

THE GESTALT TWO-CHAIR TECHNIQUE:
HOW IT RELATES TO THEORY

by

Betty Nichol Mackay
B.A. Queens University, 1965
B.P.H.E. Queens University, 1966
M.A. University of British Columbia, 1984

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in

THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES
(Department of Counselling Psychology)

We accept this thesis as conforming
to the required standard

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
April, 1995

© Betty Nichol Mackay

In presenting this thesis in partial fulfilment of the requirements for an advanced degree at the University of British Columbia, I agree that the Library shall make it freely available for reference and study. I further agree that permission for extensive copying of this thesis for scholarly purposes may be granted by the head of my department or by his or her representatives. It is understood that copying or publication of this thesis for financial gain shall not be allowed without my written permission.

(Signature)

Department of COUNSELLING Psychology

The University of British Columbia
Vancouver, Canada

Date ~~3~~ April 1995

Abstract

Using Q-Methodology, this study sought to find empirical support for the three stage model of the Gestalt two-chair technique and the theory underlying how and why it is effective, put forth by L. S. Greenberg (1979; 1983). A structured Q-Sort was constructed using the factors of Conflict Resolution (CR) and the Gestalt concept of Contact (C) in a 2X2 factorial design. Each factor was divided into two levels CR - Resolved/Unresolved, C - Interruption-of-contact/Contact. The factors of CR and C were expected to interact before and after successful and unsuccessful therapy for decision-making. Individuals who were *Unresolved* in their decision-making were expected to experience *Interruption-of-contact* while individuals who were *Resolved* from an integrated sense of self were expected to experience being in *Contact*. The 85 item sort was validated by experts in Gestalt theory and therapy as representing the three stage model and the theory underlying it. Eight subjects, ambivalent about remaining in their marriages, performed the Q-Sort before and after 6 sessions of therapy using the two-chair technique.

Moderate support was found for the 3 stages of the model, Opposition, Merging and Integration. Some support was found for the interaction of the factors of CR and C. Significant 2-way interaction was found for 1 subject before and after therapy considered successful according to the model. Significant 2-way interactions were found after successful therapy for four subjects but not before. Significant 2-way interactions were not found for subjects after unsuccessful therapy. When therapy was successful the factors of CR and C interacted as predicted. When therapy was not successful the factors

of CR and C did not interact as predicted. The factors of CR and C did not interact for individuals who were experiencing a great deal of interruption-of-contact, indicating there is a possible pre-stage to the model where CR and C are independent of each other or where other factors may be involved. This study expanded the research on the Gestalt two-chair technique in several ways. It found some empirical support for the model and the theory underlying it. It found areas where CR and C do not interact as predicted by theory. It extended the range of application of research on two-chair technique from career decision-making to divorce decision-making.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract	ii
Table of Contents	iv
List of Figures	vii
List of Tables	ix
Acknowledgments	x
Chapter One	
Introduction	1
Overview of the Study	2
Rational of the Study	5
Significance of the Study	7
Research Question	8
Assumptions and Limitations	8
Definition of Terms	8
Chapter Two	
LITERATURE REVIEW	11
The Gestalt Two-Chair Technique	11
Polarities and Splits in Gestalt Therapy	11
Description of the Gestalt Two-Chair Technique	13
Research of the Gestalt Two-Chair Technique	15
Theories of Marital Stability	18
Stages of Divorce	23
Divorce Decision-Making	24
Q-Methodology	27
Case Study Research	32
Summary	34

Chapter Three	METHODOLOGY	35
	Research Design	35
	Procedures	36
	Study Participants	40
	Therapists	41
	Recruitment and Selection	41
	Training and Supervision	42
	Q-Methodology	43
	Q-Sort	43
	Q-Sort Items	44
	Relationship Between Theory Proper and the Q-Sort Items	48
	Opposition stage: Cells 1, 2 and 3.	48
	Merging stage	54
	Integration stage	55
	Q-Sorting	58
	Analysis of the Q-sorts	59
	Elaboration Interview	61
	Summary	63
Chapter Four	RESULTS	64
	Introduction	64
	Sample Case: Sam	65
	Case Study One: Hector	71
	Case Study Two: Beverley	81
	Case Study Three: Gail	91
	Case Study Four: Edward	104
	Case Study Five: Amy	116

	Case Study Six: Carol	126
	Case Study Seven: Fred	137
	Case Study Eight: Donald	148
Chapter Five	CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION	161
	Introduction	161
	Discussion of Replications	162
	Literal Replication	162
	Theoretical Replications	163
	Other Replications	165
	Discussion of Results	167
	Limitations	171
	Theoretical Implications	172
	Practical Implications	173
	Recommendations for Future Research	174
	The two-chair technique	174
	The Q-Sort	175
	Divorce Decision-Making	175
	Summary	178
	References	180
	Appendix A: Initial letter of contact.	188
	Appendix B: Consent form.	189
	Appendix C: Degree of Resolution Scale - Splits	190

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.	Stages of two-chair technique showing relationship with factors of Conflict Resolution and Contact and the number of Q-Sort items per cell	3
Figure 2.	Overview of procedures used in the study	38
Figure 3.	Levels of Conflict Resolution and Contact showing the stages of two-chair technique	43
Figure 4.	Pattern of Q-Sort before and after therapy for Sample Case: Sam	67
Figure 5.	Results of placement of items before and after therapy for Sample Case: Sam	68
Figure 6.	Pattern of Q-Sort before and after therapy for Case Study one: Hector	73
Figure 7.	Results of placement of items before and after therapy for Case Study one: Hector	74
Figure 8.	Pattern of Q-Sort before and after therapy for Case Study two: Beverley	83
Figure 9.	Results of placement of items before and after therapy for Case Study two: Beverley	84
Figure 10.	Pattern of Q-Sort before and after therapy for Case Study three: Gail	93
Figure 11.	Results of placement of items before and after therapy for Case Study three: Gail	94
Figure 12.	Pattern of Q-Sort before and after therapy for Case Study four: Edward	107
Figure 13.	Results of placement of items before and after therapy for Case Study four: Edward	108

Figure 14. Pattern of Q-Sort before and after therapy for Case Study five: Amy	118
Figure 15. Results of placement of items before and after therapy for Case Study five: Amy	119
Figure 16. Pattern of Q-Sort before and after therapy for Case Study six: Carol	129
Figure 17. Results of placement of items before and after therapy for Case Study six: Carol	130
Figure 18. Pattern of Q-Sort before and after therapy for Case Study seven: Fred	139
Figure 19. Results of placement of items before and after therapy for Case seven: Fred	140
Figure 20. Pattern of Q-Sort before and after therapy for Case Study eight: Donald	150
Figure 21. Results of placement of items before and after therapy for CaseStudy eight: Donald	151

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.	ANOVA results of Q-Sort: Sample case: Sam	66
Table 2.	Undecided/decided scores before and after therapy with decision reached for Sample case: Sam	66
Table 3.	ANOVA results of Q-Sort: Case Study One: Hector	72
Table 4.	Undecided/decided scores before and after therapy with decision reached for Case Study one: Hector	75
Table 5.	ANOVA results of Q-Sort: Case Study Two: Beverley	82
Table 6.	Undecided/decided scores before and after therapy with decision reached for Case Study two: Beverley	85
Table 7.	ANOVA results of Q-Sort: Case Study Three: Gail	92
Table 8.	Undecided/decided scores before and after therapy with decision reached for Case Study three: Gail	95
Table 9.	ANOVA results of Q-Sort: Case Study Four: Edward	105
Table 10.	Undecided/decided scores before and after therapy with decision reached for Case Study four: Edward	108
Table 11.	ANOVA results of Q-Sort: Case Study Five: Amy	117
Table 12.	Undecided/decided scores before and after therapy with decision reached for Case Study five: Amy	120
Table 13.	ANOVA results of Q-Sort: Case Study Six: Carol	127
Table 14.	Undecided/decided scores before and after therapy with decision reached for Case Study six: Carol	130

Table 15.	ANOVA results of Q-Sort: Case Study Seven: Fred	138
Table 16.	Undecided/decided scores before and after therapy with decision reached for Case Study seven: Fred	141
Table 17.	ANOVA results of Q-Sort: Case Study Eight: Donald	149
Table 18.	Undecided/decided scores before and after therapy with decision reached for Case Study eight: Donald	152

Acknowledgments

I wish to express my appreciation to my supervisory committee: Dr. Bill Borgen, Dr. Walter Boldt, Dr. Beth Haverkamp, and Dr. Adam Horvath for their support, interest and helpful suggestions during the preparation and completion of this dissertation. I extend an especially warm thank you to Dr. Bill Borgen, my chairperson, for working with me on this research project when he had a very busy schedule as Head of the Counselling Psychology Department and to Dr. Walter Boldt who was always accessible for consultation and encouragement.

I wish to express my appreciation to the people who participated in my study. I am sincerely grateful for their willingness to involve themselves so fully in my project.

To my sons, Colin and Angus, I express my deepest thanks for their support and encouragement.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Any theory is by definition unfinished and therefore creates a need for continuous scientific investigation (Bronowski, 1973). The purpose of this study was to investigate the theory underlying a particular therapeutic technique, the Gestalt two-chair technique, as put forth in the literature by Greenberg (1979, 1983), and to relate it to practice. The Gestalt two-chair technique is a powerful technique that many clinicians incorporate into their practice regardless of the theoretical framework that forms a basis for their work. The technique was developed from Fritz Perls' Topdog-Underdog technique in which he separated the opposing forces within the individual and facilitated a dialogue between them (Perls, 1969; Enright, 1970). Practitioners used this technique for many years without understanding how or why it was effective. Beginning in the mid 1970s, intensive investigation of the practice of two-chair work began and the theory underlying the intervention was developed (Greenberg, 1976, 1979, 1983; Greenberg and Rice, 1981; Greenberg and Webster, 1982; Webster, 1981). Practitioners currently use the two-chair technique in dealing with decisional conflict in various areas of human functioning because it has proved to be an effective method for resolving decisional conflict caused by two aspects of the self being in opposition to one another (Clarke, 1977; Greenberg, 1979; Greenberg & Clarke, 1979, Greenberg & Higgins; 1980; Higgins; 1979; Webster, 1981).

The purpose of this study was to explore whether empirical support could be generated for the theory underlying the three-stage

model of the Gestalt two-chair technique put forward by Greenberg (1979, 1983) using participants who were experiencing decisional conflict concerning whether or not to remain married.

Overview of the Study

As stated previously, the three-stage model of the two-chair technique was developed in the late 1970's and early 1980's. Recently, Greenberg, Rice, and Elliott (1993) delineate a five stage model of two-chair work (See p. 14). The stages in that model focus specifically on the operations of the therapist during a session of two-chair work. This study sought to find empirical support for the three-stage model and the theory underlying it; that is, do people actually experience the three stages of the model in successful and unsuccessful decision-making as put forth in the theory.

The three-stage model of the two-chair technique as put forth by Greenberg (1979; 1983) can be seen as involving two independent variables or factors, Conflict Resolution and the Gestalt concept of Contact, that interact with each other. The more individuals come into contact with themselves, that is, become aware of their beliefs, feelings and actions and take responsibility for them, the better they are able to decide. Therapy using the two-chair technique enables them to come more in contact with self which facilitates their decision-making. The relationship between Conflict Resolution and Contact, along with the stages of the model, is diagrammed in Figure 1. For research purposes, each variable was divided into two levels. Conflict Resolution was divided into unresolved (level one), and resolved (level two). Contact was divided into interruption-of-contact (level one), and

in contact (level two). Individuals experiencing indecisiveness are unresolved and experience interruption-of-contact. They are in the first stage (Opposition) of the model in which aspects of the self are opposed to each other.

The two-chair technique promotes and facilitates contact between the aspects of the self which enables the second stage, Merging, to occur. In this stage one aspect of the self softens toward the other. This enables individuals to enter the third stage, Integration, in which the two parts merge into one integrated self. Having reached this stage, individuals are resolved and experience being in contact with the self.

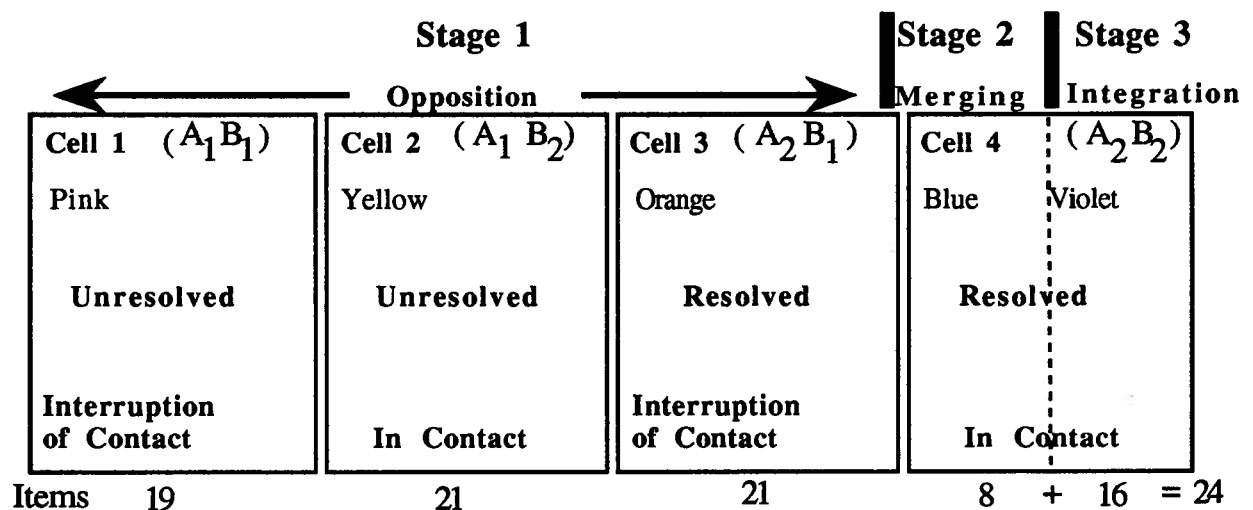


Figure 1. Stages of two-chair technique showing relationship with factors of Conflict Resolution and Contact and the number of Q-Sort items per cell.

In order to test the relationship between the factors of Conflict Resolution and Contact with the three stages of the model of the two-chair technique, this study used Q-methodology, a methodology that has been found potent for testing theory (Stephenson, 1953). The theory underlying the three stage model of the two-chair technique

was built into a Q-Sort. The Q-sort was given to participants before and after they received treatment by experienced therapists trained in Gestalt therapy and specifically the two-chair technique. The participants were asked to sort, in a rank order, cards that described experiences of their decision-making process according to those most like their experiences and those least like their experiences. The scores derived were analyzed using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) to determine whether or not patterns were present in the sortings. After therapy was concluded the Q-Sorts were again presented to the participants and further information about their experiences was sought. Significant differences between the pre-and post-therapy Q-Sorts were seen to support the theory by demonstrating that both factors, Conflict Resolution and Contact, were present and interacted with each other. Results which produced no patterns, that is random results, were interpreted to mean the theory was not meaningful for participants experiencing this phenomenon.

Significant results were indicated by particular patterns of Q-sorting. For example, all participants, prior to treatment, were undecided; therefore, they were expected to perform the Q-sort so that the items indicating that the participant was unresolved were sorted into categories most descriptive of themselves while items reflecting resolution with contact were sorted into categories least descriptive of themselves or discarded into a neutral category.

After therapy, two results were anticipated. It was predicted that participants who went through the second (Merging) and third (Integration) stages would perform the Q-sort so that items reflecting resolution with contact were sorted into categories most descriptive of

themselves while items reflecting unresolved with interruption-of-contact were sorted into categories least descriptive of themselves. It was predicted that those individuals who did not complete the Merging stage would sort in a pattern similar to before therapy. That is, they would sort some of the Merging stage items into the categories most descriptive of themselves but the others would be still in the categories least descriptive of themselves or discarded into the neutral category. Sorting in the predicted patterns would give support for the theory. A failure to identify patterns in the sortings would indicate lack of support for the theory or that it needed further elaboration to accurately explain the participants' experiences.

Rationale for the Study

Polster and Polster (1973) state, "Our truth is only a temporary truth, one which is currently serviceable and responsive to the vital stimulation of the times" (p. 6). Continued research on the Gestalt two-chair technique is important to the field of therapy for several reasons.

Firstly, the two-chair is used by many practitioners, regardless of their theoretical orientation. Greenberg (1980) states, "Given the potency two-chair technique can be used 'for better or for worse' and systematic training is essential to ensure its effective usage" (p. 180). It is valuable to ensure that a potent, widely used technique is embedded in theory and that it is taught and used appropriately and effectively, to allow for greater flexibility in application than is true with a set of methodological directives.

Secondly, previous research on the two-chair technique involved theory development (Greenberg, 1976, 1979, 1983). That is, the process of the two-chair technique was analyzed to determine what occurs in effective and ineffective resolution of a conflicted sense of self (Greenberg, 1976; Greenberg and Webster, 1982; Webster, 1981). Process analysis is considered by this researcher to be a micro theory embedded within a more global theory. The effects of the two-chair technique were studied using normative or conventional methodology (Greenberg and Clarke, 1979; Greenberg & Dompierre, 1981; Greenberg & Higgins, 1980; and Greenberg and Rice, 1981). This study added to the field by testing the completed theory. It investigated the theory underlying the two-chair technique using an ipsative methodology, Q-methodology, that is appropriate for examination of theory. Using Q-methodology Byrnes (1975) found support for the Gestalt therapy factors of Contact and Interruption-of-contact. This study extended the research on Gestalt therapy by investigating the factors underlying the three-stage model of two-chair technique put forth by Greenberg.

Thirdly, the two-chair technique is effective for resolving decisional conflict regarding a career decision (Clarke, 1981; O'Grady, 1986). Clarke (1981) recommended that the two-chair technique be examined in other areas of decision-making. The decision whether or not to remain married is a very important one that has not received much attention in any of the areas of theory, research or clinical interventions (Turner, 1985). The divorce rate has greatly increased in recent years, indicating that many people have struggled with this decision and have dissolved their marriages. This does not speak to the number of individuals who have struggled with this decision, may

even have separated and petitioned for divorce, yet have remained married (Donovan & Jackson, 1990) or to individuals living in common-law relationships. People struggling over whether or not to remain married frequently seek individual therapy during this period of indecision (Janis & Mann, 1977; Kressel & Deutch, 1977; Oz, 1994; Salts, 1985). Salts (1985) states that people who cannot decide whether to stay married or get divorced really want to dissolve their marriages but have been unable to do so. Research regarding this area of decision-making benefits practitioners in the field as increased knowledge of the issues and more effective methods of facilitating decision-making are needed to deal with such a common presenting problem. Everett and Volgy (1991) state “perhaps divorce therapy can better be understood not as a distinct discipline or group of techniques, but as a symbolic arena or therapeutic stance in which clinicians have gained knowledge and experience regarding the divorce process and can offer the therapeutic service of shepherding families through the often excruciating experiences of emotional losses, disappointments and anger that attend the divorce experience” (p. 510).

Significance of the Study

This study extended the research on the two-chair technique in three ways. Previous research on two-chair technique concentrated on theory development while, in this study the concern was with testing the theory as developed to date. Secondly, it used a different methodology, Q-Methodology, useful for the testing of theory. Finally, it extended the range of application of research on the two-chair technique from career decision problems to divorce decision-making,

specifically, the pre-decision (deliberation) stage. The limited research that does exist in this area is retrospective in nature. This study by comparison focused on the decisional process as it occurred.

Research Question

This study asked: can the theory underlying the three stage model of the Gestalt two-chair technique as put forth by Greenberg (1979; 1983) be supported empirically?

Assumptions and Limitations

Theorists argue that the Gestalt concept of decisional conflict should apply generally for all decisions. It was assumed in this study that the theory would also apply to individuals undecided about whether or not to remain married.

The Gestalt two-chair technique is drawn from the Gestalt approach to therapy. Although the technique is based on Gestalt concepts and methodology, it was removed for research purposes from the full context of Gestalt therapy. Thus, further research is necessary in order to generalize the findings to Gestalt therapy as a whole.

Definition of Terms

Following are explanations of terms used throughout this text.

Boundary: the partition between the organism and the environment and between the aspects of self. Polster and Polster (1973) describe it as a “permeable pulsating locus of energy” (p. 102).

Contact: “...awareness in the here and now with what one is feeling, thinking, and doing...” (Hellgren, 1983, p. 1). It involves experiences that occur at the boundary between the organism

and its environment in which the organism rejects that which is dangerous and assimilates that which promotes growth (Byrnes, 1975) and experiences that occur at the boundary between the aspects of self. Greenberg (1979) describes contact as "... an encounter between the parts" (p. 320).

Contact-boundary: the point at which differentiation occurs between an organism and its environment and between the aspects of self. It is the point at which contact takes place. Byrnes (1975) described it as "a relationship between the organism and its environment within the organism/environment field which potentially allows for organism definition, protection, and maintenance through need satisfaction" (p. 10).

Interruption-of-contact: hindrance of the natural process of contact.

Confluence: "lack of clear boundaries between the parts" or "non-awareness of a boundary between the parts" (Greenberg, 1979, p. 320).

Critic: the aspect of the self which is harsh toward and critical of the experiencing self. It embodies the standards and values of the person.

Experiencing self (exp. self): the organismic aspect of the self. It embodies the wants and needs of the person.

Split: "a statement of conflict expressed in a lively or poignant manner" (Greenberg, 1980).

Resolved: decided.

Unresolved: undecided.

Two-chair technique: a therapeutic intervention in which the therapist guides the client in an encounter between the different sides of the intrapsychic conflict by asking him or her to express each position, usually from different chairs; the client moves from chair to chair as the conflict unfolds (Greenberg, 1979).

The three-stage model of the two-chair technique as put forth by Greenberg (1979; 1983):

In the two-chair experiment, two opposing sides of an intrapsychic conflict are separated and brought into contact with each other, verbally and non-verbally. One side, named the critic, evolves into an aspect of the self that is usually harsh toward and critical of the other aspect of the self. It embodies the standards and values of the individual. The other side, named experiencing self, evolves into an aspect of the self that usually is rebellious, devious and/or acts like a weakling in reaction to the critic. It embodies the wants and needs of the individual. Differences between an individual's standards and values and his/her wants and needs create conflict. Resolution of the conflict occurs when the critic softens into compassion toward or fear for the experiencing self; it then embraces the experiencing self in a tender loving manner. The experiencing self is able to express its wants and needs clearly and directly toward the softened critic. Resolution is either precipitated by a new perception of each side and/or reached through negotiation.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter considers the literature and research related to the three major areas of this study, the Gestalt two-chair technique, divorce decision-making and Q-Methodology. The two-chair technique is described and research establishing it as an effective therapeutic technique for decision-making is given. The three-stage model of the two-chair technique is presented along with the theory underlying how and why successful conflict resolution is reached. This leads into the area of divorce decision-making, a new area of decision-making in which to investigate two-chair work and the theory underlying it. The appropriateness of case study method and Q-Methodology as methods for the investigation of theory is also put forth.

Gestalt Two-chair Technique

This section outlines the Gestalt concept of polarities and splits, gives a description of the Gestalt two-chair technique and presents the previous research on this technique.

Polarities and Splits in Gestalt Therapy

According to Passons (1975), the major goals of Gestalt therapy are teaching individuals to assume responsibility for their beliefs, feelings and actions plus facilitating integration of aspects of the self into a unified whole. Interruption of the person's natural self-regulation causes aspects of the personality to split creating intrapsychic conflict. This conflict involves polarities or splits in

human functioning, one of the major concepts of Gestalt therapy (Perls et al., 1951; Polster & Polster, 1973). Resolution of the conflict occurs by the integration of the opposing aspects, which is brought about by the two sides listening to each other (Greenberg, 1983). The resolution achieved is a new creation that transcends both sides of the conflict (Latner, 1973). Perls (1970) termed this process *centering*, “the reconciliation of opposites so that they no longer waste energy in useless struggle with each other, but can join in productive combination and interplay” (p. 19). Korb, Gorrell and Van De Riet (1989) believe that “the most relevant and useful patterns to explore in therapy are those, such as topdog-underdog, that block the person from growing and that use energies to maintain neurotic structures rather than for behaviors that are authentic, non-manipulative, and healthy, as defined in Gestalt terms” (p. 120).

Greenberg et al. (1993) believe that it is the conflict between the schemes that contain the societal standards (shoulds) and the organismic feelings and needs that requires changing. They view dysfunctional states occurring due to underlying schematic processing difficulties “which arise from the content, structure and organization of the emotion schemes through which one processes information about the self and the world. Specific types of processing difficulties can be related to specific types of interference with or blocking off of more adaptive emotional processing” (p. 186). They claim that incorporation of societal standards, attitudes, and ways of thinking and acting that are not the organism's own is a major method of interfering with adaptive functioning.

Greenberg (1979, 1980) discusses splits in depth. He defines a split as a statement of conflict made by a client in a therapy session "...in which two parts of the self are presented as being in opposition in a lively or poignant manner, indicating that the person is experiencing a split in the moment" (p.143). The three types of splits identified are conflict, subject/object and attribution. The manner in which the client presents the conflict determines the type of split. In a conflict split clients make such statements as "I want to go to go on a holiday but I don't think I should." In a subject/object split the client is both the subject and the object of the conflict, and makes statements such as, "I drive myself crazy." In an attribution split, clients attribute one aspect of their own conflict to someone or something in the environment and believe he, she or it is in conflict with them; for example, "I'd like to quit school but my parents won't let me" and "I want a job but there are no jobs out there."

Description of The Gestalt two-chair technique

The two-chair technique is a therapeutic intervention in which the therapist guides the client in an encounter between the different aspects of the intrapsychic conflict by asking him or her to express each position usually from different chairs; the client moves from chair to chair as the conflict unfolds (Greenberg, 1979). Splits are generally recognized by verbal and non-verbal markers. Greenberg points out that recognizing splits is basically a perceptual skill of process diagnosis that is important because it "captures an aspect of the client's ongoing functioning that *at that moment* requires and is highly amenable to change" (p. 317).

There are five basic principles underlying two-chair work (Greenberg, 1979; 1980). *Maintaining the contact boundary* involves establishing a definite separation and contact of the two positions. *Taking responsibility* entails a client “owning” his or her experience in each position, that is, being responsible for it. *Attending* requires that the therapist bring to a client's awareness his/her experiences in the moment, both inside, such as sensations, and outside, such as clenched fists. *Heightening* requires the therapist to increase a client's affective arousal by asking him/her to exaggerate and repeat behaviors, both verbal and non-verbal. *Expressing* involves the acting out of each side of the conflict, again verbally and non-verbally as opposed to just talking about it.

Greenberg et al. (1993) have identified and defined stages of two-chair work. First is the *Predialogue stage* in which the therapist engages the client in the task and structures the technique. In this stage the therapist detects the split from the dialogue and non-verbal behaviors and invites the client to participate in the two-chair technique. The *Opposition stage* involves identifying the two aspects of the self, separating and creating contact between them, and then promoting each side in taking its position. The *Identification and Contact stage* requires many operations of the therapist, promoting client's awareness of automatic self-criticisms and injunctions, increasing the specificity of those self-criticisms/injunctions, identifying core self-evaluations and injunctions, accessing underlying feelings in the experiencer, encouraging recognition and affirmation of wants and needs of the experiencer, and increasing awareness of the person's own values and standards. The *Integration stage* involves

focusing the critic on his or her inner experience when softening occurs and facilitating negotiation or integration. The final stage, *Post Dialogue stage*, involves the therapist and client creating a meaningful perspective of the work that has been done.

Research on the Gestalt Two-Chair Technique

In the past 15 years the Gestalt two-chair technique has been investigated and compared to many affective and cognitive therapy techniques. One of the first studies was a task analytic study in which three single case studies found that the two-chair experiment had the effect of greater conflict resolution and significantly greater depths of experiencing than empathic reflection (Greenberg 1976). This study also showed that resolution occurs by integration, with the softening of the harsh internal critic emerging as a key factor in resolving intrapsychic splits (Greenberg, 1980). Bohart (1977) found that the Gestalt role-playing technique proved to be more effective for reducing anger, behavioral aggression and hostile attitudes than either emotional discharge or intellectual analysis techniques.

In an analogue study of facilitating resolution of personally meaningful conflicts, Clarke (1977) and Greenberg and Clarke (1979) found that depth of experiencing and change in awareness were significantly greater with the two-chair technique than with empathic reflection although they found no difference in level of goal attainment. Higgins (1979) and Greenberg and Higgins (1980), in another analogue study, compared the two-chair technique to a focusing technique and also found the two-chair more effective in resolving conflicts.

Dompiere (1980) and Greenberg and Dompiere (1981) extended the study to clients engaged in counselling at various urban facilities. It was found that depth of experiencing and shift in awareness were higher, conflict resolution immediately after the session and in a one week follow-up was greater, and behavior change after a week and progress over a week were also significantly greater for the Gestalt two-chair treatment.

Using the Gestalt two-chair technique, Webster (1981) compared resolvers and non-resolvers of decisional conflict and found significant differences between them. In the study 31 clients completed a six-week program using the two-chair technique to work on intrapsychic conflict related to making a decision. Clients who showed signs of all of the following three components of a proposed model of conflict resolution were identified as resolvers: 1) the expression of criticism by one part of the personality, 2) the expression of feelings and wants by the other part of the personality, and 3) the softening in attitude of the critical part. These aspects were measured with reference to voice quality, depth of experience and structural analysis of social behavior. Resolvers were significantly less undecided and less anxious at termination and follow-up than non-resolvers; their target complaints were revised significantly in a positive manner at termination and follow-up, and on a report of behavior change at follow-up. All participants received six sessions of therapy. Over the resolution session, the session in which resolvers experienced a sense of resolution of their conflict compared to the fifth session for non-resolvers, the resolvers revealed a significantly greater sense of conflict resolution, less target complaint discomfort, a greater sense of

self acceptance, greater integration, and greater feelings of power. The mood changes lasted for resolvers during the week following the resolution session, and resolvers showed superior goal attainment and attitude change at both termination and follow-up.

Using the two-chair technique, Greenberg (1983) tested a proposed three-stage sequential model of conflict resolution. He compared 14 resolvers with 14 non-resolvers and found the pattern of results with the resolvers matched the proposed three-phase model of conflict resolution. The stages include Opposition, Merging and Integration. The softening of the previously harsh critic clearly distinguished resolvers from non-resolvers.

Clarke (1981) and O'Grady (1986) explored the use of the two-chair technique in resolving intrapsychic conflict in regard to career decision-making. In an analogue study, Clarke found the Gestalt two-chair technique to be more effective than a cognitive-behavioral approach or controls. O'Grady extended this study to clients and added a bio-energetic component to one of the two-chair treatments. He found both treatments to be effective, and the two-chair plus bio-energetic component more effective than the two-chair alone.

The foregoing experimental research has demonstrated that the Gestalt two-chair technique is an effective technique for helping people resolve intrapsychic conflicts. Greenberg (1979, 1983) developed the model of the two-chair technique around the concepts of opposition and integration. He states, "There is an experience of two parts of the self split into partial selves in opposition, rather than the experience of a single integrated self in process" (1979, p. 317). The role of the therapist is to facilitate integration of the opposing aspects

of self. The five principles guiding two-chair work, developed by Greenberg, are based upon the therapist's ongoing assessment of contact or interruption-of-contact in client functioning and are designed to facilitate and increase a client's contact with self. Byrnes (1975) and Hellgren (1983) found contact and interruption-of-contact to be valid factors of Gestalt personality therapy theory. Conflict resolution occurs as a result of clearing interruptions to contact and increasing contact with self. The researcher agrees with Greenberg (personal communication, Dec. 10, 1992) that contact and interruption-of-contact are the underlying factors guiding two-chair work while Opposition, Merging, and Integration are stages of the process. Conflict Resolution (Independent Factor A) and Contact (Independent Factor B) are the two independent factors upon which the Q-sort was constructed.

This study endeavored to determine whether or not there is empirical support for the three stage model of the two-chair technique and the theory underlying it. It also is a study of the two-chair technique in a new area of decision-making. The intrapsychic conflict of whether or not to remain married is one for which many people frequently seek therapeutic help. This study considered the two-chair technique in this area of decision-making.

Theories of Marital Stability

In the literature there are two major theories regarding the stability and instability of marital relationships: the social exchange theory and the economic model (Price & McKendry, 1988). Both models have a costs and rewards framework proposing that

individuals evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of their current marriage and compare their findings with the advantages and disadvantages of the available alternatives such as being single or marrying someone else. Donovan and Jackson (1990) outline the tenets of social exchange theory. The theory focuses on human interaction and exchange between two to three individuals in which a broad range of commodities, resources or skills are exchanged. An individual attempts to maximize rewards and minimize costs in order to achieve a profitable gain, and he or she compare these rewards and costs with available alternatives. If costs are greater than an individual's personal comparison level, he/she becomes dissatisfied with the relationship and it deteriorates. Social exchange theory claims that when the relationship is rewarding there is an accumulation of positive regard that enhances the relationship (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959). When the opposite is true, that is, the costs are greater than the rewards, then the relationship will develop more slowly or gradually terminate. Lewis and Spanier (1979) claim it is reasonable to assume that the anticipation of future costs along with past accumulation of costs and rewards, has an influence upon the quality and the continuance of the marriage. Social exchange theory views "the strength of the dyad as a direct function of the sum of the attractions to be in the marriage and barriers preventing dissolution of the marriage" and does not consider the strength of the dyad to imply that the relationship is satisfactory (Donovan & Jackson, 1990, p. 25).

