I was diagnosed with cancer of the cervix. I thought I was going to die. "I was losing weight and I was really scared because I thought if I die what will happen to my kids" (Elaine, p. 19).

I was very sick and weak from the cancer treatments and one day I thought I would go downstairs (we lived above the store) and sit in the store just for a change. My little daughter was with me. All of a sudden the door to the store flew open and in rushed four guys with guns. They grabbed my husband and took him into the back room. Carrie ran over to me and said "Mommy, they had guns." We had a shipment of goods come in that morning. My daughter said, "They must be after the elephant daddy wouldn't let me play with." I looked at the elephant and through a small opening in the seam I saw little white packages stuffed up inside. I knew it had to be drugs. Our little import business was really just a front for drug dealing. We ducked down behind the showcase and a few minutes later the guys came out of the back room, took the elephant and left. My husband never talked about it, it never happened. "I thought, I've got to get out of here. So the next time that he goes, I'm leaving, that's it, I have to. So I had to plan my strategy" (Elaine, p. 22).

The Story of Hope

"Hope gave me the confidence, I believed in myself, to do something" (Elaine, p. 55).

Hope was not a single incident in my life. When I look back it has been scattered all through my life. Just when I needed hope the most it would pop up. Hope happened in bits and pieces all along the way. My aunt and uncle who took me in after the death of

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my brother gave me the experience that life could be lived in a different way. I never got beat up and they believed me when I said something. That gave me hope.

When I worked in Banff I lived at the hospital and one of the nuns took me under her wing. She would always catch me coming in late drunk and the next day she would say Elaine, there is a better way to live. I got hope because somebody cared about me and took the time to talk to me.

I remember feeling hope, when someone finally understood what was happening in my family. We lived in a small town and we had opened a small store. My husband had just rolled my car. We had no money and our phone had been cut off. So this insurance man came to our door with a cheque for the insurance money from the car. The guy said to me, and I can't even remember his name, here is the insurance money for your car. I don't want your husband to have a cent of it. I know the way you are living. I know you're sick, this is your ticket out of here, take it and go. Finally, "Somebody trusted me. Somebody could see what was happening and it wasn't all my fault. For the longest time I was to blame for everything that was going on up until that point" (Elaine, p. 20). I experienced hope when I thought someone understood me.

Hope popped up in the strangest places. There was a sheriff who used to come and seize items from the store. He would try to talk to me in a kind and caring way, but I was so scared it was like he was talking Chinese to me. I would go into another world. I would try so hard to hear what he was trying to tell me. One day he phoned before he came out. He said:

> I'm coming out in an hour. I have to close the store cause your husband hasn't paid any of the bills. ... you and the kids take whatever you can out of that store before I come. And he said, I didn't tell you this. I can't stand it any more, You take whatever you can get out of there, sell it and get out of there. (Elaine, p. 25)

So I took dishes, jewelry, $300.00 and an engraving machine. I couldn't leave right then but I did eventually sell everything in the bars and got enough money to leave later on.

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What gave me hope the most, was that this stranger was willing to risk his job for me. It made me feel worthy, he understood how awful my life was and he created an opportunity for things to change. I finally had some money, now how could I get the guts to leave.

When I thought I was dying of cancer I was desperate. Everyone wanted me to leave but they didn't understand. I was sick, I had no place to go and I was afraid he would take the kids. Something had to get better, so on the advice of a friend, I decided to get baptized. I went to the church at 10:00 at night. The minister said he couldn't baptize me at that time of night and I would have to take Bible classes. He didn't realize how desperate I was. I did take the classes, but I didn't learn a thing because I slept through most of them. I was getting impatient so I said, "If you don't baptize me right away, I'm taking my business elsewhere" (Elaine, p. 24). So he baptized me and the kids the next Sunday. "I thought now I know, I'm not going to hell. I've already been there. Now I'm going somewhere else, I'm not sure what it's about but it gave me confidence and hope" (Elaine, p. 25). Then I don't know if this happened or I dreamt it, but in the middle of the night, after I was baptized, I felt a warm light come over me, a hand touched me, and say everything is going to be all right. I think it was the hand of Jesus or God passing over me.

> I can remember the black, it was like tar being pulled right out of me. I remember it clearly. It was like a funnel just coming right from my toes. I felt cleansed. ... just before I woke up or came to, He said 'there will be some evil roots there that will always come back, but you will be O.K.' (Elaine, p. 32)

I got up and went outside in the middle of the night. I remember it clearly. I touched the grass as if I was doing it for the first time. I felt the wind on my face. I looked up at the stars twinkling in the sky. I went up to my children's rooms and saw how beautiful they were. I cried thinking about what an awful life they had lived. I got a real peaceful feeling and then I went inside to make a cup of coffee. My husband got out

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of bed and wondered what I was doing up at four in the morning he said, "There's something different about you. Quit looking at me. Your eyes, quit looking at me. He got really mad at me" (Elaine, p. 33). I thought something did happen to me. You can't hurt me any more. It's over. "I knew exactly what I had to do. And there was no stopping me" (Elaine, p. 33).

The Story of Change

"Without hope there can't be any change as far as I'm concerned" (Elaine, p. 54).

My decision to leave came over a long period. I first needed "to become aware of what my behaviour was like before I could change it" (Elaine, p. 55). I first realized how desperate I was feeling when I pulled a gun on my husband. He was trying to bring a bunch of his drinking buddies home late at night.

> I just said, you're not letting them into the house. And he didn't argue with me and that scared me to death because I'd gotten to the point where I was just as bad as him ... I couldn't trust myself. When I got afraid and when I got desperate I could see that I was ... who knows what I would have done." (Elaine, p. 47)

The incident that triggered my decision to leave was when I learned that my husband was a drug pusher - I found the drugs in the stuffed elephant. I knew our lives would constantly be threatened with violence and possibly death. The reason I left was because the sheriff provided the circumstances for me to act on my decision. I finally had money. I planned it out. I hired a truck and split up our furniture. I moved to another town and got a job. Everything went according to plan. He tried to come back to live with us, but it didn't work out.

After I left this marriage I knocked off alcohol for good. This only happened when I stopped going to ALANON and started going to Alcoholics Anonymous. I started taking responsibility for what was happening in my life. I didn't need prescription drugs any more because I didn't have that horrible gut ache that I had had ever since my brother died. I used to run from doctor to doctor and would go to the hospital many times

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but they couldn't x-ray the emotional pain that twisted my guts and wrenched through my life.

Experiences of Hope Through the Lens of Change

Seeds of Hope

Elaine explained the importance of relationships with others (her aunt and her uncle, a nun, an insurance man, the sheriff, a Christian friend) as being the main stream from which her experiences of hope have developed. Her well spring of hope, however, flowed from her baptism and her belief that she would now walk hand-in-hand down the road of life with Jesus. Hope gave Elaine the belief that she had a destination (future), would be protected (safety) and a peace of mind (lack of fear/anxiety) by trusting that she would always be taken care of. It was after this particular experience of hope that Elaine was able to gather the courage to become a risk taker and make change happen. Parallel to this experience of hoping a *'change-in-self'* evolved.

Movement from the Precontemplation Stage to the Contemplation Stage of Change

An identity crisis prompted Elaine's movement from the precontemplation to the contemplation stage of change. This happened when she pulled a loaded gun on her husband and said he and his drunken friends were not coming into the house. She knew she couldn't trust herself anymore. This reality check precipitated an identity crisis. Who am I? She had become what she feared most - irrational and a threat to herself and others. Paralyzed with fear, she contemplated change yet had not found the effective means.

Movement from the Contemplation Stage to the Preparation Stage of Change

It was an existential crisis that precipitated hope into her awareness. Elaine was diagnosed with cervical cancer. She knew she could die. Faced with this anxiety, she silently looked at what was happening in her life. The question what is the purpose and meaning of my life was asked. No satisfactory answer was found. She clung to life because she thought her children needed a mother. "I was really scared because I thought

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I was going to die, what will happen to my kids" (Elaine, p. 19). Finally, a Christian friend suggested Elaine get baptized, because she would have nothing to lose. Elaine agreed. So Elaine and her children were baptized more as an act of desperation rather than any deep and burning spiritual conviction. However, after Elaine got baptized the frame of reference for her life was different. Her belief system changed. She changed. Hoping was experienced as a *'change-in-self'*.

Her attitude changed. "... the simple things in life meant a lot to me all of a sudden" (Elaine, p. 43). She felt differently about her life. "It's like a strength that comes from within you ... I felt a lot of strength and a lot of hope and peace" (Elaine, p. 43). Her thinking became very clear "I knew exactly what I had to do" (Elaine, p. 44). Hope released Elaine from fear. Hope enabled Elaine to move towards the future without fear. Before her experience of hope there was no future that could be any different from the past. After she had hope she had the courage to make change happen. Elaine had moved from the contemplation stage of change to the preparation stage.

Movement from the Preparation Stage to the Action Stage of Change

A circumstantial crisis provided the turning point for behavioural action. Elaine witnessed her husband being physically threatened by drug dealers. The reasons for leaving this marriage had increased many fold. Protection of her children, personal safety for herself and a psychological readiness allowed her to be open to a critical moment or turning point to leave this abusive marriage. The preparation stage was typified by the sheriff providing the means for Elaine to take money and items to sell from the store before he legally locked the doors of this business. The sheriff also provided hope. "He was so kind ... he cared and it wasn't his job to do that" (Elaine, p. 29) "... he could have lost his job ... somebody was trying to help me" (Elaine, p. 53). Hope facilitated the movement from preparation to action. Elaine seized this moment. It was the turning point for her lifestyle change. With her experience of hope, she had the mindset to recognize a circumstantial opportunity and the psychological readiness to believe in

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herself and trust in her actions. Change occurred when all the physical means of escaping became visible and viable.

Dan

A "Storied" Life

Researcher's Reflections

His reputation of being a whirlwind, invincible and seemingly tireless preceded my meeting of him. He was the type of person that others spoke of with awe. He not only had many remarkable accomplishments under his belt, but the level to which he aspired was above that of most individuals. He was definitely a model of hope to others. I looked forward to meeting Dan.

Journal Entry - July 10, 1997.

> His energy vibrated through the room. He smiled easily and his laugh was infectious. In his eyes there was honesty, sincerity and a searching. His gaze was steady. He was open, never mincing nor groping for words. He was willing to scrutinize himself in the present and reflect on his past. He felt little need to explain, elaborate or apologize. He did question, yet was comfortable without knowing the answers. What was, was. He said, you can't live in the past and the past is not an excuse for the present. Today, is the only part of living that counts. Dreaming is important. Dreams can come true. The future is about moving toward what you want.
>
> Living is like scaling a mountain, the higher you go, the more you can see what you couldn't see before. You never arrive, you just keep going. When Dan arrives at where his dream has taken him, this goal doesn't seem quite as important as it did before. He quickly shucks off any accomplishment and diminishes its importance stating that many others have done this before him and many others will do these same things after him. He isn't sure why he does this. Dan works hard to displace his extra ordinariness. He always challenges others to do what he has done. He doesn't accept any reasons why that might be impossible, because these are all only excuses. He did it and he is just an ordinary guy. He lives by the credo, if you can conceive it, and you can believe it, you can achieve it. Dan lived up to all his mythology.

The Life Story of Dan

> Hi, I'm Dan and I'm an alcoholic.
>
> He brandishes this indelible label that he has tattooed into himself, because it is important for him to remember where he has come from. This label grounds him, reminding him he is not unique, superior to, nor special from other people. This label reminds Dan of his past. (Memos, Aug. 14, 1997)

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I was the eldest of seven children. My father was an alcoholic, an absentee parent who when he wasn't drunk on the couch at home, was out womanizing and carrying on. My mother tried to leave this marriage but how could she bring up seven kids on her own? "... my relationship with my father was never very good. It was very, very bad and he was physically abusive (and verbally abusive) - for some reason he singled me out. I don't know if I antagonized him ..." (Dan, p. 11). Everyone knew my father was being unfair, but nobody ever did anything about it.

It was confusing growing up. I never knew where I stood. There were times when I would get rewarded with a whopping big allowance for a twelve year old. Twenty dollars was a lot of money back then. A case of beer only cost one dollar and ninety-nine cents. With a case of beer I was a big man. It was easy to find acceptance into almost any group of friends. I didn't care about school so I flunked two grades. That put me two years behind my twin sister. Didn't matter much, because I socially fit in with kids a lot older than myself. I drank, smoked, did drugs. I didn't finish grade nine. I left home at fourteen. I was the "bad kid" who would turn out to be "no good", but I knew that I would prove them all, wrong - some day.

> I always knew I had to stop (drinking). I knew I couldn't go through life that way (Dan, p. 37).
>
> I knew before I moved to Alberta at eighteen that I was an alcoholic and knew that one day I would have to deal with it. I just didn't know when (Dan, p. 4).

I got through life, by the seat of my pants and I had street smarts. I could smell a phony a mile away. Still can. "I can read people ... don't sit across the table from me and make excuses because I not only used all of the lines, I have invented some of them" (Dan, p. 43). I've been there, done that, all before.

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Now, that I don't drink, honesty, loyalty, commitment and forgiveness are important to me. I don't want to be taken for granted or advantage of either. I can forgive most anything.

Like no matter what anybody does to me I can forgive them (Dan, p. 34).

I think I can appreciate people for who they are because I understood that my father was my father (Dan, p. 60).

... now I don't look back and blame anybody. Like I understand that my father did the best he could with what he had and my mother too, I think. You know, we weren't real, they're just different in the _____, the people are different, or were different in that era. (Dan, p. 11)

When I was an alcoholic I lived for today. Money was to be enjoyed today because tomorrow might not come. That was the way it was until I met my wife. "She is very level headed, very serious, very stable, knows exactly what she wants. ... I find her a lot like my mother" (Dan, p. 40) loyal, committed, hard working - honest. She likes to look after me, make my lunch, do my laundry, that sort of thing. She stabilizes me. After I met her life wasn't so confusing to me any more. I knew where I stood. I didn't realize how much my wife meant to me until I got my last drunk driving ticket one Saturday afternoon. She was devastated and disgusted, couldn't understand how someone could drink that much, be that stupid. "Well, it really bothered her that I would drink that much that I couldn't drive ... she didn't understand why I would drink to the point where I would slur my speech or stagger or act goofy" (Dan, p. 22). Her reaction sobered me up. I knew deep in my gut that if I continued to drink my wife would divorce me. "I wanted my marriage more (than alcohol) because that was the woman I wanted" (Dan, p. 48). I think that the only reason people don't change is because they don't want something bad enough (Dan, p. 34).

I think I needed a crisis to change from being an alcoholic (a destructive and meaningless lifestyle to himself and others to a constructive and meaningful lifestyle) to a

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life of sobriety. I needed the courage to risk making change. I finally got my courage when I decided to go to a Dale Carnegie course. "... that's how I read it where everything turned around" (Dan, p. 22).

The Story of Hope

"There is always a way. There is always somebody who believes in you" (Dan, p. 51).

> I got so much out of the course.
>
> ... usually people think that Dale Carnegie is to become a public speaker, when it really isn't, it has nothing to do with that (Dan, p. 5).
>
> It's really about self confidence. You get self confidence through speaking in front of thirty or forty people (Dan, p.5).

I can still remember one of the instructors.

> She was at the back of the room and I can visualize her hunched over, big smile, she had teeth like a rabbit and telling me, 'you can do it Dan'. That's all it took and I wanted to come back week after week and hear that because nobody had ever told me that in my life. Everybody told me I couldn't do it and I believed them.... I think it just took her to tell me that I could do it (Dan, p. 49).
>
> Every time, like this is ten years ago this girl stood in front of me and told me, I can do it, I can still see that and it chokes me up when I think of her.... Whenever something goes real good the first person I think of is _____. I think without her I wouldn't be here. (Dan, p. 50)

Through this experience of unconditional acceptance and ceaseless validation I came to believe that I was important, valuable, lovable and capable.

> At Dale Carnegie everything is broken down into bite size pieces, to go out and try to do this ... (Dan, p. 49).
>
> All the feedback I got was positive. Everything I did was positive, even if I failed, that was good. At least I knew how not to do it (Dan, p. 5).

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> I got so much positive attention, it was great. For some reason it encouraged me to go out every week and try to accomplish more (Critical Incident, Aug. 10, 1997).

Because _____ believed in me I began to believe in myself. Before I was scared, but now I felt like I could do anything. Change became possible. "So for me it was miraculous just to get to there.... I got so much out of the course but I had a long way to go. " (Dan, p.4). I knew I needed to make change it was my choice.

My wife's reaction to my speeding ticket plunged me into a crisis situation. I knew that the break-up of our marriage would be the price I would pay for continuing to be an alcoholic. When I went to the Dale Carnegie course, I didn't really know what I was looking for. What I got was a constant barrage of positive feedback. Someone believed in me so I began to believe in myself, that gave me hope. It was like a miracle. I had so much hope for the future that I started to do things I had only dreamt of before. I started a new business. Success bred success and soon I was strong enough to look at reality and admit that I needed to stop drinking. Hope gave me the power to change, to turn my life around.

The Story of Change

"The only reason you don't have it is because you don't want it bad enough or because you want something else more" (Dan, p. 34).

Even after I took the Dale Carnegie course I was still drinking. I'd be sitting there at the bar telling the other guys that life's not so bad guys, drinking won't help and I'd be sitting there drinking. Then I came to the conclusion

> ... that I knew about for a lot of years, that one day I'd have to deal with my drinking problem. Why I knew I would quit I don't know, I just knew, and I knew I couldn't say I was an alcoholic until the day I was ready to quit ... (Dan, p. 38).
>
> I remember the day I told my wife that I was an alcoholic ... I sat up on the edge of the bed and I was shaking I said, I'm gonna ask _____ to go to an A.A.

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meeting on Sunday night and I knew, ... before I sat up ... if I said it that I had to carry through with it (Dan, p. 39).

... the day I said I was an alcoholic and I was going to A.A., I quit and I haven't had a drink since... I've been sober for ten years (Dan, p. 38).

Experiences of Hope Through the Lens of Change

Seeds of Hope

In reflecting back, Dan recalls that his development of hope came from three sources. The first, his mother's brother who acted as a role model for what a man could be: "I still really respect and admire him ... I do have a lot of his values in me so he was a role model more than my dad" (Dan, p. 26). The second source of hope came from witnessing his alcoholic brother-in-law (who had attended a Dale Carnegie course one year earlier) move away from a dysfunctional lifestyle. "I saw a real change in him" (Dan, p. 27). His brother-in-law became successful and was in control of his life. He made Dan realize that change was possible. The third source was Dan's memory of his mother's words: "It'll be okay, and you'll be okay and everything will be okay" (Dan, p. 53). Dan knew change was possible. He knew intuitively he would change his lifestyle, but he did not change until he experienced hope.

Movement from the Precontemplation Stage to the Contemplation Stage of Change

Dan 's life had been filled with harsh messages that he was no good and would never amount to anything just like his father (a drunk and a womanizer). Dan identified a great deal with his father: "He was very physical and had a raging temper, just like mine" (Dan, p. 12). "I think I associate a lot of my thoughts with my dad ... I try not to be like him" (Dan, p. 24). When Dan got his drunk driving ticket he felt his behaviour was no different from his father's behaviour. Who was he? This question precipitated Dan's identity crisis. Was he destined to follow in his father's footsteps? It was his worst fear. He remembered the harsh reality of his own childhood. He contemplated his life and he

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knew he had a problem. He could admit this to himself but he couldn't admit he had a drinking problem to others until he had a plan to overcome it.

Movement from the Contemplation Stage to the Preparation Stage of Change

The existential crisis that prompted hope was the impending break-up of his marriage and his fear of the loss of this significant relationship. Dan knew if he continued to drink, "my wife said she was ready to leave ... I'm thinking things aren't going right ... like I wanted my marriage more than my drinking" (Dan, p. 48). On a whim, from the advice of others, Dan decided to enroll in a Dale Carnegie course. His self- concept began to change. He learned to believe in himself and trust that he possessed the power to make choices about the course of his life. One individual particularly fed Dan's experience of hope. She was a team leader who from Dan's perception was honest and genuine. She just kept saying, "You can do it".

Dan described his experience of hope as "gaining self-confidence" (Dan, p. 5). He became a risk taker. He became more positive: "I pushed myself out of my comfort zone" (Dan, p. 59). He felt energy, powerful, big. "I'm always looking for the bigger picture" (Dan, p. 60). "Like almost everything I tried that would have been scary prior to that ... I wouldn't have done, everything I tried worked" (Dan, p. 58). This change in self gave him the courage to look at what was really happening in his life and to risk change.

He mentally began to prepare himself for change. He moved from the contemplation stage of change to the preparation stage.

> ... for about a year I used to drive by the Aurora Club. That's where they have A.A. meetings downtown ... I used to drive there every morning on my way to work and it really wasn't on my way to work. It was a block of two out of my way ... I would drive by there and look ... wondering what was up there. (Dan, p. 38)

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Movement from the Preparation Stage to the Action Stage of Change

The correct circumstances evolved that allowed Dan to reach a turning point to walk up those stairs to make change happen in his life. His sister arrived for a visit. He knew that he did not want to go to an A. A. meeting alone. His sister had been sober for over a year and he admired and respected her. Dan knew that once he verbalized his intentions of joining A. A. to his wife there was no going back to any drinking. The stakes, the loss of his marriage, were too high for Dan to continue to drink. The pro's to stop drinking increased.

The turning point for change in his lifestyle came when, Dan sitting, shaking on the edge of their bed, told his wife that he was an alcoholic and of his intentions to ask his sister to go with him to his first A. A. meeting that night. There was no turning back. He needed to live with a future, not be anchored down by the past. He understood that change was possible. He realized the choice was his. After his experience of hope, at the Dale Carnegie course which precipitated his *'change-in-self'*, he felt emotionally and psychologically empowered to make change happen. Dan had a vision for the future and a belief in himself. Dan started looking at the bigger picture and he gained confidence and respect for himself as well as an understanding of others.

Kathy

A "Storied" Life

Researcher's Reflections

Kathy was a woman with an air of the unknown about her. The person who suggested that she should be considered to be a participant in this study did so because she was so proud of Kathy. Kathy was described to me as someone who had started out in life with nothing going for her, but she made it. Kathy was a quiet, reserved pillar of strength. She was a good mother. She was in the process of finishing her post secondary education. Now, she is married to a wonderful man, but it hadn't always been this rosy.

