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A Portfolio on Family Experiences and the Motivation to Become Counselling Psychologists

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Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Psychology

City University, London

Department of Psychology

January 2011

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DECLARATION

I, Jenny Nam, the author of this thesis, grant powers of discretion to City University Library to allow this thesis to be copied in whole or in part without further reference. This permission covers only single copies made for study purposes, subject to normal conditions of acknowledgement.

SECTION A

Preface

SECTION A

Preface

A1: Preface of Portfolio of Work

This portfolio comprises of three pieces of work: a critical review of literature, an empirical research project and an extended combined process report and case study. The overarching theme of this portfolio is that of family experiences and the impact they have on individuals. This has been a subject I have always been intrigued by, especially when trying to understand my own family and my place within it. Since embarking on the profession of counselling psychology, my interest has increased hence the development of this theme for this portfolio.

The portfolio opens with a literature review, which sought to identify, evaluate and interpret recent research relating to a particular family relationship, of that between siblings. The review examines research on sibling relationships and children's adjustment in the hope to identify *how* the sibling relationship quality effects children's adjustment. Interest in sibling relationships has increased over the years acknowledging that they are often the longest relationships we will ever encounter. Conger and Kramer (2010) also recently point out that failure to consider sibling status when studying child development would be a significant omission. Eight studies were identified within the last decade, which focused their research on the sibling relationship quality and the adjustment of children from early to late childhood. The review highlights the complexity of the sibling relationship and how maintaining consistency can be difficult when investigating the impact of the relationship on adjustment. This is due to the many moderating factors within sibling relationships, such as the quality of the relationship, birth order, age difference, sex-dyad of the sibling relationship and the influences these might have on children's adjustment. Despite the inconsistencies between the studies, the review concluded that sibling relationship quality was correlated to children's adjustment, in particular, that positive sibling relationships was associated with positive child adjustment, however future research is suggested in seeking to establish *how* the relationship influences adjustment.

The empirical research included in this portfolio was inspired by my own personal and professional development and how I feel my family has helped shape my interest in counselling psychology. I therefore sought to identify how others who have also embarked on this profession have perceived their family has or has not influenced their occupational motivation. Trainee counselling psychologists were recruited due to their choice into the occupation being fairly recent. Semi-structured interviews were conducted and transcribed and then analysed using interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA). This approach was chosen due to understanding that it is impossible to

gain direct, unmediated access to someone's personal world (Willig, 2008) but the objective is to gain an insight into their thoughts and beliefs about a phenomenon. IPA also takes into account the role of the researcher, which is influenced by hermeneutic versions of philosophy, in that it involves a double hermeneutic, whereby the researcher attempts to make sense of a participant who themselves is trying to make sense of their experience. IPA does not make any claims on an external reality or question whether participants' accounts of their experiences are 'true' or 'false', or to what extent they correspond to an external reality (Willig, 2008). The aim of the research therefore was to gain the subjective experience of those who have chosen to pursue a career in counselling psychology, within the context of their family experiences.

The results highlighted four main super-ordinate themes through the detailed analysis of the interview transcripts, which offer an insight into *how* participants processed their family experiences and transformed them into their motivation to become counselling psychologists. These were early view of self; internalised family messages; growth; and adjustment challenges. Siblings were not identified as having an explicit influence on career choice, but they did play a role in participants' early view of self and the way in which they internalised their family messages. The impact of participants' occupational motivation on the family was identified as an overall reciprocal effect.

The final piece of work included in this portfolio consists of a combined process report and case study detailing my professional practice with a client suffering from depression and anxiety and how together we try to make sense of his early family experiences and their influence on the development of his low self-esteem. Fennell (1997) defines self-esteem as a global representation of the self, based on experience, which is influenced by how incoming information is subsequently processed. Although this client work fits nicely in the portfolio theme of family experiences, the development of my role as a counselling psychologist is also reflected upon with regards to my flexible use of a therapeutic approach. It demonstrates my ability to 'initiate, develop, maintain and end a purposeful therapeutic alliance' (British Psychological Society, 2006, p.6) through the formulation, treatment plan and approach and includes a ten-minute transcript of a session. Within the report my ability to formulate clients' concerns and practise safely and competently within a chosen therapeutic model (British Psychological Society, 2006, p.2) is reflected upon and how the difficulties encountered were managed with the use of supervision and continued personal reflection.

At the end of the following sections, a reflective piece is given to offer insight into the thoughts and processes that occurred for me during the process of constructing this portfolio. It is hoped that the pieces of work included, will succeed in evidencing my competencies within the different facets of the role of a counselling psychologist.

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SECTION B

Sibling relationships and children's adjustment

A Critical Literature Review

SIBLING RELATIONSHIPS AND CHILDREN'S ADJUSTMENT

1. Introduction

Sibling relationships are often the longest relationships we will ever encounter. As with any relationship, the sibling relationship can be multidimensional with positive and negative aspects. For example, the bond that can grow between siblings can either be seen as something special and positive or as something negative. The latter may be the result of a sibling being viewed as someone with whom to compete and of whom to be jealous. In some cases, siblings are found to be a source of support to each other (Bryant, 1992) whereas other siblings appear uninterested, uninvolved with each other and go their separate ways, only coming together on family occasions (Dunn, 1993). Bank (1992) defined a sibling bond as "warm and clinging, or fearful and ambivalent, or violently negative, or marked by chronic yearning and disappointment" (p.145). Research into sibling relationships can be considered from these two different points of view, positive and negative and will be the focus of this review.

2. Rationale for the Review

It has long been documented that family relationships have been recognised as important in a child's development (Brody, 1998). In the past, parent-child relationships have been regarded as the most important relationships in a child's development, especially for emotional development and attachment. Brody (2004) however found that siblings could also have a direct and indirect contribution on child development. Positive findings found were that interactions with older siblings promote young children's language and cognitive development, their understanding of other people's emotions and perspectives. Conversely however, the interaction with older siblings can also promote the development of anti social behaviour in young children.

Research into sibling relationships thus far has looked at what influences the 'quality' of the relationship, investigating what factors influence whether they are positive or negative. These studies have looked at factors such as different family types (Anderson, 1999; Anderson & Rice, 1992), the impact of divorce (Abbey & Dallos, 2004) and environmental and genetic factors (Feinberg & Hetherington, 2000). In addition, research into the effect of the sibling relationship itself has been conducted; such as the processes involved within sibling relationships (Whiteman & Christiansen, 2008) and how siblings resolve conflict (Ram & Ross, 2001; Ross, Ross, Stein & Trabasso, 2006). Studies of adult sibling relationships have also been carried out (Scharf, Shulman & Avigad-Spritz, 2005; Van Volkom, 2006; Spitze & Trent, 2006).

As Brody (2004) found, sibling interaction can contribute positively and negatively to child development. In addition to this, it has been noted in the past that sibling interaction could also be related to other development outcomes including children's adjustment (Dunn, 1998). Children's adjustment can be separated into positive and negative aspects or both and relates to the emotional and behavioural responses to the current environment. To measure for child adjustment, children's internalising and externalising behaviours tend to be examined. These include children's inward emotions such as for positive adjustment; general self-esteem, and for negative adjustment depressed and/or anxious mood for internalising emotions. For externalising behaviours, positive adjustment might include social competence, socio-emotional understanding and problem solving and for negative adjustment, problem behaviour such those that are manifested in outward behaviour and reflect a child's negative reactions to his or her environment. It has been noted, "adjustment disorder (AD) is one of the most frequently diagnosed psychiatric conditions in children and adolescents" (Newcorn & Strain, 1992, p.318). This is due to AD occurring at times of major transitions, such as adolescence (Chakrabutty, 2009). Adjustment difficulties may also arise from being involved in difficult situations. Jenkins (1992) pointed out that little work had been done on finding factors that protect children who are living in stressful circumstances from developing psychopathology (p.125). She thought, like Bryant (1992) that social support for children in these situations may come from siblings. Jenkins (1992) however found that children who live in disharmonious homes are more likely to develop hostile and aggressive relationships with their siblings than those in harmonious homes. In 1994, Dunn, Slomkowski, Beardsall and Rende carried out a longitudinal study looking at children's relationships with their siblings and the significance of that relationship for their adjustment from middle childhood to adolescence. The study looked at both older and younger siblings and found that differences in older sibling externalising behaviour and younger sibling internalising and externalising behaviour were associated with differences in their sibling relationships. Clear patterns of associations between the quality of the sibling relationship in preschool years and adjustment seven years later were also found.

From these studies, it is clear that siblings can have a huge influence on children's development and adjustment. Conger and Kramer (2010), however, recently commented, within a special section of the Child Development Journal, that failure to consider sibling status when studying child development would be a significant omission. They went on to acknowledge that including sibling factors in child development would significantly advance the understanding of a vast array of developmental processes. Due to the possible protective factors siblings might have on children's adjustment, this review focuses on examining studies that have investigated this.

3. Relevance to the practice of Counselling Psychology

Investigating aspects of this unique relationship and the affect it can have on an individual's adjustment can inform counselling psychology as stated by Gass, Jenkins and Dunn (2006). They state that by improving our understanding of the process behind the mechanisms of what makes positive sibling relationships protective, we will be able to determine how better to protect children from developing emotional difficulties in the future if faced by stressful life situations. If poor sibling relationships in early life predict adverse outcomes in a child's adjustment, harmonious relationships early in life may serve as protective factors (Kramer & Bank, 2005). Therefore helping to build this protective setting could set the stage for positive child adjustment and development. In addition to this, it has been found that having one or two siblings versus none is beneficial as Downey and Condron (2004) found in their study. They found that having a sibling was associated with enhanced social skills in peer group situations.

In addition, it has been found that high among the problems for which parents seek professional help is that of sibling conflict (Dunn, 1993). If this conflict involves an adolescent sibling, Long (2009) believes that "adolescents in conflict are actively asking for help, although their pleas may be misunderstood..." (para. 10). The systemic approach used by some counselling psychologists, uses a framework which recognises that the whole family is more than just the sum of its parts and that, although dyadic relationships can be considered as separate entities, these subsystems can also influence one another (Pike, Coldwell & Dunn, 2005; Hakvoort, Bos, Balen & Hermanns, 2010). Browning (2006) and Cox (2010) also state that new research concludes that sibling ties can be understood in the context of the families. This suggests that in order to improve relationships, the functioning of the family as a whole should be taken into account in addition to the sibling relationships. A deeper and better understanding of the patterns of sibling relationships and their role within the family will better inform clinicians as to how it can best be dealt with. In addition to this, Kim (2006) stated "sibling relationships are part of the larger family system of relationships and may both affect and be affected by marital and parent-child relationships" (para. 6).

Research into sibling relationships would also inform the world of psychoanalysis. Coles (2006) stated that until recently it was parental relationships that were accepted as central to emotional development (p.2) within this approach. She believed that the reason sibling relationships have been neglected in psychoanalytic psychological theory was because of the over-riding importance Freud placed on the Oedipus complex. Seligman (2007) also stated that sibling relationships are far more important than analysts have acknowledged in the realm of social psychoanalysis, saying that he has rarely heard any discussions of the sibling relationship as a primary influence on a patient's development.

To investigate the affect of this unique relationship on children's adjustment, the following sections will firstly highlight the process of how studies are identified and chosen for this review. Comparisons and a critique of the measures used are highlighted, followed by the studies findings and then suggestions for further research is made.

4. The Review

To keep this review as up to date as possible, the most recent studies (in the past 10 years) will be examined in order to investigate the impact of sibling relationships on children's adjustment. A literature search was made for articles relating to sibling relationship and children's adjustment (see appendix 1).

The inclusion criteria for this review firstly involved identifying those studies that involved children from early to late (5-12years) childhood only and those from intact families. Studies that were excluded from this review were those studies involving children above 12 years of age (adolescents), participants from different family contexts (Deater-Deckard, Dunn & Lussier, 2002), specific cultures (Soli, Alec & Feinberg, 2009); specific illnesses (Labay & Walco, 2004); and negative life experiences (Gass et al. 2006). Due to the prevalence of adjustment disorders in adolescents, this review wished to focus on examining the role earlier sibling relationships might have on adolescence therefore any studies that included adolescents were excluded. In addition, to attempt to control for possible confounding variables, any other family context, specific cultures, specific illness and negative life experiences were excluded so as to focus the review on the impact of the sibling relationship quality itself.

Eight studies fitting the required criteria were identified (see appendix 2). Among these the investigation of sibling relationship quality and children's adjustment varied in nature. The focus on sibling relationship quality looked at whether it predicted, was associated with, linked, influenced or contributed to children's adjustment. In addition to this, whether the sibling relationship was deemed positive or a negative for adjustment was also investigated. This review aims to evaluate the methodology, including the measures, respondents, and data collection and the findings, which will then be followed by an overall discussion and suggestions for further research.

4.1 Methodology

4.1.1 Measures

The measures used for sibling relationship quality and children's adjustment varied considerably (see appendix 3). Thirty-two different measures were used in total

between the eight studies. An evaluation of these measures revealed two distinct areas of investigation; relationship quality, which was subdivided into, sibling relationship, parent-child relationship and marital relationship; and children's adjustment. Within this section, the studies are referred to by the number they have been given within the tables in appendix ii and iii for ease of reference.

4.1.1.1 Relationship Quality:

4.1.1.1a Sibling Relationship Quality

A measure of sibling relationship quality appeared to be the only consistent measure among the studies, although the actual measures used did differ. Two general aspects of the relationship were evaluated; positive (warmth, intimacy) and negative (conflict).

The Sibling Relationship Questionnaire (SRQ) measures conflict, warmth, rivalry and relative power and was used by three of the studies (1, 3 & 7), although each used different features of the measure. Karos, Howe and Aquan-Assee (2007) were the only ones to use the full version. Richmond, Stocker and Reinks (2005) used a shortened version measuring only warmth and conflict. Both, however, gained data on both positive and negative aspects of the relationship. Stocker, Burwell and Briggs (2002) used the conflict subscale and therefore only gained data on the negative aspect of the relationship.

The Sibling Relationship Inventory (SRI) was another measure, used by two studies (6 & 8). Again each used different aspects of the scale; Kim, McHale, Crouter and Osgood (2007) used only the conflict subscale; and Hakvoort, Bos, van Balen and Hermanns, (2010) used only the affection subscale. Although each used this measure to gain just one polar end of the relationship (negative and positive respectively), alternative measures were used to gain the opposite: Kim et al. (2007) also measured for sibling intimacy and Hakvoort et al. (2010) measured the amount of quarrelling that occurs between the siblings.

Three further different measures were used by the studies that did not use either the SRQ or SRI (2, 4 & 5). In these studies, however, it was not the siblings themselves who reported on the sibling relationship, but others. Using observers to report on the quality of a sibling relationship, even if these were mothers (2 & 5), could create an inaccurate picture of this unique relationship. This however was not highlighted as a possible weakness by any of the studies, as this would only be an objective perspective rather than subjective of the sibling relationship.

4.1.1.1b Parent-Child Relationship

If parents were being asked to complete measures regarding their children, it would seem wise to control for the relationship between the parent and child. Stocker et al. (2002) note that a vast array of literature has documented associations between hostile parent-child relationships and children's adjustment difficulties (p. 52). Five studies (1, 2, 3, 6 & 8) measured for the parent-child relationship as well as the sibling relationship. None of the five studies used the same measure. Stocker et al. (2002) only measured for conflict; whereas Pike, Coldwell and Dunn (2005); Kim et al. (2007); and Hakvoort et al. (2010) measured for both positive and negative relationship quality. Richmond et al. (2005) differed again by measuring the parent-child conflict by gaining the siblings' view of their differential parental treatment. Most of the accounts of the parent-child relationship came from parents' perspective only, but Pike et al. (2005) gained the perspective of both siblings and parents on their relationship.

4.1.1.1c Marital Relationship

Although the studies chosen for this review were from intact families, three studies (1, 5 & 8) measured the marital relationship. Stocker et al. (2002) note that evidence has been found to link this relationship and children's adjustment. They therefore felt it important to control for marital conflict within their study. None of the three studies, however, measured the same aspects of the marital relationship and therefore used different measures. Two of the three studies measured both positive and negative aspects of the relationship. Modry-Mandell, Gamble & Taylor (2007) investigated the family's emotional climate in general by measuring for emotional expressiveness, child exposure to conflict and parental agreement on child rearing. Hakvoort et al. (2010) used two scales to measure for marital satisfaction and parental stress. One criticism of the measures of the marital relationships within these studies was that only mothers were asked to report on these scales. This immediately highlights a possible bias by not gaining responses from the fathers as well.

4.1.1.2 Children's Adjustment

There was a great deal of inconsistency with regards to the measures used for children's adjustment. As with sibling relationship quality, the measures for children's adjustment can be separated into positive and negative aspects or both. For positive adjustment; general self-esteem; social competence; socio-emotional understanding; and problem solving were measured and for negative; anxiety; problem behaviour; and

depression. Although there are many different adjustment characteristics that could be identified, none of the studies measured the same ones.

The inconsistencies therefore were highlighted with respect to the aspect of adjustment measured and the actual measures used. Only four studies (2, 6, 7 & 8) measured for both positive and negative adjustment, whereas three (1, 3 & 4) focused on positive adjustment and only one (5) looked at negative adjustment. Nine different measures were used in total. The Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL) for problem behaviour was used by five studies (1, 3, 4 & 6) and the Child Depression Inventory (CDI) for children's depression was used by three (1, 3 & 6).

4.1.2 Respondents

As already mentioned, the types of respondents also varied between the studies. In trying to establish the impact sibling relationships have on child adjustment, it would seem appropriate to gain reports from the children themselves. This may not necessarily need to be from the focal child and their sibling, but from the perspective of a child none the less. McElwain and Volling (2005) and Modry-Mandell et al. (2007) were the only ones who did not seek data from the children at all in their studies. Modry-Mandell et al. (2007) state that they interviewed the children but it is not clear what was involved in the interviews or what they did with the data. Not gaining data from the children themselves but from the parents and observers of what is quite a personal and unique relationship does raise questions regarding reliability and accuracy of the relationship. The remaining studies did gain data from the children themselves, mainly for internalising behaviour and their sibling relationship quality. For externalising behaviour (e.g. problem behaviour) data was collected from the parents. Using children's accounts of externalising behaviour may have created inaccurate data. Children may not always have been aware as to whether their behaviour was problematic or not, especially as they would have tended to display the behaviour in response to something troubling them.

Other respondent factors to note were the number of participants recruited; sex constellation of the sibling dyads; sibling birth order; age difference between the siblings; family size and culture/ethnicity of the families. The number of participants recruited varied between the studies, with four of the eight studies recruiting fewer than 100 families. Some researchers have commented that this will adversely affect the ability to generalise from their findings, and suggest the need to increase the sample size. The sex constellation of the sibling dyads was also considered in the majority of the studies. Some studies purposively ensured that they recruited near equal numbers within each of the four sexed-dyads. This created an additional controlling factor as to whether the gender of the sibling made a difference in the relationship quality and adjustment.

Although most studies did collate responses from the focal child, the majority included responses from the sibling also. Only one gained data from just the focal child (Karos et al., 2007).

The birth order position of the focal child and the sibling also differed, varying as to whether the focal child was the eldest or youngest. It is uncertain whether this would have made a difference or was even necessary because adjustment tended to be measured for both siblings. Perhaps it was to ease the recruitment of the same-aged children within each study and the age of the relevant sibling. This leads to the varying factor of the age difference between the siblings, which was confounded in many studies. McElwain and Volling (2005) highlighted this as a potential problem within their study where the age difference between the focal child and their older sibling ranging from 5 to10 years. In addition to this, McElwain and Volling (2005) also noted that the majority of these older siblings were the middle children in the family. As Cox (2010) stated earlier, an individual family member is intrinsically embedded in the 'family' system, therefore an individual cannot be totally understood outside the context of that system (p.95). A few studies (Pike et al., 2005; Kim et al., 2007; Karos et al. 2007; Hakvoort et al. 2010) implied that the participating families did have more than the two children mentioned in the research although they did not state the possible impact this may have had on their results. Pike et al. (2005) noted that not all of the older children in their study were the eldest in the family. This could have impacted on the children's reports about their sibling, with any additional sibling relationship confusing or spilling over into the actual relationship that was being studied. Having additional siblings who were not participating could clearly impact the measure of children's adjustment due to not accounting for the connection with these other siblings.

Although studies explicitly investigating particular cultures were excluded from this review, Modry-Mandell et al. (2007), Karos et al. (2007) and Hakvoort et al. (2010) used participants from particular cultural/ethnic backgrounds. Modry-Mandell et al. (2007) note that recruiting participants of predominantly Mexican descent may have influenced their findings. They anticipated that the sibling relationships would show higher evidence of warmth due to the ethnic background and this was found to be the case. They believe their findings add credence to the potential role of ethnic values in shaping family interactions and developmental outcomes. Hakvoort et al. (2010) studied families from the Netherlands, speaking only Dutch. It is questioned whether the measures used were successfully translated for this different culture. Only one of the measures was noted to be an adapted Dutch version (perceived competence scale). The Cronbach alpha values for all of the measures apart from the adapted Dutch version fell below 0.7, yet the adapted Dutch version questionnaire was >0.7, raising questions about the reliability of their measures.

4.1.3 Data Collection

The nature of the data collection also varied. Recruiting families and collecting data at the families' homes can be time-consuming but does provide rich naturalistic data. Stocker et al. (2002), Richmond et al. (2005), McElwain and Volling (2005) and Karos et al. (2007) invited the families to laboratories. McElwain and Volling (2005) observed children interacting with their sibling and friend within a laboratory playroom on their own. Karos et al. (2007) conducted the interviews at school. The laboratory play situation may have impacted on the results as Stewart (1983) found that when children were placed in a strange situation, more than half of all older siblings actively cared for their younger sibling if they showed distress when their mother left the room. Due to the nature of a school setting, where children are taught and tested on whether their knowledge is correct or not may have caused them to respond there as if they felt there was a right or wrong answer.

The studies within this review were conducted either at one time point or longitudinally. Due to the developmental nature of relationships and children's personal growth, including their adjustment, it would seem more appropriate to conduct studies on the effects of sibling relationship on children's adjustment longitudinally. Of the eight studies, four were longitudinal. It could be questionable as to how reliable the findings from the four who only conducted their research at one time point are, especially as these were the studies with small sample sizes. One issue that could have been problematic for the longitudinal studies would be the continuing participation of the families originally recruited. Although a couple of these studies did lose participants during the research, this was not an issue for the results due to their initial large sample size. Kim et al. (2007) did particularly well in only losing five participating families throughout the seven year period of their research.

4.2 Findings

Although various different measures have been used to investigate sibling relationship quality and children's adjustment, it has been found that sibling relationships do affect children's adjustment and, specifically, that positive sibling relationship quality is related to positive adjustment. Richmond et al. (2005) found that as sibling relationship quality improved, depressive symptoms decreased; Modry-Mandell et al. (2007) found that sibling warmth made a unique and significant contribution to child adjustment six months later; Kim et al. (2007) found that an increase in sibling intimacy was linked to an increase in peer competence; and Hakvoort et al (2010) found that sibling affection contributed significantly to self-esteem. Interestingly however, Pike et al. (2005) were the only ones to report that sibling relationship quality was linked to adjustment but only for the older siblings and not the younger siblings. This data was only collected at one

time point, however, so this result could be due to the younger siblings' not yet experiencing or presenting those adjustment difficulties which might manifest at a later age, as shown by the older siblings in the study.

It was also found that sibling relationships could also have a negative impact on children's adjustment. Stocker et al. (2002) only investigated the negative aspect of sibling relationships by looking at conflict within sibling relationships and whether it would contribute to the adolescent's psychological adjustment. They hypothesised that conflict within sibling relationships would be positively associated with children's externalising and internalising problems two years later. Their findings confirmed that sibling conflict accounted for the independent variance in the increase of depressed mood, anxiety and delinquent behaviour. They note that the results support the belief that sibling conflict contributes to changes in children's adjustment over time as opposed to earlier adjustment difficulties leading to conflict within sibling relationships. Kim et al. (2007) also found a link between an increase in sibling conflict and depressive symptoms.

Karos et al. (2007) looked at the sibling relationship slightly differently by noting that this involved a combination of reciprocal (i.e. egalitarian) and complementary (i.e. hierarchical) interactions. The association between these two types of sibling interactions and children's socio-emotional problem solving were investigated by examining children's reports on their perceptions of their sibling relationship and their experiences of positive and upsetting daily interactions. Karos et al.'s (2007) findings supported their hypothesis, that overall reciprocal interactions were positively associated with positive experiences and socio-emotional problem solving. Complementary interactions, however, were associated with experiences of upsetting daily exchanges. These findings suggest that more egalitarian sibling relationships are more supportive where neither sibling feels or acts as superior or inferior to the other.

Independently, other studies also controlled for factors that might contribute to children's adjustment. Pike et al. (2005) investigated whether the behaviour and or emotional quality from one relational subsystem within the family, i.e. the parent-child relationship was transferred to another. They hypothesised that a positive parent-child relationship would be linked with warmer less conflictual sibling relationships but found that the link between sibling relationship quality and adjustment was not entirely mediated by the quality of the parent-child relationship. Similarly, Modry-Mandell et al. (2007) investigated the impact of family-emotional climate on children's adjustment, but as with Pike et al., their results showed that although they found that an increase in sibling warmth could predict a decrease in behaviour problems, this occurred above and beyond the influence of family emotional climate.

Continuing the additional investigation of the influence of family relationships, Hakvoort et al. (2010) note that most studies that look at family relationships and children's psychosocial adjustment focus on just one or two relationships. They therefore chose to investigate three family subsystems (marital, parent-child and sibling) as they believed that the quality of family relationships influenced the functioning of children and vice versa. Their aim was to investigate whether the three family relationships would be positively correlated with each other, which they hypothesised they would, and the extent to which each of them predicted children's psychosocial adjustment. Their findings supported the spill over perspective that a warm marital relationship is associated with; a high accepting and low conflicting parent-child relationship; and with a warm sibling relationship. However, no association was found between marital and sibling relationships. Only the parent-child relationship and sibling relationships were found to predict children's psychosocial adjustment, but then only insofar as their problem behaviour and general self-esteem were concerned. Only the father-child relationship was found to be associated with marital relationship, which Hakvoort et al. (2010) explain, could be due to mothers' being more skilled at separating their marital relationship from the mother-child relationship. It was also found that only the father-child relationship was a significant predictor of a child's social adjustment and in particular that conflict within the relationship predicted problem behaviour and acceptance predicted self-esteem. Hakvoort et al. (2010) suggest that this could be either due to fathers' participation increasing as children grow older, thus influencing them more; or due to fathers having less input so being likely to have more conflicts with them.

Richmond et al. (2005) investigated the impact of changes in parental treatment and sibling relationship quality on child adjustment. They expected that warmer sibling relationships and positive parental treatment independently would decrease children's adjustment difficulties and vice versa if sibling relationships were conflictual and parental treatment was negative. It was found that changes in the siblings' context (sibling relationship quality and parental treatment) were associated with changes in their psychological adjustment. Richmond et al. (2005) however state that poor sibling relationship and parental disfavouring do not necessarily increase psychological difficulties, but that children within the developmental transition between late childhood and adolescence are sensitive to changes in the sibling context and these in turn are linked to changes in their psychological wellbeing. Changes in externalising behaviour occurred when changes were found in parental treatment but not in sibling relationship quality. Richmond et al. state that any differences they did find within the sibling relationship and externalising problems were likely to be due to being unfairly treated by parents. This could be questioned because only the parents reported on the siblings'

externalising behaviour, therefore it is hard to relate the siblings' views of their relationship and their externalising behaviours with one another. The findings also identified that parental treatment was more closely tied to externalising behaviour than to internalising symptoms. Again, children's internalised symptoms are not as readily observed by parents, as are externalising behaviours. Younger children's depressed mood was also associated with different parental treatment. A possible reason for this, not indicated in the study, could be that if parents pay more attention to an older sibling with more obvious externalising behaviour, the younger sibling could feel neglected.

McElwain and Volling, (2005) sought to find the extent to which friend and sibling relationship quality jointly contribute to children's behavioural adjustment. They hypothesised that the quality of the dyadic interactions would make unique contributions to parents' reports of aggressive disruptive behaviour. In addition, they also investigated whether the quality of sibling relationship would buffer the effect of potential negative effects of a low quality friendship on children's adjustment. More specifically, the hypothesis was that when relationship quality was low with one partner, an increase with the other would be associated with less problem behaviour. Friend and sibling interaction indicated that greater relationship quality with one partner did buffer children from poor adjustment when the relationship quality with the other was poor or average. McElwain and Volling (2005) did note however that the age difference may have caused a mismatch between the siblings' interests in play activities and therefore lower levels of social play reported.

Kim et al. (2007) carried out a longitudinal study to see whether changes in sibling relationships affect children's adjustment. Unlike other longitudinal studies, where the focus tends to be on questioning whether earlier relationship experiences predict later individual outcomes, Kim et al. (2007) point out that their study focuses on assessing whether changes in sibling relationships are linked to changes in children's adjustment. To test this, sibling relationship influence and links with perceived peer social competence and depressive symptoms were sought. The aim was to test whether sibling relationship qualities explained changes in youth adjustment beyond what was accounted for by the siblings' adjustment. The hypothesis was that positive sibling relationships would be linked to more positive adjustment and that conflict in sibling relationships would be linked with more negative adjustment. Overall, Kim et al.'s (2007) findings highlight the importance of the sibling relationship dynamic within the family context and that it supports the risk/protective framework. Sibling intimacy was linked with positive adjustment and sibling conflict was linked to poorer adjustment.

5. Discussion

This review clearly identifies that an investigation of sibling relationships and their influence on children's adjustment is not a simple task. There are many moderating factors involved in sibling relationship quality alone, which can be difficult to control for when investigating the impact of the relationship on children's adjustment. In addition, there are also many factors that can directly influence children's adjustment alongside sibling relationship quality. It is no wonder, as Dunn (2005) states, that although research into sibling relationships has increased, few consistencies have been found, highlighting the complex nature of sibling relationships and child development.

Within this review, the most striking observation was the degree of inconsistency found between the studies, especially regarding the number of different measures that were used. This makes it difficult to compare the research even though the majority of the measures independently show good reliability. In addition to this, the respondents to these measures varied. Sometimes data was gained from varying numbers of siblings or from none at all with parental data alone being used. At other times sibling data was gained in addition to that from both parents or just from the mother. Although gaining data from multiple respondents would strengthen the research, these studies were not consistent or clear in their reasoning behind some of their choices. A strength of Pike et al's (2005) study was that they obtained data about the sibling relationship from the siblings themselves as well as from their mothers. This allowed for a more global perspective of the relationship, as the children within this review were young and perhaps unable to articulate exactly how they perceived their relationship to be. Gaining additional data therefore from mothers could help offer a more complete picture of children's experiences.

Other inconsistencies, as mentioned earlier included; the number of siblings within the participating family that were not accounted for within the research; the various moderating factors being controlled for; and the variance as to who completed the measures. Many do not acknowledge the possibility of other variables that might have affected their results apart from Kim et al. (2007) and Karos et al. (2007), who account for moderating factors such as birth order, family size and gender and their impact on their results.

6. Suggestions For Future Research

Future research should focus on controlling the variables discussed above. Primarily this should focus on controlling for factors that might influence the sibling relationship quality and children's adjustment outside of the sibling relationship itself (e.g. for sibling relationship quality, birth order, number of siblings and sibling age differences and for

children's adjustment, children's personality traits and parental differential treatment). Although a couple of the studies did look at the effects of the sibling relationship on both the older and younger sibling, more research should focus on the different experiences children can have within a family. For instance second-born children benefit from learning from an older sibling, whereas first-born children do not have that benefit. Although it was noted that individual differences are important when considering the quality of sibling relationships, the temperament of the children and their personalities have not been considered. Modry-Mandell et al. (2007) was the only study in this review that measured temperament, although they did not say whether this impacted the sibling relationship quality and child adjustment.

Although all of the research within this review used quantitative analysis, which allowed for the investigation of individual aspects of these complex relationships and developmental stages, more interpersonal, qualitative research might be beneficial. A study by Branje, van Lieshout, van Aken and Haselager (2004) looked at the perceptions of the children themselves regarding their relationships and gained reports as to how they felt their relationships affected them. It was found that the perceptions themselves were more important than the actual measures of supportive behaviour. It could be argued that collecting rich qualitative data from younger children would be difficult. Pike et al. (2005) however found that the Berkley Puppet Interview was able to elicit rich data from children as young as four years of age. Ross, Woody, Smith and Lollis (2000) investigated young children's appraisals of their sibling relationships and found that they were able to provide meaningful and coherent appraisals. Brown and Dunn (1996) even found children as young as three years of age to have an understanding of emotion.

In summary, whilst it is still unclear exactly *how* the quality of sibling relationship influences children's adjustment, the current research does ask readers to question and take more note of the sibling relationship within the family context and on an individual child's development and adjustment. Not only would it be beneficial to get a clearer picture of its role in the development and adjustment of children, but also the effect on them as they grow older. For instance, if the sibling relationship has been negative in childhood, adjustment difficulties may continue in adulthood.

Despite the many inconsistencies, research to date paves the way for a better understanding of how sibling relationships affect children's adjustment. Dunn (2005) states that siblings do not only exert negative effects on adjustment but that positive dimensions of the relationship are also important. Gaining more understanding of the influence siblings have on individuals permits counselling psychologists to be better informed. As stated earlier, sibling conflict is the most prevalent reason parents seek professional help. Knowledge of the positive and negative influence of sibling

relationships in addition to other family relationships, will aid counselling psychologists in informing families as to identifying possible precipitating and perpetuating factors and showing them how to improve their relationships to live better together. On an individual level, having knowledge of the influence of sibling relationships on adjustment can help counselling psychologists help individuals identify whether any issues within the sibling relationship are intrinsically involved in any current difficulties. Adding another possible dimension in helping individuals formulate current difficulties can only be beneficial.

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SECTION C

Family experiences and the motivation to become counselling psychologists: An interpretative phenomenological analysis

Research

ABSTRACT

AIM: To understand the role family experiences play in the motivation of those pursing a career in counselling psychology.

METHOD: Eight trainee-counselling psychologists were recruited and interviewed about their family experiences and the influence they perceived their family had or had not on their motivation to become counselling psychologists. The interviews were transcribed and analysed using interpretative phenomenological analysis.

ANALYSIS: Analysis revealed four main super-ordinate themes offering an insight into *how* participants processed their family experiences and transformed them into motivation to become counselling psychologists. These were; 1) early view of self; 2) internalised family messages; 3) growth; and 4) adjustment challenges. The pathways between the super-ordinate themes show how family experiences play a significant role in the development of individuals' personal and professional identity.

CONCLUSION: The findings of this study did not necessarily identify any direct links between family experiences and participants' motivation to become counselling psychologists, although it is certainly clear that an influence was apparent. The main findings in relation to the impact family experiences had on participants' motivation to become counselling psychologists were; a strong value towards care, a need to gain validation and avoid rejection, a process of separation-individuation and an investment in self: what I really want. Siblings were not identified as having an explicit influence on occupational choice, but they did play a role in participants' early view of self and the way in which they internalised their family messages. The impact of participants' motivation on the family was identified as an overall reciprocal effect. The findings of this study can inform the training of counselling psychologists by offering guidance for personal therapy. The need for the profession of counselling psychology to become more prominent as a career choice within the field of psychology was also highlighted. Further research using other methodological approaches, such as grounded theory and narrative analysis will help delve further into the world of counselling psychology and those who are drawn to the profession. In addition to gaining more knowledge and understanding of counselling psychologists themselves, continuing to research this area will highlight any changes that might occur in a field where new developments are ongoing.

Chapter One

Introduction

INTRODUCTION

The role of the family has long been found to have a huge influence on our lives. For instance, early experiences of family interaction are known to be both beneficial and detrimental to the development of individuals. In addition to this, the way people interact and relate to one another within the family can give insight in helping to understand how our families affect us as individuals. This relationship between family members is often referred to as family dynamics and has often been strongly linked to the way people see themselves and others in the world, and influences an individual's relationships, behaviours and wellbeing (Becvar & Becvar, 2002). The process of developing a perception of the way people see themselves, others and the world is known as identity formation. Schwartz (2005) states that identity "helps one to make sense of, and to find one's place in, an almost limitless world with a vast set of possibilities and allows one to define oneself as something in particular" (p.294).

As individuals develop, obstacles are faced and decisions made, career choice being one. Lopez and Andrews (1987) acknowledge that arriving at a career decision is a difficult task for many. As families play a significant role in an individual's development it has also been well documented that they also have a role in the process of career exploration and choice (for example, Roe, 1957; Shoffner & Kelmer, 1973; Whiston & Keller, 2004; and Beauregard, 2007) . There has been an array of research looking into the motivations and family influences of various professions, for example, counsellor/therapists (Fouad, 2003; Rønnestad & Skovholt, 2003); medical students (Niemi, 1997) and social and health care students (Adams, Hean, Sturgis & Macleod Clark, 2006). Little however is known about the role family experiences play in the motivation of individuals to become counselling psychologists. The primary aim of this research therefore is to understand and explore the role trainee counselling psychologists perceive their family experiences have had on this occupational choice.

It is common knowledge that families play a significant role in the influence of its members, however this knowledge can be seen to have derived from different viewpoints. McLeod (2003[a]) notes how the most essential difference between different psychological paradigms is the understanding of development during childhood. The most well known theories on family influence come from psychodynamic psychology, particularly from the work of S. Freud, A. Adler and M. Mahler. These psychodynamic theories tend to develop through therapists' clinical work, where observations of clients are relied upon in gaining knowledge on the psychological processes and believe that psychological problems stem from unresolved developmental tasks. Similarly to the object relations school of analysis, which focuses on the relationship between the client and significant others (objects), inspired by those such as M. Mahler and M. Klein,

systemic psychology is interested in the relationship between those within the family 'system'. Systemic psychology however places more emphasis on what goes on between people rather than what is occurring inside them (McLeod, 2003). As stated earlier, the main essential difference between different approaches is the focus on childhood development. McLeod (2003[a]) succinctly described how cognitive behavioural theory is "largely silent on child development" (p.117). Cognitive behavioural theory tends to take a constructivist perspective whereby the attention is given to the construction of language, which is used to create the reality in which people live.

This study however could be viewed as seeking to combine these viewpoints by acknowledging that early experiences are integral to the way in which individual's view themselves and also how they in turn then process those experiences into their occupational motivation. As stated earlier, psychodynamic theory is drawn from clinical work, whereas cognitive behavioural therapy comes from quantitative work. By using a qualitative research method, this study seeks a different form of knowledge by not making any assumptions on what might be discovered, but is instead curious as to how each participant constructs their own experiences and transforms them into their life.

The following chapter will review the literature surrounding the topic of families and family experiences and career choice in relation to individual development. Chapter three describes the rationale behind this study and the significance and contribution it may make to the field of counselling psychology. Chapter four outlines the methodological process and explore the epistemological viewpoint of the research. Chapter five identifies the themes discovered during the analysis and chapter six details the research findings in relation to current theory and the literature research outlined in chapter two. Throughout this section, reflective accounts are given to offer insight into the researcher's mind as she journeys through the study.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review outlines and discusses the literature surrounding the topic of family experiences and career choice of individuals. This includes the construction of families and family identity, the dynamics within them and how members communicate and relate to one another. Within family relationships, the importance of identifying the influence of sibling relationships is also discussed. The review continues to discuss the family's influence on an individual's career choice and the significance this has for an individual's identity development. Finally, the review explores the development of professional identity and the research that has been done in connection with counselling psychology.

1. Families and family experiences

Many authors have questioned the definition of the term 'family' (Muncie & Sapsford, 2003). For many people the term is a stereotype, where the image is that the members of the family regard each other with affection and are supportive of each other (Dallos, 2003). Vangelisti (2004) however noted that the term could be "laden with imagery" (p.xiii). She stated that, for some, 'family' means something warm and supportive, with images of comforting embraces and warm chatty dinners, whereas for others, it elicits painful memories of being lonely, unwanted or of being abused by someone they love. Jones (1993) notes that the word *family* is continually used by all to mean something unitary, despite it becoming more common for people not to be part of what is traditionally known as an *intact*, two-parent, heterosexual couple, with not too few or too many children and where the women are seen as the home-maker and men as the breadwinners. Cigoli and Scabini (2006) however note that a wide variety of family forms exist and it is becoming increasingly difficult to identify who belongs inside the family and who does not.

Dallos (2003) views families as dynamic, where the members continually influence and are being influenced by one another. For him, the word 'family' is not an object but a process. Historically, before the 1950's families were considered 'private' and little information was known about the processes that occurred within them, until 'fámily therapy' evolved (Dallos, 2003). In 2005, Ross, Stein, Trabasso, Woody and Ross noted that, at the time, it was only in the past decade have researchers advanced the study of family processes, viewing the family as a dynamic system of interacting, adapting relationships. Day, Gavazzi, Miller and van Langeveld (2009) investigated family process research and they call a 'family' a 'system' due to the occurrence of reciprocal interactions and also because the members appear to have somehow identified themselves as a group. They go on to define the processes as a sequence of

temporal behavioural transactions within a given family group and also the interactional sequences that originate within the family that are transferred to those outside of the family system.

1.1. Family identity

"Each family creates a unique interpersonal system of meanings and actions, a version of family life which develops from the amalgamation of its members' negotiations and choices based upon their personal and shared beliefs and histories" (Dallos, 2003 p.176).

As noted earlier, the social context of the family at a particular historical time will have an influence on the values and beliefs that the family, as a system, will internalise. Within these social contexts these values and beliefs can be of religion, gender, social class, ethnicity and socio-economic status. Families are therefore constructed not only by the members within them, but also by the values and beliefs that they hold and communicate to one another. Cigoli and Scabini (2006) describe the family as an "exceedingly complex living organism, a social entity and psychological subject that both mirrors and meshes with its environment/social context and the cultural history it is steeped in" (p.1). Dallos (2003) believes that the idea of 'family' and 'family life' "is influenced by ideologies and discourses inherent in the society in which we live at a particular historical point" (p.174). He further explains how families do not just absorb these ideologies and discourses but translate them within their own 'family culture'. These are then the current traditions and dynamics of one's own family.