The economic model is very similar. It deals with the cost and benefits of the current relationship compared to the costs and benefits of alternatives to the relationship (Becker, 1981). The difference

between the cost and rewards determines the profit of the relationship and becomes the standard that the individual uses to compare the relationship to the attractiveness of other available alternatives. If the profit of the comparison is at or above their costs then individuals will not consider divorce. According to Becker (1974), even if there is a cost deficit a marriage will continue if individuals can draw upon outside resources to enhance their lives. Outside resources include education, income, property, prestige, friends and autonomy (Scanzoni & Szinovacz, 1980). However, the greater the benefits outside the marriage the higher the probability individuals will leave unsatisfactory marriages as they believe they can obtain higher rewards for less costs.

Using social exchange theory Levinger (1965, 1979) put forward a model explaining why individuals stay married or get divorced. He claims there are attractions (forces that draw an individual to the relationship), barriers (forces that prevent an individual from terminating a relationship) and alternative attractions (forces that compete with the attractiveness of the relationship). Attractions consist of companionship, esteem for spouse, sexual pleasure, home ownership, level of education and similar social status. Barriers include religion, children, legal and economic barriers, family income, obligations to the marital bond, community stigma and family influence. Circumstances that create an alternative to marriage consist of higher levels of education (especially for women), availability of resources outside the marriage, increased opportunity for employment, attractiveness of single life and an alternate source of affection.

Kalb (1983), Albrecht and Kunz (1980) and Levinger (1979) all stress that the probability that a marriage will dissolve is heavily influenced by the attractiveness of the alternative. Kalb believes that "the key variable affecting the decision to divorce can best be understood through an exploration of the individual's conception of the alternative (p. 354). Albrecht and Kunz state, "The decision to divorce will be made only after it is determined that the alternative to sustaining a marital relationship is either more rewarding or less costly than the decision to remain with the relationship" (p. 321). Levinger claims that "even if internal attractions are low and barriers offer minimal restraint a relationship will not be terminated unless an alternative seems more attractive" (p. 54). The one reason most frequently mentioned for the dissolution of marriages was "finding a mate who seemed better to fit the man's or woman's needs and wants - an engaging alternative to the lackluster of one's present circumstances" (Cuber & Harroff, 1966, p. 92).

Donovan and Jackson (1990) criticize social exchange theory as failing to "specifically include a variable which 'tips the balance of the scales' in favor of marital attractions and marital preservation" (p. 27). They view attachment as one of the rewards of the relationship. They put forward attachment theory and cognitive dissonance theory to be considered in guiding the decision to divorce.

Attachment theory is "a way of conceptualizing the propensity of human beings to make strong affectional bonds to particular others and the many forms of distress and disturbance which include anxieties, anger, and depression to which unwilling separation and loss give rise" (Goldenson, 1984, p. 70 cited in Donovan & Jackson, 1990).

Attachment in marriage is different from an individual's sense of commitment to his or her spouse or the degree of satisfaction with the relationship. It is a bond that forms as a function of time and close association with each other, and appears to provide an important sense of psychological security and personal identity (Donovan & Jackson, 1990). Commitment is a sense of pledging oneself to the other and of investing oneself emotionally in the marriage, whereas attachment “seems to be the symbolic bonds between two people that emerge because of shared beliefs, values, meaning and identity” (Donovan & Jackson, p. 19). Thweatt (1980) discussed four phases of distress that occur when the attachment bonds are disrupted—denial, protest, despair and detachment. In spite of the fact that one or both individuals want out of the marriage, when they experience this distress they may latch onto each other, feeling very confused as they go through the dissolution process (Donovan & Jackson). Attachment can be present even when commitment to the marriage and the spouse are greatly reduced (Donovan & Jackson).

Cognitive dissonance theory maintains that individuals require a consistency among behaviors, perceptions, feelings and cognitions. When this balance is upset an uncomfortable psychological state is created that causes the individual to change a belief, feeling, behavior, or perception in order to reestablish the balance (Donovan & Jackson, 1990). Denial, a phase of distress when attachment bonds are threatened, frequently occurs when commitment to a marriage lessens. This creates cognitive dissonance, which prevents correction of the relationship difficulties. Even though a marriage may continue for years in this state it usually leads to eventual dissolution (Donovan

& Jackson). This indicates that there are various stages of the dissolution process.

Stages of divorce

Salts (1985) describes divorce as “a process involving decisions, changes, and adjustments resulting from increased dissatisfaction with the marital relationship” (p. 13). The divorce process has been described by many writers as occurring in stages that individuals and couples undergo (Bohannon, 1970; Brown, 1976; Duck, 1982; Everett & Volgy, 1983; Froiland & Hozeman, 1977; Herman, 1974; Kaslow, 1981; Kessler, 1975; Kraus, 1979; Kressel & Deutsch, 1977; Weiss, 1975; Wiseman, 1975). Theorists developed different models by focusing on factors such as emotions of individuals, actions and tasks of individuals and couples, time sequencing and therapeutic implications (Salts, 1985).

Models vary from two to seven stages, with most considering three fundamental stages. Lyon, Silverman, Howe, Bishop and Armstrong (1985), Storm and Sprenkle (1982), Everett and Volgy (1983) and Salts (1985) outline three very similar stages of the divorce process and give implications for therapy. Lyon et al. put forth these stages: the decision-making stage; the litigation and restructuring stage; and the post-dissolution stage. Storm and Sprenkle present the following stages: decision-making; restructuring; and recovery. Everett and Volgy's (1991) model attempts to capture clinical aspects of the divorce process that therapists face: structural de coupling, network coupling, and structural re coupling. They set out 14 steps in the divorce process, two of which deal with

ambivalence, Step 1: Heightened ambivalence, Step 8: Recurring ambivalence. Salts also presents three stages: the pre-divorce decision-making stage; the divorce restructuring stage; and the post-divorce recovery stage. Salts further divides the pre-divorce decision-making phase into early and late phases. In the early phase, spouses are considering other alternatives as well as divorce. During the late phase, divorce is being given much more consideration and is the likely outcome.

The first stage of the divorce process, the decision-making stage, is the stage that was most relevant to this study. It is a very stressful period during which it is common for individuals to experience symptoms such as vacillation, feelings of uncertainty and hesitation, as well as intense levels of guilt, shame and anxiety (Turner, 1985). The greater the anticipated loss the greater the level of stress (Turner, 1985). It is during this stage that individuals are most likely to seek therapeutic help (Salts, 1985). Lyon et al. (1985) state that “the time just before the decision to divorce is a major traumatic period” (p. 262) and “the decision-making stage phase, then, is one characterized by conflict, ambiguity, and emotional turmoil for both adults and their children” (p. 263).

Divorce decision-making

Given the concepts expressed by social exchange, attachment, and cognitive dissonance theories the decision of whether or not to remain married is obviously a very complex one. Few researchers have addressed this specific area of decision-making, perhaps because it is complicated and difficult to study. One group, Janis and Mann

(1977), put forth their theory as one which is suitable for this area of decision-making; Turner (1985) and Donovan and Jackson (1990) use it to address the dynamics of this specific decision-making issue.

Janis and Mann (1977), researchers in the area of decision-making, claim their theory “pertains directly to decisions concerning choice of career, marriage and divorce, health-related activities, community welfare programs, management of small and large firms, governmental policies, and a variety of other kinds of significant choice” (p. xv). They define decisional conflict as “simultaneous opposing tendencies within the individual to accept and reject a given course of action” (p. 48). They put forward five coping patterns, only one of which is constructive. The first is *unconflicted inertia* which occurs when individuals do not perceive a threat and so continue their course of action. The second is *unconflicted change*; no threat is viewed to change so the individual changes to a new course of action. The third pattern, *defensive avoidance*, is a selective ignoring of threats and a continuation of current course of action. *Hyper vigilance* is a pattern in which the individual is aware of the threats but doesn’t know the best course of action and fears there is not enough time to find one. It is in this state that errors in judgment occur due in part to the negative impact of a highly aroused emotional state on cognitive functioning. In the state of *vigilance*, individuals are aware of the threats, are excited but not overly excited, believe they can successfully get out of the situation and have time to find a way.

Janis and Mann (1977) consider ambivalence about remaining married or divorcing to be a decision-making and a conflict resolution process. During this process of problem solving the person usually

experiences considerable distress. A person's appraisal of oneself in the situation determines how one deals with the decision. Major decisions create conflict and therefore the process is considered an emotional as well as rational one.

Donovan and Jackson (1990) state that the decision to divorce is not a single event but the culmination of many smaller decisions. They believe that "as a result of these incremental decisions, a person can progressively commit him/herself to a particular course of action of major significance in the absence of feeling like he/she has made any definite decision" (p. 31). This strategy of decision-making is termed *satisficing* by Janis and Mann (1977) and involves following a course of action that is just "good enough" in meeting a personal minimal set of requirements. This is in contrast to the strategy of *optimizing*, in which an individual considers all possible alternatives and factors in order to evaluate whether or not the final decision is the best possible one. People get so overwhelmed with the many factors to consider in the decision to remain married or to divorce that they settle for the satisficing decision-making strategy, which is an easier information processing method.

Turner (1985) outlines five major stages of making a sound decision to divorce based upon Janis and Mann's decision-making theory. The preliminary stage involves deciding to decide for or against separation or divorce. Once that step has been taken, the next stage is concerned with surveying all the alternatives relating to one's personal goals and values. In the third stage, the advantages and disadvantages of all the alternatives are considered. The fourth stage involves deliberating about the decision in anticipation of acting and

preparing for negative feedback from family and friends. The last stage is adhering to the decision in the face of negative feedback.

As the decision to remain married or to separate is a very significant one, and one with which many people wrestle, it is important to investigate it. As well, it is important to find an appropriate methodology for the study of this decisional issue.

Q-Methodology

According to Rinn (1961) Q-Methodology is comprised of several data-gathering and statistical operations, referred to as Q technique, along with the basic assumptions of ipsative investigation. Stephenson (1953) defines Q-methodology as “a set of statistical, philosophy-of-science, and psychological principles” designed for intensive study of the individual (p.1). It offers quantitative measurement and statistical analysis of the data of the individual. Kerlinger (1972) finds it a flexible, sophisticated and powerful method that takes an ipsative quantitative approach to the study of phenomena. It provides “a systematic way to handle a person’s retrospections, his reflections about himself and others, his introjections and projections, and much else of an apparent subjective nature” (Stephenson, 1953, p. 86). Kerlinger acknowledges that probably Stephenson’s most important contribution is the correlative notion of building theory into Q-Sort items and structuring the Q-Sorts along Fisherian analysis of variance lines. The concept of building theory into a measuring instrument and then testing that theory with systematically selected cases is, according to Kerlinger, an important development from a scientific and measurement point of view.

An example of finding support for theory using Q-Methodology is Allport, Vernon, and Lindzey's (1951) Study of Values. These authors used Spranger's theory to develop items or descriptors representing the values of different life orientations, described in Spranger's book, Types of Men, and built these into a one way analysis of variance design with six levels (theoretical, political, economic, aesthetic, social and religious). Descriptors, reflecting the discrete values positions of each of these six sub-types described by Spranger, represented the six levels. The test of Spranger's theory involved the sampling of individuals of known value orientations such as priests, bankers, musicians etc. to sort the items. The results, obtained through analysis of variance, were an appraisal of the validity of Spranger's theory as well as the adequacy of the Q-Sort items in representing the theory.

The strength of Q-Methodology in capturing the psychology of the individual lies in its ipsative nature. Q-Methodology, rather than capturing the variance of individuals across variables or test items, as is the case with the conventional normative or R approach, captures the variance of items or variables within individuals, usually within forced choice distributions. Unlike R-Methodology, Q-Methodology does not require the assumption that all people possess a measured characteristic to some degree and therefore must vary on any measured variable around some sample or population mean. With the usual forced-choice distribution of Q-Sorts, the scatter (sd) and elevation (mean), as used in R-Methodology, are lost. However, these are not of interest in the typical questions addressed via Q-Methodology. In R-Methodology the approach is an objective one in

which the items developed are assumed to be a valid measure of whatever traits, attitudes, etc., are targeted for study and they are assumed to be independent of each other. It is a method of expression; that is, subjects are measured from an external point of view (McKeown & Thomas, 1988). The subject's own point of view at issue is of little theoretical interest and technical significance. The subjects are randomly chosen (random sampling) with the focus on how any subject deviates on a given item from the mean of all other persons on that item. In Q-Methodology the subjects are purposively chosen (dimensional sampling). The approach is a subjective one in which the items are developed from the people experiencing the phenomenon under investigation. Because the subjects rank order the items, the items are considered to be dependent upon each other. It is a method of impression; that is, subjects are measured from a subjective point of view. The subject's own point of view at issue is of great theoretical and technical interest. (McKeown & Thomas, p.23).

Q-Methodology is somewhat controversial as it lies outside the traditional realm of analysis techniques . Its major strength lies in its kinship with theory (Kerlinger, 1973). To create a structured sort, it is necessary to explicate theory, and in order to build two variables into a sort they must be related to each other in some way that makes sense. "While often rudimentary, this is the essence of theory: variables related in logical and empirical fashion" (p. 594). Other strengths include its heuristic quality and its usefulness in exploratory research (Kerlinger). One of the major drawbacks of Q-Methodology is the inability to generalize to populations of individuals due to the small number of subjects that can be studied (Kerlinger). Another is

criticism is on statistical grounds that the assumption of independence is violated. Kerlinger acknowledges that the independence assumption is somewhat vitiated but he doubts much is risked in the Q statistical situation if a fairly large number of items is used. Stephenson (1963) argues that "the operations in Q-sorting are by definition primarily measurements of understandings or apperceptions, and not primarily any superimposed 'effects' of factorial designs" (p. 271). He claims that a properly performed Q-sort is psychological-situational and whether items are independent or not is an empirical matter, not one of prior definition. He states "independency is as it happens, not as it is by logic" (p. 272).

The Q-sort is a refined method of comparative ranking. An individual ranks, comparatively, statements or descriptions representative of an object, concept or experience according to some self-referent criterion. Statistical analysis of an individual's responses is intended to identify the sources of variance in the sorting, that is, the variance due to error and the variance due to the factors implicit in the theory. It also can indicate whether a theoretically proposed underlying factor structure exists for the phenomenon under investigation (Kerlinger, 1972, 1973). These factor structures represent the subjective meanings of the psychological event or phenomenon under investigation (Stephenson, 1985). These specific characteristics of the Q-sort make it the appropriate measure for this investigation of the three-stage model of the Gestalt two-chair technique, as it provides a systematic way to handle the subjective data obtained.

Several studies confirm the reliability of results produced by Q-sorts. Frank (1956) reported test re-test correlations between .93 and .97. Kahle and Lee (1974) found reliabilities over .95. Kerlinger (1973) reported a correlation of .81 over an 11-month period, while Fairweather (1981) reported test-re-test reliability coefficients of .90 or higher for one to two-year intervals.

There are two studies using Q-methodology that relate to this project. Byrnes (1975) examined Gestalt therapy personality theory using Q-methodology, focusing on the explanation of psychological health and psychological disturbance, using the variables of Contact and Interruption-of-contact. A structured Q-sort was built, using items related to Contact and Interruption-of-contact, and then administered to psychologically healthy and psychologically disturbed subjects. Using the same Q-Sort, the study was both extensive, testing across subjects (30 university students), and intensive, testing within subjects (four university students). The study found the construct of Contact related to psychological health and the construct of Interruption-of-contact related to disturbance of psychological health, giving support for Gestalt therapy personality theory.

In another study using Q-methodology, Ladd (1992) investigated the pattern of experience in a career transition. Janis and Mann's (1977) decision-making theory is one of several theories of decision-making Ladd tested. The study, using an unstructured Q-sort and consisting of ten single cases, found individual accounts of how a person arrived at a decision during the transition period did not match the sequential appraisal process described in Janis and Mann's model of decision-making. Findings supported Janis and Mann's position that

major policy decisions are made during significant conflict and uncertainty but did not support their idea that the guiding purpose of the process is to calm the turmoil that the person experiences when faced with a major decision. Ladd found the struggle with making or not making a change reflects a deeper concern, one of searching for meaning in one's life. His findings are consistent with Cochran's (1987) idea that career decisions relate to a concern with how best to live one's life.

Case Study Research

The case study, an important part of Q-Methodology, is an important research strategy for investigating an empirical topic (Yin, 1989). It is an idiographic approach in which the intensive study of individual cases produces a detailed description and analysis of a naturally occurring real-world phenomenon or related set of events (Bromley, 1986). It is an accepted method of scientific inquiry (Bromley, 1986; Campbell, 1979, 1989; Yin, 1989). Yin (1989) states "case studies, like experiments, are generalizable to theoretical propositions and not to populations or universes. In this sense, the case study, like the experiment, does not represent a 'sample', and the investigator's goal is to expand and generalize theories (analytic generalization) and not to enumerate frequencies (statistical generalization)" (p. 21). Thus the case study method is appropriate for the investigation of theory.

Multiple case studies have an advantage in that they are considered to add to the robustness of a research project (Yin, 1989). Replication logic provides the rationale for the use of multiple case

studies. If similar results are obtained from several cases, replication is said to have taken place. Yin states “each case must be carefully selected so that it either (a) produces predictable results (a literal replication) or (b) produces contrary results but for predictable reasons (a theoretical replication)” (p. 53). Essential to replication procedures is the development of an in-depth, theoretical framework that stipulates “the conditions under which a particular phenomenon is likely to be found (a literal replication) as well as the condition when it is not likely to be found (a theoretical replication)” (p. 54). If literal and theoretical replications are obtained, then the theoretical framework is supported and becomes even stronger for generalizing to new cases. If not, then the theory needs to be modified (Yin, 1989).

This study used replication logic in a Q- Methodology investigation of the theory underlying the three stage model of the two-chair technique. The theory relates the factors of Conflict Resolution and the Gestalt concept of Contact interactively. It states that individuals who are unresolved are experiencing Interruption-of-contact. As they become more in contact with themselves through therapy, becoming aware of their beliefs, feelings, and actions, they are able to reach resolution. Specifically, theoretical framework predicted that individuals, conflicted about whether or not to remain married, who successfully resolved their decision would go through all three stages of the model reaching resolution with integration of opposing aspects of self; those individuals who did not pass through stages 2 and 3 would remain conflicted or they would resolve without integration - a forced resolution. The eight cases involved in this study were chosen with the prediction that resolution would be

achieved. However, given the importance and complexity of this particular decision plus the relatively brief number of sessions, few cases were expected to reached resolution as a result of passing through all three stages. Cases that achieved resolution with integration were literal replications and cases in which individuals remained conflicted or reached a forced resolution were theoretical replications.

Summary

This chapter has drawn on the literature from the areas of Gestalt two-chair work, divorce decision-making and Q-Methodology. The material covered developed an argument for the research question addressed by this study: can the theory underlying the Gestalt two-chair technique be supported empirically? The following chapter sets out specifically the design of the study and the methodology used to investigate the theory of the two-chair technique in the area of divorce decision-making.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the research design and procedures used in this study. It sets out Q-methodology and the development of the Q-sort. It shows how the two major factors underlying the two-chair technique, Conflict Resolution and the Gestalt concept of Contact, relate to the three stage model of the two-chair technique. The phenomenon under investigation was the decision-making process for the specific decision of whether or not to remain married.

Research Design

The design chosen was a replicated single case-study using Q-technique. It was an experimental design that included a Q-Sort based upon the dependent and independent variables. The independent variables, obtained by logical analysis, were Conflict Resolution and the Gestalt concept of Contact. The dependent variables, obtained by scoring the rank ordered responses of the individuals, were the Q-variates. The technique included the formulation of a research hypothesis based upon theory to be tested. The design called for an analysis of variance to analyze the rank ordered responses and was intended to allow for an intensive study of the individual. Repeated measures was not used as it requires random sampling in order that the observations or scores are independent across subjects. In this study the scores were all obtained from one participant, each sort acting as a separate experiment.

Procedures

The study proceeded as follows (see Figure 2):

1. A Q-sort was developed from the three stage model of the two-chair technique according to the following steps.

a) Two factors were identified, Contact and Conflict Resolution.

For research purposes each factor was divided into two levels.

Conflict Resolution was divided into *unresolved* and *resolved*.

Contact was divided into *in contact* and *interruption-of-contact*.

These factors were combined to form a two-by-two factorial grid (see Figure 2).

b) Between 80-90 items were designed by the researcher, approximately 20 items per cell. Each item was composed of two parts: one level of Conflict Resolution and one level of Contact, creating a single statement that integrates the two factors. This was done for each of the four cells. For example, in Cell 1, consider item #16 I feel like running away. This item consists of level 1 of Conflict Resolution as individuals who feel like running when faced with a decision are not resolved. It also consists of level 1 of the Gestalt concept of Contact in that individuals who feel like running away when struggling with a difficult decision rather than face it are experiencing interruption-of-contact.

Thus, this one statement represents level 1 of both factors. For another example, in Cell 3, consider item #53 I'll stay for the children's sake. "I'll stay" consists of level 2 (Resolved) of the independent factor, Conflict Resolution, It is combined with "for the children's sake." which represents a decision not from an integrated sense of

self but from a conflicted sense of self. It represents level 1 (Interruption-of-contact) of the independent factor, Contact.

c) The Q-Sort was sent to three experts for validation that it was representative of the model developed and that each item fell into only the cell for which it was targeted. Specifically they were asked to validate that 1) the items represent the process analysis of the two chair technique as put forth in the literature and 2) that each item fits into the cell designated and not into any of the other cells. The three experts were L. S. Greenberg, Ph.D., R. Elliott, Ph.D. and K. Clarke, Ph.D. L. S. Greenberg is Professor in the Department of Psychology and Director of the Psychotherapy Research Center at York University, Ontario. He has been responsible for in-depth study of the Gestalt two-chair technique, writing many articles on the research findings of himself and his associates (see references). R. Elliott is Professor of Psychology and Director of Clinical Training at the University of Toledo in Ohio, where he also practices, teaches and supervises experiential psychotherapy. He has co-authored *Facilitating emotional change*. (1993) with L. S. Greenberg and L. Rice on the two-chair technique. K. Clarke is on staff at the Weston School of Theology, Cambridge, Massachusetts. Her master's thesis and doctoral dissertation (1981) were studies of the Gestalt two-chair technique.

d) The experts returned the Q-Sort with a few suggested changes and items were deleted, added and revised based upon recommendations of the experts. For example, the phrase "I feel stuck" is a statement of experience frequently used by people

who are unable to decided upon a course of action. However, it was dropped because it could fit in to cells 1, 2, and 3. When the revised Q-Sort was returned to the same experts for further consideration, they all agreed that it met the requirements.

e) The researcher's committee then requested that a further check be done to ensure the items fit only into the cells for

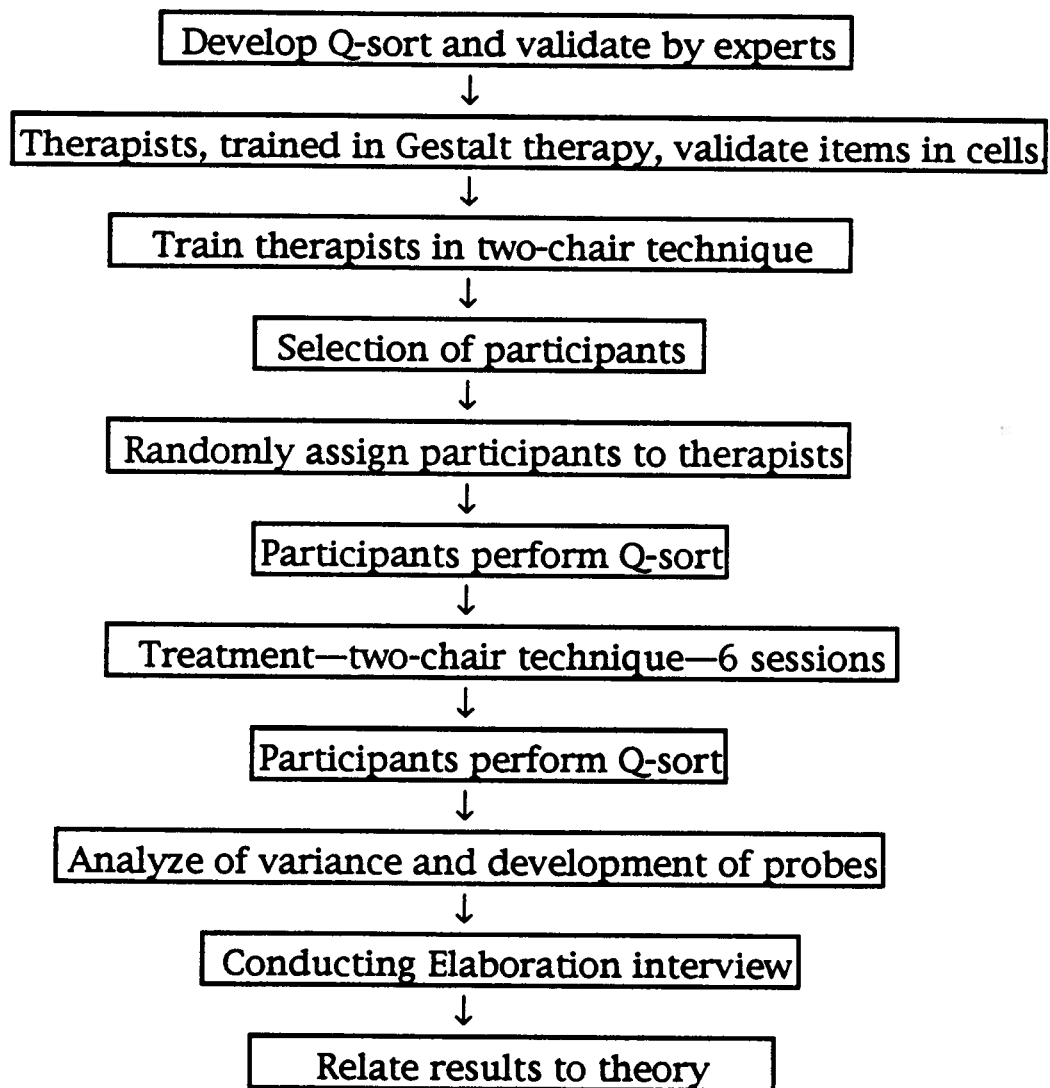


Figure 2. Procedures for this study.

which they were targeted. Three therapists, trained in Gestalt therapy, were recruited to verify that the items went into the cell to which they were targeted. Each item was put on a separate card. The researcher met with the therapists individually, explained the requirements of items to fit in each cell and directed the therapists to sort the items into the cells which they thought appropriate or discard any item which they thought did not fit into any of the four cells. The therapists agreed upon most items. Items which the therapists could not agree upon were dropped while others were revised. Then the researcher met with an additional four therapists, again on an individual basis. These therapists agreed unanimously that the items fit into the cells for which they were targeted.

2. The researcher recruited four therapists and gave them additional training in the two-chair technique. They had already received training in two-chair technique in the Gestalt training program.

3. Participants were identified through an informal network of contacts and referrals. The researcher talked to therapists in the field about her study, gave them information regarding the study (see Appendix A) and asked them to refer appropriate people to the project. Participants were identified as suitable for the study through discussion with their therapists and that they met the criteria established for the study (see p. 41).

4. Participants were randomly assigned to one of the four therapists.

5. All participants received the Q-sort before therapy. Participants were asked to sort the cards according to most/least like what characterizes their thoughts and feelings about remaining married or separating at that time.
6. All participants had six treatment sessions. This number of sessions was chosen because the researcher believed it was possible to achieve resolution within this time frame and to make the study manageable.
7. Participants performed the Q-sort following the last session of treatment. Participants were asked to sort the cards according to most/least like what characterizes their thoughts and feelings about remaining married or separating now.
8. Analysis of variance was used to analyze the Q-sort data and probes were developed for the elaboration interview. The analysis tested whether the participants characterized their feelings about the conflict both before and after therapy, in terms of the theory underlying the three stage model of two-chair work.
9. One week after the final session the researcher met with each subject for an elaboration interview. The elaboration interview sought first to clarify and validate the comparative rankings of the participants through the Q-sort and also to elaborate the results toward matching practice with theory.

Study Participants

Eight participants were recruited through a referral network of personal contacts. The number of participants was limited to eight for practical reasons; eight cases were considered manageable for this

study and each of the therapists had agreed to provide therapy for two case studies.

Participants were recruited through therapists in a large urban area of western Canada. They were recruited from therapists so that at the conclusion of the study they would have therapists to whom to return if they wished to do so.

All participants had sought therapy to deal with the phenomenon being investigated by this study - ambivalence about remaining married. A normal context of therapy would include people with various exposure to therapy. The intent was to investigate whether or not support could be found for the theory in as normal a context as possible.

Participants were offered six sessions of free therapy specifically designed to facilitate their decision-making. They were selected according to the following criteria: 1) they were married adults who volunteered for a therapy research project; 2) they were experiencing the phenomenon being investigated; that is, they were in conflict about whether or not to remain married; and 3) they wanted a resolution to their dilemma.

Therapists

Recruitment and Selection

Bergin and Lambert (1982) maintain results of therapy being helpful are due to the use of experienced therapists in studies (p. 180). Accordingly four experienced therapists were recruited, three females and one male. They volunteered to participate in the project. They received training and supervision from the researcher in lieu of

remuneration. All therapists had completed a three-year part time training program in Gestalt therapy from a local training institute. All were in private practice either full or part time. Their experience ranged 3 to 20 years. One of the therapists had a Master's degree in Counselling Psychology and was enrolled in the doctoral program in Counselling Psychology at a local university, one had a Master's degree in Social Work and two had diplomas in Counselling Psychology.

Training and Supervision

Therapists were trained in the use of the two-chair technique by the researcher. This training was an extension of the training they had previously received at a training institute. The training sessions consisted of two weekends of two 8-hour days each, for a total of 32 hours. The training material covered the following: introducing the participants to the two-chair technique; the three stages of the two-chair technique (Opposition, Merging, Integration); identification of and working with the three types of splits (conflict, subject/object, and attribution; and the five principles of two-chair work (maintaining the contact boundary, taking responsibility, attending, heightening, and expressing).

All sessions were video-taped and the researcher reviewed all sessions to confirm adherence to the principles and practice of the two-chair technique. The researcher supervised the therapy as it proceeded, meeting with all therapists every two weeks. Supervision consisted of the researcher choosing relevant portions of video taped sessions from the project, viewing them with the therapists and

Conflict Resolution (A)		
	Unresolved (A_1)	Resolved (A_2)
Interruption of Contact (B_1)	A_1B_1 CELL 1 Stage 1 Opposition (P)	A_2B_1 CELL 3 Stage 1 Opposition (O)
In Contact (B_2)	A_1B_2 CELL 2 Stage 1 Opposition (Y)	A_2B_2 CELL 4 Stage 2 Merging (B) Stage 3 Integration (V)

Figure 3. Levels of Conflict Resolution (A) and Contact (B) showing the stages of two-chair technique.

(P) Pink	Stage 1. Opposition	A_1B_1 Unresolved with interruption-of-contact.
(Y) Yellow	Stage 1. Opposition	A_1B_2 Unresolved with contact.
(O) Orange	Stage 1. Opposition	A_2B_1 Resolved with interruption-of-contact.
(B) Blue	Stage 2. Merging	A_2B_2 Resolved with contact.
(V) Violet	Stage 3. Integration	A_2B_2 Resolved with contact.

discussing the material with them.

Q-Methodology

Q-Sort

There are two kinds of Q-sorts, structured and unstructured.

Unstructured Q-sorts are sets of items assembled without specific regard to the variables or factors underlying the items while structured Q-sorts have factors identified by theory built into the items (Kerlinger, 1973).

The Q-sort for this study was structured. It consisted of a set of items that was a representative sample of the theory underlying the three

stage model of the Gestalt two-chair technique, related to the phenomenon to be investigated, and organized according to topics (independent factors) drawn from the theory. The items consisted of characterizations of conflict in the decision-making process of whether or not to remain married; the characterizations were applicable before treatment and following treatment. Each participant was asked, before and after therapy, to sort the items according to how well the description on each card matched his or her current experiences of the decision to remain married or to separate.

Separating was considered a step in the divorcing process. Once people separate they may go through the decision-making process again regarding whether or not to remain married. They may reconcile rather than go on to divorce. Many people separate and reconcile several times before they finally go on to divorce. For this reason the participants were asked about their experiences of the decision to remain married or to separate rather than remain married or divorce.

Q-sort Items

The Q-sort developed for this study was composed of a representative sample of descriptive phrases, positive and negative characterizations, about the conflict involved in whether or not to remain married. They were written in everyday language so participants were able to readily understand them.