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Journal Entry - Sept. 14, 1997.

I notice her out of the corner of my eye. She sits unobtrusively in a corner of the small room, listening with interest to the conversation. Her eyes are somewhat downcast, not in a coy or coquettish way and not because she appears to be uncomfortable. It is simply her respectful way of listening to the speaker.

After a short and hurried conversation everyone leaves the room. She and I are alone. My mind races. I wonder, if this is the woman who my friend spoke about, who she felt would be perfect for my study. Could this be the woman who's phone number I tried to find and could not? Could this woman be the psychiatric nursing student who was supposed to be doing her practicuum in the hospital, but when I inquired on the ward of her whereabouts no one had seen or heard of her? What could possibly be the chances of such a coincidental meeting when I am a doctoral student working part-time on a different ward and this is to be my last week on this unit.

I clear my throat to speak. "I haven't met you before, my name is JoAnne Keen." She smiles. I jump the gun. "Is your name Kathy ?" "Yes." My heart pounds. "Are you a psychiatric nursing student doing your practicuum here?" "Yes." I can feel myself flush with excitement.

I launch into a rather abbreviated and disjointed explanation of my doctoral study and why her name has come up as a possible co-researcher. I don't want to put her off, by making her feel rushed into something she doesn't fully understand. I only would like to get together again so that I can more thoroughly explain my research interests, outline the methodology, review the time commitment, explore the ethical considerations, answer all her questions and then pop the question - Would you consider being a co-researcher with me in my study? But I am excited.

What a coincidence! I say that to Kathy. She smiles slowly. I feel heady and brave. Out pops the question. Would you be interested in being a co-researcher with me in my study? Without hesitation, she answers, yes. I am bowled over that she would answer that quickly. I ask her why she has agreed so readily to participate in my study. Kathy quietly explains to me "That's one of my beliefs, if something comes my way, I accept it. I don't believe in coincidences".

The Life Story of Kathy

I was the fourth child in a family of eight children. I had two families - the family I was born into and the family I grew up in. I was born on a reservation. Life at home on the reservation went by in a blur. The strongest memory I have of my birth family is one of never being together. I remember the tension. My mother and father fought a lot. My father was drunk a great deal of the time. When he was drunk he beat my mother. I never saw it happen but I remember the screaming voices and the sickening thuds. I don't think I was abused in any way, but it might have happened.

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> ... we were told that there were incidents [of abuse]. I don't know if it was relatives ... I don't recall although I still feel like there was something like incest ... I don't feel a need to deal with it myself ... until I want to. (Kathy, p. 4)

I remember happy times too. Like when my mother would take all of us children berry picking or when my father took us to buy our first car. My mother left us when the last one was ten months old. She just couldn't take it any more. My father worked far away from the reservation so we children were farmed out to whoever would look after us. Soon Child Welfare stepped in.

> I remember distinctly a long blonde haired lady, very fast spoken, picking us up, taking us into a car. Putting my little brother, who was just a baby at that time, in my hands and told me that I had to be grown up. I will never forget that. To this day I wonder why she would have said that to me. (Kathy, p. 7)

I stared straight ahead at the glove compartment. We, the five little ones, were taken to a temporary home, then we all went to our foster parent's farm.

The farm was a good place to live. There was always food on the table and lots of animals to play with. Our foster mom and dad took care of us and we respected them a lot, but no one pretended this was a parent/child relationship. "She knew we weren't her daughters ... without words I felt this ... there was an understanding" (Kathy, p. 8). There were little things that happened. My second youngest sister needed a lot of affection. She tried to crawl up on our foster mom's lap, but our foster mom would put her back down and say "I'm not your mom.' You know, we were told to call her mom, but she wasn't our mom so right away there was this, only so far " (Kathy, p. 9). Obedience was mandatory and activities were very restricted.

> The thing that kept me going around that time too was the fact that I honestly believed we were going to be taken back to our parents ... it never happened though ... I hung on to that for a long time. (Kathy, p. 7)

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I simply waited. Relatives would come and visit. Our father even came a few times to visit us. My mother never did. I waited for eleven years.

The Story of Hope

Hope is "finding out who I am - in order to find out where I fit in" (Kathy, p. 17).

When I look back over my life I believe that it has been flecked with hope. What I'm beginning to understand is that all the experiences I've been involved in I needed to go through. It was meant to be. Everything, otherwise, would have been too much of a coincidence and I don't believe in coincidences.

I first realized I had hope when, " I started rebelling (as a teenager). I heard myself and I was. I had actually done something even though what happened ... wasn't necessarily good, but I knew I had touched something" (Kathy, p. 32). I had been asked to keep the basketball team statistics for all the home games. I was thrilled. I had already told the school that I couldn't go on any road trips, because my foster parents didn't want the children to go anywhere. That was O.K. with the school. It wasn't every Saturday and my friend's parents would pick me up and bring me home from all the basketball games. My foster mom and dad said no. I got really mad. I got smacked on the side of the head and threatened with being sent away to another foster home, but I couldn't stand it any more. I needed to be acknowledged. "I felt like I wasn't there and I needed to be there" (Kathy, p. 38). I knew I was doing the wrong thing but I had to. "There was no way, when I did do it the first time. I could not stop myself. It happened" (Kathy, p. 33). I didn't like breaking the rules. I felt bad but I felt strong and it was me. I finally had a voice. "I didn't have fear after that. I think I went back to being quiet again but it was different" (Kathy, p. 34). The reaction I got wasn't good but it made it easy to make a plan because I became more vocal. The bickering was constant until I moved out and went to live in a room and board situation.

At other times in my life, my friends' parents gave me hope. My friends would tell their parents what was happening in our home and their parents were concerned

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enough to call the school to find out what all the trouble was about. "... I had never met these friends' parents ... the fact that this friend's mother was concerned enough to call, just knowing that there was a way" (Kathy, p. 14), that people understood and cared gave me hope. The principal did look into what was happening in our foster home because we never wanted to go home. Nothing ever changed though.

Even before I could understand, I knew inside of myself I needed to feel connected to something or someone, thus my decision to have a child was "I believe intentional but unplanned ... I did not know what would happen in the future" (Kathy, p. 2), but I believed what would happen in the future could be better than what was happening now. Having my son was my way of expressing my hope. I drew strength from the belief that I knew I could be a good mother. Later on I was called to act on that belief, when I became involved in a physically abusive relationship, but I never could have done that without my spiritual beliefs.

After the birth of my son I knew I had to change my life from drugs and promiscuity. In my search for answers I began to go to church. I never went to church as a child, but when I felt frustrated and defeated I would sometimes pray, to an unknown God who seemed to have closed ears. As an adult "in the Christian church I was given a script (printed prayers) to pray with" (Kathy, personal communication, Nov. 14, 1997). I met nice people and it was a mental break but, "it wasn't until I started talking with the native people that I realized that I had to know who I was in order to find out where I fit in" (Kathy, p. 17). In the native healing circles the words of prayer came from my heart" (Kathy, personal communication, Nov. 14, 1997). It was a place where I was free to be me. I learned my life was a journey filled with meaning and purpose. All of the things that had happened in my life were meant to be. I just needed to open my ears, my head and my heart to understand why I am here. For me, hope is feeling

> more connected ... I'm not just living here, I'm here for a reason (Kathy, p. 19).
>
> ... when things either were just devastating or when they seemed like they

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were just continuing and never ending ... Hope would come all of a sudden ... it was unexpected and it just changed things. (Kathy, p. 32)

For me the experience of hope was about feeling connected to all life. I began to feel hope when I began to understand who I was. I began to understand hope when I attended a Native church. In this native community, I did not have to bear the burden of being a single mother nor was I stigmatized for being of aboriginal descent. I did not have to waste my energy nor squander my time trying to fight for or against something. I had nothing to prove, nothing to hide. I could just be and that was okay.

In such an accepting atmosphere, I began to really look at what was happening in my life. Without fear or expectation, I could step out and face my past. With openness, I began the journey of finding out who am I and how do I fit in. With trust, I began to live as though I had a future. This experience of hope opened my eyes and ears to what was happening in the present. I could see things that were going on in my common law relationship that were not right, but before I had hope I did not have the courage to act.

The Story of Change

"The turning point I think was when I thought he has hurt me but ... my son's not being hurt" (Kathy, p. 22).

I had left this abusive relationship a million times before. When anger and the violence were directed toward me by my alcoholic partner, I kept making excuses for him. I thought I was doing the "right thing." I believed my son needed a father figure and so I had to prove that I wasn't giving up on the relationship. For a very long time, I ignored how I was feeling inside. "Through the years of being in that relationship, I lost a sense of who I was" (Kathy, p. 2). For me, there was a build-up inside. I kept telling myself "it's wrong, it's just not right, you don't beat on your partner, because that's how you feel for the day" (Kathy, p. 21).

Then came the day when we were having one of the days where I couldn't figure him out and I didn't know what was coming next. I just was doing what I was

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> doing and he (her partner) came around the corner. I saw my son bring one of his favourite toys up to him. He had been drinking for days ... this day he didn't have what he needed I guess, and I wasn't going to get it. My son brought him his toy and said Dad, could you fix it? ... this man took the toy and ripped it almost completely in half, I remember seeing cloth flying. It was almost like an explosion and the look on my son's face. That was the day I decided that's it. (Kathy p. 22)

My mind was clear. "He's hurt me, he's not gonna hurt my son ... it burned me, I'll never forget that" (Kathy, p. 24). I needed to take a stand up for what I believed in. I needed to be heard. I was not afraid. I knew what I needed to do.

The escape plan. "I knew I was going to be leaving but I wasn't going to be leaving the way I did before" (Kathy, p. 23). After taking my son into the safety of his bedroom to cry, I heard my partner ranting and raving in the next room. "He wanted me to go get the alcohol. I told him no. I knew that a beating was coming next" (Kathy, p. 23). I told my son, not to come out of his room and I shut the door. My partner grabbed me by the neck and threw me up against the wall. I decided not to fight back. I would only try not to get hit when he started throwing things at me. He let me go, when I said that I would go get his alcohol. Instead, I ended up phoning the police. The police came and my son and I went to a safe house. "I never went back but I remember walking out, looking at him and I said this is the last time and just the look on his face, he wouldn't say anything. So it was final" (Kathy, p. 23). When I finally did go back to get a few things, the locks were changed. I was only able to get my son's bike because it was in the backyard.

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Experiences of Hope Through the Lens of Change

Seeds of Hope

Kathy's hope was seeded from other people's concern for herself and her siblings. As a teenager, her friend's parents cared enough about Kathy, not wanting to go home, to have the school principal investigate what was the reason for this problem.

Another experience of hope sprung from giving voice to what was in her heart and on her mind. She challenged her foster parents with what she perceived as injustices towards herself and her siblings.

It was, however, the teachings of her native spirituality that made hope visible in her life. Kathy began to live with hope when she developed an understanding of the interconnectedness of all life and accepted that her life is a journey of discovery about who she is and how she fits in. With acceptance of this perspective, Kathy began to believe that her life had purpose and meaning. She began to respect herself. Nothing was a coincidence. She knew that what had gone on before in her life was meant to be and what was yet to come would happen for a reason. Secure in this knowledge that her life would unfold as it should be, gave Kathy the confidence that there was a plan or reason for her life. She experienced a sense of freedom and peace. Cradled in the crux of this paradox, structured beliefs gave her personal freedom and safety. Kathy became aware of her hope.

Movement from the Precontemplation Stage to the Contemplation Stage of Change

Kathy's life fluctuated with great upheaval. After leaving her first foster home, she went to board with an alcoholic family. Life with this family was an emotional roller coaster. She retreated behind closed doors and lived in the safety of her bedroom. Finally, her dream came true. Kathy and her siblings went to live with their birth mother. Wrought with guilt of having abandoned her children as they were growing up, their mother could not reconcile the past to appreciate her children in the present. This reunion was a bitter disappointment to Kathy. It was another shattered dream. Kathy had

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difficulty understanding how a mother could not love her children - not want to have them around. Kathy left. This identity crisis precipitated the question, who am I? She had no family and no support. She felt adrift, alone, and afraid. She felt cut off from others and cut out of life.

Kathy became involved with the "wrong crowd". Drugs and alcohol were her escape. She moved from this precontemplation stage of change to the contemplation stage of change when she got pregnant. Kathy believed that getting pregnant was an unconscious act directed toward making change happen in her life. "It was intentional but unplanned" (Kathy p. 2). Change was foisted upon her. In her struggle to find her own identity she brought her son into the world. At eighteen, she could now identify herself as a mother. The birth of her son gave Kathy a "taste of hope" but it only served to change her role in life, not the direction.

Movement from the Contemplation Stage to the Preparation Stage of Change

In her new role as mother, Kathy was happy and conscientious. She entered into a common-law relationship, one of the reasons being that she felt her son needed a father figure. Too late she realized this relationship was abusive. She began the yo-yo ritual of leaving when the abuse became unbearable and coming back when the heat died down. The belief that her son needed a father figure and the reinforcement of good sex with her partner, locked her into this "destructive" pattern.

> I believed I was doing the right thing and I was gonna stick by it (Kathy, p. 21).
>
> ... through the years of being in that relationship, I lost a sense of who I was so at the end of it I had to turn around and figure out who I was again (Kathy p. 2).

Kathy was aware that problems existed but her life was still in turmoil. Her search for meaningful change led her to explore spiritual pathways. She experienced hope when she understood the teachings within the native tradition - respect for all life,

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the need to live in harmony, etc. Unconditional love and nonjudgmental acceptance laid the groundwork for Kathy to become conscious of her hope.

Her self-confidence grew. Her self-esteem increased. She knew she was moving forward. She experienced a *'change-in-self'*. She could now risk being open to new learnings. Her spiritual beliefs supported the understanding that all the experiences she had gone through were meant to be. Her life was a unique journey. There were no coincidences. Her self-image changed. She was growing into the person she was meant to be. She did not have to search for hope, her life was a journey of hope - the discovering of who she is and how to live in harmony with all living things.

Movement from the Preparation Stage to the Action Stage of Change

This *'change-in-self'* gave her the courage to be honest and realistic in the present. She was stuck in an abusive relationship and destructive lifestyle. Kathy was emotionally prepared to act. Her thinking shifted from making excuses for her common-law partner's abusive behaviour. There was no rational way to explain his cruel behaviour to her son. She feared losing her relationship with her son. She was forced to ask herself, what sort of a mother was she, if she couldn't protect her only child.

This shift in her thinking became the turning point for change in her behaviour. Change was possible only if she acted. The choice was hers and she knew it. She moved from the preparation stage of change to the action stage when she believed her child might be being harmed. The pros for leaving this destructive relationship outweighed the pros for staying. When the circumstances were right, Kathy acted quickly and without question. She left this destructive lifestyle, never to return.

Phillip

A "Storied" Life

Researcher's Reflections

Phillip was not hard to find. I presumed models of hope should be fairly visible in the public eye. Phillip was visible. He had been very vocal about aboriginal rights across

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the nation. His own life of turmoil and trauma had been recorded in the public archives for the information of future generations. He was a government official working on programs to benefit all children and families. He was especially sensitive to the native perspective and wanted to make sure that aboriginal values and experiences were taken into account in any future government programs.

I did want an aboriginal person to participate in my study, but the name Phillip Thompkins didn't sound very native to me. The first time, we met briefly in his downtown office. I was late - went to the wrong building, then I couldn't find parking. It was raining and I was drenched. The first time I laid eyes on Phillip I was surprised how big he was. Tall and large with a long braid down his back. I started to apologize profusely, because I was late. He stopped me midsentence, tilted his head to one side, folded his hands across his belly, leaned backwards in his chair and in a soft spoken voice he said, "If you could have been here on time you would have been. You had good reasons for not being here and I accept them without explanation or question." I was silent. The next half hour was spent with me explaining my research into hope and change with Phillip, to see if he might be interested in being a co-researcher. At the end of our time together he said,

> In my culture there is no word for hope, but I am interested in what you are doing and I believe that when I am spoken to by the great mystery I need to listen. It is how I know what I need to learn. Yes, I will be part of your study, but first go to the Archives in the museum there are audio tapes in the library of my past life. After you know about the events of my life I will share my story with you. (Journal Entry, Sept. 22, 1997)

I went forthwith.

Journal Entry - September 29, 1997.

> I went to Phillip's house on time this time. I had even scouted it out earlier in the day so that I wouldn't get lost and be late. He was still eating dinner with his wife, so I was shown into his den. I sat and surveyed his clutter. The fragments of his life - the drawings, the musical instruments, the feather thing in the corner,

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the pictures of his children, everything had a musty quality in the twilight of this evening. When he came into the room he brought me strange tea, that we drank through a cinnamon stick and he drummed me his song between the words on his tongue.

My life has been spent clearing away the smoke between this world and the other. Every moment of my life embraces the past, the present and the future. Time does not exist. Space is an illusion. I am one with creation. There is no one part of me that can come out. I am - body, mind, spirit and emotion. I strive to live with all things in harmony. Each day I live, I listen, I learn. I stand on the edge cradled in the arms of the great mystery. He told me his 'Indian name' it meant - a voice that will be heard all over the universe.

I later found out his name was Phillip Eagle Feather-Thompkins.

The Life Story of Phillip

My birth mother was a full blooded plains Cree Indian. Her family had moved from Manitoba to follow the fur trade. She was just finishing nursing assistant school in Edmonton when she got pregnant with me. She was a single mother. She knew she could not take care of my needs very well. So she only kept me ten days to register me as a treaty Indian, then she put me up for adoption. Giving me up for adoption was an act of love. It was the most selfless thing she could do. She knew she wasn't going to be there to bring me up so she insisted that I be adopted by somebody who was a preacher, because then I would be brought up with some moral basis in life. "So actually she grew me up pretty good for somebody that wasn't around" (Phillip, p. 18).

My birth dad was an Italian immigrant, right off the boat from Italy. We have absolutely nothing in common. He became a right wing political candidate. I don't share his political views, his values or his spirituality. I did inherit his hairline and his spicy palate. I would die if I had to exist on bland Indian cooking.

I was in foster care for two years before going to my adoptive parents' home. I remember being taken away. "I was looking out the front window, standing in my crib, it was the height of the day, bright sunshine, I will always remember those two social workers walking up the front walk" (Phillip, p. 4). In hindsight, I associate a lot of terror and fear with this memory. I think I have a tough time with bonding experiences because I figure if anybody loves me they will ultimately leave me. Now I have come to

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understand that life tends to be a series of losses. Not a very positive way of seeing the world but it's true in a lot of ways. "... ultimately you lose your childhood, lose your parents, etc. There are certain losses everybody goes through" (Phillip, p. 6).

I went to live with my adoptive parents and for seven years I remember a stable, loving, supportive, safe, fun environment. I remember the big old tree I used to climb. I was too small to climb up it. My dad pounded blocks of wood into the trunk to make steps for me to reach the bottom branches. Mother used to run indoors because she couldn't stand to see me go up so high. She was afraid I'd fall and hurt myself. Me, I wasn't afraid. I'd go way up to the top. I could look right down into the chimney or sit back and watch the whole world. I remember the day they cut that big beautiful pine tree down. It was around the same time my dad had a nervous breakdown. Everything changed after that. We moved from town to town and finally my folks split up. After that I moved with my mom and Grandpa to Victoria. I started going through some of the shenanigans of having come from a broken home. I acted up. I acted out. Finally Grandpa said,

> Christ boy, why don't you grow up and start acting like a white man, I snapped back at him 'I ain't no white man', and then I couldn't take it back. It really cut me adrift, like I didn't have anything to tie myself down to. (Phillip, p. 7)

I had my family history with my adoptive parents, but they always referred to me as their little Italian boy. They never said it was unacceptable to be an Indian, but it was understood. I became very aware of my browness and I felt a restlessness. Some day I knew I would search for my blood roots.

I have always been a defender of the weak. When I was young I was always mouthing off. Whenever we moved into a new neighborhood, I would establish myself by taking on the local bully first. I've always been physically large so I could walk up and lay them out quite easily. Finally, everybody turned on me and I was tired of being the whipping boy. At fourteen, I wasn't playing in the parks any more. I hit the streets

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and was in the bars. I was a scraper and street fighter. I drank heavily, did drugs and was pretty lost. I missed my teenage years, because I was hanging around an older crowd. Everyone thought I was a lot older and assumed I knew my way around, but I didn't. It was a very confusing time.

The Story of Hope

Hope is like "being held in the great mystery ... I know I will be taken care of. I just know it" (Phillip, p. 12).

I had a real good friend, _____. We were buddies all through school. ____ was always looking out for me. _____ talked the Junior High principal (who hated my guts because I was a troublemaker) into getting rid of me by graduating me. So the principal arranged for me to take all mickey mouse courses and gave me credits for those as though they were academic courses. That's how I graduated into high school. In high school, I knew that I wasn't going to be going the academic way, so I tried to get into Automotives. It was the most popular non academic course. I tried to get in but I was too late. Like a lot of other guys who couldn't get into Automotives, I chose the next easiest course I could find, that was Sheet Metal. I thought I would be able to breeze through it. That's when I met _____. The first day of class he welcomed us and told us we were in for a rude awakening if we thought we would breeze through this course. I thought sure, sure. By the end of the class, he had made Sheet Metal sound kind of interesting, so I was kinda looking forward to it. As the class was leaving _____ called to me,

> 'Thompkins come out to the shop. I want to talk to you.' And I was kind of standing there looking that a way and he just hauled off and kicked me square in the ass, literally - hard! I'm just about ready to kill him. He looks me square in the eye. He's this far away. He says,' Thompkins your reputation comes here long before you. I won't put up with this bullshit at all. You have one week to

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> prove to me that you can do this, otherwise, I will get your ass kicked all the way out of this school, and personally, I don't believe you can do it. (Phillip, p. 14)

I was flabbergasted. Completely speechless. There was absolutely nothing to do and I thought you screwy old man I'll show you. "It was an incredibly powerful experience for me" (Phillip, p. 13). I ended up passing his course with straight A's and he became a surrogate father to me. He believed in me. He saw my potential. He knew how to motivate me because I rose to his challenge. You see I'm really a warrior at heart. Do you know the difference between a warrior and a soldier? "... the soldier is told to fight and does it. A warrior chooses when and when not to fight. ... the wise man will avoid the fight ..." (Phillip p. 4). I am not a wise man, but I know wise men.