Dallos (2003) developed an approach termed 'the family belief system' model, which aimed to help explore the ways in which the beliefs held by family members guide their choices and serve to shape 'family life' (p.175). He went on and identified three distinct interconnected levels that underlie choices and beliefs; social, governed by what is perceived as acceptable and desirable within any given society; familial, the internalised joint beliefs and cultural discourses; and personal, an individual's own set of beliefs.

1.2. Relationships and communication

As the 'family' is made up of its members and is a process, communicating with one another is intrinsic and by interacting with each other relationships are naturally occurring. Cigoli and Scabini (2006) define 'relationship' as what binds people together whether they are aware of it or not and is a never-ending pattern of exchange. With regards to family relationships, Cigoli and Scabini (2006) describe them as firstly primary relationships. These they refer to as family members bonded

together as 'people' first and foremost. This means that they relate to each other in the 'totality and uniqueness of their being and existence, irrespective of the roles and tasks they have to perform" (p.27).

Dallos (2003) reflects how family beliefs become established and are maintained. A 'family' can be viewed as a 'system'. He states "this theory is fundamentally also a theory of communication and emphasises the patterns of action that are constructed through continual communication, much of which takes place at a non-conscious level" (p.191). Jones (1993) refers to families as human systems showing circular interaction (p.6). She continues saying that individuals both respond to feedback and elicit it in relation to those significant others with whom they interact. This feedback can be characterised as positive or negative, but ultimately is a circular interaction and exploring this can offer an explanation of how human systems remain stable or change (Jones, 1999). Vangelisti (2004) also talks about how families are created through social interaction and thus are formed and maintained through communication. She states that in order to understand families, their members and relationships, communication is essential.

Ross, et al., (2005) note how within the last decade, researchers are taking more notice of family relationships and how they are a dynamic system that is interacting and adapting. Two approaches have interested researchers with regards to interaction and are viewed as either the identification of the basic dimensions of family interaction or the recurring patterns of interactions as aspects of the exchange process (Cigoli & Scabini, 2006). These link with communication in that for the former, research would focus on the effectiveness of communication and, for the latter, on the patterns relating to the modes of communication.

Communication is also inherent in the way in which individuals build their identity, their own sense of where they fit in the world and who they are and should be. This is further explored later.

1.3. Siblings

Much research into the impact of the family on an individual has generally focused on the role of the parents. Sibling relationships, however, are often the longest relationships we will ever encounter. Bank (1992) defined a sibling bond as "warm and clinging, or fearful and ambivalent, or violently negative, or marked by chronic yearning and disappointment" (p.145). Bryant (1992) also found that siblings have been found to be a source of support to each other, although they can also be seen as something negative, which could cause competition and jealousy. As Brody (1998) noted in his review, children's individual characteristics and family processes

contribute to a variation in sibling relationship quality. In Section B of this portfolio, it was found that siblings' influence on children's emotional and behavioural adjustment during early to late childhood was both positive and negative. This is particularly important for children during adolescence, as this is when they experience a huge developmental transition.

Noller (2005) compiled a paper discussing sibling relationships in adolescence and how they grow and learn together. She identified characteristics of sibling relationships, which include, as mentioned already, the influence they have on one another and the longevity of the relationship and also the relationship as an attachment relationship. The complexity of the sibling relationship, as mentioned earlier, is augmented by the fact that families no longer consist of what was previously referred to as a typical 'nuclear' family (Dallos, 2003). With the increasing prevalence of divorce, it is becoming more common for, what might be described as, two separate families coming together to form a new 'family'. Noller (2005) stresses how important it is to be aware of how the lives of those living in intact, divorced, separated and 'new', combined, stepfamilies will be different. Anderson (1999) explored sibling relationships within different family types and found that overall stepsibling relationships were less negative than half or full sibling relationships. In support of this Anderson and Rice (1992) in their earlier study explored the effect of remarriage on sibling relationships. They found that full siblings in newly formed stepfamilies were more negative than full siblings in non-step families, suggesting that this change in family dynamics through remarriage caused friction between siblings. Abbey and Dallos (2004) however later found that in their study, siblings experienced increased closeness as a result of the shared experience of their parents' divorcing.

As the lived experiences of siblings are different, they can inevitably have a different influence on one another. As already stated, siblings can have both a positive and negative affect on emotional and behavioural adjustment in early to late childhood. Noller (2005) also notes how there is plenty of evidence as to how sibling relationships can also affect the cognitive, social and emotional development of siblings. Phenomena such as the processes involved within sibling relationships (Whiteman & Christiansen, 2008) and how siblings resolve conflict (Ram & Ross, 2001; Ross, Ross, Stein & Trabasso, 2006) have been explored. Noller (2005), in her study looked at how siblings handle the inevitable comparison and competition in their relationships and found that individuals strive to maintain a positive self-evaluation even in situations where others outperform them. Although individuals strive for positive self-evaluation, it is questioned whether this is a positive or negative experience for the individual. For example, some individuals may view

being compared to their sibling as a negative and stressful experience, continually feeling the need to compete, which could lead to sibling rivalry.

Sibling rivalry too can have either a positive or negative affect on an individual. Feinberg, McHale and Crouter (2005) investigated differentiation and found that some sibling relationships foster a desire for an individual to set themselves apart from their sibling, minimising the similarities and highlighting the differences. This, McHale (2005) notes is not necessarily a negative behaviour because this is a way for individuals to maximise parental attention and time. According to Feinberg et al. (2005), parent-child warmth helps in reducing conflict. They also found that sibling differentiation might be a strategy for managing sibling conflict and rivalry. On a negative note, however, Mackay (2010) found that the emotional context of the sibling relationship, i.e. rivalry and conflict, moderated the relationship between sibling abuse and later psychological adjustment, for example in relation to depression and anxiety. A case study highlighting this can be found in Section D of this portfolio. According to Scharf, Shulman and Avigad-Spitz (2005), warmth and emotional exchanges increase and conflict and rivalry become less intense in adulthood. McHale (2005) also notes how individuality and differentiation is not the only way siblings affect one another but that they may also model one another. She says that with regard to social learning theory, individuals tend to copy those they admire and look up to. McHale says that if an elder sibling has any of the three characteristics that are admired i.e. they are powerful, warm or loving, then they are likely to be influential.

The role of parental relationships, as already noted, also has an impact on sibling relationships, and in particular, parental differential and preferential treatment (McHale, Updegradd, Jackson-Newsom, Tucker and Crouter, 2000; Kowal, Kramer, Krull & Crick, 2002). Ross et al., (2005) note how parenting can influence the sibling relationship, especially if one child is favoured over another, again possibly leading to rivalry and conflict. Krull and Kramer (2006) reported that siblings felt that parental differential affection and fairness of maternal control and affection were associated with more positive sibling relationships.

1.3.1. Sibling order effect

Parental differential treatment can also be influenced by sibling order effect. A. Adler was the first theorist to recognise that an individual's sibling(s) could have an influence on them and their development as well as parents and other adults (Boeree, 2006). He proposed that parents of only children tend to pamper their child, taking special care of them due to them having put all their eggs in one basket so to speak.

Like being an only child, first-borns receive all the attention, yet when another is born, the first-born may then feel the need to fight for their lost position. Adler (Boeree, 2006) believed that, as a consequence, first-borns may become rebellious and disobedient, yet often precocious, solitary and more conservative. Sulloway (2007) states how historically, before the 19th century, the eldest child tended to be favoured by the parents. This was because childhood illnesses were rife during these times, so parents viewed the children who had survived and grown to be better prospects of transmitting their genes to the next generation. This viewpoint and behaviour towards the eldest is believed by Sulloway (2007) to have systematically continued over time.

Adler (Boeree, 2006) noted that the experience of the second child is different. Although at first, they gain more attention than their elder sibling, they tend to become competitive, continually striving to surpass them. Unlike the first and second born, the youngest child never experiences being "dethroned" (Boeree, 2006, para 70), yet they are second more likely to become problem children behind first-borns. This, Adler felt was not surprising due to the youngest feeling inferior to everyone else in the family being older and thus superior. He noted, however, that they might also be driven to exceed with so many "pace-setters" (Boeree, 2006, para 70) ahead of them.

Birth order effect has also long been found to be an important factor with regards to social customs and life experiences including choice of profession (Sulloway, 2007). Over the years since Adler's first suggestion of the influence of sibling order effect, many theorists have researched this (e.g. Sulloway, 1996; Zajonc & Markus, 1975). Frank Sulloway (1996) wrote a book '*Born to rebel: Birth order and family dynamics and creative lives*' where he outlined a model of personality development. This suggested that firstborn children hold positions of dominance and parental favour compared to later born children and, as a consequence, develop personality characteristics that coincide with parental interests. Since its publication, many researchers have tried to replicate his findings. Paulhus, Trapnell and Chen (1999) supported his findings, although Michalski and Shackelford's (2002) findings only partially supported Sulloway's model. Steelman, Powell, Werum and Carter (2002) say that since Zajonc and Markus's (1975) confluence model and Sulloway's (1996) model of personality, the belief in the birth order effect has been less supported and those who have experienced this in their research have been faced with what Rodgers (2001) states as the "birth order trap" (Steelman et al., 2002, p.256). They continue to

note that most academicians have rejected universalistic claims about the effects of birth order, especially when related to intellectual development.

As stated earlier, the sibling relationship is the longest relationship we can have. Dunn (1993) reflected on how individual differences are marked between siblings when they are children, but she also wondered whether these differences continue, as they grow older. According to Noller (2005), as the younger sibling reaches preschool age, the sibling relationship between them and an older sibling becomes more involved. She continued to say that as children develop into middle childhood, the sibling relationship becomes more egalitarian, although she states she is unsure whether this is because of attempts at dominance by both siblings or because the younger sibling begins to exert more dominance.

Due to the hierarchical nature of the sibling relationship, it can also be viewed as an 'attachment relationship'. The dynamics within the family change as time passes. As children get older, role reversal is often experienced because as children become adults, they can become primary carers for their elderly parents. As the parent-child relationship changes, the dynamic within the sibling relationship tends to remain the same. Bowlby (1980) identified five functions an attachment figure fulfils; can be used as a safe haven in times of distress; functions as a secure base when an individual is venturing out independently; has a strong emotional tie with the person; seeks to be in close proximity to the individual; and would mourn the loss of the person (Noller, 2005, p.6). Doherty and Feeney (2005) found that siblings meet Bowlby's criteria for full-blown attachment and Trinke and Bartholomew (1997) found that for the strength of attachment, siblings were rated higher that any other relationship (romantic, friendship or parental).

Research on the sibling relationship in adulthood has been less prolific, although the perceived importance of the relationship continues to change (Noller, 2005). Scharf et al., (2005) explored sibling relationships in emerging adulthood and in adolescence. They found that as individuals emerged into adulthood, their involvement in their sibling relationship decreased, however, they also reported that they became more involved in emotional exchanges and felt increased feelings of warmth towards their siblings. Van Volkom (2006) reviewed the literature on sibling relationships through middle and older adulthood. She found that life circumstances vary the nature of the sibling bond although, ultimately, the bond remains intact and positive throughout adulthood. Both van Volkom (2006) and Scharf et al., (2005) call for more research to be done on the sibling relationship in adulthood, with Scharf et al., (2005) calling for an increase in longitudinal work on this unique relationship.

It is evident that a family is comprised of its members, including siblings and the processes by which they communicate and relate to one another. These family experiences can play a significant part in the development of the members within them.

2. Identity formation and development

In relation to individual development, many studies have investigated the way in which families are found to play an important role in identity formation (e.g. Schultheiss & Blustein, 1994; Kelly, Towner-Thyrum, Rigby & Martin, 1998). Questions around identity are important for many people, especially during the transition from childhood to adulthood (Schwartz, 2001). Questions arise such as, 'Who am I?', 'What is my purpose?', 'What shall I do with my life?', making identity development central for many individuals. Schwartz (2001) questioned, "What exactly is identity? (...) to what extent is identity formed as an individual project, to what extent is it a function of interacting in social and cultural contexts, and to what extent is it a combination of the two?" (p.7). Winnicott (1965) talks about emotional maturity and relates to it to health. He proposes that an "adult who is healthy is mature as an adult, and by this we mean that he or she has passed through all the immature stages, all the stages of maturity at the younger ages" (p.88).

Erikson (1956) was the pioneer in understanding identity formation and development. He tried to describe the subjectivity of identity more explicitly by viewing it through different angles, wanting the term 'identity' itself to speak for itself. He stated that identity appears as a conscious *self of individual identity*; as an unconscious striving for *continuity of identity*; a criterion for the silent doings of *ego synthesis*; and as a maintenance of an inner *solidarity* with group's ideals and identity (p.57). Schwartz (2001) also described ego identity as "a coherent picture of what one shows both oneself and to the outside world" (p.9). This statement highlights the capacity and importance for individuals to feel a relation to an external reality (Winnicott, 1965) as well as discovering who they are. Kroger (2007) highlights through her exploration of the many different descriptions of identity the complexity of the concept. Schwartz (2001) also states how Erikson differentiated between identity and the *self*, which he says is loosely defined as that part of the person that knows and experiences reality, and *self-concept*, which can be characterised as one's awareness of "the internal organisation of external roles of conduct" (p. 8).

Erikson first developed an eight-stage life cycle scheme of development identifying key processes of development, tasks that must be fulfilled before progression to the next. Each of the tasks is relevant to the different stages of life development, i.e. youth, adolescence and early, middle and late adulthood. Schwartz, (2001) in his review of

eriksonian and neo-eriksonian theory, notes how Erikson's theory on identity is best represented by the single bipolar dimension; identity synthesis and identity confusion, which is placed in the adolescent stage of his eight-stage life cycle scheme of development. Identity synthesis is where individuals rework their childhood identifications into more stable self-identified ideals and identity confusion represents the inability to develop a workable set of ideals on which to base adult identity (Schwartz, 2001).

Erikson's (1968) work continued to develop the identity formation process, which are "steps by which the ego grows" (p.159). He centralised this around adolescence, as this was a crucial developmental time between childhood and adulthood. It involves the steps of *introjection*, the incorporation of another's image based on the satisfactorily experience of mutuality in early relationships; *identification*, the process whereby the individual becomes like those significant others with characteristics or features that are admired and *identity formation*, which is activated when the process of seeking identification as a basis of one's identity ends (Kroger, 2007). Kroger (2007) notes how this last step "allows the holder to mediate rather than be mediated by those earlier identifications of childhood" (p.11).

In addition to these concepts, Erikson also developed descriptions of the aspects of the identity formation process; *identity crisis; foreclosure; negative identity and moratorium* (Kroger, 2007). 'Identity crisis' describes a key turning point in one's identity development and not an impending disaster. Erikson (1968) only briefly mentioned the concept of 'foreclosure' to describe a premature closure of identity. 'Negative identity' is "a maladaptive identity resolution whereby an individual bases an identity on all the identifications and roles represented to them in their earlier development as being undesirable or even dangerous" (Kroger, 2007, p.11) and 'Moratorium' is a "period of searching for or exploring meaningful identity commitments. During a psychosocial moratorium, one lives life 'suspended'" (Kroger, 2007, p.12). Schwartz (2001) however notes that although Erikson was the pioneer in identity development theory, much of his work lacked theoretical rigour, precision and detail. Côté (1984) stated that Erikson's theory was "eloquent and artistic but from which operational definitions were difficult to extract" (Schwartz, 2001, p. 11).

Marcia (1966) was the first neo-eriksonian to elaborate on Erikson's identity theory by identifying a methodology for describing the process of ego identity formation (Yoder, 2000). This involved the status of exploration and commitment. Exploration concerned the exploration of "occupational, ideological, political and sex role options or domains of adult life" (Yoder, 2000, p.96) and commitment, the belief and action in these areas. Blustein, Devenis and Kidney (1989) state that commitment refers to the attainment of a

clear sense of self-definition or ego identity within one or more domains. Marcia (1966) also believed an individual could be assigned one of four statuses depending on their participation in these processes. *Identity achievement*, where a decision-making period has been experienced and is pursuing a self-chosen goal; *foreclosure*, where an ideological goal is being committed to but without exploration; *identity diffusion*, where no set direction or goal is being engaged in, whether or not exploration is involved; and *moratorium*, where struggle is prominent and identity crisis is experienced.

Schwartz (2001) concludes his review saying that much of the identity research has focused on establishing measures and suggests "continuing and extending the work on the effects of social-cultural contexts, including family environment, gender, ethnicity, and subculture, on personal and social identity" (p. 49). In a similar way to the development of family identity, individual identity is influenced and constructed by social-cultural context.

2.1. Family and identity

As mentioned at the beginning of this section, many researchers have investigated the way in which families play an important role in identity formation. Dallos (2003) describes how a family is like an institution and helps us achieve our own identity in four related ways: by providing emotional support and social stability; by promoting a sense of solidarity, to feel a part of something; by providing a set of roles in which we can locate ourselves within the social order; and by helping establish our social identities in a wider sense through our family experiences (p.164).

Meeus and de Wied (2007) reviewed twenty-five years of research looking at the relationship between parents, identity and adolescence. They identified four theoretical perspectives on parent-child relations and identity; parental attachment; separation-individuation; connectedness and individuality; and intergenerational boundaries. Parental attachment has long been identified as influential of children's development as well as sibling attachment as mentioned earlier. The influence of parental attachment is well known. Securely attached children, for example, are more inclined to explore their surroundings than insecurely attached children. Past research on attachment, however, has tended to focus on the mother-child relationship. Winnicott (1965) states that individual development starts with maternal care and that it changes and adapts as the child develops, to meet the needs required at any given time. A study by Faber, Edwards, Bauer and Wetchler, (2003), however, found that attachment with the father in particular was strongly associated with identity achievement. Being attached to the father enabled the individual to explore and commit to an identity. That same attachment, however, was also associated with the diffused status, and therefore could also inhibit individuals from

exploring and committing to an identity. Separation-individuation refers to when the adolescent releases their internalised image of their parent. This matches Erikson's identity formation and, as Kroger (2007) states, is when the individual begins to mediate rather than be mediated by those earlier identifications of childhood. Separation-individuation complements connectedness and individuality, which Grotevant and Cooper (1986) hypothesised was when the relationship between an adolescent with their parents changes from one where the parent is authoritive to a more equal relationship between the two. They continue to hypothesise that individuality is dependent on the level of connectedness in the parent-child relationship such that if, for example, there is a high degree of connectedness, there will be a high degree of exploration of identity. Intergenerational boundaries also relate to the boundaries between parent and child. Luyckx, Soenens, Vansteenkiste, Goossens and Berzonsky, (2007) found that parental control is negatively associated with commitment dimensions, showing that parental control of college students intrudes on their search for autonomy and their search for and approach to identity formation.

Other studies that investigated additional family relations on identity formation, including Mullis, Brailsford and Mullis (2003) found that high family cohesion and adaptability were strongly related to commitment for white males, yet for females there seemed to be no significant effect of family cohesion on ideological commitment. Hofer, Chasiotis, Kiessling and Busch, (2006) looked at whether personality characteristics, such as self-control and self-regulation of participants, was associated with how their family relationships affected their identity development. They found that conflict in childhood did not interfere with successful identity formation of action-orientated participants, whereas state-orientated participants seemed to benefit from a positive family climate during childhood in respect of their identity formation.

The family influence on identity formation can also be viewed in respect of individuals' occupational goals. Individuals are likely to experience Erikson's (1968) 'identity confusion' at some point, which is where uncertainty as to which course or profession to pursue is experienced, or uncertainty as to whether they wish to follow in their parents' footsteps with regards to their profession. Blustein et al., (1989) believe that career exploration could be a means by which individuals learn about themselves or find an occupational outlet for their identity and so is an important process. Nauta and Kahn (2007) also note the importance of an identity status, saying that the degree to which an individual is engaged in exploration and committed to an identity has positive implications for career decision self-efficacy.

3. Occupational motivation and development

Phillips, Christopher-Sisk and Gravino (2001) identified various themes about the ways in which others are involved in individual career decision-making. These included actions of others; recruitment of others; and the pushing away of others. Schultheiss, Kress, Manzi and Glasscock (2001) looked into the role of families and other relationships in the career decision-making process and found that they were mainly supportive.

3.1. Role of family on occupational motivation

Much research has agreed with one of the most prominent early career development researchers, Roe (1957) that families have an influence on an individual's career choice. Roe (1957) developed a theory regarding the relationship between an individual's early life experiences with their parents and the development of their interests, needs and occupation. Her theory suggested that parents create a particular climate that either satisfies or frustrates the early needs of the child (Switzer, Grigg, Miller & Young, 1962). Other researchers continued the investigation into the role families play in career choice. Crites (1962) noted an individual's identifications with significant others, particularly with parents, affects their likes and dislikes specifically in relation to vocational interests. Shoffner and Kelmer (1973) followed this finding and suggests that the way parents can affect their children's career choices is by acting as role models, being influential on children's self-concept, occupational motivators, job information resources and as providers of the developmental environment.

Young, Valach, Ball, Paseluikho, Wong, DeVries et al., (2001) reviewed research looking at family and career. They found that family variables such as parental attachment, support, marital status and other family dynamics had an influence on dependent variables such as vocational aspirations and achievement, career decisiveness, career aspiration, career commitment and career self-efficacy. In conclusion, they pointed out that career outcomes are deeply embedded in family process. Although familial factors, such as those mentioned have been identified as antecedents to career choice, numerous unanswered questions exist regarding *how* family relationships influence the career decision-making process (Blustein, Walbridge, Friedlander & Palladino, 1991). Hargrove, Creagh and Burgess (2001) investigated interaction patterns (e.g. quality of family relationships, family-supported goal orientations, and degree of control and organisation in the family) on career decision making self-efficacy and vocational identity, and found that these family of origin interaction patterns only play a small, yet significant part, even though many career theorists have suggested otherwise. Rather than it being the status of the family, i.e. intact or divorced, Johnson, Buboltz and Nichols (1999) found that it was

in fact the family functioning itself that played a role in career development of children. Johnson et al., (1999) state however, that the level at which the family is functioning requires further research.

Lopez and Andrews (1987) has previously noted that much of the research looking at the role of family in career decision-making has its limitations. The focus mainly looked at the vocational outcome rather than on the process leading to decision-making. The views of families are not seen as functioning as a whole; and the changing nature of work and of the family itself was not recognised. Blustein et al., (1991) noted that virtually all the major career choice and development theories acknowledge, to varying extents, the role of the family in career development, although the exact nature of the family's contribution to the career motivation and decision-making process remains unclear. A review by Whiston and Keller (2004) on the influence of the family of origin on career development noted that recent research found that both family structure (e.g. parents' occupation) and family process (e.g. warmth, support, attachment and autonomy) influenced career development across the life span. They also noted that the process by which families influence career development is complex. Chope (2005) states, however, that when measuring the impact of families on children, researchers may be inadvertently measuring the effects of children on the family (p.395).

Alderfer (2004) expands Whiston and Keller's (2004) work by referring to their findings in relation to family therapy theories. One important theory she touched upon was Bowen's family systems theory and the four major concepts underpinning it; differentiation of self; the family emotional system; multigenerational transmission processes; and the emotional triangle (p.572). Alderfer (2004) states that any of these concepts may contribute to the ease or difficulty of the career decision-making process. Differentiation refers to the degree to which an individual is able to function congruently with self and others. She continues, "the differentiation from the family and the family's aspirations for the child affects the ease with which career decisions are made" (p.572). As this is a prominent feature for those in adolescence and young adulthood, Alderfer (2004) believed that those who were unable to differentiate from their family effectively found it difficult to make choices based on their own desires and were more likely to do as the family expected of them. The concept of the family emotional system relates to the degree of fusion between the family members. Alderfer (2004) says that if this fusion is too strong, the process of differentiation creates high anxiety and leads to the individual's inability to leave home. On the other hand, if this fusion is too weak, differentiation may occur prematurely, forcing the individual to leave home. This results in their main concern then being for future survival and not being focused on a career. The

multigenerational transmission process relates to the way in which experiences are processes and are transformed into the present. Families are generational, changing with the continuing shifting climate of the social environment. Gaining an understanding of the impact the 'past' has on the 'now' could lead to insights into how individuals have introjected their family history. These may be identified by the expectations parents have on their children's career choice or the choice of an individual to follow in their parents' footsteps. The final concept, the emotional triangle, refers to the interaction between two people and the invitation of a third to help stabilise the emotions between the two. With regards to the family and the process whereby an individual pursues a career choice, individuals may find themselves in an emotional triangle with their parents. If, for example, an individual is anxious about their choices, one parent may offer support whilst the other undermines it.

Although much of the research has tended to focus on the family of origin, defined by Whiston and Keller (2004) as "the family in which one spent his or her formative years of the family in which one was raised" (p.495), research on the effect of siblings on career choice has been sparse. As mentioned earlier, the bond that can grow between siblings can be seen as something special and positive. With regards to research on sibling influence on career decision-making, to date only one study by Schultheiss, Palma, Predragovich and Glasscock (2002) has explicitly looked at the role of siblings in the context of influence on career decision-making. They suggest that some individuals learn about the world of work from siblings and use them as a source of information and support, and that individuals specifically seek advice from siblings, who act as role models. Other studies do not mention siblings within the influence of the families of origin. This may have been due to the participants' not feeling that their siblings have influenced them in any way, or that those who took part did not have any siblings.

As stated earlier, families are also defined by the beliefs and values that they hold. Brown (2004) states that, although the family of origin is probably the single most potent determinant of career development, he questions, "in what ways might one expect the family to influence career development, and have the most important family variables been studied?" (p.588). Brown (2004) highlights how learnt roles and family role expectations are also defined culturally and are therefore likely to have a powerful influence on a family's vocational behaviour. He feels this should also be considered when investigating the nature of the family of origin influences on career development.

4. Profession of Counselling Psychology

Counselling Psychology as a profession has its foundations in the humanistic paradigm (Lewis & Bor, 1998). Within therapy, the focus tends to be on the positive potential of individuals. The therapeutic relationship and the process that occurs between therapist and client is a major emphasis in counselling psychology training. With the focus very much on this therapeutic process, the 'use of self' in the service of the therapeutic relationship (Lewis, 2008), it makes sense to gain a better understanding of the therapist. In addition, the focus on the therapist 'self' has also been stated as being influential on, or the primary guide to, the theoretical orientation and therapeutic techniques used by them (Murphy & Halgin, 1995). For counselling psychologists to gain an understanding of 'self', training courses incorporate personal therapy into the programme. This offers trainees the opportunity to reflect on their development, learning from past and present and how this impacts on them and on their practice as counselling psychologists.

Much past research on counselling psychology as a profession has focused on client resourcefulness and motivation; counsellor/therapist competence; the method used; the match between the client and therapist and the qualities of the working alliance (Skovholt & Rønnestad, 2003). Research that looks at the motivations and career development of counselling psychologists, however, has been sparse. Research has tended to focus on the motivations and career development of counsellor/therapists (Fouad, 2003; Rønnestad & Skovholt, 2003); medical students (Niemi, 1997) and social and health care students (Adams, Hean, Sturgis & Macleod Clark, 2006). It is not necessarily suggested that the motivations and career development of counselling psychologist will be different, however, just as these studies have focused on one specific profession, it could be argued that an investigation of the motivations and career development of counselling psychologists is also warranted.

Goodyear, Wertheimer, Cypers and Rosemond (2003) identified various studies that looked into the family experiences of those within a psychology/psychotherapy background, including counselling psychologists. Unlike the research mentioned earlier, where support was found to be the most salient influence of families, Goodyear et al., (2003) found that practitioners reported unhappy childhoods, had experienced childhood abuse, physical abuse, molestation and had greater family dysfunction in their families of origin. They believed that these experiences affected their choice of career, and that the act of providing psychological help is itself therapeutic.

Choosing a career as a therapist has in the past been commonly suggested as being due to an individual's attempt to resolve personal psychological distress, by, for instance, working through issues pertaining to disturbance in their family of origin

(Murphy & Halgin, 1995). Elliott and Guy (1993) compared female mental health professionals with females in other professions and found that the female mental health professionals reported more psychological distress, trauma and interpersonal conflict. They proposed that this early psychological distress predisposed them to pursue care-taking professions. Norcoss and Guy (1989), however, note that a family history of distress is not universal among those becoming psychotherapists. Murphy and Halgin (1995) compared influences on career choice between clinical psychologists practising psychotherapy and social psychologists and found that although some psychotherapists did report early family distress and that this had an influence on their choice of career, others did not. They therefore conclude that it would be unwarranted to suggest that it is primarily the case for most psychotherapists.

Although the research quoted here is rather old, this concept, of being a 'wounded healer' is a historical one and a perspective that remains the same today. Stone (2008) and Davis (2009) relate this concept of 'wounded healer' to compassion and cultivation of empathy respectively. They both suggest that some choose helping professions not so that they can vicariously heal themselves through others, but because they believe that an individual's own past difficult experiences offers them increased empathy for their clients. Another reason why past research highlights psychologist's past difficult experiences may be due to the nature of therapy and its training, a greater prominence of family distress has been found to be a primary influence on career choice. On the other hand, in order to become an effective therapist in a profession whose focus is psychological distress, it is necessary during training that an awareness of personal issues is developed and that these are recognised and possibly dealt with. The presence of such issues, therefore, is more likely to be noted by those pursuing psychotherapy training than by those in other fields. Murphy and Halgin (1995) suggest that perhaps the wounds of therapists have been exaggerated due to the nature of the work compared to other professionals.

Only one study to date has been found to focus specifically on the motivations of individuals to become counselling psychologists, that by DiCaccavo (2002). This study, however, also suggests that counselling psychologists have had difficult childhoods as she considers the influence of early care-taking roles. DiCaccavo (2002) found that counselling psychology trainees reported significantly lower levels of care from their mothers than did art students. Murphy and Halgin (1995) suggest that potential links between specific experiences and motivations and subsequent career choice and professional behaviour deserve further attention (p.426). The following chapter details the significance of and contributions made by exploring the nature of individuals' career choices and the role of family experiences on the world of counselling psychology.

Chapter Three

Significance and Contributions

SIGNIFICANCE AND CONTRIBUTIONS

Investigating the role of families in individuals' career choices is beneficial to career counsellors. Whiston and Keller (2004) say that because individuals are most likely to seek assistance with career decisions from family members, it is important that counselling psychologists understand how families can have a positive influence and facilitate career development of clients. Skovholt and Rønnestad (2003) say that career development as a discipline is closely aligned to the field of counselling psychology and suggest that more focus should be on the therapist/counsellor. They point out that "like 'the shoemaker who has no shoes' counsellors have neglected research on their own life-long career development" (p.2).

Rønnestad and Skovholt (2001) found that family experiences can have an impact on the professional practice and development of senior psychotherapists. Early life experiences fell into two categories, positive, which were seen to have modelling and guiding qualities; and negative, which elicited counter reaction. In addition, Wampold (2001) concluded that 'who' the therapist is, makes a bigger difference than the method used. As noted earlier, much importance is placed on the therapeutic relationship between the therapist and client, but most studies look at the client. The influences of individuals' motivation towards counselling psychology may help gain a better understanding of the processes that occur within the practice and development of practitioners. Becvar and Becvar (2002) also note that an understanding of the impact of family dynamics may also pinpoint the driving forces behind an individual's motivation.

Personal therapy for counselling psychologists was also found to be beneficial for both personal and professional issues (Williams, Coyle, Lyons, 1999; Grimmer & Tribe, 2001 & Rizq & Target, 2008[a]). It may be beneficial to offer guidance to trainees to explore their family experiences, especially as these have been found to impact on professional practice. DiCaccavo (2002) notes that the results of her study emphasise the importance of self-care for counselling psychologists, especially for those who have had their own needs neglected at an early age.

As the research by DiCaccavo (2002) is the only study that has looked at the career choice of counselling psychologists, this study proposes to look at the family influences of counselling psychologists. The aim of this study therefore is to investigate how an individual's family experiences influences their motivation to choose a career in counselling psychology. As stated earlier, the systemic nature of family relationships concerns the associations between their parts as well as the contexts in which they are situated. Vangelisti (2005) stresses the importance of understanding family communications in order to make sense of the family systems and hence the interaction

between individuals and their family experiences. The contributions this study could make to the profession are that it may enlighten professional practice and development of practitioners; guide personal therapy; inform training needs; add to the existing theories of career development and build theory regarding the motivation of trainees to become counselling psychologists.

As this literature review highlights, families have been found to have an influence on career motivation and choice. To begin to examine the exact nature of the family's contribution, qualitative research is undertaken in order to investigate the relational context in which the career motivation process occurs. A discovery-orientated approach was also chosen to explore the relationship between family experiences and career motivation. The research question thus is "How do trainee's process their family experiences and transform them into their motivation to become counselling psychologists?" The results hope to answer additional questions such as whether siblings influenced this career choice and what impact this choice has had on the family itself. In answering these questions, this study hopes to add to the existing theory of career development and family influences on this.

REFLECTIONS

My interest in family experiences has come from my own experience of personal therapy since commencing training as a counselling psychologist. Although this has been the focus of my therapy sessions, I have long wondered about my family's influence, the dynamics and my trying to make sense of where I fit within it. I feel I was taught to think psychologically from an early age as both my parents are in the profession; my mother a consultant clinical psychologist and my father a consultant psychiatrist. When I first had to choose a career path by selecting A-Levels to best support this choice, I actually did not know what career path I wanted. Initially, I chose to follow a hobby of mine, the love of horses and so went on to do an HND in Horse Studies, Management and Technology and worked in the field for a number of years. I however realised that looking after other people's horses did not offer very good financial rewards. I gave this up and was again in a position where I did not know what I wanted to do with my life. For two years, I worked for a temping agency doing office administration roles. It was not until, chatting with my mother, I mentioned my interest in psychology. I did not ever think of choosing this career before, as I believed my mother did not want me to. However, as soon as I mentioned this to her she was delighted and it was from this point that my career path moved towards counselling psychology.

In addition to believing that my parents' psychological background has influenced me, I also feel that my siblings have played a role in my beliefs about the need to succeed. I am from a mixed family dynamic, an only daughter from my parents' marriage and the youngest, but also have two sets of half siblings; three siblings from my father's first marriage and a brother from my mother's. Due to the age difference between my siblings from my father's first marriage, (10, 12 and 14 years difference) they had left home to go to university by the time I was old enough to really interact with them and my brother from my mother's first marriage went to boarding school, so I felt as though I was an only child. This was a bizarre experience in itself, feeling as though I am an only child with no one to compete with, but also feeling the need to compete with siblings. This feeling the need to compete I believe came from the fact that my siblings are high achievers, two being in the medical profession; a G.P. and an oncologist. I felt I had a lot to live up to. It is this complex family dynamic and my experiences within it that led me to choose this topic for this thesis.

In relation to the methodological approach I had chosen to explore the family experiences of other people who had also chosen counselling psychology. It was the

process of writing these next three chapters that caused me some discomfort. I am relatively new to qualitative research and so I naturally experienced some anxiety, wanting to ensure I did things correctly.

The common perception that those who pursue a career in therapy are doing so in order to achieve a sense of therapeutic fulfilment for themselves makes me curious. I question those studies (e.g. Goodyear et al., 2003; Elliot & Guy, 1993) that have found this to be the case as psychological distress is subjective and what may seem distressing to one, may not be for others.

Chapter Four

Methodology

METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the rationale for the methodology chosen, including research design, epistemological stance and methodological procedures used to obtain and analyse the data for this research. The final section of this chapter details the reflexivity processes undertaken throughout the research, which will be written from a first person account to reflect the epistemological stance of the whole study.

1. INTRODUCTION & RESEARCH AIM

It has been noted that the family has long been found to have a huge influence on our lives, including career choice. There has been an array of research looking into the motivations and family influences of various professions, for example, counsellor/therapists (Fouad, 2003; Rønnestad & Skovholt, 2003); medical students (Niemi, 1997) and social and health care students (Adams, Hean, Sturgis & Macleod Clark, 2006). Little, however, is known about the motivations of individuals to become counselling psychologists. The primary aim of this research therefore is to explore how such individuals perceive their family experiences has influenced their choice and motivation to become counselling psychologists.

2. RATIONALE FOR QUALITATIVE RESEARCH DESIGN

Quantitative research has been the most dominant methodological approach in psychological research. The quantitative paradigm however has a strong emphasis on the measurement and analysis of causal or correlational relationships between variables (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). Quantitative research is shaped by positive and postpositive traditions, which hold that a reality exists and that the objective is to seek, capture, measure and understand this 'reality'. Qualitative research on the other hand seeks to examine the socially constructed nature of reality; how social experiences are created and given meaning. Qualitative research therefore is generally built around the collection and analysis of accounts that people offer regarding their experiences. Geertz, (1973) suggest that it offers an approach that allows rich descriptive accounts of the phenomena under investigation to be gained.

Guba and Lincoln (1994) describe human behaviour as being like physical objects in that they cannot be understood without reference to the meaning and purpose attached to them by individuals and their activities. The aim of this study is exploratory in nature, seeking to gain and understand individuals' subjective experience of the phenomena under investigation, their family experiences and the influence these have on their motivation to become counselling psychologists. A qualitative research design was therefore adopted.

McLeod (2003[b]) distinguishes two broad types of activities which qualitative research can be divided: gathering data and analysing data. The latter is explored in the next section. With regards to gathering data, qualitative research involves the collection of naturalistic data in the form of, for example, verbal reports (Smith, 2003). Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) point out that the purpose of qualitative interviews is to seek to understand themes of the lived daily world from a person's own perspective. Due to the exploratory aim of this research study, semi-structured interviews were chosen. Semi-structured interviews are described as non-directive since the questions are designed to act as triggers encouraging the participant to talk (Willig, 2008). The aim is to reflect an everyday conversation but to have a professional structure and purpose, guided by the research aim, in order to obtain detailed subjective accounts of participants' experiences with regards to the specific phenomena. Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) point out that it is neither a conversation nor a closed questionnaire

The decision to use a qualitative approach for this study was also influenced by the underlying principles of counselling psychology. Strawbridge and Woolfe (2003) point out that counselling psychology focuses mainly on evaluating and understanding the subjective world of the self and others. Being inspired by humanistic and existential thinkers, such as A. Maslow and C. Rogers, counselling psychology aims to view the individual as a 'whole' rather than as a collection of psychological parts. This philosophy is reflected in the values of the qualitative approach, allowing the exploration of idiosyncratic meaning and the focus on a deeper understanding of individual's subjective experiences.

3. RELEVANCE OF INTERPRETATIVE PHENOMENOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

Interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) has become increasingly used in conducting qualitative research (Brocki & Wearden, 2006). IPA seeks to explore how participants make sense of the social and personal world by looking at the meaning they hold for a particular experience (Smith & Osborn, 2003). As this study's aim is to obtain the subjective experience of those who have chosen to pursue a career in counselling psychology, within the context of their family experiences, the choice of IPA as methodology, therefore, seems appropriate. IPA is described as taking on an idiographic approach. Smith (2004) describes this as the process whereby each case within the study goes through detailed examination until there is some degree of 'closure' before the next case is examined. Larkin, Watts and Clifton (2006) however, describe an idiographic approach as the study of 'specifics', i.e. any specific situation or event. The 'specific' in this study would be the exploration of the process of those choosing a career in counselling psychology. This study therefore, adopts an idiographic approach with regards to data collection and data analysis.

The method accepts the impossibility of gaining direct access to research participants' life world (Willig, 2008) and understands that it is a dynamic process. Whilst the participant is trying to make sense of their family experiences in relation to their choice to become a counselling psychologist, the researcher's role is to try and explore in detail the processes undertaken (Brocki & Wearden, 2006). In trying to gain an 'insider perspective', the method understands that the researcher's point of view, as well as the interaction between the participant and researcher will have an impact on this exploration (Willig, 2008). Hence, the method is the researcher's 'interpretation' of the participants' experience.

3.1. Epistemology of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis

Denzin and Lincoln, (1994) state that the qualitative research process is defined by three interconnected activities – ontology (nature of reality and being), epistemology (nature of knowledge) and methodology (how the researcher goes about finding out whatever they believe can be known).

As stated above, this study has chosen to use IPA as the methodology. In order to locate the position of IPA with the other two qualitative research processes, Willig (2008) suggests the following three questions be answered in relation to the study:

1. What kind of knowledge does the methodology aim to produce?
2. What kinds of assumptions does the methodology make about the world?
3. How does the methodology conceptualise the role of the researcher in the research process?

Using IPA in this study the aim is to discover what and how participants think about their family experiences and the relevance of this on their motivation to become counselling psychologists. IPA acknowledges that it is impossible to gain a direct, unmediated access to someone's personal world (Willig, 2008) so the objective is to gain an insight into his or her thoughts and beliefs about the phenomenon. The assumption is that gaining access to people's thoughts and beliefs, will in turn help to gain an understanding of their experiences. This knowledge production viewpoint could be seen as taking a 'realist' approach, which follows the position of phenomenologist Heidegger (Willig, 2008). Heidegger's work was based on the view that lived experience is an interpretative process. He proposed that phenomenology concerned the meaning of 'Being' (presence in the world) (Dowling, 2007), saying, "what is real is not dependent on us, but the exact meaning and nature of reality is" (Larkin et al., 2006, p.107).

The role of the researcher is also considered in the knowledge produced by IPA. This is influenced by hermeneutic versions of philosophy, such as Gadamer (Dowling, 2007). He proposed two central positions that advanced Heidegger's work: "a) prejudgement (one's preconceptions or prejudices or horizon of meaning that is part of our linguistic experience and that make understanding possible and b) universality (the persons who express themselves and the persons who understand are connected by a common human consciousness, which makes understanding possible" (Dowling, 2007, p.133). Gadamer argues that detachment is not possible in the process of understanding because "our understanding occurs in the process of understanding itself" (Dowling, 2007, p.134). He proposed that the involvement of the researcher is essential, whereby a reciprocal process of interpretation occurs relating to one's being in the world. Thus the importance of reflexivity on the part of the researcher is integral to the interpretative results of this type of study.