Kerlinger (1973) recommends the Q-sort consist of between 60 and 90 items for adequate reliability and ease of handling by participants.

Relevant statements from the literature on Gestalt two-chair theory were written in the form of brief statements forming the items for the Q-sort. Each item was expressed in the present tense and in the active voice as well as in everyday language that is easily understood by the participants. The final total was 85 items.

Two factors are considered, Conflict Resolution (A) and the Gestalt concept of Contact (B). (see Figure 1.):

There are two levels of each factor

- | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| Conflict Resolution (A) | 1) unresolved |
| | 2) resolved |
| Contact (B) | 1) interruption-of-contact |
| | 2) in contact |

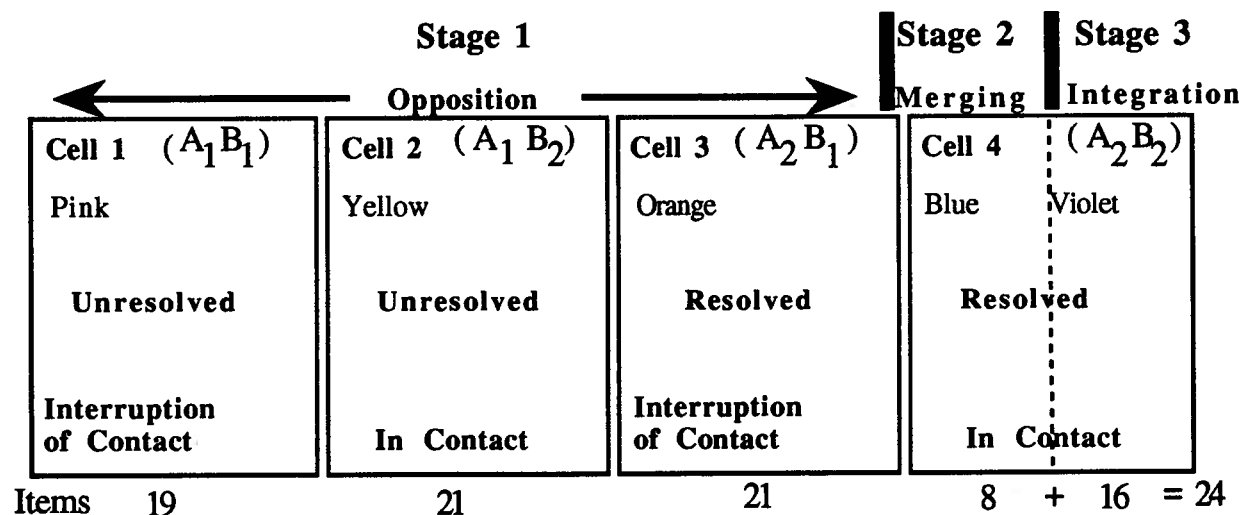


Figure 1. Stages of two-chair technique showing relationship with factors of Conflict Resolution and Contact and the number of Q-Sort items per cell.

According to the theory of the two-chair technique these two factors interact with each other. The more interruption-of-contact individuals experience the more difficult decision-making is. They are likely to remain unresolved. Items relating to the joint influence of the factors A₁B₁ (unresolved and interruption-of-contact) are in Cell 1. As therapy progresses individuals come more into contact with their feelings, beliefs and actions and take responsibility for them. Before individuals can resolve their decision from an integrated position they need to become aware of each side of their conflict. This relates to the principle of separation and contact in the three stage model of the two-chair technique. Although they are still unresolved at this point this is a precursor to a decision that stems from an integrated position. Items relating to the joint influence of the factors A₁B₂ (unresolved and in contact) are in Cell 2. A decision that is made without going through the Merging stage is a decision made without an integration of individuals' standards and values with their wants and needs. They remain in the Opposition stage. Items relating to the joint influence of the factors A₂B₁ (resolved and interruption-of-contact) are in Cell 3 of Figure 2. As individuals come fully into contact with self they are likely to experience full expression of their experiencing selves as their critics soften, enabling them to integrate their standards and values with their wants and needs. They experience a new sense of self. Items relating to the joint influence of the factors A₂B₂ (resolved and in contact) are in Cell 4.

There are approximately 20 items in each cell: 19, 21, 21 and 24 items in Cells 1, 2, 3 and 4 respectively. Items that reflect the Opposition stage of the theory are in Cells 1, 2 and 3 (61 items).

Aspects of the self are in conflict; the individual has not reconciled standards and values with wants and needs. Items that reflect the Merging (8 items) and Integration stages (16 items) of the model are in Cell 4. Aspects of the self have been reconciled; the critic has softened into compassion or fear for the experiencing self and the experiencing self has expressed itself clearly and directly to the critic.

As the theory of the model is built into the items, it is possible to predict how individuals will sort. Since all individuals were undecided and seeking resolution upon entry into this project it was predicted they were experiencing opposition within themselves. Therefore, they would choose items mostly from the stage of Opposition, Cells 1, 2, and 3, to describe what they were like. They would either not relate to items from Cell 4 containing the items reflecting stages 2 (Merging) and 3 (Integration) and leave them in the neutral category or would choose them to describe what they were *not* like. Because they were unresolved they would choose items from Cell 3 and 4 to describe what they were not like or they would not relate to these items and would leave them in the neutral category.

After therapy, those individuals who came to a decision based upon their critics softening and integration would sort differently than they did initially. They would choose mostly items from Cell 4 to describe what they were like and items from the stage of Opposition, Cells 1, 2, and 3, would be chosen to describe what they are *not* like or they would be left in the neutral category. Individuals who were still unresolved but were more in contact with themselves would choose fewer items from Cells 1 and 3 to describe themselves and more items

from Cells 2 and 4. Some items from Cell 4 might still be chosen to describe what they are *not* like.

Individuals who resolved without going through the Merging and Integration stages would remain in the Opposition stage even though they were resolved. They would feel more conflicted after therapy as the conflict between the opposed aspects of self was exacerbated by therapy but not resolved. As well, they would experience disappointment and loss of hope as a result of the therapy not having been successful.

Relationship between the theory and O-sort items (See Figure 1)
Opposition stage: Cells 1, 2 and 3.

This stage is characterized by a relationship of opposition between the two parts in conflict. “One aspect of the personality, labeled as the ‘other chair’ is critical, hostile, intimidating or threatening toward the part, labeled the ‘experiencing chair’ that is initially rebellious, passively compliant, helpless or avoiding” (Greenberg, 1983, p. 191).

Cell 1 (A₁B₁): *Unresolved and Interruption-of-contact*. This cell contains items that describe experiences of people who are unresolved about their conflict. They are in the beginning of the opposition phase and do not have a clear sense of the opposing forces within themselves. They have difficulty taking responsibility for most of their beliefs, feelings and actions because they block or interrupt awareness of themselves. These items represent the experiences of subjects who are experiencing confluence.

- Opposition between two parts of the conflict is not the focus of client's attention.
- Two sides of the conflict are not clearly delineated.
- Client is more invested in one side of the conflict.

Source: Greenberg (1979, 1983); Greenberg & Webster (1982); Greenberg, Elliott & Rice - degree of resolution scale (1993) (see Appendix C)

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1 I don't know what to do. | 11 I'm just not happy. |
| 2 I'm confused. | 12 I feel like something is wrong with me. |
| 3 I'm frustrated. | 13 I'm terrified. |
| 4 I constantly question myself. | 14 Sometimes I feel suicidal. |
| 5 I don't know what I feel anymore. | 15 I feel out of control. |
| 6 I don't like the person I've become. | 16 I feel like running away. |
| 7 I feel like life is passing me by. | 17 I feel like a failure. |
| 8 I feel anxious a lot of the time. | 18 I'm torn. |
| 9 I feel discouraged. | 19 I'm afraid. |
| 10 I'm depressed. | Number of items: 19 |

Cell 2 (A₁B₂): *Unresolved and in Contact*. This cell contains items that describe experiences of people who are still unresolved, are still in the opposition phase, but now have clear awareness of both sides of their conflict. They take responsibility for the beliefs, feelings and behaviors of each side of the conflict. They are aware that one side has become very critical and that the other side responds and reacts to the criticism. They have become aware of deeper underlying feelings but have not yet accessed new feelings. They are aware of what they do to themselves and how they do it. The critic has not softened. Neither side has developed a new perception of the other.

The two sides of the split become clearly delineated.

Client experiences struggle.

Sources: Greenberg (1979);

Greenberg, Elliott, & Rice, (1993):

degree of resolution scale;

Greenberg & Webster (1982).

The critic embodies the standards and values of the individual and conflicts with his/her wants and needs.

Source: Greenberg (1983).

One side of the self (critic) becomes harsh and critical to the other side of the self (experiencing self).

Sources: Greenberg (1983);

Greenberg, Elliott, & Rice (1993):

degree of resolution scale.

Client experiences expectations.

Source: Greenberg, Elliott, & Rice (1993): degree of resolution scale.

The critical aspect of the self embodies the standards and values of the self.

Source: Webster (1982).

The experiencing self embodies the wants and needs of the self.

Client experiences striving.

Source: Greenberg (1979).

20 I see clearly both sides of my struggle.

21 I am struggling hard to resolve my impasse.

22 What I want conflicts with what I think I should do.

23 I'm really hard on myself.

24 I expect/demand a lot of myself.

25 I feel pressure to honor my wedding vows.

26 I should be better/different than I am.

27 I should count my blessings, others are worse off.

28 I want a better relationship.

29 I want a better life for myself.

30 I want a better life for my children.

31 I want to be free.

One side becomes the part of the self that fundamentally is and experiences being done to by the critical side.

Sources: Greenberg - (1983);
Greenberg, Elliott, & Rice (1993):
degree of resolution scale.

32 I intimidate myself.

33 I discount myself.

34 I'm my own worst enemy.

35 I feel stifled by my standards and values.

One side is unaccepting of the other.
Source: Greenberg (1979).

36 I can't accept myself as I am.

One side is coercive toward the other.
Source: Greenberg (1979).

37 I feel guilty if I do what I want.

38 I pressure myself to do what I think I should do.

Client takes responsibility for both sides of conflict and become aware of how he/she prevent him/herself.
Source: Greenberg (1979).

39 I undermine the actions I do take to resolve my dilemma.

40 I hold myself back from taking action to resolve my decision.

Number of items: 21

Cell 3 (A₂B₁): *Resolved without integration* (a forced resolution).

These items reflect the experiences of subjects after they have explored their conflict thoroughly but have not achieved a shift or change in the underlying dynamics of the conflict. They feel either forced to make a decision or resigned to a decision. They remain in the Opposition stage without shifting into the Merging or Integration stage.

Client experiences frustration and lack of progress.

Sources: Inferred from Greenberg (1983);
Greenberg, Elliott, & Rice, (1993):
degree of resolution scale;
Greenberg & Webster (1982).

41 I'm so fed up with going round in circles
that I've decided to stay/leave.

Client may express increased criticism of self.

Sources: Inferred from Greenberg (1983);
Greenberg, Elliott, & Rice, (1993):
degree of resolution scale;
Greenberg & Webster (1982).

42 I'm too screwed up to ever sort this out.

Client expresses deep discouragement.
Client expresses deep resignation.

Sources: Inferred from Greenberg (1983);
Greenberg, Elliott, & Rice, (1993):
degree of resolution scale;
Greenberg & Webster (1982).

43 I've decided to give up trying to get
what I want.

44 I feel utterly hopeless that I can change
my situation.

Client cannot see how various needs and desires can be accommodated

Sources: Inferred from Greenberg (1983);
Greenberg, Elliott, & Rice, (1993):
degree of resolution scale;
Greenberg & Webster (1982).

45 I'll never be able to get what I want and
need so I'll just accept my situation the
way it is.

Client continues to feel conflicted,
perhaps in a worse way such as
more divided within self.

Sources: Inferred from Greenberg (1983);
Greenberg, Elliott, & Rice, (1993):
degree of resolution scale
Greenberg & Webster (1982)

46 I've resolved to remain unresolved.

Client experiences a sense of blocking and lack of contact and openness to the self as it most fundamentally is.

Sources: Inferred from Greenberg (1983); Greenberg, Elliott, & Rice, (1993): degree of resolution scale; Greenberg & Webster (1982).

Client feels resigned or forced to make a decision.

Sources: Inferred from Greenberg (1983); Greenberg, Elliott, & Rice, (1993): degree of resolution scale; Greenberg & Webster (1982).

47 I've decided to settle for what I've got.

48 I have decided that I have no choice.

49 I've decided to sacrifice myself to my marriage.

50 I've decided that it's 'better the devil I know than the devil I don't know'.

51 I'll continue as I am because I'm too afraid to make a change.

52 I'll maintain the status quo because I don't know what else to do.

53 I'll stay because I'm too afraid to be alone.

54 I'll stay for the children's sake.

55 I'll stay, with the hope that my spouse will change.

56 The price I'll pay is too high if I leave/stay.

57 Financially I can't afford to leave/stay.

58 I can't face starting over.

59 I'll stay because I'll feel too guilty if I leave.

60 I'm not sure I'll find another partner so I'll stay.

61 I've decided to lead a separate life within the marriage.

Number of items: 21

Cell 4 (A2B2): *Resolved with Contact* - integration.

The items in this cell reflect both the Merging and Integration stages of the conflict. They reflect experiences that occur in order for resolution to occur. Key experiences are:

- The critic softens. Sources: Greenberg (1979); Greenberg (1983); Greenberg, Elliott, & Rice, 1993, degree of resolution scale; Greenberg & Webster (1982).
- The experiencing self expresses its feelings and then its wants in a clear direct congruent manner. Source: Greenberg & Webster (1982).
- Each side has a new perception of the other. Source: Greenberg & Rice (1982).
- A new feeling is arrived at. Source: Greenberg, Elliott, & Rice (1993) - degree of resolution scale.

Merging stage: Cell 4.

This stage is characterized by a softening of the critical part of the self, which appears to shift from a blaming and lecturing stance to one of introspection. The two sides move toward affiliation by changing the manner in which they relate to each other, shifting from opposition to acceptance. The experiences of this stage involve deeper, more intense feeling (Greenberg, 1983). The Merging stage occurs within the context of the Opposition and Integration stages and required fewer items to accurately represent it than either of the other stages.

Client's underlying feelings in response to criticism emerge.

Source: Greenberg, Elliott, & Rice, (1993): degree of resolution scale.

62 My deeper feelings are clear to me.

63 I realize my self criticisms are based on my fears.

Critic softens — for the first time client experiences greater considerations for expressed feelings and needs.

Sources: Greenberg (1983); Greenberg, Elliott, & Rice, (1993): degree of resolution scale; Greenberg & Webster (1982).

64 I'm not as bad as I thought I was.

65 I can ease up on myself.

66 What I want and need is worth fighting for.

67 What I feel is important.

Critic softens into compassion or fear for the self.

Source: Greenberg (1983).

68 I feel very tender toward myself.

69 I'm more afraid than condemning of myself.

Number of items: 8

Integration stage: Cell 4.

This stage is characterized by negotiation or integration taking place between the sides of the conflict, when they mutually listen, understand and accept each other, to form a resolution in which opposing aspects of the conflict are reconciled (Greenberg, 1983). Perls (1970) states "the reconciliation of opposites so that they no longer waste energy in useless struggle with each other but can join in productive combination and interplay" [cited in Greenberg (1979)].

Critic expresses concern for exp. self.

Source: Greenberg, Elliott, & Rice (1993): degree of resolution scale.

70 I feel very protective toward myself.

71 I've decided to take care of myself.

Critic expresses respect for exp. self.

Source: Greenberg, Elliott, & Rice (1993):
degree of resolution scale.

72 I am worthy.

Client expresses wants or needs associated
with newly experienced sense of self.

Source: Greenberg, Elliott, & Rice (1993):
degree of resolution scale.

73 I have wants and needs that stem from a
new sense of myself.

Client recognizes and accepts self as a
trustworthy and responsible person.

Source: Greenberg, Elliott, & Rice (1993):
degree of resolution scale.

74 I am trustworthy.

75 I am responsible.

Client recognizes self as responsible
agent for self determination.

Source: Greenberg, Elliott, & Rice (1993):
degree of resolution scale;
Greenberg & Webster. (1979)

76 I can make a difference in my life.

Client expresses: a caring type of self-
embracement, or

Source: Greenberg, Elliott, & Rice (1993):
degree of resolution scale.

77 I value myself.

expresses a comforting type
of self-embracement.

78 I believe that whatever I do I'm going to
be OK.

Client describes a clearer stronger sense
of self and freedom to be.

Source: Greenberg, Elliott, & Rice (1993):
degree of resolution scale.

79 It's OK for me to do what is right for
me.

Client expresses clear understanding of how various needs and desires may be accommodated with standards and values. Client expresses clear understanding of how previously antagonistic sides of the self may be reconciled in a working relationship.

Discourse may involved some negotiation between aspects of the self.
Source: Greenberg, Elliott, & Rice (1993): degree of resolution scale.

The subject reaches a decision which is a result of the integration of his/her standards and values with his/her wants and needs.
Source: Greenberg & Webster (1982)

The subject experiences a sense of inner harmony and self as a single integrated self in process.
Source: Greenberg (1979);
Greenberg, Elliott, & Rice (1993): degree of resolution scale.

Client feels new feelings and sensations as a result of having resolved decision.
Source: Greenberg, Elliott, & Rice (1993): degree of resolution scale.

Client experiences changes in perception and specific shifts.
Source: Greenberg & Rice (1981, p. 34).

80 I can reconcile the differences within myself.

80 continued.

[This item also shows recognition of self as responsible agent for self determination]

81 I'm clear on what I am going to do.

82 I feel at peace with myself.

83 I feel relief.

84 I have new feelings and sensations.

85 I see things differently.

Number of items: 24

Items — Opposition stage	61
Items — Merging stage	8
Items — Integration stage	16
<u>Total</u>	<u>85</u>

Q-sorting

Each Q-sort item was typed on a small card the size of a business card. Each participant sorted the cards according to the following directions:

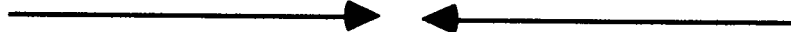
1. Sort these items according to how you feel about remaining married or separating now.
2. Put the items that are most like you on the left-hand side.
Put the two items most like you in the outside column. Put the three items next most like you in the next column. Do the rest of the items the same way according to how many items are required for each column.
3. Put the items that are not like you on the right hand side.
Put the two items that are least like you, or not at all like you, in the outside column. Put the next three least like you in the next column, etc.
4. Put any items that mean nothing to you or are just not relevant to your situation in the middle column.
5. At any time you can change an item from one column to another as long as there are the required number of items in each column.

Analysis of the Q-sorts

Each Q-sort item was scored according to the column in which it was placed. The Q-sort was administered as follows:

Question: How do you feel about remaining married or separating now?

Directions: Sort these cards according to how you feel about remaining married or separating now.

	Evaluative Criteria										
	Most like me				Neutral			Least like me			
	↓				↓			↓			
											
Frequency:	2	3	5	8	10	29	10	8	5	3	2
Q-Score:	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0

Each participant performed the Q-sort twice: before and after treatment. Each sorting provided a score for each item. Items sorted into the category of 'Most like me' obtained the highest scores while items sorted into the category of 'Least like me' obtained the lowest scores. Using analysis of variance, pre-treatment sorts were compared with post-treatment sorts for each participant. The Q-scores for each item were entered into the appropriate cell of the structured sample design (2X2 factorial design), before analysis (see Figure 3, p. 43). Participants' Q-sort data were analyzed by means of a 2X2 factorial ANOVA design with fixed effects. The scores on the dependent

variable in the design were the Q-scores obtained for items in the structured sample design.

The significance level was set at $\alpha < .10$. A lower requirement of statistical significance was considered because this study was an investigation of theory therefore a higher risk level of committing a Type I error could be tolerated. Kerlinger (1973) claims that if there is a fairly large number of items in a Q-sort, in most cases, the F ratios are so high they leave little doubt as to statistical significance (p.595). The current study used a Q-sort with 85 items.

The two factors in the design were expected to interact. If they did not interact it would indicate that Factor A (Conflict Resolution) was independent of Factor B (Contact). For the theory to be supported there must be interaction effects; clear resolution must include contact and clear contact produces resolution. Specifically, the levels of Contact and Conflict Resolution interact. Support for the theory demands that Level A₁ (unresolved) will interact significantly with Level B₁ (interruption-of-contact) while Level A₂ (resolved) will interact significantly with Level B₂ (contact).

Also, if the theory underlying the model is supported, the three stages of the theory (Opposition, Merging, and Integration) are expected to emerge through patterns in the sorting. All participants were expected to perform the Q-sort in a similar way initially because they were all in the Opposition stage. Following treatment, participants who had not resolved but had shifted—that is, aspects of self were not as opposed—were expected to perform the Q-sort so that the Merging stage was evident from the analysis. Finally, participants who had experienced coming to a decision were expected to perform

the Q-sort so that merging and integration were evident from the analysis.

Where the two factors did not interact would indicate a failure of the sort. If participants could not describe their experiences according to the theory underlying the three stage model of the Gestalt two-chair technique no patterns would emerge in the analysis of the data. This would indicate a lack of support for the theory underlying his model. Significant interaction effects would be interpreted in terms of the theory.

The individual sorting patterns are considered very important. For this reason the cell means were not be used as they would be aggregate scores and would hide rather than show the individuality of the sorting patterns. For example, in this study two participants could obtain the same cell means but have very different sorting patterns.

Elaboration Interview

From the analysis of each participant's Q-sort a series of questions regarding the content and the pattern of his or her sorting were developed. The results were then discussed with each participant in an individual interview that took place one to two weeks following the post Q-Sort dependent upon the participants' schedules. Participants were treated as collaborators in the study. In this interview they were encouraged to give explanations that would give a more complete understanding of their experience. They were shown their pre-therapy Q-Sort and asked if this represented what they remembered about themselves when they sorted the items.

They were given an opportunity to shift and change any items. The following procedure was used:

1. Presented first sort.

Question 1: Look at this sort. Think back to how you felt before therapy when you sorted these items. Does this accurately describe yourself deep down as you were then?.

If you want to change any items you may do so but you must keep the same number of items in each column.

(Subject responds)

How would you account for this...?

Question 2: Did you have problems understanding what it meant by to sort according to — Most-like-me? Least-like-me?

Did you have any problems understanding which items went in the middle or center column?

2. Presented and repeated with Second sort.

Question 3: Look at the sort. Does this represent you deep down after therapy?

Question 4: Can you help me understand what impact if any the therapy had on your decision change? Was there anything in the therapy that stands out for you?

If so what led up to that?

What followed from that?

(If there were several events do each one.)

Question 4:

Were there any extraneous events outside of the therapy that could have had a bearing upon your decision?

Question 5:

Ask questions about items that shifted in the second sort.

Example: Item #67 What I feel is important. shifted from a score of 4 to 8.

Can you help me understand your thinking when you sorted this item here (in the first sort) and here (in the second sort).

Repeat with more items if necessary.

Question 6:

Was there any item that you had any difficulty with or did not understand?

Question 7:

Describe and elaborate on any experiences you felt were important but have not been brought out by what we've discussed so far.

Summary

This chapter set out the design and methodology used in this study. The development of the Q-Sort was described and explained. The relationship between the two factors Conflict Resolution and Contact was shown in a 2X2 factorial grid. The Q-Sort items were directly related to the three stage model of the two-chair technique and the theory underlying it. The predictions of how individuals would sort, made possible as a result of the integration of theory and methodology, were stated.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Introduction

This chapter presents the results of the eight single case studies. Of the eight case studies one demonstrated a literal replication of the three stage model of the two-chair technique and the theory underlying it. According to replication logic, if similar results are obtained from several cases replication is said to have taken place (Yin, 1989). Cases are carefully selected so that they offer the best chance of producing a literal or theoretical replications. Literal replications are ones that produce predictable results according to the theory under investigation. Theoretical replications are ones that produce contrary results but for predictable reasons (Yin). Replications that are neither literal or theoretical are considered to demonstrate areas where the theory is inadequate. These replications may be partially literal or partially theoretical (see page 32-33). Successful therapy is defined by the model; participants demonstrated movement from Stage One (Opposition) through Stages Two (Merging) and Three (Integration).

To facilitate understanding of the results in this chapter a hypothetical case demonstrating a literal replication of the model is presented first. This is followed by the results of the eight single case studies each of which contains demographic data, results of an ANOVA, Q-sort qualitative results, outcome of the decision and discussion of results. The participants were given fictitious names for ease of reading and identification.

Case study Hector demonstrated a literal replication of the model and the theory underlying it. Case studies Beverley, Gail, Edward, and Amy demonstrated partial literal replications. There were no cases demonstrating a theoretical replication. Case studies Carol, Fred and Donald demonstrated partial theoretical replications.

Hypothetical Case: Sam

The following is a presentation of a hypothetical case which demonstrates support for the three stage model of the two-chair technique and the theory underlying how and why it is effective. It is a representation of a case of an individual who was conflicted about remaining married before therapy and made a decision after successful therapy using the two-chair technique as a result of going through all three stages of the model.

ANOVA Results of Q-Sort (see Table 1)

Before and after therapy the analysis of “Sam’s” Q-Sorts showed that he could be categorized successfully according to a joint relationship of the factors of Conflict Resolution (CR) and Contact (C).

Significant 2-way interaction results were interpreted to mean that the Q-Sort task was meaningful to “Sam”. That is, he sorted in a systematic way, responding to the factors targeted by this study as predicted by theory. If the 2-way interaction results had not been significant, it would have been interpreted to mean that the Q-Sort task was not meaningful to him. That is, that he had sorted in a random manner, not responding to the factors targeted by this study as predicted by theory.

Table 1

ANOVA results of the Q-Sort: Hypothetical Case: "Sam".

Source of Variation	<u>Before Therapy</u>				
	Sum of Sq.	DF	Mean Sq.	F-ratio	p-Value
Conflict Resolution (A)	11.055	1	11.055	3.918	.051*
Contact (B)	61.630	1	61.630	21.843	.000*
2-Way interaction	69.199	1	69.199	24.525	.000*

Source of Variation	<u>After Therapy</u>				
	Sum of Sq.	DF	Mean Sq.	F-ratio	p-Value
Conflict Resolution (A)	152.943	1	152.943	82.750	.000*
Contact (B)	5.231	1	5.231	2.830	.096*
2-Way interaction	61.636	1	61.636	33.348	.000*

n = 85 items

*p = < .10

O-sort Qualitative Results (see Figures 4 and 5)

Before therapy "Sam" sorted as predicted for an individual who was undecided about remaining married or separating. He chose mostly items from the Opposition Stage to describe both what he is like and not like.

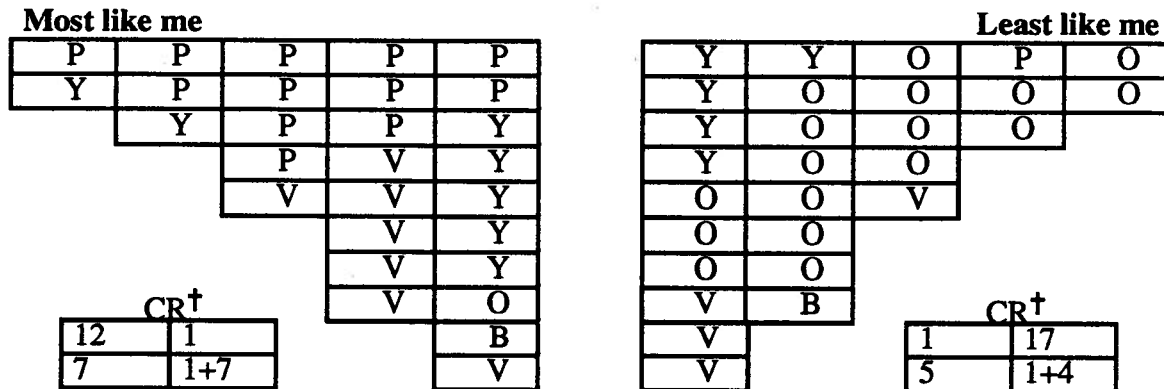
After therapy "Sam" sorted very differently. He sorted as predicted for an individual who was decided. He chose mostly items from the Merging and Integration stages to describe what he is like and items from the Opposition stage to describe what he is not like. The differences in the items he chose before and after to describe what he is like and not like can be seen in figures 4 and 5.

Table 2

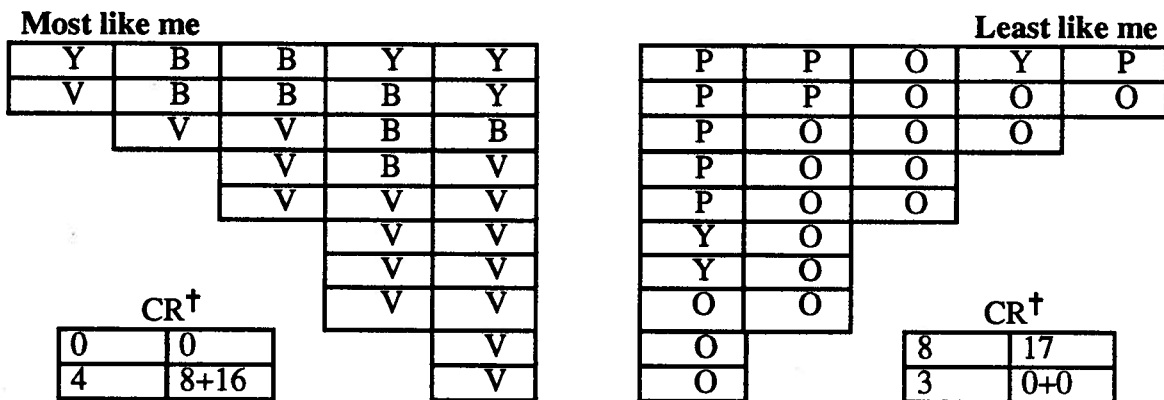
Undecided/decided scores before and after therapy with decision reached.

	Before	After	Elaboration	Decision
Hypothetical Case:Sam	2	7	No change	Remain married

Hypothetical Case: "Sam"



A. Before Therapy



B. After Therapy

Figure 4 . Pattern of Q-Sort for Hypothetical Case: "Sam" with neutral items omitted.

Theory underlying the three stage model of the two-chair technique.

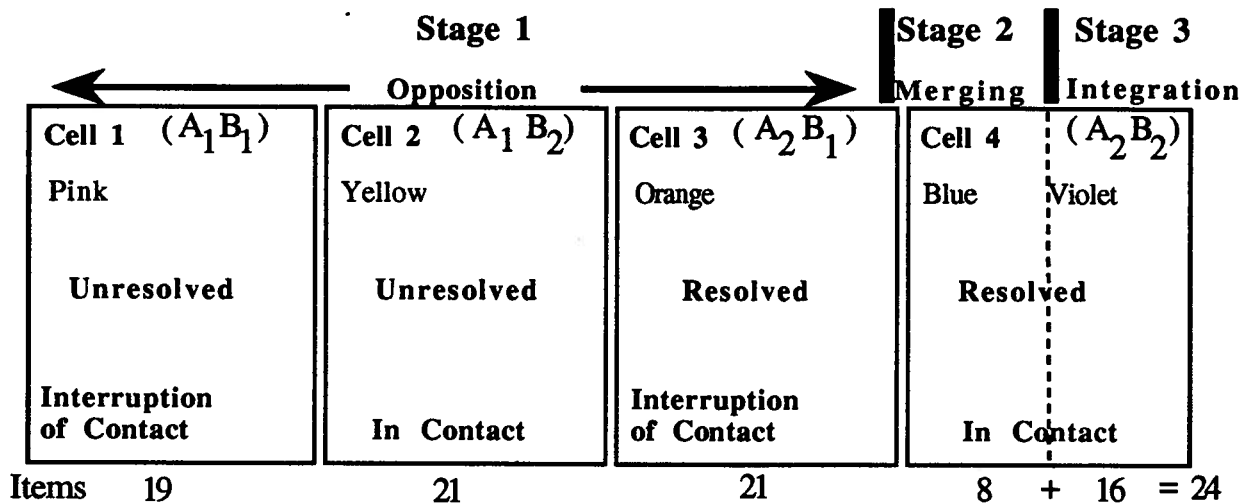
(P) Pink	Stage 1. Opposition	A1B1	Unresolved with interruption of contact.
(Y) Yellow	Stage 1. Opposition	A1B2	Unresolved with contact.
(O) Orange	Stage 1. Opposition	A2B1	Resolved with interruption of contact.
(B) Blue	Stage 2. Merging	A2B2	Resolved with contact
(V) Violet	Stage 3. Integration	A2B2	Resolved with contact

CR = Conflict Resolution (factor A) C = Contact (factor B)

1 = level 1. 2 = level 2.

† Grid showing interaction of levels of Conflict Resolution and Contact. (See Figure 3)

Note. In main figure each rectangle represents a Q-Sort item.