One of my times of greatest "hope" came to me when I was at war with my drug addictions. My friend, _____, saw me getting more and more hooked on narcotics. I was to the point of mainlining junk. He saw me going downhill real fast. My friend said,

> Phillip this is bullshit. You can't be doing this, you'll die. I won't sit here and watch. So he got a couple of bottles of whiskey, a whole truck load of candy bars and we sat over on _____ Island in this pup tent until I quit shaking. (Phillip, p. 11)

I always knew I could go home to my adoptive mother's home, because she gave me such unconditional love. So after the dry out on _____ Island I phoned her to see if I could come home. She always said "It does not matter what you do, I will always love you and you'll always have a place to come home to" (Phillip p. 11). So I went home to start again. My mother gave me hope.

I started to search for my cultural heritage after that, to find out who I was. I remember meeting my birth mother for the first time. I had contacted a parent finders agency and for fifty bucks and permission for a series of phone calls they would conduct a search. They asked me how much I wanted to spend on phone calls so I gave them an

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amount and in ten minutes they phoned back. They had found my mother. She had been looking for me too. I couldn't believe it. It was around the time that my first son was to be born. My mother and I planned to meet at a campground. When I arrived at this meeting place, a shortish, plumpish, native woman with curly hair started walking towards me. I was feeling a little uncomfortable when she grabbed me and hugged me. "Then I had the most amazing experience because I knew this woman was my mother because I recognized her heartbeat, that's the only way I can describe it" (Phillip, p. 19). In that year I found my blood family and felt a part of something bigger.

Yet my own family was suffering. My first born son died and then a few years later my wife left with my other sons. I sought out alcohol and drugs again. It was the lowest time in my life. I raged at the Creator to give me a sign. I needed a sign to show me I was worthy, to give me direction in life. I decided that the sign should be some Indian artifact. I stumbled around looking for something significant, like an arrowhead or stones on the harrow, etc. After half an hour of searching, waiting and stumbling around I was about to give up in bitter disappointment. At that moment, a five year old child yelled out from the window of a passing car, "Look momma, there's an Indian" (Phillip, personal communication, Aug. 6, 1998). This child's uninhibited statement of the blatantly obvious made me realize

> ... that what I was searching for was inside of me, it suddenly came to me. I can demand nothing. If it was meant to be mine, I will have it. If the Creator wills it, it will be done. Imposing my will is fruitless, because I don't understand the great mystery. (Phillip, personal communication, Aug. 6, 1998)
>
> You see there is a paradox in my own mind as far as being able to trust the great mystery and also to be afraid, you know, not trusting at the same time (Phillip, p. 15).

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It's like one of those phrases "when you are in the presence of paradox you're more than likely in the presence of truth" (Phillip, p. 15). Hope for me is knowing that I am being held in the arms of the Creator.

The Story of Change

"The time came when the pain it took to let go was less than the pain it took to hang on"

(Phillip, personal communication, Aug. 6, 1998).

Change happened in a pretty straight forward way for me. When things got pretty bad, I always knew life could be better. Like when I went on welfare, got kicked off, worked at a job, for seven bucks an hour, drank away all the money I made each day, got into fights, woke up the next day and did it all again. Finally, I woke up one morning in a fleabag hotel with a pounding headache in a room that smelled like a pulp mill. It was ninety degrees outside. There was only creamed corn and Kraft dinner in the cupboard. This could be better. I have always been led

> ... to the edge of the abyss ... and something has always sort of reeled me in before I got myself killed ... there was always divine intervention ... it has to do with going to the abyss and being pulled back. (Phillip, p.12)

I finally gave up hard drugs when the woman I thought I would marry talked me out of buying any more. I moved off the streets when someone drove by me and took a couple of gun shot blasts at me. They thought I had squealed to the narcs and they were going to kill me. I really didn't want to die so that stopped me dead in my tracks (figuratively speaking). I didn't go back to the streets.

My life has had many ups and downs. When I did the Significant Life Events Chart I realized the theme of abandonment that has runs all through my life. "It must be the fire that tempers this steel" (Phillip, personal communication, Aug. 6, 1998).

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Experiences of Hope Through the Lens of Change

Seeds of Hope

Phillip's first experiences of hope happened in his adoptive family. His adoptive mother gave him unconditional love and his clergyman father preached love with action not empty words. Close friends through acts of caring, and a teacher who believed in Phillip, grounded his hope. In the present, Phillip's hope resides in his relationship with the Creator. Phillip never worries about the future because of his beliefs that life will unfold as it is meant to be. This thought gives him comfort, peace and hope.

Movement from the Precontemplation Stage to the Contemplation Stage of Change

Living in a family with a different racial background was confusing for Phillip because he was continually confronted with being who he was not. His father preached that it did not matter what colour a man's skin was, "... if you're green, purple or blue, everybody is all the same and that's fine if it's in the community, but my father had no concept of what it was like to be different" (Phillip, p. 17). Phillip intuitively understood that "it was unacceptable to be an Indian" (Phillip, p. 20) since his adoptive family only referred to him as their little Italian boy. This message psychologically cut him adrift from his adoptive family. With this identity crisis he became more aware of his differences and started searching for who he was. He tried in all the wrong places. Finally, drunk on alcohol, hooked on drugs and living a life on the fringes of society Phillip decided he had a problem. He moved from the precontemplation stage to the contemplative stage of change.

Movement from the Contemplation Stage to the Preparation Stage of Change

Existential crises and experiences of hope have been sprinkled throughout Phillip's life. The first experience that precipitated Phillip questioning the meaning of life was the tragic death of his first born son. In that year Phillip watched his baby boy die in his mama's arms and for all his size, strength and toughness he could do nothing. Phillip felt powerless and all alone. A few years later, his wife and other children moved away.

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Phillip again felt loss in his life, lack of control, abandonment and rejection. Phillip began to search his aboriginal past to find his cultural heritage. What he did find were spiritual roots.

In his duress, Phillip questioned the purpose of his life. "Who the hell am I if I can' t keep my family together?" (Phillip, Personal Communication, Aug. 6, 1998). He demanded the Creator show him an answer. Phillip had even decided what the appropriate symbols should be. There was no answer. Bitterly disappointed, he turned to leave, when unexpectedly the voice of a young child from a passing car called out the blatantly obvious. Look there's an Indian. Instantly humbled, Phillip felt hope.

Phillip knew that he did not have to search for who he was or ask questions about the meaning of his life. He was implicitly acceptable, doing what he was meant to do and being who he was intended to be. Phillip's experience of hope was an 'epiphany', a moment in time, when he felt connected to the universe, total trust in guidance from the Creator and an acceptance and belief in himself. Phillip's *'change-in-self'* moved him from questioning who am I? to knowing I am who I will be. The Creator resided in him and he in Being, as part of the infinite and the infinitesimal.

For Phillip, this spiritual experience was a profound affirmation of who he was. He would never need to worry or be afraid again. He was free and had found peace. For Phillip, "hope was being open to the Great Mystery knowing you are held in the arms of the Creator" (Phillip, Personal Communication, Aug. 6, 1998). Hope for Phillip created an acceptance that his life continually unfolds as it will be. He trusts change happens as it should. Movement from the contemplation stage to the preparation stage of change was experienced when this shift in Phillip's thinking occurred.

Movement from the Preparation Stage to the Action Stage of Change

For Phillip, the turning point for change in his lifestyle was when the pain it took to let go was less than the pain it took to hang on. This parallels Prochaska's action stage where the cons to stay in a destructive lifestyle outweigh the pros to stay. There were no

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traumatic circumstances or crisis, rather it was a *'change-in-self'* and the acceptance of a belief system that ultimately procured the decision to change into a constructive and meaningful life style. His experience of hope released him from fear, self condemnation and opened him to trust, acceptance and humility.

> Finally, I succumbed to paddling with the universe not against it. I've accepted that in the river of life you can pick your placement in the stream, but you have no choice but to go with the flow (Phillip, Personal Communication, Aug. 6, 1998).

Doug

A "Storied" Life

Researcher's Reflections

Doug was one of the very first people whom others mentioned should be considered to be a co-researcher in this study. He had been open and honest with others about his conflicted background. I knew even before I met him that he had been involved in every addiction imaginable - alcohol, illegal drugs, eating, gambling, sex, etc. He was a con artist and a drug pusher. He had been married three times. He had been a member of a street gang as a kid and a member of a motorcycle gang as an adult. He had been in jail many, many times for everything imaginable.

I knew that he was an anomaly. He had grown up in a respected two parent family from the right side of town. No alcohol, no abuse. He had been an honors student, good kid, up until grade nine, then it all went haywire. Downhill and on the wrongside of the tracks. He grew up to be a big, bad, scary dude. Then something changed him.

I had a hard time finding him because most people didn't know where he was now. They either had personally known him and verified all the horrendous stories about him or knew of him and supplied me with all the requisite mythology that shrouded this essentially wayward human being. I finally tracked him down in a city not far away. There were about fifteen D. _____'s in the city directory and there was no other way

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to track him down but to phone' em all. It would be expensive, both in time and money. After about the fifth phone call and the same number of explanatory apologies, I got a recording on an answering machine. "Hello this is Doug _____. Sorry, I am not here to take your phone call but I am interested in talking to you. Please leave your name and phone number and I will get back to you and remember every day in every way you are getting better and better." Ah, ha! I knew my search had ended. I had the right number, I'd found the mysterious Doug _____.

Journal Entry - October 18, 1997.

> I was a bit nervous meeting Doug for the first time. Everyone had painted such a bleak and terrifying portrait of his life before he became a model of hope. I had decided with my husband that he would phone after about an hour into the interview because I was conducting this interview at home, late at night, all alone. It was just a precaution, but one couldn't be too careful in this day and age could one. After all I didn't know Doug and he had been an unsavoury character, not only once but many times before.
>
> The doorbell rang. I opened it a bit slowly. In strode a big man in fairly good shape, with one of those gripping handshakes that are intended to convey openness, enthusiasm and confidence. He met my eyes straight on, with no diversion. After all the socially acceptable greetings, we sat down at my kitchen table to talk and drink tea. I still wasn't sold on this guy. A bit too slick for me with a highly polished veneer. Like the preacher who preaches in the pulpit on Sunday do not covet your neighbour's wife and is busy the rest of the week chasing anything that wears a skirt. He wasn't going to slip and slosh his way around me trying to impress me with big flowery words and an affable manner. I would listen to what he had to say, but I would be tough to impress. Why did I feel so guarded?

The Life Story of Doug

I grew up in a very ordinary family. I had four brothers and a sister. I was a model student. I won the academic and athletic awards at school. I was doing exceptionally well until I entered my teens. If I had been physically, mentally or sexually abused an explanation for the chaos in my life might have been more understandable. It might have been easier to deal with. Instead,

> I was a very good student. I would bring my report card home and my parents would look at it and my mom or my dad would say 'You know that's a really good report card but you can do better.' Now that's their way of motivating me, but

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> that's not how I saw it. What I came to accept and believe was no matter what I did, I'm not good enough and so a belief was developed around that and when a belief is developed around something like that ... we create experiences to be right about it. (Doug, p. 22)

I was thirteen when things started to go downhill. When I was fourteen, I had my first brush with the law because I was running illegal gambling out of my parent's basement. By the time I was fifteen I was pretty much an alcoholic, involved in a loosely knit street gang, constantly in fights because I kept harassing people and involved in a bit of vandalism.

I think that the reason this all happened was because I was a very sensitive kid. I cried a lot as a child. A very inappropriate thing to do for a male child who grew up in the fifties. People who had come back from the war had completely shut down their feelings because how could you be around killing and still have feelings. You can't, you'd go crazy. War is insanity. I learned that I had feelings like a woman. Not a good thing for a guy to have, so I thought I must be a queer. That was bad. So I grew up thinking about that, hating myself for having feelings. I was afraid of girls because if I was "with" one and couldn't perform then I might really find out that I was queer. So I stayed away from them.

I was also the "apple" of my grandparents' eyes. I was the first born boy in the family. I could do no wrong. I would wait for grandpa to come home from work and then we would walk over to my grandparent's house together. Then the big day came when my grandparents moved into a house right across the street from our house. "I didn't have to wait any more and I mean, this was, a heaven in heaven, big event" (Doug, p. 23) I could walk right over to their house myself, anytime. A short time later my grandfather retires and he decides to move to the city to enjoy the amenities they never had living in a small town. This little boy is crushed so he directs all his attention and energy on his mother and then she gets sick and goes to the hospital for eight months. The little boy

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learns that if you love somebody they will leave you. So throughout his life this little boy has been pushing people away.

> He gets older, he gets married. Wife loves him , doesn't fit. She's not leaving so he pushes her away, gets a divorce ... He gets married again to a nice lady, same thing happens. Gets married again, same thing happens and in the process of all this happening, somewhere along the line he also realizes one day that he does the same thing to his children. (Doug, p. 24)

By the time I was fifteen I had become pretty entrenched in my thrill seeking 'bad' behaviours. One day out of the blue I sat down at a coffee shop with a bunch of friends. This old guy comes up and sits down beside me. He starts feeling me up. I don't know what to do so I freeze. I'm really uncomfortable but I don't say anything to anyone. A couple of weeks later the old guy shows up at a party. It all happens again. Later I find out he is queer. I am devastated. Immediately I gain eighty pounds. Of course, being a drunk and overweight I never had to worry about sex again. It wasn't until I was twenty-three that I had my first sexual experience with a girl. That was when I found out I was straight. By that time a lot of damage had been done.

I had dropped out of high school. I started to smoke pot. I went from being a member of a street gang to trying to become a hippie. Did more drugs, soon discovered that if I sold drugs I could then cover the costs of my own drugs, so I started doing that. Didn't really fit into the peace/love thing so I decided to go back to the streets and joined an outlaw motorcycle gang. I became a very dedicated and committed member. Living in this place was where I felt accepted. I never really felt I had been accepted for who I was before. I always felt like an outsider. So my career as a gang member included narcotics trafficking, stealing, extortion, and physical and verbal abuse in order to collect on overdue debts. My size made me very intimidating. I spent ten and a half years in this outlaw gang, six of those years on the executive.

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The Story of Hope

"You can't have change without hope" (Doug, p. 15).

My first experience of hope came when I went through my first serious addiction to drugs. I was at the lowest point of my life "whenever things go downhill for me now I always think of that event and realize (what's happening now) is not that bad" (Doug, p. 6) I had become an IV drug user popping needles all over my body. I was in this dimly lit room and something happened. I had total mental clarity for about ten minutes.

> I looked at my arms, they were all callused up, bruised and puffy veins and I looked down and I knew that I had become what I hated the most, which was a needle freak (Doug, p. 6).

On the street these people were considered the lowest of the low. I had disgraced my family and friends. I was disgusted with my life and hated myself. It was easy to justify committing suicide. I remember mixing up an overdose. I had decided to end it all, then right in the middle of that darkness an event happened that changed my life forever and even many years later I fail to understand what happened.

> Out of the clear blue, this voice in my mind says, 'but your mother loves you' and it was so clear and so profound that I couldn't do it. It was turning point for me (Doug, p. 6).

After that some of the gang members tracked me down and locked me up for a week to dry me out and threatened anybody who tried to sell drugs to me.

The Story of Change

"When you're going through it, there ain't nothing that you can do about it except go through it. You can't change the process" (Doug p. 10).

My first experience of hope did save my life, but it did not result in profound change. I still chose to live a destructive lifestyle honoring the gang's norms of honesty and loyalty at all costs and at any price. I slipped back twice into the offal of my addictions for the thrill seeking pleasure of living on the razor's edge. It was a less

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obvious type of suicide, slower, less conscious, but much more costly because ultimately I sucked down all the others in my life with me.

To the outside world, I began making socially acceptable progress. I went back to college, got a diploma in Business. I did well, went on to university, got a degree in Commerce.

But I hadn't really changed. I had only modified my lifestyle by upgrading the physical trappings. The memories of being 'high' on drugs made my veins itch. I succumbed. My drug addictions gnawed away my better judgment and cracked the bones of my life again. I lived in an altered reality always high on cocaine, stoned on marijuana or plain stinkin' drunk.

I lost my job. I lost my wife and my family. I had a bleeding ulcer. I smoked 3 1/2 packages of cigarettes a day. Gang warfare had broken out and I had been picked up for trafficking. I faced five years in jail, if convicted, and I knew I was guilty. At thirty years old I hit another bottom, yet,

> I'd look at my arm and I always would say, hey it's not that bad. I always had that to go back to. Any time things get real tough I look at my arms and I always look down and I say, it's not that bad, and it never is. Nothing's ever been that bad. (Doug, p.7)

The police took me to jail and let me know who had set me up. They did this because they knew how the street life operated. They knew that if I knew who had ratted on me, well, I would have the squealer offed. I knew I was being set up.

> I knew where my life was going with everything that was happening and if I didn't make some changes that I would be dead. I knew there were only two choices. I either had to make wholesale change or I'd be dead and I had to accept either of those two. (Doug, p. 28)

I chose life. I plea bargained with God.

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> At that point, I knew it was either life or death. For life, I chose to say, if there is a God and I can find a way to get my life back then I would spend the rest of my life helping other people. (Doug, p. 31)

It was a very passionate commitment I made. With passion you can do things you never dreamed of. I had a mystical experience. In a dream I was sitting in the audience of an old theatre listening to a guy talk. I went to this place the next Sunday and it was just like the place in my dream. It was the Centre for _____. Then as I was sitting in the audience "I had a vision and there I was standing up there doing it and this voice in my mind said, this is what you're going to do Doug" (Doug, p. 32).

I poured all my personal and financial resources into building this church. I become a pastor. I decided to start a branch of this church in another city. I financed this venture out of my own pocket. A few years later I had to declare personal bankruptcy and I felt betrayed by my spiritual family when I found out the church treasurer had absconded with church funds. I had a nervous breakdown and needed to be hospitalized. When I went back home after being hospitalized I found out that my son had neglected my dogs so they starved to death. I kicked my son out. My son went to live on the streets. Finally, I became homeless, because I couldn't afford my condo. I moved in with my daughter, her husband and my new grandson.

Now I understand that I had been a willing participant in my own self destruction and chaotic life. I know now my life has affected the lives of many others. I believe that there is a purpose to life. Life is not predetermined but one's life is like a seed. In a seed is the opportunity for a beautiful flower to bloom if the conditions are right. "... the difference between me and a flower and you and a flower is I can create within myself the conditions that have to be right to move into it. I can create that" (Doug, p. 42).

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Experiences of Hope Through the Lens of Change

Seeds of Hope

References to the development of Doug's hope were nonspecific. Rather, he recalled all the events in his life that created uncertainty and upheaval for him. Doug remembered his relationship with his parents as being not quite living up to their standards. They were always telling him that he could do better than what he had done before. His relationship with his father had always been strained. His mother, whom he adored, got sick and "abandoned" him while she was hospitalized for a number of months. His grandparents disappointed him by moving away to the city. He believed that he learned as a kid to distrust people because if you love them eventually they will leave you. Doug thought this was the underlying belief that motivated him to get divorced three times.

As an adolescent, Doug remembers home as not safe nor welcoming. Nothing was predictable. He got a thrill out of living on the edge of society and thwarting its rules. The only place he ever felt accepted for who he was, was as a member of an outlaw street gang. Loyalty and honor were the credo of this pack, so Doug felt safe. If he lived within the norms of this group in which he could trust and be trusted. He rose to be a leader of the pack. Years later, Doug followed the same route. He found a church, felt accepted and rose to be a pastor.

The only people he ever trusted and felt safe with were his mother, some members of the gang, his ex-wife and himself. Could God be trusted? Only time would tell. In those days Doug was still sorting out the wheat from the chaff, by himself.

Movement from the Precontemplation Stage to the Contemplation Stage of Change

Doug's life has been one continuous identity crisis. He has never really known who he is. He has rollercoastered through many different personas - druggie, bookie, hippie, gang member, enforcer, college student, college teacher, university student, businessman, pastor, and personal growth facilitator. His life has been chameleon-like,

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with his 'self' lurching somewhere in the shadows just beyond his reach. On a good day, he acknowledges he is smart, multitalented, and entrepreneurial. On a bad day he is a sucker who is regularly being taken advantage of by others. Doug always knew he had a problem, but some of the "bad" stuff was fun and he was far too self-centered, compulsive, and immature to really want to make change. He had the type of personality that if he could get away with anything, he would. He never really contemplated change until he was forced to, usually by the law.

Movement from the Contemplation Stage to the Preparation Stage of Change

His first existential crisis happened when he realized he had become what he hated most, a needle popping drug addict. It was his mother's voice that gave him hope and strength to not commit suicide. A *'change-in-self'* did not occur because it was Doug's friends in the gang that rescued him by locking him up to dry out. He relied on them, and he complied with them. He gained no personal strength or belief in his own ability to help himself. No shift in thinking occurred. Change happened because of the good will (charity) of others. Doug let it happen because he knew it was for his own good. He didn't want to die. He needed to be carried for a while.

Doug's second existential crisis happened when he had lost his job, his marriage, and was once again involved in hard drugs and illegal activities. He believed that even the police were setting him up to get knocked off. He turned to God to rescue him and it was in a dream that God answered his prayers. God told him he was to become a pastor. No *'change-in-self'* occurred this time, because God rescued Doug through revelation and created an escape route from the responsibilities in his life. Personal strength was an ordination and a right of privilege so there was never any need to question one's actions. Change was a foregone conclusion when one followed divine directions. *'Change-in-self'* did not occur because it is not a cloak of station.

Doug's third existential crisis happened when he was defamed by another church pastor and barred from the church. Later, he was forced to declare personal bankruptcy.

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Major set backs occurred when Doug found out a close friend had been murdered and that his own son had betrayed him. Doug crumpled under the pressure and suffered a nervous breakdown. He felt like he was going to die. Later he learned he had developed a panic disorder. Hope came in the form of psychotropic medications and psychotherapy.