The assumptions IPA makes are that of the subjective perception of the world. Although it was stated earlier that IPA follows Heidegger's realist approach, IPA could be viewed as subscribing to relativist ontology. Although this study takes the view that there may be an objective reality, it is only concerned with the perceived subjective experiences of the participants, assuming that individuals can experience the same 'objective' conditions in radically different ways (Willig, 2008). IPA does not make any claims as to an external reality or question whether participants' accounts of their experiences are 'true' or 'false', or to what extent they correspond to an external reality (Willig, 2008).

As stated earlier, IPA acknowledges the role of researcher in the research process. It is understood that although the aim of IPA is to gain an 'insider's perspective' of the participant's 'world', it acknowledges that it is impossible to gain direct access. Essentially the analysis is therefore an 'interpretation'. Smith (2003) identifies that IPA involves a double hermeneutic, whereby the researcher attempts to make sense of a participant who themself is trying to make sense of their experience. This means that the researcher is intrinsically implicated in the study. Willig (2008) identifies that IPA, therefore, is both phenomenological; aims to represent the participant's view of the world, and interpretative; dependent on the researcher's own views and standpoint. Due to the inherent role of the researcher in the analysis, reflexivity is an important process involved in the research.

4. VALIDITY AND QUALITY OF QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

Evaluation of the validity and quality of a piece of research has traditionally been guided by the criteria for quantitative studies. These have included evaluation of scientific value through reliability, representativeness, validity, generalisability and objectivity. These

criteria cannot however be applied in the same way to qualitative research. McLeod (2003[c]) points out that the assumptions that underpin these traditional concepts of validity are that an objective reality exists, suggesting therefore that scientific methods are able to measure and identify this reality. Gergen, (1985) however points out that qualitative research in contrast is built on the assumption that the world of persons is a co-constructed social reality. As the traditional methods of evaluating validity and quality are not appropriate for qualitative work, discussions around how qualitative studies should be assessed have been many (e.g. Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009; Willig, 2008; Madill, Jordan & Shirley, 2000, Yardley, 2000).

Some researchers have developed general criteria for judging the quality of qualitative research in psychology by outlining good practice guidelines for researchers, e.g. Henwood and Pidgeon (1992), Elliot, Fischer and Rennie (1999) and Yardley (2000). Madill et al., (2000) however, believe that evaluation of qualitative research should be guided according to the epistemological approach the research has taken. This is because the diversity of different epistemological approaches can create implications for the evaluation (Willig, 2008). To enhance the quality and validity of this study the focus on developing the four principles set out by Yardley (2000) as recommended by Smith (2003) for an IPA approach, including sensitivity to context; commitment and rigour; transparency and coherence; and impact and importance, was made. It was felt that these also take into consideration the epistemological viewpoint of the study.

Yardley (2000) highlights the importance of the researcher showing sensitivity to context. The choice of IPA as a methodology and the very nature of it focuses on the sensitivity to context by closely examining the idiographic and the particular. To strengthen this principle further, it was ensured that this research was placed within the existing literature surrounding the topic. Coming from the same context as the sample, i.e. counselling psychology allowed me access to the required sample range relatively easily and also helped in gaining good rapport with the participants within the interview process. The latter is important for this type of study due to the interactional aspects required for the data collection. Within the analytic process, the sensitivity to context can also be evaluated by how the interpretations were grounded in the raw data. This was done through using verbatim extracts to demonstrate and support the theme generated through the analytic process, allowing the reader to check the interpretations being made.

In addition to the latter point, Madill et al., (2000) suggest a process of 'triangulation' in order to increase reliability. For some qualitative approaches, this would mean comparing interpretations with that of (an)other researcher(s) and aiming to reach consensus. This postulates that different interpretative accounts could be identified from

the same data. Madill et al., however, note that accounts may not be invalidated by alternative versions but that the process of triangulation is more concerned with gaining completeness rather than convergence.

The commitment the researcher gives to the research relates specifically to the degree of attentiveness that is given to the participant data collection and the care given to the process of analysis. Again, IPA as a method requires a high level of commitment to be made by the researcher. The way in which this can be evaluated in this study would be through the conduction of in-depth interviews, which required a great deal of commitment and investment and can be viewed by the care that is shown to the analytic process of the data. The way in which the interviews were conducted also demonstrates the rigour of the study; along with ensuring that the right method had been chosen for the research question; appropriateness of the sample and the depth of the analysis. With regards to the latter, Yardley (2000) points out that with IPA, the analysis should be sufficiently interpretative and show that it has clearly moved beyond the descriptive. Rigour can also be identified in the way the researcher has drawn interpretations proportionally from the data, including emphasising some things that are important to the individual participants as well as the themes they share.

In order to demonstrate transparency, it was attempted to clearly state the process that was undertaken throughout the whole of the research. This includes stating in this chapter how: participants were recruited; the interview schedule was developed; the in-depth interviews were conducted; and the steps used in the analysis. Undertaking continuous reflexivity throughout the research and making this explicit throughout the research also highlights the researcher's transparency and commitment to the research. To evaluate coherence, the aim was to clearly outline the argument for conducting this study and for it to be written in a way that does not contain any contradictions or ambiguities. To keep consistency with the epistemological viewpoint throughout, it was ensured a good degree of fit between the research and the underlying theoretical assumptions of the approach chosen.

Finally, Yardley (2000) highlights the broad principle of impact and importance. She states that no matter how well a piece of research highlights the above points, if it does not tell the reader something important, interesting or useful, then its real validity can be questioned.

5. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Attention must be given to ethical considerations when undertaking any research. The British Psychological Society's Code of Ethics and Conduct (2006) states that psychologists must "ensure that clients (...) are given ample opportunity to understand

the nature, purpose, and anticipated consequences of any professional services or research participation, so that they may give informed consent to the extent that their capacity allow" (p. 11).

5.1. Consent

Informed consent was sought by giving each participant a consent form and information sheet (see appendix 4 & 5), containing details of what the research study was about and what were expected of the participant. The participant was given a consent form to read and sign just before the interview commenced, which advised them that they had the right to withdraw at any time.

5.2. Confidentiality

The information sheet and consent form highlighted the procedures of ensuring their confidentiality as suggested by the British Psychological Society's Code of Ethics and conduct (2006):

- Signed consent forms were kept separate from any research documentation.
- Tape recordings of each interview were transferred onto the researcher's personal computer where they were given a code and password protected.
- Each transcribed interview was given a code and password protected and stripped of any personally identifiable information. This was done mostly by changing details to something similar or if this was not possible, omitted.
- Each participant was asked to examine the transcripts of their interview, to ensure they were happy that any identifiable details had been changed or omitted.
- Once the research report had been completed and marked, the tape recordings and transcripts would be deleted securely.

McLeod (2003[b]) states that "maintaining confidentiality lies not only in the basic moral imperative to respect and prevent harm to research participants, but also in the role that perceived ethicality plays in counselling research" (p.173).

5.3. Managing distress

McLeod (2003[b]) states, participants may come to change his or her descriptions of; and meanings about the theme under investigation through the process of the interview, producing new insights and awareness. Although the population of this study concerned those training to be counselling psychologists, it was assumed that the participants did have a high level of awareness of ethical issues. However, as the information sought might potentially be sensitive in nature, steps were put in place to ensure participants' needs were met. In the event that the participant became aware

of new insights, wanted or unwanted, the use of personal therapy was suggested so that any such issues might be addressed. Participants were already familiar with personal therapy as part of their course requirements. If participants were not currently undertaking personal therapy, details of their university counselling service were given.

6. METHODOLOGICAL PROCEDURES

6.1. Sampling and participants

Smith and Osborn (2003) point out that due to the concise nature of analysis, researchers tend to find homogenous samples. This study therefore sought to find a more closely defined group of participants for whom the research question was significant.

6.1.1. Inclusion criteria

Goodyear, Murdock, Lichtenberg, McPherson, Koetting and Petren (2008) suggest that the roles, behaviours and attitudes of counselling psychologists have changed over time. Forrest (2008) also points out that the recent graduates and students in counselling psychology programmes are the future of counselling psychology. Similar to the view of Goodyear et al. (2008), Forrest (2008) states that the majority of cohorts that graduate today have experienced a different world socially, economically, politically and technologically from those older than the mean age of society members. This study therefore proposed to focus on the perspectives of counselling psychologists in training. Skovholt and Rønnestad (2003) note that conceptual maps are created at all levels of experience, but that for the novice, this map is drawn from personal formulations. This suggests that the influences of family experiences on the decision-making process of those who are in the transition period between novice and professional counselling psychologists will be more salient.

In order to also explore whether siblings have any influence on the decision-making process of individuals to become counselling psychologists, this study only recruited those who had at least one sibling. Sibling relationships have previously been noted as important, but the absence of reported support in some studies (Phillips, Christopher-Sisk & Gravino, 2001; Whiston & Keller, 2003) may be due to recruiting participants who do not have any siblings.

6.1.2. Exclusion criteria

A study by Williams, Soeprapto, Like, Touradji, Hess and Hill (1998) relied on retrospective accounts of prominent academic women within counselling

psychology of chance events on their career path. They reported that this was a limitation, as people could not always report accurately on past events. This was not necessarily an issue within this study, because the aim of this research is to gain an understanding of individuals' perception of their experiences rather than identify whether their accounts are real or not. The choice however to exclude counselling psychologists of all levels of experience was more to do with gaining a more homogenous sample.

As noted earlier many studies have focused on parental influence and ignored the huge impact siblings may also play. This study aimed to start to bridge that gap. Although family experiences without siblings may undoubtedly have had an influence on the participants, not specifying at the recruitment stage the need to have a sibling would limit the study in exploring their influence on the career decision of the participant.

6.1.3. Sample size

Smith and Osborn (2003) indicate that there is no preferred number of participants that should be included for IPA. They state the main concern is to ensure the interviews provide rich data in which to examine the similarities and differences between cases. Since the aim was to gain a detailed understanding of the perceptions of a particular group rather than making more general claims, and in view of the fact that detailed case analysis of individual transcripts is time consuming, eight participants were recruited for this study.

Since counselling psychologists in training were the chosen population to study, those currently on a three-year postgraduate training programme, leading to eligibility for chartered status with the British Psychological Society, were sought. A table highlighting the demographics of the participants recruited can be found in appendix 6.

6.2. Recruitment

Although the research method required the recruitment of a homogeneous group, the aim was to widen the opportunity to recruit participants. Once ethical approval had been granted, an email was sent to the course administrators of 10 institutes that run a British Psychological Society accredited counselling psychology course (appendix 7), in the middle and south of England, United Kingdom. The email (appendix 8) requested that the course administrator distribute an email, containing a recruitment poster (appendix 9) to all their trainees.

Those who responded showing interest were thanked and placed on a list in the order of response. Starting at the top of the list, eight individuals were contacted to arrange an interview. Those who did not reply were deleted from the list and individuals further down the list were then contacted. After four women and one male had been recruited, it was decided that it would be beneficial to also include more data from male trainees. Two further male participants were then chosen randomly from the list for the remaining interviews.

6.3. Data Collection

As stated earlier, semi-structured interviews are designed to act as triggers, encouraging the participant to talk (Willig, 2008). With the research aim leading the structure of the interview, open questions were constructed to encourage the participants to open up about their thoughts and feelings about their family experiences and their decision to become a counselling psychologist. Smith and Osborn (2003) suggest that the researcher's role is to facilitate rather than dictate what will happen during the interview. This allowed the researcher to concentrate on what was being said and to monitor the coverage of the scheduled topics.

Following guidelines by Smith and Osborn (2003), an interview schedule was designed (appendix 10). The overall issues the schedule aimed to cover were the trainees' perception of their family relationships; decision to pursue the profession of counselling psychology and how they believed their family experiences had impacted on this process. Although the schedule offered an order in which the questions could be asked, the sequence was not necessarily followed. Questions were asked out of order and in different ways, depending on the responses of the participant, to encourage a more naturalistic interaction.

6.3.1. Pilot

A pilot interview was undertaken, as Breakwell (2006) suggests to test and refine the interview schedule and ensure the interview would elicit the information required to help answer the research question. A fellow female trainee was recruited and after advising her of the aim, format of the data collection, and expected time required for participation, a mutually agreed time and place was arranged to conduct the interview. Feedback was sought on the flow and perspective of the interview experience.

Slight amendments were made to the wording of the questions. The participant felt that overall, the flow of the interview worked well and that the interview did elicit deeper thought about the subject than her current awareness. The timing of the interview was as expected, lasting between 45 minutes and an hour.

6.3.2. Interviews

After confirmation of participation in this research, each participant was asked to select a location, where they wished the interview to take place. This permitted the participant to feel comfortable in familiar surroundings (Smith & Osborn, 2003), encouraging them to possibly open up more. Seven of the interviews were held at the institutions where they studied and one at the home of the participant.

Those, who showed interest in participating, were emailed the information sheet, which briefly described the study's aims and procedures. Participants were made aware that they would subsequently be invited to examine the transcripts of their interview, to ensure confidentiality should verbatim extracts be used in the report. Having agreed to participate, a pre-interview questionnaire (appendix 11) was emailed for them to complete and return prior to the interview. The pre-interview questionnaire asked for additional demographic details, including sibling number and order.

At the time of interview, participants were given the consent form to read and sign. The interview then proceeded, lasting on average from 40 minutes to an hour. This was audio taped using a digital Dictaphone. After each interview, participants were given a de-brief information sheet (appendix 12), advising them of the resources available to them had the interview raised new insights or awareness. The researcher's details were included should they have any further questions or concerns after the interview. Once the interview had been transcribed and stripped of any identifiable information, the participants were then sent a copy of the transcript of their interview and invited to check the accuracy of its contents. They were also asked to make any changes they felt necessary to ensure confidentiality and anonymity.

6.4. Recording and transcription

Each interview was tape recorded and transcribed verbatim. Smith and Osborn (2003) believe that it is not possible to undertake the interviewing required for IPA without tape recording. The level of transcription required for IPA, as Smith and Osborn (2003) suggest, is at the semantic level. This includes all spoken words, including false starts, stumbles, laughs and significant pauses. The digital tape recordings and subsequent transcriptions were transferred onto the researcher's personal computer, which was password protected to ensure confidentiality. Additional copies were also kept in paper form and on an external hard drive. This was to ensure data was not lost due to computer failure. These were also kept in a locked filing cabinet, only accessible by the researcher. The British Psychological Society's Code of Ethics and Conduct (2006) states that psychologists should 'record, process, and store

confidential information in a fashion designed to avoid inadvertent disclosure' (p.10). A code name was given to the data for each participant to ensure anonymity.

6.5. Analytic Strategy

The aim of IPA is to unravel the meanings contained within the accounts of participants' experience, by undertaking a process of interpretative engagement with the text and transcripts (Willig, 2008). All aspects of self-reflection are included to discover how participants interpret their experiences in a way that is understandable to them (Brocki & Wearden, 2006). Since the study took an idiographic approach, dealing with individual, subjective experiences, the analysis of the transcripts were done case by case, then integrated during the later stage of the research (Willig, 2008).

The analysis followed the guidelines as set out by Smith and Osborn (2003):

Stage 1: Analysis of the data consisted of reading and re-reading each transcript repeatedly, along with listening to the audiotapes, in order to become as familiar as possible with each account. Starting with the transcript of the first interview, comments, including summaries or paraphrases, associations and preliminary interpretations were made in the left hand margin.

Stage 2: The next stage involved a more interpretative analysis of the data. Emerging themes were identified, including theoretical connections, and written in the right hand column. These preliminary emerging themes were clustered together, ensuring that the researcher's interpretations were checked against what the participant actually said to capture the essence of the participant's speech.

Stage 3: Once the whole transcript had been annotated, the emergent themes were then arranged in a structured way. The relationship between themes were examined and clustered, in a meaningful way, into groups, relating to each other. Each clustered group was given a name, which captured its essence, creating master themes. In addition to the master themes, subordinate themes were also listed where relevant.

Once the first transcript had gone through this process, each of the other transcripts were then analysed in turn using the steps above. The initial transcript was used to help orientate the subsequent analysis, allowing the researcher to identify similarities or differences between the transcripts. Any master themes that emerged illuminated the analysis further. Once all the transcripts had been analysed, a final table of master themes was constructed with clusters of subordinate themes (Willig, 2008). The analysis of themes was continued throughout the write-up phase.

Throughout all these stages an iterative process of analysis occurred, whereby the researcher moved back and forth through the data, exploring different ways of thinking about it rather than just completing each step in turn. This describes van Manen's (1997) *hermeneutic circle* where he draws together the *objective hermeneutic circle* that refers to the concept that the 'whole' cannot be understood without its 'parts' and the 'parts' cannot be fully understood without the 'whole', and the *alethic hermeneutic circle* that refers to the reciprocal process between preunderstanding and understanding. This process fits with the topic of family being explored in this study. As noted by Cigoli and Scabini (2005), families consist of more than the sum of their parts. They also note a paradox where "on one hand, there is a system that is unique and original, which has its own irreducible features and qualities and on the other, it is a product that comes into being when its components interact with each other. This means that the whole and the parts have to be simultaneously imagined" (p.24).

6.6. Limitations

A possible limitation of this study is the generalisability of the results. Goodyear, et al., (2003) note that qualitative research typically does not permit generalisation because of the small samples recruited. Warnock (1987) however states that by delving deeper into the particular, we become closer to the universal. This then allows a better position to think about and explore how other people might deal with the particular situation being explored, bringing us closer to significant aspects of a shared humanity.

Another limitation considered was with regards to the participants' insights into their family experiences and the influence they may have had on them. Beauregard (2007) says that family influence on professional motivation may manifest itself unconsciously. Some participants may have already discussed the influence their family has had on them, causing this information to be more salient. Others may still be unaware of any such influence and this information may only be surface level awareness. The interview questions however were designed to try and elicit deeper awareness of this experience. The interpretative component of the study, however, is to 'make sense' of the participant's story from a psychological perspective therefore analysis is likely to touch upon material that may also be outside the participant's awareness.

The data produced by the semi-structured interviews was also considered a possible limitation. Reynolds and Prior (2003) analysed interview transcripts of chronically ill women and believed that they may have been doing presentational work to convey their replies in a manner thought desirable. The method of IPA however should be able to reduce both these limitations because the method of analysis includes 'how'

something is said as well as 'what' is said. For example, Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) note how the interviewer should also "be observant of-and able to interpret-vocalization, facial expressions, and other bodily gestures" (p.29). The interviewer is therefore seeking data on a factual as well as a meaningful level. Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) continue to state that interviewing on a meaning level can be difficult, hence the reason that within the method of IPA, this can be overcome through the process of becoming familiar with the interviews by listening to the recording as well as the transcripts.

7. REFLEXIVITY

Due to the nature of this research, going through a process of reflexivity is important in gaining perspective on the researcher's own role as researcher throughout the study. Reflexivity, as Willig (2008) states, "requires an awareness of the researcher's contribution to the construction of meanings throughout the research process, acknowledging the impossibility of remaining 'outside of' one's subject matter while conducting research" (p.10). Finlay (2002) identifies, as a whole, reflexivity has the potential to be a valuable tool to:

- examine the impact of the position, perspective and presence of the researcher
- promote rich insight through examining personal responses and interpersonal dynamics
- open up unconscious motivations and implicit biases in the researcher's approach
- empower others by opening up a more radical consciousness
- evaluate the research process, method and outcomes
- enable public scrutiny of the integrity of the research through offering a methodological log of research decisions.

(Finlay, 2002, p.225)

Willig (2008) identifies two types of reflexivity; personal and epistemological. Personal reflexivity involves reflecting as to how the researcher's own values, experiences and beliefs shaped the research. Epistemological reflexivity involves a wider research reflection of the assumptions (about the world and knowledge) that have been made throughout the course of the research process. The next section explores both types of reflexivity.

7.1. Personal Reflexivity

Brocki and Wearden (2006) suggest that it is important for the researcher to acknowledge and be explicit about their perspective to help understand the interpretative process.

Coming from a similar context as the sample, being a counselling psychologist in training and having siblings, created a dual role for me in being not only the researcher, but also a member of the same population. My interest in this topic developed through my own personal therapy, during which my understanding grew of the influence, both implicit and explicit, of my family experiences on my identity and my self-image. My career journey had been varied and after a spell of not really having a clear goal of where I wanted my life to go, I eventually chose a career in counselling psychology, a path similar to that of my parents. I became intrigued as to how other people viewed their family experiences and the influence this had on them. Due to the emphasis on the 'use of self' (Wosket, 1999) and on the therapeutic relationship (Rogers, 1992) within the role of a counselling psychologist, I believed it to be important to find out more about the process undertaken by those choosing counselling psychology as a career.

I was aware of both the advantages and disadvantages for this study of coming from a similar context as the sample. The advantages included me essentially being an 'insider', which helped facilitate the process of engaging participants to take part in the study, establish trust and rapport and allowing me to nurture the relationship within the interview. Sharing a similar identity, that of a counselling psychologist in training, it could be seen that I could relate more readily to the participant's experiences, have a shared understanding and awareness of the interview process, enabling a greater access into their 'life world'. Likewise however, coming from a similar context also posed some challenges. Assuming a shared identity created difficulties in bracketing out my own preconceived ideas and beliefs about my participants' experiences and at times, causing me to perhaps interpret my participants' experiences in a different way from what had been intended.

Being aware of these challenges, I engaged in various processes in an attempt to remain as close as possible to the participants' experiences in my interpretations. I sought to maintain what van Manen (1997) referred to as, the *hermeneutic alertness*, which involved actively reflecting on the data, rather than accepting my pre-conceived ideas and interpretations at face value. As stated earlier in the section regarding validity, grounding my interpretations in the original transcripts was something that was continually monitored as on-going interpretations occurred.

7.2. Epistemological Reflexivity

As well as an understanding of the researcher's personal beliefs and viewpoints, it is also important to be aware of the researcher's personal philosophical stance and how it sits within the epistemological framework of the chosen methodology.

My position concurs with Heidegger's view of reality; that we are essentially 'people in context' (Larkin et al., 2006), that "nothing (literally no-thing) is revealed as anything (real or unreal), thing or no-thing, except when it is brought meaningfully into the context of human life" (p. 107). Larkin et al., (2006) labels this position as the minimal hermeneutic realist recognising "that certain 'things' exist and would have existed if humans had not, but that the very question of this separate existence can only arise because we are here to ask the question" (p.107).

In my position as researcher, I was aware of the different factors influencing the gathering and analysis of the data. This included, the participant's perception of their experiences, my preconceptions of the phenomenon under investigation and the relationship and interaction that occurred between the participant and myself during the interview. Langdridge's (2007) view of phenomenological philosophy is that it seeks to focus on the intentional relationship between the neoma (the experienced) and the noesis (the experience). It could be argued that by making sense of an experience, the experience itself will become different. Ponterotto (2005) however purports the view that multiple, constructed realities exist, which are subjective, influenced by context and are constructed through the interaction between the individual and researcher. IPA therefore recognises that the researcher's view of the world and interaction with the participant will inevitably shape the way in which participants' meanings are constructed (Larkin et al., 2006).

Larkin et al. (2006) claim that by viewing experiences as 'persons-in-context' can cause implications for the research. It must be remembered that any discoveries will be a function of the relationship between the researcher and participant. The researcher must therefore continually reflect on the questions that are being asked of the participants and be attentive to the analytic process, which "cannot ever achieve a genuinely first person account – the account is always constructed by participant and researcher" (Larkin et al., 2006, p. 104). This reflects the sensitivity of context mentioned earlier regarding validity. Larkin et al. (2006) state "the goal of phenomenology is to approach and deal with any object of our attention in just such a way that it is allowed maximal opportunity to show itself 'as itself'" (p. 108).

Throughout the rest of the research, my reflections will be interspersed to show my evolving personal and theoretical position. Madill et al., (2000) indicate the usefulness of reflection upon the central influences on the researcher's development throughout the research process and how their position inevitably shape the filter through which the data is analysed and presented.

8. Summary

It was decided that qualitative research would be the best approach to explore an individual's family experiences and the influence these had on their choice and motivation to become counselling psychologists. Eight counselling psychologists in training were recruited and in order to gain in-depth accounts of their experiences, once consent had been given, semi-structured interviews were conducted. These were digitally recorded and subsequently transcribed. In order to explore and understand the meaning of these experiences, the methodology of IPA was chosen. The following chapter describes the findings of the analysis in detail.

REFLECTIONS

The choice of methodology was not difficult for me to decide upon. This was perhaps mainly due to not having a great deal of experience in qualitative psychology that rather than being paralysed by the array of qualitative approaches available, my question led me to choose IPA, as well as my agreement with the epistemological stance the approach leant towards.

Pets were included in my interview questioning when participants were asked to describe their relationships with their family and this was due to my own experience of having pets. For me, they are not just animals that we look after and share good times with, but members of the family and thus I feel they have had an impact on me. I therefore wanted to offer participants the opportunity to express their relationship with their pets, if they had any, and whether they felt that they too were part of their 'family' and to reflect on the effect they may have had on them.

With regards to the application of the methodology, I found this simple to do, apart from the analysis side of things, which I mention after my results section. As part of triangulation however, I asked a peer to look over my transcripts and data analysis I had done. This was a very daunting process for me, knowing how my confidence still easily waivers. It was the integral part of the researcher when interpreting data within IPA that allowed me to be able to take on and make effective use of the feedback from this process. It reminded me that there is no such 'correct' interpretation; similarly as the epistemological stance is that 'reality' is not real or unreal, but how each individual perceives it to be is what is important.

Chapter Five

Analysis

ANALYSIS

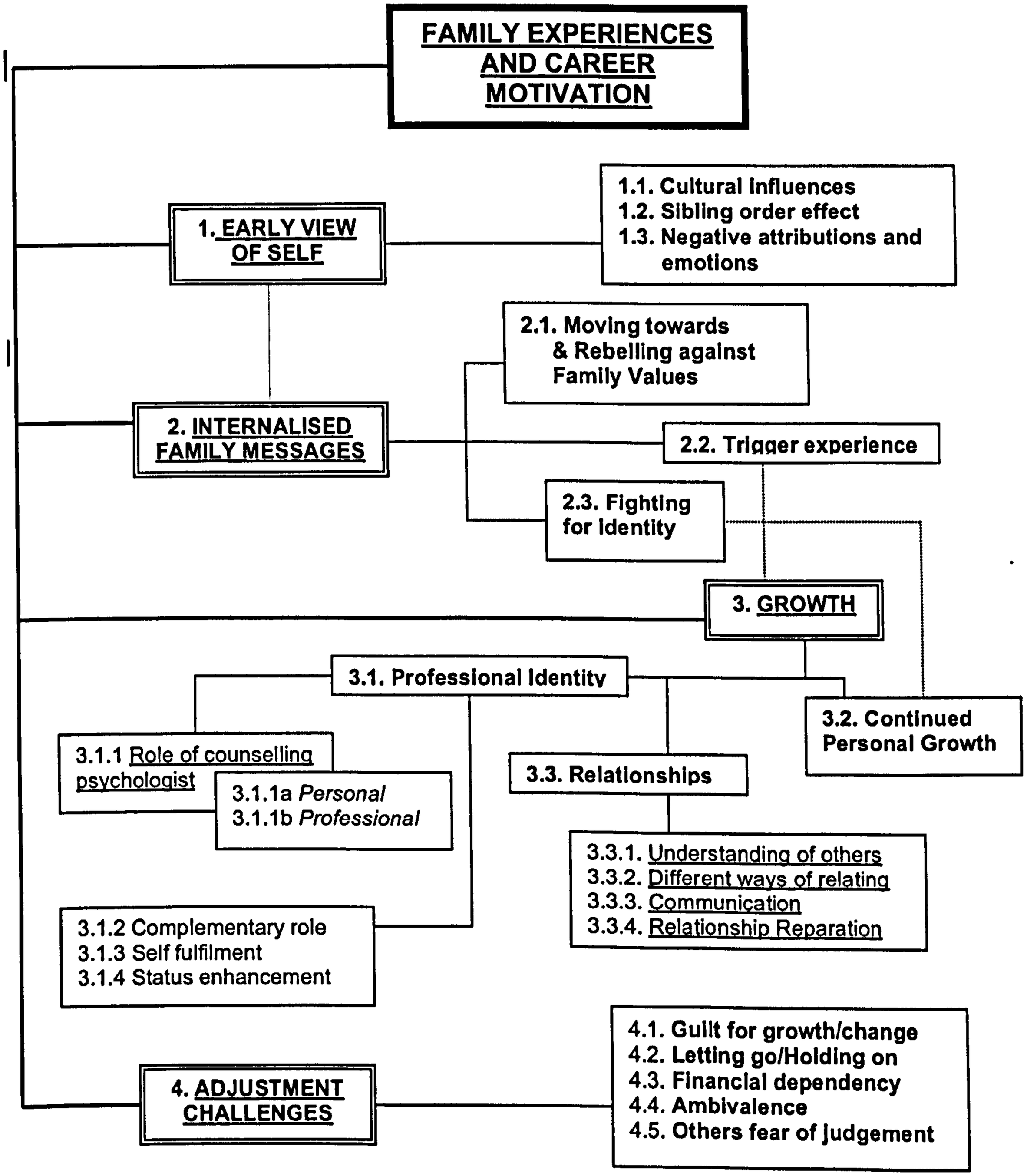
Overview of Analysis

This chapter provides as overview of the themes that emerged from the data. A transcript from one interview can be viewed in appendix 13 and an example of the construction of the super-ordinate themes from the emergent themes in appendix 14. The results of the interpretative phenomenological analysis are structured into four super-ordinate themes, each with their corresponding master themes. These are summarised below in figure 1.

In the following sections, each super-ordinate theme and its related master and subordinate themes is discussed in turn. Each will detail example extracts from participant interviews to show how the themes were built and anchored in the words used by them. All identifiers have been removed from quotations, and pseudonyms have been given to each participant. The extracts are identified by the pseudonym of the participant and the relevant page and line number of the interview transcript, for example [name 2.7] would be Page 2, Line 7 of that particular participant's interview. Although only an example of extracts are used within this chapter, appendix 15 details a table highlighting the themes that were identified for each participant.

Field notes taken during interviews have also been included to provide further information to highlight certain factors as appropriate. Personal reflective accounts of my own experience of the IPA process have also been incorporated throughout this chapter and are identified by the italicised paragraphs in a different font. For clarity, each super-ordinate theme is written in bold, capitalised and underlined, master themes are emboldened, subordinate themes are underlined and the sub themes of the subordinate themes are italicised.

Figure 1. Themes identified within family experiences and career motivation



THEME 1

EARLY VIEW OF SELF

This is the first super-ordinate theme identified by the analysis. As participants talked about their family experiences, it could be seen how their view of self, their identity had developed. Within this theme, three master themes were highlighted, cultural influences, sibling order effect and negative attributions and emotions.

1.1. Cultural Influences

Some of the participants were born into a strong societal culture whereas others into a more family culture. These cultures, whether societal or familial, have influenced participants' identity explicitly and implicitly. For most, these influences are identified by what they felt was expected of them. One participant was able to name this influence of her family expectations, saying:

> *"I guess in a way it's kind of fulfilling the family script" [Amber 8.52]*

One expectation that was highlighted by four participants was one of gender. For two participants, a cultural expectation of what is expected of them was highlighted. For Denise, the gender expectation within her culture clearly impacted on her. In the following extract, she tries to make sense of why she felt inferior within her family to her elder brother and why she was treated differently:

> *"...perhaps I've thought that maybe it's a cultural thing...in the Jewish religion, men and women are very different, they don't mix...and, men and boys do that and women and girls do that and yeah, I can't help but wonder if that's been a part of it as well (mmm)..." [Denise 1.48]*

Elaine was very much aware of the cultural expectations of women and hence upon her:

> *" Um...there are a lot of...expectations from...a woman (mmm) in um...the Indian society, she's supposed to be the carer...um...the person who cooks for the family, let's say um...takes keen interest in um...everybody's wellbeing etc, etc." [Elaine 1.49]*

For other participants, these gender expectations appeared to come from a more internal family mini culture. Amber identified how the women in her family were traditionally seen as 'strong':

> *"she's [grandmother] very, she's a very strong woman as all of the women in our family are" [Amber 2.23]*

This seemed to be an implicit expectation for Amber and something she felt she also related to and experienced:

> *"I guess in a way, I guess just in terms of...playing into that whole thing for being a strong...a strong woman who can (mmm) cope with...hardship...it's kind of played into that...generational thing I guess in our family of, women being tough and being able, resilience I guess, to come again, having the resilience to be able to deal with...(mmm)...what life throws...at you." [Amber, 5.39]*

For Hugh, as he described his family, a gender expectation was highlighted:

> *"being just quite a stereotypical normal family, you know we all like lived together, did things together...um...some ways quite traditional at first in that my, my dad was kind of seen as the person who...would go out all the time, work and um...um...though mum also had a job, but he was kind of ss...like...took a very traditional fatherly role. Kind of expected my mum to do all the cooking and all that kind of things (mmm) so...I'd say a bit more of a traditional outlook on life, er, on, on a...family." [Hugh 1.24]*

Hugh also identified how he, as a male, was expected to pursue particular subjects:

> *"if you're a male you kind of sh-should either go into finance or science...they're the right things for...a male to do." [Hugh 4.25]*

In addition to expectations, these cultural influences were identified in terms of 'values'. For some participants an implicit family value was placed on success. Frank noted that his family perceived him as being successful because he was earning good money:

> *"so that was seen to be very good because you know, I got a good job and it was well paid and I was travelling around the world and (yeah)...it was always...I think um...well received" [Frank 11.47]*

Elaine also identified a value being placed on the amount that was earned:

> *"So he [her father] would much rather have paid, you know, me taken...subjects like maybe...finance or economics (mmm)...and get a good job and get, get a good pay." [Elaine 3.46]*

Yet for Gareth, the family experience was different:

> *"I come, come from a very...very working class background...kind of working in um...hand, hand to mouth" [Gareth 3.46]*

Instead, he, like two other participants, felt a strong family value towards others:

> *"There was just, just so much um...yeah...giving I guess (mmm), you know...but with will-willingness to...put, place them, themselves second for someone else" [Gareth 8.32]*

Clare also identified a caring value in her family:

> *"It's a value on the kind of so-on...care and support I think" [Clare 8.2]*

And Hugh remembered how, through his parents' professions and explicit message, he was made aware of this caring value:

> *"they were in the medical profession that they're kind of...you know it's nice to do some-you need to study because you're doing, you need to do something to help people and that you value in society" [Hugh 6.37]*

1.2. Sibling Order Effect

Since only participants with siblings were interviewed, talk of a sibling order effect was prominent for most. As to being the eldest, two such participants spoke about caring for the others in the family. Clare recognised that there was an implicit expectation on her for being the eldest, which she did not want to fulfil:

> *"Um...and yeah I have a good relationship with my mum. I probably didn't always necessarily when I was a teenager...because I should be the oldest I think I probably...I, I don't know...it's a bit cliché but rather than assume the cliché definitely when I was younger, in my teens" [Clare 2.7]*

Another participant, Amber, identified that not only did she feel responsible for her younger brother but also felt a duty to look after the whole family:

> *"I was always somebody wh...who I think, wanted to take care of people and wanted to...help people and, I had adopted that role in my family" [Amber 3.1]*

Bonnie, being the middle of three sisters, recognised that she had two different relationship roles with them. With her elder sister, Bonnie identified with the role of a younger sibling, feeling that her sister would try to take on an authoritive role with her. With her younger sister however, Bonnie did not view herself as the eldest in that dyad but instead viewed their relationship more as a 'friendship'.

> *"she's, she, she's like a mother hen but not to me because she's my sister and I can say..."yeah, shut up...don't forget I'm your sister"*

(yeah), sort of thing, so...it's more about, it's, for me that feels more like an older sister...um...kind of, kind of role um...whereas my litt-younger sister, feels more like a friend" [Bonnie 4.6]

The youngest participants tended to identify with how they were 'taken care of' and protected within the family.

"I'm the youngest so...um...I suppose um...I felt quite protected early on"

[Hugh 1.31]

Hugh also noted how this early-internalised role changed as his personal identity developed:

"I suppose it's just...kind of...my role has changed within the family so, before I was just the youngest one where everyone would do everything for me and just...carry on being quite spoilt in some ways, where as now...um...um as processes change as um...my...um...as we all got separated, I 'spose um...I...taking the role of being more independent and I see our family as kind of, all, we, all of us being quite independent of one another (mmm), not maybe...needing the support so much so" [Hugh1.35]

Another participant, Denise, was intrigued by a possible sibling order effect, questioning the impact of being the youngest:

"if you are the youngest, you don't have really any experiences of looking after others. You not (?), you don't need to, (mmm) you're the youngest in your family and everyone cares for you, or each other and you don't feel...you're not ever called upon to care for somebody" [Denise 8.21]

Although being a younger sibling points towards not having the experience of looking after anyone else, for Gareth this was not the case. Although he is the youngest of three children, there is a strong presence of an extended family including nephews and nieces. This seemed to offer Gareth an opportunity to take on a protective, older sibling type role with his eldest nephew:

"Um...and between me and him, I think, yeah, yeah there's a friendship there, there's...a lot of joking (mmm), a lo-lo-li-light heartedness and he comes to me sometimes for advice about...girls and...school and other bits and bobs as well (yeah) and we spend lot, lo-lot of time together, we, we go out together...pictures and whatever else, running and stuff (yeah) so...mmm" [Gareth 2.58]

1.3. Negative Attributions and emotions

When describing their early family experiences, negative issues seemed more salient. The title of this master theme highlights two aspects of the recounting of these negative issues; the way in which the participants perceived how their families felt towards them (attributions) and how they felt in response to these perceptions.

In the following extracts, participants recounted how they perceived that they did not feature very highly in the eyes of their family, especially those of their parents. The negative attributions that participants highlighted included feeling uninteresting to others:

> *"he has very...he has his interests and he finds it hard to take ev-I guess he finds it hard to take an inter-I see it, he finds it hard to take an interest in me [deep breath]" [Amber 1.50]*

For Amber, this disinterest from her father left her feeling that in order to gain love from her father, conditions needed to be met:

> *"I still feel that there's a, I guess in a way conditional love there" [Amber 1.46]*

Elaine also identified how she felt her father dismissed her interests, only wanting her to follow cultural expectations:

> *"I would like him to listen to me but he never really gave me an opportunity...to speak as such (yeah), or he would always say 'you just shut up' or um, you know 'you got to do what your elders tell you' and that is a mark of respect in a way" [Elaine 1.29]*

Bonnie highlighted that she felt her father related to her differently compared to her sisters:

> *"he [father] wouldn't relate to me (mmm)...in the same way" [Bonnie 2.23]*

Although Bonnie described how this 'used to bug' her, as she reflected, she began to wonder whether she felt more about this experience than she had previously thought:

> *"I guess in a way I slightly sort of discounted...sort of how I fel-how, how I feel about it" [Bonnie 2.31]*

Feelings of hurt, pain and invalidation were salient feelings of participants in response to these negative attributions. For Denise, not only did being the youngest hide her from any expectations of caring for others, this also led her to feel invisible within her family:

"no one ever listened and no one took me seriously because I was the...the younger daughter (mmm) and I was, was a girl...and I was the youngest. I was the youngest in my entire family because even amongst my cousins I was the youngest...And um...it's a very invalidating experience, it is a very invalidating childhood (yeah)...to be the youngest, to be...not really taken seriously (mmm), not being listened to...and sometimes laughed at for...saying stupid things"
[Denise 4.59]

I remember feeling a strong affinity with Denise. Her story triggered memories of how I felt within my family. I recall thinking how closely our family experiences resembled one another. I kept this in mind when analysing her data to ensure I was picking up 'her' inferences rather than mine. Even though IPA recognises the researcher within the interpreting stage, I remained reflexive by continually questioning whether this was my story or hers when interpreting.

This feeling of invalidation, left Denise feeling hurt:

"And it was hurtful to be...mocked...not taken seriously" [Denise 9.21]

In another form, there was also an underlying feeling of insignificance that was interpreted through participants' seeking validation from their families. For Amber, this involved her immersing herself completely within the family and taking on a 'mothering' role, yet feeling all her efforts at looking after her family were not valued:

"I once had a conversation with her about it, I think when I was...seventeen, eighteen, about how I felt that...I was mothering, the family and...I-I must, I think I must have been saying that I kind of feel put upon. And I remember being very hurt because, she...basically told me that I had taken on that role myself (mmm) and that was not something that they, we, that the family members had 'put' on me"
[Amber 5.19]

The opposite occurred for Frank. As he spoke about the loss of his father, he talked about how he felt isolated from the family at an early age. This he felt was due to his family's implicit assumption that he was independent, rather his explicitly distancing himself:

"I feel sad about moving away really and not having that much time...with him, um...because there was this feeling, I think that I'd left...home at sort of eighteen (mmm) to go to university and...and there was this idea that sort that I'd gone then...(mmm) that was it and they,

they were sort of still there, my dad was still there but...um...there was this idea I think that sort of, I was independent, looking after myself and...(mmm) actually missed...having him around. Um...but, but didn't feel that able to...to ask for too much help...(mmm)." [Frank 5.4]

Although Frank identifies what he feels were implicit messages from his parents, to be independent and go off on his own, and that 'he' rejected his family's life, reading through the interview however, there is more of a sense that *he* felt rejected:

"I...was sort of successful in school and then (mmm)...um and then went away to university and, and...and my brother stayed...um, working in the family business (mmm). And...how I'd...I'd never really appreciated that, perhaps I was sort of rejecting...their life (mmm)...there...by moving away and staying away and, and then I went and lived in different countries and...and was out of the UK for ten years (mmm). Um...actually, I never really appreciated it like that. I w-always felt what I was being encouraged to do this and get on with my life and...(yeah) but actually my brother may have felt that that was quite rejecting and that I...just didn't really keep in contact with them very much, I was (yeah) just too busy get-getting on with my life really..." [Frank 2.12]

THEME 2

INTERNALISED FAMILY MESSAGES

The internalising of family messages relates to the way in which participants made sense of their family experiences and how they processed and transformed them into their early motivation towards counselling psychology. Not only do these internalised family messages relate to participants' early professional motivation, they also link with participants' early view of self, as highlighted by the dotted line joining the two super-ordinate themes together in figure 1.