Before Therapy

Cell 1*

12	1
----	---

Cell 2

7	5
---	---

Cell 3

1	17
---	----

Cell 4a

1	1
---	---

Cell 4b

7	4
---	---

After Therapy

0	8
---	---

4	3
---	---

0	17
---	----

8	0
---	---

16	0
----	---

Figure 5. Results of placement of items before and after therapy for Hypothetical Case Study : "Sam".

*Left box = number of items used to describe what participant is like.

Right box = number of items used to describe what participant is not like.

Discussion of Results

The results of the ANOVA table were interpreted to indicate that, as predicted by theory, the combined factors of Conflict Resolution and the Gestalt concept of Contact were present in "Sam"'s decision-making process both before and after therapy. Evidently, before therapy "Sam" was unresolved with interruption of contact in regard to his decision whether or not to remain married. After therapy he sorted according to being resolved and in contact. Before therapy, "Sam" apparently was in

the early part of the Opposition stage. After therapy he appeared to shift to the Integration stage having passed through the Merging stage.

According to the theory, the Merging stage, a key determinant of successful therapy using two-chair technique, is characterized by the critical aspect of the self (critic) softening toward the experiencing part of the self along with clear expression of the experiencing self to the critic. The statistical analysis does not detect or identify the occurrence of this stage; it only indicates whether or not the factors of Conflict Resolution and Contact interact. Indication of the Merging and Integration stages can be seen in placement of items within the cells. To determine the occurrence of the Merging stage the qualitative results must be considered both by the placement of the eight Merging items before and after therapy as well as the participant's own words. In "Sam's" case, before therapy, he selected only one of the Merging stage items (placing it in the weakest position) to describe what he is like. He chose one Merging item to describe what he is not like and placed the rest in the neutral category. After therapy he chose all eight Merging stage items to describe himself. These results indicated that "Sam" passed through the Merging stage. Because there are only eight items representing this significant stage, their placement before and after therapy would need to be supported by "Sam's" own words.

Therapy is considered successful if participants sort the items according to theoretical expectations of the model. For the post-therapy Q-Sort when participants chose mostly items from the Merging and Integration stages to describe what they were like and no items (or

very few) from these stages to describe what they were not like, therapy was considered to be successful.

“Sam’s” case demonstrated a literal replication of the theory. That is, “Sam” sorted the items as the model said he would both before and after successful therapy as defined by the model. If therapy had not been successful then Sam’s post Q-Sort would be similar to his first. There would be little or no indication of the Merging stage, hence it would demonstrate a theoretical replication.

Case Study One: Hector

Demographic data

Hector was a 41-year-old male Caucasian. He had two graduate degrees and worked in an area that combined his business and artistic abilities. He had been married for nine years and had an 8-year-old son. He was previously married for five years and had no children from that marriage. His wife had a graduate degree and this was her first marriage. He reported family income in the over \$80,000 range.

Hector had had an affair which created a crisis in his marriage. His wife was interested in retaining the marriage but Hector was ambivalent. He had had other affairs before and now wanted some time and space to explore himself. He had moved into the basement of their home. Prior to this study Hector was in individual therapy with a male therapist and the couple was in conjoint counselling with a different therapist. Because of Hector's ambivalence regarding the marriage his therapist referred him to this study.

ANOVA Results of Q-sort (see Table 3)

Both before and after therapy the significant 2-way interaction results of Hector's Q-Sorts showed that he could be categorized successfully according to a joint relationship of the factors of Conflict Resolution (CR) and Contact (C). (Interpretation of these results follow in the discussion section.)

Table 3

ANOVA Results of the Q-Sort: Case study one: Hector.

Source of Variation	<u>Before Therapy</u>				
	Sum of Sq.	DF	Mean Sq.	F-ratio	p-Value
Conflict Resolution (A)	30.109	1	30.109	10.535	.002*
Contact (B)	43.095	1	43.095	15.078	.000*
2-Way interaction	65.887	1	65.887	23.053	.000*

Source of Variation	<u>After Therapy</u>				
	Sum of Sq.	DF	Mean Sq.	F-ratio	p-Value
Conflict Resolution (A)	141.648	1	141.648	62.261	.000*
Contact (B)	35.823	1	35.823	15.746	.000*
2-Way interaction	7.051	1	7.051	3.099	.082*

n = 85 items

*p =< .10

O-sort Qualitative Results (see Figures 6 and 7)

Before therapy, Hector sorted the Q-sort items as predicted by the theory for an individual who was conflicted. To describe himself he chose 18 items from the Opposition stage, ten from Cell 1 (unresolved with interruption of contact) and eight from Cell 2 (unresolved and in contact). Also to describe what he was like, he chose from stage 2, two Merging stage items #66 What I want and need is worth fighting for. and # 67 What I feel is important. plus eight stage 3 (Integration) items. Most of the items from the Merging and Integration stages were placed in the weaker positions. To describe what he was not like he mostly chose items from Cell 3 (resolved with interruption of contact); these were items from the stage of Opposition. Also to describe what he was not like he chose one item from stage 2 (Merging), #62 My deeper feelings are clear to me. plus two items from stage 3 (Integration). The remaining Merging and Integration items he discarded as neutral or irrelevant.

Hector

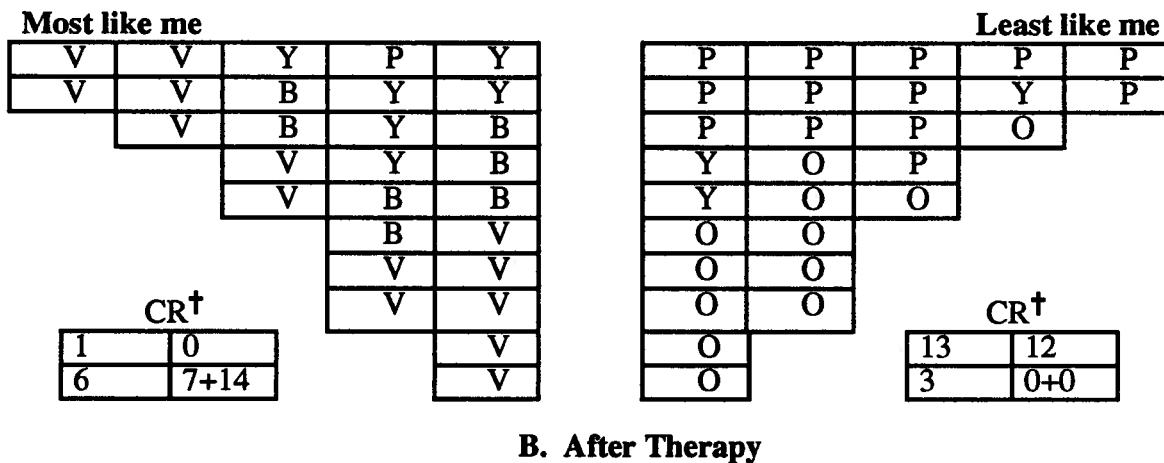
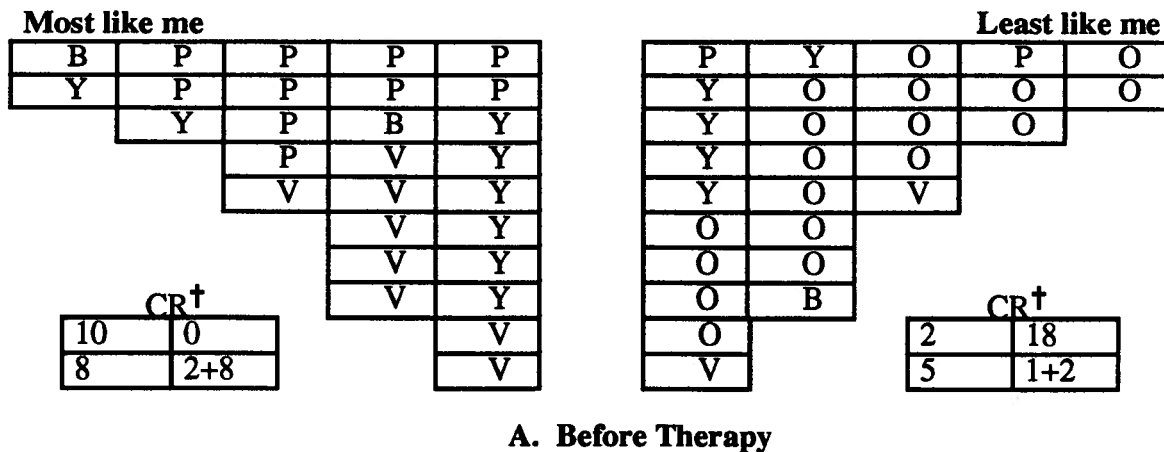


Figure 6. Pattern of Q-Sort for Case Study one with neutral items omitted.

Theory underlying the three stage model of the two-chair technique.

- (P) Pink Stage 1. Opposition A1B1 Unresolved with interruption of contact.
 (Y) Yellow Stage 1. Opposition A1B2 Unresolved with contact.
 (O) Orange Stage 1. Opposition A2B1 Resolved with interruption of contact.
 (B) Blue Stage 2. Merging A2B2 Resolved with contact
 (V) Violet Stage 3. Integration A2B2 Resolved with contact

CR = Conflict Resolution (factor A) C = Contact (factor B)

1 = level 1. 2 = level 2.

† = Grid showing interaction of levels of Conflict Resolution and Contact.

Note. In main figure each rectangle represents a Q-Sort item.

After therapy, Hector sorted very differently. He sorted as predicted by theory for an individual who had passed through the Merging stage and was solidly in the Integration stage. This was confirmed by his choice of items to describe himself in the second Q-sort. To describe himself he chose mostly items from the stages of Merging and Integration, all items from Cell 4 (Resolved and in contact). He chose seven of the eight Merging stage items and 14 of the 16 Integration stage items. He chose only seven items from the Opposition stage; one from Cell 1 (unresolved with interruption of contact) and six from Cell 2 (unresolved and in contact). He did not choose any items from Cell 3 (resolved with interruption of contact) to describe what he is like. To describe what he is not like he chose only items from the Opposition stage (Cells 1, 2, and 3). His sort showed a total lack of conflict.

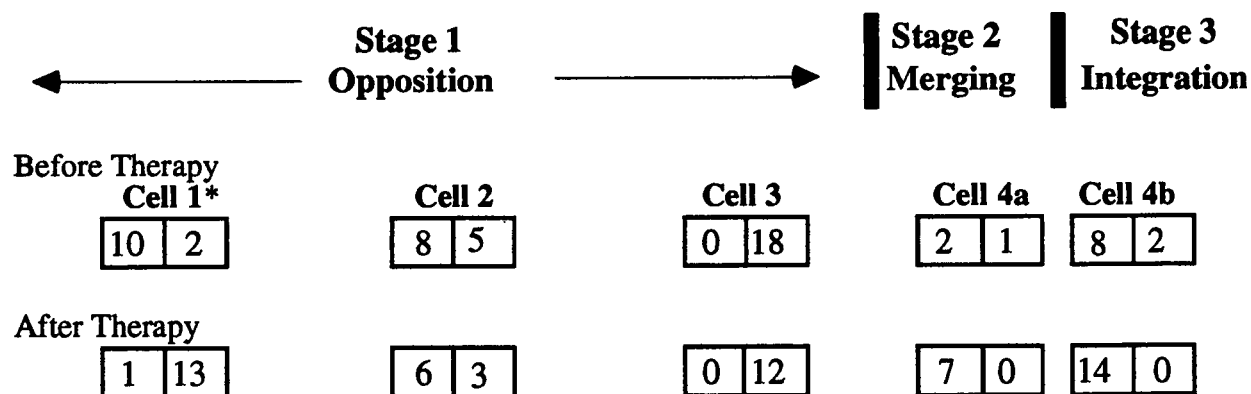


Figure 7. Results of placement of items before and after therapy with for Case Study one: Hector.

*Left box = number of items used to describe what participant is like.

Right box = number of items used to describe what participant is not like.

Outcome of the decision (see Table 4)

Upon entering into this study Hector had just moved out of the family home. He had been living in the basement of the home prior to moving out. After therapy Hector reached a decision he reported feeling very good about. On the undecided/decided scale he shifted from a score of 3 to 8 (see Table 4). He decided to remain married. After the fourth session of therapy he moved back into the family home and into the marital bedroom. He and his wife continued in conjoint counselling at the conclusion of his participation in the study.

Table 4

Undecided/decided scores before and after therapy with decision reached.

	Before	After	Elaboration	Decision
Case Study one: Hector	3	8	No change	Remain married

Qualitative Data Collected at Elaboration Interview

At the Elaboration interview Hector spoke of his confusion when he entered the study and performed the first Q-sort:

The first Q-sort really, I think- I think when I did it- it really surprised me how confused and sort of searching I was... there was just a lot of uncertainty and concerns and all that kind of stuff, and some of the questions, you know, this stuff about tenderness and all those kinds of things, I think that those are things that I probably didn't want to want to address when I first did it.... yeah yeah or actually really jarring, things like the tenderness one, and, you know, that it almost hurts to look at it because you think, yeah I should feel that, but boy, that's just not part of my feeling or thinking right now, yeah.

What stood out in therapy for Hector was the effectiveness of the two-chair technique in helping him focus on the core issue of his conflict:

Clearly the method stands out in that, um, I think it's really effective. It really helped me. Yeah, the two chair, yeah yeah. Um it seemed-it seemed to very quickly get you into -into the essence of what-whatever was being discussed and sort of got rid of all the superfluous thoughts and feelings and just really homed in on what was critical. The method seemed to do that really effectively.

I was actually quite surprised, because I thought the therapy would focus on the relationship, and in fact, of course it was brought in at times, but, in fact, it wasn't that. The focus wasn't that at all, and that seemed to really fit what I needed at the time.

Where he placed specific items before and after therapy explained some of Hector's changes. Specifically, he shifted from feeling vague and unclear to very clear. This was demonstrated by the change in the following items:

- Item #5 I don't know what I feel anymore. shifted the greatest amount, from a score of 9 to 2.

Initially, I think um just so many conflicting feelings that didn't- didn't -there was nothing common about them, and I think to some degree shutting down feelings because that was an easier way to deal with things at the time. And afterwards I think I do know what I feel and sort of have a much better understanding- clearer understanding of my feelings.

- Item #14 Sometimes I feel suicidal. shifted from a score of 5 (neutral) to 0.

I guess maybe in the first sort, it was neutral and then it wasn't really there at all. And now it's-it's like...that's just- just not there. And so I think it's moved from a neutral- as being- no I wasn't- I was- It certainly wasn't something I was contemplating, but it wasn't something I was really strong against.

- Item #18 I'm torn. shifted from a score of 9 to 3.

I think that initially there's probably a whole series of, sort of, competing thoughts and feelings about which way to go and possibilities and all those kinds of things, and that's-that's not there now. It's much clearer and I don't feel torn. I feel more committed, more focused...on the direction I've chosen to go.

- Item #36 I can't accept myself. shifted from a score of 6 to 1.

I think that's all tied into the feelings things as well, the change in feelings and the focus on feelings, acceptance of feelings. Initially, a lot- a lot- of inability to accept who I was and also accept some of the actions that I made. And now I-I- just feel a whole lot better about myself and who I am.

- Item #48 I've decided that I have no choice. shifted from a score of 0 to 4.

I realize I have a choice and it's maybe gotten off the bandwagon to simply being there.

Hector sorted most of the Merging stage items in different ways before and after therapy:

- Item #62 My deeper feelings are clear to me. shifted from 3 to 7.

I think that's very much part of the process in that initially there's some real barriers there, some blockages and understanding some of my feelings and now, now they're certainly far more apparent, yeah.

- Items #63 I realize that my self criticisms are based on my fears. , #64 I'm not as bad as I thought I was., #65 I can ease up on myself. and #68 I feel very tender toward myself. were initially neutral (5) to Hector but after therapy he used them in the weaker positions (6 or 7) to describe himself. Item #64 I'm not as bad as I thought I was.

I think that all has to do with the acceptance and understanding about myself and I guess I don't feel I'm as bad as I thought I was, you know, it came from a very neutral ambivalent response to it- to- that was more reflective of what I was thinking.

Item #68 I feel very tender toward myself.

I feel tender - I....initially....I have no relationship with that [item]whatsoever, and so...neither positive nor negative. But afterwards, I felt- I felt quite tender.

- Item #69 My criticisms are based on my fears. remained neutral to Hector. He stated simply, "It doesn't fit."

Hector's perception of himself and his situation changed over the course of therapy indicated by the shift in items #43, #66, and #85.

Item #43 I've decided to give up trying to get what I want. shifted from a score of 0 to 4.

It could well be seeing things in maybe a bigger perspective than just me, and that yes, of course, I'm very important and what I want is important, but there's other things that have to be reconciled or looked at and accepted I think as well, and I think that makes...[the] shift, Yeah. It's not saying that I'm going to give up, but it's saying that it's just one of many things to maybe be factored in....It was [initially], yeah, yeah, beat your chest kind of issue. Yeah.

Item #66 What I want and need is worth fighting for. shifted from 10 to 8.

It's again, I think, that the polarization and then it gets softened as things get into better perspective.

Item #85 I see things differently. shifted from a score of 4 to 8.

I think that that relates to some of these here, the ease up on myself, tenderness and taking care, in that I think that's one side of it where I have certainly been exposed to look at things differently.

Events Occurring While Involved in the Project

Therapy proceeded as expected and there were no unusual extraneous events or circumstances while Hector engaged in therapy. It is worth noting that after one session of therapy Hector moved out of the house and then moved back in after the fourth session.

Discussion of Results

The results of the ANOVA table were interpreted to indicate that as predicted by theory, the combined factors of Conflict Resolution and the Gestalt concept of Contact were present in Hector's decision-making process before and after therapy. Evidently, before therapy Hector was unresolved with interruption of contact in regard to his decision of whether or not to remain married. Apparently, after therapy he was resolved and in contact. This suggested that therapy was successful as defined by the model.

The patterns of Hector's Q-Sorts showed that he sorted as predicted for a person who was conflicted about remaining married before therapy and decided after therapy. He chose mostly items from the stage of Opposition to describe what he was like and some items from the stages of Merging and Integration to describe what he was not like. After therapy he chose mostly items from the stages of Merging and Integration to describe what he was like and items from Cell 3 (Resolved with interruption of contact) to describe what he was not like.

It seemed that before therapy Hector was in the stage of Opposition. After therapy he appeared to shift to the Integration stage having passed through the Merging stage. This was supported by Hector's description of his experience. This also suggested that therapy was successful.

Hector's case demonstrated a literal replication of the theory. This was interpreted to mean that the three stage model and the theory underlying it can be useful to describe the decision-making process of individuals who successfully resolve their conflict about whether or not to remain married.

Case Study Two: Beverley

Demographic data

Beverley was a 50-year-old female Caucasian who had been married for 29 years. She had a Master's degree and was currently a doctoral candidate at a local university. She was also working part time in a research capacity. Her husband had a university degree. She reported their family income level in \$40-60,000 range. They had three adult children, none of whom were living at home.

Beverley described her marriage as difficult for many years. She and her husband separated when their youngest son was nine; Beverley moved out of the house. She and her husband were separated for a period of three years. Beverley said she reconciled because she found it very difficult living on her own. She was not employed at the time and she was displaced from her home and roles of wife and mother. Another important factor influencing her decision to reconcile was that her youngest child was experiencing serious emotional difficulties. Beverley was in therapy to deal with her renewed indecision regarding whether or not to remain married when her therapist referred her to this project.

ANOVA Results of the Q-sort (see Table 5)

Before therapy, Beverley did not sort the Q-sort items according to theoretical expectation for a person who was undecided about remaining married. The two-way interaction results of her Q-Sorts did not reach significance and showed that she could not be categorized successfully according to a joint relationship of CR and C. After therapy Beverley did sort the items as predicted by theory. The two-way interaction results of her Q-Sorts reached significance

and showed that she could be categorized successfully according to a joint relationship of the two factors. (Interpretation of these results follow in the discussion section.)

Table 5

ANOVA Results of the Q-Sort: Case study two: Beverley.

Source of Variation	<u>Before Therapy</u>				
	Sum of Sq.	DF	Mean Sq.	F-ratio	p-Value
Conflict Resolution (A)	1.062	1	1.062	.266	.608
Contact (B)	45.262	1	45.262	11.331	.001*
2-Way interaction	.000	1	.000	.000	.993

Source of Variation	<u>After Therapy</u>				
	Sum of Sq.	DF	Mean Sq.	F-ratio	p-Value
Conflict Resolution (A)	58.764	1	58.764	17.952	.000*
Contact (B)	25.364	1	25.364	7.748	.007*
2-Way interaction	21.064	1	21.064	6.435	.013*

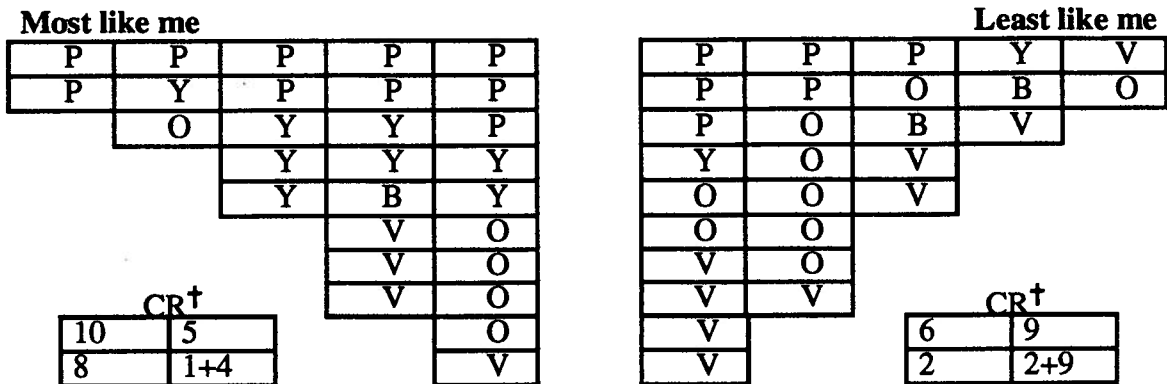
n = 85 items

*p = < .10

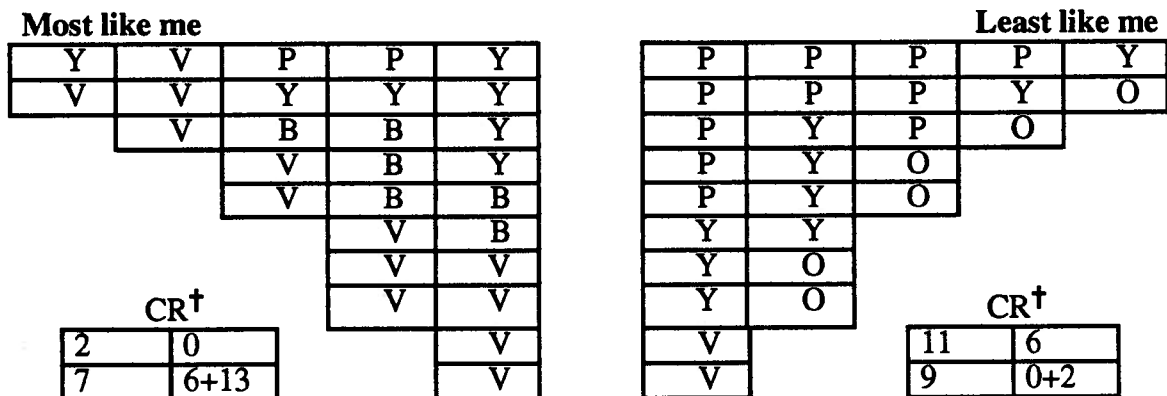
Q-Sort Qualitative Results (see Figures 8 and 9)

Before therapy Beverley sorted the Q-sort items as predicted by the theory for an individual who was conflicted. She mostly chose items in the Opposition stage to describe herself, items from Cells 1, 2, and 3. She identified with five items from Cell 3 (Resolved with interruption of contact) #43 I've decided to give up trying to get what I want., #46 I've resolved to remain unresolved., #53 I'll stay because I'm too afraid to be alone., #58 I can't face starting over. and #59 I'll stay because I'll feel too guilty if I leave. Beverley either did not relate to most of the items in Cell 4 (Resolved and in contact) or used them to describe what she is not like. Of the

Beverley



A. Before Therapy



B. After Therapy

Figure 8 Pattern of Q-Sort for Case Study two with neutral items omitted.Theory underlying the three stage model of the two-chair technique.

(P) Pink Stage 1. Opposition A1B1 Unresolved with interruption of contact.

(Y) Yellow Stage 1. Opposition A1B2 Unresolved with contact.

(O) Orange Stage 1. Opposition A2B1 Resolved with interruption of contact.

(B) Blue Stage 2. Merging A2B2 Resolved with contact

(V) Violet Stage 3. Integration A2B2 Resolved with contact

CR = Conflict Resolution (factor A) C = Contact (factor B)

1 = level 1. 2 = level 2.

† = Grid showing interaction of levels of Conflict Resolution and Contact.

Note. In main figure each rectangle represents a Q-Sort item.

Merging stage items (#62-69) she chose only one to describe herself, #67 My feelings are important. She used items #62 My deeper feelings are clear to me. and #65 I can ease up on myself. to describe what she is not like. She discarded the remainder of the Merging stage items in the neutral category.

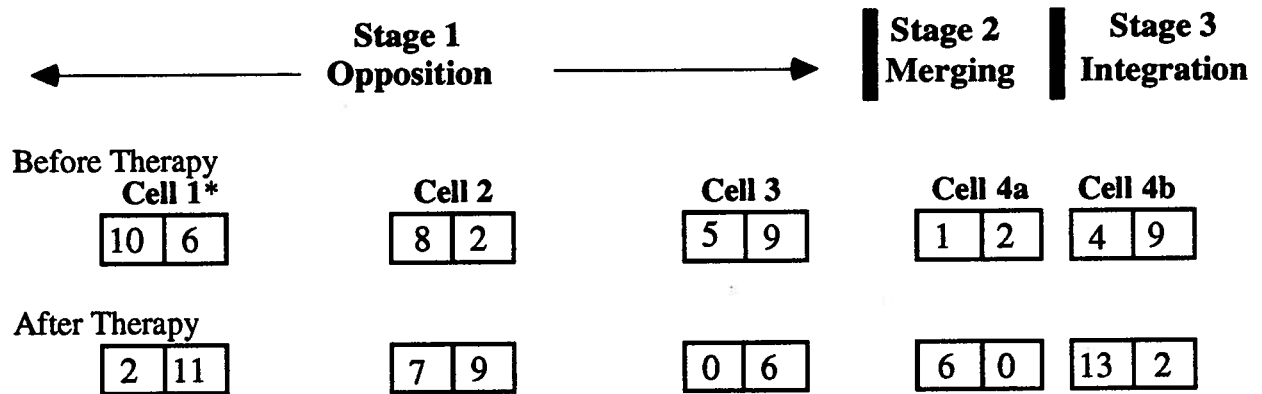


Figure 9. Results of placement of items before and after therapy for Case Study two: Beverley.

*Left box = number of items used to describe what participant is like.

Right box = number of items used to describe what participant is not like.

After therapy, Beverley sorted as the theory predicted she would sort for an individual who had passed through the Merging stage and was in the Integration stage with still some work to do. She used mostly items from Cell 4 (Resolved and in contact) to describe herself. Of the Merging stage items she identified with all but two. Of the rest of the Cell 4 items she identified with all but three. She did not use any items from Cell 3 (Resolved with interruption of contact) to describe herself. To describe what she is not like she chose 26 out of 28 items from the Opposition stage. She also chose two items from stage 3 #81 I'm clear on what I'm going to do. and #83 I feel relief. placing them in higher positions than in her pre-Q-sort.

Outcome of the decision (see Table 6)

After therapy Beverley reached a decision that she reported she felt good about. On the undecided/decided scale she shifted from a score of 2 to 6 (see Table 6). She decided to separate. She did not act on this decision at this time. She said she was working on her doctorate and she and her husband were involved in a major construction project. She continued in therapy with the therapist she worked with in this study, not returning to her original therapist who referred her to the project.

Table 6

Undecided/decided scores before and after therapy with decision reached.

	Before	After	Elaboration	Decision
Case Study two: Beverley	2	6	No change	Separate

Elaboration Interview Data

Beverley stated that she could relate much more to the Q-Sort items after therapy:

... a better understanding of myself and what I had been doing to myself. So that helped me realize then. I guess for me what happened in the therapy which was most meaningful was that I have allowed myself to be able to listen to myself so that I can make a decision. Before the therapy I wasn't allowed to listen.

As she looked at her initial Q-sort during the elaboration interview Beverley spontaneously reported that she has come to realize through the course of therapy how stifled she has been by her standards and values.

Beverley: "This one [item] 'I feel stifled by my standards and values'. Now I realize that, in fact, I was stifled by my standards and values."

Researcher: "How would you account for your being clearer about that now?"

Beverley: "Well, through the therapy. We worked a lot on what - the side of me that's saying (points finger and says in a singsong voice) You're supposed to do this, and you're supposed to do that - and how it was terrorizing me and to not hearing myself and all sorts of other things that I shouldn't —well not should or shouldn't— *wasn't* doing, *wasn't* listening."

She states that initially she did not sort the items according to any decision because she said, "I had *no* idea what I was going to do". She also explained:

Couldn't allow myself to. I don't think I could have sorted them according to resolution. I think when I'm terrorizing myself like that I can't make a decision.

She reported that she found the first sort very difficult because she could not relate to the items.

When I left I thought, you know, it didn't touch anything in me, not a thing. There was just nothing. No. None of them really seemed to say (pause) what was going on for me, so it was really really hard to identify with any of them.....What I thought that I had done when I left was anything that had a decision in it um wasn't put anywhere.

About the second sort she said

It was much easier to do it. Much easier. It's still a lot of work (laughs) but -but you could relate to the items better the second time. ...[the second Q-sort] I didn't avoid the items that had decision in them. (laugh) I didn't put them in the center. Certainly the decision has not moved right up into the very strong items but at least I'm allowing myself the right to think about whether or not that's what I want to do.

The part of therapy that stood out most for Beverley was a shift in the critical part of her.

Yeah its- I think that the most dramatic time was when I gave myself permission to explore. So it's still a 'should' um, but but I'm pushing it away and saying - Just stay out of there for awhile. Just will you please stay away for a little while and let me explore. Let me be and when I allow myself to do that then I can start to develop and grow. And for me I think that was the biggest step in the therapy.

She reported that working in the two chairs led up to obtaining this permission to explore. Once permission was obtained she experienced a sense of growth in herself.

....We were just working on the two chairs and [therapist] said, 'Is it important for you to get permission to be able to do something?' I said 'Yes it is.' She said Well then sit in the other chair - well ask yourself for permission - now sit in the other chair and then I gave permission to explore and I think - I can't remember now whether that happened the week before and then I had the dream or I had the dream and talked about it and then did those sessions but that they were all very close together. So it was those two things that allowed me to be able to do that and then the wonderful feeling the week afterwards when the silver dust [from the dream] began....started growing little spikes and became stars.

At the elaboration interview Beverley reported that her hair has stopped falling out and that she has received feedback from several friends that she looked better.

Beverley was asked to account for how she sorted the items #62-#69 (Merging stage items):

- #62 My deeper feelings are clear to me. shifted from a score of 1 before therapy to 7 after therapy.

Before, nothing was clear so my deeper feelings certainly could not be clear. I didn't know what they were so they before could not have been clear at all. They are much clearer now um in that I know I have them (laugh); they're there and they're meaningful and they're important....I guess also that in a sense there's a bit of faith there too because although they're not really clear they're going to be clear and each day another one becomes more clear.

- #65 I can ease up on myself. shifted from a score of 2 before therapy to 7 after therapy.

there was the shoulds before - I have to do this and I have to do that and I can't ease up on myself because if I'm not hard on myself I could do something really foolish and ruin and destroy my children's life and my husbands' life and the whole world's going to fall apart. *In fact* - it's OK. I don't have to hold the weight of the world....There's also enough people around me shaking their finger at me and saying 'You should be doing this and you should be doing that' that I don't need to be doing it too. (laughter)...

Beverley said she would have chosen items #64 I'm not as bad as I thought I was. and #66 What I want and need is worth fighting for. to describe what she was like after therapy if they had been worded slightly differently. She did not like the words 'bad' and 'fighting'.

Events Occurring While Involved in the Project

Therapy proceeded as expected and there were no unusual extraneous events or circumstances while Beverley underwent therapy.

Discussion of Results

The results of the ANOVA were interpreted to indicate that, as predicted by theory, the combined factors of Conflict Resolution and the Gestalt concept of Contact were present in Beverley's decision-

making process after therapy but not before. The significant 2-way interaction results after therapy, but not before, were interpreted to mean that the Q-Sort task was meaningful to Beverley after therapy but not before. This was supported by her words regarding the initial Q-Sort "it didn't touch anything in me, not a thing". The theory does not account for the lack interaction between Conflict Resolution and Contact before therapy. This suggested that before therapy something was interfering or blocking the interaction of the factors or that other factors may be involved. After therapy it seemed that Beverley was resolved and in contact. That she responded to a joint relationship to Conflict Resolution and Contact as predicted after therapy was interpreted to mean that therapy was successful as defined by the model.