Up to this point in his life, change had always been imposed upon Doug from some outside source or pressure. He had taken little responsibility for the course of his life through the choices he had made. Now in the dark night of his soul, Doug reflected that hope came when he wallowed in the bowels of personal devastation,

> ... you go down till you've got to the bottom and then there's a spring ... there is always a choice present ... we're not aware of it ... when we reach our bottom is when we see the other choice and when we make the other choice ... that's hope. (Doug, p. 16)

Doug explained that it was this knowingness, this hope, that pulls him forward now to make change happen. He described the shift inside himself as: "After I had hope, what I would talk about was where I was going instead of what had happened to me ... what I had learned as opposed to being a victim" (Doug, p. 46). Having hope makes Doug appreciate the 'now' moments in his life. Simple and ordinary things have become important. He looks for the gift in the devastation. He sees the bigger picture. Doug stated that he has embarked on his own journey to understand himself. Doug has learned he needs to believe in himself. He explained he needs to believe in himself because God is within him and it is through God he will learn to connect with others and learn to trust again.

Doug described this *'change-in-self'* as a transformational process - a dying, a giving up of part of his personality so a new dimension can evolve. He used this metaphor to describe this process

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> ... in there is the darkness as the caterpillar gives up part of its personality so that's what I call the tomb. And then there is the womb where the gestation of the new, the birth of the new begins (Doug, p. 10).

Hope no longer eludes him. With recognition of his *'change-in-self'* process, he is currently striving to make change happen. Doug is living with his daughter, her husband and his new grandson. He has hiked seven hundred kilometers this past summer through the Rocky Mountains all alone except for his thoughts and his God. He never wants to re-visit the places he has already been.

Movement from the Preparation Stage to the Action Stage of Change

Doug believes his life is a work in progress. He hopes to maintain the action stage of change for a long time yet. He has many things to think about and changes to make in his life.

Summary of Personal Stories of Hope and Change

In summary, this chapter has highlighted the co-researchers' stories and addressed the interaction between the experience of hope and the stages of change. Chapter #5, Findings, will describe the themes of the experience of hope then explore the relationship between hope and change in more detail.

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CHAPTER FIVE

INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

Chapter Overview

The original research question for this study asked, "What is the experience and meaning of hope for people who have made profound change?" These findings will confirm the presence of hope in the process of human change. Two sets of findings will be presented. The first addresses the experience and meaning of hope for people who have made profound change; the second addresses the relationship between hope and change using Prochaska's Stages of Change Model. Together, they attempt to deepen our understanding of the role of hope in the human change process.

In the first set of findings, the experience of hoping was described ultimately as a *'change-in-self'* which happened concurrently with the experience of hoping. The experience began with precursors described as an identity crisis and an existential crisis.

The experience of hope has been described as five themes, each of which had a parallel underlying process of change. Each theme was described as a shift in thinking, feeling and behaviour. The first theme described a shift from "giving up on life" to "saying 'yes' to life." The underlying process was an intuitive response to existential anxiety that called forth an instinctual "wish for life". The second theme described a shift from believing "change is impossible" to "becoming open to the possibility of change." The underlying process was developing an awareness of differences in how others handle their lives or the realization of paradox. The third theme described a shift from the perception of "being powerless" to "becoming aware of one's strengths and potential." The underlying process was realizing I can make a difference in my own life and was described as the development of self awareness. The fourth theme described a shift in attitude from "reacting negatively" to the challenging events of one's life to "finding the positive" in a negative situation. The underlying process was learning to refocus and reframe. The fifth theme described a shift from feeling "disconnected and alone" in the

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world to feeling connected to others by "developing an understanding of the purpose and meaning of life." The underlying process was transcendence of the present. I interpretively labelled the gestalt of the dynamic in the collective themes, the *'change-in-self' process.*

Throughout the descriptions of the process of hoping, a relational component to hoping emerged, not as an integral part of the hoping experience, but rather as conditions which facilitated hoping. Past childhood experiences, present adult relationships and future spiritual relationships were reported in the data and will be elaborated upon in this first set of findings.

The second set of findings explored the interaction among the crises, the *'change-in-self'* process and the stages of change proposed in Prochaska's model Stages of Change. This interpretation described the role of hope in meaningful lifestyle change.

Findings #1

What is the Experience and Meaning of Hope for People Who Have Made Profound Change?

Most people intuitively understand that hope is important in their lives but are unable to describe, define or explicate it. Co-researchers, as part of this study, were asked, "Were your experiences of hope and process of change related at all? The answer to this question was "yes", with the exception of one person, who felt unable to answer, because there was no equivalent word for hope in his culture. This intuitive understanding was confirmed in the descriptions of their 'lived hope' experiences of hope as they underwent change. The co-researchers' identified that hope came before change.

> Without hope, there can't be any change as far as I'm concerned (Elaine p. 54).
>
> But if we don't have that hope that things can change they won't change (Bess p. 6).

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> People told me about myself, for years, there was no hope (Dan p. 63). I don't think I ever thought I was hopeless. I think I always knew that I was gonna go somewhere (Dan p. 52).
>
> You can't have change without hope (Doug p. 15).

More succinctly delineated, hope appears to be knowing that there is a path and that change is about discovering the path.

Precursors to the Lived Experience of Hope

The co-researchers' intuition, that hope comes before change, was confirmed in their personal life stories. A direct temporal relationship between hope and change was found. The context precipitating the experience of hope was one of turmoil and trauma and subsequent anxiety. Two anxiety provoking phenomena preceded both the experience of hope and the process of change - an identity crisis and/or an existential crisis. The sequencing of the interaction between hope and change appeared to be: an identity crisis, and/or an existential crisis, an experience of hope, a circumstantial crisis that tips the balance of pros to change or act differently (turning point) followed by behaviours that constitute a change of lifestyle. This sequencing will be supported with direct quotes from the data.

Identity Crisis

An *identity crisis*, typified by the question, "Who am I?" tended to happen when individuals found themselves in circumstances where they were acting in ways that were abhorrent to their sense of self. Defined usually as a "confusing" time, specific events became a catalyst for an individual's personal search for an acceptable self identity. These events usually were negative experiences that sensitized one to what one did not want to become.

> I got to a point in my life and it's always been very very clear to me. I started sleeping with a gun under my bed. I had decided if you hit me one more time I'm

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going to kill you ... I thought my God what has happened to me. I was a nice person, where am I ... I didn't even know who I was any more (Bess p. 3).

I would feel like I was going out of my mind. I would know that this certain thing went on, and yet he would convince me it didn't. Totally brainwashed. I didn't know if I was coming or going by the time I finished with that relationship (Elaine p. 13). And I couldn't stand it, I could not stand to be like that. I did not want to be that way, and I wanted to change (Elaine p. 55).

... through the years of being in that relationship, I lost a sense of who I was, so at the end of it, was when I had to turn around and figure out who I was again (Kathy p. 2).

... I'd be sitting there, you know, it's not so bad guys, drinking won't help and I'm sitting there drinking and then I came to the conclusion ... that I was an alcoholic and knew that one day I would have to deal with it. (Dan p. 4)

... my grandfather said to me 'Christ boy, why don't you grow up and start acting like a white man.' I snapped back at him, 'I ain't no white man' then I couldn't take it back ... cut adrift ... I didn't have anything to tie myself down to. (Phillip p. 7)

I had become an IV user popping needles in my arms and stuff ... I knew I had become what I hated the most, which was a needle freak ... that was considered on the street life, the lowest of the low ... I hated myself for what I had become. (Doug p. 6)

The questioning of "Who am I?" appeared to be juxtaposed with the thought "I want to be different." This awareness set the stage to begin a *'change-in-self'*. The risk to be different, or to change self, did not happen until a turn of events challenged the co-researchers to question the meaning of their existence during an existential crisis.

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Existential Crisis

An *existential* crisis was precipitated when each person was forced, through life circumstances, to anticipate ultimate separation from others. In this study, when the co-researchers were faced with the death of a loved one, fear of their own death and/or the loss of a significant relationship, the question, "What is the meaning of my life?" in the context of this trauma, turmoil and suffering, became relevant.

People exhibited anxiety in a variety of ways. Fears of loneliness, isolation, alienation, and meaninglessness highlighted this crisis. Death and/or permanent loss of a significant relationship unconsciously symbolized an extreme state where no opportunity for change appeared to exist. This stark reality was a blunt reminder that change could only happen if "I" became the subject of change and "my life" became the object of change.

> My mother's death made me realize even more how much I wanted to change my life and therefore my children's (Bess, Critical Incident - Process of Change, Aug. 24, 1997). With mom dying I knew I had to go [leave this marriage] ... I had three people [her children] I couldn't let down. (Bess p. 33)
>
> I was diagnosed with cancer of the cervix ... I was losing weight and I was really scared because I thought if I die what will happen to my kids (Elaine p. 19). I thought, I've got to get out of here. (Elaine p. 22)
>
> I always knew I had to stop [drinking]. I knew I couldn't go through life that way (Dan p. 37). My wife was ready to leave ... I knew subconsciously things weren't going right (Dan p. 47). I couldn't say I was an alcoholic until the day I was ready to quit .... (Dan p. 38)
>
> ... I was determined to make it work ... I was saying to myself I have to prove I wasn't giving up on the relationship but in the back of my mind I was saying he has to prove it and if he can't then you know [I'll leave] (Kathy p. 22). I

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knew I was going to be leaving but I wasn't going to be leaving the way I had before ....(Kathy p. 23)

I knew that what I was doing was probably going to kill me and so I decided not to die (Phillip p. 22). I'm responsible for my own doings, right, wrong, indifferent, here and now, always have been ... (Phillip p. 21).

So I knew at the time, I knew where my life was going with everything that was happening and the addiction, that if I didn't make some changes, that I would be dead ... I had only two choices .... either I make wholesale change or I'd be dead and I had to accept either one of those. (Doug p. 28)

Typically, these circumstances shed light on the co-researchers' existential aloneness and amplified their powerlessness in events that were beyond their control.

I felt completely alone (Bess p. 19) ... total isolation ... cut off from friends and my support system (Bess p. 20). I would take the responsibility to think, now how can I get him out of this, not realizing at that time, he chose that [mood] so of course nothing I was going to do would make any difference. (Bess p. 24)

I felt something had to change. I even went to the doctor and nobody gave me any answers and I didn't know what to do ... I was so afraid (Elaine p. 16 - 17). Every time I tried to talk to somebody ... they would gang up on me, that's how I felt because no one believed me (Elaine p. 18). I didn't trust nobody. (Elaine p. 27)

... scared little fellow that I was when I came in (Dan p. 5). ... only time I could associate with people was when I was drinking (Dan p. 6). If I was a friend of yours and all the friends were getting together ... well, I would somehow get a half a mickey in me before I even came ... if I didn't have half a mickey in me I really would have nothing to say ... nobody wanted to hear from me anyway, because I felt stupid and dumb ... that's just what I thought of myself. (Dan p. 7)

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> Everybody was against me ... I didn't know what was happening in the future ... I went through a period of time when I wasn't very sure of myself ... (Kathy p. 2).
>
> I watched my baby boy die in his mama's arms and for all my size, strength and toughness I could do nothing (Phillip, Significant Life Events Chart p. 3). The death of my son was my first lesson in powerlessness. Up until that point I was always able to overcome anything and there was nothing I couldn't do. (Phillip p. 24)
>
> The lowest point I've ever been in my life ... I had disgraced my friends and family and everyone around me ... so I knew that the best thing I could do was to end it all ... (Doug p. 6).

In summary, an identity crisis and existential crisis preceded the co-researchers' experience of hope. Although an identity crisis could happen more than once, it was the existential crisis that appeared to be temporally linked to one's experience of hope. It was after an existential crisis that one's hope emerged into one's awareness.

Emergence of Hope

In this study, the *experience of hope*, emerged as the co-researchers' response to feelings of anxiety - vulnerability, powerlessness, meaninglessness and latent fears of loneliness, isolation, rejection and alienation. Hope happened at a time of existential questioning that was facilitated through personal trial, trauma and suffering.

> I needed to come to crisis. I needed to come to the end of my rope. I had to walk out of there and be able to say to myself, okay, I've done the best I can ... (Bess p. 27). I didn't want any more of that, I didn't want to be scared any more. I got to the point that I didn't want to be scared. (Bess p. 28)
>
> I thought, I've got to get out of here. So the next time that he goes, I'm leaving, that's it, I have to (Elaine p. 22).

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> I'll never forget the rage I went into ... but this time, I just shut the door and told my son, "Don't come out" (Kathy p. 11).
>
> I was raging and screaming, who and what am I? I can't even keep my family together (Phillip, Personal Communication Aug. 6, 1998).
>
> When you are going through it, there ain't nothing that you can do about it except to go through it ... there is a grieving process ... devastation ... anger ... resentment (Doug p. 12).

In the presence of a moment, hope became conscious. "It [hope] wasn't conscious. When I spoke, it [hope] became conscious" (Bess p. 57). Hope happened as a slip of the tongue. "It was just as if my mouth opened and that [the idea change is possible] came out and I was stuck and I had to do something" (Bess p. 56). "... I could not stop myself, it [my voiced hope] happened so there was no stopping it" (Kathy p. 33) or an idea that popped out. "It [hope] just happened, like an intuition" (Elaine p. 42). The voice of one's hope was spontaneous and often took one by surprise.

> I guess when things either were just devastating or when they seemed like they were just continuing and never ending ... when things were down ... It [hope] would come all of a sudden ... unexpected and it just changed things (Kathy p. 32).
>
> It [hope] just happened, I don't plan ... it was spontaneous (Dan p. 55).
>
> For me there is no planning. It [hope] just comes (Phillip, personal communication Aug. 6, 1998).
>
> No planning at all (Doug p. 44). It [hope] just comes (Doug p. 15).

Hope was a force that propelled life forward. For the co-researchers of this study, their experience of hope was a *'life wish'*. Their *'life wish'* was an intuitive survival response to an existential crisis and was posited as a direct, equal yet opposite force to the inevitable and ultimate alienation of death. When faced with the prospect of choosing

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life or death (physical or spiritual) the experience of hope was an individual's way of saying 'yes' to life.

Five Themes of Hope

Five themes of hope and five parallel processes of change described the experience and meaning of hope, which accounts for the eventual change in self. These experiences of hope occurred over time and, therefore, will be referred to as hoping. As such, throughout the rest of this document, hope and hoping shall be used interchangeably. An introduction and brief discussion of the themes and underlying processes will follow. An integration of these findings with the hope literature will follow in Chapter Six.

The themes of hoping were revealed to be:

Theme #1 - Hoping is a wish for life or an intuitive survival response.

Theme #2 - Hoping is becoming open to the possibilities of change.

Theme #3 - Hoping is becoming aware of one's strengths and potential.

Theme #4 - Hoping is choosing to refocus and reframe one's experiences.

Theme #5 - Hoping is understanding life has meaning and value.

Each theme will be described using supporting evidence from the gathered data.

Theme #1 - Hoping is a "life wish" or an intuitive survival response.

During an existential crisis co-researchers experienced the spontaneity of hope and understood that, when life was threatened, hope bubbled forth from the depth of their being as a response to anxiety and fear. Hoping was an intuitive understanding, a knowingness that life must go on. Hoping meant '*I choose life*'.

> I felt at peace ... I had a secret [I was going to leave] ... I didn't have anything of my own before ... I thought more methodically, more in a planning way ... I don't think I acted differently at all ... when I got hit I had a different feeling ... a streak of defiance ... I'd think maybe this is going to be the last time." (Bess p. 58) I

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couldn't do any physical preparation, it was more psychological .... planning the other end. (Bess p. 36)

I knew inside myself, I couldn't tell anybody. I'd keep it to myself. I would just do what I had to do. There was no stopping me (Elaine p. 45 - 33). It was a great urgency, I've got to get out of here. I know what I have to do, I just have to do it (Elaine p. 45).

I knew I couldn't say I was an alcoholic until the day I was ready to quit and the day I said I was an alcoholic and I was going to A.A., I quit. I haven't had a drink since. (Dan p. 38)

I knew I was going to be leaving but I wasn't going to be leaving the way I had before (Kathy p. 23). I heard myself ... I had actually done something (Kathy p. 32). I had to do. I had to act ... I had to act on a feeling ... but [first] I had to throw away the idea that I'll be coming back (Kathy p. 31).

Not an expectation, just a knowingness and it [hope] was there, there was a reason, there was something there that pulled me forward ... (Doug p. 45). I believe that it [hope] is always there. (Doug p. 54)

The underlying process was a shift to saying 'yes to life' when unconscious hope came into one's awareness. This spontaneous outburst of hope began the *'change-in-self'* process. Cognitively, one's belief in self increased. One's thoughts turned to possible ways to make lifestyle change. Affectively, one became calm and experienced both a sense of peace and freedom. The past released its clutches onto the future. Hopelessness dissipated. Fear of action dwindled. Behavioural change, however, did not happen until negative circumstances became intolerable and environmental conditions for change prevailed.

Theme #2 - Hoping is becoming open to the possibilities of change.

Having made a decision to live, the experience of hoping opened one to search for the possibilities of a different lifestyle. One's orientation shifted from being stuck in the

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past and narrowly focused to being more long range and panoramic and thus the potential of a different future became possible. Each individual's global orientation toward life shifted, from change is impossible to change is possible. Hoping meant '*I am becoming open to possibilities.*'

> I went away with alot more ideas in my head and hopes, dreams that it was going to be different (Bess p. 20).
>
> I had a choice to go now (Elaine p. 48). It [hope] was encouraging, something to look forward to, a strength, something better than what is right now (Elaine p. 55).
>
> ... it [hope] opened up a whole new world (Dan p. 59).
>
> Hope started when I seemed to be redirected from one circumstance to another. Redirection created the response of rethinking and having to act on what I perceived as possibilities (Kathy, Reflection on hope experience, Sept. 17, 1997).
>
> What moves me forward is being open to the opportunity, being able to see, to hear, to recognize, to accept, to know (Phillip, personal communication Aug. 6, 1998).
>
> It [hope] will always announce itself in a way and present us with a choice (Doug p. 15). Hope focused and centered me on possibilities (Doug p. 47).

The underlying process was the development of an awareness of differences and the realization of paradox. The co-researchers grappled with understanding the necessary contradictions in life. The end could be the beginning. Hope was the answer to hopelessness. I am nothing, but I am all I have. I am all. Once one became open to the possibilities of change, change became possible.

Theme #3 - Hoping is becoming aware of one's strengths and potential.

This awareness facilitated a shift from the perspective of being powerless to a more self reliant perspective. For these individuals, hoping was experienced as gaining

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more control and feeling empowered. As respect, trust and belief in self increased self-esteem, self-efficacy and self-confidence grew. Hoping meant *'I am able.'*

> Each one of those things where I could say okay, I'm getting a little bit more power, I'm getting a bit more control here ... those were the things that gave me hope (Bess p. 41). ... once I started feeling like I had some power, I had some hope. When I had no power I was just a shell ... a little bit of power gave me a little bit of hope, a bit more power gave me a bit more hope. (Bess p. 45) I was making a choice. No one was making it for me. I was making the choice (Bess p. 60).
>
> So the kids and I got baptized and that was when I started to know I'm not going to hell. I've already been there. Now I'm going somewhere else. I'm not really sure where or what it's about but it gave me some confidence and some hope. (Elaine p. 24 - 25)
>
> It [hope] gave me self confidence .... self esteem (Dan p. 5 - 6). ... it was like I knew if I kept doing this pretty soon it won't be hard to do and now I just do it no matter who it is or where it is (Dan p. 59).... and I focused in on how I had to get there (Dan p. 59).
>
> I think I've learned that I feel better when I can use my situation to be able to connect with somebody else ... to be able to give ... to be genuine so I have to be genuine to myself. (Kathy p. 28) I drew strength from the fact that I told myself I'm going to try this and I will do it (Kathy p. 2).
>
> I decided the Creator should send me a sign. What I wished for never came to be, because I was looking for a sign outside of myself. What I got made me realize that I already had inside myself what I needed. It was an incredible affirmation. (Phillip - personal communication, Aug. 6, 1998)
>
> I believe in the dark moment of the soul, hope comes but we have to choose it .... I have the power to choose it (Doug p. 15). What really made a

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difference was what I believed ... What makes a difference is if I believe in myself (Doug. p. 51).

The underlying process was one of empowerment. In this study, empowerment was the process of growing into the skin of who you really are. Empowerment was shifting from feeling unworthy to being worthy, from feeling incapable to being able and from no respect for self to believing in oneself. The awareness of one's strengths and potential shifted one's point of view. One began to look at life differently.

Theme #4 - Hoping is choosing to refocus and reframe one's experiences.

Thoughts of a new beginning, heightened sensory awareness and looking for the 'gift' in the midst of trauma and suffering were some of the hallmarks of an individual's description of their hoping experience which supported intrapersonal change. This shift in thought triggered shifts in attitude towards life. The idea, "I can choose", sparked the thought that I can choose to look at life differently. I can choose to feel differently. I can choose to act differently. Hoping meant '*I have choices.*'

Thoughts [of hope] were this is just the beginning ... It was like, today is gonna be better than yesterday, you know (Bess p. 22). I think I looked at life as a new experience .... It was a new life (Bess p. 61).

The simple things in life meant a lot to me all of a sudden ... the trees, the grass, I wanted to be outside. I wanted to get up early .... before I didn't want to get out of bed (Elaine p. 44).

It [hope] was like an aura ... almost like a high .... Like almost everything I tried that would have been scary prior to that or something I wouldn't have done, everything I tried worked ... more positive. (Dan p. 58 - 59)

... if this didn't work or that didn't work I try something else and I guess I'm still doing it (Kathy p. 1).

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> I know that there will be a better day and a time. I have succumbed to paddling with the universe, because in the river of life I can pick my placement in the stream .... (Phillip, personal communication Aug. 6, 1998)
>
> So through my devastation I now find the gifts .... to find a gift is to find a reason for the devastation .... to be empowered from the experience instead of being decimated by it (Doug p. 13 - 14).

The underlying process of choosing to refocus and reframe the challenging experiences in one's life from a negative stance to looking for the positive in the negative situation, shifted one's thinking from being a victim to gaining some control over the situation. Even if the events of life were beyond one's control, the way one thought about these events was within one's control. The attitude of looking at life differently opened one to transcending the present trauma or turmoil and looking at life more positively.

Theme #5 - Hoping is understanding life has meaning and value.