2.1. Moving Towards and Rebelling against Family Values

This master theme was one of the largest identified and relates to how participants have transformed their family experiences by either moving towards or rebelling against them. Again these processes were implicit and explicit, positive and negative and were related to either their own sense of personal identity or to their professional motivation.

For some participants, there was a definite positive process of moving towards their family values:

> *"I guess in a way, I guess just in terms of...playing into that whole thing for being a strong...a strong woman who can (mmm) cope with...hardship...it's kind of played into that...generational thing I guess in our family of, women being tough and being able, resilience I guess, to come again, having the resilience to be able to deal with...(mmm)...what life throws...at you." [Amber 5.39]*

As mentioned in the master theme **cultural influences (1.1)**, this was more of a gender value that was placed onto the women of the family.
Frank's experience was more personal:

> *"she's [mother] helped me to have a...um and approach to life, which is quite adventurous (mmm). And so...um...this sort of feeling of sec-some, some aspect of feeling very secure, to be able to go and do that (mmm) um and sometimes not really think about the risks too much [laughs] um...so there's that aspect, which has been really positive thing (mmm) for me" [Frank 3.38]*

These family values also seemed implicit to Bonnie:

> *"Because it seemed like that was what...everyone did (mmm)...you know, um...my parents had done it, my grandparents had done it*

and...aunts and uncle...cousins...you know, that sort of...that's what they all did" [Bonnie 9.39]

She goes on:

"I think there was this expectation...but uh...considerable expectation of mine that that is what I wanted (yeah)...um and I'm not saying that I wouldn't have wanted it...(yeah) um...and it's a...I guess it's still something that I would be very much...sort of on my wish list" [Bonnie 9.47]

Participants also identified how moving towards their family values was viewed negatively by them. In the following extract, Amber reflects on how she was pulled towards a caring role within her family, which she resented:

"I think they've all had...an impact but I think, perhaps particularly my mum because...your mo-mother is a supposed to be the mothering...role in the family...and...and because for whatever reason I felt that she didn't always...and I, took in that role, (mmm) and you know and being a caring person is traditionally the mothering kind of role so maybe her in particular" [Amber 5.12]

Frank also identified that he had become aware of how when he was younger, he moved towards his parent's value of not connecting with their emotions:

"I mean they had a big influence, yeah I think...in terms of...generally not being in touch with my emotions for many, many years." [Frank 10.17]

Internalising and moving towards family values in relation to participants' professional identity was also evident and viewed as something positive. For four participants, there was a definite family influence towards a caring role. This was not necessarily an explicit expectation, but rather one that grew within them as they did. This was not just an isolated influence but appears to be a 'family' tradition:

"I've always had an interest...in...in people I guess...and in science, as well. And I come, come from a fam-family, which I've mentioned that...that just oozes compassion (mmm)...I think my, my dad's...uh works for the ambulance service, my mum was in nursing before she came ill, my sis-sister's a nurse, my...mum was a nurse, so...the whole family...all about helping (mmm) other people. Um...I've al-I've al-um, I've always had this interest in...in people" [Gareth 3.28]

Another participant stated:

> *"It's a value on the kind of so-on...care and support I think (hm-mm). Um...and my sister's, she's now training as a speech and language therapist, so...I kind of don't think it's coincidence that both of us have gone into...more...you know, kind of supportive...(mmm) supportive...um...professions." [Clare 8.2]*

This caring role appeared to then be transferred into their professional motivation.

Moving towards family values with regards to professional motivation, not necessarily counselling psychology but more their future careers in general, was also viewed negatively by a couple of participants:

> *"because I was st-still in a framework of kind of...you know I need to do science at university to get anywhere in life" [Hugh 2.57]*

Hugh reflects how he did not gain anything from pursuing something his family expected:

> *"I actually got onto the IT training scheme which is, kind of training you to do kind of...like systems engineering (mmm), but...I-I did it for, literally for two weeks and I was so bored" [Hugh 3.16]*

Hugh however did then go on to rebel against his family expectation and pursue the profession he wanted:

> *"and I just, there was just this feeling that wasn't even me and (yeah) and um...even though like my dad was kind of...bit disappointed and stuff um...I...um...I started doing um...er, I just got job as a Mental Health Support Worker" [Hugh 3.17]*

For Gareth, his move towards his family expectations in relation to his professional motivation could be seen through what would appear to be an implicit family message that life was hard and that aiming high academically was not something that was achievable:

> *"I never really achieved much at school. I never really thought that this, this was a career [counselling psychology] that I could achieve" [Gareth 3.47]*

Like Hugh, Gareth also then goes on to rebel against this view when he pursues the doctorate in counselling psychology, saying that he was the first in his family to go to university.

Another participant identified how after receiving negativity from her family, when they were told that she wanted to pursue counselling psychology as a profession, she felt the need to rebel against the negativity and fight to prove them wrong:

> *"I thought well, you know what...I'm going to show you...you know...and okay you might not be behind it, but...I'm jolly well gonna...stick this out" [Bonnie 7.43]*

On a personal level, rebelling against family expectations came across strongly particularly for those who were brought up in strong social cultures.

Elaine did not identify with all of the cultural expectations on her, especially those that were placed upon her for being a female:

> *"I'm more strong...in a way, more confident (yeah). And um...less of a weak...person in the family, less of er...terr...I-I-I would say that I don't...fit into the traditional role (hm-mm)...of a daughter or, of a married woman or of an Indian girl as such. I'm struggling here to make...uh, or create...a space for myself an identity for myself (mmm). So there's been a big clash there, between culture and...between my own needs (mmm) I suppose, so...it's been a...yeah struggle there" [Elaine 9.47]*

There did not seem to be any indication that there were any negative feelings about rebelling against family message either personally or professionally for the participants in this study.

2.2. Trigger Experience

Experiences were identified which appeared to trigger participants' career motivation towards counselling psychology, making up this second master theme. Five participants identified a trigger experience initially. For three participants the trigger experience for their career motivation came later.

Two participants spoke about how a traumatic experience within the family caused them to re-evaluate the current path their life was taking, leading them to question their career:

> *"well it was after my marriage broke down really in...2002...um...I had counselling myself (hm-mm). Um...and...it sort of changed my...view of the world really (mmm) and so...discovery of...all sorts of things I hadn't really though about...um...until then (mmm). Er...and...so yeah I can safely say it sort of changed my life...r-radically...um...and...it was also*

I guess, a, a thing about, sort of change-wanting to change my career" [Frank 8.34]

For another participant:

"And when, when my mum became ill...about seven years ago...just made me question a lot. Just made me question if I was happy in (mmm) my career and...um...just question what would...make me happy 'cause I, 'cause I...I wasn't happy, so I just began to question what, what, what would make me, me happy (mmm)" [Gareth 3.36]

Bonnie felt she had not previously felt any interest in her career. Hearing about a friend's troubles, however, triggered first her disgust at the lack of resources within a counselling service, but then her own interest in what appeared to be her natural affinity for listening to others. This left her feeing the need to pursue a way of helping them more actively:

"...a colleague of mine...was going through some really difficult things with his...in his marriage, and...I'd said, turned round to him and said "Oh my God", you know "get yourself signed up for Relate, go and get some counselling, you know you've got to try and save your marriage"...and he turned round and he says..."the waiting month-the waiting list is twelve months...(mmm) and we've done eight months and we can't get there, you know...we just (can't)...can't do it anymore"....And I thought that was just criminal, I just thought, you know...why aren't there enough counsellors, you know why is that waiting list so long (mmm)...that is just awful, awful, awful...and the more I thought about it, I thought, you know I really...I'd...be really interested in, in doing that" [Bonnie 5.14]

For another participant, the trigger experiences occurred when they were younger, yet was still prominent in her memory. For Denise, her experience involved her father acknowledging her ability to view situations differently from others.

"So we were in the car, sniping, sniping, sniping...and I said "look...I"...you know, quite precocious way..."this is how it is, you do this and then...when you do this, it makes this person do this" and...whatever. Everyone agreed...and my dad said...you know "Denise, you're a very observant person"...and I, it just filled me with some...kind of..."yeah"...gosh..."I am"...that, that...yeah...that's totally...it's a compliment I feel I can take (mmm) and not giving it back to you. I, I kind of, it felt right" [Denise 3.28]

2.3. Fighting for Identity

This master theme relates to how participants felt unsure about their identity. Two participants felt they have had to 'fight' for their own identity:

> *"I think we're both [he and his wife] fighting for our own identities (right) within, in a, within the family where that was actual quite difficult I think (mmm), so of a bit overwhelm...ing mothers. Um...and so haven't, so, sort of taking on a lot and being sensitive to what, what, whether other people...um...yeah what's, maybe what's going on for, through other people, but also...fighting for your, our own identities but <u>having</u> to do that (mmm)" [Frank 6.6]*

For Frank, this was a feeling of oppression by the family, whereas for another, the struggle was against a wider societal cultural expectation:

> *"I'm struggling here to make...uh, or create...a space for myself, an identity for myself (mmm). So there's been a big clash there, between culture and...between my own needs (mmm) I suppose, so...it's been a...yeah struggle there" [Elaine 9.46]*

The 'fight' for identity also occurred through a fear of change:

> *"I...think I've tried for a long time...to not, not change, I kind of, kind of fought the change (mmm) so much...kinda, kinda, kind of been scared of changing" [Gareth 6.18]*

Also wanting to be able to differentiate themselves from the 'family':

> *"I think the-there's a big thing about my...my identity and...and that...um (mmm)...within my family I think I found it difficult to...to know what my identity really was growing up (mmm)...er...and yet...in, on the surface it would all seem very...obvious (mmm)...but to me it wasn't (yeah)...and I felt quite...insecure I think about my own identity for a long, many, many ti-for a lot, many, many years (mmm)...but on the surface everything looked fine you know and great, well fantastic, but actually underneath I felt very insecure" [Frank 12.39]*

And to keep their own identity separate:

> *"I won't have to...kind of...but kind of being tied back into the family is quite difficult actually (mmm), you know a bit more of a dependent role" [Hugh 8.59]*

THEME 3

GROWTH

This super-ordinate theme of growth is an enormous process for all participants. It encapsulates the journey participants have experienced from their early view of self through progression of this view to how their new professional identity has developed and how this has impacted others.

3.1. Professional Identity

Participants' developing a sense of identity as counselling psychologists was a salient theme. For most, developing this identity had been positive and the following subordinate themes highlight how participants define their role as counselling psychologists, on a personal and professional level; how they feel their professional identity is just an extension of themselves; and how they felt they have gained from developing this identity.

3.1.1. Role of Counselling Psychologist

This subordinate theme developed through participants' recollecting what they felt being a counselling psychologist meant to them. Two sub themes emerged of personal and professional meaning.

3.1.1a Personal

Participants identified how becoming a counselling psychologist and taking on the role has impacted them on a personal level. For some, this has been in the way they feel they have grown as a result of training:

> *"I've grown so much just in this year alone. And I feel so much more...secure and sure of myself actually, in my identity as a counselling psychologist and in...where I'm going in life (mmm) and I feel confident of myself and I feel like I've learnt skills and so maybe kind of having more security and sss-being sure of myself in that area of my life" [Amber 7.36]*

For others, being a counselling psychologist means more than just learning what the role entails and that it also involves bringing 'the self':

> *"in some ways you need your own qualities I think...that um...I see that...as a um...that's my kind of image as a counselling psychologist" [Hugh 6.44]*

Another participant reflected:

> *"I think, being a psychol-counselling psychologist is...is about your individuality and, and...and bringing yourself in (mmm) into...being I'd say a counselling psychologist, it's...(yeah) it's a big part of the training. I think it's not just, sort of learning the techniques (mmm)...um...(yeah) it's who, it is a big part of who you are" [Frank 10.5]*

In addition to this, participants also felt positive as a result of incorporating the role of counselling psychology into their 'selves':

> *"there is a sense of...of enjoying feeling...useful" [Bonnie 6.28]*

Another participant felt valuable:

> *"the idea of...working with people to...help them to become more satisfied and happy and their...life full stop. I think it's...an incredibly...valuable thing to be able to do. I think it's...an incredibly...valuable thing to be able to do." [Clare 5.40]*

And another, satisfied:

> *"I would say...it's about being success-successful in...the course that I have chosen for myself or the career I have chosen for myself. It's about satisfaction...of...having learned something that you can...help others with" [Elaine 7.11]*

3.1.1b Professional

This sub theme highlighted the qualities participants felt they identified with at a practical level within the role of a counselling psychologist. This theme was also divided into two aspects; the skills that participants valued about the role; and how 'helping other's' was a salient theme.

<u>Skills</u>

For many, the processes that counselling psychology focuses on was prominent. Clare identified how she felt that counselling psychology places a great deal of emphasis on the 'person':

> *"I did like the fact that...counselling psychology...takes the person as the starting point." [Clare 4.46]*

Another participant highlighted how the 'person' was key for counselling psychologists rather than the person's symptoms, as would be the case within a medical model:

"with counselling it was...about, about the person was mainly about the person about working with the individual and, and what they, they brought rather than just...a label" [Gareth 4.16]

Clare felt that being able to work holistically was because of the many approaches counselling psychology training offered:

"I think counselling psychology takes a much more holistic view...of people and also even...counselling...psychology training...provides you with a lot more...approaches." [Clare 4.49]

These different approaches offered the participants the capabilities to unpick a person's issues, which can be quite complex:

"on a professional level, it would be a case of...um...wwwhat working within a profession where...that I would feel so...I could work...with...such...diff-different angles um com, complex patients more...more so than if I was just say a counsellor or support worker" [Gareth 4.50]

Another participant used a metaphor to describe that although working with such complexity was challenging, it was also interesting and adventurous:

"more interesting is in the swampy lowlands, where it's not so easy really to, to pin these things down (yeah) but, but is more interesting (yeah). So I found sort of counselling psychology more around that (mmm). I mean its...its qu-there's a balance there (yeah) between the sort of the science side of it and psychology and (mmm)...that, that for me was the right sort of balance" [Frank 8.58]

"it's more of this adventurous stuff" [Frank 9.11]

Satisfaction was also highlighted:

"Yeah I guess that is a very different way of being a counselling psychologist. Definitely the...that there's something very satisfying about finding patterns in people. And that's what I want to help them do." [Denise 9.4]

"I would say...it's about being success-successful in...the course that I have chosen for myself or the career I have chosen for myself. It's about satisfaction...of...having learned something that you can...help others with." [Elaine 7.11]

As was being non-judgemental:

> *"I see myself in there times being someone who, is prepared to sit and listen...um...without...view...or without a comment (mm), without my own personal comment" [Bonnie 6.14]*

Bonnie goes on to say how although being non-judgmental is a value of counselling psychology, they were still human:

> *"there's a, a human side to me being a counselling psychologist as well and that...I think this year I've been real-realising I don't...necessarily like all of my clients..." [Bonnie 6.21]*

However she also notes that although at times not liking clients is inevitable, putting any differences aside on the part of the counselling psychologist is a skill:

> *"because like I...w-I want, I want to be there for them because if they've taken the step of...deciding that they need to come for counselling then, then I want to be there in that space...um...and um...but I, I don't think it's always necessary for me to...to have to like the person (yeah)...to be able to counsel them" [Bonnie 6.23]*

<u>'Helping others'</u>

'Helping others' was a salient theme for all participants when asked about what they felt counselling psychology meant to them. For Frank, this was 'huge':

> *"I think, being with clients is a big aspect (mmm). It's, it's the client, the client work and...um...being, well...'being', being able to be there, with clients, as their...trying to...ww-he-work on their...difficulties (mmm), problems. Um...that's huge for me." [Frank 9.55]*

Others also identified this as a central aspect of their role:

> *"I suppose even then the-there's this concept of 'I want to help others'" [Elaine 6.46]*

> *"I think my role er...is, is someone who's kind of...er helping people that are in need" [Hugh 6.30]*

As mentioned earlier, participants felt positive affect as a result of their role in helping others, i.e. feeling satisfied, finding work with clients enjoyable and valuable, however the process of working with clients could also lead to frustration. Bonnie reflects on these polar feelings:

"there is a sense of...of enjoying feeling...useful (mmm)...and um...that uh...for some people that you've been there...sort of facilitating...the changes (yeah) that um...that are going on in their lives...and I guess that's...yeah, it's a real sort of...it's a real sort of 'pick you up' when someone goes..."Oh my goodness, I've just realised blah" and you go "Yeeeessss!!" [Bonnie 6.28]

"equally it can be sort of...frustrating when you've...sort of spent...hours trying to describe something, or...or (mmm) working through issues and...and it really not sort of, it's really not hitting the spot and...I guess at those times it's, it feels sort of, very sort of...you know a person you're like "Oh golly, you know, how, how am I ever gonna get it...get through this?"" [Bonnie 6.33]

Ultimately however, there was a sense of feeling privileged to work with people:

"I think...for me, especially being with clients...listening to clients talking and...sitting with them as we, as we work things through...I feel, I feel...really privileged to...uh...be allowed to hear...what's going on for people" [Bonnie 6.8]

"I think it's an incredibly powerful and very...like I definitely do feel very...um...you know there is so many people that I work with...that I feel really...privileged..." [Clare 5.54]

3.1.2. Complementary Role

Five participants highlighted how developing the professional identity of a counselling psychologist felt like an extension of their personal identity.

"Yes it sort of seems...that natural home for those, instincts that I already had" [Amber 4.11]

Amber then went on to say:

"I think it then became...yeah part of my identity and how I saw myself" [Amber 4.26]

For another participant, working with people helped them identify with the role:

"I kind of, I've...felt, felt suited to working closely with people" [Gareth 3.40]

In addition to this, working through his own experiences and gaining support also brought about this realisation that the role suited him:

"I kind of live, live through, through enough of things and I've came, came through it (mmm)...to see the ben, ben, benefit of me being helped by some, someone else, have, having support or guidance...(mmm) from some, someone else and uh...that's, that's why I thr-I-I just feel that this is the career for me" [Gareth 4.2]

For another participant, however, it took the results of many psychometric tests before she realised that she had a natural affinity for the role of counselling psychology:

"I was in my early thirties at the time, I thought well...do you know, that's quite a big step to take to change career...um...I'd better go and...double check this at a career's counsellors, so (mmm) I went to somebody who I know who...does loads of psychometric stuff and...talk about sort of aspirations and dreams and all the rest of it...and we sort of ran all these tests and...out of the sort of the top ten jobs...um psychology and counselling related jobs...came up as sort of, in seven of the top ten jobs" [Bonnie 5.25]

3.1.3. Self fulfilment

Gaining some self-fulfilment was also a theme identified by participants. For some, a sense of achievement was important:

"so that was one thing...that led into the counselling psychology...um...and then I think also for myself, I really wanted to...prove to myself that...um...that I could actually do it and get that kind of qualification" [Bonnie 5.52]

"I had this great big dream and the dream, dream's came, came true, as such and I've and I and I've achieved that and I've gone...beyond what I could achieve" [Gareth 4.48]

For the above two participants, this sense of achievement was academic, but for others, pride in identifying with the identity of a counselling psychologist was also a factor:

"Well definitely I have a lot of pride in...being a psychologist [...] I've always...liked the identity of a psychologist" [Clare 5.14]

3.1.4. Status enhancement

Although some identified an internal feeling of self-fulfilment, much focus was on how participants felt they gained some form of status enhancement by reflecting on how they felt others perceived them now that they had pursued this profession.

For three participants, gaining some form of validation was important to them:

> *"I've loved the acknowledgement that actually they've seen I've been doing a...you know a good job" [Bonnie 7.58]*

This acknowledgment for Bonnie meant a great deal:

> *"it's actually really wonderful for them to turn round at various points and just...to say that they've been very proud of me" [Bonnie 7.55]*

Amber and Denise, however, identified this validation by feeling that others (their family) now took them seriously.

> *"I wondered at one point whether maybe people take me a bit more seriously, in my family" [Amber 6.44]*

Until embarking on this profession, Amber reflected that she had not previously realised that some members of her family did not respect her:

> *"I hadn't really realised that I had thought that maybe he had doesn't really respect me, but I...I think maybe in a way...yeah, maybe in a way that's something that's...come out of it." [Amber 6.55]*

Similarly for Denise, who identified how subconsciously she had hoped that by not only becoming a counselling psychologist, but that also by having the status of 'doctor' she would now gain some validation:

> *"I think part of the fact that it was a doctorate...I maybe...I don't remember feeling it at the time, but I remember thinking it would be cool to be a Dr. Definitely that came into my mind but...maybe I think on a different...consciousness level, on a subconscious level, I'd just wanted to be taken seriously, I wanted people to hear me" [Denise 1.52]*

Hugh also identified that becoming a 'doctor' gained him respect:

> *"this sounds quite bad, but because it's a...a doctorate, I'm almost...I feel almost that I'm...got a bit more respect..." [Hugh 6.58]*

Becoming a 'Doctor' also highlighted for other participants how proud their parents were of them:

> *"I think my dad in-in one way is quite proud of the fact that I'm going to be a Dr at the end of it." [Amber 6.59]*

Elaine reflected what her parents told her:

> *"we're proud of you (mmm) you make a doctorate and...our friend's daughters aren't doing doctorate's or...things like that, so they're proud of me" [Elaine 8.19]*

Feeling this pride, Denise and Frank note how their mothers liked to voice this to others:

> *"my mum likes to brag, so it's been great for her (mmm)...gets to brag to all her friends...wonderful" [Denise 6.3]*

> *"I think my mum's...wanting to come to the ceremony [laughs]...(yeah) so she's proud and, and then can talk to her friends about what I'm doing" [Frank 12.19]*

Ultimately, participants felt a greater value as a result of their professional motivation and identity.

3.2. Continued Personal Growth

This theme developed as the participants highlighted a clear sense of continued growth. Frank succinctly described this as a 'constant discovery':

> *"Um...but yeah, I mean the roots of it really are my own experience of being sort of a satisfied client if you like (mmm). Um...and it just really, changing my...view of the world and (yeah)...access to all this...philosophy and...um, the emotions of the world (mmm) and the way people think, why they think like that and (yeah) just there's so much...um...that it's, it's...sort of...constant discovery really" [Frank 8.41]*

This constant discovery involved an improved sense of self. For Elaine, this highlighted the differences she felt between her and her father:

> *"after having started studying counselling psychology and um when my own personality...started to...develop and then I started taking, you know um...personal therapy as well...and...a lot of things came up...within that...um, my thoughts...my values, so...then I started realising that, you know, these are the differences between us" [Elaine 1.26]*

Elaine went on to say in what way she used this discovery of her own 'personality' to identify her needs:

> *"I've started making my own choices and taking the responsibility for them (mmm). I'm recognising...what my needs are and I want to share that" [Elaine 9.17]*

She continued:

> *"I'm more strong...in a way, more confident (yeah). And um...less of a weak...person in the family, less of er...terr...I-I-I would say that I don't...fit into the traditional role (hm-mm)...of a daughter or, of a married woman or of an Indian girl as such. I'm struggling here to make...uh, or create...a space for myself an identity for myself" [Elaine 9.46]*

This increased understanding of self was explicitly linked with participants' development of their new professional identity through understanding of others:

> *"I guess...t-training as a psychologist it's this...sort of personal growth thing...that have been quite challenging, sort of just...learning to understand learning more about human behaviour (mmm) and reactions and...and not only other people's, but my own as well" [Bonnie 6.37]*

And through the process of personal therapy:

> *"Definitely having to do my own therapy...I can just imagine me, I have become much more aware of the impact...(mmm) that she's had on me and the interaction...you know kind of family generally and the impact it's had, so much, it hasn't changed my behaviour but it's made me much more aware of...where I get things from and (right yeah) that kind of thing..." [Clare 9.5]*

3.3. Relationships

3.3.1. Understanding others

An increased understanding of others has also been a salient theme for participants. For some, this has been an explicit result of their current training and personal therapy. In learning how to understand others, participants found that this helped them understand their families more:

> *"although I have had therapy as part of my course, yes I do feel I've had more insight into my family relationships...which has surprised me*

because I thought that actually, I'd got (a lot) a lot of insight out of all (yeah) the therapy I had had before," [Amber 2.1]

"And perhaps some kind of defence...not really understanding why somebody, why people would want to invalidate your experience so much and so...you know, being a counselling psychologist enables me to understand people more...(mmm) and so maybe...maybe makes me understand...how and why families work...(mmm) better..." [Denise 5.6]

Another participant noticed how she became more aware of others' perspectives and how they may have been different from her own:

> *"I'm more aware of...I'm more aware of kind of...the difference, well certainly from my mother's perspective, I'm more aware of her perspective I think and certainly my interpretation of her perspective (mmm) and that I think is probably through...like having to do, my own counselling. And consider my family and the impact they've had on me (mmm). Yeah I'm much more...accepting of who she is and all that she's been through" [Clare 9.48]*

Although this newfound understanding of others has allowed the participants to understand their families better, it has also made them more critical of them, as Frank and Hugh note:

> *"I guess we're all quite critical of our parents [both laugh] a bit, um...I do feel quite critical in, in, in...quite a few ways but also (mmm) I fe-I recognise...you know some great stuff that I've got from them" [Frank 4.34]*

> *"but because of the programme, I've become a lot more critical...of um...my family. I've seen things which I wouldn't, I don't know if I would've seen, I don't know if that's because of personal therapy or what." [Hugh 8.5]*

3.3.2. Different ways of relating

Leading on from the above theme, participants found that they now related differently to others as a result of pursuing counselling psychology.

> *"I think I do relate to them [the family] differently" [Bonnie 10.48]*

This was prominent when talking about what they perceived to be new family dynamics:

"my knowledge has increased the things or...whether it's because I just feel I'm in a more...powerful position within the family dynamics" [Hugh 7.36]

For some participants, this new way of relating was evident by considering how they felt their previous role within the family had changed:

"the other difference is in how I've been in the family, which I've already touched upon in terms of actually being more aware of my role and being aware of how I am (mmm) and be asserting what, what role I want to play actually and I, i.e. a daughter role or a sister role (mmm) and not a carer" [Amber 7.30]

For Amber, being more aware of her own identity allowed her to differentiate between the other roles she felt she also had. This helped her to identify what role she wanted to play within certain relationships, whereas before she felt her role was 'put upon her'.

For others however, this new professional identity, which participants felt either complemented their own identity or that it became incorporated into it, found it difficult to know whether they should differentiate between their professional and personal identities or amalgamate them:

"I was also sort of thinking, you know it's that...sort of...seeing friends and trying, trying not to sort of go into sort of 'counsellor' mode but remain in 'friend' mode (yeah)...rather than...yeah, because I guess so much of...sort of whilst you are working with clients that's similar to- geared into...sort of being there as the counsellor but...it's almost...d-d I mean, I remember having this...this conversation with someone last year about 'do you switch off the counselling psychologist in you?' " [Bonnie 6.42]

Another participant noticed how she *did* want to separate her professional and personal identity, especially when she was with her family, as she began to notice how her parents would try and use her and her new knowledge against one another:

"You fe-perhaps people will look to you...more. You know my mum might want to moan about my dad to me and hope that I'll say something...psychologically insightful about him back. But that would be armour to her (mmm)...that would be fodder and I'll...that's what I'm trying to steer away from. I don't want to give either of the power by having the...the psychologist opinion (yeah) kind of thing. I-you know because I'm still their daughter, I'm st-I still have be there to witness their relationship..." [Denise 7.11]

Ultimately, whether participants wanted to differentiate between their identities or amalgamate them, there was an awareness of this new way of relating:

> *"there is this sort of, you know...there's the daughter or the sister side, but that's also the [laughs] trainee psychologist side, which sort of sits there with the...with the sort of head thinking, "oh you know, I wonder why she said that" or (mmm) "golly, you know, when she says that, that makes me feel" and the process between us and...blah, blah, blah and you know, whether it's counter transference or (yeah) you know, some, some [laughs] kind of terminology...right I recognise that" [Bonnie 10.39]*

3.3.3. Communication

As with understanding others and different ways of relating, participants found new ways of communicating with others:

> *"So I guess...in some ways...I guess the major thing...about becoming a psychologist, a counselling psychologist, a-of training, is learning to be more openly communicative with them, to not get my feelings so much in the way...(mmm) it's just to be able to...openly communicate...better. Better, in a better way, yeah. I feel that being a psychologist...equips me to communicate better..." [Denise 7.34]*

As Denise indicated, a better understanding of self and of others allowed her to communicate her needs to her family. This was something she felt she had been unable to do before, due to her feeling insignificant, as highlighted in the previous master theme **negative emotions and attributions (1.3).**

Being able to communicate how they felt, although helpful, was also difficult:

> *"Um, which we've managed to come through, but it was difficult and it actually meant that we had to talk about it, which wass...yeah that was really difficult and (yeah) I think came as a shock to her the fact that I was finding it hard. But now we do speak very regularly...every...every other day" [Amber 1.28]*

The growth of their professional identity caused a rift between Gareth and his friends and family because he found it more difficult to communicate with them than he could previously:

> "that caused a rift...between the family and, and some friends as well, not being able to connect (mmm)...like I could, could've done before" [Gareth 5.58]

3.3.4. Relationship Reparation

This theme seems to be interrelated to the above themes. Many participants found that some of their relationships were repaired, again as a result of increased understanding and communication. One participant identifies how her relationship with her father has not been great:

> *"my dad and I don't have a particularly...good relationship" [Amber 1.38]*

But Amber went on later to say that an increased understanding of herself and the way she perceived her relationship with her father was not helpful and now views her relationship with him differently:

> *"his whole way just angered me and it's actually only, I think again this year, that I've been able to come to...terms with...who he is and not expect...anything more from him, (yeah) and not...crave after this ideal father which I had in my mind." [Amber 1.43]*

For another participant, as a result of having to spend more time with his father, he felt that their relationship had become closer:

> *"I 'spose, it's actually in some ways it's made me closer to my dad because I've spent more time with him, that because I have to and...I think it's quite nice for him to see that I actually do, do some work and things and that I'm quite busy with the...(mmm) the programme, um...so that's been quite good" [Hugh 7.47]*

Another participant also reflected on her understanding of why perhaps her relationship had previously been 'bad' with her brother and how that it was now getting better:

> *"I think that's...charged us to have a...bad relationship-things are improving now...it's taking a lot of effort...but, improving, slowly" [Denise 1.33]*

And for another, although he recognised that his relationships were becoming closer, this did not necessarily mean that it was easy:

> *"Yeah it's closer and more...um...uh...it's warmer, but stormier [laughs]...which is mainly [laughs] (yeah)...yeah, warmer and stormier" [Frank 12.31]*

THEME 4

ADJUSTMENT CHALLENGES

For all the participants, pursuing the profession of counselling psychology brought up many adjustment challenges. Five master themes were identified within this super-ordinate theme. Four of them are related to participants' adjustment challenges. The fifth relates to how participants felt their families struggled with their professional development.

4.1. Guilt for personal growth/change

Due to the nature of counselling psychology, change was inevitable for those who pursued the role of a counselling psychologist. For some participants, this caused them to feel guilty for their families. One participant recognised how she began to grow whilst training but felt guilty for those she felt she was leaving behind. She felt unsure how to deal with this difference between her and others around her:

> *"that...not everyone around us of course...you know, we're growing...but the people around us aren't (yeah)...and it can be very hard...you know to...yeah there are some relationships that would be left behind (mmm)...but with family, you can't leave them (yeah) behind...but they're not going to be growing...um...in the same way...um...so it remains a bit of a sort of puzzle...for me at the moment" [Bonnie 2.57]*

As a result of her growth and change, linked again to different ways of relating, Bonnie felt she needed to be careful how she approaches her relationships:

> *"but working out how you...how I want to change or approach the relationship in slightly different ways...um...without causing them any distress, because it's not them who's changing, it's me who's changing" [Bonnie 2.48]*

Another way in which participants felt guilty about their growth and change was by feeling that distance was beginning to form as a result:

> *"I guess in a way it's, my coming into this field perhaps is...in a way moved...m-me, perhaps a little bit further away from him in some way" [Amber 7.11]*

This, another participant found distressing:

> *"I feel terrible for saying, but to feel more enlightened than my parents can feel like a very distressing thing" [Denise 6.53]*

For most participants, there was an element of positivity in the fact that they had grown. For Gareth, however, this was something *he* was finding difficult and not necessarily seeing his growth as a good thing:

> *"I've...became a, a much more serious person [laughs] (mmm). I used to be quite...laid back and light-hearted and...we'd...joke the majority of the time. Um...but I am, I've, I've become a more, serious, serious person" [Gareth 5.36]*

4.2. Letting go/holding on

This master theme highlights how some participants wanted to let go of their old identities and how they used to relate to their families:

> *"I suppose it's sacrifice an old role I have of just being the younger person who's kind of gone along (mmm) with the flow" [Hugh 8.9]*

For Amber, being able to identify with her professional role allowed her to incorporate some aspects of it into her personal identity. As a result she could let go of the identity she felt she had before and instead now relates more with others with this new one:

> *"I think that now, I've got to the point where I'm more able to...separate myself from that role in my family, now that I am doing it...in my career if you like (mmm) and there are clear boundaries about what is expected of me and...the client. And so I feel less put upon...you know because actually, I'm now choosing to do something willingly, consciously (yeah)...um...and there are boundaries and I work within those boundaries...then...there's that kind of...do you know what I mean, I've diverted that into that and now...I don't take responsibility for my family" [Amber 4.28]*

However others did not want to change, linked with feeling guilty, Gareth felt that change was not something he wanted to happen, so was holding on to his old identity:

> *"I...think I've tried for a long time...to not, not change, I kind of, kind of fought the change (mmm) so much...kinda, kinda, kind of been scared of changing" [Gareth 6.18]*

Earlier in the interview however Gareth reflected how he felt that others resented him for changing, hence the desire to 'fight' the change:

> *"I've felt at times they've resented me for...changing, because I've changed, changed a lot during my...um...journey (mmm). And I think at times it's been, been hard for me to...connect with them and to for them to connect with, with me" [Gareth 5.25]*

4.3. Financial dependency

For half of the participants, dealing with financial dependency was difficult. For two participants, this financial dependency was identified as self-sacrifice for becoming dependent on family again:

> *"Financially there's been big sacrifices I've had to do (mmm). I mean...as an ass-I could live by myself and stuff, I've had to...move back in with my...dad, um which I found really difficult and um...also uh...um...he...he's a...like helped me with my fees and things, so...um...yeah so it means that I-I've felt under obligation in some ways, so that's a sacrifice..." [Hugh 7.43]*

This was clearly a factor for these participants when deciding whether to purse counselling psychology:

> *"I-I guess maybe I wasn't sure whether or not it was really what I wanted to do, where would I get the money from? Did I really want to be really poor? Did I want to go back to being dependent on upon my family?" [Amber 3.28]*

This financial dependency was not a positive aspect:

> *"So, we've had to...we've had that tie, the financial thing" [Amber 8.11]*
>
> *"that's the bit that I've not liked" [Amber 8.12]*

Rather than viewing the financial dependency as being self-sacrifice, other participants identified how the financial support has been a sacrifice for the family:

> *"So...it's affected them in that way...um obviously financially...it's affected all of us, because I have to live with them to do this course (mmm)." [Denise 6.16]*
>
> *"again my family aren't...wealthy at all, they don't, don't have money...at all, but...during the past year of training, they have supported me completely more...or less fin-financially (mmm), which has meant that it's been hard for them." [Gareth 5.17]*

4.4. Ambivalence

Ambivalence refers to the experience of both positive and negative thoughts and feelings towards something or someone. This master theme therefore encapsulates how participants have experienced ambivalence towards their family. This ambivalence

is possibly highlighted due to participants' becoming more aware of their feelings and through having personal therapy as part of their training. This ambivalence however was not just experienced since participants pursued the profession of counselling psychology. In talking about their early family experiences, earlier ambivalence during this time was also identified.

Ambivalence was mainly identified as being experienced by participants. Two participants, however, also identified that they felt their families felt ambivalence. This was something they identified as occurring in the present and related to how they felt their parents viewed the counselling psychology qualification:

> *"I think we both got some...ambivalence in it, in the fact that...he's, I think, if it wasn't a doctorate, I don't think he would have given any...support and I think because it's a doctorate in some ways he feels that okay I'm doing something. Whereas some...(mmm) thing you know has to be quite...academically robust. It has to be quite...you know, almost...sounds awful to say, almost something quite prestigious" [Hugh 8.48]*

Hugh identified that the fact that the qualification was a 'doctorate' made it acceptable to his family, especially his father. On the other hand, his father viewed counselling psychology as being 'soft'. Amber also noted, after her mother had told friends what Amber was doing, she was also confused about the term 'counselling' being in the title. Although her mother was proud, she did not want others to think that he daughter was doing 'just counselling':

> *"my mother then I think...was wondering well 'why is, why, why aren't you doing clinical psychology? (yeah) actually' and...and 'what is counselling psychology and is it really a proper route?' and...kind of dealing through all of, going through all of that stuff and (mmm) I felt really cross about that because I then became...I guess kind of defensive 'of no, it is a proper route and it means this, and it means that and it means that' and...mum's saying 'well it's just unfortunate that it's called 'counselling' psychology because that just infers that you are a counsellor and you can do that, you know within six weeks' it doesn't sound very...(mmm) it doesn't sound like...actually the amount of hard work that you're going to be doing" [Amber 10.27]*

Elaine however noted that she felt her family's pride was just an outer, superficial emotion:

> *"So I would say um...i-i-it's like a sphere really, so the outer layers, yeah, good, you know...we're proud of you (mmm) you make a*

doctorate and...our friend's daughters aren't doing doctorate's or...things like that, so they're proud of me but...it seems more hollow from inside I would say" [Elaine 8.18]

For others the ambivalence was highlighted when participants spoke about the support they felt they did or did not receive from their families during this training period:

"I wou-would say that, that ninety percent they've supported me completely...I think that only ten, ten percent is that...well it's not...not really support really" [Gareth 5.23]

He went on to feel that due to his family's increased understanding, however, they began to accept why he seemed different. At the same time, underlying the following extract, there seems to be some resentment from Gareth towards his family for not automatically having this understanding:

"I think it brought, brought us close, closer together when they began to learn more about me...when they...saw why...Gareth was so serious...(mmm) that it's not just because he's...gone to university because I first, first, first one in, in the fam-family, family to go, go to university and it's not, not because Gareth's reading more...or mixing with many cultures and whatever else is. That is, is, it's actually because he's so friggin busy and stressed (mmm) and working in a very challenge, challenging...career" [Gareth 7.17]

Again for Elaine, she felt that when reflecting on the past, she was give the 'green light' so to speak to pursue psychology, yet now that she is, her father perceives her as being lazy and disrespectful:

"I suppose things have changed maybe it's the family circumstances that may have changed (mmm), so when they see me spend so much time maybe studying or doing things, for instance if I was just upstairs, they presume that I must just be on the internet. My dad presumes that, I must be doing something. But he'd...doesn't remember that I could be studying in...he thinks I'm wasting or whiling away time when I should, have to come downstairs and help and (mmm) other things. So I suppose...that backing, that everybody needed, you know that support that...I tend to go to placement two days a week, I tend...to do my page-op two days a week, I go to university once a week...I suppose there's little support there and understanding I would say" [Elaine 7.56]

For some other participants, this ambivalence was highlighted when they spoke about their early family experiences and relationships.

Gareth had previously spoken about how compassionate his family were and that a strong value was to help others. Here, Gareth reflects on how, although now embraces this value, at times he resented it:

> *"I kind of did was...resent at times...the fact that the so, so many other people...strangers got...so much help and support and attention (mmm) when...I think I wou-l would have preferred some, some of that...attention" [Gareth 7.49]*

Amber felt dissonance when reflecting on the role she took on within the family:

> *"I think there was a conflict between, at times really resenting it and, and times...I don't...I don't know that I would have done anything else, I can't see what else I would have done...uh, you know it's a natural inclination for me" [Amber 6.10]*

And Frank identified his experience of giving up his pony and how he realises, as he reflects, that in fact this was a sad time:

> *"I think I'd sort of...grown out of er...out of...my relationship with him [pony] somehow (yeah) and it was a bit sad actually, I mean I, I thought...gosh...how, yeah...but I was...I was young I guess (mmm)...emotions weren't a big thing in the family so...sort of okay (yeah) somehow...yeah (Right)...er (okay) probably feel sadder about it now than I did then" [Frank 8.2]*

4.5. Others fear of judgment

As a result of participants' pursuing their professional motivation to become counselling psychologists, they highlighted how some of their family members feared this. Bonnie succinctly expresses how she believed her family perceived counselling psychology and personal therapy:

> *"this whole thing that we have to do personal therapy...has been a real...has been really quite sort of negatively received because it's, because I think they're just so unsure of what...counselling psychology is about, but also what I might be talking about...(mmm), and what I might be discovering about myself and...all sorts of things like that" [Bonnie 8.12]*

And how in particular how she believed her mother felt about it:

> *"I think my mother was...felt quite threatened...that I could talk to somebody else...that I wasn't...telling her what I was talking about (yeah)...um, especially when it was about her, you know" [Bonnie 8.18]*

"but I know that she'd, that I'm, she'd definitely sort of, her heckles would rise (...) that she feels fairly uneasy about it" [Bonnie 8.21]

Other participants also identified how they noticed that certain family members had become defensive. Denise believes that her father feels threatened by her becoming a counselling psychologist but that because of his fear that he will be encouraged to talk more about his feelings:

"he's very respectful of what I'm doing...and frightened of it at the same time. Towards the beginning of the course...they would say, or he would say to me, you know "don't you think there's a possibility that you can just think about things too much?" (mmm) or is..."are, are, do you not, does it not become tiring over analysing everything" and I think for me...that wasn't a criticism, just a fear. He'd maybe fears...(mmm) thinking about things too much, because he knows, perhaps he does...and just doesn't want to...talk about it." [Denise 6.11]

Although Hugh talks about how he feels that his awareness of his mother's defences has become more prominent since he began his training, these defences may have only appeared since she pursued this profession:

"my knowledge has increased, I think she's a lot more insecure than I thought she was (mmm). And I-I can see a lot more defences and things that...I wouldn't have done...before, just because my knowledge isn't, creates the thing, so I don't know if my relationship has changed a bit because of that" [Hugh 7.8]

And Amber recognises that her mother feels threatened when she tells her that she is undertaking the interview for this research, fearing that she will be judged:

"I think obviously in a way there's part of her that actually feels a bit threatened...by it. I guess in her response to me coming here for this interview as well (mmm) she was obviously threatened about the fact that I was going to sit and talk about...how the family has affected my...choice of career." [Amber 7.23]

Summary of Results

The overall aim of this research was to gain an understanding of how participants perceived their family experiences and how they linked these with their motivation to become counselling psychologists. It also aimed to highlight *how* early family experiences may have influenced this motivation.