The patterns of Beverley's Q-Sorts showed that she sorted as predicted for a person who was conflicted about remaining married before therapy and decided after therapy. She chose mostly items from the stage of Opposition to describe what she was like and some items from the stages of Merging and Integration to describe what she was not like. After therapy she chose mostly items from the stages of Merging and Integration to describe what she was like and items from the stage of Opposition to describe what she was not like.

It seemed that before therapy Beverley was in the stage of Opposition. After therapy she appeared to shift to the Integration stage having passed through the Merging stage. This was supported by Beverley's description of her experience. This also suggested that therapy was successful.

Beverley's words support the theory put forth by Greenberg (1979; 1983) that the opposed aspects of the self represent a conflict

between an individual's standards and values with his or her wants and needs. This is supported by her spontaneous words, "Now I realize that, in fact, I was stifled by my standards and values".

Beverley's case demonstrated a partial literal replication of the model. The patterns of her Q-Sorts before and after therapy matched theoretical expectation and as predicted by theory after therapy she sorted according to an interaction of the factors of Conflict Resolution and Contact. Contrary to theoretical expectations she did not sort according to an interaction of Conflict Resolution and Contact before therapy. This was interpreted to mean that the three stage model and the theory underlying it can be useful to partially describe the decision-making process of individuals who successfully resolve their conflict about whether or not to remain married.

Case Study Three: Gail

Demographic data

Gail was a 45-year-old female Caucasian. She completed two years of post secondary education and worked full time in a clerical capacity for a large corporation. She had been married for 24 years with one separation of three months which occurred four years ago . Her husband had completed a community college program and worked for the same corporation. She reported her family income in the \$20-40,000 range.

Gail had given up on the marriage and had retained a lawyer. When she informed her husband that she wanted a divorce he implored her to give him another chance. They then entered conjoint counselling with the goal of reconciliation. At first this seemed successful but after two months Gail became very ambivalent again. At this point the therapist referred her to this study.

ANOVA Results of the Q-Sorts (see Table 7)

Before therapy, Gail did not sort the Q-sort items according to theoretical expectation for a person who was undecided about remaining married. The non-significant two-way interaction results of Gail's Q-Sorts showed that she could not be categorized successfully according to a joint relationship of Conflict Resolution (CR) and Contact (C). implying that performing the Q-Sort was not a meaningful task for her.

After therapy Gail did sort the items as predicted by theory. The significant two-way interaction results of Gail's Q-Sorts showed that she could be categorized successfully according to a joint relationship of the two factors indicating that it was a meaningful task for her.

(Interpretation of these results follow in the discussion section.)

Table 7

ANOVA Results of the Q-Sort: Case study three: Gail.

Source of Variation	<u>Before Therapy</u>				
	Sum of Sq.	DF	Mean Sq.	F-ratio	p-Value
Conflict Resolution (A)	2.238	1	2.238	.516	.475
Contact (B)	9.179	1	9.179	2.116	.150
2-Way interaction	7.070	1	7.070	1.629	.205

Source of Variation	<u>After Therapy</u>				
	Sum of Sq.	DF	Mean Sq.	F-ratio	p-Value
Conflict Resolution (A)	59.404	1	59.404	17.320	.000*
Contact (B)	2.471	1	2.471	.720	.399
2-Way interaction	25.099	1	25.099	7.318	.008*

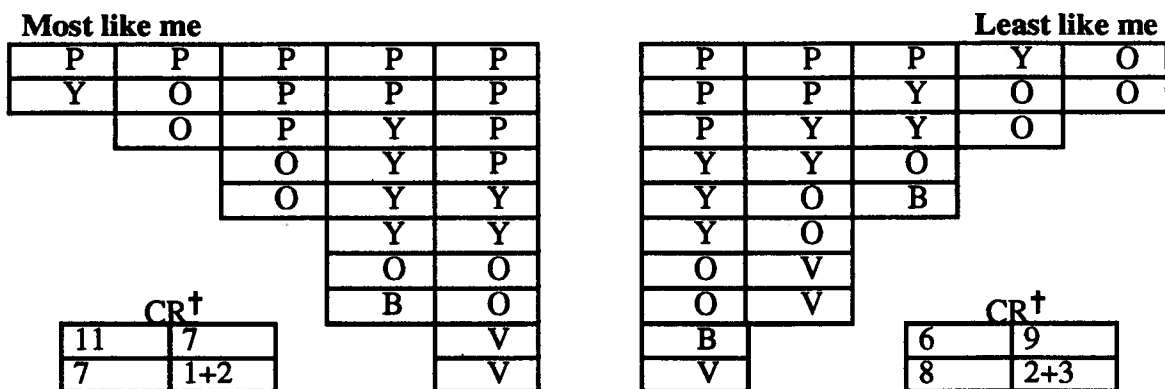
n = 85 items

*p =< .10

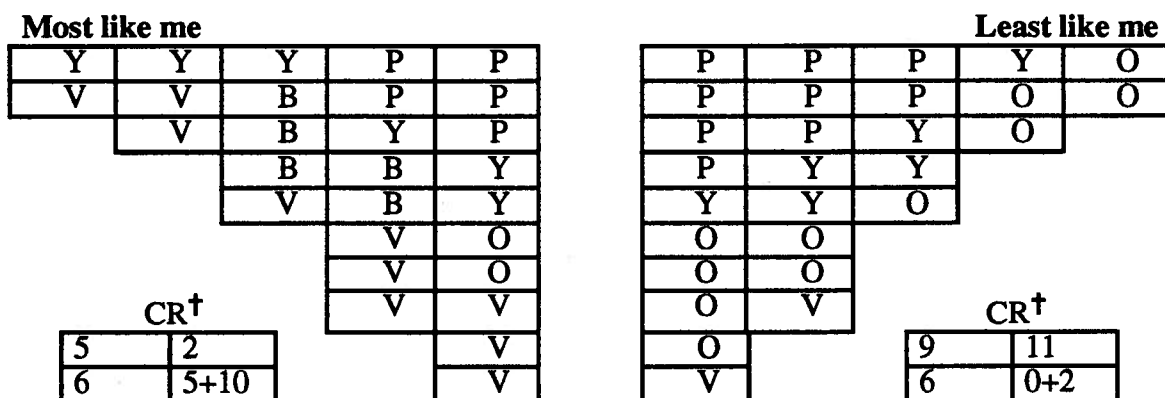
O-sort Qualitative Results (see Figures 10 and 11)

Before therapy, the pattern of Gail's Q-Sort was as predicted by the theory for an individual who was conflicted (See Figure 10). Although she could not be categorized according to an interaction of Conflict Resolution and Contact, as indicated by the ANOVA results, she did choose items mostly from the stage of Opposition to describe what she is like. Of the 28 items she chose to describe herself 25 of them were from the Opposition stage, that is, from Cells 1, 2, and 3. Seven of these items were items from Cell 3 (resolved with interruption of contact). To describe what she was not like she chose two items from the Merging stage, #63 I realize my self-criticisms are based on my fears. and #69 I'm more afraid than condemning of myself. and three from the Integration stage, all items from Cell 4. Her sorting pattern indicated conflict.

Gail



A. Before Therapy



B. After Therapy

Figure 10 Pattern of Q-Sort for Case Study three with neutral items omitted.Theory underlying the three stage model of the two-chair technique.

(P) Pink Stage 1. Opposition A1B1 Unresolved with interruption of contact.
 (Y) Yellow Stage 1. Opposition A1B2 Unresolved with contact.
 (O) Orange Stage 1. Opposition A2B1 Resolved with interruption of contact.
 (B) Blue Stage 2. Merging A2B2 Resolved with contact
 (V) Violet Stage 3. Integration A2B2 Resolved with contact
 CR = Conflict Resolution (factor A) C = Contact (factor B)

1 = level 1. 2 = level 2.

[†]= Grid showing interaction of levels of Conflict Resolution and Contact.

Note. In main figure each rectangle represents a Q-Sort item.

After therapy Gail's sorting pattern indicated she had shifted a great deal but was still in conflict. As the theory predicted, her pattern showed an individual who was in the Merging and Integration stages. She now chose five of the eight items from the Merging stage to describe herself. Like Beverley, Gail said she probably would have chosen more items from this stage if they had been worded slightly differently. She chose ten of the sixteen items from the Integration stage to describe herself. The conflict she still felt was demonstrated by the choice of two items from Cell 3 (Resolved with interruption of contact) to describe herself, # I'll stay because I'm too afraid to stay alone. and # I'm not sure I'll find another partner so I'll stay. It was also demonstrated by her choice of #81. I'm clear on what I'm going to do. and #82 I feel at peace with myself. to describe what she is not like. She did not chose any items from the Merging stage to describe what she is not like.

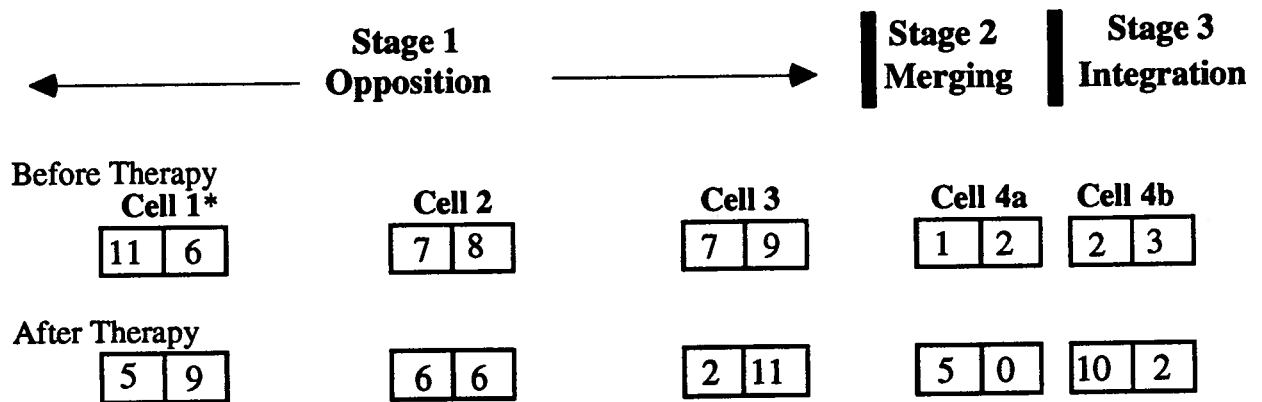


Figure 11. Results of placement of items before and after therapy with for Case Study three: Gail.

*Left box = number of items used to describe what participant is like.

Right box = number of items used to describe what participant is not like.

Outcome of the Decision (see Table 8)

On the undecided/decided scale Gail shifted from a score of 6 to 8. She decided to remain separated. She began negotiations with her husband toward a permanent separation. She continued in therapy.

Table 8

Undecided/decided scores before and after therapy with decision reached.

	Before	After	Elaboration	Decision
Case Study three: Gail	6	8	No change	Separate

Elaboration Interview Data

Performing the initial Q-sort had a strong effect on Gail as evidenced by her moving out of the home shortly after doing the sort.

I really feel that the sort itself- the statements that were made, being a very visual or very written or word written person, to see it out there, to- to see these- it just blew me away. And I'm quite sure that the decision was made the night that I went through the first Q-sort, just seeing where I was torn. Everything I- I put out here was well, yes and no. I'm just not sure, and it was very just a- a mishmash and I couldn't see that when I sorted it. Go home, think about it. Filter it through and realize that I don't want to be like this.

Researcher: What was the therapy about then, for you?

It clarified my feelings, a lot if- [therapist] worked with me a lot on how I felt... focusing in on specific areas of my feelings and my life in general. It takes somebody who's trained to do that, otherwise you just kind of blahh all over the place and you can't focus in on anything at all and of course nothing makes sense. The therapy sessions would focus in on certain things and they were all almost spontaneous things to me. It was just how the conversation came about and then we'd focus in on whatever it was, or my buzz-word or my

buzz-phrase for the week type of thing. and we'd go from there. But having a focus and things like that- feelings sliding off and that kind of thing. Once I see it, once I hear it, then I can relate to it. But again I've spent so many years everywhere at once, not being able to focus in or not knowing how to focus in , that to me was very important in these sessions.

At the beginning of the Elaboration interview Gail described how the therapy had clarified her feelings:

I tended to go round and round in circles, and- and couldn't decide the should and the want, which one was more clear. And actually that's really what it helped me see- is that there was a should and a want, and until I realized that I didn't know, or I couldn't see what was making me go round in circles all the time, and fighting myself. But understanding the should and the want, then it freed me up to, sort of, get out of the circle and to see, sort of, a panorama view, but without circling myself, so that was what really helped me.

This is confirmed by the shift in item #5 I don't know what to do. from 1 to 8.

Before therapy I just was going around in circles. I couldn't make a choice. I couldn't make a decision. Um Having spent years of supposedly having made the wrong decision of everything, you know, being told I'd made the wrong decision never having had any feedback that I was doing well or I was doing right. Uh- it feels so right to me to be doing what I'm doing right now. Wish I'd done it 10 years ago. [After therapy] I don't know what to do in terms of future. Um You know, my-my- future is very very clouded uh. I still don't entirely agree with what I've done or that I'm doing the right thing in the long run. But it certainly isn't that the negative side of it is definitely moved over [referred to Q-sort] and I feel very much more positive, I have to say now, although I don't know what my long term plans may be for right now, I do know that this [separation] is what I want to do.

When asked what stood out for her in the therapy Gail responded:

To me the whole thing was just one great big evolution and every week it was something new that I discovered, and every week was some more information that helped me see where I was going or what I was doing, so there was - there was nothing that light bulbs, except every session was light bulbs somewhere along the line.

Yeah maybe I will go back and recant what I said about not having anything, light bulbs going on in the therapy, because now that you say that, yes the- the- there was one thing that really clearly came out, probably the second to the last session, when she showed me how every time I had to feel my feelings I'd slide off and I'd go talk about [husband] and I'd talk about the kids, and she'd bring me back- well how do you feel and I'd slide off again and every time she cornered me to make me state what my feelings were I would cry.

- Item #8 I feel anxious a lot of the time. shifted from a score of 8 to 4.

Before [therapy] anxiety attacks were a part of my life. Headaches, um general every step I took was- Am I doing the right thing? uh How would [husband] feel about this? uh Should I do this?, Those kind of questions were continually going through my mind. Having been through this whole session, I see myself, I see *me* more clearly and have taken on the acceptance of - so what if I make a mistake. This is what I'm doing because it's the best I have in the way of- the lesser of two evils or the better way to go or whatever you want to say, it seems more clear and I'm less, less afraid of making decisions that are- whether they're right or wrong....I'm less anxious about making a mistake.

- Item #53 I'll stay because I'm too afraid to be alone. shifted from 9 to 6.

I've spent 5 years trying to stay at home because I'm terrified of not having a ?? of companionship, particularly male companionship. um When I came to the decision to actually move out it was basically the thinking of- I'm more alone being in a relationship with a man who doesn't care about me or love me, than I am being by myself. Because at least when I'm by myself I don't always have that reminder of that man whose there- whose putting me down and I'm not ever quite good enough. I still feel that way. I'm still very afraid to be alone.

- Item #54 I'll stay for the children's sake. shifted from 9 to 1.

Uh, I would feel that the- well I know for a fact, because I came from a home, when I was 16 my parents split up and it was very difficult even at 16 to adjust to the new lifestyle. Um I felt that keeping them protected from the upheaval of-of- both of us leaving or the family splitting up, I would- I guess you would say I was willing to sacrifice myself for the sake of the kids. Uh, at some point in time I guess I've discovered that the kids are far happier without the tension in the home of the two parents being there, and although I don't like the arrangement right now of the kids being away from me, um they are much happier. I see a lot less fighting. I see a lot more talking back and forth with them. At the ages of 12 and 14, to me that's a miracle that they even spend 30 seconds of the day being decent to each other. Um Perhaps I was using the kids as a-a- crutch for myself. Uh I'll stay for them rather than I'll leave for myself. Um plus I- even though I see them every day, it's still probably the hardest thing that I'll ever have to face. I would say that is harder than being by myself for the rest of my life- is not having my kids ???with me???

- Item #60 I'm not sure I'll find another partner so I'll stay. Shifted from 8 - 6.

We live in hope...Well before [therapy], I thought that anybody anyhow would be better than nobody. Um Having gone through it, and being on my own now, it's not so important to have a body next to you, or with you, as it is to be happy with yourself..

Researcher, Is that the result of moving out or is it the result of therapy, or both those, maybe you don't even know which?

I-it's a- it's a- it's a combination of both, because having been through therapy, it's-it's shown me that I'm an OK person, and that I can value myself and I can stand on my own two feet, I don't have to have a partner to be a crutch with ???, um , it seemed, before it seemed that being a couple was more important than being happy. Since I've been through this whole thing, it seems to me to be -to be more important to be happy than to be a couple.

- Item #61 I've decided to live a separate life within the marriage. Shifted from 8 to 5 (neutral).

I thought that I could be myself and technically- technically be married and yet still just do things that I wanted to do, or live my own life. Um It just -it just doesn't work like that, ...it's just that kind of an idea does not relate to reality. It's a wonderful idea if you think you can do it, but in reality you cannot do it. You have to make a choice, you can't sit on the fence for the rest of your life.

The critic softening items, which shifted the most before and after therapy, were ones relating to fear and criticism, #63 I realize my self-criticisms are based on my fears. and #69 I'm more afraid than condemning of myself.

- Item #63 I realize my self-criticisms are based on my fears.

Before therapy, I blamed myself for most of the problems within the marriage, that it was, if I had only been this, or I'd only done that, or if I'd only thought something, or what if I had- that whole scenario. Uh, coming through this whole thing, it wasn't the self-criticism that was the problem, it was the fear of leaving, the fear of being on my own, the fear of not having anybody for the rest of my life. Those were what was actually causing me to stay there and to criticize myself.

- Item #69 I'm more afraid than condemning of myself.

Again, I think that relates to self-criticism as opposed to fear. Uh you condemn yourself because you- it's easier to blame yourself. It's easier to self-criticize yourself. And well, what if- uh going through this whole thing you can- I can see of myself that I'm afraid of some of the things I feel- um but I don't condemn myself anymore for what I have done or the steps I have taken over the past 5 years to get to today. In real time today- um it's - it's a process that you have to work your way through and you're not going to do it until you're ready.

Gail's feelings changed over the course of therapy as indicated by the shift in items #62 and #67.

- Item #62 My deeper feelings are clear to me. shifted from 4 - 7.

Before therapy I was so muddled, so in a vicious circle of-of- self-criticism really and fear and all those things. Worry about my kids and what I was gonna do, and how I was going to handle the rest of my life. Um Working my way through this whole thing, even just going from self-criticism to fear- uh- it's-it's more clear exactly where my feelings are, what my feelings are, and you tend to cover up your fear with criticism so that you don't have to deal with the fear. And once you allow the fear to come to light, it's not so bad, the fear isn't so hard to take, It's just confronting that fear first of all.

- Item #67 What I feel is important . shifted from 5 (neutral) to 7.

Before [therapy] is definitely that old feeling of-of- sacrificing myself for everybody else. um After, [therapy] kind of self-evident that-that I must feel that-that my feelings are more important than- if I can't- if I can't like myself then I can't be liked by anybody and I can't like anybody else. Um So it's important to identify or to-to know what my feelings are and to acknowledge those feelings as being important to my well-being cause obviously when I was denying them they were certainly not doing me a hell of a lot of good.

- Items #64, #65 #66 , and #68 remained neutral to Gail before and after.

64 I'm not as bad as I thought I was.

I don't relate to that because I've never felt myself to be a bad person.

#65 I can ease up on myself.

I don't think I've been all that hard on my self.

#66. What I want and need is worth fighting for.

I guess it's-it's partly the wording...I'm not a fighter. I will slide around and and-and- um try and find the least obtrusive method of doing things...

#68 I feel very tender toward myself.

I didn't-possibly wording- semantics- um ...no, I don't relate to that at all.

A strong indicator that Gail has entered the integration stage is indicated by the marked shift in item #73 I have wants and needs that stem from a new sense of myself. from 5 (neutral) to 10.

Before therapy I had no sense of myself. Um I was just a piece of garbage that hung around my husband kind of thing. And that's honestly how I felt. I had no self-esteem. I had no sense of being- I had no sense of being a respected person within the marriage. Outside of the marriage I have those feelings. I am respected. I'm well-liked. I have a totally almost different personality. I come home and I'm this piece of garbage at home that gets shat upon all the time. Having taken this step- um I- I- again at 3 o'clock in the morning I think-oh I should just pack it all in and go home and forget it. It's too hard to live on my own and I just put [husband's] face in this picture in my mind and say 'Do you want to live with this?', and- OK there you have it. I can't go back to him.

...I still don't have a sense of myself. But I am at least- over these last sessions- have- I'm starting to flow in that direction, if not actually getting there. I'm starting to make the first little steps towards that.

Events Occurring While Involved in the Project

Performing the initial Q-sort had a strong effect on Gail. A few days following the first Q-sort Gail moved out of her home and into a townhouse with a womanfriend. She stated that this was a temporary decision intended to give her some distance from her husband while she considered her decision. She continued to live there while she participated in the remainder of the project. Therapy proceeded as expected and other than moving out of the family home there were no extraneous events or circumstances while Gail underwent therapy.

Discussion of Results

The results of the ANOVA table were interpreted to indicate that the combined factors of Conflict and Resolution and Contact were not present in Gail's decision-making before therapy but they were afterwards. The significant 2-way interaction results after therapy, but not before, were interpreted to mean that the Q-Sort task was meaningful to Beverley after therapy but not before. This was supported by her words regarding the pre therapy Q-Sort "It was very- just a- a mishmash.". The theory does not account for the lack interaction between Conflict Resolution and Contact before therapy. This suggested that before therapy something was interfering or blocking the interaction of the factors or that other factors may be involved. Evidently, after therapy Gail was resolved and in contact. That Gail responded to a joint consideration of Conflict Resolution and Contact after therapy suggested therapy was successful as defined by the model.

The patterns of Gail's Q-Sorts showed that she sorted as predicted for a person who was conflicted about remaining married before therapy and decided after therapy. She chose mostly items from the stage of Opposition to describe what she is like. At the end of therapy she apparently had shifted into the Merging and Integration as she chose mostly items from these stages to describe herself. Her final Q-sort showed that she was still conflicted but much less so. She retained two items from Cell 3 (Resolved with interruption of contact) # 53 I'll stay because I'm too afraid to be alone. and #60. I'm not sure I'll find another partner so I'll stay. However, she did not place them in as strong a position as she did in the first Q-sort. Another indicator of her conflict was her choice of two items, #81 I'm clear on what I'm going to do. and #82 I feel at peace with myself, used to

describe what she was not like. She was in the Integration stage but not solidly in it. This was supported by her words "I'm not where I need to be but I'm where I need to start to get to where I need to be". The shifts also suggested that therapy was successful.

It seemed that Gail's decision to move out after the initial Q-sort was a reactive decision made from a conflicted, not integrated, sense of self. After therapy Gail came to a decision that she reported she felt good about. Evidently her decision to remain separated after therapy was made from a newly integrated sense of self.

Gail's words support the theory put forth by Greenberg (1979; 1983). that the opposed aspects of the self represent a conflict between an individual's standards and values with his or her wants and needs. She reported "actually that's really what [therapy] helped me see - that there was a 'should' and a 'want'".

Gail's case demonstrated a partial literal replication of the model. This was interpreted to mean that the three stage model and the theory underlying it can be useful to partially describe the decision-making process of individuals who successfully resolve their conflict about whether or not to remain married.

Case Study Four: Edward

Demographic data

Edward was a 46-year-old male Caucasian. He had a graduate degree but did not work in the field in which he graduated. He was self employed in an outdoor business. He had been married for five and a half years and had two preschool children. He and his wife had never been separated. Previous to his marriage he had two common-law relationships each lasting five years. He had a teenage son from the first of these relationships. He reported the family income in the \$60-80,000 range.

Edward was the husband of Case Study Amy. Amy entered the project before Edward and at the end of her participation came to a resolution to remain married. When Amy approached Edward with her decision to reconcile the differences in their marriage Edward then became ambivalent about the marriage himself, whereas previously he had not expressed any ambivalence. His wife told him about this project and he consulted with his wife's therapist who referred him. Edward's wife was completely finished with her participation in the study before Edward began to participate.

ANOVA Results of the Q-sort (see Table 9)

Before therapy, Edward did not sort the Q-sort items according to theoretical expectation for a person who was undecided about remaining married. The two-way interaction results of Edward's Q-Sorts showed that he could not be categorized successfully according to a joint relationship of Conflict Resolution (CR) and Contact (C).

After therapy Edward did sort the items as predicted by theory. The two-way interaction results of Edward's Q-Sorts showed that he could be categorized successfully according to a joint relationship of the two factors. (Interpretation of these results follow in the discussion section.)

Table 9

Statistical Analysis of the O-Sort: Case study one: Edward.

Source of Variation	<u>Before Therapy</u>				
	Sum of Sq.	DF	Mean Sq.	F-ratio	p-Value
Conflict Resolution (A)	11.740	1	11.740	3.010	.087*
Contact (B)	36.673	1	36.673	9.401	.003*
2-Way interaction	5.269	1	5.269	1.351	.249

Source of Variation	<u>After Therapy</u>				
	Sum of Sq.	DF	Mean Sq.	F-ratio	p-Value
Conflict Resolution (A)	51.845	1	51.845	17.169	.000*
Contact (B)	12.509	1	12.509	4.142	.045*
2-Way interaction	61.466	1	61.466	20.355	.000*

n = 85 items

*p ≤ .10

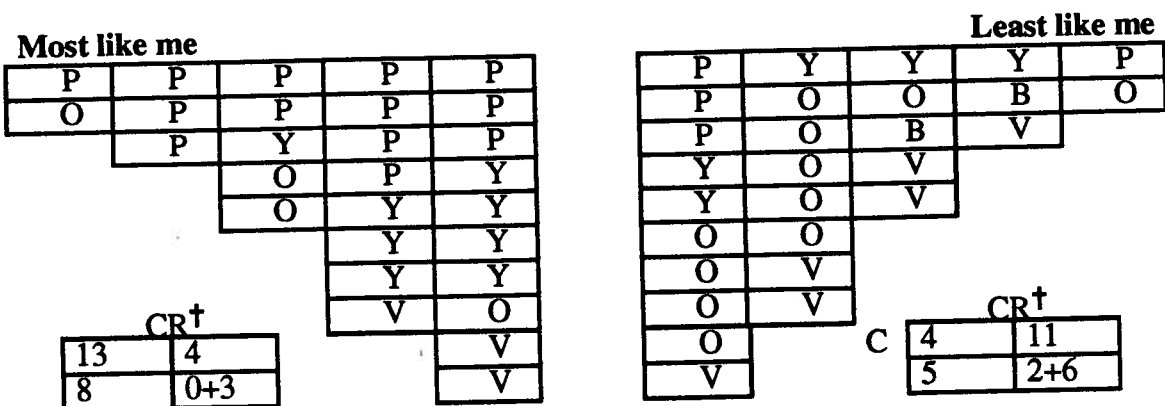
Q-sort Qualitative Results (see Figures 12 and 13)

Before therapy Edward sorted the Q-sort items as predicted by theory for an individual who was conflicted (See Figure 12). Of the twenty-eight items he chose to describe himself, 25 were from Cells 1, 2, and 3, (Opposition). Four items were from Cell 3. (Resolved with interruption of contact), # 51. I'll continue as I am because I'm too afraid to make a change., #54. I'll stay for the children's sake., #59. I'll stay because I'll feel too guilty if I leave., and #61. I've decided to live a separate life within the marriage. He placed

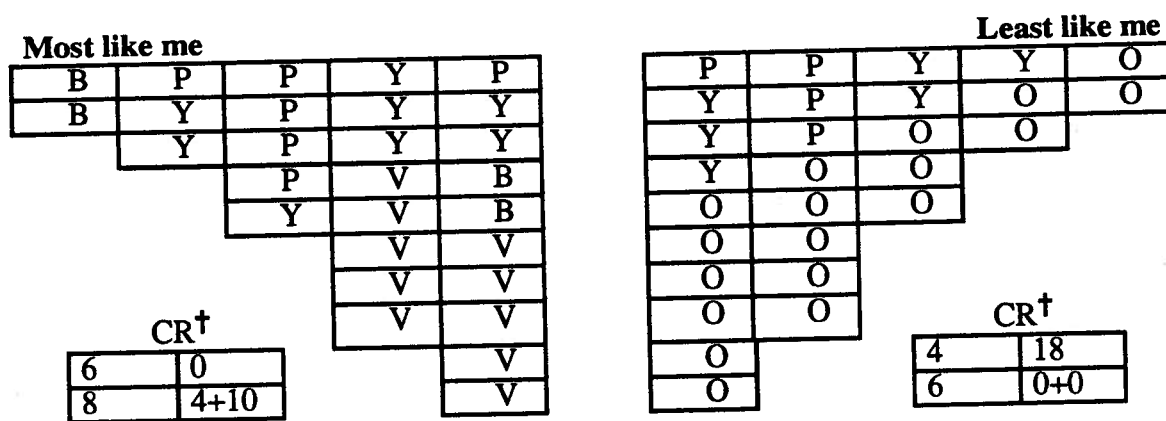
#54 in the strongest position. He chose eight items from Cell 4 to describe what he was not like. Two of these items #65. I can ease up on myself and #68. I feel very tender towards myself. are from the Merging stage. His sort showed a great deal of conflict.

After therapy Edward also sorted according to theoretical expectations for an individual who was resolved. His second Q-sort showed he was in the Merging stage but not through it. This was demonstrated by his choice of four Merging stage items #64 I'm not as bad as I thought I was., #66 What I want and need is worth fighting for., #67 What I feel is important., and #69 I'm more afraid than condemning of myself. to describe himself. Two of these, #66 and #67, shifted dramatically, from scores of 5 (neutral) to 10. To describe himself he chose ten of the 16 items from the stage of Integration and none from Cell 3 (Resolved with interruption of contact). The four remaining Merging items were discarded in the neutral category. He still did not have a new sense of himself or awareness of his deeper underlying feelings as he did not choose #62 My deeper feelings are clear to me. or #73 I have wants and needs that stem from a new sense of myself. to describe what he was like. He was only beginning to realize that his fear gave rise to self criticism as he chose #69 I'm more afraid than condemning of myself. to describe himself but only placed it in the weakest position (score of 6) and he left #63 I realize my self criticisms are based upon my fears. in the neutral category. Although he did not choose #65 I can ease up on myself. or #68 I feel very tender toward myself. to describe himself these items shifted from being used to describe what he is not like to being discarded into the neutral category. He did not chose any items from the Integration stage to describe what he is not like.

Edward



A. Before Therapy



B. After Therapy

Figure 12 Pattern of Q-Sort for Case Study four with neutral items omitted.

Theory underlying the three stage model of the two-chair technique.

(P) Pink Stage 1. Opposition A1B1 Unresolved with interruption of contact.
 (Y) Yellow Stage 1. Opposition A1B2 Unresolved with contact.
 (O) Orange Stage 1. Opposition A2B1 Resolved with interruption of contact.
 (B) Blue Stage 2. Merging A2B2 Resolved with contact
 (V) Violet Stage 3. Integration A2B2 Resolved with contact
 CR = Conflict Resolution (factor A) C = Contact (factor B)

1 = level 1. 2 = level 2.

† = Grid showing interaction of levels of Conflict Resolution and Contact.

Note. In main figure each rectangle represents a Q-Sort item.

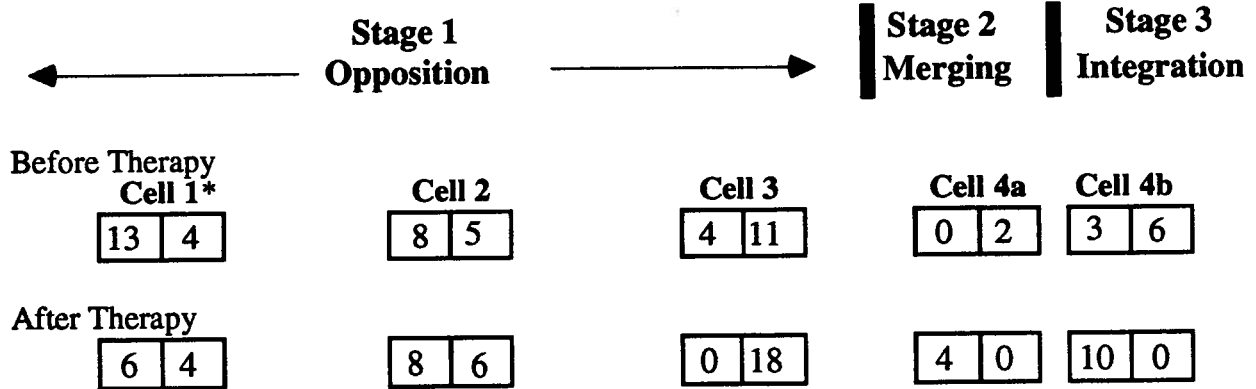


Figure 13. Results of placement of items before and after therapy for Case Study four: Edward.