Hoping shifted one from emotional and psychological isolation to feeling more connected to others. Typically, these cognitions developed into a comprehensive and integrative belief system, which became foundational to the co-researchers' understanding and interpretation of the world. The intrinsic belief that life had purpose fed the realization that their lives had reason and value and thus spawned the idea that their lives must have meaning. The meaning of hoping was cognitively expressed as understanding the interconnectedness of all life and believing that life is more than a chaotic and random act. Hoping meant '*I belong*'.

> ... I believe in an after life ... (Bess p. 33). ... I had a spirituality that I believed in. A strength that I believed in but not God that people believe in (Bess p. 47). At the beginning of hope I was still isolated but once I left there ... I became so much more connected to people (Bess p. 61).
>
> So the kids and I got baptized ... I thought now I know I'm not going to go to hell, I've already been there. Now, I'm going somewhere else, I'm not really

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sure what it's about but it gave me some confidence and some hope. (Elaine p. 24 - 25)

... from realizing that there is nobody out there that is better than me, ... they're different from me but they're not better than me (Dan p. 45). ... I believe in God. I know there is a higher power. I know that there is no human being that's responsible for what is here .... we're powerless ... we think we have control that isn't true (Dan p. 3).

I did start having a little more ... hope ... more connected ... I'm not just here. I'm here for a reason (Kathy p 19). ... I realized I had to know who I was in order to find out where I fit (Kathy p. 17). It's [life] more than just a coincidence (Kathy p. 20).

Nothing happens by accident (Phillip, personal communication, Aug. 6, 1998). ... my life has always been, I've been led to the edge of the abyss and something has always ... sort of reeled me in before I got myself killed (Phillip p. 12). I believe that the past, the present and the future all exist within this second ... absolutely everything is connected. Everything is really the same thing. A creative energy connects us all (Phillip, personal communication, Aug. 6, 1998).

I believe the soul, the essence of my being, the spiritual part of me is connected to all. (Doug p. 41). I believe that what has happened to me happened to me for a reason and even though at the time for some of the experiences they seemed to have been very painful and I may not have seen the reason, the reason was there is much greater than what I could possibly even begin to imagine at this point in time.... (Doug p. 54)

The underlying process was learning to transcend the turmoil of the present by looking at life from a broader context. Each individual came to believe that his/her life had meaning and value because each felt that he/she belonged to something bigger. This realization prompted a response of wanting to live life fully and without fear.

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Many times the meaning of hoping was supported by the notion of spirituality, which embraced a belief in life after death and the acceptance of an omnipotent and loving God or Creator, who oversees a master plan for all humanity and the universe. This belief system explained the past while one coped in the present and projected a future which would eventually enlighten the present. Thus, hoping had a transcendental quality that bridged the gap between the past, present and future. The chaos of the past was given reason; the unknown of the future was given structure, so that the turmoil of the present could be transcended.

Summary of the Precursors of Hope, Emergence of Hope and the Five Themes of Hoping

In summary, this study revealed that trauma and turmoil preceded one's experience of hoping. Existential questioning regarding the meaning of one's life piqued anxiety. Awareness of hope or one's '*life wish*' happened spontaneously in response to the fear of isolation and meaninglessness.

Theme one, *hoping is a wish for life*, represented an instinctual reaction to the threat of meaninglessness, alienation and oblivion. The experience of hoping was a reaction to existential anxiety and manifested as '*I choose life.*' The co-researchers thoughts, feelings and behaviours became more congruent and were directed toward making change happen.

Theme two, *hoping is becoming open to possibilities*, represented a shift in orientation of self in relationship to the world, from 'change is not possible' to, "change is possible'. For the co-researchers, this change process involved the continued efforts of significant others to make a person aware of differences in how others handle their lives. This process involved challenging the normalcy of the world the co-researchers were currently living in thus becoming aware of the paradox of their reality as opposed to, and in contrast with, others' realities. Hoping was manifested as '*I am becoming open to possibilities.*'

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Theme three, *hoping is becoming aware of one's strengths and potential*, represented a shift in perspective from an external locus of control to an internal locus of control, from I am powerless to *'I am able.'* For the co-researchers, this change process was one of empowerment and self awareness, which increased their self-esteem, self-efficacy and self-confidence. Change became possible because the co-researchers realized that they were able to make change happen.

Theme four, *hoping is choosing to refocus and reframe one's experiences*, represented a shift in attitude toward life. For the co-researchers', this change process involved moving from a reactive stance toward life to a responsive stance. This responsive stance involved seeing the positive in a negative situation. Thinking about the "bigger picture" helped them to refocus their lives toward the possibility of a more meaningful and constructive lifestyle in the future. Their realizations that change is possible and that I am able to make change happen supported the idea *'I have choices' in* how I interpret the events of my life.

Theme five, *hoping is understanding life has meaning and value*, represented a shift to developing a spiritual awareness in life. A spiritual awareness in life opened up the opportunity for the process of transcendence. The co-researchers were able to transcend the anxiety of trauma in the present by remembering the past, or believing in a better future. Spiritual transcendence allowed the co-researchers to have a personal relationship with God, nature or other living things in order to gain a sense of interconnectedness. Transcendence of time allowed one to appreciate the present, one moment at a time, but forge forward into the future with a sense of security and trust. The realization of the temporality of life and the interconnectedness of all living things triggered the thoughts that I have meaning, value and purpose therefore, *'I belong'*.

From the first person perspective, the themes of hoping: *'I choose life'*, *'I am open to possibilities'*, *'I am able'*, *'I have choices'* and *'I belong'*, were hermeneutically interpreted as a "new beginning" or an epiphany, hence the rationale for a *'change-in-*

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self'. 'Change-in-self' has been depicted as the cumulative effect of the integration and interaction among the inherent shifts or processes within each theme of hoping. These processes were labelled as dynamic because there was a shift over time which culminated in a gestalt or *'change-in-self'* . *'Change-in-self'* represented the whole. The underlying shifts, or processes, represented the individual parts. The gestalt represented a whole greater than the sum of the parts. These shifts or processes uncovered *how* hope works. The following diagram entitled, "The Experience and Meaning of Hope Is...", will represent the processes in the themes of hope as they have been articulated in this chapter.

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"THE EXPERIENCE AND MEANING OF HOPING IS..."

DIAGRAM 1

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Relationships with other people became the context in which hope happened. This final section in Findings #1 will explore the importance of relationships to the experience of hoping.

The Importance of Relationships to Hoping

The Seeds of Hoping

The seeds of hoping developed much earlier than at the moment of existential crisis. In the following section, I will explore the background relationships of the co-researchers which nurtured their hope. Relationships acted as inter-personal bridges which moved one from isolation, alienation and self doubt to feeling worthy, in control, and empowered to act. Three different relationships were identified from these data and were described as memories from the past, present relationships and spiritual relationships which moved one's hope into the future. Some subtle differences in the qualities of these hope nurturing relationships were uncovered. These differences will be discussed and examples of the different relationships will be provided.

Hope Nurturing Relationships from the Past

Childhood memories. Memories of childhood focused on the perception of being unconditionally loved and non judgmentally accepted. The relationship was perceived as being trustworthy, psychologically safe, undemanding and transcending time. Typically, this relationship was recalled as a mother's love for her child, but also as other individuals who took the time to become involved in the child's world, either through believing in him/her, standing up for the child's rights or caring emotionally (loving) for the child was viewed as positively nurturing hope. The seeds of worthiness and positive self- esteem was developed and these memories became the roots that anchored one's hope.

> She [mother] use to say to me when I was a little girl and my dad was very cruel to me ... don't worry, just don't listen, you can do it, you'll prove him wrong, just this constant , don't worry, you'll do it, you'll be okay, you'll do it. (Bess, p. 34 - 35)

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... when I worked at the hospital with the Nuns ... one [Nun] really liked me. She use to call me into her office all the time and sit and talk to me ... I would lie through my teeth to her because I wanted to be good ... she'd say there is a better way to live and that was the first time I got hope, somebody cared about me and took the time to even talk to me. (Elaine p. 31) ... the other time was my aunt and uncle when I stayed with them ... I never got beat up, they believed me when I said something (Elaine p. 31).

... like from my mother there was always ... it'll be okay and I would be (Dan p. 52) ... other relatives ... would kind of nurture me and it'll be okay and you'll be okay and everything will be okay (Dan p. 53).

I never had the mom and dad but I had so many along the way ... the family itself is important ... it's alive, it has to be taken care of ... (Kathy p. 29). ... just knowing that these people (my friends' parents) ... I had never met ... were going to do this and the fact that this friend's mother was concerned enough to call ... just knowing that there is a way (Kathy p. 13 - 14).

... mom always told me ... she was such a support ... you'll always have a place. I will always love you it doesn't matter what you do ... just absolutely unconditional love (Phillip p. 11).

... my mother was very positive and strong. Over the years she has never condemned me, she accepted me and that was one of the things that was always in the back of my mind (Doug. p. 21). My mother never cast me out ... she kept the door open and that door saved my life (Doug p. 34).

Hope Facilitating Relationships in the Present

Adult memories. Hope inspiring relationships in the present or recalled as adolescent or adult memories differed from childhood memories. One difference was that the "other" believed in me, which gave me confidence to believe in myself. This relationship tended to be thought of as "being viewed as equal human beings" even

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though status differences through education, job or experience were evident. Respect, trust, safety, genuiness and caring were experienced as part to this relationship. However, the more subtle differences were feeling as though their pain was validated by having been listened to and acknowledged, as well as, a challenging/confrontational aspect to the relationship which caused one to realize that their viewpoint or reality was different from others. The shift from a dependent (external) locus of control to an independent (internal) locus of control began within these relationships.

> Dr. _____ gave me hope. It was his words that gave me hope ... when this man can look at something and remove the fear from it and put it over there, it gives you a lot of hope (Bess p. 52). I see him as a friend. I'm sure he sees me as a patient but I see him as somebody that's really done a lot for me ... just the way he is has done a lot ... there is something about me that he admires ... I trust his opinion. (Bess p. 53)
>
> I remember the insurance fellow ... I want you to have the insurance money for the car ... I can't stand the way you and your kids are living ... this is your ticket out of here, take it and go .. . somebody trusted me. Somebody could see it wasn't all my fault ... (Elaine p. 19 - 20) ... the sheriff said ... I have to close the store ... you and the kids take whatever you can get out of that store before I come ... and get out of there ... (Elaine p. 25) ... he was so kind and he cared and it wasn't his job to do that (Elaine p. 29).
>
> The instructor _____, just her saying I could do it ... I can visualize her hunched over, big smile, she had teeth like this rabbit and telling me, you can do it Dan ... nobody ever told me that in my life (Dan p. 49). Every time, like this was ten years ago, this girl stood in front of me and told me that. I can still see that and it chokes me up when I think of her ... whenever something goes real good the first person I think of is _____. I think without her I wouldn't be here (Dan p. 50). I believed she was an honest person and she knew what she was

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saying , and I believed it and I did some little thing and I thought, she was right ... she must have been genuine, she reminded me of my wife ... she reminds me of my mother ... they believed in me ... If she hadn't been what I perceive as a genuine person, if I didn't trust her then it wouldn't have worked. (Dan p. 63 - 64) There is always a way, there is always somebody that believes in you (Dan p. 51).

... I had to believe in myself .... I had to learn to allow people I hardly knew to help me (Kathy p. 36). I disclosed some of the things that were hurtful and these other people from wherever they were, thinking and feeling told somebody else (Kathy p. 40). I think I've learned that ... I feel better when I can use my situation to connect with somebody else ... to be able to give ... to be genuine so I have to be genuine to myself (Kathy p. 27 - 28).

My teacher turned me around most ... just a powerful experience ... He knew who I was and he saw my potential ... he did believe in me ... He challenged me and I had to prove him wrong (Phillip p. 13 - 14). I trusted he was right (Phillip p. 22).

Oddly enough I resented the thing that helped me the most ... people suggesting different things that I could do ... because I knew they were right ... things I didn't like to hear (Doug p. 46). Some of those guys were there again for me this time ... [they] care about me (Doug p. 51 - 52). ... honesty ... trust ... loyalty ... respect ... and that's reciprocal (Doug. 53).

Hope Inspiring Relationships that were Projected into the Future

Spiritual relationships. Hope inspiring relationships which one carried with them into the future were spiritual. An integrated, comprehensive and interdependent view of the world, the past, the present and the future provided a constellation of understandings that transformed one's being and transcended time. One viewed him/herself as part of a greater whole, doing the best possible under the loving care of a greater intelligence and

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wider eye. Belief systems were developed or accepted which gave value, meaning, purpose and direction to life. This relationship was usually with one's Creator. Safety, trust, unconditional love, nonjudgmental acceptance and obedience were characteristics of this relationship. The feeling of being connected to the rest of the world also carried with it a responsibility to the rest of the world. This was the motivation for much altruistic action toward others.

> ... I believe in an after life and I believe that my mother seen what was happening and I also believe that even though I was leaving after she died she'd know that I got out (Bess p. 33). ... my mom's spirit every once in a while she'll come ... when I'm down ... at my weakest and there's that little nudge from her, come on now ... it's comforting. (Bess p. 34)
>
> My relationship with God ... gives me a lot of hope. Like I'm going to be okay, now (Elaine p. 52).
>
> I think all the things I do or have done in my life were to get my dad's approval. And now that my dad is dead I still do things thinking, well he still knows, he still knows when I start the Boston Marathon ... for the first three or four miles all I think about is my dad ... hoping he would be happy with what I was doing .... (Dan p. 29)
>
> I started talking to the Native people ... that's where it all started ... finding the strength spiritually something nobody else can touch ... It was a sense of who I was ... I realized I had to know who I was in order to find out where I fit (Kathy p. 17). I did start having more hope ... something more connected ... I'm not just living here I'm here for a reason. (Kathy p. 19)
>
> You enter into this relationship with the Creator ... there is a flow. I don't believe things are problems. Something I set out to do will be done, never a doubt in my mind, if it doesn't happen it wasn't meant to be in the first place (Phillip, personal communication, Aug. 6, 1998). I still don't exactly know what you

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> mean by hope ... I have an understanding that it's part of being held [in the Great Mystery] and being all right. (Phillip p. 32)
>
> I believe that we are always presented at every step of the way in our journey with choice ... what has happened to me, happened to me for a reason and even though some of those experiences have been very painful and I may not have seen the reason, the reason that was there was much greater than what I could possibly even imagine, at this point in time. (Doug. p. 54)

In summary, hoping was recalled as a shared experience between self and a significant other. Hope was seeded in the past through childhood memories of nonjudgmental, trusting, and safe relationships with caring adults. Hope was experienced in the present with caring, respectful, equitable, authentic and genuine relationships with other adults. These trusting relationships enhanced one's self-worth and were considered safe enough to allow one to risk challenging rather than defending the reality of the current destructive lifestyle one was living in. Hope inspiring relationships were future oriented and acknowledged a spiritual component to life. These relationships tended to be hierarchical, unequal, unconditionally loving and nonjudgmentally accepting. The thoughts of being a part of a "bigger" benevolent plan engendered a sense of interdependence with others and an interconnectedness among the past, present, and future. These relationships were recalled as positive childhood memories from the past, the impetus for hope in the present and beacons of hope for the future.

Findings #2

What is the Relationship between Hope and Change using Prochaska's Stages of Change Model

'Change-in-self' happened before a change in lifestyle occurred. The experience of hoping or *'change-in-self'* gave one the courage to risk behavioural change, yet change from a destructive to a constructive lifestyle did not happen until negative environmental

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circumstances became unbearable. This last section, will integrate personal crises, the themes of hoping and the *'change-in-self'* process with Prochaska's Stages of Change.

Interaction of Personal Crises and Themes of Hoping with Prochaska's Stages of Change

Crises precipitated movement from one stage of change in Prochaska's model to another. An identity crisis made the person ask, "Who am I?", and made one realize that "I have a problem". As such an *identity crisis* was the impetus for movement from precontemplation to the contemplation stage of change. Serious thinking about changing one's lifestyle had not yet begun.

An *existential crisis*, such as the fear of death or fear of the loss of a significant relationship, created existential anxiety (fears of loneliness and meaninglessness) which made one ask, "What is the meaning of my life?" One's hope came into one's awareness spontaneously. This wish to engage in life or *'I choose life'* (theme #1) became conscious hoping and precipitated movement from the precontemplation to the preparation stage of change. The underlying process in theme #1 was an intuitive response to feeling one's life was threatened. This process was a *"life wish'*, an instinctual drive to survive, possibly primordial and basic to all life forms. How to survive was not readily apparent, but the thrust to survive spontaneously came into one's awareness. With the realization that one wanted change in lifestyle, one began to take small steps toward these ends. Much of the preparation done during this stage of change was intrapersonal or within self. At Prochaska's preparation stage, hoping was manifested as a number of intrapersonal processes which prepared the co-researchers to risk lifestyle change. The underlying process in theme #2 was developing an awareness of differences in how others handle their lives. This realization that the same situation could be handled in a totally opposite way, created a dissonance. This realization of the inherent truth in the paradoxes of life opened one to the possibility of change, or *'I am becoming open to possibilities.'* The underlying process in theme #3 was becoming aware of one's strengths and potential. This realization brought into one's awareness that

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I can make a difference in my own life or '*I am able.*' The underlying process in theme #4 was the refocusing and reframing of the challenging events in one's life from a negative interpretation to looking for the positive in a negative situation. This realization that '*I have choices*' created an attitude of positive responding rather than negative reacting. The underlying process of theme #5 was the development of an understanding of the value and meaning of life through transcendence of the present. This awareness fostered the feeling of being interconnected with all life and created an opportunity for the future to be different from the past and present. The realization that '*I belong*' made one feel connected to others.

The cumulative effect of the above processes was a '*change-in-self*'. This '*change-in-self*' represented shifts in thoughts, feelings and behaviours: a different vision of the future was created with the realizations that '*I choose life*', '*I am becoming open to possibilities*', '*I am able*', '*I have choices*', and '*I belong*'. One was no longer anchored to the past, fearful of the future and paralyzed by the present. These processes created a psychological mindset and interpersonal strength that prepared one to risk behavioural change. When a situational crisis (turning point for change according to Prochaska's Stages of Change model) prevailed, '*change-in-self*' was the catalyst which motivated behavioural action thus moving one from the preparation stage to the action stage of change.

The action stage of change was triggered by a situational crisis and was the logical consequence of balancing the pros to stay in a destructive lifestyle against the pros to leave. Hoping/'*change-in-self*' was the catalyst for change which tipped the balance in favour of moving to a meaningful and constructive lifestyle. Added impetus for behavioural change was altruism, which was primarily aimed at protecting "others" (i.e., especially children, who were perceived to be more vulnerable than the individual.)

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Hoping was also evident in movement from the action to the maintenance stage of change, in the form of goal attainment. Success in attaining one's goals positively reinforced one's hope and was instrumental in maintaining positive lifestyle change. Hoping facilitated Prochaska's stages of change by carrying one psychologically and emotionally through crises until the conditions for change were created or recognized.

In summary, for the co-researchers of this study the role of hoping in the process of human change was:

1) a spontaneous awareness of a "wish for life" (intuitive and instinctual) which created movement from the precontemplation to the preparation stage of change.

2) the creation of a psychological mindset and a heightened awareness of intrapersonal strength/readiness that prepared one to risk change which created movement from the preparation stage to the action stage of change.

3) a catalyst for change based on altruistic action which turned a circumstantial crisis into a turning point for lifestyle change.

4) positive behavioural reinforcement in the form of successful goal attainment which kept one focused in the maintenance stage of change.

The following table, Defining Features of the Experience of Hoping and the Characteristics of Change, explores hope and change.

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TABLE #1

Defining Features of the Experience of Hoping and the Characteristics of Change

Hope	Change
Hope comes before change.	
Hope is an intrapsychic process.	Change is a shift in lifestyle.
Hope evolves from multiple intrapersonal processes.	Change happens when the pros to change outweighed the cons to change.
Hoping is intuitively knowing there is a path.	Change is about discovering the path.
Hoping is recognizing the opportunities.	Change is acting on probabilities.
Hoping moves an individual towards something positive.	Change moves an individual away from something negative.
Hoping is looking for an integration of life experiences and understanding the bigger picture.	Change is looking for solutions to current problems.
Hoping facilitated a gestalt labelled *'change-in-self'* - an epiphany.	Change focused on a difference in environmental circumstances.

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CHAPTER SIX

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS FOR COUNSELLING AND RESEARCH

Chapter Overview

Chapter #6 will integrate the findings with the hope literature. Each theme will be introduced, followed by support from and challenges to the hope literature. Implications for counselling and recommendations for further research will follow each theme.

In the latter part of this chapter in the section, entitled Inter-personal Relationships, the relationships which facilitated hoping are discussed from a developmental perspective. Inter-personal relationships were not interpreted directly as themes of hope in the context of profound change. Rather, relationships encouraged hope. This section will follow the same format as described above.

It should be noted that the findings relative to the relationship between hope and change using Prochaska's Stages of Change model will not be discussed and integrated with the hope literature. These findings stand as a new contribution to the literature. In the final section, limitations of this study will be considered.

Theme #1 - Hoping is a Wish For Life

Trauma, turmoil, and suffering provided the ground for the germination of hope in this study. Personal crises eroded one's identity (an identity crisis) and unearthed one's fears of meaninglessness, powerlessness, isolation, alienation and hopelessness, opening a seemingly bottomless pit of existential anxiety (an existential crisis).

Theme #1 is best viewed through the literature about what hope is and what hope is not.

What Hope Is

In the midst of these precursors, hope seemingly emerged out of nowhere and nothingness. It was not pre-meditated nor intentional. In this study, hope was a personal yet common, response to the fear of death (oblivion), the unknown, and chaos.

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Theme #1 showed hoping to be an intuitive survival response or *'life wish.'* This intuitive survival response, or *'life wish,'* was the silent partner that acted as a catalyst to spark the whole process of hoping. This *'life-wish'* lept into one's conscious awareness and said *'yes to life'* in the face of overwhelming odds and provided a surge of energy that thrust behaviours toward life sustaining ends despite an unknown future. It was as if these people, would not or could not articulate the demise and insignificance of their own being inherent in the crises.