The interviews with trainee counselling psychologists, who had at least one sibling yielded rich narrative data. The interpretative phenomenological analysis attempted to make sense of the participants' stories. The analysis identified four super-ordinate themes: early view of self; internalised family messages; growth; and adjustment challenges.

The **early view of self** appeared to form three distinct master themes. These related to the **cultural influences** participants felt helped build their personal identity, the experience of **sibling order effect** on the way they viewed themselves in relation to others and **negative attributions and emotions,** highlighting how salient the negative early experiences were for them and how they felt they affected them.

The **internalised family messages** were also a prominent theme for participants. These were related to their early views of self also. The master themes related to how participants had **moved towards or rebelled against** their explicit or implicit **family values** and expectations and whether this was viewed as a positive or negative experience. How a **trigger experience** within the family was internalised and what processes occurred for participants as a result of this. The third theme **fighting for identity** related to participants reflecting on how they have felt about how they internalised their family messages and thus felt they went through a process of fighting for their own identities.

Growth was a large super-ordinate theme to emerge from the data as this related to both participants' personal and professional identities. The master themes that developed within growth were **professional identity, continued personal growth** and **relationships.** Within the master theme of professional identity there was a further sub-theme of role of counselling psychologist, which was further sub-divided into how participants viewed their role *personally* and *practically*. How participants felt their role was complementary to their personal identity was also identified, and how, as a result of gaining a

professional identity, participants experienced self-fulfilment and status enhancement.

The master theme **continued personal growth** did not yield any further sub-themes, as this seemed to be a continuation of what had already occurred.

Within the master theme of **relationships**, participants reflected how their training has allowed them to develop understanding of others, different ways of relating, increased communication and as a result, have experienced relationship reparation.

The final super-ordinate theme **adjustment challenges** mainly highlighted participants' reflections on how they dealt with the changes that were involved in pursuing counselling psychology. The sub-themes that formed were **guilt for personal growth/change, letting go/holding on** of their past identities and history, **financial dependency**, feelings of **ambivalence** and one which related more to others, **others' fear of judgment.**

The next chapter explores the themes in more detail and relates the findings to current theory and the literature review discussed earlier. A critique of the research is then made, followed by conclusions and reflections.

REFLECTIONS

The process of analysis was quite difficult for me as this was the first time I have used IPA as an approach. The difficulty stemmed in knowing how interpretative to be. Due to the background of participants, being trainee-counselling psychologists, they seemed to already show some element of interpretation within the interview and also appeared knowledgeable about the influences their family has had on them due to personal therapy. This therefore at times made me feel as though I was only going through a process of descriptive analysis.

Researcher reflexivity was a huge aspect that I was very aware of, as stated in the methodology. I am also a trainee-counselling psychologist and there were times during my interviews where participants would assume that I understood what they meant when talking about their journey since starting their doctorate course. The topic is also something I really relate to, hence my choice in the topic! I therefore felt it was very important that I was aware of what could be the interpretation of 'my' experiences and what was that of the participants. I continually reflected when interpreting participant data as to whether I was looking through 'researcher' eyes or my own. That was one of the reasons why I chose IPA as a methodology because of the recognition that the researcher cannot be completely objective and that their own experiences will alter the way in which 'one' views the world. I was therefore aware that I may have interpreted participant interviews as my own, but at the same time, may have also seen things that others may not have if they had not experiences similar experiences.

Chapter Six

Discussion

DISCUSSION

The following chapter firstly summarises the study thus far and then gives an overview of the findings. The findings are then explored in more detail, referring to and connecting with the theory and literature explored in chapter two. In conclusion the chapter makes suggestions for future research and notes my final reflections on the whole research process.

1. Summary of the research

Our experience of family starts from the very beginning of our lives and our perceptions of those experiences influence how we view ourselves. As we develop, obstacles are faced and decisions made. For most, one decision is that of occupational choice and many studies suggest that families can influence this. Much research has explored the motivations behind the choice of various professions, although little has looked at the family influence on the occupational choice of those who have pursued counselling psychology. The aim of this research therefore was to explore and understand how family experiences influenced the motivation of trainee's to become counselling psychologists.

Qualitative research methods were employed in order to investigate the relational context in which the occupational choice and motivation occurs. A discovery-orientated approach was chosen to explore the relationship between family experiences and career motivation. Interviews were conducted with eight trainee-counselling psychologists to gain rich accounts of each participant's subjective experience. Each of the eight interviews was recorded and transcribed verbatim so that an interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) could be undertaken. This approach was chosen because it seeks to explore how participants make sense of their social and personal world by looking at the meaning they hold for their family experiences in relation to their occupational choice. IPA takes the view that reality is subjective and is only concerned with what and how an individual perceives their experiences rather than setting out to discover whether their experiences are true or not. Since the IPA process requires the researcher to place their interpretation on the data collected, it is important for the researcher to be reflexive and this is shown through the reflective pieces offered throughout the study.

2. Overview of the results

The main research question asked of this study was:

> "How do trainees process their family experiences and transform them into their motivation to become counselling psychologists?"

Through the process of answering the main research question, additional questions were also identified:

"Do siblings influence this occupational choice?"

And

"What impact does this choice have on the family itself?"

The four super-ordinate themes discovered through the detailed analysis of the interview transcripts offer an insight into *how* participants processed their family experiences and transformed them into their occupational motivation to become counselling psychologists. These were: early view of self; internalised family messages; growth; and adjustment challenges. Siblings were not identified as having an explicit influence on occupational choice, but they did play a role in participants' early view of self and the way in which they internalised their family messages. The impact of participants' occupational motivation on the family was identified as an overall reciprocal effect.

Although not identified as a super-ordinate theme, *how* participants made sense of their family experiences appeared to be through the process of identity development. The results highlight how participants' occupational motivation grew from their personal identity development, to which the family made a significant contribution. Smith, Flower and Larkin (2009) noted how often identity emerges as a central concern for many IPA studies. They also state that identity changes are associated with life transitions, which within this study, was identified as participants' career transition. Smith et al., (2009) suggest that this is not surprising considering the nature of IPA research, "as the research embarks on in-depth inductive qualitative study of a topic which has considerable existential moment, as often is the case for IPA, then it is quite likely the participant will link this substantive topic of concern to their sense of self/identity" (p163).

The following sections will detail four main findings from the analysis section in relation to identity development, occupational motivation and how families influenced these. These are: value towards care; gaining validation/avoiding rejection; separation-individuation; and investment of self: "What I really want". How participants' occupational choice has impacted the family then follows this.

3. <u>Value towards care</u>

All four super-ordinate themes identified within the analysis section relate to the development of identity, with the first two highlighting the early developmental processes. Kroger (2007) says that before mid adolescence, where Erikson's identity formation process begins, an individual's sense of identity is formed through identifications with significant others. One strong family value that participants seem to

have internalised and thus had an influence on their early identity formation process and in turn their occupational motivation was a 'value towards care'. This was highlighted by four of the participants.

In respect to participant's personal identity development, for Amber, her value towards care seems to have originated in her feeling the need to take on this caring motherly role, in order to gain validation from her family. On the other hand, Gareth's value towards care seems to have come from a wider societal influence that places certain expectations on its members to be kind towards others. Similarly, Hugh was aware of the caring occupational roles his parents had and the expectation that he too should find a role that involved the:

> *"need to do something to help people and that you value in society"*
> *[Hugh 6.37].*

Clare's family experience was of caring for her younger disabled brother, and the values placed upon helping others similar to him within a day care service. The early family experiences of these four participants towards a value of care might have also impacted on their choice of occupation, which could be viewed as an outlet for their identification with this value.

Another family influence that was interpreted as having contributed towards this value of care was also found through the sibling relationship, in particular the sibling order effect. Forer (1969) noted how the first child, when another child is born, has to suppress their child role and struggle to become parental. This certainly seemed to be the case for the two participants who were eldest children, Amber and Clare. Amber, as already noted, took on a caring role within her family, yet Clare notes how she was aware of what was expected of her as an eldest sibling and chose to rebel against this.

The early family experiences of these four participants towards a value of care also seems to have had an influence on their choice of occupation. Kroger (2007) notes that individuals also create their identity through their own personal assessment of their skills, strengths, interests and talents within a separation-individuation process. As part of this development, the need to start earning an income becomes a focus and hence an occupational choice arises. Erikson (1968) shows that during mid adolescence elements that fit one's growing sense of identity, such as experimentations with meaningful vocational directions, are integrated. He pointed out, however that "the inability to settle on an occupational identity is what most disturbs young people" (p132). This is a time where finding a vocational outlet allows for individuals to "assess one's skills, interests and talents, as well as channels for expression" (Kroger, 2007, p.63).

As stated in the introduction, Shoffner and Kelmer (1973) long ago suggested that parents influence individuals' career choices by acting as role models, being influential on their self-concept, being occupational motivators, job information resources and providers of the developmental environment. A process by which this happens, Erikson (1968) states that adolescent values must have ideological guidelines that transcend family values to give themselves their own connection to their broader social and cultural contexts. As mentioned earlier, however, Alderfer (2004) notes that the degree to which an individual is able to differentiate from the family can affect the ease or difficulty of the career decision-making process. Kroger (2007) draws attention to Ginzberg's (1972) adaptive occupational decision making process that unfolds over three stages during childhood and adolescence; fantasy, tentative, and realistic. It is during the tentative stage that Ginzberg (1972) suggests adolescents begin to consider their own abilities and values. The degree to which values are placed on different issues will influence the occupational choices.

With regards to Erikson's (1968) statement about the need to transcend family values, it would seem that these participants created their own way of continuing this value towards care. Psychologist, Kate Alilovic (2007), reflected on how as a young child, she wanted to be like her mother, a teacher, and how, as an elder sister, would enact being just like her mother, playing the teacher to her not so eager siblings. As she became older (adolescent) she reflected how this view changed. She said she no longer wished to be a teacher and instead pursued psychology. A few years later, after pursing a career in psychology, Kate realised that she had not completely rejected the idea of becoming a teacher, as she had become a lecturer in psychology. This story also shows how Kate, although initially unaware of this process, transformed her internalised value of wanting to be like her mother into her own. Amber's experience seems to reflect Ginzberg's (1972) tentative stage, where she expresses that she feels as though she is trying to rebel against her 'caring' role and pursues a career in massage therapy, which upon reflection she realises is also a caring role. Amber's occupational motivation could also reflect her need for validation. Lackie, (1983) states that those choosing a career in a helping profession may do so as an overt way of gaining validation and recognition for caring for others that is not gained from within their family.

With regards to choosing a 'helping' profession, Skovholt and Rønnestad (2003) stated that the conceptual map of counsellors and therapists is guided by their experience. The conceptual map of novice counsellors and therapists therefore lends to that of a lay helper. They say that this tends to be drawn from the personal formulations of helping as a family member or a friend. This might reflect this salient theme of helping others that was identified in this study. Norcross and Farber (2005) also found, when interviewing psychotherapists that the most frequent and conscious reason for this

occupational choice was the desire to help others. As stated earlier, although much research into counsellors' and psychotherapists' early experiences and occupational choice have been linked with having 'unmet childhood needs', it is questioned again whether this is only identified due to the nature of the work undertaken by therapists rather than it being a consequence of being a wounded healer. In the past, Raskin (1978) asserted 'I became a therapist before I became a person' might seem true for most, if not for all these participants. It is unlikely however that those who enter this profession would not gain personal growth due to the requirement for personal therapy and being made more aware of the use of self in therapy. In the past, Miller (1997) suggested that it may be due to individuals' having these unmet needs that leads them to have a more acute sense for fulfilling the needs of others, which in turn naturally lends itself to therapeutic work. This still seems to be a valid assumption today as noted earlier from the work of Stone (2008) and Davis' (2009) on the increased compassion and empathy of those who have had similar experiences in their life.

Within this study, participants also highlighted what being a counselling psychologist meant for them, stressing the development of a 'professional' identity. Many, as mentioned earlier, have spoken of the value of 'helping others'. There is a sense of pride in gaining knowledge and understanding of human development and behaviour in order to do this. It seems that for most, this goal of helping others was a continuation of their internalised value towards care. One participant, Denise however, explicitly identified herself as being different from most other psychologists because rather than her desire to 'care for others', her goal was to help them by identifying patterns and in turn changing them. She strongly questioned whether this had anything to do with being the youngest sibling. How participants felt as a consequence of helping others was also salient. Gaining career satisfaction, as stated earlier is important for motivation and personal happiness (Farmer, 1985). Participants talked of a feeling useful and privileged as a consequence of being able to offer help to others. This reflects what Norcross and Farber (2005) found in their study that "feeling fulfilled and healed by their work, their efforts on behalf of their clients are reinforced and their sense that they are truly in the right career is confirmed" (p.941).

A value towards care therefore seems to still be an important factor for those choosing a career in counselling psychology as well as those in other helping professions. For most this seems to have come from an early identification with the family's value towards care, however participants were able to transcend this family value and make their own value by using an occupation as an outlet. In addition the influences of a family value towards care, the next section discusses other family values and how they may have influenced participants' identity development and in turn their occupational motivation by their trying to either gain validation or avoid rejection.

4. Gaining validation/avoiding rejection

In addition to the link found between participants' family values towards care, a need to gain validation or avoid rejection was identified. This seemed to become apparent as other family values were identified as being influential on their identity development and occupational choice.

All four super-ordinate themes identified relate to the development of identity, with the first two highlighting the early developmental processes. As previously stated, Dallos (2003) expressed how 'the family' is influenced by ideologies and discourses from society which are then translated within their own 'family culture'. Within the master theme of cultural influences, different types of ideologies were identified in addition to a value towards care and these were notably gender and achievement. Each highlights how participants felt towards these values and how they felt the need to 'move towards' them in order to gain validation or avoid rejection.

Schwartz and Montgomery (2000) include the culture of gender (role and expectation) in their definition of cultural context. They note that these gender roles and expectations tend to vary between different cultures. Many participants expressed a feeling that there was a gender expectation within their families. Of the five female participants, three explicitly felt their gender had some bearing on the way in which their family related to them and what was expected of them. Amber talked of a 'strong woman' legacy, an implicit expectation, and reflected that during her early difficult family experiences she had felt there was no other way but to be strong:

> *"in a way and at least that way it was better than me falling apart"*
> *[Amber 6.8]*

This reflected how Amber took on this strong woman legacy to avoid being rejected if she were to 'fall apart'. A common underlying theme between two other female participants was that the origin of this expectation came from their distinctive socio-cultural backgrounds. Denise and Elaine both spoke about becoming aware that men were viewed as superior to females and felt they had to fight for their own values and goals rather than conform to these gender expectations. This awareness that males were seen as superior was prominent for both Denise and Elaine because they are the younger siblings to an elder brother. Forer (1969) offered an understanding of the feelings youngest siblings experience; "I am less able to do many things than other people" (p.6). This perfectly reflects particularly what Denise expressed in her interview. She felt inferior to her eldest brother and saw him as a constant competitor, especially as the family's socio-cultural view was that the eldest son was important. This reflects Ross et al's (2005) view that parental favouritism of one child can lead to rivalry and conflict. It is therefore hypothesised whether Denise felt the need to gain a high level of

achievement in order to gain validation from her family. She, however, also wondered whether her interest in psychology came from her Jewish cultural roots too. The other two female participants did not talk explicitly about a gender expectation although this could be due to a number of factors. Bonnie, for example, grew up without any brothers. Clare is the elder sibling with a younger brother. Neither Bonnie nor Clare were born into such a distinctive societal culture, as Elaine and Denise.

Of the three male participants, Hugh was the only one to talk of an explicit male expectation. This again may be due to his family's different cultural background, where again, males are viewed as superior. Hugh's view of his father's perception, using the term 'traditional' about his gender expectations, suggests that it reflects how many changes have occurred in societies and cultures over the last century (Kroger 2007). Kroger (2007) says that within Western societies the degree to which society dictates the roles each person will play has loosened, creating an enormous choice for individuals. Although this can be viewed as something positive, it can also place a greater burden on adolescents to find a way to make their lives meaningful alongside others (Kroger, 2007). This perhaps reflects the conflict Hugh faced when choosing his professional role. Within his family, there was an expectation for him to follow a 'male' orientated occupation such as finance or science. Hugh talked of an early interest in psychology, which, like other caring professions such as nursing and social work, has tended to be regarded as a role for women (Morgan, 1996). Although an old perception, this was still a value that Hugh was exposed to within his family. Hugh made a tentative decision to begin to pursue psychology but his family's response, especially from the male members of his family (brother and father), suggested that his choice was inappropriate and viewed as a 'feminine' occupation. Once he had completed his graduate psychology course, Hugh backtracked and pursued an occupational role within information technology, perhaps to avoid rejection from his family. As with some of the female participants, the other two male participants did not mention any specific gender expectation and perhaps this was due to their more western cultural background.

Similarly to what is hypothesised earlier that Denise felt the need to gain a high level of achievement in order to gain validation, this was a family expectation that was also identified by others. This however seemed to be more implicit. This expectation of achievement was intrinsically linked to participants' occupational choice. As Farmer (1985) has said, understanding the factors that influence career and motivation to achieve is important because motivation affects achievement, level of occupation achieved and career satisfaction. For Frank and Elaine, achievement seemed to be measured by the financial benefits of an occupation. Farmer's (1985) point regarding career satisfaction seems relevant to Frank. Frank spoke about how he was viewed as being successful because he had achieved more than his elder brother at school and

was successful because he earned a great deal of money. Frank appears to have gone along with what he felt his parents wanted for him, by going and earning lots of money in an occupation other than their family business. Frank talked of how he felt *he* might have rejected his family's life. It might be considered, however, whether it was actually he who felt rejected by his family in being encouraged to do something different. Perhaps Frank thought he would gain validation if he followed what he believed his family wanted, even though it may not have fitted with his goals and desires.

Gaining validation/avoiding rejection was also identified as an issue as participants developed their identity as a counselling psychologist. Johns (2002) noted that 'transition' is a significant personal development issue for trainees. The reciprocal growth of participants' personal and professional identities seems to have caused conflict for some in that they were unable to identify whether to integrate this new professional identity with the changing personal identity or keep them separate. This adjustment challenge was reflected in the theme letting go/holding on. Reid and Deaux (1996) say that "recognition that self-representation includes both social and personal identities raises questions about the cognitive organisation of these elements" (p1084). It seems that by gaining an increased understanding of the human behaviour and development and learning new skills in relating to others left participants feeling unsure how to incorporate this into their lives. Skovholt and Rønnestad (2003) metaphorically compared this process to learning a new language; at some point, the theoretical learning needs to be applied in the practical world. The interpretations of participants' difficulty in knowing whether to 'let go' or 'hold on' to their old identity could be that they are unsure how to integrate this new knowledge into their practical world, including relating to others. Gareth clearly identified a fear of change, even though he knew that it was inevitable, but at the same time wanting to keep hold of his old identity. Perhaps this was due to him fearing his family would reject him. He did not reflect why he feared this change as he implied that he knew it was a positive one. Johns (2002) notes Bridges' (1933) description of this type of transition and how it involves three phases; an ending; followed by a period of confusion and distress; leading to a new beginning (p.49). This might explain Gareth's fear of change. He perhaps saw the development of this new identity as a replacement rather than as something that could be integrated into his previous identity. What participants seemed to be experiencing is the re-organisation of their self-representation. Whilst there may be, and remain a conceptual distinction between their social identities as counselling psychologists and personal attributes, there is also an integration where the identities and attributes are inextricably linked to one another, which offers a better way to conceptualise the organisation of self-structure (Reid & Deaux, 1996).

As a result of pursuing an occupation in counselling psychology, many participants also found that they gained validation from their families mainly due to the prestige of the level of achievement the occupation offered. This will be discussed further in the section 'Investment of self: "What I really want"' as it highlights more how participants feel within themselves having gained increased self-worth through their self-achievement and status enhancement.

This section highlights how some of the participants' early family experiences led them to internalise some family values, noticeably, gender and achievement in order to gain validation and avoid rejection. It was also identified that once participants began to pursue an identity as a counselling psychologist, a conflict arose whether to integrate or separate this new identity with their existing one, especially in relation to how their families may perceive this. Although a definite sense of participants needs to try and gain validation and avoid rejection when talking of their family experiences was found, it is also apparent through analysis that a process of separation-individuation also occurred.

5. Separation-Individuation

The previous sections highlight what Erikson (1968) states as the process preceding identity formation, consisting of an individual's sense of self, which has been primarily formed through identifications with significant others. Thus far identification with a value towards care has been highlighted and the process participants have gone through in order to gain validation/avoid rejection. This process of identification occurs for the primary school aged child through to young adolescence as they begin to organise a functioning self through the attributes of others (Kroger, 2007). Within this section an exploration is made of the way participants have gone through a process of separation-individuation, where their own values are considered and followed as their own sense of identity grew.

During late adolescence, a process of separation and individuation begins, which involves the development of a more autonomous sense of self through reworking the internalised ties of representations of one's parents (Kroger, 2007). This was something that Blos (1967) developed as a second separation-individuation process, continuing on from the separation-individuation process that Mahler (1963) developed which ended around the age of three. Although Blos (1967) did not detail the specific movements involved in this process during adolescence, Kroger (2007) says an important outcome of the second separation-individuation process of adolescence is to relinquish the power held by the internalised representation of the early caretaker, which was developed during the first separation-identification process and to find a way of functioning more autonomously.

Another theme within this study that related to Erikson's (1968) identification process and Blos' (1967) separation-individuation process is seen within the super-ordinate theme of 'internalised family messages'. This shows how participants processed their family messages/beliefs. In particular, the master theme within this super-ordinate theme, 'moving towards/rebelling against' identified *how* participants transformed their family experiences. This theme seems to highlight Erikson's (1968) identity formation where the individual begins to choose what they will accept as part of their identity as opposed to hitherto identifying with others they admired. Within the 'moving towards/rebelling against' theme, the experiences where participants felt their values/expectations were positive fits with the identity formation stage. These included experiences where they felt they 'moved towards', accepted their earlier identifications. Examples of this can be seen in Amber's identification of continuing the 'strong woman' legacy, Frank's identification with his mother's 'adventurous' approach to life, and Bonnie's holding in high regard her family expectation and her own desire to get married and start a family. As highlighted in the previous section, some of these values that participants felt the need to 'move towards' in order to gain validation, were later rejected and participants differentiated from them. These were mainly identified when participants talked about their occupational choice with some linking this with their socio-cultural gender expectations.

One participant's distinctive experience of rebelling against a socio-cultural gender expectation was Elaine's. By undertaking her professional training in a different country from her own, she is immersed in and experiences a completely different culture from that of her family. Acculturation is a term used to describe the process of adopting features of a different culture with which an individual, or group of individuals, has continuously come into contact. In their study, Schwartz and Montgomery (2000) questioned whether gender identity changes with acculturation, and highlight how the emergence of postmodernism challenges Erikson's and other theorists' universal claims of identity development. Erikson's epigenetic approach "suggests that identity formation is relatively immune or unresponsive to acculturation and gender-related experiences" (Schwartz & Montgomery, 2000, p.360) whereas the postmodernist view suggests that components of identity formation are contextually labile and are affected by acculturation and gender related experiences. Schwartz and Montgomery (2000) hypothesised a third alternative theory whereby they believed that "the fundamental structure of identity is quite consistent across variations in gender and level of acculturation but that acculturation and gender do influence the degree to which individuals draw upon specific processes and outcomes within this overarching structure" (p368). In her interview, Elaine said she had a clear goal from a young age of wanting to pursue psychology and that with her father's approval at the time, she was able to do so. Since,

she now talks about the lack of support she currently receives from her father, it appears that Elaine may have begun to adopt the 'loosened' gender expectations of the British culture, which is clearly different from that of her culture of origin that her father still strongly lives by. This perhaps highlights a process of separation-individuation, whereby a person goes through a process of relinquishing the values and goals of others and instead begins to pursue their own. Although Schwartz and Montgomery (2000) continue to question whether the identity development of those individuals who live in a different country from their own culture is affected, for Elaine, this could be the case. Kroger (2007) says that the identity formation process becomes complicated for those who grow up within an ethnic minority group within a larger culture because more role models would be available but with possibly conflicting cultural values. For Elaine, changing her developmental context by training in the UK may have strengthened her early views of wanting to be different and her desire to pursue her own values and goals, rebelling against the gender expectation of her, highlighting a process of separation-individuation. At the same time, however, this caused a rift between her and her father, leaving him feeling that she no longer identified with the roots of her culture of origin.

Secure parental attachment has consistently been linked with healthy levels of adolescent separation-individuation and positive adjustment. Kroger (2007) noted how secure attachments with mothers tend to have more of an influence than fathers on adolescent identity development and the separation-individuation process. Fathers' anxiety about distancing, however, was linked with higher foreclosure scores for daughters, but lower foreclosures for sons. Marcia (1966) explained how those in the foreclosure stage of identity development are particularly drawn to the values of a parent. Fathers featured prominently for Bonnie and Amber, although they did not feel that their fathers experienced any anxiety about distancing with them. Instead, both indicated a sense of distance between them and their fathers, which led them both to convey a sense of disappointment. This experience was identified within the 'negative attributions and emotions theme, where both women felt hurt by their fathers' lack of interest in them. During the interviews, neither Amber nor Bonnie explicitly say that their relationship with their father had an impact on them, however it is interpreted as having done so more than they may realise, especially for Bonnie and her career development. It is not clear, however, whether this led them to remain within the foreclosure stage longer than necessary. It seemed that rather than fusing with their fathers' values, they had become resigned to how their fathers perceived them. Bonnie in particular appeared to have done this rather than choosing to explore alternative identities. Marcia (1966) notes how late adolescents in the foreclosure identity status are fused in a symbiotic relationship with the primary caretaker. Amber moved towards feeling the need to care for her family, which she viewed as a negative process. This could be

interpreted as her going through a process of 'parentification', being placed in the role of family caretaker. Amber voiced that she sensed feeling this was 'put upon' her by her family, but perhaps she took this role on herself. DiCaccavo (2002) says that if an individual is unable to provoke a caring response from their parents, which seems to be the case for Amber, the individual then becomes adept at anticipating the needs of others as their way of relating to the parent. Winnicott (1965) also identifies this process as 'premature emotional growth' (p.91).

Yoder (2000) attempted to understand the relationship between late adolescence and early adulthood identity development and their social contexts and proposed a general model of ways in which various contextual barriers may interact with identity exploration and commitment processes and impact on internal psychological functioning. Her concept of these contextual barriers refers to the external limitations imposed by the socio-cultural environment. Reflecting the biases helps to qualify the nature and process of each of Marcia's (1966) identity statuses. Yoder (2000) therefore believed that researchers could identify the interaction between the contextual and individual driven ego identity-formation process.

Within this study, it is not clear at what stage in their life the participants reached any of Erikson's (1968) ego-identity statuses. Erikson (1968) proposed that Identity development in late adolescence serves as a basis for future psychological tasks during the years of early, middle and late adulthood. Although he states that identity is consolidated at the end of late adolescence, he does not suggest that this is the final process of identity. He believes that this process continues, that the structure/framework provides direction as adulthood emerges and identity remains flexible, open to change or modification from both external experiences and internal awareness. This seemed to be what the participants in this study experienced. Three participants, Frank, Bonnie and Gareth, did not seem to go though what Marcia (1966) identified as the process of exploration. It could be said that they did not go through Blos' (1967) separation-individuation process but instead remained in the foreclosure status, identifying and continuing to internalise others' beliefs and expectations. It is possible therefore that these were not questioned until a 'trigger experience' occurred, enabling them to realise that their life was not what they wanted it to be. This also links with the master theme 'fighting for identity' as it seemed that it was not until a trigger experience occurred that these participants realised that they were fusing with their family identity rather than forming their own.

Marcia (2002) noted how identity could be reformulated in the psychosocial stage of adulthood if a disequiliberating event or non-normative, critical life event was experienced (Kroger, 2007). He suggests that during these times, individuals may

regress to previous identity modes, but that once a search for better identity option is fulfilled, another identity is constructed, which accommodates a wider range of life experiences, including the disequiliberating event, than previous resolutions (Kroger, 2007). The participant who seemed to have felt this most powerfully was Frank. He began to realise upon reflection that he seemed to automatically continue along the path he felt his family set out for him and came to realise that he did not really know who he was. These 'trigger experiences' and new identity development seemed to occur in early-middle adulthood for these participants, although most identity developmental theorists imply that this generally occurs during adolescence. Kroger (2007) looked into longitudinal research of late adolescents and young adults and found that fewer than half of the subjects had reached the status of identity achievement. This suggests that this is not achieved as readily in adolescence as initially believed and that there is considerable scope for development during young adulthood. Kroger (2007) does note, however, that more opportunities seem to be available during adolescence than young adulthood. This seems also to be linked with the social expectations, where there is more openness to identity alternatives for the adolescent than the adult.

It is clear a process of separation-individuation was experiences, which was particularly apparent as participants spoke about their occupational motivation and choice and for some rebelling against socio-cultural gender expectations. The relationship between early family experiences and parental attachment and the stage at which the separation-individuation process occurred was also highlighted. It is hypothesised that for some participants the separation-identification process was delayed and that it was not until a 'trigger experience' occurred did this process begin. As a result of participants going through a separation-individuation process, it would appear that they are now investing in themselves by doing what they really want. This is discussed in the next section.

6. <u>Investment of self: What I really want</u>

Now that a process of separation-individuation has occurred and participants' own goals and values are realised, this section highlights some of the processes participants went through in choosing to pursue counselling psychology and the impact this had on them. To get to this point of feeling happy with their occupational choice, many participants seemed to go through what Ginzberg (1972) describes as the realistic stage. This typically occurs during mid to late adolescence and is the time when the explorations of tentative choices occur. All participants appear to have experienced this process although, similarly to the stage at which the process of separation-individuation occurred, this did not seem to occur during adolescence. Four of the participants' occupational experiences seem to have occurred during early adulthood, at the time when A-level and undergraduate degree course choices are made. Amber, Clare,

Denise, Elaine and Hugh all reflected that from an early age they had an interest in psychology. Amber and Clare, however, had pursued different branches of psychology before later deciding on counselling psychology. This could be viewed as their exploring their tentative choices, although it seemed more than once in those different roles, that their goals and values were still not being satisfied. This realistic stage seemed more straightforward for Denise, Elaine and Hugh. For them some elements of exploration continued for a few years before they decided on counselling psychology but they did not pursue any particularly different roles beforehand as Amber and Clare had done. Hugh, as mentioned earlier, also experienced a conflict when choosing his occupational role due to the gender expectation for him to follow a 'male' orientated occupation such as finance or science. Although Hugh initially backtracked and pursued an occupational role within information technology, he did eventually choose to pursue the occupation he initially wished. Hugh reflected that it was not until it was suggested within the interview that Hugh realised that this may have been an instance of his internalising his family's values again rather than pursuing his own. Gareth and Frank, and in some respects Bonnie, had similar experiences to Amber and Clare in that they pursued other occupations before their interest in psychology surfaced. Kroger (2007) states that Ginzberg's (1972) model provided a useful framework regarding the process by which realistic vocational choices are made. The model has also been criticised, however, for not acknowledging different contexts in that there are not always meaningful occupational opportunities for adolescents and the fact that individuals vary in the rate and timing of their occupational development, as was shown by the participants in this study. In relation to choosing the field of counselling psychology, Amber, Clare, Denise, Gareth and Hugh all expressed how initially their interest in psychology was mainly towards clinical psychology. At some point during their tentative explorations, they encountered someone they knew who was a counselling psychologist and that it was not until they had had this encounter did their interest in counselling psychology begin.

Kroger (2007) points out that much research on identity development has looked at the differing styles of communication and identity development among mid and late adolescents. The findings have generally been that people from families that encourage individuality and connectedness are more likely to explore various identity alternatives prior to commitment whereas families discouraging individuation lead the adolescent to be less likely to explore identity alternatives (Grotevant & Cooper, 1986). This study does not necessarily support or not support this theory. Frank felt supported by his family and pursued a career in a business-orientated world. It was only when he had a traumatic experience that he re-evaluated his life and realised that although his parents were supportive, he had followed their values rather than his own. This highlights the theme "fighting for identity", which is significant throughout all participants' identity development to some degree. Frank identifies the fight with his family's values and

Elaine a fight against her cultural values. For others the fight was subtler. With regards to support, Bonnie also seemed to have had a similar experience to Frank, in that although she just 'fell into' job roles, she considered her family were always in favour. When she told them of her wish to pursue counselling psychology, however, their responses were less than supportive. It could be questioned, therefore, as to exactly what is implied by the term 'supportive'. Although superficially some individuals would say their family was supportive, it is often the case that specific demands or expectations are implicitly placed on individuals. The term 'supportive' therefore could be viewed as subjective, having a different meaning for each individual. This means that what is deemed supportive by one person, may not necessarily be so for another.

In addition to the influence of family on individuals' identity, this study also suggested how participants viewed their occupational motivation in the context of their own identities. Roe (1957) has in the past stated that an individual's choice of occupation can be an expression of their identity. Erikson (1968) notes how, within mid adolescence, elements that fit one's growing sense of identity, such as experimentations with meaningful occupational directions, are integrated. Erikson (1968) pointed out, however, that "the inability to settle on an occupational identity is what most disturbs young people" (p132). This is a time when finding an occupational outlet permits an individual to "assess one's skills, interests and talents, as well as channels for expression" (Kroger, 2007, p.63). Many participants felt that their occupational motivation towards counselling psychology grew as they identified how it complemented their personal identities. As a result they also found that their growing professional identities complemented their personal identities. Fouad (2003) says that the implementation of a career choice is characterised by making congruent the inner world of the self and the outer world. This highlights the super-ordinate theme of 'growth', where the master theme 'professional identity' sheds light on a sub-ordinate theme of a 'complementary role'. Amber viewed the role of a counselling psychologist as part of her 'natural instincts'. This may have grown from her caring role within her family and also perhaps her being the eldest, which will be discussed later. Gareth also felt that he was suited to work closely with people, perhaps from his internalised family value towards care. Bonnie claimed she felt strongly about becoming a counselling psychologist, but due to her later career change, sought advice from psychometric tests before she would trust that she had a natural affinity towards the work of a counselling psychologist.

Kroger (2007) says, "the process of finding a vocational direction that can meaningfully express elements of one's identity is a formidable task" (p.70). For Bonnie, Frank and Gareth, it took some time for them to realise that they were unhappy with their lives and take the decision to change. A study by Mortimer, Zimmer-Gembeck, Holmes and

Shanahan (2002) investigated longitudinally, youths' decision-making processes about long-term vocational commitments. They found that many youths reported more delays in meeting vocational goals than they expected whereas other youths reported being uncertain about their future plans and living on a day-to-day basis, hoping that 'clarity will happen'. This is perhaps what occurred for those who pursued counselling psychology later, after having already committed to a different career role. Mortimer et al., (2002) stated that for some, a strong turning point occurred when a vocational direction crystallised, while others felt it was a slow process of growing awareness of a preferred vocational direction. As stated before, the occurrence of a trigger experience for three participants could be related to these strong turning points as highlighted in Mortimer et al.'s (2002) study. Both Frank and Gareth experienced a personal traumatic experience, leading them to re-evaluate their lives, whereas for Bonnie, it was a friend's misfortune that gave her the momentum to re-evaluate her life.

These trigger experiences can be compared with what other researchers call 'chance events' or 'serendipity'. Williams, Soeprapto, Like, Touradji, Hess and Hill (1998) note how the role of serendipity on career choice has been discussed occasionally in psychological explanations of career development. They noted, however, that several researchers have called for the context of chance events and for the interaction between such events and the person's "readiness" to incorporate these chance events into his or her career decisions to be considered; yet such research had not been conducted. Williams et al., (1998) therefore conducted a qualitative research study investigating the impact of chance events on the career choices of prominent academic women in counselling psychology. Within their study, the definition of chance was events that were unplanned, unexpected, unanticipated and serendipitous random occurrences. They also stated that a person must also respond in some way to the chance event. They found that from the perspectives of the participants, chance did have an impact on their career paths and choices, by changing their paths completely. This seemed to be clearly the case for the three participants, Bonnie, Frank and Hugh, within this study although it was not discussed whether they felt they would have changed their career paths if the chance event had not happened. Participants in Williams et al's (1998) study also observed that these chance events changed their self-concept. Both Frank and Gareth certainly felt that their trigger experiences caused them to re-evaluate the direction their lives were going and what was important for them and to start to do what they really wanted.

Super's (1990) theory of occupational development seems to include the possibility of a later change in occupational direction than adolescence stage in Ginzberg's (1972) model. Super's (1990) theory includes processes all the way to retirement. He says that between the ages of 25-35, specific choices about occupation are made. It is

around this age that this appears to occur for most of the participants, including those who changed occupations later. The slow process that Mortimer et al., (2002) highlighted could relate to Amber's, Clare's and, to a certain extent, Hugh's experiences. Clare and Amber had both embarked on a different career path before choosing and feeling settled with counselling psychology as a profession. Although their previous roles were still related to psychology, the disciplines are very different.

Super's (1990) theory of vocational development also suggests that the self-concept plays an important role in career choice. For many participants, it was identified within the master theme of 'negative attributions and emotions' that feelings of hurt, pain and invalidation were experienced. As stated earlier, this could have developed for those into a negative self-concept and it has already been suggested, especially in Bonnie's case, that this might have influenced her later goals and choices. Participants found that the role of counselling psychologist was complementary, which was identified through the development of 'self achievement' and 'status-enhancement'. This appeared to help participants to repair their earlier negative self-concepts.

As stated earlier, participants did reflect how as they have grown as counselling psychologists, so too has their personal identity. This reflects the master theme of 'continued personal growth', which in Figure 1 was linked to the master themes 'trigger experiences' and 'fighting for identity'. This seems to be largely due to the growth that is expected within the counselling psychology doctoral course, through compulsory personal therapy. For a long time it has been noted that personal therapy for therapists has generally been seen as an invaluable component of training (Macaskill, 1988). Macaskill's (1988) review of the empirical literature on personal therapy in training found that two-thirds of trainees found their personal therapy satisfactory. All participants in this study reflected how useful they found their personal therapy for both their personal and professional development. Amber specifically felt that she had learnt a great deal about herself and the relationship with her family through therapy. Other participants reflected on how the way in which they related to their families and others had changed since commencing their counselling psychology training. It was not made explicit, however, whether this was purely as a result of personal therapy per se, although it was suggested that it had played a significant part.

As a result of now feeling that they are investing in themselves a process of self-healing also seemed apparent. As participants have pursued their chosen occupation, most noted an ongoing change and development in their identities and feelings of self-worth. This they felt has grown from an increased understanding of self, allowing them to feel stronger and surer of themselves. Gaining a sense of identity as a counselling psychologist offered participants a change in self-concept, a sense of fulfilment and

status enhancement. This developed perhaps due to feeling that they belonged. Kroger (2007) states how the feeling of actually belonging to a community actively confirms one's own sense of identity. Ethier and Deaux (1994) emphasise the importance of a collective membership and the significant effects a group membership can have on behaviour. For these participants, finding a profession that fitted with their own values and identity and also feeling that they belong to the professional community of counselling psychologists, has allowed them to feel that their identity is more complete. As stated earlier, it seems as though it has also helped repair those negative self-concepts that developed from their early family experiences.

As participants spoke about where they felt they were now, it would seem that they had finally reached a period of identity achievement, even if a little later than Erikson (1968) suggested. Personal therapy for many helped them identify their needs and perhaps go through a new separation-individuation process that they had not experienced during adolescence. This inevitably led to a change in the way participants related to others. The increased awareness and understanding of others posed an adjustment challenge, which is discussed in the next section on the impact participants' occupational motivation has had on the family.

7. Impact on family

The previous sections have highlighted the process of change that occurred for the participants in relation to their occupational motivation and choice and the role their family experiences played in this. This next section attempts to highlight the impact participants' choice to become a counselling psychologist and the change that occurred for them has impacted the family.

In relation to the impact of participants' occupational motivation on the family, it appears that this whole process had a reciprocal effect. O'Brien (2005) states how the systems approach to the study of individual and family development emphasises the bidirectional nature of influence. She continues, "no person, event, or context is static or passive" (p.885). The subordinate theme of 'others fear of judgment' highlighted the way in which the members of the participants' family have been affected since they embarked on their professional training. Barcai (1977) said that a "family system can only accommodate itself to a certain amount of change in one of its members without manifesting a need to reorganise itself" (p.105). Others' fear of judgment perhaps developed as a consequence of their feeling that the family dynamics were changing when they, as a member of the family, were not ready to, which Barcai (1977) says needs to occur. This may reflect the ambivalence that was also identified by both family members and the participants.