*Left box = number of items used to describe what participant is like.

Right box = number of items used to describe what participant is not like.

Outcome of the decision (see Table 10)

Before therapy, Edward was living with his wife, sleeping in a different bedroom. After therapy he came to a decision which he reported finding difficult but felt it was appropriate for him. On the undecided/decided scale Edward shifted from a score of 5 to 7. He decided to separate. Five days before the elaboration interview Edward moved out of the home. A few weeks later the home was up for sale.

Table 10

Undecided/decided scores before and after therapy with decision reached.

	Before	After	Elaboration	Decision
Case Study four: Edward	5	7	No change	Separate

Elaboration Interview Data

Edward explained how therapy had affected his decision:

I think the-for me- the therapy got me in touch with-with a lot of stuff that was really not, you know, like really not directly related to-to the relationship stuff, but it was related to how I was, kinda stuff. And it was really deep deep stuff. I mean, I'd never really thought about it before. So somehow, like it-it-it was just like little little blocks were in there or something and it enabled me to then deal with a lot of the grief I was feeling around my kids. It was like that- that was a huge huge part of it- was -was- grief, and it allowed me to feel a lot of that for some reason....it [therapy] did-it did affect it, you know. It didn't affect it from what I thought but it was sort of came in from over here and allowed me more to relate the the situation, and understand what was going on in the world of - present world definitely.

In the therapy two instances stood out for Edward:

Two that just came completely out of the blue. And one was how, when I was a little boy, how I never really, I- I- It was the first instance that I thought about that I would use my head to get out of pain- thinking to get out of pain, and then so- so- therefore I wasn't really- I- I would, sort of, try to intellectualize feelings and so that that- was going-so I didn't feel them. And the other one was -was when I was a teenager around the pain of-of-of- around my father had a nervous breakdown. And it hadn't even really occurred to me that- that- was a big- and caused me like- I had to work for my mom and help my little brother and I, sort of like, grew up really quickly and had to become like a man really quickly. ...and those -those two instances like sort of stood out and really caused me to get in touch with some pretty deep-seated whatever, grief or whatever, around doing that. And- and- um, it was very powerful, and like I- I felt like, I mean it was really deep stuff going on. It was- I mean- I was, sort of, you know- an hour would go by like it was 10 minutes. I was really into it.

As a result of exploring these two instances Edward was able to talk to his wife more openly.

What followed from that was- was being able to talk to [wife]. Really, you know, and- and- just sort of- like- allow me to- to-, you know, open up. And, you know, to open and let her know, you know, how I was feeling in a certain situation. Whether it was good or whether it was and instead of trying to sugar-coat it or whatever

Researcher: You were able to be more honest with your wife?

Yeah Yeah. or put out what was going on for me. Like and then I think that's, you know, that's the sort of important thing, that I really want to continue actually working on, to tell you the truth, it-it- was, you know, I've never moved so far so fast for me. I- and I think it was only that last time, it was just like it seemed- it seemed like some- some really amazing things were happening.

Edward had some difficulty with items that contained a slash, for example, #41 I'm so fed up going around in circles that I've decided to stay/leave. These items were designed to cover a context with which participants could relate.

Sometimes I have I- I- I have a lot of trouble with the ones that are slash and they're like stay/leave ... like on some of the cards I really had to think, you, it wasn't like a real gut thing where, you know, I've decided to take care of myself *boom*. I mean there was some that and I tried to get more- I started to think- well if I had to think about it- forget it.

In the first Q-sort Edward chose four items, #51, #54, #59, #61, from Cell 3 (Resolved with interruption of contact) to describe himself. After therapy these items were used to describe what he is *not* like.

Item #51 I'll continue as I am because I'm too afraid to make a change. shifted from a score of 8 to 3.

Well I think back then at the start, that was accurate, because I- I think I was just like really too afraid, And it moved over here because -it didn't move completely-...so but I- but I can deal- I- I- I feel- I- I- I- can deal with it a little bit more.

- **Item #54** I'll stay for the children's sake. shifted from a score of 10 to 4.

Well it-wa-....I think the-the-absolutely the reason I was around there was for the children. No question about it.

Researcher: So before therapy you were in the marriage for the children.

Huge. Huge. And after therapy, you know-um, if it ever, if we ever got back together, no I should not say that, that's -that's in fact is not true. What I was going to say, I was going to say, well, if we ever got back together it would be through the children, but that- that is not true actually. And I just came to that realization just recently too. ... It's still- it's still- I mean, I still think about it, I mean I must admit, witness I just said it, but I just, you know, it's not as big an issue for me.

So I- I- all the-all these-there seems to be the same basis for what's going on- on all these three cards, as I- I- I- it- it- it would have to- I'd just say ditto as far as that. I mean I still feel a little bit guilty, but it's less guilty than I started that I felt

- **Item #61** I've decided to live a separate life within the marriage. shifted from a score of 8 to 4.

Yeah. I think basically [before therapy] I just- I was just like- I mean I was just- just, I mean I was just shell-shocked from morning to night, Just like taking mortar, taking...I just-I just-,you know, I was just holding on essentially. And [after therapy] I've ... it's a little bit not like me. Right. So that's- that's

probably very accurate actually...Yeah, yeah, yeah. It's improved a lot. Yeah, Yeah.

Most of the critic softening items shifted significantly.

#66 What I want and need is worth fighting. and #67 What I feel is important shifted from a score of 5 (neutral) to 10.

Well, I think before therapy, I was really discounting myself so that's why they were here. And after therapy, I think it's I- I think that I was - or not I was- I- well yeah- I was- feeling better about myself and- and- and so they became- they became really important for me, you know, like it was really like- let's find out about the things that I'm- that I'm- it seems sort of selfish, but in a way, I think if you understand those things you're healthier in a certain respect.

- Item #65 I can ease up on myself. shifted from a score of 2 to 5 (neutral). The shift with this item showed a new perspective for Edward.

Before therapy, I didn't take it easy on myself at all. I was very very very hard on myself. And-and then after, it says I can ease up on myself, I guess I- I just- It- it- it just wasn't an issue, I can ease up on myself, it wasn't like I was too hard on myself or not. I- I- It's sort of like it be-gone into a whole different level of just being truthful.

- Item #64 I'm not as bad as I thought I was. shifted from a score of 5 (neutral) to 6.

So it was a non-issue at the start, and it became- it became OK. Well, OK. I'm not as bad as I thought I was, which was-which I'm acknowledging to myself. I'm not as bad as I thought I was, and before I thought I was bad.

- Items #62 My deeper feelings are clear to me. and #63 I realize my self-criticisms are based on my fears. Edward did not relate to these items before or after therapy.

Item #81 I'm clear on what I'm going to do. shifted from 1 to 6.

I'm clear on what I'm gonna do, yeah, went from, I- I wasn't clear before therapy. I'm clear. OK that was -that's easy and those two I can reconcile the differences within myself and I have wants and needs that stem from a new sense of myself, well I just didn't have any new sense of myself and I can reconcile the difference within myself, um went from being least like me to, sort of, like a non-issue, um cause I haven't -I haven't fully integrated the new- the new thing in terms of wants and needs, I mean I sort of get a glimpse of it. I mean that-you know, that one there- I have wants and needs that stem from a new sense of myself, I- I mean it- it- it's a shade into here OK I can reconcile the differences within myself um I guess it's just a move to a non-issue because I- I don't think I can move it and say I can reconcile the differences between myself. I- I'm not quite there.

Events Occurring While Involved in the Project

Therapy proceeded as expected and there were no unusual extraneous events or circumstances while Edward underwent therapy. It is worth noting that during the course of therapy it emerged that he continued to be involved in the same extra-marital affair that had caused a crisis in his marriage the previous summer.

Discussion of results

The results of the ANOVA were interpreted to indicate that, as predicted by theory, the combined factors of Conflict Resolution and the Gestalt concept of Contact were present in Edward's decision-making process after therapy but not before. The theory does not account for the lack interaction between Conflict Resolution and Contact before therapy. This suggested that something was interfering

or blocking the interaction of the factors or that other factors may be involved. Apparently, after therapy Edward was resolved and in contact. That he responded to joint relationship of Conflict Resolution and Contact after therapy was interpreted to mean that therapy was successful as defined by the model.

The patterns of Edward's Q-Sorts showed that he sorted as predicted for a person who was conflicted about remaining married before therapy and decided after therapy. Before therapy he chose mostly items from the stage of Opposition to describe himself as well as several items from the stages of Merging and Integration to describe what he is not like. Apparently after therapy he appeared to have shifted into the Merging and Integration stages as he chose mostly items from these stages to describe himself. As well, he chose all items from the stage of Opposition to describe what he is not like. It seemed that he was in the early part of the Integration stage. This was supported by his words; "well, I just didn't have any new sense of myself", "I haven't -I haven't fully integrated the new- the new thing in terms of wants and needs" and "I'm not there yet". Also indicating that he was in the Merging stage and had entered the Integration stage was his new perception of himself. This is supported by his words; "it wasn't like I was too hard on myself or not. I- I- It's sort of like it be-gone into a whole different level of just being truthful". Having a new perception of himself but not having a new sense of himself matches with his report that he learned to intellectualize his feelings at an early age. It seemed that Edward had made a decision based upon a partially integrated position. In spite of the fact that he had only entered the Integration stage his post-therapy Q-sort showed no conflict.

After therapy he responded to a joint relationship between Conflict Resolution and Contact, appeared to have passed through the Merging stage and be in the Integration stage. This was supported by his description of his experience. This also suggested that therapy was successful.

Edward's case demonstrated a partial literal replication of the model. This was interpreted to mean that the three stage model and the theory underlying it can be useful to partially describe the decision-making process of individuals who successfully resolve their conflict about whether or not to remain married.

Case Study Five: Amy

Demographic Data

Amy was a 34-year-old Caucasian. She was born in Europe and has a Canadian equivalency of Grade 10 plus some training in practical nursing. She met her husband while traveling and came to Canada when she married. She was primarily a homemaker, caring for her two preschool children. She had a teenage stepson who does not live with the family. She worked only a few hours a week as a salesclerk, more for an outside interest than for the income. This was her first marriage, her husband's second. He was ten years older and had a graduate degree. They had been married for five and a half years and had never been separated. She reported their family income level between \$20-40,000.

Last summer Amy discovered her husband was having an affair. She became very distressed and ambivalent about remaining in the marriage. She was in therapy dealing with this issue when her therapist referred her to this project.

ANOVA Results of the Q-sort (see Table 11)

Both before and after therapy the two-way interaction results of Amy's Q-Sorts showed that she could be categorized successfully according to a joint relationship of the factors of Conflict Resolution (CR) and Contact (C). (Interpretation of these results follow in the discussion section.)

Table 11

Statistical Analysis of the Q-Sort: Case study one: Amy.

Source of Variation	<u>Before Therapy</u>				
	Sum of Sq.	DF	Mean Sq.	F-ratio	p-Value
Conflict Resolution (A)	21.340	1	21.340	5.252	.024*
Contact (B)	1.201	1	1.201	.296	.588
2-Way interaction	13.064	1	13.064	3.215	.077*

Source of Variation	<u>After Therapy</u>				
	Sum of Sq.	DF	Mean Sq.	F-ratio	p-Value
Conflict Resolution (A)	71.431	1	71.431	21.155	.000*
Contact (B)	71.431	1	71.431	2.247	.138
2-Way interaction	17.091	1	17.091	5.062	.027*

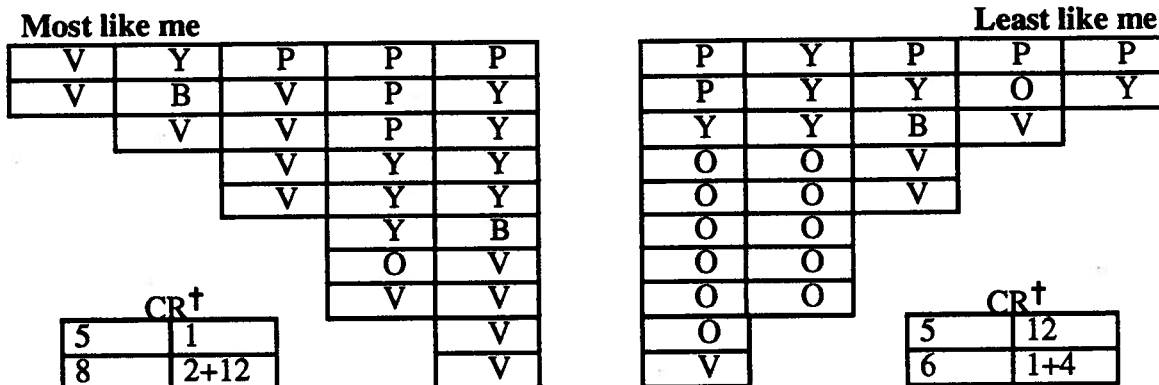
n = 85 items

*p = < .10

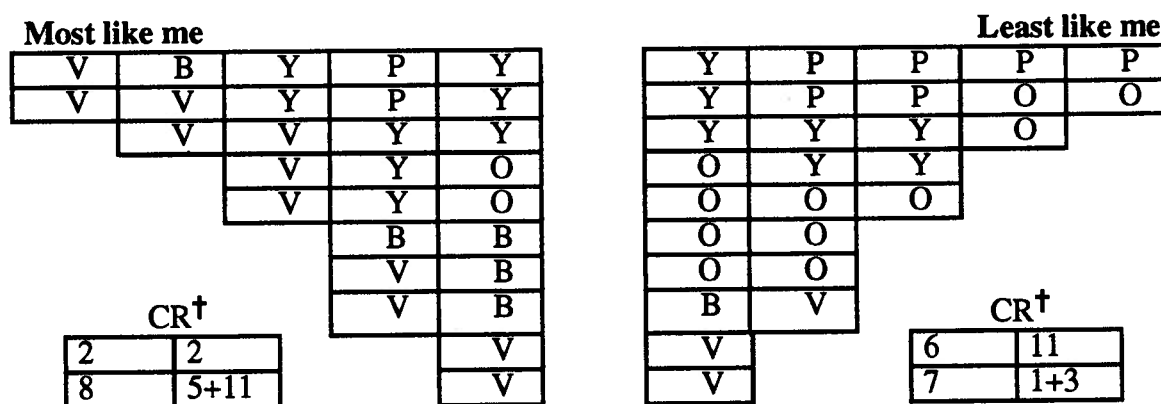
Q-sort Qualitative Results (see Figures 14 and 15)

Before therapy, Amy mostly sorted the Q-sort items as predicted by the theory for an individual who was conflicted. She chose many items from the stage of Integration to describe herself, placing most of them in strong positions. These were items from Cell 4 (Resolved and in contact). This was somewhat unusual for an individual who was undecided. Of the eight Merging items she chose two to describe herself; #62 My deeper feelings are clear to me. and #63 I realize my self criticisms are base on my fears. From Cell 3 (Resolved with interruption of contact) she chose #61 I've decided to live a separate life within the marriage indicating her conflict about her marriage.

Amy



A. Before Therapy



B. After Therapy

Figure 14. Pattern of Q-Sort for Case Study five with neutral items omitted.

Theory underlying the three stage model of the two-chair technique.

(P) Pink Stage 1. Opposition A1B1 Unresolved with interruption of contact.

(Y) Yellow Stage 1. Opposition A1B2 Unresolved with contact.

(O) Orange Stage 1. Opposition A2B1 Resolved with interruption of contact.

(B) Blue Stage 2. Merging A2B2 Resolved with contact

(V) Violet Stage 3. Integration A2B2 Resolved with contact

CR = Conflict Resolution (factor A) C = Contact (factor B)

1 = level 1. 2 = level 2.

† = Grid showing interaction of levels of Conflict Resolution and Contact.

Note. In main figure each rectangle represents a Q-Sort item.

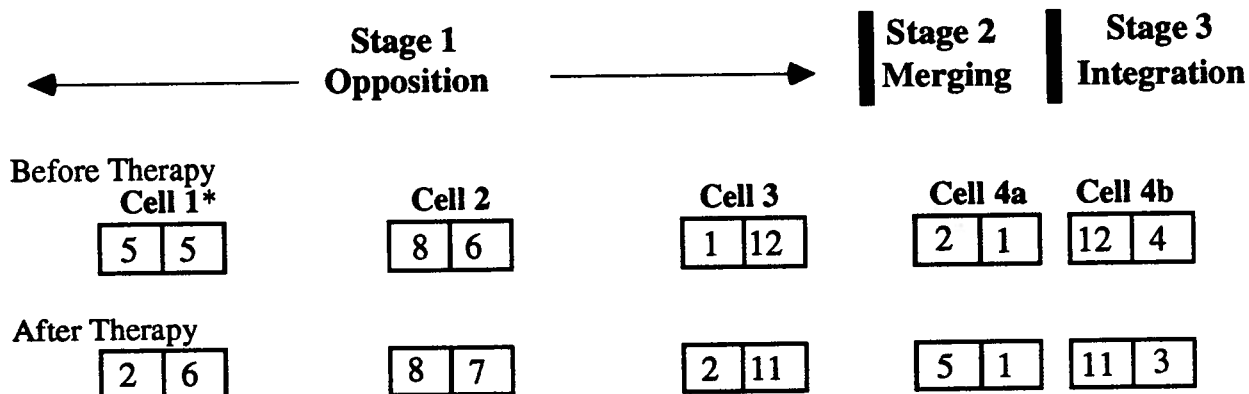


Figure 15. Results of placement of items before and after therapy for Case Study five: Amy.

*Left box = number of items used to describe what participant is like.

Right box = number of items used to describe what participant is not like.

To describe what she was not like, Amy chose a Merging stage item #65 I can ease up on myself. She used several other Cell 4 items to describe what she was not like, #79 It's OK to do what is right for me., #80 I can reconcile the differences within myself., #81 I'm clear on what I'm going to do., and #83 I feel relief. These clearly show her indecision and conflict.

In the second Q-sort Amy showed some changes. She related to more Merging stage items #64 I'm not as bad as I thought I was., #67 What I feel is important., and #68 I feel very tender toward myself. From Cell 3 (Resolved with interruption of contact) she no longer used #61 to describe herself but now used #55 I'll stay, with the hope that my spouse will change., and #57 Financially I can't afford to leave/stay. This indicated her shift in attitude about the marriage and showed she was still conflicted. The Merging stage item that she now viewed as not descriptive of her was #69 I'm more afraid than condemning of myself. Even though she did not chose #65 I can ease up on myself. she described herself as easier on herself after therapy.

Outcome of the Decision (see Table 12)

On the undecided/decided scale Amy shifted from a score of 5 to 7. She decided to remain married.

Table 12

Undecided/decided scores before and after therapy with decision reached.

	Before	After	Elaboration	Decision
Case Study five: Amy	5	7	No change	Remain married

Elaboration Interview Data

The part of the therapy that stood out most for Amy occurred during a piece of two-chair work.

I remember once when we were doing the duality conversations where I was talking to myself and [therapist] was just really sensitive toward my feelings. She said (Amy put her hand on her chest as she reported this) Try to get in touch with your heart. And I think that- that really-like getting in touch with my heart and actually talking about how much of what my heart thinks and what I'm doing to myself- that kind of comes up in my daily life....That was the strongest.

Amy also said she found the two-chair work important to her.

All the conversations of course I found really-sometimes I had to switch so fast and I just wanted to talk and talk and then all of a sudden I had to kind of switch into another person, you know, and- but it made it clearer and made it kind of clearer for me and I didn't just bubble out with something, you know, what was

up here (she motions to her head.) It was like-hey look at yourself from this side and look at yourself from this side and then see-look at yourself.

Amy explained her thinking about item #65 I can ease up on myself. before and after therapy. It shifted from a score of 2 to 5 (neutral):

I was hard on myself in that I didn't allow any feelings, any positive or beautiful feelings to come - to allow to come up, I had all negative feelings towards [husband] and um I think I'm easier now with myself. I allow feelings to come- to show them -to express them.

Amy sorted item #81 I'm clear on what I'm going to do. at a score of 1 before therapy and 6 after therapy indicating decisiveness. She states:

I think I was very confused when I came in here the first time and I did this [the Q-sort] the first time. I was very exhausted. I had no idea what I'm going to do. All I know I feel terrible. I couldn't make up a decision because a lot of things weren't clear enough in my mind and what I said before- this therapy helped me become really clear and I think that's why I shifted it [the item] over there.

Events Occurring While Involved in the Project

Over the course of the 6 therapy sessions Amy went on a short trip by herself. While on this trip she had a liaison with a man which resulted in her realizing that she still had loving feelings toward her husband. As well, while on the trip she read a book by J. Gray (1992) *Men are from Mars Women are from Venus* which she said affected her decision-making process. When she returned from the trip she

approached her husband with renewed hope for keeping the marriage intact.

During the therapy Amy disclosed that she had had bulimia for many years but was not currently experiencing this disorder. When her husband informed her that he was going to separate she became bulimic again.

Discussion of Results

The results of the ANOVA table were interpreted to indicate that as predicted by theory, the combined factors of Conflict Resolution and the Gestalt concept of Contact were present in Amy's decision-making process before and after therapy. This was an indicator that therapy was a success.

A major factor in the change in her ambivalence toward her husband was from an extraneous event, not the therapy. Nevertheless, there were indications that therapy was successful as defined by the model.

The pattern of Amy's Q-Sorts was somewhat unusual for a person who was conflicted about remaining married before therapy. Although she sorted initially using many items from Cell 4 (Resolved and in contact) she chose only two items from the Merging stage indicating her critic had not softened. Her words supported this in that she did not allow herself to feel "I was hard on myself in that I didn't allow any feelings, any positive or beautiful feelings to come - to allow to come up". It was somewhat unusual for an individual who was undecided to choose so many items showing resolved and in contact to describe herself. There are two possible explanations for this. One is an intrapersonal process that she became aware of during the therapy. Through the

two-chair work she discovered that she would interrupt any negative feelings she began to experience. The interruptive process involved telling herself that she has so many things to feel good about so she *should* feel good and had no right to feel bad. She would then focus on positive aspects of her life and dismiss, deflect or avoid her pain. This process developed as a child. When she approached her mother with any pain or difficulties her mother would shame her and tell her she should feel good because so many people are worse off than herself. Apparently, as a result of this interruptive process she learned to be less aware of herself and probably only imagined how she felt which was more positive than she actually did feel. The other possible explanation is the bulimia disorder from which she suffers. Lack of awareness of how one feels and feeling out of control of one's own life is characteristic of this disorder (Doane, 1983). This is another indicator that her initial Q-sort might be a result of how she imagines she feels, rather than how she actually does feel.

There are several indicators that she did not have a sense of integration before or after therapy. First, for the pre-therapy Q-sort she chose only two of the eight Merging stage items to describe herself. The Merging stage items and the several Integration stage items that she used to describe what she was not like was another indicator that she had not reached integration and was still conflicted. As well, the items from Cell 3 (Resolved with interruption of contact) that she chose to describe what she was like, both before and after therapy, although they have changed, showed she was still conflicted thus still in the Opposition stage.

It was not possible to tell to what extent if any Amy has entered the Integration stage because of how she sorted initially. She did choose more Merging stage items to describe herself after therapy, suggesting her critic had begun to soften. Her choice of more Merging stage items to describe what she is like indicated that therapy was starting to be effective. She was still conflicted as indicated by her choice of two items from Cell 3, #55 I'll stay with the hope that my spouse will change. and # 57 Financially I can't afford to leave/stay. Another indicator that she was still conflicted was her choice of one Merging stage item and three Integration items to describe what she is not like. She found the two-chair technique productive and meaningful. This was supported by her own words "It made things clearer for me...It was like-hey look at yourself from this side and look at yourself from this side and then see-look at yourself".

Due to the extraneous events it was unclear to what extent her decision to change was as a result of the therapy. There were certainly indications that she made an interim decision based upon her renewed feelings of love for her spouse.

The model and the theory underlying of the two-chair technique is somewhat supported by this case study. She seemed to have entered the Merging stage but was not completely through it. She was decided but still in the opposition stage therefore she appeared to be resolved with interruption-of-contact.

Amy's case suggested a partial literal replication of the model and the theory underlying it. This was interpreted to mean that the model and the theory underlying it as put forth by Greenberg (1979; 1983) can be useful to partially describe the decision-making process

of individuals who were conflicted about whether or not to remain married.

Case Study Six: Carol

Demographic data

Carol was a 44-year-old female Caucasian. She had a university degree and worked full time at a local college as a lecturer. She had been married for eighteen years and had never been separated. This was her first marriage and her husband's second. She had three adult stepdaughters, none of whom were living at home. Her husband was 10 years older and had a grade 12 education. She reported their family income level in the \$60-80,000 range.

Carol was in therapy dealing with her issue of whether or not to remain married when her therapist referred her to this project.

ANOVA Results of the O-Sort (see Table 13)

Both before and after therapy the two-way interaction results of Carol's Q-Sorts showed that she could not be categorized successfully according to a joint relationship of the factors of Conflict Resolution (CR) and Contact (C). (Interpretation of these results follow in the discussion section.)

Table 13

ANOVA Results of the Q-Sort: Case study six: Carol.

Source of Variation	<u>Before Therapy</u>				
	Sum of Sq.	DF	Mean Sq.	F-ratio	p-Value
Conflict Resolution (A)	7.687	1	7.687	1.942	.167
Contact (B)	39.420	1	39.420	9.958	.002*
2-Way interaction	1.959	1	1.959	.495	.484

Source of Variation	<u>After Therapy</u>				
	Sum of Sq.	DF	Mean Sq.	F-ratio	p-Value
Conflict Resolution (A)	57.494	1	57.494	17.022	.000*
Contact (B)	18.452	1	18.452	5.683	.019*
2-Way interaction	.032	1	.032	.039	.845

n = 85 items

*p = < .10

Q-Sort Qualitative Results (see Figures 16 and 17)

In the first Q-Sort of the 28 items Carol chose to describe herself, 22 were from the stage of Opposition; 17 of these were from Cell 1 (Unresolved with interruption of contact). She also chose three items from Cell 3 (Resolved with interruption of contact) #47 I've decided to settle for what I've got., #50 I've decided it's better the devil I know than the devil I don't know. and #52 I'll maintain the status quo because I don't know what else to do.

To describe what she was not like Carol used many items from Cell 4 (Resolved and in contact); four of these were Merging stage items. The remaining four Merging stage items she discarded in the neutral category.

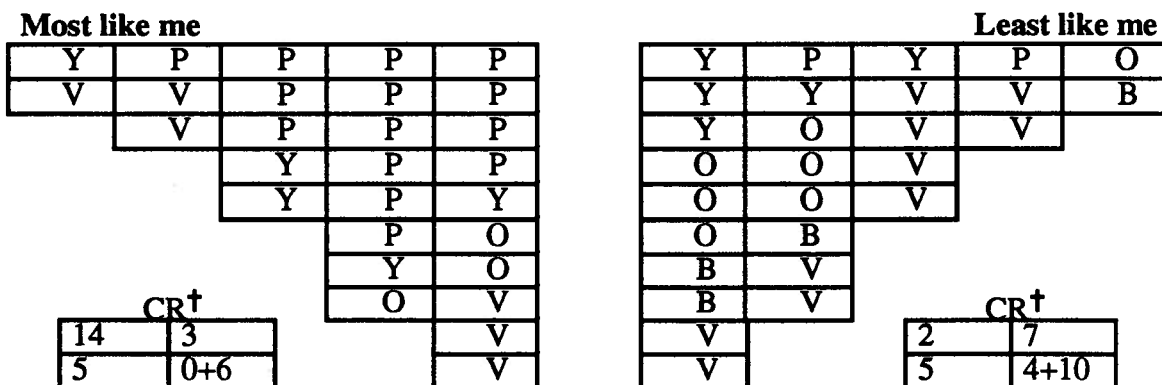
Carol's initial Q-Sort supports her description of herself when she entered therapy. She was in a great deal of confusion. She was very

unhappy in her marriage and unsure about whether or not to remain in it. As well, she was conflicted about her field of work and whether or not to shift careers.

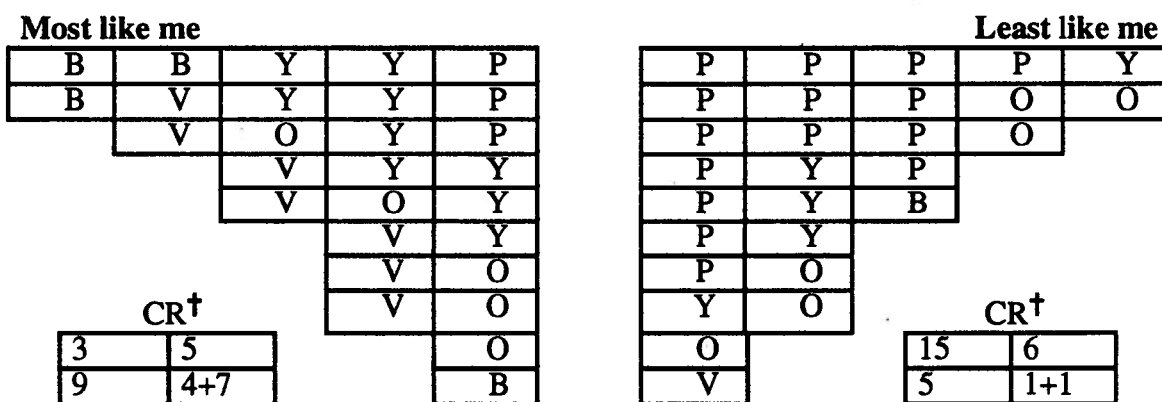
After therapy Carol's Q-sort showed she was still confused and unclear but much less so. Her sorting pattern indicated that she was even more conflicted than before. She now chose only 17 items from the stage of Opposition to describe herself and only three of these were from Cell 1 (unresolved with interruption of contact). She shifted from being very unclear about what she was going to do to being somewhat clear that she was 'going to pursue some process'. Of the Merging stage items she chose four to describe herself #64 I'm not as bad as I thought I was., #65 I can ease up on myself., #67 What I feel is important, and #69 I'm more afraid than condemning of myself. Three of these were placed in the strongest positions. She shifted a great deal in her attitude toward herself as indicated by the shift in items #64 and #70-72; afterwards she viewed herself as worthy and motivated to protect and care for herself.

Her post therapy Q-sort indicated in two ways that she was still conflicted about her marriage. First, to describe what she was like she chose 17 items from the stage of Opposition. Of these, five items were from Cell 3 (Resolved with interruption of contact), in particular, #61 I've decided to lead a separate life within the marriage. Secondly, to describe what she was not like she chose one item from the Merging stage, #62 My deeper feelings are clear to me., and one item from the stage of Integration #81 I'm clear on what I'm going to do. Although Carol was still conflicted about her marriage she reported that she no longer felt blocked or stuck in her decision-making.

Carol



A. Before Therapy



B. After Therapy

Figure 16. Pattern of Q-Sort for Case Study six with neutral items omitted.

Theory underlying the three stage model of the two-chair technique.

(P) Pink Stage 1. Opposition A1B1 Unresolved with interruption of contact.
 (Y) Yellow Stage 1. Opposition A1B2 Unresolved with contact.
 (O) Orange Stage 1. Opposition A2B1 Resolved with interruption of contact.
 (B) Blue Stage 2. Merging A2B2 Resolved with contact
 (V) Violet Stage 3. Integration A2B2 Resolved with contact

CR = Conflict Resolution (factor A) C = Contact (factor B)

1 = level 1. 2 = level 2.

† = Grid showing interaction of levels of Conflict Resolution and Contact.

Note. In main figure each rectangle represents a Q-Sort item.

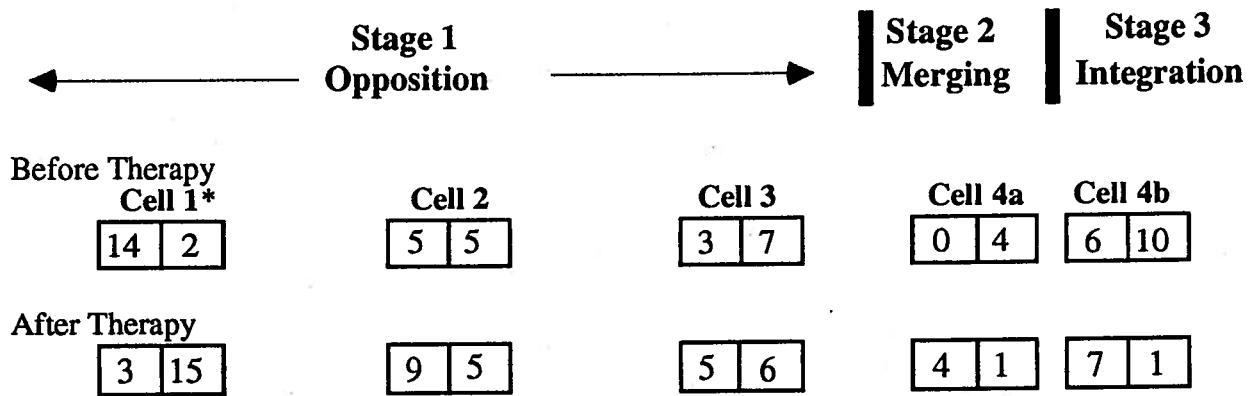


Figure 17. Results of placement of items before and after therapy for Case Study six: Carol.