The Paradoxical Nature of Hope

The nature of hope is reflected symbolically in the paradoxes of life. The paradoxes in life are expressed in the euphemisms of ordinary language, i.e., 'the end is just the beginning,' 'death gives birth to new life,' 'silence is deafening,' 'limits create freedom', 'out of despair pops hope.' These euphemisms metaphorically give credence to the expectation that *change is possible*. As Buckley (1977) wrote:

> The vision and acknowledgment of the dialectical nature of hope is itself a source of hope. To be able to understand that it arises within the context of human existence and thought which is constituted of polarities already to liberate you and me from feelings of 'this is the end, I am trapped, there is no exit.' ... despondency and hope; and this very acknowledgment creates a break-through ... alternating polarities involving as they do a certain point and counterpoint, lead toward a cyclic form or succession much like the wheel, as it were, of the seasons. (p. 344)

In this interpretation of the data, hope was the paradox of saying 'yes to life' (Jevne, 1994) when faced with the possibility of death. Hope fed off the tension of opposites because "truth" in life resided in the crux of paradox. Hope was about accepting the contradictions in life as "truths" and learning to live with them in a tension free way.

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In this study, hope has been described by the co-researchers as a leap of faith, a stepping forth into the great void, knowing that you will be taken care of and an intuitive knowing that life will turn out for the better. Hoping was the process of changing powerlessness into powerfulness, meaninglessness into meaningfulness, alienation into acceptance and isolation into connectedness. It was an affirmation of life which accompanied one's experience of life (Progoff, 1985). The juxtapositioning of equal, yet opposite forces, created tension which could only be relieved through the transcendence of time and movement to a higher plane of awareness. "The thesis of hope becomes the antithesis of anxiety" (Progoff, 1985, p. 82).

Support from the hope literature. Menninger (1959) saw hope as "another aspect of life instinct, the creative drive which wars against dissolution and destructiveness" (p. 449) and stated that "hope reflects the working of life instinct in its constant battle against the various forces that add up to self-destruction" (p. 454). Morse and Doberneck (1995) described hope as "a determination to endure" (p. 277). McGee (1984) identified hope as "a force that guards against death" (p. 3). Dufault and Martocchio (1985) defined hope as a "multidimensional dynamic life force" (p. 380). Synder (1994) speculated hope to be "tacit knowledge" that was used to generate mental efforts to overcome blockages to one's goals (p. 7). These acknowledgments are not surprising. What is surprising is that, although hope has been previously tied to the fundamental dilemma of human existence - existential anxiety, no exploration into personal crises has been forth coming. Some researchers have acknowledged the importance of the paradoxical nature of hope. For example, Pruyser (1963) stated that "hope is grounded in the existential structure of man" (p. 91), Progoff (1985) linked the "movement from hope to anxiety and back again as an ubiquitous cycle of human experience" (p. 14) and Jevne (1994) talked about hope as "the space between" (p. 10).

Challenge to the hope literature. If hope is truly nourished by the paradoxes of life, then differences and contradictions which create anxiety and stress might also well

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be considered a life embracing forces. The pathway to one's hope may be cobbled with trauma, turmoil, and anxiety, but these may be the stepping stones needed to arrive at a fresh new vantage point from which to view life. Even though cognitively the patterns of certainty, stability, and predictability appear to be the orienting structures of hoping, the driving energy (force) of hope comes from tension, anxiety, and disequilibrium. Hope is dynamically inbred with the continuation of life.

In the psychological literature, hope may be theoretically tied to instinct survival or an orienting response. Jevne stated, "Hope is an orientation of the spirit, of the heart. It is not the conviction that something will turn out well, but the certainty that something makes sense, regardless of how it turns out" (personal communication, Oct. 1999).

In nature, all life seeks homeostasis, or equilibrium, in order to maintain itself. Patterns of stability, consistency, and predictability support this state. Disequilibrium, however, is the natural dynamic of change. Hope is the pivotal point which counterbalances equilibrium and disequilibrium in life, the bridge between the possible and the impossible, the known and the unknown. "When hope is experienced as an unconditioned affirmation of life there is an open relation to the unfolding possibilities of existence" (Progoff, 1985, p. 83). Hope not only embraces life, it is necessary for the existence of life.

Implications for Counselling

If, as therapists, we accept that one's hope begins with an exploration of the paradoxes of life, then

1) therapy could encompass, for example, not only the solutions to a problem but the etiology, not only the fear of failure but the fear of success, etc.

2) therapists may also become less intent on moving a client away from anxiety to supporting one through anxiety. Suicide then becomes a subject to be explored in therapy, because in talking about death a client is inadvertently or intentionally talking about a commitment to life (or the lack of it) or a *'life wish.'*

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3) in therapy, when the paradoxes in life are discussed to yield the "truths" of reality, hope is being addressed.

Recommendations for Research

In the past, hope has been researched in relationship to hopelessness. This study would suggest that the field would benefit if hope was also researched in relationship to anxiety. Suggestions for further studies may be:

1) a correlational study between hope and anxiety.

2) a process oriented study using Gottschalk's Hope Assessment instrument to do a content analysis of therapy sessions using hope, anxiety and depression scales.

3) a discourse analysis conducted on the successful and unsuccessful interventions of suicide crisis line workers using the lens of hope.

Since the findings of this study suggested that hope was an intuitive response to existential anxiety, my curiosity spurred me on to interpret what hope was not, as gleaned from this study.

What Hope is Not

Within the hope literature, the conceptualization that hope is the setting and achievement of a goal has been prevalent in some writings and theories (Cantril, 1964; Erickson, Post & Paige, 1975; Frank, 1968; French, 1952; Gottschalk, 1974; Lewin, 1938; Melges & Bowlby, 1969; Mowrer, 1960; Schachtel, 1959; Stotland, 1969 cited in Snyder, C. R., Irving L. M., & Anderson, J. R. (1991).

Goal Attainment

In this study, goal attainment acted as an intermittent reinforcement to hoping or a means of an increased sense of control over one's life. Two specific hoping processes supported this finding. The first process was the empowerment process (McWhirter, 1991). Self-esteem was enhanced when self-efficacy increased (Bandura, 1997). The thought that *'I am able'* was supported by the proof that *I can do*. The thought, *I can do*, was positively reinforced through the setting and attainment of goals.

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The second process can be found in Prochaska's Maintenance Stage of Change. This stage has been characterized as the continuation of change and consolidation of gains over time. During this stage, success in planning and achieving one's goals was experienced as proof that one had changed, which increased one's hope. This cycle became a positive feedback loop for both hope and change. In both instances, goal setting and attainment supported the hope process but did not sufficiently explain the totality nor the complexity of the process.

Success in goal attainment does not speak to what would happen to one's hope if one's goal was not realized. Would hope be dashed? In the model of hope for this study, if a goal was not met one's hope may flounder temporarily, but a re-evaluation of the situation was the most typical response to not achieving a goal. Hope was more comparable to a guiding light that focused one on the 'bigger picture.' Establishing and focusing on a goal provided directionality for one's hope, but was not the epitome, nor the embodiment of hope.

Goal setting and attainment may be compared to the targeting of a beam of light from a flashlight on a 'wished for' goal. This narrowly focused beam of light could never sufficiently enlighten the dynamics of hoping. Hoping is the light not the object in the light. Hoping can be compared to a guiding light that orients one through troubled waters, somewhat like a beacon of light from a lighthouse. The object of hope at best is uncertain, more frequently unknown.

Support from the hope literature. Dufault and Martocchio (1985) agreed with the notion that hope reaches beyond goal attainment. In their discussions of hope, goals were labelled hope objects and subsumed under the heading *particularized* hope. *Generalized* hope was viewed as a broader based, intangible umbrella that cast a positive glow on life which "... extended beyond some of the limitations of life and matter" (Dufault & Martocchio, 1985, p. 382). The spheres of hope were graphically represented as concentric rings with particularized hope at the core or center of the hope experience and

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with generalized hope wrapping around it. Ersek's study (1992) of the process of hope in adults who were undergoing bone marrow transplants for leukemia reported the finding that the "process that did appear to be central, however, was that of maintaining hope. Specifically, sustaining a generalized sense of hope was seen as vital" (p. 884). Pruyser (1987) acknowledged that hope does not deal with objects at all but is focused on global, or existential, conditions.

Challenge to the hope literature. A difficulty in understanding hope may reside in the ambiguity of language and concrete thinking that is exemplified through exploring the differences between the physical (real) and the metaphysical (visionary) worlds. If hope resided in the physical world, then hope would be limited to an object of desire or goal. Hoping, however, resides in both the physical and the metaphysical worlds. Reality is juxtaposed with vision. Goals (objects of desire) deal with movement toward the possible in the physical world. Hoping is trusting in beyond the possible, the creative 'not-yet' and the process of be(ing)-coming. Hope is, therefore, grounded in reality, but reaches toward a vision of the unknown - the potential.

Implications for Counselling

Implications for counselling may be:

1) the importance of the timeliness of goal setting in therapy, thus paying particular attention to the finding that premature goal setting may inadvertently diminish one's hope.

2) that faint hope can be reinforced when attention is paid to one's particularized hopes.

3) that the discipline of psychology may benefit from exploring the use of more creative approaches to counselling such as visioning, imagery, etc., in order to reach out to the metaphysical aspects of one's hope.

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Recommendations for Research

Further research needs to be conducted into the area of the relationship among goal setting, success and failure of goal achievement and the experience of hoping. Suggestions for further research may include:

1) the field testing of Stotland's seven principles of hope relative to low hope patients in order to explore the relationship among hope, anxiety and goal setting.

2) the correlation between particularized hope and goal attainment in maintaining one's hope

3) the correlation between generalized hope and goal attainment in maintaining one's hope

4) the correlation between particularized hope and generalized hope.

Theme #2 - Is Becoming Open to the Possibilities of Change

The shift from *'change is impossible'* to *'change is possible'* has been interpreted as the global view one has toward the world in general or the self in relationship to the world. It is the lens through which one views the world. Is the world a good or a bad place? Will my needs be met? Can I trust people in general? Before the experience of hoping all the co-researchers were locked into a worldview that change was not possible. Life circumstances would not change. The co-researchers felt trapped. Fear and isolation fed hopelessness.

In this study, theme #2 - hoping opened one to "possibilities", sensitized one to other possible ways of living life. One's lens, through which one viewed the world, changed from a narrowly focused, telescopic view of life to a more wide angled, panoramic view of life. This shift made one aware of the contrasts and differences between self and others and precipitated movement from blind acceptance of life's circumstances to an understanding that difference exists and that, therefore, *'change is possible.'* This heightened awareness of difference was prompted by exposure to, and contrast with, other people's situations and lifestyles. The continual jarring of one's

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reality happened over time, with challenges sparked from various sources - friends, family, significant others, role models, psychoeducational material, etc.

> I had to be aware of what my behaviour was like before I could change it, I couldn't change anything I didn't know about. If I didn't know ... I wouldn't have changed (Elaine, p. 55).

Subsequently, affect changed from feelings of entrapment to feelings of freedom.

> Hope to me is seeing that light get bigger and know that it's bigger and it's getting bigger (Bess, p. 40). To me it [hope] meant freedom ... I can remember just visualizing, thinking, if I could just get there ... (Bess, p. 32).

Hoping oriented one to realizing that *'change is possible'*. The jarring of one's reality opened one to becoming open to possibilities . One began to contemplate a future that was not dictated by one's past. This enabled one to transcend the present turmoil by projecting through time and space. No longer was one anchored to the past nor held hostage in the present. The future was yet to unfold, thus change was possible.

Support from the hope literature. The idea that *'change is possible'* has been supported in the hope literature. Jevne (1993) states "... hope is a sense of the possible" (p. 124). Morse and Dobernick (1995) suggested that "One cannot hope if outcome is certain because hope is by definition an expectation" (p. 282). As already discussed the patterns of consistency and predictability garnered from having needs met as an infant were important because one's cognitive schema of having needs met created within an infant the expectation and the anticipation of fulfillment in the future. According to Pruyser (1987):

> Scott's psychodynamic and developmental sequence appears to square well with Marcel's idea about the role of time in hoping. The person who hopes is future oriented in a special sense, namely by seeing reality as a process of unfolding, and therefore essentially open-ended. (p. 124)

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This study did support Marcel's idea of a person who has hope as being future oriented and seeing reality as a process of unfolding, rather than as a 'fait de complet.' Inherent in this idea is that time exists in a chronological sequence, but that for every moment in time there exists a retrospective and projective perspective, which orients one to the bigger picture. The present becomes filled with future possibilities. This cognitive ability to transcend the present trauma with a more panoramic view gives the future a timeless quality and opens one to realizing that *'change is possible.'*

Challenge to the hope literature. In the hope literature, Pruyser (1963) cited Richter's animal behavioural studies of endurance as an example of hope. One moment of escape for rats swimming in a water jar brought about renewed efforts to keep swimming in the attempt to survive. The rats have had the experience that the situation can change, and this observation was linked to hope. However, this study would suggest that the process of hope may involve more than simple behavioural intermittent reinforcement.

A deeper understanding of the cognitively complex phenomenon of hope may be found in the psychological literature. The awareness of differences or paradox which creates anxiety may be theoretically tied to Festinger's (1957) Theory of Cognitive Dissonance which stated "... in the presence of inconsistency there is psychological discomfort" (p. 2) and "... reduction of dissonance is a basic process in humans" (p. 4). The concept of cognitive dissonance may be helpful in deepening our understanding of the processes of hoping and its connection to anxiety.

Implications for Counselling

If the experience of hope is premised on the generating of possibilities then

1) creating cognitive dissonance in therapy may be an effective strategy to access one's hope.

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2) the creative use of art, drama and literature in therapy may be helpful to our clients by generating alternative ways of seeing, understanding and responding to situations, thus promoting the possibility of change.

Recommendations for Research

The field would benefit from research which seeks to understand how hope occupies future time but is experienced in present linear time. Possible studies into this area may include:

1) a philosophical or theoretical paper delving into the complexities of time and space warping. The discipline of quantum physics may have a contribution to our understanding of the lived experience of hope.

At this point very little is known about the development of hope.

2) a longitudinal study plotting the trajectory of hope over the course of an illness would be valuable to understanding the development of hope.

3) the relationship between hope and paradox warrants further study. Time appears to be the variable that exposes the paradox.

4) another study may seek to understand the relationship among cognitive dissonance, anxiety and hope.

All these suggestions for future research incorporate some aspect of time, for example, the sequencing of time, dispelling the illusion of permanence of time through range of vision and the recognition of variable speed of time as orienting features of reality. In theme #2, the underlying process of paradox utilizes the mechanism of time to make a person aware of differences, thus opening one to the possibility of change.

However, from the data analysis of this study, hope was more than cognitively understanding that *'change is possible* ' through the transcendence of time and awareness of differences (theme #2). Understanding *'change is possible* ' did not provide impetus to act differently. Thus, the experience of hoping could only be explained through uncovering other underlying intrapsychic processes which facilitated action. Theme #3,

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becoming aware of one's strengths and potential, will describe how understanding the potential of personal power was necessary to faciliate action.

Theme #3 - Is Becoming Aware of One's Strengths and Potential

In this study, Theme #3 - I am becoming aware of my strengths and potential oriented one to the perspective that *'I am able'*. The idea *'I am able'* was a subjective interpretation of who I am. This shift in thinking and feeling more positively about one's capabilities happened when each co-researcher had specific individuals (typically a stranger) who believed in him/her, even when one did not believe in him/herself. This idea empowered co-researchers, who then opened up to risk change.

Achievement of small goals or behavioural changes became self-reinforcing for one's perceived self-efficacy. One moved from an external locus of control to an internal locus of control. Hope flourished. The filter that projected onto one's self image a sense of powerlessness and lack of control faded and was replaced with the filter *I can*. The importance of this theme was that it captured the shift from *I can't* to *I can*. The mindset *I can't* reflected a lack of belief in personal capability. The mindset, *I can* (self-efficacy) was action oriented and thus created a vehicle for increasing one's self-esteem or self-worth. This theme reflected the defusing of one's sense of powerlessness and vulnerability, thus reducing existential anxiety. The shift in thinking about one's personal capabilities mentally prepared one to think, act and feel differently about self.

Support from the hope literature. Menninger (1959) described hope as the creative process of searching for the underdeveloped potential within an individual. In therapy, diagnosis was a 'hopeful' search for a way out and treatment was a 'hopeful' strategy for self-directed and self-administered change. Morse and Doberneck (1995) suggested that hope involves "a realistic assessment of personal resources ... " (p. 282). In the hope literature, hope was described by Farran, Herth and Popovich (1995) as "faith in oneself and others" (p. 341) and "to feel a sense of control" (p. 117). Feelings of personal power and control (Ersek, 1992; Farran & McCann, 1989; Miller, 1989) were

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highly significant to one's perception that '*choice exists*.' Dufault and Martocchio (1985) and Travelbee (1971) noted that hope must involve an element of choice.

Challenge to the hope literature. Some psychological literature (Snyder, Irving & Anderson, 1991) has focussed on comparing hope to other related constructs, such as optimism (Seligman, 1990), self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977) and helplessness (Abramsom, Seligman, M. E. & Teasdale, J. D., 1978). Snyder et al. have attempted to compare these constructs to their proposed concept of hope, a goal-directed determinism (agency), or 'will', and effective strategies to attain this goal (pathways), or 'way'.

The findings of this research study would suggest that hope may be a composite process which subsumes other processes. If this is the case, then, the challenge to the hope literature would be in identifying the similarities among constructs and refrain from giving new labels to similar ideas. If an approach such as concept analysis or factor analysis could factor out significant theoretical concepts, then universal constructs for hope likely exist. Hope research could then focus on developing a more holistic view of hope from various psychological theories (perspectives).

In the psychological/counselling literature the concepts of locus of control (Abramson, Seligman & Teasdale, 1978), self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997) and empowerment (McWhirter, 1991) may be theoretically tied to the underlying processes of the hoping experience. Further research from the perspective of hoping is required.

Implications for Counselling

If the experience of hope is connected to a shift in thinking from *I can't* to *I can* then:

1) therapy has the potential to be more effective if a therapist focusses on strengthening the individual rather than solving of problems.

2) therapy could utilize clients' past successes in developing a positive orientation toward the future by bringing into awareness their personal capabilities.

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3) a therapist needs to be aware of the subtle message (*I can't*) that is sent to a client when the therapist acts in the role of being an expert.

4) a therapist should attempt to facilitate a client's ability to recognize and shift between an external locus of control and an internal locus of control.

Recommendations for Research

Basic research studies need to be conducted into a person's ability to solve problems and one's hope. Suggestions for research may include:

1) specific studies of hope directed at understanding the relationship between (among); locus of control and hope, self-efficacy and hope, self-esteem, self-efficacy and hope, as well as learned helplessness, self-efficacy and hope.

2) the correlation between crystallized intelligence (verbal I.Q.) versus fluid intelligence (non-verbal I.Q.) and hope.

Theme #3 was a description of the movement from powerlessness (lack of control) to powerfulness (control). The primary process of movement was a shift from an external frame of reference to an internal frame of reference. The primary gain was an increased belief in one's personal capabilities. A secondary gain was enhanced self-esteem. The outcome of developing increased self-efficacy and self-esteem was the self realization that '*I am able.*' This theme described a process similar to empowerment yet, until the realization that '*I have choices* ' came into one's awareness, behavioural action could not occur.

Theme #4 - Is Choosing to Refocus and Reframe One's Experiences

Before the experience of hoping, a negative attitude toward life prevailed. One tended to view life from a victimized stance, blaming others for his/her life circumstances. After the experience of hoping, this negative predisposition shifted to a more reflective and positive point of view. As one of the co-researcher's so aptly stated "... after I had hope, what I would talk about is where I was going, instead of what had happened to me or what I had learned as opposed to being a victim" (Doug p. 46).

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This shift in attitude was first noticeable when a person moved from reacting automatically to negative events to intentionally responding to the same events from a more positive and cognitive stance. Thought was inserted between a feeling and a behaviour. This shift happened when one began to understand that all life's experiences were relative to one's subjective interpretation. The process of choosing to refocus and reframe negative events and approach one's life with a positive attitude paved the way for one to evaluate the circumstances of one's life differently and understand that *'I have choice.'* Such realizations decreased one's feelings of hopelessness and alienation, thus reducing existential anxiety.

Support from the hope literature. The hope literature has described the shift in attitude toward life that having hope provided. Pruyser (1969) stated:

> For hope is not a denial of reality, but a continued re-evaluation of its content in contrast to other possible evaluations ... the moment hoping begins to perceive reality as of a larger scope than the one he has hitherto dealt with (p. 93).

Frankl (1959) understood that having hope gave one the power "... to transform a personal tragedy into triumph, to turn one's predicament into a human achievement. When we are no longer able to change a situation ... we are challenged to change ourselves "(p. 135). Hall (1990) in her study of HIV-positive men found that "in order to deal with their diagnosis it was necessary to establish a future and a positive outlook on life, and that this was gained through changing their attitudes and priorities in living" (p. 114). Keen (1994) attempted to explain one aspect of the dynamics of hoping as:

> ... A more interconnected view of life either through God (Higher Power) or nature which created an opening for hope to be nurtured. This belief gave organization and reason for the unfolding of life events and procured a positive attitude exemplified by the ability to turn bad experiences into good memories. (p. 16)

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Hoping evoked cognitive change. Environmental conditions did not change but, rather than being narrowly focused with a negative attitude toward life, hope opened one to understanding that various interpretations exist. This opening allowed a greater amount of light to be shed on a negative situation. Positive could be found in the negative. The ability to chose a positive attitude unlocked one to risk acting differently.

Challenge to the hope literature. The hope literature addresses to some degree all three areas of human experience - the cognitive, the affective, and the behavioural domains. The nursing and psychological literatures on hope have emphasized trying to understand its behavioural aspects. The findings of this research study challenge the hope literature by uncovering basic intrapsychic processes which make up the dynamic process of hoping, thus integrating the interactions among thoughts, feelings and behaviours. The next challenge to hope research will be in attempting to tie the proposed basic intrapsychic processes of hope to other theoretical constructs and concepts in psychology.

Implications for Counselling

If the experience of hope lies in the ability to refocus and reframe negative experiences then

1) the importance of a therapist obtaining these skills for self, as well as helping a client to acquire these skills, may be requisite and necessary to uncovering hope.