Three participants when talking of their early family experiences identified some feelings of ambivalence. Fingerman, Hay and Birditt (2004) found within their study that individuals viewed certain close familial ties with greater ambivalence than they viewed more distal family ties. This is probably due to the fact that those having close relationships with their family are likely to have more interaction and thus experience more ambivalence. The participants in this study spoke about their close family members, perhaps because when asked about family experiences, these would have been more salient for them. Although a couple of participants spoke of their ambivalence, generally most identified how they felt their family felt ambivalent about their professional motivation. As a consequence this left them feeling ambivalent also. Within the results section, the feelings of ambivalence that three participants spoke of related to the family's pride about the level of achievement, which offered an implicit indication of support. This could be described as being a form of sociological ambivalence (Lüscher & Pillemer, 1998). Lüscher and Pillemer, (1998) distinguished between sociological and psychological ambivalence. The former involves normative expectations, such as status and roles, which could present as structural challenges in social relationships, whereas psychological ambivalence occurs at the subjective level, causing dissonance for the individual regarding their cognitions, emotions and motivations. An example of sociological ambivalence therefore could be highlighted by Amber's experience when she talks about how her mother voices her unhappiness that the term 'counselling' is involved in the title because she felt this was something 'anyone could do'. This led Amber to wonder whether it was *her*, her mother actually felt pride for or the societal recognition she gains when talking to others about her daughter's profession. Hugh also experienced something similar. As stated before, he is aware of a family gender expectation to pursue 'masculine' roles and he stated that due to the profession of counselling psychology being at a doctorate level, his choice has been accepted, even though the male members of his family perceive his chosen profession to be 'soft'.

Gareth's experience might portray psychological ambivalence, as during the interview, he seemed to want to portray his family as generally supportive, yet he also stated how much they did not support him too. This may be because at the time of the interview, he was experiencing dissonance between what he thought and felt about his family's supportiveness, on one hand perhaps wanting to offer an acceptable portrayal of his family, yet also feeling disappointed. Fingerman et al., (2004) say that trying to develop autonomy may be a contributing factor in the emergence of ambivalence within family, causing conflict and power imbalances as participants developed their identities.

Other themes that emerged reflecting the impact participants' professional motivation had on their family were implicitly through themes such as financial dependency,

different ways of relating and to an extent, participants' guilt for their growth/change. The financial dependency theme relates intrinsically to all that has already been said regarding identity development in that participants are pursuing a high level academic achievement, a step further towards autonomy, yet to enable them to do so, some are having to rely on their families financially. For some participants this may have just delayed for them the autonomy they would have experienced once they had left home, yet for others, it almost felt like a step back in their achievements, to be dependent on their family once more. As mentioned earlier, participants felt a conflict about this new identity development they were experiencing and being unsure as to whether to integrate or keep them separate. This development of a new identity however also led to feelings of guilt by participants because they were aware that this change had inevitably impacted on their family. Bonnie was one participant who reflected on how she relates differently to her family now and struggles with knowing how to respond. For example, she found it difficult to relate with her parents as a daughter, to switch off the counselling psychologist within her which wanted to help them to grow too because she became aware that her development was her decision and that it was not fair to impose growth on them too.

Kroger (2007) notes how the growth of a more autonomous sense of self also involves the development of new forms of relationships with others, including one's parents. Fouad (2003) also found when exploring the career development journey of counsellors, that counsellors found when others learned of their occupation, stereotyped perceptions would be thought about and voiced, such as suggesting they were being analysed. Fouad (2003) said that what counsellors found hard to deal with was the negotiation of the changes in relationships that come about as a result of their new knowledge and skills of listening and responding differently to significant others. This perception of being analysed may have also led to the fear of judgment that others feel as mentioned earlier. This highlights how some family members may be finding it difficult to adjust to the new way participants are relating to them. Other participants' family members, however, seem to perceive this new way of relating as positive. For example, Denise spoke about how she felt her parents would sometimes use her new professional identity as a weapon against each other in an argument. As participants highlighted, this re-negotiation of their relationships with significant others had both positive and negative outcomes. More positive outcomes have been the evidence of relationship reparation. Many participants found that their new skills and negotiation of relating differently to others has resulted in better relationships with others. This is mostly evident with Amber, who prior to her professional motivation, blamed her father for not being there for her, whereas now she reflects on how she has learnt to accept him as he is. One participant, Elaine, identified that her new knowledge did not create any relationship reparation but instead caused a great deal of conflict with her father. She

expressed how she felt a lack of support from her father whilst she has been on her doctorate level training, although when she first showed an interest in psychology as a teenager, this was supported. This parental support in adolescence helped Elaine to gain a sense of autonomy, just as Grotevant and Cooper (1986) identified. It is uncertain, however, how this recent conflict between her and her father will affect their relationship and Elaine's continued identity development.

Kroger (2007) talks of the reciprocal socialisation process involved in family relationships and how recent research has begun to focus more on the impact adolescent behaviour has on parents and siblings. As this study only asked the participants what effect their professional motivation has had on their family, the results obviously will not have offered a complete picture. For many participants, answering the question whether they felt their professional motivation has or has not had an impact on their family was difficult. This could be due to the focus of training and personal therapy being on 'the self' more than that of their families.

The impact of the participants' choice to pursue counselling psychology has had a reciprocal effect on the family. Feelings of ambivalence were experienced with regards to the family support towards the decision to pursue this occupation, with some participants highlighting a need to financially depend on their families. The main reciprocal effect was experienced with regards to the change in the way they relate to one another, which for most, was a positive experience. The following conclusion will summarise the main findings of this study and how the research questions and aims were addressed.

8. Conclusion

The main aim of this study was to establish how trainees transformed their family experiences into their motivation to become counselling psychologists. A great deal of insight was apparent when participants spoke of their family influences and this might have been due to participants having undergone some personal therapy including the process of learning about oneself and the use of self being integral to the role of the profession. Some participants felt that their family did not directly have any input in their motivation to become a counselling psychologist, but this study highlights that the family did play a role within this process, whether the participants are aware of this or not. The findings of this study did not necessarily identify any direct links with family experiences and participants' motivation to become a counselling psychologist, however it is certainly clear that an influence was apparent. The main findings in relation to the impact family experiences had on participants' motivation to become counselling psychologists were; a strong value towards care, a need to gain validation and avoid rejection, a process of separation-individuation and an investment of self: what I really want.

These findings highlight the processes that occurred whereby the participants initially internalised their family's values. The main value identified was that of a value towards care. It is interesting to see how many participants related this early family value towards care with their occupational choice of counselling psychology apart from one, who believed that her pursuit of counselling psychology was due to her desire to help others identify patterns within their lives rather than 'to care for'. This clearly supports Stone (2008) and Davis' (2009) work regarding those who pursue helping professions who tend to have increased empathy and compassion for others as a result of their own experiences. In order to pursue counselling psychology, however, many participants during the process of identity formation felt the need to reject some of their family's values in order by going through a separation-individuation process for their own values to be realised and pursued. These tended to be with regards to socio-cultural gender expectations. Extending the internalising of the family's values caused, for some, a delay in realising their own values and goals and in turn, pursuing their own occupational choice, with this process not occurring until after the age of thirty. Many career theorists claim that by this age, an individual should have completed this process (Erikson, 1968; Marcia, 1966), except Super (1990), who suggested a stabilisation phase occurs between the ages of 25-35 years. The experiences of these three participants therefore seem to support the time span of Super's (1990) stabilisation phase. Although participants were able to identify with a family value towards care and transform this into their own values by finding an occupational outlet to express this value, a process of gaining validation/avoiding rejection was also identified.

Although the gaining validation/avoiding rejection process participants experienced before was mainly identified with negative experiences, the choice to become a counselling psychologist ultimately impacted participants in a positive way. Many felt a sense of satisfaction and validation in the work this role offered them. This was identified not only through a sense of pride in the role they play in helping others, but also within their family that they did not feel they received before. The prominence of the negativity of the experiences expressed within the main finding of gaining validation/avoiding rejection could be due to the nature of therapy and training as mentioned in the introduction. Greater prominence of family distress could be identified due to the focus on the therapist's use of self and the need to be aware of what Jung described as 'the shadow self' (Wosket, 2003).

Although the role of siblings was not as pronounced as was expected in the occupational motivation of participants, they all reflected in their interviews the effect of their sibling order within their families. Steelman et al., (2002) feel that the birth order effect has been less supported and those who have experienced this in their research

9. Limitations

As mentioned in the methodology section, the limitations expected of this study would be the generalisability of the results, due to the small number of participants. Warnock (1987), however, stated that by delving deeper into the particular, we become universal. Although this study did only recruit a small number of participants, an argument for qualitative research is to gain deeper, richer accounts of a particular phenomenon. The data gained from the interviews within this study certainly did gain rich data about individuals' family experiences and professional motivation towards counselling psychology, offering a window into the world of counselling psychologists.

Williams et al., (1998) note that a limitation of their study was using retrospective accounts of the impact of chance events. They say, people cannot always accurately report on past events. It should therefore be remembered that all of the accounts offered by participants within these interviews were of retrospective accounts. Williams et al., (1998) also noted that given the nature of their interviews, participants might have offered to discuss only what they considered socially acceptable chance events, even though interviews were confidential and anonymous. As mentioned earlier in respect to the identification of 'trigger experiences', not only could there be the possibility that participants did experience chance events and not remember them, but they may have also chosen not to talk about them. Unlike Williams et al's (1998) study however, where only positive chance events were brought up, the participants in this study did talk of what were initially negative events.

10. Significance for Counselling Psychology

Understanding the journey individuals have made towards becoming counselling psychologists can be valuable knowledge to the field. Wosket (2003) talks about Jung's work of the shadow self, "the negative side of the personality, the sum of all these unpleasant qualities that we all like to hide, together with the insufficiently developed functions and contents of the personal unconscious" (p190). Jung said that it is not the shadow self per se that is the issue, but more the problems that may arise as a consequence of one being unaware of its existence or adamant to ignore it. As already discussed, including a requirement for personal therapy for counselling psychology trainees could be seen as an advantage in allowing trainee therapists to become more aware of their own development and any issues that they may have. In this study, it is clear that all the participants had an awareness of the impact their family and their family experiences had on them. Although insight into this may not have only arisen through the process of personal therapy, all participants identified how valuable they felt personal therapy was and the positive benefits it gave them in respect of their personal and professional growth. Some, more than others had insight into the relevance of

these experiences and their journey into counselling psychology, although all had an awareness of themselves and their own processes. This, as Wosket (2003) highlights, is crucial in the therapeutic work between therapists and clients. Although personal therapy is mandatory within counselling psychology training, many trainees find it difficult to identify areas to discuss and explore. This study therefore could inform training institutes in ensuring that some guidance could be offered of topics to be explored, including those of family experiences.

As mentioned earlier, five participants when speaking of their initial interest in counselling psychology, they said that it did not become clear until they had encountered someone who was already in the field. Before this, they said their psychological interest was pointing towards the field of clinical psychology. This highlights the importance of need to increase the prominence of the field of counselling psychology. This is a move that is already being pursued by the Division of Counselling Psychology at the British Psychological Society Annual Conference in Glasgow May, 2011.

Essentially, Fouad (2003) feels that gaining more information about the personal experiences of counselling psychologists will help the field of counselling psychology by answering questions such as "Who am I and how do my life experiences influence my effectiveness as a therapist?" (p.84). Due to many processes inevitably being involved in establishing how life experiences influence a therapist's effectiveness, it is hoped that this study begins to answer this question by focusing on the impact life experiences, specifically those occurring within the family and how this has impacted individuals choice and motivation to become counselling psychologists.

11. Suggestions for further research

When considering a suitable qualitative method to answer the research question of this study, grounded theory was highlighted as a possible method alongside IPA. Willig (2008) notes that IPA and grounded theory share similar features. Both have the ability to identify cognitive maps of how people view the world, sharing a systematic and categorical process of analysis. Both begin with individual cases, which are then integrated with others, to obtain a composite picture of the phenomenon being investigated. The apparent difference between the two methods is that grounded theory was first designed to look at social processes, answering questions more suited to sociological research questions, whereas IPA aims to gain insight into an individual's psychological world, making it a specifically psychological research method (Willig, 2008). This was the reason IPA was chosen over grounded theory for this research. Grounded theory also differs in that it attempts to saturate the available data in order to develop a theory about the research question. The research question for this study

however is also suited to the methodology of grounded theory, therefore a suggestion for further research would be to implement this approach to develop a theory regarding the occupational motivation of counselling psychologists.

As mentioned earlier, the reciprocal impact of the motivation of trainees to become counselling psychologists was only identified from one perspective. To better enhance this study, multiple perspectives could be useful to gain a wider picture of the family dynamics, interactions and the effects that changes in one member have on the rest.

As counselling psychology training incorporates personal therapy, whereby trainees are expected to reflect upon and learn from their own development, being able to reflect upon personal experiences is also important in gaining an understanding of oneself and thus form meaningful relationships with others. Lewis (2008) notes how trainees' understanding and development of self is through the accounts they give of themselves and their work. It could be said that the accounts the participants offered through the interview within this study regarding the process of their family experience and motivation towards counselling psychology, were 'their story'. Murray (2003) notes how it is through narratives that people bring a sense of order to what seems a disorganised world, and is also the way one defines oneself. Lewis (2008) also says that it is through stories and narrative that people create (rather than represent) their identities and sense(s) of self. Singer (2004) highlights a new sub discipline of personality psychology called narrative identity research. He says that its focus is on how individuals use narratives "to develop and sustain a sense of personal unity and purpose from diverse experiences across the lifespan" (p.437). This approach therefore could also be used to answer the research question of this study, by organising each participant's story through their interpretation and sequence of events.

Overall, further work on this phenomenon can only increase the knowledge and understanding of the field of counselling psychology. Continuing to research the people drawn to the profession may help to inform training institutes of any specific training needs and requirements, for example as mentioned above, topics for exploration within personal therapy. It may also highlight any changes that might evolve over time within a field where changes are always occurring and in those drawn to the profession. Such knowledge can only increase the prominence of this profession within the field of psychology.

REFLECTIONS

Overall, this research study has been very interesting to conduct, mainly due to my personal interest in the subject. As stated in my reflections throughout, I have found undertaking such a huge piece of work a daunting task. I have been amazed by the huge array of emotions that were experienced during the whole process, from waves of motivation; boredom, excitement and determination.

Although no hypothesis was identified in this study, I felt the results reflected what I expected in that family experiences do have an influence on trainees' professional motivation and the themes identified did not seem surprising. This was perhaps due to my involvement and position in the process. I hope however that I have remained true to the process of analysis of IPA and been transparent and continually reflexive of my process of interpretation, aware that my own experiences may have impacted the way in which I viewed the data.

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SECTION D

CBT and early family experiences

Professional Practice:

Combined Client Study and Process Report

CBT AND EARLY FAMILY EXPERIENCES

1. Introduction

This case study emphasises the influence of family experiences, especially the early ones, on a person's view of themselves, those around them and the world. It also highlights the work discussed in the critical literature review on the influence of sibling relationships on adjustment; and reflects how the client processes his early family experiences, the phenomena investigated in the research section of this portfolio. The development of my role as a counselling psychologist is also reflected upon with regards to my flexible use of a therapeutic approach.

A Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) perspective and theoretical approach was used to guide the work with this client, particularly the work of Fennell (1997) on self-esteem. Beck's (1967) cognitive therapy identifies that negative thoughts about self are central to the maintenance of depression, a symptom that my client presents with. Beck (1995) identifies how a person's self-concept is central to emotional disorders. With knowledge of cognitive therapy for depression, Fennell (1997) developed a cognitive model in understanding low self-esteem. Fennell (1997) defines self-esteem as a global representation of the self, based on experience, which is influenced by how incoming information is subsequently processed. Those with low self-esteem have a global negative view of themselves rather than a "differentiated flexible appreciation of varying qualities or aspects of self" (Fennell, 1997 p. 2).

Fennell describes how low self-esteem can be mapped onto Beck's (1976) cognitive model of emotional disorders. On the basis of a person's experience, beliefs and assumptions about themselves, others and the world are created. When presented with an appropriate experience, these beliefs and assumptions are activated and create negative automatic thoughts that in turn trigger negative emotions, physiological symptoms and behaviour. This creates a self-maintaining vicious cycle maintaining and reinforcing the negative beliefs. Fennell (1997) outlines the aims of cognitive behavioural treatment of low self-esteem as providing a context for change; breaking the self-perpetuating cycle; shifting the perceptual bias; correcting the interpretative bias; and reducing self-critical thinking.

CBT tends to be very structured, featuring paper-based exercises and homework (Beck, 1995). This case highlighted that although CBT can be a very structured approach, a more flexible approach allowed my client to set the pace for his progress. Wosket (1999) notes that having a preoccupation with a technique or intervention can take the therapist away from the client rather than bringing them closer into contact with them. This case therefore highlighted a shift in my process as a therapist, from being theory

driven, which Wosket (1999) suggests therapists do to conceal their feelings of inadequacy, and putting trust back into the client.

2. Client profile

Jon[1] is a 58-year-old married man and lives with his wife in a small Welsh valley town. Jon adopted his wife's two sons, after they married 26 years ago. Jon is still close to his adoptive sons, aged 33 and 37. Sam, the eldest, lives alone in a town nearby and Peter, the youngest, has recently moved out along with his girlfriend to live in their own home in the same town as Jon.

Jon has an elder brother, to whom he is not close. Jon perceived that his brother continually gained preferential treatment from their mother. This caused Jon to be extremely jealous of him when growing up, leading to resentment, especially as Jon was the one who cared for his mother for many years before she died of cancer four years ago.

Jon retired from work in 1981 on medical grounds. He has suffered and still does with many health problems, including; hypertension; bell's palsy; piles; arthritis; irritable bowel syndrome; and is partially blind in one eye. In July 2009, Jon suffered a heart attack.

3. The referral

A Community Psychiatric Nurse (CPN) referred Jon to the psychology service from the Community Mental Health Team (CMHT) in November 2008. The referral stated that Jon had received six sessions of counselling in June 2008 and had found this helpful. Since then, however, Jon felt his preoccupation with thoughts and feelings towards his mother, who died four years ago, had returned causing him to suffer further with depression and anxiety. He therefore sought further psychological input.

Jon was required to wait over a year from the time of his referral, due to the high demands on the service, until he reached the top of the waiting list to be seen.

4. Initial assessment

I first saw Jon in October 2009. He attended the first session with his wife. He was casually but neatly dressed. He engaged well, offered good eye contact and talked freely and extensively about his issues. Jon explained how he had received therapy previously but had felt it ended abruptly and was unsure why. He felt the sessions had

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[1] In the interest of confidentiality, names and certain identifying details have been changed.

allowed him to open up, but when they ended, he felt as though he had been "dropped like a stone", left still with unresolved issues. This left Jon wondering what he had done wrong. This made me more mindful, to proceed more sensitively when ending our therapeutic relationship.

4.1 Presenting Issues

Jon expressed a desire to overcome the issues he has felt towards his mother since he was a child. Jon described how he constantly sought out his mother's love and affection but felt unloved due to being persistently rejected. Since his mother's death four years ago he has continued to be preoccupied with seeking answers as to why she treated him the way she did. Jon says he has tried to 'let go of the past' but finds that every day something reminds him of her, triggering his negative thoughts again. As a result, Jon is left feeling depressed and angry. In addition to this, Jon also suffers from panic attacks when faced with crowded streets.

4.2 Formulation

Jon's issues are understood using Fennell's (1997) cognitive model of low self-esteem (see appendix 16). The consequence of Jon constantly feeling rejected has influenced his low self-esteem. Jon talks of his jealousy of his brother whom he felt his mother favoured and who, in her eyes, could do no wrong. Whilst Jon was growing up the family were very short of money so Jon had to go to school with very worn shoes and clothes. He was bullied at school because of this. Due to Jon's persistently trying to please his mother and not gaining any recognition, he developed negative core beliefs (global negative beliefs about self) that he was not good enough, unworthy, unlovable, a failure and useless.

As this became a regular pattern for him whilst growing up, Jon developed dysfunctional assumptions. Fennell describes these as guidelines or rules for operating in the world, given the truth of the core belief. They take the form of conditional statements. For Jon, this is that he feels he needs to please others in order to be liked. Helping others is habitual for Jon, but whenever something is asked of him, a critical incident, Jon feels his standards will be tested. His core belief is activated leading him to question his ability, a biased perception of self (Fennell, 1998) and he makes negative predictions about the outcome, biased interpretation (Fennell, 1998). This creates anxiety and activates Jon's maladaptive behaviours of becoming emotionally distant and distrusting of others. The latter maintains Jon's core belief about others, that they will not be able to meet his needs even though he seeks validation from them. This ultimately means that Jon always feels that he has failed. He discounts any positives, avoids certain

situations and his performance becomes impaired. This results in the confirmation of his core belief that he is useless, unworthy, unlovable and not good enough. To complete the cycle, Jon criticises himself leading to depression and again, the activation of his belief system.

5. <u>Negotiating a contract and therapeutic aims</u>

As Fennell and Jenkins (2004) point out, low self-esteem is an element of many different presenting problems rather than being either an axis I emotional disorder or personality disorder as found in the DSM-IV-TR (APA, 2000). The relationship between the presenting problems and low self-esteem can vary. It could be an aspect or consequence of the presenting problem, thus if the primary problem is dealt with, the low self-esteem restores itself. However if low self-esteem acts as a longstanding vulnerability factor for other problems, resolving the presenting problem without dealing with the underlying low self-esteem issues will leave people susceptible to future difficulties.

Jon's depression, anger and anxiety were formulated to be a result of his longstanding vulnerability to low self-esteem and, as Fennell and Jenkins (2004) suggest, exploring Jon's underlying negative sense of self will, in turn, help alleviate his other presenting problems. I felt that through Jon's need to express his experiences, therapy would help him gain metacognitive awareness, the "acceptance of the idea that thoughts, assumptions and beliefs are mental events and processes rather than reflections of objective truth." Fennell (2004 p.1953)

We agreed to meet weekly. Fennell (1998) posits that cognitive therapy is typically offered for between 6-20 sessions. I was very much aware of Jon's disappointment in how a previous therapeutic relationship ended abruptly and how he reflected on the fact that he felt that there was still 'unfinished business'. We therefore did not set a number of sessions, but instead I offered him the option of having an open-ended contract, reviewing this on a regular basis. Open-ended therapeutic contracts can be viewed as offering both advantages and disadvantages to the client. One advantage can be that it offers the client space and time to work through their issues at their own pace, whereas some might experience anxiety if they feel that they are required to achieve a certain goal if a limit were put on the number of sessions offered. Another advantage of offering an open ended contract with regular reviews is that it allows clients to be collaborative in the decision as to whether to continue with sessions or not. A disadvantage, however, of open ended contracts is that they might cause anxiety for the client in not knowing when therapy might end or what they need to do to end them.

My intention in offering Jon an open-ended contract was to provide him the space and time to work though his issues, which he felt he did not get previously. Reviewing the contract on a regular basis, I was mindful of the reasons therapy might be extended, considering the intensity and consistency of Jon's negative beliefs; the extent to which he believed them; his perceived risk (or impossibility) of change; chronicity of his experiences; his threshold for activation; the range of potential activating stimuli; level of associated disability in daily life and the availability of more positive alternative perspectives on self (Fennell, 2004). Ultimately, however, the decision would be collaborative and based on whether Jon felt his goal of dealing differently with his past issues had been achieved. I was also mindful of the possible negative impact an open-ended contract might have on Jon. His issues stemmed from being unable to gain validation from his mother no matter how hard he tried. It is possible that Jon might have viewed me as another 'mother' figure, being a professional female and therefore more powerful than him. This could have been an issue because Jon might have felt that I too may have thought that he would not be able to succeed by offering him an open-ended contract. As a result, Jon might have perceived our relationship similarly to the one he had with his mother and felt that he was again unable to gain any validation. The impact therefore might have caused Jon to feel anxious about our therapeutic relationship, the process of therapy and his role in it, not knowing when it could end or what he might have to do to make me end it. By ensuring that the therapeutic reviews were collaborative, encouraging Jon to be open about what he felt he was gaining from the sessions, telling him that there was no 'right' or 'wrong' answer, helped to reduce any possible anxiety he might have had about having an open-ended contract.

In addition to having an open-ended contract, I was also mindful of Jon's history of therapeutic endings, previously feeling that he had been 'dropped like a stone'. Ensuring a collaborative relationship from the beginning of therapy therefore was also important in order to ensure a mutual and positive ending experience.

6. <u>The therapeutic plan and main techniques used</u>

Jon expressed his wish to understand why he felt the way he did and to stop being 'a prisoner' of his thoughts about his past experiences. The main focus therefore was to help him to increase his metacognitive awareness, to gain an understanding how his past experiences have influenced his current self-beliefs and negative biased view of situations.

Fennell (1998) emphasises that the treatment of low self-esteem is to target elements in the cognitive model. By using the cognitive model, a tailored case conceptualisation of Jon's problems was developed in helping him understand and to help guide

interventions. Fennell highlights some key interventions (see box 1), which were used to guide the therapeutic process with Jon.

Although it is suggested that treatment be carried out in a systematic sequence, Fennell notes that the exact sequence of events and emphasis given to the components will vary. This is highlighted in my less structured, more flexible, empathic approach with Jon.

Box 1. Key interventions as suggested by Fennell (1998, p.299)

Overall treatment objectives

- To weaken old, negative core beliefs about the self
- To establish and strengthen more positive, realistic new beliefs about the self
- To encourage kindly self-acceptance, 'warts and all'

Modifying the perceptual bias

- Directing attention to positive qualities, assets, skills and strengths
- Keeping regular written records of examples of positive qualities, etc. on a day-to-day basis
- Seeking evidence (past and present) which is inconsistent with negative core beliefs about the self
- Acting against the old belief and observing the results (behavioural experiments)

Modifying the interpretation bias

- Re-evaluating the evidence (past and present) that apparently supports the old belief
- Questioning associated negative automatic thoughts (e.g. self-criticism) on a daily basis
- Testing negative predictions through regular and frequent behavioural experiments
- Breaking down black-and-white thinking through continuum work
- Re-evaluating dysfunctional assumptions and formulating more realistic and helpful alternatives.

7. Key content issues and the pattern of therapy

Jon's low self-esteem is inherently related to his relationship with others, where he constantly seeks validation from them. Due to the continuous rejection Jon received from his mother, he developed a safety seeking behaviour - becoming emotionally distant and distrustful of others, to avoid being hurt again. This has a current impact on his relationship with his wife and sons. Jon feels he is unable to trust his sons and this causes friction between him and his wife, as well as impacting directly on his relationship with his sons. My approach with Jon was based around Fennell's (1998) cognitive model of treatment for low self-esteem, with a view to changing Jon's perception and challenging his dysfunctional thoughts to help increase his self-esteem. I tended, however, to be more empathic due to his previous experience of his feelings being neglected and ignored. I therefore sought to allow Jon room to express his

thoughts and feelings, being mindful and sensitive about how I challenge them, so as to not sound as though I am also dismissing them.

Sessions 1-6

Within the assessment session, Jon was asked to complete Rosenberg's self-esteem scale (RSE) (see appendix 17), a reliable and valid measure of self esteem as reviewed by Gray-Little, Williams and Hancock (1997). The scale rates a person's self esteem through the total number of scores given to the 10 items on the scale and the higher the score, the higher the self-esteem. A score below 15 suggests low self-esteem. Jon scored only 3 on this scale, confirming how low his self-esteem was. This made me mindful of the possible intensity and chronicity of Jon's low self-esteem, validating the need to not constrain him to a set number of sessions even though Fennell (1998) does highlight that even those people with lifelong difficulties could still respond well to 6-20 sessions.

The next five sessions consisted of Jon's trying to gain an understanding of why his mother continually rejected him when all he wanted from her was love and approval. Jon identified that he felt a failure due to his persistent attempts at pleasing his mother to no avail. Within the second session, I offered Jon psychoeductaion, using the CBT diagram (see appendix 18). This helped Jon gain an understanding of his problems by identifying how different elements of his experiencing interact with each other (Greenberger & Padesky, 1995). This provided a helpful platform in setting out suitable homework for Jon, consisting of monitoring and rating his mood throughout the week and subsequently the situation surrounding the changes in his mood. Jon soon became aware that changes in mood do not occur 'out of the blue' and that awareness allows interventions to be implemented when an undesirable mood arises.

Work on Jon's interpretative and perceptual bias (his view of situations and self, respectively) surrounded mostly his relationship with his sons. Jon felt very distrustful of them, believing that they lie all the time; hence he could not tell when they were being honest. Jon would view this as a personal attack on him, keeping them at arms' length to avoid being hurt. Changing Jon's biased thinking, to become aware of alternative perceptions of situations, helped him see that other people's behaviour and motivation is not solely about hurting him. Using Greenberger and Padesky's (1995) thought records, I encouraged Jon to be more mindful of his dysfunctional thought process whenever he felt a change in his mood.

Sessions 7-9

Mindfulness techniques were introduced during these sessions as Jon was finding it difficult to accept that other people do have different perceptions of situations from him.

Fennell (2004) also advocates the use of Mindfulness in the treatment of depression and low self-esteem. Mindfulness was used to aid Jon is monitoring his moods and his avoidance further. Jon's mood became low again and we explored the situation he was in and the effect it had on his mood. Jon was able to identify that he felt he was no longer 'needed' by his sons. Before the Christmas break, I asked Jon to test his belief that his sons no longer needed him by talking to them, to be aware that again he was shutting them out to avoid being hurt.

Sessions 10-12

Jon began to notice changes occurring. This was especially poignant as his perceptual and interpretational bias had been so strong. Both Jon and his wife had noticed a reduction in the amount he thought about his mother. The intensity of Jon's perceptual bias however began to emerge again, causing Jon to doubt his ability to bring about change. Jon's relationship with his sons became prominent. He believed it was their lying that was causing a rift between him and his wife.

During these sessions my interventions focused on getting Jon to again see his perceptual and interpretational bias and to be aware of his dysfunctional thinking 'in the moment' by using Socratic questioning. We discussed how his core belief, that no one can meet his needs, became activated, causing him to mistrust his sons again. For homework, he was asked to fill in Greenberger and Padesky's (1995) thought record to aid him in challenging his negative automatic thoughts/biases.

In one session Jon arrived feeling good, reflecting how he had been able to open up to his wife and the positive impact this had on him. As the session progressed, however, the conversation turned towards his mother and Jon's mood changed, activating his core beliefs and causing him to struggle to hold back his sadness.

8. Transcript and comments

The following extract from this session highlights my more empathic approach with Jon, offering reflections and interpretations in order to gently challenge his thought processes. Here, Jon's core beliefs are activated, leading him to first become self-critical and then emotional. I wanted to offer Jon space to experience his emotions, in that moment, aware of how he struggles to express his emotions in front of others.

The session began with Jon saying how he felt better and attributed this to our sessions and talking. He described how he has been taught to live in the 'present' rather than the past. The session began to focus on being able to 'accept' the past and move on. Living in the 'present' was something Jon was struggling with. Jon begins to reflect how all his problems started due to the way his mother treated him and that with time; he

hopes that he will be able to 'move on'. Jon remembers a time recently when he felt his mother's 'presence'

Code:

J = Jon

M = Myself

( ) = interruptions from the other person

... = short pauses in speech, less than 5 seconds long

...[x]...= Number within the bracket is the amount of seconds silence occurred between speech

J1. ....but like I say, as time goes on, so funnily enough...was it last week after I left...I was in the house, just on my own [clears throat], doing absolutely nothing, sitting down having a cup of tea I think it was...oh...s'come to me 'ead like that...I hadn't even been thinkin' about 'er...you know, I mean no-thing whatsoever. I dunno why...I thought I...well, my son's partner then, dabbles...if she heard me sayin' that she'd kill me (I laugh), she would, believe me. But...(tell him?) she'll do it...because she wants to talk to you. She knows what's happenin', she o-she's around 'ere now [points around the room] (mmm), she can 'ear every single word...I think she trying to get in touch with me...to tell me whether I'm right or wrong, in doing what I am...if that makes-what I mean is, am I right to talk about it, to try and...forget about it-oh sorry...accept it. You caught me round your way in the end, accept it and then just move on...I dunno...but I won't let her...because...very often, you see me, I sit like that [arms folded]...(mmm) very, very defensive...won't let anyone in, won't let nothin' in. Maybe that's why I haven't been sleeping, I dunno...but I know she definitely wants to try and talk to me, I know that...I just won't let 'er (mmm)...and maybe I should...But I'm afraid...but after saying that, can I carry on...wondering

Comm 1. *I recall feeling a little frustrated that Jon was still holding onto his need to gain answers as to why his mother had treated him the way she did. As Jon continued to talk, I wondered where the story was going. What did he want from me? How did he want me to respond? I wondered whether he was seeking my approval, for me to give him permission to speak to his mother; trying to create a similar relationship with me that he still seeks with others.*

M2. What are you afraid of?

Comm 2. *I asked him what he was afraid of, keeping the responsibility with him, not to give him what he seemed to be asking me for. This Socratic question aimed to clarify*

exactly what he was afraid of, to guide his discovery (Padesky, 1993), to put into words what he felt.

J2. ...what she'll say...whether she'll try and keep...everything the way it is...she'll try and stop me trying.

M3. How would she be able to do that?

Comm 3. *I felt Jon's response was the content of a dysfunctional assumption, a habitual response, believing that his mother still controls him. Again I asked Jon a Socratic question, to delve further into his thought processes. I also wanted to get Jon to take responsibility for his own actions rather than seeking approval/disapproval from me, trying to encourage him to question his dysfunctional belief.*

J3. [breathes out]...just 'er...just 'er way...I don't know whether I'm scared of 'er or j...or...that's one thing I can't...scared of upsetting 'er...

M4. ...So it's still that feeling of seeking her approval?

Comm 4. *Jon struggles with his response. His breath out and repetition suggests that my question had opened his awareness to his habitual thought process. He identifies that he still carries his past feelings of being scared, scared of upsetting her. I felt that I wanted to share my hypothesis of why he felt this way.*

J4. Yeah...that's why I stopped then...but it's also about time...I've turned round...'scuse...no language but em...sometime I just turn round an say "stuff you, I got my life to lead. Get on with it, without any...fall back, any worry, any thinkin'"...and that's somethin' I don't know if I can do...but I'll never get peace of mind unless I do it...[6]...mmm [holding back tears]

M5. I think again, you still need to remember that everything takes time and as you keep, you know...you're very much aware how long...your mother's had a hold on you, how long you've had to endure...feeling that you've been discarded away or when your brother's been put on a pedestal and [Jon blows out]...feeling worthless and that it's gonna take time for you to be able to start feeling...worthy of yourself...and that you don't need to know...any longer to look outwardly, to feel, approved or happy that...you know that, you will learn to love yourself...[5]...

Comm 5. *Jon agreed with my hypothesis (M4), reflecting that we were together in his experiencing. Jon began to show some anger, unsure whether this was with himself or directed towards his mother. Jon became overcome by feelings of sadness and he was trying to control them. Jon had mentioned in previous sessions that he believes showing emotion, crying, is a weakness and embarrassing.*

I held the silence for a few seconds, wanting him to experience his emotions. Ladany, Hill Thompson and O'Brein (2004) found that theoretically, silence could be a potentially powerful therapeutic intervention to stimulate client introspection. Speaking, I felt, would break this, however, I was also aware of the micro process that was occurring; how he was feeling uncomfortable. I felt a little uncomfortable too, unsure how to respond, in that moment, to help Jon stay with his emotions and experience them. I gently reflected to him what I felt he was experiencing. I used the term 'worthless' as this was identified as one of Jon's core beliefs in a previous session. The latter part of my reflection was offering Jon a way of dealing with his feelings, to move on. A stricter CBT response would have guided him towards experiencing his feelings further, what did they feel like, what were they representing? This may have offered Jon an opportunity for him to recognise how his thought processes led to him feeling this way as Fennell (2004) advocates, 'encouraging in-session awareness of cognitive processes' (p.1064).

J5. I told you last week, last Saturday, I ended up in Porthcawl. (hm-mm) I just don't know...and talking to my wife last week about this and that around, this and that...tell you something, she said, and Sam, that's the boy that was there...that's the one that's living down in Bridgend...he was home for the weekend...he phoned and phoned and phoned. Now, whether I couldn't get any reception, or whether the phone was up again, I dunno, I 'aven't got a clue...He's on about...that he doesn't think that I don't think anything of him. Does that make sense? (yep) He said, "you should've seen me"...said "you see that carpet b'there? See the big hole where I've been walking back and forth, from the kitchen out the door, near the door, round"...but I got this awful impression because I'm nottt...their biological father...I'm doing my best [breathes out]...not to get too close...I feel very, very awkward situation...because I have treated them, the way that I've been treated myself. (mmm)...And that is something I can't undo. But he still turned round...and what I've been told...is that they still think a hell of a lot of me....but that's a problem I've got-I just don't believe it....I don't believe my wife sometimes, I've gotta be honest...how can someone, like something that is as worthless as...well...a lump of meat, for want of a better expression...and that's the way that I look at myself...no good to man or beast...[8]...

M6. I mean, I'm aware that, that...you don't trust or believe what other people say to you...and that you're-ve, the reason that is because you're scared of being hurt, the way your mother hurt you...[6]...but as we talked last week that you're hurting yourself...by pushing other people away that do love and care for you...and I suppose I'm just trying to think how...you know, what...how you're gonna be able to let them in...and trust yourself...

Comm 6. *On a micro level, Jon had an awareness of his thought processes and dysfunctional assumptions by reflecting on a situation where evidence highlighted that his son does care for him, but that he still found it difficult to believe. My response (M5) also impacted on Jon recognising in him a parallel process whereby his relationship with his sons reflects a similar relationship process to the one he had with his mother. Jon's reflection however activated his core beliefs and the anger he felt earlier (J4) arose again but this time it was directed at himself as he began to be self-critical and degrading.*

During the silence, I was mindful not to respond in a way that would offer Jon reassurance, so as to not reinforce his need for external validation. I reflected my interpretation of his experiencing (M6). I paused in the middle to observe how Jon was reacting to my response, again trying to encourage him to reflect on what I had just said. I then moved the focus onto 'how' Jon could begin to let others in, that even though he recognises the evidence, he still struggles to change his dysfunctional assumptions.

J6. One question to that...do I want to?...can I?

M7. Well (?), they're two different questions, whether you want to or whether you can

J7. Alright then, take the first, do I want to?

M8. Do you want to?

Comm 8. *For a moment, my intervention (M6) moved Jon away from his immediate emotions of self-disgust and triggered his belief that he is unsure of his capabilities of bringing about change (J6), as Fennell (2004) suggests can be an obstacle in therapy. By pointing out that wanting and ability are two different things (M7) I wanted to clarify what Jon meant. He recognised this and questioned his motivation. I naturally repeated his questioning (M8), hoping to strengthen his thoughts about this.*

J8. Yeah...more than anything [tearful]...[7]...I want them...to like me, not even love...for me...not for want...what they can possibly get out, take money or...that they know...in the past, I have been able to do it, I can't do it now...for advice, always there...

M9. What would, what would, what would unconditional love look like to you?

Comm 9. *The impact of my repeating the question (M8) was intense for Jon. He became tearful, sad that he did not feel that others liked him for him. Although I was aware of his underlying emotions, I focused on his underlying belief in his words that people only want him for something in return. An alternative approach would have been to have commented on the micro process of his tearfulness and reflect that I felt sadness in that moment. This would have allowed Jon to focus on his emotion and explore what this meant to him.*

I wanted to explore whether Jon actually knew what Rogers (1961) calls unconditional positive regard (M9). I used the term 'love' instead of 'positive regard' as an alternative because I did not think Jon would know what the latter meant. My thought processes were focused on how Jon's interpretational and perceptual bias would restrict the recognition of unconditional love, but this would be even harder if he does not know what it might look like.

J9. 'aven't a clue...dunno...don't even know what it means

M10. I mean, do you think then you always see, as you say, you want to be loved, without any kind of strings attached in that sense that...want to be wanted without wanting...people wanting something...something materialistic (mmm) money or whatever in return. So I'm just wondering whether it'll be helpful for you to have a think about okay, what would that be...what would [Jon breathes out] that be like then, to have that, what...what would it look like?...for someone to be able to show you, how much they care for you, without...without having an ulterior motive?

Comm 10. *The intensity of Jon's emotions reduced. I was however aware that they were still there, bubbling under the surface. I recognised this through Jon's closed, tense body language and facial expression. Jon's response (J9) suggested that I was correct in my thinking that he did not know what unconditional love was or looked like. I sensed an underlying feeling of uselessness and wondered whether this was because Jon did not know what I meant, activating his core belief. Rather than making this explicit, as I felt this might reinforce his belief of being useless and not good enough, I*

chose to respond by describing unconditional love in another way, in a tone to suggest that it did not matter that he did not know what I meant.

J10. I honestly don't know

M11. ...mind you, actually then, as I said that, I suddenly thought well, haven't we all got an ulterior motive (mmm), when we offer someone our love...that perhaps it's wanting love back in return?

J11. ....my wife and I, turn round...and tell each other we love each other every single day (hm-mm)...that there are times...I wonder why...why she's yer...how the hell can she turn round and love something like this?...[8]...cold...

Comm 11. *My intervention (M10) kept Jon's emotion at a level I believe he was used to, at his edge of awareness (Wosket, 1999). His response (J10) suggests that he is still unsure whether he knows what unconditional love would look like, continuing to access his automatic response. My response (M11) was led by a memory of a conversation I had with a colleague about altruism and the dialogue between Jon and I had triggered this. This activated Jon's thoughts to reflect on a time where he recognised that he received unconditional love but that he still did not believe. The activation of Jon's core belief continued causing him to begin to berate himself again.*

<u>Sessions 13-16</u>

Following Jon's response (J11), I interrupted his berating himself, as I felt that this was not helpful, in that moment. I spent the rest of the session asking Jon to challenge his thought processes and begin to look at the evidence in front of him. We also discussed ways in which Jon could begin to let others in without too much risk of being hurt.