*Left box = number of items used to describe what participant is like.

Right box = number of items used to describe what participant is not like.

Outcome of the decision. (see Table 14)

Carol was living with her husband when she entered this project and continued to live with him throughout. On the undecided/decided scale she moved from a score of 2 to 6. She decided to remain married. Carol stated she would not make a decision about her marriage at this time because she wanted to continue finding out and getting clear about herself. She continued in therapy.

Table 14

Undecided/decided scores before and after therapy with decision reached.

	Before	After	Elaboration	Decision
Case Study six: Carol	2	6	No change	Remain married

Elaboration Interview Data

Carol sorted differently before and after therapy. She could not be categorized according to the combined relationship of Conflict Resolution and Contact either before or after therapy. After therapy she could be categorized according to both factors although independently of each other. This demonstrated a lack of interaction of Conflict Resolution and Contact as she sorted the items. When asked about the difference in her sorting pattern before and after therapy she explained:

I wasn't even sure at the beginning when I first went in whether I was going to go back to school or anything. I just didn't know what the answers to any of the questions were, any of them that were floating around in my mind because it wasn't just that question. At the end I was thinking of the question because I'd started to think a lot about that during therapy. So I don't think when I came into it I probably wasn't thinking about my marriage that much. I was thinking of my own state of confusion probably more than anything else.

For Carol three areas of the therapy stood out for her. Firstly, she was surprised at her own behaviors in therapy:

Well, first of all I was really surprised that I talked about, you know, I really really felt strange when I talked about the -um - the picking (self-mutilation behavior), because I've never talked to anybody about that before except for my doctor.

Researcher: So that was such a secret and so a surprise that you talked about that.

Yeah. To someone besides my doctor whom I've- didn't really get a very good answer from and I'd always felt that I just wasn't gonna talk about that again.

And the other thing was that I don't usually cry very much, except for maybe cruelty to animals or something like that. But I don't usually feel sorry for myself and cry, but I felt quite comfortable in experiencing feelings that I felt in the therapy sessions.

Secondly, she was surprised by the realization of the split within herself:

I was surprised by- oh- I realized that I didn't really- that I really had this other person, I was. I knew that my negative talk was there, I knew it was there, and I heard enough seminars and things to know that you're supposed to say nice things to yourself, but I never really thought of it as a separate entity or as possibly being something in my past or, I hadn't really thought of that. And I hadn't thought of trying to make a bargain with that person to try and help you, and thought of that as a separate issue.

I think well, you know, why am I being so mean to myself? And then that made me very sad. I've wasted so many years on this and I just would just like to have a life.

Carol acknowledges that she is still working through her issues; that she has not completely resolved her conflict regarding her marriage.

So there still is a little bit of confusion and still is a little bit of unresolved dilemma.

I still would like to know why I am the way I am. Why I am sort of looking for something, and is that normal or...I still have a little bit of that should in me that says that you should be healthy and you should have all these aspects of your life organized and then because some of them aren't, then you should do something about them, you know.

I still feel like this therapy is somehow resolving some things for me and I feel like I'm on a positive roll, so I don't really want to be—I don't feel like I'm

totally undecided right now, because I'm, I really look forward to these sessions and to what I'm learning and finding out.

Carol explained some the item changes she made from the first to the second sort.

- Items #84 I have new feelings and sensations. and #85 I see things differently. make dramatic shifts. They both shifted from a score of 2 to 9.

Well, I definitely see things differently, and I did have some new feelings after that- those sessions, just in really working - on working with my feelings instead of with logic or some kind of convoluted logic or old ten commandments or eleven commandments or whatever they are. That old stuff that comes in, you know, all the time why you should and shouldn't and everything and I'm really trying to work with my feelings, and that's why I'm starting to see things differently.

- Item #67 What I feel is important. shifted from a score of 4 to 9.

Well, the thing that came out every time was that [therapist] would say 'Well what you feel is important' and 'Thank you for sharing your feelings' and that, and I never really thought of that, even though my husband always asks me to show my feelings and what I really want and everything, and so that was something I had thought about as being more important afterwards.

It was the way he questioned me too. I would talk in the third person, and he would say well, talk about what you feel, not about what you think.

- Item #14 Sometimes I feel suicidal. shifted from a score of 6 to 3 and #16 I feel like running away. shifted from a score of 7 to 2.

I do remember those two, I just of remember those two... that really came to a crescendo when I was in [City] in October, and I don't know, I just didn't want to go home, you know.

Yeah. I don't feel like it anymore, as a matter of fact I've made a couple of weekenders that I don't even really want to go on anymore. I used to wish I would get cancer or something so I could just refuse treatment, just go away, you know.

- Item #81 I'm clear on what I'm going to do. shifted from a score of 1 to 4.

Well yeah. It's getting a little bit more clear, because I guess I'm getting a little bit clear that I'm going to pursue some process.

- Item #62 My deeper feelings are clear to me. shifted from a score of 0 to 2.

They're starting to get a little closer, but I still feel that my deeper- deeper feelings are not clear, and yet that does really relieve me. I want to find out what they are, like of couple of little things that I'd really like to clarify.

- Items #64 and #65 shifted from a score of 5 to 10; that is, from the neutral category to the highest score. She explained the shift this way:

Well, I really, - they just didn't mean anything to me, I guess, before, but after, I kept thinking of when we did therapy, the voices, you know, and the other chair and just that, you know, how ridiculous it was, it really, it really did apply to me.

- Items #70-72 shifted a great deal as well. #70 I feel very protective toward myself. moved from a score of 2 to 8. #71 I've decided to take care of myself. from 4 to 7. #72 I am worthy. from 4 to 8.

Events Occurring While Involved in the Project

Therapy proceeded without any unusual occurrences and there were no unusual extraneous events or circumstances while therapy took place.

Discussion of Results

The results of the ANOVA table were interpreted to indicate that, contrary to theory, the combined factors of Conflict Resolution (CR) and the Gestalt concept of Contact (C) were not present in Carol's decision-making process before or after therapy. The theory does not account for the lack interaction between Conflict Resolution and Contact. This suggested that something was interfering or blocking the interaction of Conflict Resolution and Contact or that other factors may be involved. This was an indicator that therapy was not successful as defined by the model.

The pattern of her Q-Sorts showed that Carol sorted according to theoretical expectations for a person who was conflicted about remaining married both before and after therapy. Before therapy she chose mostly items from the stage of Opposition to describe herself. She did not choose any items from the Merging stage to describe herself. As well, she chose half (14) of the items from Cell 4 (Merging and Integration) to describe what she was not like. After therapy she sorted quite differently. To describe herself she still chose mostly items from the stage of Opposition and she also chose four Merging stage items. She chose only two items from the stages of Merging and Integration to describe what she was not like. It seemed that before therapy Carol was in the stage of Opposition. After therapy she

apparently had shifted into the Merging stage but had not entered the stage of Integration. This was interpreted to mean that therapy was having an effect.

Carol's case demonstrated a partial theoretical replication of the model. This was interpreted to mean that the model and the theory underlying it can be useful to partially describe the decision-making process of individuals who have not successfully resolved as defined by the model (that is, from an integrated sense of self) their conflict about whether or not to remain married.

Case Study Seven: Fred

Demographic data

Fred was a 35 year old male Caucasian. He had completed his Grade 12 and worked as a salesman. He had been married for six years and had two preschool children. He had never been separated.

Fred became romantically involved with a woman who had been a long term friend. He sought out marital therapy with his wife. When the therapist told him he would have to give up his girlfriend he refused. The therapist then referred him to this project. Although he was clear about wanting a relationship with his girlfriend more than he wanted his marriage, the pressure from his family and friends resulted in his feeling ambivalent about his decision.

Although Fred scored 8 on the decided/undecided scale he was not dropped from the study. He also marked yes to the question 'Are you undecided about remaining married or separating?'. The discrepancy between these two answers indicates his ambivalence regarding remaining married or separating. As well, in theory testing using Q-methodology participants are chosen with the intent to support theory. In this case according to the model Fred was still in stage 1 (Opposition) his standards and values were still opposed to his wants and needs. If the therapy was successful, as defined by the model, in facilitating movement through the Merging stage then he would shift to a resolution from an integrated rather than conflicted sense of self. For these reasons he remained in the project.

ANOVA Results of the O-sort (see Table 15)

Both before and after therapy the two-way interaction results of Fred's Q-Sorts showed that he could not be categorized successfully according to a joint relationship of the factors of Conflict Resolution (CR) and Contact (C). (Interpretation of these results follow in the discussion section.)

Table 15

ANOVA Results of the O-Sort: Case study seven: Fred.

Source of Variation	<u>Before Therapy</u>				
	Sum of Sq.	DF	Mean Sq.	F-ratio	p-Value
Conflict Resolution (A)	37.312	1	37.312	9.308	.003*
Contact (B)	8.270	1	8.270	2.063	.155
2-Way interaction	.001	1	.001	.000	.989

Source of Variation	<u>After Therapy</u>				
	Sum of Sq.	DF	Mean Sq.	F-ratio	p-Value
Conflict Resolution (A)	68.733	1	68.733	19.724	.000*
Contact (B)	15.844	1	15.844	4.547	.036*
2-Way interaction	3.705	1	3.705	1.063	.306

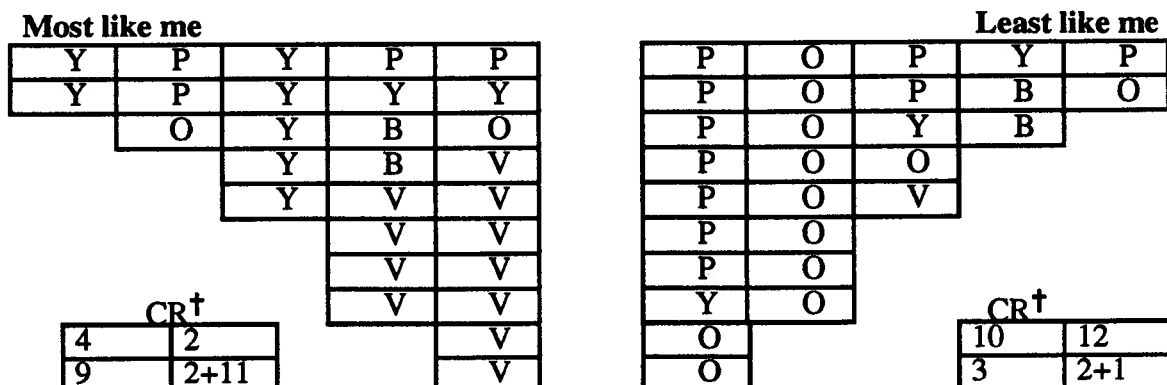
n = 85 items

*p = < .10

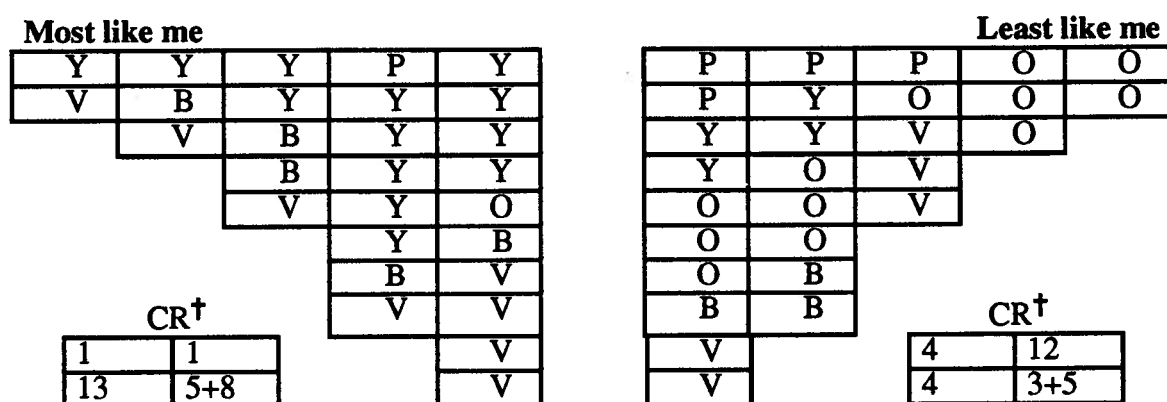
O-sort Qualitative Results (see Figures 18 and 19)

Before therapy Fred chose 15 of the 28 items from the stage of Opposition to describe what he is like. The items were from Cells 1, 2, and 3. The two items from Cell 3 (Resolved with interruption of contact) were #48 I have no choice. and #54 I'll stay for the children's sake. He also chose two Merging stage items and 11 Integration stage items from stage 3, placing these in the weakest positions.

Fred



A. Before Therapy



B. After Therapy

Figure 18. Pattern of Q-Sort for Case Study seven with neutral items omitted.

Theory underlying the three stage model of the two-chair technique.

(P) Pink Stage 1. Opposition A1B1 Unresolved with interruption of contact.

(Y) Yellow Stage 1. Opposition A1B2 Unresolved with contact.

(O) Orange Stage 1. Opposition A2B1 Resolved with interruption of contact.

(B) Blue Stage 2. Merging A2B2 Resolved with contact

(V) Violet Stage 3. Integration A2B2 Resolved with contact

CR = Conflict Resolution (factor A) C = Contact (factor B)

1 = level 1. 2 = level 2.

† = Grid showing interaction of levels of Conflict Resolution and Contact.

Note. In main figure each rectangle represents a Q-Sort item.

To describe what he was not like he chose two items from stage 2 (Merging) #65 I can ease up on myself. and #67 What I feel is important to me. and one item from stage 3. (Integration) #79 It's OK for me to do what is right for me. He left four Merging stage items in the neutral category.

After therapy Fred performed the Q-sort differently. He had shifted into the Merging stage somewhat shown by his choice of five Merging stage items to describe himself but he was still conflicted about his decision. The two Merging stage items he chose in the first Q-sort he placed in stronger positions. The other three Merging stage items he chose to describe himself were #63 I realize my self criticisms are based on my fears, #67 What I feel is important, and #68. I feel very tender toward myself. He chose one item from Cell 3 (Resolved with interruption of contact) #41 I'm so fed up with going around in circles that I've decided to stay/leave.

To describe what he is not like he chose the remainder of the Merging stage items and several more items from Integration stage than he had for the first sort.

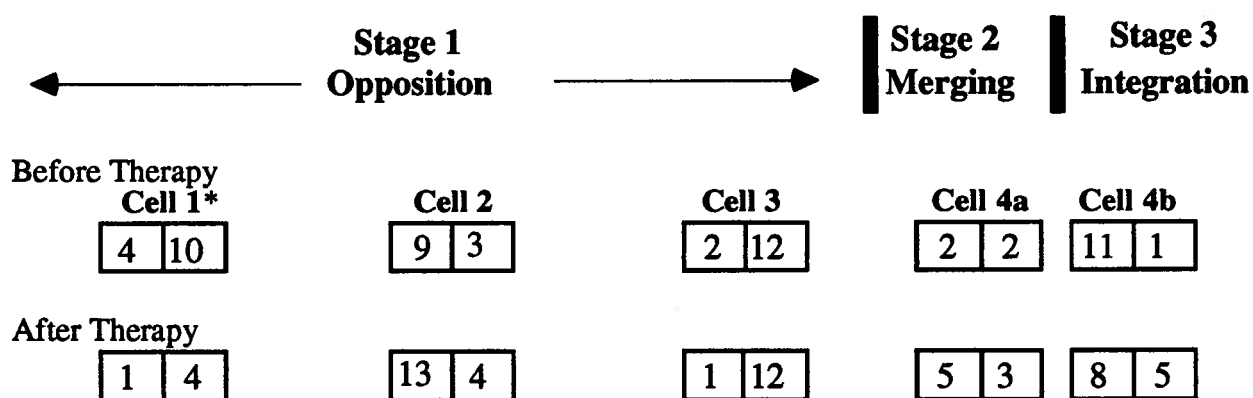


Figure 19. Results of placement of items before and after therapy for Case Study seven: Fred.

*Left box = number of items used to describe what participant is like.

Right box = number of items used to describe what participant is not like.

Outcome of the decision (see Table 16)

On the undecided/decided scale Fred's score remained the same at 8. He had separated during the course of his involvement in the study and he decided to remain separated.

Table 16

Undecided/decided scores before and after therapy with decision reached.

	Before	After	Elaboration	Decision
Case Study seven: Fred	8	8	No change	Separate

Elaboration Interview Data

Fred talked about the lack of change regarding his decision before and after therapy:

Before I came here the decision was made to leave the marriage. I just didn't know why I was feeling like I was feeling, why I was torn and confused. I didn't understand why I was breaking down like I did today. I haven't done that in weeks....I did feel good about what I was doing but something was holding me by the scruff of the neck and wouldn't let me turn around and go back, so that means the decision was made and I just had to understand why I was doing it.

What stood out in the therapy for Fred was issues around his parents:

It [therapy] was really good, and I think the effect was learning about myself and about worrying and pleasing other people. Before I kind of put myself in front of other people.

The first two [sessions] were kind of passive. Nothing struck me. I think it was the third one where we got into my mom- my parents- the fear of losing them. Understanding their age now. Their age never made a difference to me. Like I said, this July when we had the birthday party for my dad and my ??? brother???

happy 70th birthday. I was shocked. I just stood there and I said to somebody, he's not 70 years old. He's still 50, age, where did those last 20 years-30 years go. Like it was, you know, and it scared the hell out of me. It really really scared me, And then he had a heart attack awhile ago. And seeing him in the hospital bed- I've never seen my dad like that. I've seen this guy that never got sick for as long as I can remember. I mean I've seen him have a cold. But I've never seen him stop. And all of a sudden you see this guy hooked up to machines and tubes and you realize that, yes, they're parents but they're not invincible.

...but no one, you see, no one understands that side [of me] which means no one can understand the dilemma I'm in.... But they see this guy that raced cars, raced motorcycles, earned a black-belt in Tai Kwan Do, fought full-contact Tai Kwan Do, did all my other business. They just saw this guy that could just go, and but they don't see the warm loving side [of me]. No no They just see this side that was -can take it, you know.... I don't know why I get so emotional about it. We start talking about my parents I just get emotional. I don't know why. I do know why, Because that side I just talked about never told them I loved them. For all those years. It's just go go go go go. They're always gonna be there.

Fred reported that after the therapy session that focused upon his parents he went and talked to them and succeeded in getting them to understand him in the way he had never been able to do before.

Fred explained shifts he made in the critic softening items.

- Item #67 My feelings are important to me . shifted from a score of 1 to 8.

[Before therapy] what I feel is important didn't matter because I was thinking about this thing about thinking about everybody else, worrying about what other people think or do or what is something as simple as worrying about the neighbors. That they have little kids like we have little kids and they had this whatever when we came to the neighborhood, saying Oh great! more little kids

in the neighborhood and now I'm going to take the little kids away. So I felt, you know, what I'm saying here is, what I feel inside or for me isn't important. [After therapy] when I learned that I have to start doing stuff for myself rather than other people, yeah, it- it [the Q-sort card] was put over there because that was something I learned in the therapy- I can't- and I've said that- I can't worry about what other people think because it's gonna be a crisis ??? for 10 or 15 minutes, maybe one hour and then after that they're not gonna give a damn, get on with their lives, so I can't worry what they think.

- Item #65 I can ease up on myself. shifted from 1 to 4.

I guess what I'm trying to say, what I'm trying to say is, um when I had it over here [before therapy] I was trying to say, I can't ease up on myself cause it's the least like me to do it. And I guess when I moved it to this pile [after therapy] I still feel I can't ease up on myself but um I guess what I'm sort of saying is, it's- it's the least like me because I'm not gonna do it- I'm not gonna stop easing up on myself.

- Item #68 I feel very tender toward myself. shifted from 5 (neutral) to 7.

Because-because I've started to put myself in the thinking of myself position rather than put me at the end of the pile and put everybody in front of me.

- Item #62 My deeper feelings are clear to me. and #66 What I want and need is worth fighting for. shifted slightly. #62 from a score of 7 to 9. #66 from a score of 7 to 8.

Both those items refer to [lover] and how much she means to me. It's important. She's worth hanging on to, so that's why they progressed up.

- Item #29 I want a better life for myself. demonstrated a shift in perception of his circumstances. It shifted from a score of 10 to 6.

It's still important to me but to make it that strong, powerful, um oh I still want to put other stuff in front of me, as in, like the kids and [wife]. I'm still putting them in front of me, so I do want a better life. I'm willing to sacrifice some of that better life to give them a good life too....In the beginning I came in here thinking I- you know- I want this all, not thinking, but I guess I had- I had, sort of, the inside attitude that, yeah, I want this better life, but then I realize now, I guess, I have to give some to have some.

Fred's conflict is clearly demonstrated by the placement of items #71 and #79. #71 I've decided to take care of myself. shifts from a score of 5 (neutral) to 10 showing a strong shift within himself after therapy yet #79 It's OK for me to do what is right for me. does not move. It remains at a score of 2 on the Least-like-me side. At the Elaboration interview the only changes that he made were in the post Q-sort. He switched #40 I hold myself back from taking action to resolve my decision. (score 8) with #76 I can make a difference in my life. (score 6) indicating he was stronger in acting on his decision. Although Fred had decided to take care of himself he still did not believe it was OK for him to do so.

After therapy Fred was actually more conflicted than before as indicated by the shift in items just previously mentioned as well as #80 I can reconcile the differences within myself. from 6 to 4, #82 I feel at peace with myself. from 5 (neutral) to 4, and #83 I feel relief. from 5 (neutral) to 2.

His self esteem was lower as indicated by the shift in items #72 I am worthy., #74 I am trustworthy., and #77 I value myself. from a score of 6 to 5 (neutral).

One item, #48 I've decided that I have no choice, Fred conceptualized differently before and after therapy. It shifted from 9 to 5. For the first Q-sort he felt he had no choice but to leave the marriage. For the second Q-sort he felt:

It's, after last night, it's not leave the marriage, but I have no choice, I can't do it (separate) in a soft helping way. I have to be cold and blunt now. I have no choice.... I've tried to do it and be as helpful and- and- and work through the best I can to try to help the pain and suffering for everybody else but, I just got to be blunt now. There's no doubt about it.

After therapy Fred came to a new decision regarding his children as shown by the shift in item #54 I'll stay for the children's sake from a score of 6 to 3.

I realize that I can't stay for the children's sake because I won't be happy and it won't do them any good.... Now I can see that I just wouldn't be happy and it wouldn't do the kids any good not to see love in the house, and I wouldn't show it, not- I'd show it to them. They wouldn't *see* love.

I kept having- I kept having to sort out why I would go back and- and it- the answer always came that if you're gonna go back to the marriage it has to be for [wife], it can't be for the kids. It can't be for the house. It can't be financially. To have a good marriage I have to want and love [wife] and that's the only reason to go back to, and everything else will fall in place and that's what I kept sorting and sorting and sorting and the answer always came out the same. There's nothing that I want to go back to this person for, so that's probably why it moved over there [Least-Like-Me side] Putting it there means I still have feelings and thoughts about the kids. I'd like to be there, that's why I didn't discard it 100%. I had to put it- I had to keep it in the picture showing that I'm still thinking about the kids.

At the Elaboration interview Fred commented on his reaction to seeing the Q-sorts.

But today when I sat down and read it I saw- well, like I said to you- I see a person that knows what he wants to do, but I see a person that's having trouble doing it. Like some of the cards. I saw it. It was black and white. I could see it.

Yeah. And then when I looked at the first [Q-sort], remember, I said I see a person that's determined and strong, and now I see a person that's not so strong and weak, or torn or tied. I don't know what word to use. But, yeah, I see two different people.... I came in with the attitude I can deal with it. I'll deal with it my way and I can do it. I've done it all the time. Now I see a person that's having trouble dealing with it, and it's hurting, big!

Events Occurring While Involved in the Project

Therapy proceeded as expected and there were no unusual extraneous events or circumstances while Fred underwent therapy. However, it was worth noting that Fred moved out of his home and into a place with friends the first day of therapy.

Discussion of results

The results of the ANOVA were interpreted to indicate that, contrary to theory, the combined factors of Conflict Resolution and the Gestalt concept of Contact were not present in Fred's decision-making process before or after therapy. The theory does not account for the lack of interaction between these two factors. This suggested that something was interfering or blocking the interaction of the factors or that other factors may be involved. This suggested that therapy was not successful as defined by the model.

The pattern of Fred's Q-Sorts showed he sorted as predicted for a person who was conflicted about remaining married before and after therapy. His pre-Q-sort showed that he was conflicted and that his decisiveness did not stem from an integrated sense of self. He chose only two Merging stage items to describe himself which indicated that his critic had not softened. His choice of two items from Cell 3

(Resolved with interruption of contact) to describe himself also indicated his decision was not from an integrated sense of self. After therapy he had shifted somewhat but, as predicted by theory, he felt even more conflicted than before therapy. He chose more Merging stage items to describe himself, suggesting his critic had begun to soften. This was supported by the description of his experience; that he had more compassion for himself and was acting on this by putting himself first instead of other people. He seemed more aware of his feelings but apparently he still felt strongly that he did not have permission to do what he felt was right for him. He chose more items from stage 3 (Integration) to describe what he was not like. His choice of item #41 I'm so fed up with going around in circles that I've decided to stay/leave. to describe himself also demonstrated that his post therapy decision stemmed from conflict, not from an integrated sense of himself. This was more indication that therapy was not successful.

Fred's case demonstrated a partial theoretical replication of the model. This was interpreted to mean that the model and the theory underlying it as put forth by Greenberg (1979; 1983) can be useful to partially describe the decision-making process of individuals who are unable to successfully resolve as defined by the model (that is, from an integrated sense of self) their conflict about whether or not to remain married.

Case Study Eight: Donald

Demographic data

Donald was a 51-year-old male Caucasian. He had completed Grade 12 and worked full time at a local university in a technical capacity. He reported the family income in the \$40-60,000 range. His wife also had completed Grade 12. He had been married 29 years and had never been separated. He had two adult children, one of whom lives at home.

Donald sought out therapy to help him resolve his dilemma regarding whether or not to give up his marriage for his lover of two years. His therapist referred him to this project.

ANOVA Results of the Q-sort (see Table 17)

Before therapy, Donald sorted the Q-sort items according to theoretical expectation for a person who was undecided about remaining married. The two-way interaction results of his Q-Sorts showed that he could be categorized successfully according to a joint relationship of Conflict Resolution (CR) and Contact (C)

After therapy, Donald sorted differently. The two-way interaction results of his Q-Sorts showed that he could not be categorized successfully according to a joint relationship of the two factors. According to theoretical expectations he should sort the items according to an interaction of Conflict Resolution and Contact after therapy as well as before regardless of whether therapy was successful or not, as defined by the model. (Interpretation of these results follow in the discussion section.)

Table 17

ANOVA Results of the Q-Sort: Case study one: Donald.

Source of Variation	<u>Before Therapy</u>				
	Sum of Sq.	DF	Mean Sq.	F-ratio	p-Value
Conflict Resolution (A)	3.273	1	3.273	.966	.329
Contact (B)	72.076	1	72.076	21.275	.000*
2-Way interaction	20.487	1	20.487	6.047	.016*

Source of Variation	<u>After Therapy</u>				
	Sum of Sq.	DF	Mean Sq.	F-ratio	p-Value
Conflict Resolution (A)	42.574	1	42.574	10.556	.002*
Contact (B)	.499	1	.499	.124	.726
2-Way interaction	.311	1	.311	.077	.782

n = 85 items

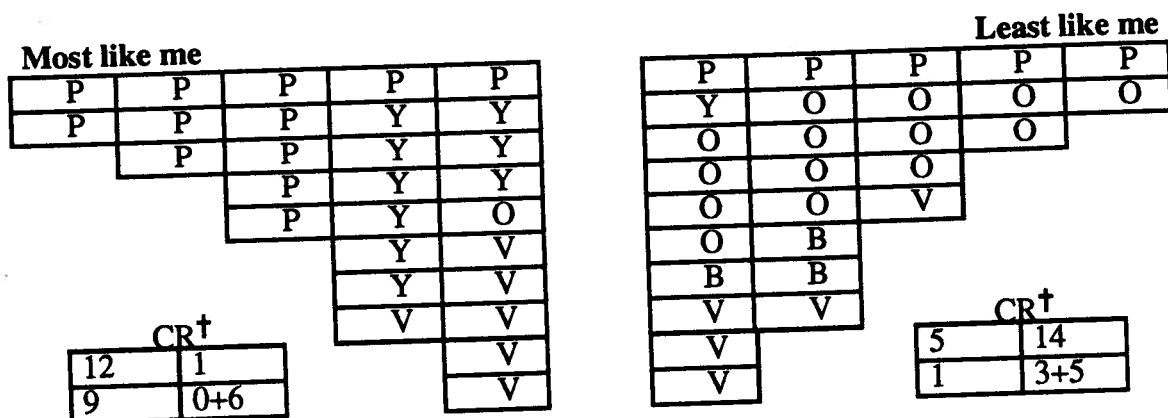
*p = < .10

Q-sort Qualitative Results (see Figures 20 and 21)

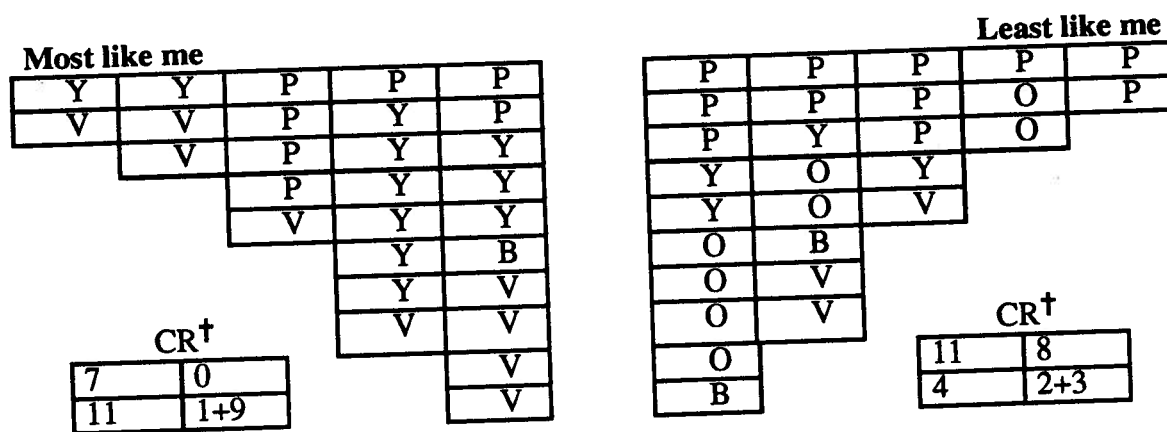
In the pre-Q-sort Donald used mostly items from the Opposition stage to describe himself. Of the 28 items used to describe what he was like 22 of them were from Cells 1, 2, and 3. The item #61 I've decided to live a separate life within the marriage. gave a strong indication of his conflicted state regarding his marriage.

To describe what he is not like Donald used eight items from the Integration stage. These were items from Cell 4 (Resolved and in contact); three of these were Merging stage items; #62 My deeper feelings are clear to me., #65 I can ease up on myself. and #68 I feel very tender toward myself.

Donald



A. Before Therapy



B. After Therapy

Figure 20. Pattern of Q-Sort for Case Study eight with neutral items omitted.

Theory underlying the three stage model of the two-chair technique.

(P) Pink Stage 1. Opposition A1B1 Unresolved with interruption of contact.
 (Y) Yellow Stage 1. Opposition A1B2 Unresolved with contact.
 (O) Orange Stage 1. Opposition A2B1 Resolved with interruption of contact.
 (B) Blue Stage 2. Merging A2B2 Resolved with contact
 (V) Violet Stage 3. Integration A2B2 Resolved with contact
 CR = Conflict Resolution (factor A) C = Contact (factor B)
 1 = level 1. 2 = level 2.

† = Grid showing interaction of levels of Conflict Resolution and Contact.
 Note. In main figure each rectangle represents a Q-Sort item.