If an automatic negative reaction can be altered by the insertion of reflective and selective responding, then

2) positive responses are facilitated by cognitive interventions. Teaching a client thought insertion, self-talk and other cognitive-behavioural interventions may be important skills to enhancing one's hope.

Recommendations for Research

In the past, qualitative studies have captured the multidimensionality of hope and quantitative studies have verified the multidimensionality of hope. In the future other studies could

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1) focus on understanding the interactions among the multiple dimensions.

2) develop instruments which tap into the multidimensional aspects of hope

3) develop descriptive studies to understand what interventions were hope inspiring from a client's, as well as a therapist's, perspective.

If the ability to refocus and reframe negative events in a positive light is an aspect of hoping, then

4) studies need to be developed that explore whether hope is a learned behaviour, a personality trait, an attitude or an orientation toward life.

An integral aspect to hoping was the development of a framework for understanding the interconnectedness of life. This framework helped an individual to derive the meaning and value of his/her life from within a broader context. Hence theme #4, *I' have choices*,' took on greater significance. Theme #5 will portray the importance of developing a connectedness to others.

Theme #5 - Is Understanding Life has Meaning and Value

Theme #5 - I am developing an understanding that life has meaning and value, shifted one from isolation to feeling connected to others. This shift in thinking exemplified the co-researchers' attempts to make meaning of, and find value in, their personal suffering. Typically, this was done by developing or adopting a comprehensive belief system which integrated the past, present and future as well as the physical and the metaphysical (spiritual). Personal tragedy could then be externalized, transcended and given meaning within a larger context.

In this study, the adoption of a belief system involved the acceptance of a spiritual dimension to life. The individual recognized his/her life to be unique part of a greater whole. The value of one's life was implicit within this belief framework. The meaning of one's life was usually viewed as an unfolding process of self discovery. The realization that '*I belong* ' in the bigger scheme of life provided a sense of trust or certainty. This

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theme defused one's fear of rejection by others and meaninglessness in the world, and thus reduced existential anxiety.

Support from the hope literature. Farran, Herth and Popovich (1995) suggested that hope in its "mature form becomes a sense of certainty about the coherent nature of life and an acceptance of one's self as worthwhile" (p. 22). The idea that a hopeful individual develops a sense of consolidation of identity and a connection to the larger universe has been widely supported in the hope literature (Dufault & Martocchio, 1985; Ersek, 1992; Miller, 1989) Other researchers, Farran and McCann (1989) have tied hope more directly to the adoption of religious beliefs. The belief that one's life has meaning and purpose has been described by Farran, Herth and Popovich (1995) as a transcendent spiritual process or 'soul' of hope. Hope without faith in oneself or others cannot be conceived "without the ability to make expectations fluid and not be overcome by the absoluteness of the present ((Farran, Herth & Popovich, 1995, p. 8).

Challenge to the hope literature. The challenge to the hope literature resides in trying to differentiate between the importance of relationships in hoping (a sense of community) and the importance of connectedness (a sense of belonging). In my opinion, a sense of community involves relationships with other people. From the findings of this study, hope involved developing a deeper sense of belonging which related to finding one's place in the greater scheme of life. This sense of belonging incorporated a belief in the physical world and the spiritual world. One's life had implicit value, but the meaning of one's life unfolded as time went on. The hope literature has moved away from its foundations in theology. The present research suggested that it might be beneficial to once again embrace the historical roots of thinking about hope in order to expand our knowledge of the experience of hope.

In the psychological literature, a theoretical basis for the a sense of connectedness and the importance of making meaning out of life experiences could be supported with

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Viktor Frankl's (1959) book entitled Man's Search for Meaning and subsequent clinical application logotherapy.

Implications for Counselling

If hoping is connected to the development of the feeling *'I belong'* then,

1) exploring the belief systems which develop a person's sense of being part a greater whole may be important.

2) uncovering the values which are operative in one's life would be beneficial.

3) making meaning out of one's experiences may be as important, if not more important, than solving problems.

Recommendations for Research

If hope is related to a sense of belonging and finding meaning and value in life through feeling a part of a bigger context, then research studies could possibly focus on

1) exploring whether spirituality is connected to hope by designing a study to provide information about the correlation between spirituality and hope; religiosity and hope; and religiosity and spirituality.

2) understanding whether spiritual people are more hopeful or whether having hope develops one's sense of spirituality.

3) cross-cultural research where different interpretations of spirituality or a lack of spirituality exists.

4) uncovering referential language and visual imagery for hope which implies a sense of belonging or connectedness.

The five themes of hope and the underlying process within each theme have found some credibility within the hope literature. The following section will integrate the underlying processes of hoping.

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Processes of Hoping Cumulatively Interpreted as a *'Change-in-Self'*

'Change-in-self' was interpreted as the cumulative effect of the processes of hoping, or the gestalt of the experience of hoping. Each theme had an underlying process which summatively created the opportunity for a *'change-in-self'*. This *'change-in-self'* was symbolic of an epiphany or new beginning - a transformation of being.

Support from the hope literature. Some studies in the hope literature have identified processes in the experience of hoping. Farran, Herth and Popovich (1995) understood the transformative nature of hoping:

> People who learn to hope despite an unknown outcome will probably be permanently changed and experience life very differently from those whose hope has never been challenged (p. 7). Hope involves a sense of consolidation and holding on to this sense of identity over time. (p. 22)

Pruyser (1963) recognized positive changes in personality and a shift in the affective state. "Hoping is a process; a psychic activity of persons" (p. 87). ... with marked positive changes in personality ... patience, tolerance and humility (p. 91). Nekolaichuk (1990)was among the first to allude to a change in the self. She concluded that the hoping process is "dynamic, interactive in nature and reflected in changes in the hoping self (p. 130). Nekolaichuk (1996), in an attempt to identify a structure for hope based on personal meaning and subjective experience, identified a multidimensional structure using principal components analysis. The dimensions imply movement and depth: meaning, vibrancy, engaging, empowering, and caring. Hope has been characterized as an aspect of resurrection that is not the creation of another reality but a transformation of the present reality into one of greater aliveness (Fromm, 1968; Lynch, 1974; Marcel, 1962; Farran, Herth & Popovich, 1995). All these studies focussed on movement and shifts in self, or viewpoint, suggesting the potential for processes.

Challenge to the hope literature. The hope literature has supported the various themes of hope and has even recognized the self as changed (Farran, Herth & Popovich,

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1995; Pruyser, 1969; Nekolaichuk, 1990; Nekolaichuk, 1996). What has not been explored is how this process occurs. These processes include an instinctual survival response, the realization of paradox, development of self awareness, refocusing and reframing of life's experiences and transcendence. Some of these processes involved cognitive functioning which marks the experience of hoping as a truly human experience.

Implications for Counselling

If the cumulative effect of hoping is a *'change-in-self'* then:

1) hope counseling will focus more on developing, understanding and becoming one's self. The underlying processes of hope would focus on self becoming open:

to change (*I am open to possibilities*),

to self awareness (*I am able*),

to choosing (*I have choices*),

to understanding life has meaning and value (*I belong*).

2) a therapist needs to be aware of clinical applications of cognitive dissonance theory, empowerment, self-efficacy, logotherapy and self-actualization.

Recommendations for Research

Further refinement of hope as a *'change-in-self'* process needs to happen. Hope research needs to be designed that

1) would confirm or challenge the presence of the underlying processes in one's experience of hope.

2) creates a better understanding about how hope can be both a primal survival instinct, yet a complex process of self development. (This would suggest that hope itself is a paradox, which may well be at the crux of confusion that surrounds this concept).

In the final section of this chapter, I will discuss the importance of inter-personal relationships to the experience of hoping.

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Inter-Personal Relationships

In this study, three types of interpersonal relationships have been recognized: early childhood memories with nurturing adults, which *seeded* hope; adult experiences with other caring adults, which *facilitated* hope in the present; and spiritual relationships, which *inspired* hope in the future.

Development of Hope

The importance of interpersonal relationships to the experience of hoping has been well documented in the hope literature (Buckley, 1977; Dufault & Martocchio, 1985; Farran, Herth & Popovich, 1995; Jevne, 1993; Keen, 1994; Marcel, 1962; Menninger, 1959; Morse & Dobernick, 1995; Pruyser, 1963; Snyder, 1994; Nekolaichuk, 1996; Stotland, 1969), but the qualities of these relationships have not been sufficiently explored in depth. This study made more visible the qualities of relationships that tend to facilitate hope.

Theories about how hope developed within an individual have been primarily hypotheses which have been analytically derived from theories of developmental psychology (Erickson, 1950; Fromm, 1968; Scott, 1959). This study will provide examples of what the co-researchers' recall as their earliest childhood memories of hope, thus supplementing the current hope literature.

Theoretical Background

Erikson (1950) explored the relationship between hope and trust and hypothesized that the first stage of human psychological development was "trust versus mistrust." If the biological needs of an infant to be warm, dry, fed, and pain free were met during the first year of life, he postulated that a basic trust developed between the child's maturing ego and the social world (Crain, 1980). The importance of meeting these needs was not in goal fulfillment but rather in the predictability, consistency, and reliability of the interaction with the primary caregiver. Either feeding on demand or a fixed schedule of feeding would suffice to behaviourally entrench this intrapsychic pattern of expectation

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for emotional fulfillment (reduction of anxiety). Thus the pattern of a nurturing interaction was more important than the positive reinforcement of need fulfillment. It was speculated that the ability to trust preceded one's development of hope. Trust was defined as an ego strength, because it enables a child to postpone satisfaction gratification.

Hoping Seeded from Childhood Memories

The co-researchers of this study all recalled nurturing relationships that, sometimes were the mother/child relationship but at other times were nurturing relationships from a variety of sources (aunts, uncles, friend's parents, etc.), which seeded their hope. The possibility did exist that these were the reflections of childhood from an adult perspective. Stories, however, remained meaningful personal interpretations of past experiences.

The perceptions that one was unconditionally loved and nonjudgmentally accepted revealed that co-researchers reduced their emotional anxiety in the present through recalling at least one nurturing relationship from their past. These consistent and reliable interactions transcended time, thus creating the possibility of positive predictions for the future. This study suggested that at least one nurturing interpersonal relationship (recalled from childhood) that was loving, reciprocal, trustworthy and safe promoted the development of self worth, facilitated trust, and seeded hope. Nurturing inter-personal relationships became bridges to intra-personal hoping.

Support from the hope literature. Very little was found in the hope literature about the relationship between the specific development of hope and nurturing relationships from childhood (Fromm, 1968; Scott, 1959). Nekolaichuk (1990) first described the phenomenon of the hoping self, but stated that origins of the hoping self were ambiguous. As such, the importance of Bowlby's (1951) studies on human attachment and bonding may be useful in understanding the development of hope within primary relationships. The role of significant others, such as substitute parents, role

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models and other attachment figures, in the development of hope (or in the destruction of it) warrants further investigation.

The findings of this study suggest that predictability, consistency, and reliability are important qualities of a nurturing relationship which engender childhood memories of hope. These concepts although expressed in different terms [i.e.. certainty (Nekolaichuk, 1990), confident yet uncertain expectation (Dufault & Martocchio, 1985), predictability (Nekolaichuk, 1996), acquired schema (Stotland, 1969)], may be significant in one's development of hope.

Challenge to the hope literature. Some of the existing hope literature suggests that the process of hoping has been conceptualized as an overall perception that goals can be met (Cantril, 1964; Erikson, Post & Paige, 1975; Frank, 1968; Frankl, 1959; French, 1952; Gottschalk, 1974; Lewin, 1938; Melges & Bowlby, 1969; Mowrer, 1960; Schachtel, 1959; Stotland, 1969), or the ability to set goals and then develop strategies to attain these goals (Snyder, C.R., Harris, C. B., Anderson, J. R., Gibb, T., Yoshinobu, I., Langelle, C., Harney, P., Hollerman, S., & Irving, L. M., 1989). Successful goal attainment has been cited in some studies as the foundational experience upon which hope is developed (Snyder, 1994). This appears to diverge from Erikson' s original concept of trust. Erikson implied that the development of a sense of reliability and predictability in others would consistently reduce one's emotional anxiety and, therefore, was foundational to the development of hope. This research would not support that goal attainment is foundational to the development of hope, but would support Erikson's original thesis that consistency, predictability, and reliability were the relational qualities that preceded hope. The impact of having one's goals in life met may be more influential in the development of an optimistic attitude toward life.

Hoping Facilitated by Relationships from Adult Memories

The quality of adult relationships was subtlety different from the memories of each childhood relationship that inspired hope. Hope inspiring adult relationships that

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were perceived as safe and trustworthy primarily occurred with someone the individual had not known before, typically a stranger. Each co-researcher felt safe with this stranger because he/she perceived the relationship to be mutually respectful, equal in status as human beings (nonjudgmental acceptance), caring, genuine/authentic, and honest. This stranger recognized the potential within an individual "to become" and "to do".

This reciprocal relationship facilitated two responses from each individual, a belief in self and the courage to look at what was really happening in one's life. The challenge/risk to look at reality from a broader perspective was possible because the individual identified at some level with this stranger and felt validated and understood. Safety, equality, authenticity, and mutual respect created an atmosphere where one could be challenged with honesty and reality in such a way that risking and change became distinct possibilities.

Support from the hope literature. The hope literature supports the importance of relationships (Buckley, 1977; Dufault & Martocchio, 1985; Jevne, 1993; Morse & Doberneck, 1995; Pruyser, 1969) in the process of hoping. In Farran, Herth and Popovich's (1995) book, Hope and Hopelessness, Marcel is reported as describing hope as something that occurs between persons - a relational process inspired through love (p. 10). Others have described the relational qualities of hope as well.

> Persons can influence another's hope through the gift of presence, or by communicating positive expectations and exhibiting a confidence in the individual's ability to overcome difficulties. (Stotland, 1969, p. 10)
>
> The language of hoping does not accentuate actions verbs, but verbs of relationships and receptivity. A hope is found, it is given, it is received. One hopes with, through and sometimes for someone else. Hoping is basically a shared experience. (Pruyser, p. 95, 1969)

Challenge to the hope literature. Relationships are the bridges, or vehicles, through which an experience of hoping is delivered to a person. Relationships provided

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access to hoping, but were not central to the experience, much like the air that carries the scent of a flower. The air is the medium of delivery. Air allows the experience to happen but air is not part of the experience. Relationships are the medium that allow an experience of hope to happen, but they are not the process of hoping. This does differ from the hope literature, which suggests that relationship tends to be a component of the hoping experience (Dufault & Martocchio, 1985). In my study, relationships are interpreted not as components of the hoping experience, but as conduits for hoping to be experienced. Jevne (1995) expresses this idea by stating that, hope "is administered through human interaction" (p. 125).

Hope Inspiring Thoughts for the Future

Interpersonal relationships that inspire hope in the future were spiritual in nature. These spiritual relationships tended to be hierarchical, comprehensive, and inclusive. Relationships were considered to be inclusive because each co-researcher came to believe that they were part of a greater whole, interdependent with all life, and interconnected through the infinity of time. They were considered hierarchical because the spiritual relationships were unequal; the co-researcher's being was subsumed by a greater awareness (Being) which was all loving, all forgiving, all understanding and all knowing. The comprehensiveness of such spiritual relationships reduced existential anxiety for the future and allowed individuals to move forward in their lives with feelings of safety and trust.

The intrapsychic pattern of these inter-personal relationships was one of reliability, predictability, and consistency. Cognitively, a belief was developed that all things work out for the greater good and that one will be taken care of, even though all their "needs" may not be satisfied. Emotionally, this pattern reduced anxiety, created trust, and inspired hope.

Support from the hope literature. The spiritual interconnectedness of human beings and the importance of an inter-personal relationship with Being/God/Creator or

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nature has been covered in depth in the theological doctrines of Christianity and didactic discussions of Thomas Aquinas and St. Augustine. The psychological speculations about hope (Buckley, 1977; Marcel, 1962; Menninger, 1959; Pruyser, 1963) laud the cycles and images of nature as the birthplace of hope because of the implicit patterns of certainty and renewal. The findings of this study would agree that a spiritual relationship is important for hoping to take place and expands the existing hope research by linking the reduction of anxiety to the seeking of cognitive patterns of stability (i.e., certainty, predictability, and consistency as reflected in nature and projected through time). In this sense, the experience of hoping is, then, no less than a re-enactment of giving birth and/or giving life to self.

Challenge to the hope literature. Some current thinking about hope has shied away from the spirituality involved in hope but, in doing so, has neglected human being's fundamental 'curiosity' or need to know and make sense of the unknown, and the fundamental need to feel connected to others.

Implications for Counselling

If relationships provide the means by which hoping can happen then:

1) a therapist needs to recognize the potential potency of the therapeutic relationship to make a difference in one's hope

2) a therapist needs to be aware of the importance of the qualities in the relationship which facilitate one's hope - respect, nonjudgmental acceptance, equality, caring, authenticity and honesty.

Recommendations for Research

Relationships appear to be an important context in which hope is facilitated. More research needs to be conducted into what aspects of significant relationhips facilitate the experience of hope. Possible research suggestions are

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1) a comparative study into what qualities of the therapeutic relationship a client finds most hope inspiring and what qualities a therapist believes to be most hope inspiring.

2) a study into assessing the levels of hope in both a therapist and a client prior to therapy followed by counselling interventions which are intentionally hopeful, then a post test to determine if hope in the client has increased. This focus might be augmented with a description of what a client believed was most hope inspiring, either content or process, in the therapeutic sessions.

Any type of research into the relationship between caregivers and clients would be helpful in identifying the qualities of a relationships which provide a context for the experience of hope to happen.

The Contributions This Study Makes to Our Understanding of Hope

The purpose of this study was to explore and understand the role of hope in the process of human change. The research question asked, "What is the experience and meaning of hope in the process of human change? This study deepens our understandings of hope by presenting these findings for consideration:

1) that the trauma and turmoil that precedes hope has been further refined to two types of crises, an identity crisis and an existential crisis.

2) that the paradox of hope encompasses both an instinctual survival wish for life and a higher conceptual process *'change-in-self'* which subsumed lower order processes

3) that the meaning of hoping is a dynamic and integrative process labelled *'change-in-self'*.

4) that the underlying processes of hope included: an instinctual survival response to existential anxiety, the realization of paradox or the awareness of difference, a process of empowerment through development of self awareness, a process of refocusing and reframing life's experiences which developed one's

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perspective, and a process of transcendence which developed one's feelings of connectedness with others.

5) that in the process of human change the role of hope is

a) an innate spontaneous response to existential anxiety, which alerts an individual to the necessity for change.

b) a facilitator for intra-personal change, so that an individual is able to move forward to make personally meaningful behavioural change.

I offer these ideas to the academic community for their scholarly consideration.

Limitations of This Study

Some limitations do apply to this research study. These findings are specific to a population that has been involved in a lifestyle destructive to self and others. These individuals have also been recognized by unbiased third parties as 'models of hope' to others. The co-researchers were typically involved in a constructive lifestyle for self and others for a minimum of three years or more prior to this study. The intent of being specific with this criterion was to be sure that a constructive life had been maintained over time and was applicable in other situations. As such, this is a reflection of what has happened in the past and may be subject to change in the retelling.

Many of the co-researchers of this study were counsellors and caregivers to others. This was not intentional. All co-researchers understood that they had changed, but had never stopped to consider what this process entailed. These co-researchers were interested in retrospection and in sharing their experiences honestly and openly. The sample for this study has been small but the information has been rich.

Another limitations is that the Significant Life Events chart has been specifically designed for this study, thus it is the first time it has been used to gather data. Further refinement may be necessary. Also spirituality was only reviewed from Christian and Aboriginal perspectives, and thus this research is contextually and culturally limited.

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APPENDIX A

A Proposed Study of Hope

Research Title: **What is the experience and meaning of hope in the process of human change?**

Researcher: **Jo Anne Keen**, Ph.D. Candidate, Counselling Psychology, University of Alberta.

Supervisor: **Dr. Ronna Jevne,** Ph.D., Dept. of Educational Psychology, University of Alberta.

Background to this Study

In partial requirements for the completion of my Ph.D. degree in Counselling Psychology I am conducting a qualitative research study to describe and interpret the experience and meaning of hope for people who have made profound change. The purpose of this study is to understand: 1) if, a relationship between the experience of hope and the process of human change exists 2) if, so what is the nature of this relationship. This study will make a unique contribution to Counselling Psychology because human change processes have not been explored from the perspective of the lived experience of hope.

This study will be conducted in the following manner. Twelve people who have experienced hope and profound change in their lives will become the co-researchers for this study. The criteria for people having made profound change is defined as individuals who have engaged in destructive and harmful lifestyles for a minimum of three years, then change happened, and a productive and meaningful lifestyle has been sustained for a minimum of three years.

The sample will be selected from people, who others believe and the participants themselves confirm, have experienced profound change and are 'models of hope'. The criteria for 'models of hope' will be persons who through their lifestyle change have become role models that inspire hope through their thoughts, words and actions.

I am looking for the following communication skills in potential participants: ability and willingness to communicate both orally and in written form, ability to be introspective and reflective as well as open to sharing personal experiences. The criteria for becoming a participant will be:

1) identified by their peer group as 'models of hope' (as previously outlined)

2) having had a lived experience of profound change (as previously defined)

3) a willingness to engage in both written and verbal explorations of their experiences

4) a willingness to commit to the necessary time and work involved in this study

5) a willingness to be tape recorded

6) a willingness to allow the use of direct quotations for thick rich descriptions in the final document of this study

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7) a willingness to allow articles/presentations from this dissertation to be published

If you have experienced hope and profound change and would be willing to share your personal experiences with me then you may be interested in volunteering for this study. Together, we will explore your hope experiences. Your experiences are unique and I will try to understand hope from your perspective. I will be checking back with you during the time I am analyzing what you have said, so I can be sure I have an accurate understanding of what you were trying to tell me.

You may withdraw from this study at any point in time. The data I have collected for this study will only be read or listened to by you, me, my supervisor, possibly another researcher and a transcriber. All raw data will be retained for a period of five years after which it will be destroyed. Your name can be changed and any other identifying data will not be used in my dissertation or future publications if you so desire.

The Proposed Research Process

In the first phase of the research project each co-researcher will be asked to reflect then write about: 1) your experience of hope 2) your experience of profound change.