The following three sessions focused on challenging Jon's core beliefs. Jon still felt very low and worthless, leading him to be distrustful of his sons again. Experiments to test Jon's core beliefs were identified. This helped Jon feel stronger and more confident that change could be achieved. This then led us to explore situations from different perspectives. I encouraged Jon to view situations from different perspectives, to see how perhaps his mother may have viewed her relationships with him and with his brother differently, that she had a different interpretation from him. This Jon did find difficult to accept due to the hurt he felt his mother caused him, although using the parallel process that was occurring between him and his son helped.

Individual therapy sessions have ceased whilst Jon attends a Mindfulness course that he was referred to during his assessment. This course runs for seven sessions over

three weeks and both Jon and I agreed that to continue with both at the same time would be too much. To date, Jon has yet to complete the course due to the demand of other appointments regarding his physical health.

9. <u>The therapeutic process and its change over time</u>

Jon has, from the beginning, portrayed a man who is not confident in his own abilities and who questions other people's motives, finding it difficult to trust. Within the first session, Jon commented that he was unsure whether he could trust what I had told him; my formulation as to how I feel his past experiences have led him to feel the way he does. Although he said this, I felt we had a good therapeutic relationship. As the sessions progressed Jon commented on how he felt he could talk freely to me.

As the sessions progressed and Jon became more comfortable in our relationship, he was able to share that he was finding it difficult to apply the techniques and insights he experienced during the sessions outside them. Jon would consistently say he wanted to be able to 'walk before he could run' and was aware of his impatience. This led Jon to also be biased in his progress, keeping his focus on how much more he needed to do to be 'free' from what he felt was his mother's hold, rather than on the changes that had already achieved. I was aware at times that I also found this frustrating and wonder whether a parallel process occurred, that I was sensing his frustration.

Although my approach was not structured in a strict CBT way, homework was part of my intervention. At times, Jon would not complete the assignments saying that he did not come across any situations that he could use. This brought up several formulations to reflect upon as to why this may have been occurring; my delivery style of the homework tasks or perhaps Jon viewed homework as another method to highlight his inadequacies. I also reflected on what Jon felt about our relationship, whether he viewed it in the same way as he does with others, requiring approval and validation. This again could be a valid hypothesis as to why he does not do his homework for fear of being 'wrong' and feeling 'useless' again. Newman (2007) points out the importance of dealing sensitively with clients' beliefs about doing homework, to make these the focal points of the therapeutic discussion.

Jon continually suggested that he was not capable of changing. I questioned whether he was not yet ready for change and was at the 'contemplation' stage of Prochaska and Norcross's (2001) stages of change model or whether, at this moment, his perceptual and intellectual bias is too strong to allow him to see where change is possible.

Aware of the continued power of Jon's bias, I began to focus the sessions on his progress. I noticed a change in his overall mood, that he was becoming more positive.

Jon's confidence in his ability to change increased and his perceptual and interpretative bias began to change. This I have saw through a change in the content he brought to each session. They began mostly with issues around his mother whereas now, Jon has begun to be curious and mindful, questioning the process occurring in the situations that have occurred between sessions.

10. Evaluation of the work

Our good therapeutic relationship offered Jon the opportunity to explore his feelings and what life meant to him. Hardy, Cahill and Barkham (2007) highlight the importance of the therapeutic relationship in promoting client change. I felt Jon gained insight in most of our sessions, allowing him to experience feelings of confidence. At times however, he found it difficult to apply outside what he had discovered and learnt inside the therapy room. This in turn led to him to doubt himself again, creating cognitive dissonance, an inconsistency between cognitions leading to an experience of uncomfortable psychological tension (Festinger, 1957). Because Jon felt this dissonance, his drive to reduce it arose, leading him to maintain the life and cognitive beliefs he had been used to for the past 50 years.

Jon has attended every session, even though he admitted there were times when he did not want to attend, feeling too depressed to leave his home. Jon reflected that he continued to attend because he knew that it would be required if he really wanted change to occur. By increasing his understanding of why and how he has developed such a low opinion of himself allowed Jon to begin to doubt the thoughts he previously believed to be the truth.

11. Discussion

When I began working with Jon, I was aware of wanting to work in a CBT model but not be too 'theory bound'. This led me to be less structured and be more 'person centred' in the sessions, allowing Jon to lead, even though my formulations and interventions within the sessions came from a CBT approach. At times however, my empathic approach could be viewed as my trying to maintain control of the sessions by taking on the 'expert' CBT role, telling Jon how I understood his experiences and how he could overcome them. Working with Jon has increased my awareness of how powerful and valuable a more structured framework can be. Jon's struggle to incorporate his insights within sessions into his life outside of them would be helped by introducing more experiential homework as this would help enhance Jon's progress and confidence in himself as opposed to creating a relationship where he relies on me.

Not only does this case help evaluate the process occurring between therapist and client and the interventions used, but it also highlights the processing of early family

experiences for the client. As highlighted in the critical literature review on sibling relationships and children's adjustment, sibling conflict can have a negative affect a child's adjustment. Jon's early relationship with his brother had a profound affect on him, continually feeling jealous of his brother's relationship with their mother. Jon felt that he could never live up to his mother's view of his brother, leading him to internalise his feelings of being inadequate causing him to mistrust his relationships with his own family, with his wife and sons. This highlights the negative impact of a poor sibling relationship on an individual's adjustment. In addition to his sibling relationship, Jon's relationship with his mother involved his continually seeking validation from her and being rejected no matter how he'd sought this. Jon's experiences fit with the findings of Shah and Waller's (2000) study, that those with major depression recall their childhoods as characterised by uncaring parenting. Similar to those who participated in the research in section C, it can be seen how Jon has transformed his early family experiences into his personal identity and the impact this had on his family.

Jon's story encapsulates the exploration of the influences family experiences have on individuals as described throughout this portfolio. For professional practice, this case highlights the importance of understanding a person within the context of the family as Cox (2010) states, an individual family member is intrinsically embedded in the 'family' system, therefore an individual cannot be totally understood outside of the context of that system (p. 95).

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Literature search for critical literature review

Appendix 1 – Literature search for critical literature review

Databases:

- Ebsco Host
- Science Direct
- Google Scholar

Terms:

- Sibling relationships (+ adjustment)
- Siblings + adjustment (+ children's adjustment)
- Sibling relationship quality + children's adjustment
- Sibling relationship quality + adjustment

Years:

- Between 2000-2010

Inclusion criteria:

- Children participants under age of 13 years (early-late childhood)
- Intact Families

Exclusion criteria:

- Specific culture or ethnicity (as a main aim of study)
- Specific family situations (e.g. divorce; foster care etc)
- Related to illness (e.g. Cancer); physical health problems (e.g. disability) or other mental health problems (e.g. Autism, ADHD)
- Negative life experiences (e.g. marital difficulties)

Appendix 2

Table of reviewed studies for critical literature review

Appendix 2 – Table of reviewed studies for critical literature review

Study	Type of measure	Participants	Age of siblings	Analyses	Number of siblings	Duration	Other factors considered
1. Stocker, Burwell & Briggs (2002)	1. O'Leary – Porter Scale 2. Video coding system of interaction 3. SRQ 4. Revised Manifest Anxiety Scale 5. CDI 6. CBCL	Parents; youngest and eldest siblings	Eldest: *M*=10.2yrs Youngest: *M*=7.11yrs at Time 1	Quantitative: Correlational Hierarchical multiple regression	*N*=136 (eldest: 80 male, 56 female) (youngest: 74 male, 62 female) (70 same sex pairs; 66 different sex pairs)	Longitudinal: Time 1 +2 years later	Marital conflict Sex differences in target child, Sex constellations of dyads
2. Pike, Coldwell & Dunn (2005)	1. The Berkeley Puppet Interview 2. Maternal Interview of Sibling Relationships 3. Expression of Affection Inventory 4. Parent-Child Relationship Scale 5. Parental Feelings Questionnaire 6. The Parental Discipline Interview 7. Parent-Child Conflict 8. The Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire	Parents; youngest and eldest siblings	Eldest: *M*=7.4yrs Youngest: *M*=5.2yrs Age difference between siblings: *M*=26.41months	Quantitative: Correlational, Hierarchical multiple regression	*N* = 101 families (Equal no of 4 sibling sex constellations)	One time point	Parent-child relationship
3. Richmond, Stocker & Reinks (2005)	1. CBCL 2. CDI 3. SRQ 4. Sibling Inventory of Differential Experience	Parents & both siblings	Eldest: *M*=10.2yrs Youngest: *M*=7.9yrs at Time 1	Quantitative: Hierarchical Linear Model (HLM), Correlataional	*N*=133 (Eldest: 77M; 56F) (Youngest: 71M; 62F) Dyads: 41M-M; 26F-F; 36M-F; 30F-M)	Longitudinal: Year 1 + 2years + 4 years again	Parental differential treatment; age and birth order

Table of reviewed studies for critical literature review (continued 2)

4. McElwain & Volling (2005)	1. Coding of videotaped free-play behaviour 2. CBCL	Parents and observers (siblings & friends)	Eldest: *M* = 7yrs Youngest: *M* = 4yrs	Quantitative: Correlational; ANOVA; Hierarchical multiple regression	*N*=52? (Eldest: 27 females) (youngest: 27 females) *N*=boys? *M* age between siblings = 3yrs Dyads: 14M-M; 16F-F; 11 F-M; 11 M-F.	One time point	sibling order gender
5. Modry-Mandell, Gamble & Taylor (2007)	1. FEQ 2. Family Emotional Climate scale by Jouriles et al (1991) 3. CCR 4. PEPC-SRQ 5. CBCL 6. SCBE 7. TABC	Parents, siblings and teachers (Mexican decent)	Target child *M* = 4.79yrs Younger *M* = 2yrs Older *M* = 8yrs	Quantitative: Correlational; Regression	*N*=144 (younger *N*=19; Older *N*=44	Longitudinal: SCBE and CBCL measured 6 months later	Family emoti climate
6. Kim, McHale, Crouter & Osgood (2007)	1. Intimacy questionnaire 2. SRI 3. Child's Reports of Parental Behavior Inventory-Parent version 4. Parent-child conflict measure 5. Self-perception Profile 6. CDI 7. Center for Epidemiological Studies Depression Scale	Parents and siblings	Eldest: *M* = 11.83yrs Youngest: *M* = 9.23yrs at Time 1	Quantitative: Multilevel Modeling (MLM); Hierarchial Linear Model (HLM); Nonlinear modeling	*N* = 197 Dyads of equal sex constellations	Longitudinal: Data taken from 1995-1996 and collected every year after. This study used data from: +2; +3; +6; +7yrs	Birth order, s sex constella family size

Table of reviewed studies for critical literature review (continued 3)

7. Karos, Howe & Aquan-Assee (2007)	1. SRQ 2. Sibling interview 3. Coding of daily diary 4. HRPT	Focal children	Focal child: *M* = 11.5yrs Older sibling: *M*=13.9yrs Younger sibling: *M*=9.4yrs	Quantitative: Correlational; Hierarchical regression	*N* = 40 (22 males; 18 females) Dyads: Older *N*=20; 3F-F; 3M-M; 7M-F; 7F-M. Younger *N*=20; 5F-F; 4M-M; 7M-F; 4F-M.	One time point	Birth order; g
8 . Hakvoort, Bos, van Balen & Hermanns (2010)	1. MSS 2. Relationship with Spouse subscale of PSI 3. Child version of PACHIQ 4. SRI 5. Child reports 6. Total Difficulties Scale of the SDQ 7. Dutch version of PCSC	Mothers and Siblings	Focal child: *M* = 10.15yrs Younger: *M*=7.17yrs	Quantitative: Correlational Multiple Regression	*N*=88; (37 boys; 51 girls) Dyads: 24M-M; 13M-F; 33F-F; 18F-M	One time point	Gender

Abbreviations of measure codes

CBCL – Child Behavior Checklist
SRQ – Sibling Relationship Questionnaire
TABC – Temperament Assessment Battery for Children
HRPT – Hypothetical Relationships Picture Task
PSI – Parental Stress Index
SDQ – Strength and Difficulties Questionnaire Self-Report Version
PCSC – Perceived Competence Scale for Children
CCR – Conflict Over Child Rearing (subscale of Marital Satisfaction Inventory, Revised)
PEPC-SRQ – Parental Expectations and Perceptions of Children's Sibling Relationships Questionnaire
SCBE – The Social Competence and Behavior Evaluation: Preschool Edition
CDI – Children's Depression Inventory
FEQ – Family Expressiveness Questionnaire
SRI – Sibling Relationship Inventory
MSS – Marital Satisfaction Scale
PACHIQ – Parent-Child Interaction Questionnaire

Appendix 3

Matrix of measures for critical literature review

Appendix 3 – Matrix of measures for critical literature review

	Pers Comp	Studies / Measures	1. Stocker, Burwell & Briggs (2002)	2. Pike, Coldwell & Dunn (2005)	3. Richmond, Stocker & Reinks (2005)	4. McElwain & Volling (2005)	5. Modry-Mandell, Gamble & Taylor (2007)	6. Kim, McHale, Crouter & Osgood (2007)	7. Karos, Howe & Aquan-Assee (2007)	8. Hakvoort, Bos, Van Balen & Hermanns (2010)
1	M	O'Leary – Porter Scale	Marital Conflict							
2	O	Video coding of interaction	Hostility in Parent-child relationship							
3	S	Revised Manifest Anxiety Scale	Children's anxiety							
4	P	Child Behavior Checklist	Delinquent Behaviour		Externalising behaviour problems	Problem Behaviour	6 months later – by mother only			
5	S	Child Depression Inventory	Depressed mood		Depressed mood			Depressive symptoms		
6	S	Sibling Relationship Questionnaire	Sibling conflict		Warmth & conflict				Full version	
7	S	Sibling Relationship Inventory						Conflict subscale		Affection subscale
8	S	Berkeley puppet Interview		Sibling & parent-child relationship						
9	P	Maternal interview		Sibling relationship						
10	P	Strength and difficulties questionnaire		Child adjustment						
11	P	Parent-Child Relationship Scale		Parent-child conflict						

Code: Pers Comp (Persons completing the measure):
M=Mothers only; S=Siblings; P=Parents; O=Observers; T=Teacher.

Matrix of measures for critical literature review (continued 2)

12	S	Sibling Inventory of Differential Experience			Parents differential treatment						
13	O	Children interactions (Individual & dyadic behaviour coded)				Friend & Sibling Relationship					
14	M	Parental Expectations and Perceptions of Children's Sibling Relationships Questionnaire					Sibling relationship quality				
15	M	Family Expressiveness Questionnaire					Family emotional climate				
16	M	Child exposure to conflict									
17	P	Conflict over Child Rearing (modified version)					Parental agreement on child rearing				
18	T	Social Competence and Behavior Evaluation: Preschool Edition					Child adaptation 6 months later				
19	M	Temperament Assessment Battery for Children					Child temperament				
20	P	Parent-child conflict Scale						Parent-child conflict			

Code: Pers Comp (Persons completing the measure):
M=Mothers only; S=Siblings; P=Parents; O=Observers; T=Teacher.

Matrix of measures for critical literature review (continued 3)

21	S	Intimacy scale						Sibling intimacy			
22	P	Child Reports of Parental Behavior Inventory (parent version)						Parent responsiveness/ acceptance of children			
23	S	Self-Perception Profile (subscale)						Perceived social competence			
24	P	Center for Epidemiological Studies Depression Scale						Parents depressive symptoms			
25	S	Hypothetical Relationships Picture Task							Understanding socio-emotional problem solving		
26	S	Sibling interview							Reciprocal & complementary interactions		
27	M	Marital Satisfaction Scale								Quality of marital relationship	
28	M	Relationship with Spouse subscale of the Parental Stress Index									
29	S	Parent-Child Interaction Questionnaire (child version)								Quality of Parent-child relationship	
30	S	Subscale of Leiden Sibling Relationship Questionnaire								Sibling relationship quality	

Code: Pers Comp (Persons completing the measure):
M=Mothers only; S=Siblings; P=Parents; O=Observers; T=Teacher.

Matrix of measures for critical literature review (continued 4)

31	S	Total Difficulties Scale of the Strength and Difficulties Questionnaire								Self-report of Problem Behaviour
32	S	Perceived Competence Scale for Children (Dutch version)								General SE & social competence

Code: Pers Comp (Persons completing the measure):
M=Mothers only; S=Siblings; P=Parents; O=Observers; T=Teacher.

Appendix 4

Information sheet for participants

Appendix 4 – Information sheet

Information sheet for research study

You are being asked to participate in a study of how your family experiences have influenced your motivation and decision to become a counselling psychologist. The reason I have asked that participants have a sibling, is to investigate the influence of families that include siblings only.

Your participation

If you agree to participate, the time commitment will be approximately 1hr. You will first be asked to fill in a pre-interview questionnaire seeking general information about yourself and then be interviewed about how you feel your family has influenced your motivation and decision to become a counselling psychologist.
The reason I am asking for this information is not to judge either you or your family, but to try and learn more about why people choose counselling psychology as a profession and the role their family had on this decision.

Location of interview

The location of the interview will be held at a place convenient to you. This should be somewhere where you feel safe and comfortable, either at your university or at your home. If you decide you would prefer the university, I am more than happy to contact them and arrange to book a room for this.
Alternatively I am willing to conduct the interview via telephone or by using Skype (if you have access). I would however only be willing to do this as a last resort.

Confidentiality

The interview will be tape-recorded to make sure I get all the information from you. To safeguard your privacy, the recording will be stored on my personal computer, which is password protected and no one else has access or uses this other than me. The only people who may listen to the recordings are you, my research supervisor, Professor Marina Gulina and myself.

The tape recordings

The tape recordings will be transcribed and some extracts may be included in my report. Your name will not be included or attached to the transcript or the tape recordings. A number or code will be given to the data from each participant to ensure anonymity. Once the research report has been completed and marked, the tape recordings and transcripts will be deleted securely.

Voluntary participation/withdrawal

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may decide not to participate and you may cease your participation at any time. Should you decide not to participate or cease participation, there will be no penalty. Any material collected from you will be destroyed immediately.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study, please do not hesitate to contact me on jen_nam@yahoo.co.uk or 07930 449438 or my research supervisor Professor Marina Gulina on Marina.Gulina.1@city.ac.uk or 0207 040 4583.
If you are willing to participate, please contact me and I shall send you a consent form and the pre-interview questionnaire by post to complete. Once completed, post back to me using the enclosed self-addressed envelope. I will then contact you to arrange a convenient time and place to meet and conduct the interview.

Appendix 5

Consent Form

Appendix 5 – Consent form

Consent form

CONSENT

This study, including the risks and benefits, has been explained to my satisfaction. I have agreed to read the transcript of my interview afterwards, to ensure my confidentiality is maintained should any verbatim extracts be included in the report. I have been given the opportunity to have my questions answered to my satisfaction. I have read and understood the information given to me about the study. I voluntarily agree to participate in this research study and have been given a copy of the consent form. Should I wish to withdraw my participation in this research, I can do so at any time and my data will be deleted.

Participant

Name (print): _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix 6

Demographic details of the participants

Appendix 6 - Demographic details of the participants

	Number of Participants
Age Range	
21-29	4
30-39	2
40-49	2
Gender	
Male	3
Female	5
Year of training (at time of interview)	
1	1
2	2
3	5
Geographical location	
London	7
Surrey	1
Number of siblings	
1	5
2	1
3	2
Sibling order	
Eldest	2
Middle	1
Youngest	5

Appendix 7

List of institutes running BPS accredited counselling psychology course

Appendix 7 – List of institutes running BPS accredited counselling psychology courses

List of BPS accredited Counselling Psychology courses in the UK

Successful completion of the following programmes confers eligibility for Chartered Counselling Psychologist status.

Name of Institute	Course name	Contact details
City University	Postgraduate programme in counselling psychology	Nikki.hann.1@city.ac.uk
London Metropolitan University	Professional Doctorate in Counselling Psychology	admissions@londonmet.ac.uk
Metanoia Institute	Counselling Psychology and Psychotherapy by Professional studies	Cathy.simeon@metanoia.ac.uk
Regent's College	Doctorate in Counselling Psychology	spc@regents.ac.uk
New School of Psychotherapy and Counselling	Existential Counselling Psychology and Psychotherapy	admin@nspc.org.uk
Roehampton University	PsychD in Counselling Psychology	j.jarmain@roehampton.ac.uk
University of Surrey	PsychD Psychotherapeutic and Counselling Psychology	G.Greene@surrey.ac.uk
University of East London	Professional Doctorate in Counselling Psychology	admiss@uel.ac.uk or d.dada@uel.ac.uk
University of West of England	Professional Doctorate in Counselling Psychology	Mandy.James@uwe.ac.uk
University of Wolverhampton	Practitioner Doctorate in Counselling Psychology	Sas.enquiries@wlv.ac.uk

Appendix 8

Email to course administrators

Appendix 8 - Email to course administrators

Email to course administrators.

Dear Colleague,

I am a counselling psychology trainee at City University completing my doctoral thesis. I am looking to recruit trainee-counselling psychologists for my research. I am therefore wondering if you would be able to distribute the following attachment to all of your trainees on your DPsych Counselling Psychology course to ask if they would be interested in taking part.

Many thanks,

Jenny Nam

Appendix 9

Recruitment Poster

Appendix 9 – Recruitment poster

Would you like to explore why you chose to become a Counselling Psychologist?

Specifically…

…What role do you perceive your family played in this process?

If YES, then please read on…..

I would like to offer you the opportunity to explore your views and feelings about this, together with me, during a semi-structured interview, lasting up to an hour.

I would be happy to conduct this interview at a place of convenience to you or via telephone or skype.

My name is Jenny Nam and I am a trainee counselling psychologist at City University, completing my doctoral thesis. My research supervisor is Professor Marina Gulina.

If you are interested and satisfy the following criteria…

- ***You are currently a trainee counselling psychologist***
- ***You have at least one sibling***

…then please contact me for further information.

Contact Details:

Jenny Nam: jen_nam@yahoo.co.uk or 07930 449438

Prof. Marina Gulina: Marina.Gulina.1@city.ac.uk or 0207 040 4583

Appendix 10

Interview Schedule

Appendix 10 – Interview schedule

Interview Schedule

1. **Could you tell me about the relationship you have with members of your family?**
   Prompts:
   - Family of origin: siblings, parents, significant other family members
   - Immediate family (if have any): children, husband, wife, partner, pets?!

2. **Could you tell me how you came to choose a career in counselling psychology?**
   Prompts:
   - What was the process you went through in the decision to become a counselling psychologist?
   - What do you feel drew you to the profession of counselling psychology?
   - Have you had any other career(s) previously to embarking on this profession? If so...
   - How and why did you come to choose to change your career to pursue counselling psychology?
   - What does being a counselling psychologist mean to you?

3. **Could you tell me in what way you feel your family did or did not influence/play a part in your decision and motivation to become a counselling Psychologist?**

   Prompts: (Relationships? Experience? Family values?)

   Relationships:
   - What was the influence of family relationships, if any, on your decision and motivation to become a counselling psychologist?
     (prompt: mention the different people that may have already been mentioned: parents, *sibling(s), partners*, children, other family members)
   - Were any of these relationships more *influential? If so, in what way?*
   - Were the influences of these relationships direct/non-direct?
   - How did you feel about being influenced in this way?

   Experiences:
   - Did any particular family experience(s) influence your motivation and decision to become a counselling psychologist? If so, what were they?
   - In your view, was this influence (if there was one) positive/negative and in what way?
   - How did you feel about being influenced in this way?

   Family values:
   - Have any particular family values influenced your motivation and decision to become a counselling psychologist? If so, what were they?
   - In your view, was this influence (if there was one) positive/negative and in what way?
   - How did you feel about being influenced in this way?

4. **Could you describe in what way, if any, you feel your motivation to become a counselling psychologist has impacted your family?**
   Prompts:
   - Do you feel you have made any sacrifices/changes for your family in relation to becoming a counselling psychologist? If so, what are they?
   - Has your family perceived you differently in any way since you chose this profession? If so, how?
   - Do you feel your family has made any sacrifices/changes as a result of your choosing to become a counselling psychologist? If so, what are these?

Appendix 11

Pre-interview Questionnaire

Appendix 11 – Pre-interview Questionnaire

Pre-Interview Questionnaire

Participant Number: _____

(for researcher only)

Gender: Male Female Age: _____

Nationality: _____ Ethnic Origin: _____

Where are you studying? _____ Date commenced: ----------

Relationship Status: Co-habiting Married Divorced Single In Relationship

Do you have any children? Yes No

If yes, how many_____

How many siblings do you have? _____

Where are you in your sibling order? Eldest Middle Youngest

In the case of being the middle child with more than 2 siblings, please state where in the order you are: _____

Appendix 12

De-Brief Information Sheet

Appendix 12 – De-brief information sheet

De-brief Information sheet

Thank you for taking part in this study investigating how your family experiences have influenced your motivation and decision to become a counselling psychologist.

I hope that you were given the opportunity to raise any questions or concerns at the end of the interview. If you did not, or you have thought of any questions or concerns since the interview, then please contact me on: 07930 449438 or jen_nam@yahoo.co.uk or my research supervisor: Professor Marina Gulina on: Marina. Gulina.1@city.ac.uk or 0207 040 4583.

If you feel that the interview itself raised new insights and awareness for you, I would like to remind you of the use of personal therapy (a requirement of your course), where you can talk through these issues. If you are not currently undertaking personal therapy, then your university counselling service is available:

(details of specific university counselling services)

Thank you

Appendix 13

Transcript of an interview

Appendix 13 - Transcript of an interview

I1: Q1 - So I suppose to start with, do you want to tell me a bit about your family and your relationship with...the members of your family?

R1: Yeah, so...there's my mum and my dad and they're divorced, they divorced when I was...sixteen and...I have a younger brother, called [Name]...who..is, I always forget how old he is, but I think he's 25, or maybe [laughs]...maybe 26 [both laugh]....um....and then....um...I have a grandma, who's my dad's mum...she lives up in [City]....and she's the only surviving grandparent (mmm) because...all of my mum's family died within...in a really short period of time, in nine months, when I was about fifteen/sixteen, so just before my parents divorced. (Yeah) so um...so yeah, it's just and there are...actually there are uncles and aunties but they don't really feature so much and um...So yeah, so I guess just in the immediate family, my mum and my dad and...and my brother....

I2: Then what's your relationship like with each of those....(um)...people?

R2: Yeah...it's...my mum and I of.....I would say we've always been very close, but actually in this year of my training...um...our relationship, I've noticed has become less close and partly that's to do with her because...she's involved in marketing and she's very driven person, I would say bordering at times on the point of obsession and she works, literally all the hours that God sends (yeah). And I've found this year very demanding and so I've needed...her to be there for me (mmm) and actually that's kind of disrupted the pattern of our relationship because, as I see it, the pattern of our relationship is that, in some ways I'm more of a mother to her than she is to me and...(mmm) I go home and I help her put on her make-up for her meetings and helping to decide what to wear, cos she hates all that stuff and...so although we've been very close, we've had to negotiate this kind of disruption in, in our kind of roles, I think (yeah) in our relationship. Um, which we've managed to come through, but it was difficult and it actually meant that we had to talk about it, which wass...yeah that was really difficult and (yeah) I think came as a shock to her the fact that I was finding it hard. But now we do speak very regularly...every...every other day and in fact I called her on my way over here to this interview and I told her that...I was...participating in this research, because I was kind of intrigued just to how she would react...(mmm)...and um...she clearly was quite worried about it, she said "I'm going to be worrying all afternoon now" (really) "about what you're going to be...about what you're going to be saying", I think ultimately about, she was worried that...I think, you know, I'm only come to where, my course because I've had to deal with a load of nut bags, I think [laughs], her way of putting it...which I don't, you know, it's not, it's not the case, but...yeah that was interesting her perception (yeah)...um and my dad and I don't have a particularly...good relationship...and...um...and I was very cross with him for a very long time...over...who he was because he's very...um...I don't really know how to sum it up...but he's...um...he's not very emotionally present, I think is a good way to put up wi-a good way to put it (yeah) and um...he's a in the army and so he was absent for huge chunks of my life. What with being away and being in other countries (mmm) and um...yeah and his whole way just angered me and it's actually only, I think again this year, that I've been able to come to...terms with...who he is and not expect...anything more from him, (yeah) and not...crave after this ideal father which I had in my mind. Um...but it is still difficult and I still feel that there's a, I guess in a way conditional love there that...he's mad about narrow boats and if I show interest in narrow boats, then he's happy [laughs] (yeah). Um...and you know if I kind of do choral signing as opposed to musicals, then he's happy but I do musicals and you know he's not as happy, but (yeah) do you know what I mean, it's that kind of....(yeah)...he has very...he has his interests and he finds it hard to take ev-I guess he finds it hard to take an inter-I see it, he finds it hard to take an interest in me [deep breath]. So that's that (yeah). But it's in-it's kind of improving.

I3: Yeah you feel like...I suppose starting this course you feel that you've almost gained more insight do you think in your relationships with (I think so) different family members?

R3: I think so...It's interesting because I've had a lot of therapy at different points in my life and the first time I had, started having therapy was when, was around the time when my parents split up. And then I had some at Uni and then I had some...for two years...a year or so ago. And then coming into therapy again, I think, it's, it's interesting, although I have had therapy as part of my course, yes I do feel I've had more insight into my family relationships...which has surprised me because I thought that actually, I'd got (a lot) a lot of insight out of all (yeah) the therapy I had had before, but I think...I think it's something...I don't, it's-I find it hard to put my finger on, but I think it's something about...being able to be more objective...(mmm)...and I...I think as a therapist, you're learning to be objective, and that's a continual process of...not being ab-not getting so involved in your client stuff and being able to actually, contain them, contain yourself (mmm) and somehow I think that's....rubbed off on the way that I am with my family as well (Yeah)...And my brother, we...traditionally have also had a difficult relationship...because he would say that I mothered him and um...and that was really very difficult and he was...the rebellious one out of the two of us. And I...was...I guess pretty much the good girl and...he had a period where he-he....was....he had problems and he was diagnosed with depression at the age of sixteen (mmm). So he went through a really difficult time...and...I guess I took, I was, because I was so concerned with him, I took an-a sort of nagging involved...mothering kind of role...and, which I didn't enjoy either, but it's just what I did, and (yeah) I think that that's actually...what I did...I guess with all of my family. Um...I think that's probably real...a role that I've adopted (mmm), but...we also, I think through going to University, my brother and I, managed to re-negotiate our relationships somehow and kind of relate to each other as young adults, rather than as mother...child (yeah). And I now I think we have...a good relationship and...um...yeah it's much more on equal terms (yeah)...And...just on my grandma briefly, I love very much, and um...I have a lot of respect for her-even though she's so far away, she quite close to me, on my mind, (mmm) I think about her often and she's very, she's a very strong woman as all of the women in our family are. And, but she's strong in an old fashioned stiff upper lip kind of way and I'm from a military family and so (right) she-she was a nurse in the wa-the war and, and she's got a very kind of stiff upper lip approach to things, which does not go at all...with the therapeutic [both laugh] kind of approach to life (yeah), but it does make me giggle, you know, she just has such an alternative...outlook (yeah) and...yeah

I4: But you're like you say, you're quite close to her (yes) and even though...distance wise (yeah, yeah) you're quite far away but, you feel quite close (yeah, yeah). Okay...did your parents get, once-after they got divorced, did they have any other significant partners or anything that you feel....

R4: No...no...er, no...and that's interesting, but no (no), they-they don't.

I5: Okay...do you have any pets at all that you feel...

R5: Ah...we had a dog...[Name]...and she was a huge part of our family and she only died at Christmas. (ah)...and um...she was fifteen, so we've'd had her for a long time (mmm) and um, she sort of became my mum's...is animus the right word? Uh, it's in a book somewhere, don't know whether it's in his 'Dark Materials' and it's sort of like a...an animal took on the persona of...somebody and she's (right, yeah) sort of became my mum's...company and persona and (yeah) um...she was, she was very human like in our mind...actually...Um...and I did all the responsible for her, like I used to take her for walks and care for her and be a good dog owner. My brother did...wi looked after her really appallingly, but she absolutely adored him and they had fun together. (Yeah) And it always used to be a real bone of contention that I would be the one that wo-religiously take her for walks and feed her...and he would forget to take her walk until it is snowing and in the middle of the night, but...somehow, anyway, they still had this bond...[laughs]

I6: Q2 - Ah, so did you not feel you quite had that same bond (No), did she not sho...you didn't (no) feel that she kind of gave you that (no) unconditional love? (no [laughs] no) ? okay, you feed me ([laughs] yes exactly!....yeah) Oh (yeah, but no, yeah)...oh bless, (yeah) [laughs].....**Okay, so my next question is....um...I suppose**

lik-..to ask you if you could tell me how you came to choose....um....a career in counselling...psychology.

R6: Hmm...um...I guess there were two different bits to it, so...part of it I think is choosing to come in to psychology in general (mmm)...and then part of it was coming into counselling psychology and the first bit in terms of coming into psychology, just seemed to...naturally, evolve that way, in that I was always somebody wh...who I think, wanted to take care of people and wanted to...help people and, I had adopted that role in my family (mmm) and then amongst my friendship group, I'd be the one who would be holding back the girl's hair and they'd puked after they had been drinking [laughs} too much the night before...(yeah)...and you know and I....and a part of me really resented having that ki-caring kind of role...but (yeah) yet I still have it. And so that...was a natural kind of evolution until I finished my A-levels and I had a bit of a rebellion, I was like I don't want to University, maybe I won't go. And so, I trained in Swedish massage, which was taking care of people [laughs] I didn't really think that one through. (right) And then I did go to Uni and do jus-do psychology and then I kind of...So that kind of...evolved really, but actually I went into...forensic psychology more (mmm)...and my background is in forensics, so...um...My first job...my dissertation was on prisons and prisoners and my first, my only, my first and only job really has been in prison, which is where I've worked for five years. And...I really enjoyed it...(mmm)...um...but...um...and I really enjoyed the client group...um and I love working with...offenders...because I've ssseen them as a real challenge, but the forensic, division, I see as really very narrow (mmm) and I see the forensic psychology workers being...very uh...focused on kind of...um...working in prisons and doing a lot of group work, CBT group work with the aim to...reduce re-offending and I...(yeah)...I dunno there's this kind of political agenda with that and that was something that didn't really sit too happily with me and actually I wanted to look more at th-people's whole lives (yeah) and not just they're offending aspect. And I didn't want just to limit myself to working in prisons. And not actually having that much face-to-face contact, one to one with clients (yeah). And what I actually heard about counselling psychology by, a girl I work with at the prison, who decided to do...a masters in counselling psychology and before that actually I had never heard of it...Um (mmm)...I don't know how, how that was, but I'd never heard of it and...I looked more into it and then it took me...I'd say two years...before I actually made the decision to apply to the course, because, the amount of money that goes into (mmm)...training in this is, is such a huge amount, that....it really put me off and I really...I-I guess maybe I wasn't sure whether or not it was really what I wanted to do, where would I get the money from? Did I really want to be really poor? Did I want to go back to being dependent on upon my family? (mmm) You see the effect of what's happened...but at some point, I think I just got to the point where...I thought there is gonna be no good time to be...fifty grand in debt [both laugh]...to whoever, I do, that's never gonna be ? time for that (yeah), so...I'm stagnant here in the prison, I...this is not what I want and actually this is what I want (mmm), so I might....as well go for it...(yeah). And um...the university I am at now was the only place that I applied to...and...um...which now looking back on it seems really foolish [laughs]. But um...it worked out (yeah) and I got in.

I7: So...I was just thinking going back to you like you say you started off went to finish you're A levels, going into Swedish massag (yeah), massaging (yeah)...um...so at what point then did-whilst you were doing that did you suddenly decide to go then back onto psychology? You-alth-be it forensic, but...

R7: Yeah do you know I don't really know? Um...I think part of it was...an expectation in me that I wou-an expectation from my family that I would go to University. (mmm) And...I wasn't really willing to be completely rebellious and not do that. And...I think, I don't know...I don't know, I even know I thought that much about it, I think maybe it was just "right well okay, you're go...I am going to go to University", and so, what, what am I going to study? And psychology...I think sociology was...another option and...theatre arts...the drama school was another option, but...I-I know I don't it's-I fun-I don't really have a clear idea of why it was that I ended up...(yeah) with psychology...apart from the fact that I just think that...no, actually I do know think about. I think because I'd had

therapy...around that time...after my parents splitting up. And I think, I guess it is sort of exposure actually to that job and what that job involves, and how useful I found that, and how I could identify with the role of the therapist (mmm) and I think maybe, it kind of opened my eyes to...actually maybe I would enjoy doing that kind of...work...Um...yeah (yeah)...I, I think that's probably it, actually.

I8: Okay, so what do you think, I mean I don't know if you, you can sum this up really, what do, what do you feel that counselling psychology means to you? Or being a counselling psychologist means to (well I) to you?

R8: I guess it's something I realise this year as well is that it's actually kind of...sounds really silly but I feel like it's a way of life, it's not...for me it's not just a job, it...it is...in a way a hu-well it is...a huge part of my identity (mmm) and it's...I guess it's who I am and it's ho...it's how I approach people and it's how I approach things and it's how I think about things and it's...yeah, it's...just me and everything...about me, in a way (yeah).

I9: Almost like you feel it fits...like you say you, cos you've, you say you kind of grew up with a kind of a caring kind of...(yeah)...a personality and a kind of a role (yeah) and that...it sort of...

R9: Yes it sort of seems...that natural home for those, instincts that I already had (mmm), I guess and...yeah it's I guess it's a vo-vocation rather than just a job, it's not...yeah, it's not something that I kind of...it's, I don't see it in like a nine to five kind of way (yeah)...um...yeah, does that make sense?

I10: Q3 - Yeah, yeah, I think so (hmm)...okay. So could you ans-also then tell me then...In wh-what way you feel your family did or did not influence or play a part in your motivation to become a counselling psychologist

R10: Hmm I do think...hugely...actually. And...although I think my mother would be very worried about it. I do...I do think they had a huge influence and I think that was because...of...my development of my identity of myself as...a...somebody who cares for and looks after other people. (hmm) and that hasn't...as I said that hasn't always...sit...comfortably with me and at times I felt really very cross about...being the one in the family who kind of looked after my mother and...looked after my brother and...took responsibility for my dad (mmm)...but...yeah it did really take...i-y...I think yeah, I think it then became...yeah part of my identity and how I saw myself....and...that's kind of evolved from there, really and I think that now, I've got to the point where I'm more able to...separate myself from that role in my family, now that I am doing it...in my career if you like (mmm) and there are clear boundaries about what is expected of me and...the client. And so I feel less put upon...you know because actually, I'm now choosing to do something willingly, consciously (yeah)...um...and there are boundaries and I work within those boundaries...then...there's that kind of...do you know what I mean, I've diverted that into that and now...I don't take responsibility for my family, apart from the reneg-otiating my relationship with my mother this year has been again me kind of I guess trying to grasp back the daughter role in our relationship (mmm) and (yeah) I don't want to go home and care for her like her mother or even like her husband...and run around, ferry her around and....and again with my dad, I don't...I'm not responsible for the fact that he's an emotional fuck up, it's not...it's not me to try and...win him around to being a father...um...so yeah, in a way they kind of bought me into couns-being a counselling psychologist and now...the counselling psychologist is sort of helping me...evolve in my relationship and in my role in the family as well (yeah). And I really do see the two as very...as having a huge impact upon one another. (yeah) Um...and I think also...I guess, another way it's affected me is just in terms of exposure to...the way that human...humans deal with things and deal with difficult situations and our family went through a huge amount of...upset with, you know the death of my mother's family and...such a, you know in such a short period of time. And then effectively she kind of had a nervous breakdown. And then there is...my parent's divorce and then my brother was diagnosed with depression (mmm) and the went off the rails and so there was so much going on, and...I guess I felt like I

was...dealing with so much of it and I, there was no way I could go off the rails or have a nervous breakdown (yeah) because, you know that was...wasn't my role, quite frankly [laughs] and...and so I had exposure to so much, stuff, going on...and uh...and...I guess you know I could deal with it, actually, and...it-I could cope with it and...um...and...part of me maybe, I don't know if I found it interesting at the time, but...no actually I didn't, I [both laugh]

I11: In hindsight, it-i-i-i-it seems (yeah) interesting (yeah) like looking back on (yeah) sort of...reading the process (yeah) that sort of thing

R11: Yeah, so maybe it's something about resilience actually, proving to yourself that you...or seeing in yourself that you have the resilience (mmm)...to be able to...I don't know, cope with...human despair and...you know coping mechanisms

I12: Yeah...yeah as you say-you know you're talking about the fac-you've got a lot of, like you say I think you have a...a separate...relationship with each one of th-the (yeah) those three members of your family (yeah) that...each, kind of different in their own, like you say, well, well obviously different in their own way (yeah) but...have all contributed in, in one way (yes). Would you say one was more influential than the other or do you think they've all really kind of had a...

R12: I think they've all had...an impact but I think, perhaps particularly my mum because...your mo-mother is a supposed to be the mothering...role in the family...and...and because for whatever reason I felt that she didn't always...and I, took in that role, (mmm) and you know and being a caring person is traditionally the mothering kind of role so maybe her in particular, although interesting, I once had a conversation with her about it, I think when I was...seventeen, eighteen, about how I felt that...I was mothering, the family and...I-I must, I think I must have been saying that I kind of feel put upon. And I remember being very hurt because, she...basically told me that I had taken on that role myself (mmm) and that was not something that they, we, that the family members had 'put' on me, I had taken that as my way of dealing with it (mmm)...which okay, she may have had a point. But...I remember being very hurt that...she also hadn't acknowledged her own responsibility in that...in...to protect me, perhaps (yeah) from taking on that role as...as being the one to look after people (yeah). So it's interesting that perhaps she, I don't think she would really, I don't think she would really want to see...that I, that that's how I feel that my role is in the family.

I13: Mmm...and like you say take ham(?) some responsibility for it (yeah) for it happening (yeah)

R13: Because I guess if she saw that, then that would mean maybe that she had to step back in and do...the difficult mother stuff, which she does do, I mean it's, and it and it's changed very much now, she does do that but...but I guess just at that time, she, she wasn't so much.

I14: Yeah...so did your relationship with your...grandmother have, do you think have any direct or indirect influences?

R14: Um...I was going to say no, not really, I think she'd bemused by the whole idea of therapy. *Um...but, I guess in a* way, I guess just in terms of...playing into that whole thing for being a strong...a strong *woman who can (mmm)* cope with...hardship...it's kind of played into that...generational thing I guess in our *family of, women being tough* and being able, resilience I guess, to come again, having the resilience to be able to deal with...(mmm)...what life throws...at you.

I15: Yeah, so do you think you have, there was a kind of family value...I mean you say your father is a pilot as well and your mother being in marketing, whether there...whether you felt that there were family values of ...'keep going, keep...keep strong' and

R15: Yes...yeah and, and...doing your duty is a huge thing, because both my mother and my father are in the army and in fact that is how they met. And...there is a strong thing about doing your duty and if you said you were going to do something then you do it and (mmm) you know therefore you...yeah, you guess you kind of step up to the plate and you don't let things overcome you and you...you get on with them you do them (mmm) um...and I th-yeah I think that has been very much passed down...And I think then particularly as well from...my mother's mother...um...it's funny I wer-I don't...I don't know, I don't know where that's come from, but...yeah again this strong woman thing as well particularly in our family about being a strong woman. Um...yeah

I16: Yeah...So you know you've talked about how s-uh, you've kind of picked up on that, like you say that role and...(yeah) being strong and...caring (yes)...but not particularly wanted that...not for the, not for the...for being like you say the daughter of the family and then having to

R16: Yeah, and I, but I, I mean I guess mum had a point actually at times I, I did want that, that was the role that I...took because I guess, in a way, I felt empowered by that and I felt comfortable in that (mmm) and it meant that I was doing something, and that's very important to me, being active and...feeling like I'm actually...you know, yeah, I guess kind of doing something and I was...yeah it was em, it was...empowering in a way and at least that way it was better than me falling apart and...having a nervous breakdown or whatever else (yeah) um...yeah...so, yeah I think there was a conflict between, at times really resenting it and, and times...I don't...I don't know that I would have done anything else, I can't see what else I would have done...uh, you know it's a natural inclination for me (mmm). And one that...I don't resent that...role now at least...maybe in my family a little bit sometimes, but I can see now that I notice it happening when I'm...taking on that role then I can...step away and re-jiggle things a bit (yeah). But I certainly don't resent that role in my work, if you know what I mean.

I17: Well as you say it sounds as if yo-that that kind of role the led...led you down the path of like you say...well certainly psychology (yeah) and then (yeah)...eventually counselling psychology (yes)...

R17: And I think um...I can't even why I don't resent it...I don't resent it because I...I enjoy it...and I find it interesting, and meaningful, and again the boundaries that...I, er-er, reassuring for me...um...and are important to me in my work (yeah)...so yeah...mmm

I18: Q4 - Okay...um...so could you also then describe...In what way if any you feel your motivation to become a counselling psychologist has impacted your family? Yo-You've already touched a little bit upon that (mmm) with your mother...how you feel your relationships...so do you feel, has there been any sacrifices, changes, I suppose maybe on your side where you feel you've had to make any sacrifices or changes...um...for your family in relation to becoming a psy-counselling psychologist? (mmm)...I suppose to start with

R18: So it's kind of how...is it how...being a counselling psychologist has affected my fffamiy? Is that the question? Or is it

I19: Well, I su-pa-ki-it's it's two ended I suppose *I think that's why* I was, if we start with the first part with...Do *you* feel you've made any sacrifices/changes for *your family in* relation to becoming counselling psychologist? (silence) (dunno) Yeah, I suppose that really, I suppose really goes...as I say that now it sounds more like as if is a, I think if you had your own family, children that maybe that (yeah) that would stand more I suppose...yeah thinking maybe how your fam...changes in your family have occurred I think since...since you've embarked on...(yeah, okay) counselling psychology?

R19: Um...I think that in some ways, I wondered at one point whether maybe people take me a bit more seriously, in my family...and I wonder this because I remember being at a dinner with my mum and brother and my brother works in the cou in the

council...um which of course my mum finds very interesting, she's interested in marketing and we were at...we we're at dinner and my mum...my brother would talking about marketing basically and I was feeling quite left out and then, we got on to talking about something else and I remember telling them, I can't even remember what it was, it was something in the lecture that was re-that I found really interesting. And they were both really interested and I saw my brother was actually...listening to me, but really listening to me (mmm) not and...I was like 'oh...maybe he's actually interested in what I'm saying, maybe he finds this interesting, maybe he has some... respect in...in what I'm doing' (yeah). And that was *really nice. Um...because* I...I guess then I hadn't really realised that I had thought that maybe he had doesn't *really respect me, but I...I* think maybe in a way...yeah, maybe in a way that's something that's...come out of it. And...I...changes I wonder whether ha...I don't know whether in a way...uh in terms of...relationship with my dad, whether...my being on this course...My mum's also a doctor, but...um...but she did a PhD. And um...I think my dad in-in one way is quite proud of the fact that I'm going to be a Dr at the end of it. Um...but in another way it kind of...pushes him and I a bit further apart (mmm) because my dad, left school and he went straight into the army and so he doesn't have an academic background (mmm). So I wonder whether partly there's sort of its...kind of me...do you know what I mean, there's sort of a, I can't, I don't think I know how to say it, but kind of moving further away from his area of knowledge (yeah) and from what he's interested in and what he understands. And when we've been talking about fees and terms and things, he doesn't know anything about it and so it's very...in that way I think that perhaps it's highlighted the difference in, in I guess in our worlds, in how we live our life. My dad's not at all psychologically minded. He doesn't really express any interest in psychology. I've actually no idea what he thinks of about, what I do. I know he finds my work at the prison interesting (mmm). But, I think that's more to do with the kinds of criminal aspect of it and...particularly when I've got clients who are sort of ex-army. So he's...yeah I guess in a way it's, my coming into this field perhaps is...in a way moved...m-me, perhaps a little bit further away from him in some way (yeah)...But...yet, then I think he also has pride in me, for what, for what I'm doing, so I don't think it's been hugely detrimental (mmm) and it's probably only I that see it, actually...And in terms of my mu-my relationship with my mother, well I remember being on the phone once after I'd come out of a placement and she'd had some...sort of dilemma about whether to go to a meeting or whether to see a, a school friend. And I'd just come out of placement and I was in therapist mode. And so obviously all the questions I was asking her was this ? I was still in this...therapist mode and she said 'you're in therapist mode aren't you' [both laugh] I was like, 'yes, sorry' [laughs]. And...it was very much uh 'that's not what you normally do, you know, that's kind of' and I, and I apologised for it and I kind of felt bad for it, I was like 'oh gosh, no', you know (yeah). Um...so I don't know and I think obviously in a way there's part of her that actually feels a bit threatened...by it. I guess in her response to me coming here for this interview as well (mmm) she was obviously threatened about the fact that I was going to sit and talk about...how the family has affected my...choice of career (yeah)...Um...and, my mother is highly intelligent and she is psychologically minded when she wants to be [laughs] and...so, I don't know, I don't know whether maybe I feel she's a bit...threatened by it and is going to see flaws perhaps in her, as a mother (mmm)...and is, and in our family...um...so yeah, really subtle differences. And I guess then the other difference is in how I've been in the family, which I've already touched upon in terms of actually being more aware of my role and being aware of how I am (mmm) and be asserting what, what role I want to play actually and I, i.e. a daughter role or a sister role (mmm) and not a carer or...and actually you're kind of reasserting...in a way actually, I think...in some ways I've regressed in my family in this year...in that I've thrown little hissy strops and I have perhaps been a little more teenager ish (yeah). I think partly because...I've...this, in this course I have...gr-I think I've grown so much just in this year alone. And I feel so much more...secure and sure of myself actually, in my identity as a counselling psychologist and in...where I'm going in life (mmm) and I feel confident of myself and I feel like I've learnt skills and so maybe kind of having more security and sss-being sure of myself in that area of my life (mmm) has enabled me to rock the boat a little bit with my family and (yeah) to throw the hissy strops and to be the slightly rebellious daughter and, to contemplate not going to stay with my dad at Easter just because I don't want to spend

a weekend with him or, do you know what I mean? (yeah) You know all the things that I wouldn't have dared never before to do, because it wasn't in the family script. Now I...I feel like I kind of have ah...a bit more assure of myself to be able to...rock the boat in the family (yeah).

I20: So do you think that that that's happened since embarking on the counselling psychology course (yeah) more than (Oh yes definitely) any of the other st-the forensic or

R20: Yeah definitely...yeah, absolutely. And...yeah I guess a part of that is kind of the *self-awareness*...and the objectivity that I talked about (mmm). And yeah, I think the self confidence...that and that I got *out of*...*being on this* course. (yeah)

I21: And even that combined with y-y-yo, think you mentioned at the beginning of having...that choice of hav-because of...the amount of money that gonna be, that's involved in the...training...having to...kind of rely back on your parents again (mmm). Um...

R21: Yeah actually that's a good point because that's been ba...that factor of it has been more difficult because my dad's basically funding me through this course. And, that's been a real conflict for me because...I really haven't liked that...and...o...in practical ways, like I haven't liked the fact that I've not been able to go clothes shopping when I want to, and spend my money (mmm) that I've earnt. And just being responsible to myself actually (yeah) and if I want to go and buy a dress I will. And I haven't, I haven't liked not being able to have that kind of...au-autonomy. But I also haven't liked being...regression in a way of being back dependent upon my father. When I had seen myself as being very dep-Independent (mmm) from him and really the-it's been a huge amount of distance, I guess in a way it was, it was a bind...a tie between him and I that I didn't really want because when I first started on this course, he and I really were very distant from one another and we would go...sometimes a month without speaking to one another (mmm), not not speaking, but just I didn't want the contact (yeah)...So, we've had to...we've had that tie, the financial thing. And something else that was on the tip of my...yeah, but I think, yeah that was it, so that's the bit that I've not liked it, but on the other way...I think in a way...and I feel really bad about saying this but...you know...he didn't ah...I feel like he ever really gave me the emotional support and investment in me and my...me growing up...and actually what he's contributed to our family has been able to give us a nice quality of life (mmm) and financial stability and that's, I mean that's a huge, thing...but he did that by not being present, in my life (yeah).
And...therefore...uh...it sounds really bad about saying it but therefore okay, well that, if that's what he's going to give me in my-in my life then that's what he's going to give me (mmm) and if I'm not going to expect any more, that he's going to...uh, give me any kind of emotional...support, then is it so wrong of me to expect that, or to...expect or hope or ask for him to give me the financial support (yeah). But still it doesn't sit comfortably because I'm twenty-seven years old and...we kind of have a jokey agreement...that I hope he's not going to hold me to that when he's retired I'll fund his nursing home...when I'm qualified [laughs]. I just really hope that (oh dear) he doesn't want this really expensive nursing home [both laugh]

I22: Well surely if you're funding it, it's what you want (yeah) [both laugh] (it's a Travelodge), which will it be? (yeah), yeah (yeah)...Yeah...okay...I suppose I'm just, just thinking because I mean that was actually one of my last questions...and I was just thinking if there was any other points that I suddenly thought of, that that you'd mentioned on the way back, I suppose...I think one thing that I...again that still sticks in my mind is, like you say the, the expectation of going to university (mmm)...that did you feel that there was that expectation? (yeah) I think that's what you mentioned and (yeah) of both of you, you mentioned your par-your father didn't, went straight into the army (mmm), was your mother...did she go to university or did she then straight (yeah) into the army as well?

R22: Um she waaaas...she was a mature student because she ran away from home to join the army at eighteen as well...And...then she left the army, became a bit of a feminist [laughs]....um and married my father, and had me and so she became a mature student and did her PhD whilst I was a baby. Which thinking back I just think 'how on earth was she able to do a PhD and bring up a baby'...when my dad was away...flying *(mmm) all the time.* And they lived in the middle of nowhere...in a run down house that they were doing up. I mean I just *can conceive of doing* that, I mean that is absolutely extraordinary. And so...yeah, there was, I guess there was an *expectation that...I don't* think it was ever said, like I don't think it was ever verbalised...but my dad, when I was talking about going to drama school, which was another kind of...try and being slightly rebellious [laughs]...he kind of...then took me through all of the employment figures for being an actress [laughs] and promptly realised that that wasn't going to keep me and nice shoes and clothes, so [laughs]. He said 'oh I don't know, maybe go to a normal university first and get a degree and then if you still want to pursue drama, pursue drama'. So it...it wasn't ever that 'you must go to university', but...it was, I guess it was partly in terms of...your mother managed to get a PhD and bring up a baby and be very successful and (mmm)...and...yeah I guess in a way it's kind of fulfilling the family script of kind of being...actually successful and...making something of yourself, like...um...not making something of yourself, is not tolerated of in our family, you know...I guess it's a mmm...striving to be ambitious and to...achieve (mmm) basically...my mum doesn't do failure...[laughs] and so...yeah...although we were never...yeah it was never rammed down our throats and it was never forced upon us, but yes, the subtle message was of (yeah)...we don't do failure in this family, so...okay if you're gonna be a Swedish masseuse...where are you going to be? What-what is, what is your goals? Where is that going to take you? What then are you going to train in? Are you going to have your own salon? What, you know...do you know what I mean? (yeah) as a...yeah

I23: So did you have to go through the-all of that then like you say when you became a Swedish masseur...masseur? And then...(I) forensics?

R23: Well I yeah, my-my, actually my body kind of opted out because I did my training in Swedish massage and then I got glandular fever...and so I spent the rest of my gap year with glandular fever (mmm) um...so...yeah, actually I think maybe...fate if you like had a bit of a hand in the whole...thing there (yeah)...because I didn't go on to train in reflexology and...you know I think...I didn't pursue that.

I24: Hmm...so do you feel sort of some-some...in, maybe indirect pushing from-from your parents, maybe then...onto the d-you know the psychology (yeah) going to university and

R24: I think so...actually I just realised that my mother...I remember her telling me that she...before she ran away and joined the army, she had put in an application to study psychology at university [laughs] (oh right) yes...and um...yeah maybe that was a, maybe that was a factor in it...Um, I think it sometimes I...I think...certainly when I thought about that before...that's made me slightly irritated because psychology is my patch in the family and [laughs]...you know (yeah) given the fact that she was going to *think* about doing it you know...that's kind of my...my area...But um [laughs]...yeah, so there was an indirect expectation (mmm)...and even my brother who ah at that point was...a real drop out and suffering from depression and blah, blah, blah. He still ended up going to university (mmm) um...so...and at one point we didn't even think he'd get the grades to go to university and he...really wasn't sure that he was going...going to *(yeah) and I think that was* a very anxious time for mum. So...yeah (yeah)...yeah

I25: So how did the-yo-your suddenly decision then to *become a counselling* psychologist, do you then feel impacted...your family or...

R25: What once, what rather than go the forensic route (yeah) and counselling psychologist?

I26: And what at point did you then d-you know, well because you've talked about at some point who you'd heard about counselling psychology (yeah) through a colleague and then (yeah)...you know what was the process like for you and...you know (yeah)....and d...was there any influence or...um...response I suppose from your family when you decided...

R26: Yeah, it wasn't and I guess in some ways actually, it wasn't really an-just an individual decision of mine because I spent quite a long time talking things over with my mum...and for over a period of year...of a year, we probably came back to it. But actually what I was really toying with was...becoming a governor in the prison service...and doing the fast track governor scheme...and...I mean that really was a real option for me...or going down this counselling...psychology route. I think I'd obviously ruled out forensic psychology even before then (mmm) because those-those seemed to be my two options. And I spent a-quite a long time talking about...talking with my mum about those two options. Um...and...she didn't ever really...she didn't really push me one way or the other and actually she was very good in kind of saying 'well you've got strengths that would suit that role and then you've got strengths that would suit that role' and...and then she just left me to it actually, which I real-I appreciate the fact that she didn't...express...a preference (mmm) one way or another because that enabled me to find my own feet, although that was really hard...and then...part of it actually was the boyfriend I think I had at the time as well, he was very...he was also...he also worked at the prison, but he'd also in the past looked at counselling psychology (mmm)...and um...and so he was very supportive of that and of me...doing that and...I guess he kind of gave me a boost in a way of me thinking 'maybe I can do this, maybe it's not...just a pipe dream...or a vague dream, maybe I can make it become real' because (mmm) I think I was feeling very stuck in my job and feeling like...actually everything just-ac none of it really seems real...so I think...my mum not pushing me in one direction and my boyfriend at the time kind of...helping me to see that it is something that I could really...do (mmm)...if I just was brave enough to take the step...enabled me to take the step...and then I actually never...I didn't...sit down with my dad and discuss finances...which was effectively how I was going to be able to fund the course...I think until I got offered a place...(mmm) um I just assumed that somehow it would...somehow it would work out...and either I would...work all the hours that god sends and save money (yeah) and you know...something...would work out...and I think, when I did have that discussion with...about finances with my dad...he was kind of gruff about it and he said 'Of course I'm not going to let you...struggle' or whatever or I can't remember how he put it, but there was, I did wonder whether...he was maybe slightly grudging...not in a...'I don't want you to do it and I'm not gonna...pay for you to do it' but just, he obviously offered hiss financial support (mmm)...but I wondered at the time...I wonder whether maybe he's not...entirely happy...I don't know...who would be entirely happy *about shelling out* fifty grand over a period of three years [laugh] [both laugh] (yeah, it's true)...really, I guess...*but (yeah)...(mmm,* okay)...yeah um actually on the other, I guess the other aspect of it was when I was *on the course in the first* term...yeah that was it...this was interesting, was then...having to educate my *family about what it was I* was actually doing...(mmm) because I don't think they really...knew, I mean if I hadn't heard much about counselling psychology before I really started to investigate it, I think in...people don't know (mmm)...actually what a counselling psychologist is compared to, I don't know, I guess people think of normally a clinical psychologist...or if you're in forensic psychology, you're 'cracker' or 'Jodie Kidd' [laughs]...'Jodie Foster'...so I think there's not a lot of knowledge and so I had to...kind of educate them and I found a leaflet somewhere and I emailed it to them and said 'please will you read this about what it is I'm going to be doing for the rest of my life' (yeah)...um...I don't think my brother or my dad ever read it, but my mum did. Partly because my mum then had to deal with...one friend in particular, but people asking her what is 'What is Amber now doing?' you know, family friends. And one friend in particular I think was very...snooty, she was... a she's a very, I don't know, high flying Lawyer and whatever it is and she's...horrible snob...and...obviously m...um had kind of said 'well counselling psychology? Well what's that? Why isn't she doing clinical psychology' and my mother then I think...was wondering well 'why is, why, why aren't you doing clinical psychology? (yeah) actually' and...and 'what is counselling psychology and is it really a proper

route?' and...kind of dealing through all of, going through all of that stuff and (mmm) I felt really cross about that because I then became...I guess kind of defensive 'of no, it is a proper route and it means this, and it means that and it means that' and...mum's saying 'well it's just unfortunate that it's called 'counselling' psychology because that just infers that you are a counsellor and you can do that, you know within six weeks' it doesn't sound very...(mmm) it doesn't sound like...actually the amount of hard work that you're going to be doing and you know it's...I...I think she found it odd that you come out with a doctorate, but yet...the word counss-elling (yeah) is in the title, do you know what I mean, it's...yeah, it was a matter, I think of educating them about...what it was I was going to do because they didn't really had a clue, so that was part of the whole adaptation in the family of me...becoming a counselling psychologist (yeah)...yeah...

I27: Okay...cool...so is there anything else you w-you can think of that you would like to add that I haven't asked you about? (Um)...that you think is relevant or....

R27: Mmm...no, I guess actually the only other brief thing was perhaps that...part of the way that my...being...trainee...counselling psychologist...is it's impacted on the family, in terms of my brother when he was...diagnosed with depression but then with social anxiety...and I suppose actually in my training in that way...has...helped my understanding of...what it was he was going through (mmm) and helped me to be...yeah more understanding, more compassionate and perhaps...that maybe partly improved (mmm) our relationship because...he could...do you know what I mean, he perhaps felt that I did understand it properly...(mmm) um...but on the flip side of that...um because he's my brother...I'm more likely to be directive with him and say 'have you thought about CBT and blah, blah, blah, blah' and...you know it's hard for me not to be because he's my brother and I love him (yeah) um...so, yeah, I don't know, maybe that...then s-he sort of found difficult as well, so perhaps in that way it's sort of...affected a little bit but they...kind of know that I have a knowledge about...mental health (mmm)...um...yeah (yeah)...yeah but I, yeah...other than that I think we've kind of discussed everything...that I thought might be relevant...(okay) yeah it's really interesting

<u>Debrief</u>

I28: So how did you find the interview then?

R28: Yeah. I enjoyed it, it's really interesting. I think, I mean that's...I...one of the reasons why I, I offered, because I think it is a really interesting topic (mmm) and because I can see...that the, that my family really did impact me (mmm) in my profession that I think it's...it's been interesting for me to actually trace back *how* and put all the pieces together I guess about how that has come to be. And it's also interesting to think about how they may continue to affect me...when I'm actually continuing my training and then (mmm) I'm qualified, hopefully...it would be interesting to see...to think about actually whether...you know in what way, that that the kind of the...interaction between the two will carry on (yeah)...I don't know, we'll see...(ongoing process) yeah (changing process) (going on) yeah, exactly...maybe if you do a follow up I can let you know [both laugh]

I29: Yeah...that might be interesting actually. Did you find any of it uncomfortable at all or?

R29: No not at all

I30: Okay, well I (no), I mean I did ask like...because I'm just to, just to basically to remind you of obviously of the support network that is around you (yeah), that which part of the course is personal therapy (yeah) and if you weren't already undertake, still undertaking personal therapy, there's um...information about the student counselling there...um as well, so that's kind of a debrief (okay) sheet for you to take (thank you)

R30: No I probably will discuss some of it with my personal...therapist because I think some of the stuff that we've...certainly the stuff I've discussed with her about the family stuff...has kind of all been...relevant, so I'm sure I will discuss some of it with her (yeah)

I31: Um...and did it, do you think it highlighted anything for you that you weren't already aware of?

R31: ...yeah, I think that initial journey into becoming...a psychologist...I a...it, that was all sort of a very vague period in my life, I think...or at least it's hazy looking back at it, so it's interesting to have...reflected more about that...and um...I think also it's just kind of...solidified in my mind that...I guess I have control over...the role in my family (mmm) no matter, no matter what my career, you know out...yeah I have control what role I take in my family and...um...I've taken...more or less mothering roles at different stages, but...but it's within...(mmm) my grasp and that maybe continual my training will just continue to help me...feel more comfortable with my family, because I still then? They still drive me absolutely drive me nuts at times, but maybe actually...by continuing the training I will be able to...find a, find the role in the family that I am happy, that I am actually happy with (yeah)...yeah

I32: yeah, almost like self, kind of self, well it is kind of like a self discovery (yeah)...journey isn't it (yeah)

R32: And also a lot of trial and error, actually as well (mmm) in terms of how you are with your family and...practical things like the re-negotiating...their expectations of you and...are you going to see them at Christmas...and all of that kind of stuff (yeah)...kind of a trial and error and...I think that...I do think that probably will change even more as I finish my training...(yeah)...yeah...

Appendix 14

An example of a list of emergent themes and super-ordinate themes

Appendix 14 – An example list of emergent themes and super-ordinate themes

Understanding the past: internal and external

Internal

No validation
View of self as 'average'
External validation triggered belief in self again
Perceived as 'hurtful' – hurt by negative way of relating
Compared with brother: felt rejected
Yearning validation (Need to be valued by family – move away from Jewish perspectives

External

Long standing family stability
Different view of family relationship – inside v outside
Mother imposing her ways
Difficulty of difference in expressing emotions
Connection through similar emotional expression
Insight of experiential connection with brother
'Nice' relationship with grandmother
- no judgment?
- brother more valued?

Grandmother = childhood - encapsulated
View of relationship 'froze' in time
Invalidating family experiences
Significance of early experience of cats
Family usual ways of relating – 'rows' 'snipping'
Habitual negative pattern of relating

Loss

Significance of loss of grandmother – childhood and grandmother
Different losses with different grandmothers

Gains

Experience – turning point in breaking negative way of relating
Insight created validation from the family

Process of psychological growth

Validation led to pursuit of psychological knowledge
Achievement in early training increased motivation in psychology and belief in self
Clear 'starting' experience of interest in psychology

Making sense of professional identity

Clinical v Counselling – person v symptom
- limited knowledge of others

Influenced by approach of others
Defines +v'es of CP by –ve's of clinical
Doctorate = way to be valued
Experience of validation from personal therapy
Psychology = understand the behaviour of others

Cultural influences

Curious about cultural link between psychology and Jews
Jewish history and psychology
Jewish gender differences
Competing with family & Jewish cultural perceptions of brother
Jewish cultural perceptions of gender
Clear of 'step one' experience towards psychology
Reflecting on different parental influence

Changes = rewarding v difficult

Rewarding

Security in self
(CP training =) **Increased communication**
Finding patterns – different than other CP's?
Growth of observation skills
Increased trust in own abilities – fulfilling; realisation others valued

Difficult

Same = parental fear of showing how feel
Financial effect
Reparation v distance
Ambivalence – wants from mother and aware of her limitations
Guilt

Making sense of self in relation to others

Sibling order and relating style
Change in perception of role within family – no longer require validation from family: feels secure
Reflecting on effect of old and new role in family
Daughter v therapist role
Help v 'look after' others
Equal relationship v 'mother' relationship with clients
Same v Different
Pragmatic v emotional?

Appendix 15

Tables identifying themes for each participant

Appendix 15 – Tables identifying themes for each participant

Key: Theme numbering correlates to that in the analysis section.

1. SUPER-ORDINATE THEME: EARLY VIEW OF SELF

Participant *Alias*	1.1. Cultural influences	1.2. Sibling Order Effect	1.3. Negative attributions and emotions
Amber	2.23, 2.25, 2.26, 3.43, 5.1, 5.39, 5.49, 5.50, 5.55, 8.43, 8.50, 8.56	*2.9, 2.14*	*1.46, 1.50, 2.45, 5.16, 5.21*
Bonnie	7.33, 9.6, 9.40,	3.13, 4.8	1.22, 1.45, 2.13, 2.21, 5.11, 7.19
Clare	7.18, 8.2	1.13, 1.18, 2.7	
Denise	1.19, 1.48, 5.17, 5.31, 9.31	1.57, 7.59,8.8, 8.23	1.32, 2.9, 3.13, 4.58, 5.4, 9.21
Elaine	1.24, 1.32, 1.34, 1.49, 1.53, 3.46, 5.32, 10.10,	3.20, 4.49	1.30
Frank	10.17, 11.15, 11.22, 11.44, 11.47	1.42	7.19, 7.24, 7.34, 7.53, 8.2
Gareth	1.41, 1.51, 2.53, 3.10, 3.13, 3.20, 3.29, 3.46, 4.33, 7.42, 8.23, 8.32	2.15, 2.47, 2.58	
Hugh	1.24, 2.18, 2.24, 4.25, 5.35, 6.35	1.31, 1.35, 1.53	

2. INTERNALISED FAMILY MESSAGES

Participant Alias	2.1 Towards/rebelling against	2.2. Trigger Experience	2.3. Fighting for Identity
Amber	2.15, 2.60, 3.6, 3.43, 4.21, 4.39, 5.1, 5.12, 5.39, 6.4, 8.45, 9.16, 9.22		4.28, 4.34, 6.4, 9.16
Bonnie	7.31, 7.43, 8.57, 9.39	5.16	
Clare	2.43, 7.18, 7.33, 7.43, 7.47, 8.2, 8.5		
Denise	1.19, 1.23, 3.44, 3.47, 5.42, 6.7	3.28, 5.54	7.11
Elaine	1.23, 1.24, 1.37, 2.59, 3.47, 7.44, 7.53, 9.18, 9.47		2.12, 5.37
Frank	2.12, 3.38, 3.49, 3.53, 4.18, 10.17, 10.20, 10.25, 10.27, 10.31, 11.15, 11.22, 11.29, 11.47, 11.54	8.11	6.7, 12.39
Gareth	1.26, 3.34, 3.47, 4.36, 5.11, 8.40, 8.50, 9.5	3.36	6.18
Hugh	1.35, 1.54, 2.48, 2.57, 3.6, 3.16, 3.41, 4.1, 4.10, 4.30, 4.54, 5.20, 6.2, 6.35, 6.60,		8.59

3. GROWTH

3.1. Professional Identity

Participant Alias	3.1.1 Role of counselling psychologist	3.1.1a *Personal*	3.1.1b *Professional*	3.1.2b *Clients*
Amber	2.6, 2.60, 3.51, 4.1, *4.11, 6.21, 7.36*	2.60, 2.6, 4.1, 4.11, 4.26, 6.10		
Bonnie	6.14, 6.21, 6.28, 6.42, 7.7, 7.48, 10.39	*5.25*	*9.10*	*6.8*, 6.28, 6.33
Clare	4.46, 4.49, 5.1, 5.40	5.21	5.30, 5.32. 5.36	5.54, 5,40
Denise	8.35, 9.4, 9.60,	3.57, 5.42, 7.58, 8.35, 8.45		8.52, 9.4
Elaine	6.46, 6,56, 7.11, 7.16			6.56
Frank	8.52, 8.58, 9.11, 10.11, 10.5,			9.55
Gareth	3.59, 4.16, 4.22, 4.50	3.33, 3.40, 3.59, 4.2, 7.54		3.59
Hugh	6.19, 6.30, 6.41, 6.44			6.41

Participant Alias	3.1.2 Complementary Role	3.2.3 Self fulfilment	3.2.1a *Status enhancement*
Amber	2.60, 2.6, 4.1, 4.11, 4.26, 6.10		6.44, 6.49, 6.55, 6.59, 7.13
Bonnie	5.25	5.52	5.52, 7.55, 7.58, 10.26
Clare	5.21	5.14	5.14, 5.15, 5.17
Denise	3.57, 5.42, 7.58, 8.35, 8.45		3.57, 4.52, 4.57, 6.3, 6.6, 6.11
Elaine			6.52, 7.20, 7.23, 8.19
Frank			10.54, 12.12, 12.19
Gareth	3.33, 3.40, 3.59, 4.2, 7.54	4.48	4.48
Hugh			6.58

3.2. Continued Personal Growth

Participant Alias	3.2. Continued personal Growth
Amber	4.28, 7.30, 7.36, 7.44, 7.54, 11.32,
Bonnie	2.50, 2.55, 6.37, 8.32
Clare	1.44, 9.5
Denise	4.56
Elaine	1.26, 2.12, 9.16, 9.46,
Frank	8.41, 10.7,
Gareth	
Hugh	7.13

3.3. Relationships

Participant Alias	3.3.1. Understanding of others	3.3.2. Different ways of relating	3.3.3. Communication	3.3.4. Relationship Reparation
Amber	2.58, 10.44		1.28	1.27, 1.38, 1.43, 4.28, 4.34, 4.39, 6.12, 7.30, 10.44,
Bonnie	2.55, 6.37, 10.4	6.42, 10.39, *10.48*, *10.49*	2.42, 10.12, 10.16	
Clare	9.5, 9.48			
Denise	5.6, 6.37, 6.39, 7.25, 9.18		7.34, 7.48	1.33, 6.23
Elaine	9.18			3.39, 3.60, 5.14
Frank	3.53, 4.6, 4.34, 8.41	12.21	12.21	12.21, 12.31
Gareth	3.59		7.17	
Hugh	7.8, 8.5, 8.11	7.13, 7.22, 7.28, 7.36		7.47, 7.54

4. ADJUSTMENT CHALLENGES

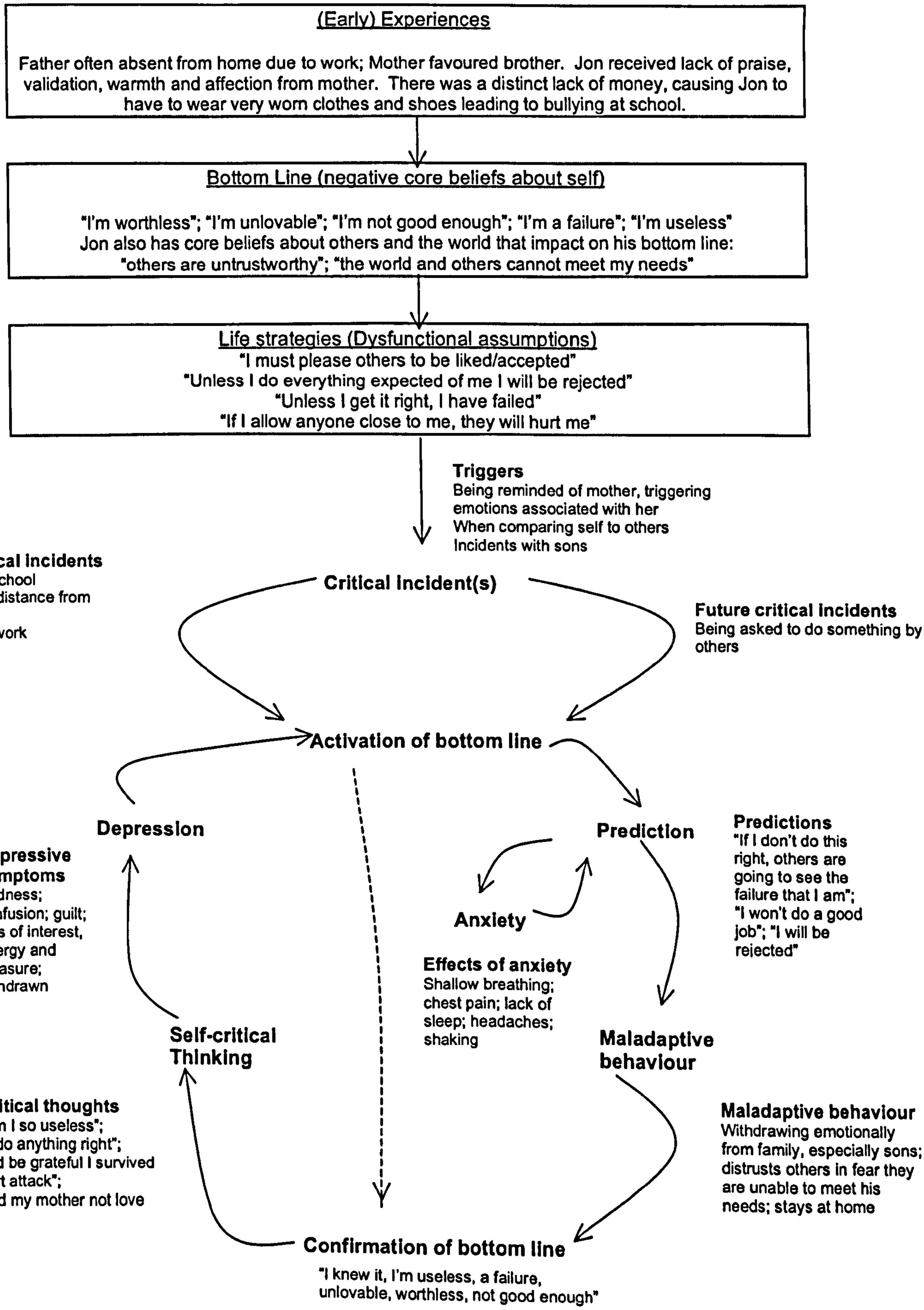
Participant Alias	4.1. Guilt for growth/change	4.2. Letting go/holding on	4.3. Financial Dependency	4.4. Ambivalence	4.5. Others fear of judgement
Amber	6.59, 7.11, 7.19		3.28, 7.60, 8.11, 8.20, 10.6	2.15, 3.5, 4.23, 6.10. 10.27	1.33, 4.20, 5.24, 7.23, 7.27
Bonnie	2.48, 2.57	2.57			8.9, 8.12, 8.18, 8.25,
Clare					
Denise	6.53	6.54, 7.8	6.16	1.25, 1.42, 6.3, 6.11, 6.39	6.11
Elaine				3.36, 7.56, 8.6, 8.18	9.28
Frank				3.49, 3.53, 4.6, 4.18, 4.34, 5.5, 5.33, 8.2	
Gareth	5.36, 6.20, 6.29	5.25, 5.28, 6.18, 6.20	5.17	2.7, 5.23, 6.49, 6.55, 7.17, 7.49	
Hugh		8.9, 8.37, 8.59	7.50, 8.36	8.48	7.8

Appendix 16

Formulation of client's issues

Appendix 16 – Formulation of client's issues

Jon's problems using Fennell's (1997) cognitive model of low self-esteem



Appendix 17

Rosenberg's self-esteem scale (RSE)

Appendix 17 - Rosenberg's self-esteem scale (RSE)
Taken from: http://www.selfesteem2go.com/rosenberg-self-esteem-scale.html

Below is a list of statements dealing with your general feelings about yourself. Circle the option that best applies to you.

1. On the whole, I am satisfied *with myself.*

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

2. * At times, I think I am no good at all.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

3. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

4. I am able to do things as well as most other people.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

5. *I feel I do not have much to be proud of.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

6. *I certainly feel useless at times.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

7. I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

8. *I wish I could have more respect for myself.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

9. *All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

10. I take a positive attitude toward myself.

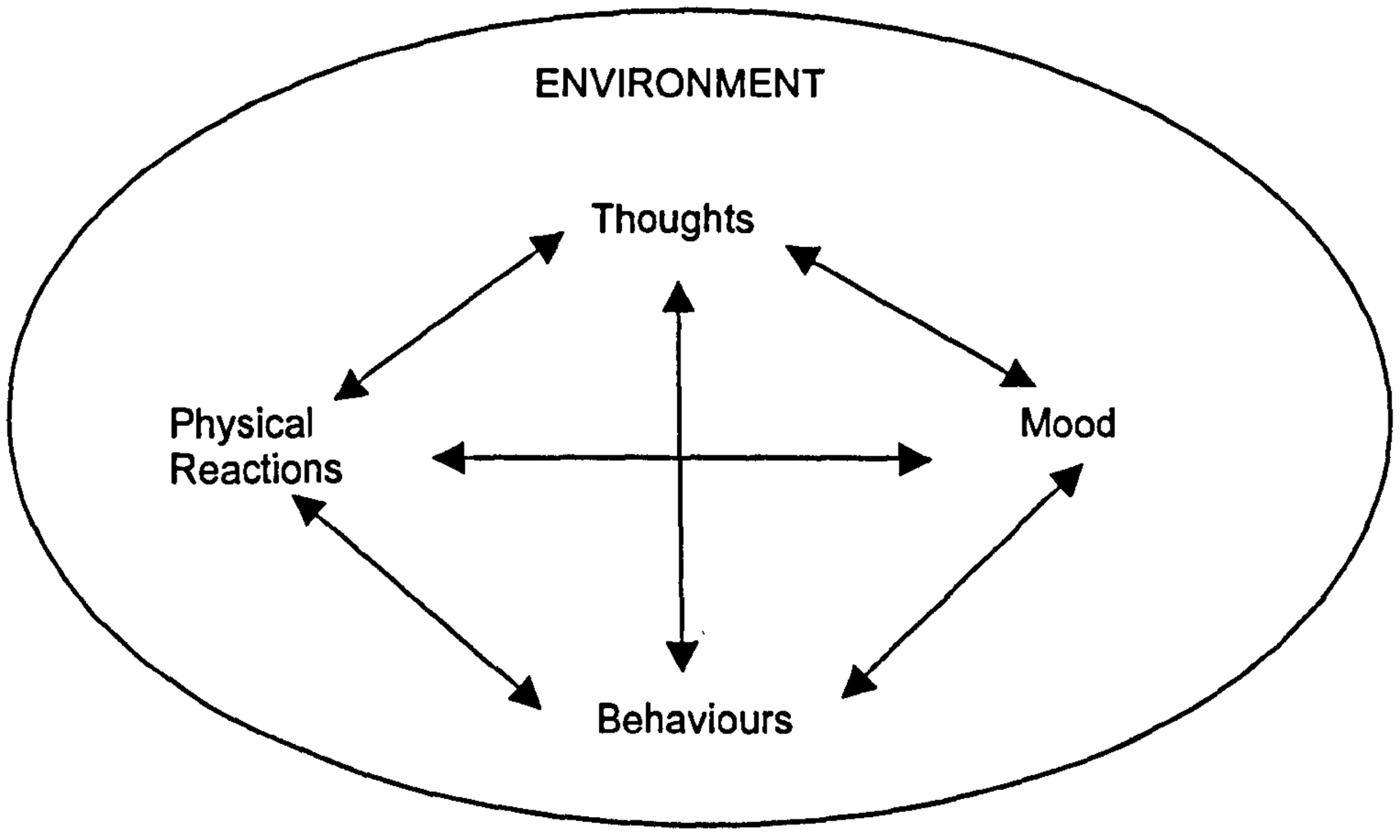
Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

Scoring: SA=3, A=2, D=1, SD=0. Items with an asterisk are reversed scored, that is, SA=0, A=1, D=2, SD=3. Sum the scores for the 10 items. The higher the score, the higher the self-esteem. Scores below 15 suggest low self-esteem.

Appendix 18

CBT Diagram

Appendix 18 – CBT Diagram – taken from Greenberger & Padesky (1995)



THESIS CONTAINS CD