In the second phase of this study each co-researcher will be asked to share with the researcher their personal life story from the perspective of gaining a better understanding of their change process and their lived experiences of hope. This segment will be taped recorded and transcribed.

The third phase of this study will be an in depth open ended interview with questions being drawn from both phase one and phase two. The interview will also be tape recorded and transcribed.

The audio-tapes and the descriptive writing is the data which will be analyzed for this study. The time frame for this study will be from January 1997 until April 2000. I will write up this research in either thesis or article format for my doctoral dissertation. The conclusions of this research will be what I have come to understand about the experience of hope for people who have made profound change. When I have completed this study, I would be very pleased to share my research findings with you. Other publishable materials, such as articles or speeches may also be forth coming from this study.

Sincerely,

Jo Anne Keen, M. Ed.
(403) 342-0551

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APPENDIX B

Informed Consent

University of Alberta
Faculty of Graduate Studies
Department of Educational Psychology

Research Title: **What is the experience and meaning of hope in the process of human change?**

Researcher: **Jo Anne Keen**, Ph.D. Candidate, Counselling Psychology, University of Alberta.

Supervisor: **Dr. Ronna Jevne,** Ph.D., Dept. of Educational Psychology, University of Alberta.

The purpose of this study is to increase our understanding of how hope is experienced and related to human change. The results of this study may be directly beneficial to the Guidance and Counselling profession in order to develop a better understanding of how to utilize hope in the assessment, facilitation and maintenance of human change. You may also benefit from this study by developing a better understanding your own experience of hope and your personal process of change.

During this research, I will be collecting information about your experiences of hope and change in three different ways. **First,** you will be asked to write about two experiences: an experience of hope then an experience of change. **Second**, you will be given the opportunity to talk about your personal life story from the perspective of sharing information about your background in order to develop a better understanding about your change process and your hope. **Third**, you will be interviewed about your change process and your hope. The questions for this interview will be primarily taken from your written experiences and your personal life story. These questions will be used to clarify, sharpen and concretize your personal meaning of hope as it relates to your change process.

All these interviews will be tape recorded then transcribed (your written work will also be transcribed) by a transcriber. My supervisor, possibly another researcher and the transcriber will all be asked to sign an Oath of Confidentiality before being given access to the confidential information (written experiences, personal life stories, interviews) which constitutes the 'raw data' for this study. In the final write up for this research study I may use quotes from this 'raw data' but in order to ensure confidentiality, I will change your name and any other identifying information, unless you choose otherwise. When I am in the process of analyzing the data I will check back with you to confirm that my interpretation of what you were trying to say is accurate. I will be happy to share the progress and final results of my findings with you at any time.

I will keep all the 'raw data' for a period of seven years in a locked filing cabinet. I will erase all the tapes after this period. Thank you for your help in this project.

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT **I,** _____,
hereby agree to participate in this research project.

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I understand there may be some distress to me during the data collection for this study. If the need arises I have no hesitation in seeking counselling if either I or the researcher acknowledge that this would be of benefit to me. I understand that I have the right to refuse to answer any question. I understand that I will also be able to withdraw from this research project at any point in time with no penalty given thus ending my participation in this study.

I give my permission to be interviewed knowing that those interviews will be audio-taped. I understand that this data will be kept for a period of five years then erased. I understand the information may be published, that my name will not be associated with the research without my permission.

I have been given the opportunity to ask any questions regarding this study and all my questions have been answered to my satisfaction.

_____ _____

Co-researcher **Researcher**

_____

Date

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APPENDIX C

Oath Of Confidentiality

Research Title: **What is the experience and meaning of hope in the process of human change?**

Researcher: **Jo Anne Keen**, Ph.D. Candidate, Counselling Psychology, University of Alberta.

Supervisor: **Dr. Ronna Jevne**, Ph.D., Dept. of Educational Psychology, University of Alberta.

You are being ask to sign an Oath of Confidentiality form because of your involvement with this research project. The material that you will be reading or transcribing will be extremely personal and sensitive data for all the participants. Therefore, I would ask that by signing this Oath you are indicating your commitment to upholding and respecting the ethical principle of confidentiality. This will serve to protect the volunteers who have chosen to enter into this project in good faith. Failure to strict adherence to this ethical principle can result in serious legal damages to both you and the researcher.

I, _____, swear (or solemnly affirm) that I will diligently, faithfully and to the best of my ability, execute according to law the duties required of me as an associate of the project known as **'What is the experience and meaning of hope in the process of human change?'** I will not, without undue authorization, disclose or make known any matter or thing which comes to my knowledge by reasons of my involvement in the service of this project.

_____

Signature

Taken and subscribed before me at _____ this _____day of _____, A.D. _____.

_____

Witness

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APPENDIX D

Guidelines On How To Write a Reflection About Your Experience of Hope

When writing your reflection about your experience of hope try to recall:

1) What was happening in your life prior to your experience of hope?

2) What incidents/thoughts/ feelings triggered (started it) your hope?

3) What facilitated (kept it going) your hope?

4) What might have crushed (killed) your hope?

5) When you think about hope what imagery (pictures) inspire hope for you?

6) Was hope connected to your process of change? IF so at what point in your change process did you become aware of your hope or IF NOT upon reflection of your change process was hope involved even though you may not have been consciously aware of it.

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APPENDIX E

How To Write A Critical Incident On Your Process of Change

When writing your critical incident about your process of change try to focus on eyewitness observations (your own) to obtain factual accounts of behaviours, important thoughts and vivid feelings which significantly contributed to you deciding to change your lifestyle from being destructive to yourself and others to being constructive to yourself and others. The emphasis is on incidents (things that actually happened and could be directly observed) which were critical (things which significantly affected the outcome). Please describe what you saw, heard or felt when you decided to change your lifestyle.

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APPENDIX F

How to Fill in the Significant Life Events Chart

Scale Interpretation

***Positive* Experiences**

Major Feelings -intense & continuous	5 - exhilaratingly positive feelings 4 - extremely positive feelings 3 - decidedly positive feelings
Minor Feelings -feelings come and go	2 - somewhat positive feelings 1 - mixed (+) and (-) feelings
	0 - neutral state / no recall of (+) or (-) feelings
Minor Feelings -feelings come and go	-1 - mixed (+) & (-) feelings -2 - somewhat negative feelings -3 - decidedly negative feelings
Major Feelings -intense & continuous	-4 - extremely negative feelings -5 - devastatingly negative feelings

***Negative* Experiences**

INSTRUCTIONS

1) Briefly **label significant events** in your life that have shaped who you are today. These events may be perceived by you as either positive or negative. Also jot down **how this event impacted** on you. For example;

What were the consequences to you?
How did you respond to this event? *thoughts* - "I believed that ....";
feelings - "I felt .....";
actions or behaviours - "I acted (did) ....."

2) Each sheet represents a 10 year span in your life; thus the age categories are:

0 - 9 years;	10 - 19 years;	20 - 29 years;	30 - 39 years;
40 - 49 years	50 - 59 years;	60 - 69 years	70 - 79 years

As you fill out each sheet please fill in the appropriate age category.

3) **Circle the experience(s)** that were significant in your change process from a destructive and meaningless lifestyle to yourself and others to a meaningful lifestyle to your self and others.

4) **Pinpoint (by means of a line)** where in your change process or in your life that you experienced hope.

Thank you very much for participating in my research project. Your contribution is very valuable in developing a better understanding about the relationship between hope and change.

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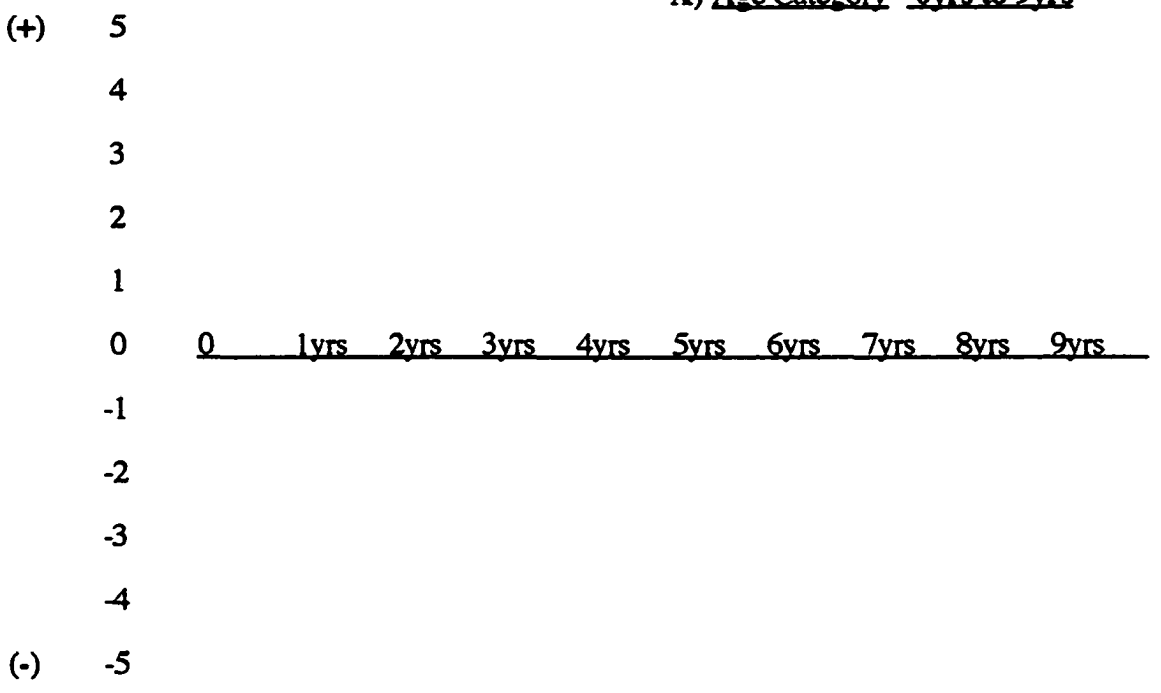
SIGNIFICANT LIFE EVENTS CHART

A) Age Category - 0yrs to 9yrs



Event #1 - What were the consequences to me?

My reactions to the consequences were:
I believed

I felt

I did/ or acted/ or behaved

Event #2 - What were the consequences to me?

My reactions to the consequences were:
I believed

I felt

I did/ or acted/ or behaved

Event #3 - What were the consequences to me?

My reactions to the consequences were:
I believed

I felt

I did/ or acted/ or behaved

Please feel free to use other paper to continue this format if more than three significant events have been recalled.

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B) Age Category - 10yrs to 19 yrs

(+) 5
4
3
2
1
0 10yrs 11yrs 12yrs 13yrs 14yrs 15yrs 16yrs 17yrs 18yrs 19yrs
-1
-2
-3
-4
(-) -5

Event # What were the consequences to me?

My reactions to the consequences were:
I believed

I felt

I did/ or acted/ or behaved

Event # What were the consequences to me?

My reactions to the consequences were:
I believed

I felt

I did/ or acted/ or behaved

Event # What were the consequences to me?

My reactions to the consequences were:
I believed

I felt

I did/ or acted/ or behaved

Please feel free to use other paper to continue this format if more than three significant events have been recalled.

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C) Age Category - 20yrs to 29 yrs

(+) 5
4
3
2
1
0 20yrs 21yrs 22yrs 23yrs 24yrs 25yrs 26yrs 27yrs 28yrs 29yrs
-1
-2
-3
-4
(-) -5

Event # What were the consequences to me?

My reactions to the consequences were:
I believed

I felt

I did/ or acted/ or behaved

Event # What were the consequences to me?

My reactions to the consequences were:
I believed

I felt

I did/ or acted/ or behaved

Event # What were the consequences to me?

My reactions to the consequences were:
I believed

I felt

I did/ or acted/ or behaved

Please feel free to use other paper to continue this format if more than three significant events have been recalled.

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C) Age Category - **30yrs to 39 yrs**

(+) 5
4
3
2
1
0 30yrs 31yrs 32yrs 33yrs 34yrs 35yrs 36yrs 37yrs 38yrs 39yrs
-1
-2
-3
-4
(-) -5

Event # What were the consequences to me?

My reactions to the consequences were:
I believed

I felt

I did/ or acted/ or behaved

Event # What were the consequences to me?

My reactions to the consequences were:
I believed

I felt

I did/ or acted/ or behaved

Event # What were the consequences to me?

My reactions to the consequences were:
I believed

I felt

I did/ or acted/ or behaved

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D) Age Category - 40yrs to 49 yrs

(+) 5

4

3

2

1

0 40yrs 41yrs 42yrs 43yrs 44yrs 45yrs 46yrs 47yrs 48yrs 49yrs

-1

-2

-3

-4

(-) -5

Event # What were the consequences to me?

My reactions to the consequences were:
I believed

I felt

I did/ or acted/ or behaved

Event # What were the consequences to me?

My reactions to the consequences were:
I believed

I felt

I did/ or acted/ or behaved

Event # What were the consequences to me?

My reactions to the consequences were:
I believed

I felt

I did/ or acted/ or behaved

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E) Age Category - 50yrs to 59 yrs

(+) 5

4

3

2

1

0 50yrs 51yrs 52yrs 53yrs 54yrs 55yrs 56yrs 57yrs 58yrs 59yrs

-1

-2

-3

-4

(-) -5

Event # What were the consequences to me?

My reactions to the consequences were:
I believed

I felt

I did/ or acted/ or behaved

Event # What were the consequences to me?

My reactions to the consequences were:
I believed

I felt

I did/ or acted/ or behaved

Event # What were the consequences to me?

My reactions to the consequences were:
I believed

I felt

I did/ or acted/ or behaved

Please feel free to use other paper to continue this format if more than three significant events have been recalled.

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F) Age Category - 60yrs to 69 yrs

(+) 5

4

3

2

1

0 60yrs 61yrs 62yrs 63yrs 64yrs 65yrs 66yrs 67yrs 68yrs 69yrs

-1

-2

-3

-4

(-) -5

Event # What were the consequences to me?

My reactions to the consequences were:
I believed

I felt

I did/ or acted/ or behaved

Event # What were the consequences to me?

My reactions to the consequences were:
I believed

I felt

I did/ or acted/ or behaved

Event # What were the consequences to me?

My reactions to the consequences were:
I believed

I felt

I did/ or acted/ or behaved

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APPENDIX G

Interview Guide

Preamble To The Co-researchers:

Keep in mind that I am seeking to understand what is the nature of hope as a human experience. I am particularly interested in whether hope has been related to your profound change (moving from a destructive lifestyle to self and others to a constructive and meaningful lifestyle) or not. If so, how, when and in what way has hope been related to your process of change.

Interview Questions

The purpose of the interview was three fold:

1) to elicit personally important information about memorable life events through the use of narrative life stories

2) to have each co-researcher focus on their process of change and recall the events, feelings and thoughts that comprised this process

3) to have each co-researcher reflect and elaborate on an experience(s) of hope

4) to have each co-researcher do some introspection about whether their experiences of hope related in any way to their process of change

The following interview questions typify the approach I used while I interviewed each co-researcher. Each question appeared in some form during the interview process and not necessarily in this order.

Narrative Life Stories

Question #1. What is it I need to know about you in order to understand who you are as a person?

Question #2. What are the experiences that have impacted upon her/him in order for she/he to become a model of hope today?

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Process of Change

Question #3. Could you describe your process of change from a destructive and meaningless lifestyle to yourself and others to a meaningful and constructive lifestyle to yourself and others. Reflect on how, when and why you changed.

Question #4. Did your change process happen gradually or quickly? Please elaborate.

Experience of Hope

Question #5. Describe a personally meaningful experience of hope? Question #6. How did hope enter your life?

Question #7. When did you realize that you had hope?

Question #8. What did hope mean to you?

Question #9 Was there any planning involved in your experience of hope or did it just happen?

Question #10. Did you think differently after you had hope?

Question #11. Did you feel differently after you had hope?

Question #12. Did you act differently after you had hope?

Question #13. Were others involved in your experience of hope?

Question #14. What words, thoughts, actions or feelings of others gave you hope?

Question #15. Did hope center and focus you or release you?

Question #16. Did hope give you energy or peace?

Question #17. Did hope make you feel big or small?

Question #18. Did hope make you feel powerful of powerless?

Question #19. Did hope give you choice or faith in a path?

Question #20. Did hope make you feel strong or vulnerable?

Question #21. Did hope help you see the bigger picture or enjoy one moment at a time?

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Question #22. Did hope make you draw closer to others of embark more on your own journey?

Question #23. For your hope to flourish was it more important for you to believe in something (if so what?) or someone (if so who?).

Question #24. Was it more important to believe in yourself or in what others told you about yourself?

Question #25. If someone believed in you , why did you believe what she/he had to say?

Question #26. What did she/he say?

Question #27. How did she/he say it?

Question #28. What was essential to your experience of hope?

Question #29. What could have been left out of this experience without you losing the essence of hope?

Interaction Between Change and Hope

Question #30. Were your experience of hope and your process of change related at all? If so please describe in what way.

Question #31. Which came first hope of change?

Question #32. Did hope facilitate your change or did change facilitate your hope?

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APPENDIX H

Process of Uncovering Thematic Statements from One Co-researcher's Interview

Step #1

I choose a significant paragraph then highlighted meaningful sentences and isolated the meaning units (meaningful sentences are in italics).

> I think watching the deterioration around me, watching myself deteriorate, but watching my kids deteriorate, watching them withdraw more and more, watching them become more un-childlike. *Those sorts of things, and you know, you know like I always felt there was this tiny, tiny little light over there (1-1) and if I could get to it (1-2), you know, we could just get going a little bit, a little bit at a time. (1-3) (all segments were colour coded pink for hope)* And I think that's what happened when we did start over, it was a very, very little bit at a time. And we hit the (existential[added]) crisis. I seen what had happened. I didn't want any more of that, I didn't want any more, I didn't want to be scared any more, I got to the point where I just didn't want to be scared (Bess, p. 27 & 28).

Step #2

I paraphrased highlighted sentences in an attempt to uncover the underlying nature and meaning of hope.

> *(1-1) like I always felt there was this tiny, tiny little light over there* - To hope is the visualization of light, a metaphor which implies thinking that a way out is possible, even before any realistic plan or action to escape might happen.
>
> *(1-2) if I could get to it* - To hope is the realization that I must make change happen.
>
> *(1-3) we could just get going a little bit, a little bit at a time* - Hope involves change over time.

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Step #3

Next, I took the paraphrases and attempted to abstract a fundamental sense of hope.

(1-1) The experience of hope is a cognitive expectation, a futuristic orientation, i.e., a visualization or creative imagery conveying a different reality exists.

(1-2) The experience of hope is the realization of I need to be involved if any change is to happen.

(1-3) The experience of hope involves patience.

Step #4

I then attempted to develop meaning units of the paraphrased sentences.

(1-1) difference does exist or change is possible.

(1-2) need for empowerment and self-reliance

(1-3) a shift in attitude toward time

Step #5

Next I clustered the meaning units into conceptual groupings in an attempt to capture the universal essences of the experience of hope. These grouping provided the basis of my themes.

Theme #1.

(1-1) Hoping opened one to "possibilities".

Theme #2

(1-2) Hoping invited one to become aware of his/her strengths and potential.

Theme #3

(1-3) Hoping refocused and reframed one's experiences to reduce anxiety and create understanding.

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APPENDIX I

Audit Trail

Project Title: What is the experience and meaning of hope for people who have made profound change?

Investigator: Jo Anne Keen, M. Ed., PhD. candidate
Counselling Psychology, Department of Educational Psychology
University of Alberta

Phase I: Development of Proposal

Time Period	Activities
Jan. - Apr. 1996	General reading in the area of hope and change in order to develop sensitivity and understanding Development of research question
Spring 1995	- Candidacy Exam
May -June 1995	- Ethics Review: \ - development of A Proposed Study of Hope form (Appendix A), Informed Consent form (Appendix B), Oath of Confidentiality form, (Appendix C)

Phase II: Co-researcher Selection

Time Period	Activities
June- Dec. 1996	- visited Fishes and Loaves Soup Kitchen, - Developing theoretical sensitivity - orienting to the phenomenon, my journalling, field notes, etc. - Direct contact made to groups and presented research proposal to AADAC, Womens's Emergency Shelter, Women's Outreach, Adult Psychotherapy Center Men's group, Alcoholics Anonymous groups for potential co-researchers. - Direct contact made with individual therapists to inform them about my study and to see if anyone might know any potential co-researchers - I followed up leads on potential co-researchers

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Phase III: Data Collection

Time Period	Activities
January 13, 1997	- Ist interview for pilot study (Ed), translation and data analysis
May 26, 1997	- 2nd interview for pilot study (Jan), translation and data analysis
June 15, 1997	-I attended an Alcoholics Anonymous meeting (Sylvan Lake)
June 30, 1997	- I attended an Alcoholics Anonymous meeting (Red Deer)
	- development of Guidelines on How to Write a Reflection about your Experience of Hope (Appendix D), How to Write a Critical Incident on your Process of Change (Appendix E), Significant Life Events Chart (Appendix F), Interview Guide (Appendix G)
July 10, 1997	- interview with Dan, transcrition and analysis
July 23, 1997	- interview with Elaine, transcription and analysis
July 24, 1997	- attended a Narcotics Anonymous meeting
August 25, 1997	- interview with Bess, transcription and analysis
September 14, 1997	- interview with Kathy, transcription and analysis
September 29, 1997	- interview with Phillip, transcriptiona and analysis
October 18, 1997	- interview with Doug, transcription and analysis
October 28, 1997	- interview with Don, transcription
November 8, 1997	- interview with Helen, transcription
November 25, 1997	- interview with Adrienne, transcription
December 14, 1997	- interview with Alexis, transcription

Phase IV: Data Analysis

Time Period	Activities
Jan. 1998 - Jan. 1999	- The transcriptions were completed.
	- Comparisons of audio-tapes to written transcriptions. - Coding completed. Themes began to emerge: clarification of meaning begins. - Reviewing of the literature on hope and change - Decision to use Prochaska's Stage of Change model - Preliminary diagrams and tables

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Phase V: Review of Findings and Preparation of Final Report

Time Period	Activities
Jan. 1999 - Jan. 2000	Verification of findings with co-researchers in small group discussion. - Peer debriefing - External auditor reviewed findings - Preparation of Final report

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