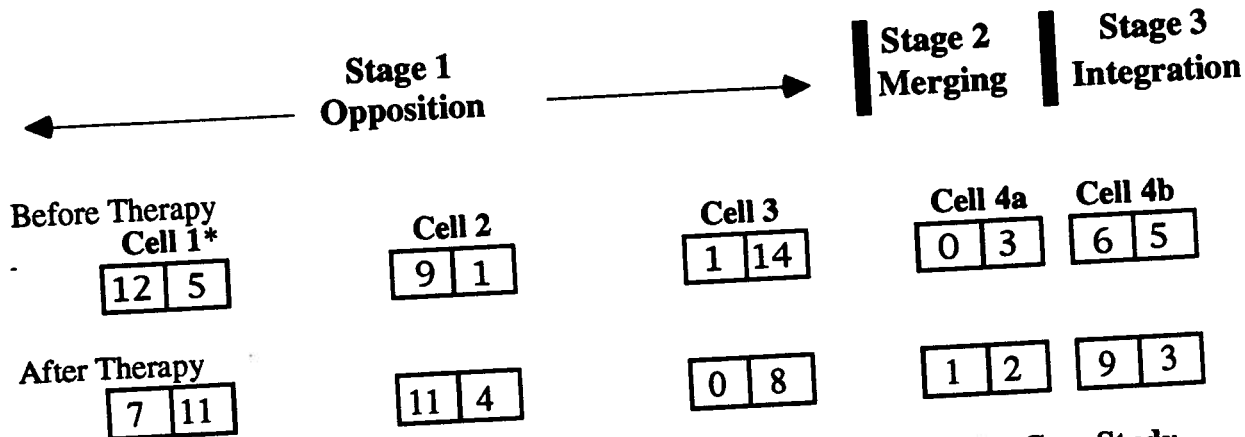


Figure 21. Results of placement of items before and after therapy for Case Study eight: Donald.

*Left box = number of items used to describe what participant is like.

Right box = number of items used to describe what participant is not like.

After therapy, Donald's Q-sort showed that he was no clearer about his decision and was still conflicted; he remained in the Opposition stage. There were some changes. He chose fewer items from Cell 1 (Unresolved with interruption of contact) and more items from Cell 4 (Resolved and in contact) to describe himself. He no longer chose #61 or any other items from Cell 3 (Resolved with interruption of contact). There was very little indication that he had entered the Merging stage in that he chose only one of the eight Merging stage items to describe himself, #67 What I feel is important. He still chose two Merging stage items to describe what he is not like, #62 My deeper feelings are clear to me. and #68 I feel very tender toward myself. The remaining Merging stage items were discarded into the neutral category.

Outcome of the Decision (see Table 18)

On the undecided/decided scale Donald moved from a score of 1 to 7. He decided to remain married. At the Elaboration interview one week later he reported returning to feeling very ambivalent and revised his score to 5.

Table 18

Undecided/decided scores before and after therapy with decision reached.

	Before	After	Elaboration	Decision
Case Study eight: Donald	1	7	5	Remain married

Donald performed the post-Q-sort not based upon how he felt but upon what he *assumed was going to happen*. Because certain interactions had occurred between him and his lover since therapy had ended, he assumed that she was going to end the relationship. This then precipitated his decision for him—to remain married, no longer living a separate life within the marriage. However, not only had his lover not ended the relationship but instead had renewed her investment in it.

In fact, my dilemma now right today, is probably in a worse situation than I was when I first came in, because I've- now find her saying that she's- she can't live without me being with her, and that- which is I find ridiculous, but then again that's her feelings.

At the Elaboration Interview Donald revised his score to 5. He still decided to remain married. He expressed surprise at this turn of events and stated he felt back to where he started at the beginning.

Elaboration Interview Data

What stood out in the therapy for Donald was experiencing and expressing his feelings in a way he had never done before.

I guess the most meaningful thing, or what first came to my mind when you said that is being- finding myself expressing myself the way I have never expressed myself. Like, I mean, like even crying for instance in expressing my feelings. I mean I never do that.

Researcher, "Do you have any idea what made that possible for you to do?"

Well, I think it was [Therapist] more or less making me go-feeling that way. Like wanting to feel my inner feelings or that kind of thing. That's what I think what brought it on.

Although Donald experienced himself in a new way he still did not trust what he felt.

One thing that I did feel out that though- even if I feel my inner feelings, I still felt questionable about those.

What also stood out for Donald was his difficulty with the two-chair experiment.

Just to get used to the two chair thing. I found that difficult to get into.

- Items #5, #62 and #67 also indicated Donald's struggle with his feelings. Donald misunderstood item #5. I don't know what I feel anymore. He shifted it from a score of 0 to 4. Donald responded to the item as if it said 'I know what I feel.' Before therapy he did not at all know how he felt so he put that item at the extreme of Least-like-me. After

therapy, he was somewhat aware of what he felt so shifted it to a score of 4. At the elaboration interview he states;

Because I'm- I still don't know what I feel anymore, but it's not as strong....I felt like I was mixed up, very, but I don't feel that way as much anymore, but I still feel it.

- Item #67 What I feel is important. shifted from a score of 5 (neutral) to 6. This indicates Donald was beginning to value his feelings. It showed only a slight shift in the critic softening.

That's through therapy because my feelings were brought out and it made me realize more about my feelings and when I read that [Item #67] I related to it.

- Item #62 My deeper feelings are clear to me. shifted from a score of 3 to 4. Well, my deeper feelings are not, and they're not clear to me, and this is probably where the 'crutch' of the whole thing is- is where I-you know- where I am, and I'm still not really clear on it.

Donald's explanations of his sorting of items #18, #19, #24, #64, and #70 showed how he conceptualized the Q-sort and the purpose of his involvement in the project. He was asked to explain the change in the way he sorted these items before and after therapy:

- Item #18 I'm torn. shifted from a score of 9 to 3. Because he feels less torn than before, he sorted this item on the Least-like-me side in spite of the fact that this item still described him.

Over there [pre-Q-sort] I was torn apart over there cause I didn't know what the hell was going on, and over here [post-Q-sort] now I realize more what the heck's going on. I still am probably torn, but I'm not, it's not something that sticks out anymore.

- Item #19 I'm afraid. shifted from a score of 10 to 4. Donald focused a great deal on his decision and the pressure to decide rather than on the process he had of frightening himself.

I'm-it's not like me anymore cause I'm not afraid. I think that probably helped me out a lot in the therapy because afraid, meaning what's gonna happen around my decision. Now I know more about- I guess in time and in therapy, that, you know, I know more about what I have to face so I'm really not afraid. I'm more or less built some confidence up that- so that doesn't bother me now.

- Item # 24 I expect/demand a lot of myself. shifted from a score of 5 (neutral) to 10. He viewed this item as referring to the pressure of deciding over the course of this project rather than relating it to his high standards and values.

It came to my mind right away because at the state that I'm in now, going through therapy, you know, I- I expected something for me to make a decision. That's, you know, to come up with something, and so I put a lot of demand on myself to make the decision.....Because I felt that kind of pressure within myself and my partners as well.

Item # 70 I feel very protective towards myself. shifted from a score of 7 to 2. Because he had a lover, he related this item to his need to lie and then remember what he had said to whom. Again, as with Item #18, he sorted this item on the Least-like-me side in spite of the fact that it still described what he was like. He did not conceptualize this item as a new sense of protectiveness that occurs as a result of the critic softening.

I was very very protective towards myself at the beginning because of what was happening around me, I had to be, I still have to be total aware....I felt-I felt that very strong at the beginning, but I-I still feel it, but it's not as strong.

- Item #64 I'm not as bad as I thought I was. remained in the neutral category, scoring 5. Donald related to this item but did not use to describe himself. When asked about this item and the fact he didn't move it he responded:

Well, I still think I'm bad. You know what I mean.

Donald's self esteem improved in spite of the fact that his critic softened only slightly. This was indicated by the shift in items #72, #74, #75.

- Item #72 I feel worthy. shifted from a score of 6 to 9.

Yeah. I remember putting that [item] there because I just-I just feel that- I feel whatever decision I make I just feel more worthy of myself, whatever I'm gonna do, and I still felt worthy of myself before but not as strong. I feel stronger now.

- Item #74 I am trustworthy. shifted from a score of 5 (neutral) to 9. Even though Donald knew his dishonest behavior with both his wife and lover was not trustworthy behavior he felt more trustworthy within himself.

Yeah. Because- that's funny, you know, it's like a double negative again too, because I'm not trustworthy at all really, but I am feeling more trustworthy. I- I felt strongly about that because I am, whatever I'm- decision that I make to do, I'm- I honestly believe that I'll be very trustful. Do be honest with myself. In spite of, you know, the lies you're living in your life, that's not what it's about. It's about what you think of yourself.

- Item #75 I am responsible shifted from a score of 6 to 10.

Well, I am *damn* responsible. I feel, yeah, strong. Yeah, it [therapy] brought that out, I guess, my inner feelings brought that out.

- Item #36 I can't accept myself as I am. shifted from a score of 7 to 4. This showed that Donald felt even worse about himself after therapy than before.

Donald explained his state of mind when he performed the post Q-Sort; he was convinced his lover was going to end the relationship which would mean he would remain in his marriage:

"Because as of last Thursday, I honestly felt that things were going to change in a - with the lady that I'm seeing- and I just thought that she had had enough and she didn't want to go on anymore. In other words she was going to make a decision and I felt that I would, with that decision, would be - would be obviously not to be with me anymore, and I was building up in myself to live with that decision, so I was looking for all the good things in my marriage that would help me stay and help me forget about that.

His lover did not end the relationship as he expected and he returned to conflicted position regarding whether or not to remain married.

In fact, my dilemma now right today is probably in a worse situation than I was when I first came in, because I've now find her saying that she's-she can't live without me being with her and (that which is I find ridiculous) but then again that's her feelings, that how she feels.

Events Occurring While Involved in the Project

Therapy proceeded as expected and there were no unusual extraneous events or circumstances while Donald underwent therapy. However, he did not have a clear grasp on how to perform the Q-sort. Donald misunderstood some of the items or placed them on the Least-like-me side when he meant to show they described him, but less so.

Just before Donald performed the post therapy Q-Sort circumstances had occurred between him and his lover that convinced him she would end the relationship.

Discussion of results

The results of the ANOVA table were interpreted to indicate that as predicted by theory, the combined factors of Conflict Resolution and the Gestalt concept of Contact were present in Donald's decision-making process before therapy. This would suggest that Conflict Resolution and Contact were interrelated as expected on theoretical grounds. After therapy results of the ANOVA table were interpreted to indicate that the combined factors of Conflict Resolution and Contact were not present in his decision-making. The theory does not account for the lack interaction between Conflict Resolution and Contact after therapy. This suggested that after therapy something was interfering or blocking the interaction of the factors or that other factors may be involved. This was supported by Donald's explanation of his state of mind when he performed the Q-Sort after therapy; that he responded to the items according to what he believed would happen. This suggested that therapy was not successful as defined by the model.

The pattern of Donald's Q-Sorts showed that he sorted as predicted for a person who was conflicted about remaining married before therapy and decided after therapy. However, the decision after therapy appeared to be from a conflicted rather than integrated sense of self. Before therapy he chose mostly items from the stage of Opposition to describe himself. He chose no items from the Merging stage to describe himself. As well, he chose three Merging stage items and five Integration stage items to describe what he was not like. After therapy he still chose mostly items from the stage of Opposition to describe himself. He still chose items from the stages of Merging and Integration to describe what he was not like but fewer of them. Evidently he was not able to reach a decision through integration of the opposed aspects of himself. One of the major reasons for this was his apparent reluctance to experience his feelings. This was supported by his words that even when he experienced the value of accessing and expressing his feelings he still resisted it by doubting what he felt. As a result, he appeared unable to access his deeper feelings which even he described as the 'crutch' of the matter. Secondly, it seemed that he found the two-chair-technique difficult and was able to experience its effectiveness only slightly. This was further evidence that therapy was unsuccessful.

Donald's case demonstrated a partial theoretical replication of the model and the theory underlying it. It came very close to demonstrating a complete theoretical replication. This was interpreted to mean that the model and the theory underlying it can be useful to mostly describe the decision-making process of individuals who are

unable to successfully resolve (that is, from an integrated sense of self) their conflict about whether or not to remain married.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

In order to facilitate discussion of the results in this chapter the operational definition of the two-chair technique, given at the end of Chapter I, is reiterated. The results are then discussed according to the type of replication of theory that the cases produced. This is followed by limitations of the study, recommendations for future research and a final summary.

This study considered whether or not it could be demonstrated that the three stage model of the two-chair technique illuminated the theory and practice of the technique. In the two-chair experiment, two opposing sides of an intrapsychic conflict are separated and brought into contact with each other, verbally and non-verbally. One side, named the critic, evolves into an aspect of the self that is usually harsh toward and critical of the other aspect of the self. It embodies the standards and values of the individual. The other side, named the experiencing self, evolves into an aspect of the self that usually is rebellious, devious and/or acts like a weakling in relationship to the critic. It embodies the wants and needs of the individual. It is the differences between an individual's standards and values and his or her wants and needs that create the conflict. Each side takes responsibility for its side of the conflict. Resolution of the conflict occurs when the critic softens into compassion toward or fear for the experiencing self, allowing the experiencing self to express itself fully and clearly to the critic; the critic then embraces the experiencing self in a tender loving manner. Resolution is either precipitated by a new perception of each side and/or reached through negotiation. Standards and values are revised and integrated with legitimate wants and needs.

Discussion of Replications

According to replication logic, if similar results are obtained from several cases replication is said to have taken place (Yin, 1989). Cases are carefully selected so that they offer the best chance of producing a literal or theoretical replications. Literal replications are ones that produce predictable results according to the theory under investigation. Theoretical replications are ones that produce contrary results but for predictable reasons (Yin). Replications that are neither literal or theoretical are considered to demonstrate areas where the theory is inadequate. These replications may be partially literal or partially theoretical.

Literal Replication

Of the eight single case studies presented, one, Hector, produced a literal replication. On the basis of his ANOVA results, as predicted by theory, before and after therapy he could be categorized according to a joint relationship of the factors Conflict Resolution and Contact. The pattern of his Q-Sorts showed movement through all three stages of the model, Opposition, Merging and Integration. His final Q-sort showed no conflict. His descriptions of his experience matched the pattern of his Q-sorts. He reported that he found the two-chair method very effective. He moved from unresolved to resolved regarding his marriage, and whether or not to stay in it. He came to a decision that he reported feeling very good about and acted upon it. The decision was still in effect two months after therapy ended.

From a theoretical view Hector's results are interpreted to mean that therapy was successful and that the joint relationship of Conflict

Resolution and Contact could be used to describe his decision-making process through the three stage model. Specifically, it meant that as he came into contact with himself, resolution of his conflict issue was facilitated. He began in a state of conflict, experiencing interruption of contact and a sense of being unresolved with aspects of himself opposed (Opposition). Over the course of therapy he came more into contact with self. His critic softened, allowing his experiencing self to achieve clear expression (Merging). As a result he came to feel more accepting of and tender toward himself which enabled him to develop a new sense of himself as an integrated whole (Integration). This precipitated resolution of his conflict issue.

Theoretical Replications

The study did not generate theoretical replications. However, the results from Donald's Q-Sorts demonstrated a nearly perfect theoretical replication of the three stage model. Based upon the ANOVA results from Donald's Q-Sorts, before therapy he could be categorized according to a joint relationship of Conflict Resolution and Contact. After therapy, however, contrary to theory, he could be categorized only according to Conflict Resolution. This meant that before therapy he was unresolved and experiencing interruption of contact. After therapy, his sort indicated that he was resolved, with some items showing resolved with contact and some items indicating resolved with interruption of contact. He began in the Opposition stage and the pattern of his Q-Sorts showed no movement through the stages of Merging and Integration. His final Q-sort showed conflict. His descriptions of his experience matched the pattern of his Q-Sorts. In spite of the fact that he had difficulty relating to the two-chair technique, Q-Sort items he chose to describe himself

indicated that he was able to access some of his feelings and experiences but not on a deep level. His critic did not soften and he did not achieve an integrated sense of self. He did not come to a new sense of himself or perceive his situation or himself any differently. He came to a decision that was short-lived, less than a week. He returned to his initial state of conflict and confusion. Without contact he did not get a sustained resolution.

From a theoretical view these results were interpreted to mean that therapy was not successful as defined by the model. He came somewhat more into contact with self but not enough to enable his critic to soften. Thus, at the end of the six sessions of therapy he felt resolved but not from a sense of being in contact with himself and not from a sense of integration of the opposed aspects of himself. At the elaboration interview he stated that he made the decision based upon what he assumed his lover was going to do; that is, upon his cognitions not his sense of self. He was still conflicted, still in the Opposition stage, resulting in a decision that was forced. His words "In fact, my dilemma now, right today, is probably in a worse situation than I was when I first came in..." are confirmation that therapy was not successful for Donald.

For a perfect theoretical replication to have been produced the ANOVA results from Donald's Q-Sorts would have demonstrated an interaction between the factors of Conflict Resolution and Contact both before and after unsuccessful treatment. According to the theory, decision-making occurs due to an integration of the factors of Conflict Resolution and Contact whether or not therapy is successful. In Donald's case Conflict Resolution and Contact interacted in his decision-making before therapy but not after. This indicated that he responded

differently to these factors before and after therapy. The theory does not account for this change in his decision-making process.

Other Replications

The remaining case studies are neither literal nor theoretical replications. They are partial replications that also gave some support to the three stage model.

The case studies of Beverley, Gail and Edward produced partial literal replications. After therapy, like Hector, Beverley and Gail sorted as predicted. They chose items indicating they were resolved and experienced being in contact. They went through the Merging stage and were solidly in the Integration stage at the end of therapy. They had shifted to choosing items mostly from Cell 4 (resolved and in contact) after therapy. At the end of therapy, Edward also sorted as predicted. He appeared to be in the Merging stage, but not completely through it, and had entered the Integration stage. Evidently, after therapy, they all responded to a joint relationship of Conflict Resolution and Contact. The difference between Hector and these three cases showed in the Q-Sorts before therapy. In his Q-Sorts, Hector chose items mostly from Cell 1 (unresolved and interruption of contact) before therapy and Cell 4 after therapy. Beverley, Gail and Edward were in Opposition stage before therapy but did not choose items mostly from Cell 1. It seemed that initially they did not respond to a joint relationship of Conflict Resolution and Contact. This suggested that something unpredicted was occurring before therapy in regard to these two factors or that they were responding to some other factor(s) not targeted by this study. The change in how they sorted before and after therapy was interpreted to mean that therapy had an effect on their decision-making process. It

was also interpreted to mean that a joint relationship of Conflict Resolution and Contact was involved in successful outcomes of therapy using the two-chair technique with the decision of whether to remain married or separate.

The case studies of Amy, Carol and Fred were partial theoretical replications. Before and after therapy, Amy responded according to a joint relationship of Conflict Resolution and Contact but did not choose items predominantly from Cell 1 to describe herself before therapy as expected. Neither Carol nor Fred responded according to a joint relationship to Conflict Resolution and Contact before or after therapy. After therapy all chose more Merging stage items to describe themselves indicating they had entered the Merging stage but were not completely through it. This was interpreted to mean that their critics were in the early part of the softening process. Their own words supported this interpretation. At the end of therapy they all made decisions that showed they were still in the Opposition stage. They experienced being somewhat more in contact than before therapy. This demonstrated some support for the theory, specifically that going through the Merging stage is necessary for therapy using two-chair technique to be successful.

From a theoretical viewpoint, although the participants did not always respond according to a joint relationship of Conflict Resolution and Contact, the patterns of the Q-Sorts, along with participants' own words, support the stages of the model. As predicted by the theory, to describe what they are like before therapy, almost all participants chose mostly items from the stage of Opposition, indicating that they experienced parts of the self opposed to each other. There were indications of conflict in the initial sorts. After therapy, Beverley and Gail, who went through all three stages of the model and showed no conflict in their sorts, chose

mostly items from Merging and Integration stages to describe themselves. They chose very few items from the Merging and Integration stages to describe what they are *not* like. The participants who did not go through the Merging stage still chose items mostly from the stage of Opposition to describe themselves after therapy.

Also, although the case studies of Beverley, Gail and Edward are not complete literal replications they still gave some support to the three stage model and the theory underlying it. They demonstrated support of the stages of Opposition, Merging and Integration. They indicated that a joint relationship of Conflict Resolution and Contact was involved in successful outcome using two-chair technique. The effect of these factors was not always as predicted or expected and this suggested areas of the theory that need further development.

Discussion of Results

The cases of Hector and Donald showed that the theory underlying the model of the two-chair technique can be useful for describing and explaining individuals' processes through successful and unsuccessful resolution of conflict using the two-chair technique for the decision of whether or not to remain married. According to the three stage model a successful resolution is one in which the critic softens, allowing clear expression of the experiencing self, which leads to an integrated sense of self that is new. An unsuccessful resolution is one in which the critic does not soften and the conflicted aspects of the self remain opposed to each other. These two replications show the interactive relationship between the factors of Conflict Resolution and Contact involved in the two-chair technique. That is, individuals who are unresolved regarding a decision experience interruption of contact and as a result of therapy

using two-chair technique they experience increased contact with self, which facilitates resolution.

The theory predicted that before and after therapy all participants would be able to be categorized according to an interactive relationship between the factors of Conflict Resolution and Contact. Each item was constructed of a combination of one level of Conflict Resolution, for example, unresolved, and one level of Contact, for example, interruption-of-contact. It was predicted that all participants would respond to the combination of the factors in the items, that is, they would choose mostly items from Cell 1 to describe themselves before therapy and mostly items from Cell 4 to describe themselves after successful therapy. In fact, they did not. Before therapy, only three participants responded according to the joint relationship of Conflict Resolution and Contact. After therapy five participants responded according to the joint relationship of both factors. This added additional support for the interactive nature of these factors in successful therapy.

There are two reasons embedded in the theory that account for participants sorting other than as predicted. One is the concept of confluence from the stage of Opposition. Due to a lack of clear boundaries individuals do not have a sense of the split within themselves (Greenberg, 1979). Before therapy, the lack of awareness of self could explain why individuals do not respond to the joint relationship of the factors Conflict Resolution and Contact. Individuals experiencing a great deal of interruption-of-contact may be unaware of the split within themselves; they may be aware of only one side of the split or not be able to focus in on either side. Gail's words support this, "But again I've spent so many years everywhere at once, not being able to focus in or not knowing how to focus in". Her sort (Figure 10) showed that she chose items from each Cell to

describe both what she is like and what she is not like in such a manner that they balanced each other, indicating that she could not be categorized into any of the cells making up the stages of the model. The other reason, also from the stage of Opposition, stems from the concept of splits, particularly the subject/object split (Greenberg, 1979). Individuals interrupt or block their own awareness of self often by scaring and doubting themselves. "The person is usually fully invested in one side of the self in this situation" (Greenberg, 1979, p. 318). Beverley supported this with her comment, "I think when I'm terrorizing myself like that I can't make a decision." Carol stated; "I wasn't even sure at the beginning when I first went in whether I was going to go back to school or anything. I was thinking of my own state of confusion probably more than anything else". As these participants performed the initial Q-sort they chose items which indicated they were both resolved experiencing interruption of contact and resolved experiencing being in contact. It is possible that some unknown factors, or combinations of factors, were involved. This demonstrated that even though some individuals may think they are working on decision-making, other factors may be influencing their process. Possible factors are negative feelings, such as fear and anxiety, as well as negative cognitions such as doubting or dismissing one's experience. Excessive fear or lack of trust in one's self appear to block decision-making. Lack of clear awareness of one's cognitions and feelings and the interaction of the two appears to result in lack of action in decision-making.

The theory underlying the model does not explain or allow for the lack of response to the joint relationship of both factors before or after therapy. According to theory these two factors cannot be responded to separately in the decision-making process; the more interruption of contact individuals experience the more unresolved they are, and as

individuals come more into contact with themselves the more able they are to resolve.

A possible explanation is that there is a pre-stage to the model, a stage that clients need to go through in order to get to a point where they respond to a combination of the two major factors underlying the model. As the therapy using the two-chair technique takes effect, individuals appear to shift from a pre-therapy state of confluence in which they respond to neither factor, or only one factor, either Conflict Resolution or Contact to responding to a joint relationship of the factors in their decision-making after therapy. This was supported by the change in sorting considerations of Beverley, Gail and Edward. On the other hand, Carol and Fred appeared to shift from responding to only one factor before therapy to responding to both factors after therapy but independently of each other. This suggests that they were approaching this pre-condition or state and needed more sessions of therapy to reach the stage where they would respond to both factors in a joint manner. The pre-stage suggested here is not the same as the pre-dialogue stage to which Greenberg et al. (1993) refer. The pre-dialogue stage they refer to addresses the interaction between therapist and client in preparation for implementing the two-chair technique. The pre-stage suggested as a result of this study refers to an emotional state or condition in which individuals are not able to respond to both factors, Conflict Resolution and Contact, in a joint manner because they are experiencing so much interruption of contact or because other factors may be involved. This suggests that therapy during this stage should focus on bringing individuals more into contact with self, which would enable them to reach a point where they could consider both factors jointly.

There appears to be a sequential aspect to decision-making for the decision of whether to remain married or to separate. Amy and Carol made interim decisions at the end of therapy. They appeared to have entered the Merging stage but were still experiencing conflict. They both made decisions to stay in the marriage as they continued to work on their intrapsychic conflicts. This speaks to a sequential nature of effective decision-making. It is important to remember that Amy's decision was also influenced by extraneous events. It also indicated that some individuals require more than six sessions of therapy to resolve their decision of whether to remain married or separate.

Limitations

In this study, each of the eight case studies was a test of how well theory underlying the model of the Gestalt two-chair technique accounted for the individual's experience of successful and unsuccessful resolution of his or her conflict regarding whether or not to remain married. The two-chair technique was taken out of the general Gestalt therapy theory and applied in a way that was somewhat artificial. Usually a therapist waits for a marker that indicates a split spontaneously emerging in the moment before engaging the client in two-chair work (Greenberg, 1979). In this study, participants entered the project with a specific split and the therapists did not wait for a split to emerge; instead, they actively invited its exploration. Generalizability of the theory to Gestalt therapy theory as a whole needs further research.

There were only eight out of 85 items representing the Merging stage. Statistically, the Merging stage could not be detected because this number was too small and because these items were combined with the 16 items representing the stage of Integration in Cell 4. The small

number of items representing the Merging stage gave an indication of the presence or absence of the Merging stage through patterns in the sorting. This was then verified by participants' own words.

An additional limiting factor may be that as a result of clients adopting the framework and language of their therapists they learn to frame the problems in the same way.

Theoretical Implications

The two-chair technique

The three stage model received moderate support. The interactive relationship between Conflict Resolution and Contact received some support. While Conflict Resolution and Contact did interact they did not always interact as the theory predicted they would. For example, the theory does not explain how the factors of Conflict Resolution and Contact are involved when individuals are very frightened or confused. The theory needs to be expanded to explain what affects the interaction of these two factors. Also, it needs to address whether or not there are any other factors involved in this decision-making process and, if so, how these factors relate to Conflict Resolution and Contact.

The three stage model and the theory underlying it is a sub-theory of the more global theory of Gestalt therapy theory. For example, Passons (1975) states that the major goals of Gestalt therapy are teaching individuals to assume responsibility and facilitating integration of aspects of self into a unified whole. How the model is embedded within the larger theoretical framework of Gestalt therapy needs to be made explicit.

Practical Implications

Not all participants engaged in the two-chair dialogue procedure readily and easily. Participants who reached resolution from an integrated position were able to readily engage in the procedure and found it very effective. The two participants who had difficulty engaging in the two-chair dialogue, Donald and Fred, reached decisions still in a state of Opposition. They both had great difficulty shifting from talking about their feelings to experiencing their feelings. At the end of therapy they entered the Merging stage only slightly and they still used some Merging stage items to describe what they were *not* like. Greenberg et al. (1993) address this factor. They state, "In our experience, not all clients enter treatment with this ability to focus in on and search out the edges of their own experience. In fact much of the challenge and art of the Process-Experiential approach comes in adapting the treatment to meet the needs of a variety of clients with various processing styles" (p. 286).

Some individuals have difficulty relating to the two-chair technique and either may find another method of therapy more productive entirely or may need to go much more slowly and take more time before they experience the two-chair as a safe and productive way of working in therapy. The individuals who are able to relate to it and use it are individuals who are willing to access all levels of feelings, even though these feelings may be very frightening, shameful or unknown. They are also willing to face and experience a deep sense of vulnerability. This speaks to the importance of the therapeutic relationship and the support necessary from the therapist as clients experience deep feelings and sensations.

It is important to practitioners in the field to be aware of and be clinically prepared for clients whose words and intentions are not

matching their emotional state. Practitioners would benefit from a more explicit description of clients in the Opposition stage to prepare them for working effectively using the two-chair technique. Practitioners should be aware that many clients seeking therapeutic help for decision-making are experiencing such confusion and fear that their capacity for decision-making is blocked or seriously impaired. It is very important for clinicians to be aware of and knowledgeable about working with subject/object splits. Under the umbrella of the Process-Experiential approach to therapy, the recent manual by Greenberg et al. (1993) provides in-depth task analysis for clinicians working with splits. Although they acknowledge their "approach involves a combination and a balance between client-centered empathic responding and the process directiveness of experiential and Gestalt therapies," they do not relate their methodological directives to the more global Gestalt therapy theory (p. 15). In Gestalt therapy theory, the concept of subject/object splits is derived from the concept of organismic functioning in that the organism interrupts itself, blocking healthy homeostatic functioning.

Recommendations for Future Research

The two chair technique

Further research needs to investigate other possible factors influencing individuals upon entering therapy and how these factors are related to the factors of Conflict Resolution and Contact. Further research is needed to investigate what influences individuals to shift from responding to only one factor to both factors, and from responding to both factors independently to responding to both factors jointly. Why individuals give up responding to both factors jointly when they are still conflicted also requires study.

This study found support for the three stage of model of the two-chair technique as put forth by Greenberg (1979; 1983) and the theory underlying it for some individuals. The participants in this study were Caucasian, well-educated, and employed outside the home on a full or part-time basis. Further research is needed to determine if the model and theory underlying it is useful to describe the process of other individuals who experience the two-chair technique.

The Q-sort

For further research, some of the Q-Sort items need to be revised. Some participants did not relate to some Merging stage items. Revising and/or adding some items would help to better detect the Merging stage. Participants Beverley and Gail stated that they would have chosen items #64 and # 66 to describe themselves if they had been phrased differently. While other participants related well to these items as stated (for example, some participants did perceive themselves as bad).

Some examples are:

Current items	Suggestions for Revision
#64 I am not as bad as I thought I was.	I am not as messed up as I thought I was.
#66 What I want and need is worth fighting for.	What I want and need is worth striving for.
#69 I am more afraid than condemning of myself	I am more afraid than bad.

Divorce decision-making

This study raised some important ideas for future research in this area. It suggested that there is a sequential process leading to effective

decision-making regarding remaining married or divorcing. When individuals are able to resolve the conflicted aspects of themselves they are then able to make an active, versus reactive, decision about remaining married or separating. It also suggested that the part of the individual that embodies his or her standards and values conflicts with the part of the individual that embodies his or her wants and needs. It indicated that it is the rigid standards and values, which will not revise to accommodate the legitimate wants and needs of the individual, that cause the indecision. The purpose of this study was to find empirical support for the theory underlying the three stage model of the Gestalt two-chair technique. To support these findings regarding divorce decision-making requires further research.

For reasons of manageability this study did not consider the factor of attachment in divorce decision-making. None of the 85 Q-sort items have the word "love" in them. To further knowledge of the divorce decision-making process it is recommended that the factor of attachment be incorporated into the Q-sort in future research.

Some examples are:

I don't know whether I love my spouse anymore. (Cell 1)

I hold myself back from loving my spouse. (Cell 2)

The bond between my spouse and myself is too strong to break. (Cell 3)

Salts (1985) states that people who feel stuck with regard to the decision to stay married or get divorced really want to dissolve their marriages but have been unable to do so. The findings in this study indicated that something more complex was going on. As mentioned previously there appears to be a sequential process to effective decision-making in which an intrapsychic conflict requires resolution before an

individual attempts to resolve the issue regarding remaining married. This indicates that individuals who do not know themselves on a deep level do not make decisions regarding their marriages from an integrated sense of self. That is, individuals who deny their beliefs, feelings, and actions on a deep level are more likely to get blocked in their decision-making. Further research is necessary to support these findings.

Kalb (1983) believes that "the key variable affecting the decision to divorce can best be understood through an exploration of the individual's conception of the alternative" (p. 354). This study indicated that a key variable affecting the decision to divorce is an intrapsychic conflict between an individual's standards and values with his or her wants and needs. Further research is needed to determine if there is a connection between these two variables. It may be that when individuals are considering the alternative, they are actually considering whether or not they can get their wants and needs met. This ties in with Cuber and Harroff (1966) who believe that the one reason most frequently mentioned for the dissolution of marriages was "finding a mate who seemed better to fit the man's or woman's needs and wants" (p. 92).

Donovan and Jackson (1990) criticize social exchange theory as failing to "specifically include a variable which 'tips the balance of the scales' in favor of marital attractions and marital preservation" (p. 27). They view attachment as one of the rewards of the relationship. They put forward attachment theory and cognitive dissonance theory to be considered in guiding the decision to divorce. This study suggested that what tips the balance may be related to the opposition of standards and values to wants and needs. One thing this study pointed to is an intrapsychic resolution of one spouse's standards and values with his/her wants and needs. Another reason may be that a spouse comes to be

convinced by partner's behavior that his or her wants and needs will never get met in this relationship.

This study showed that research on the decision of whether or not to remain married can be other than retrospective in nature. Future studies should consider the divorce decision-making process while it is in process.

Summary

The results of this study gave moderate support to the three stage model of the two-chair technique, in particular the Merging stage in which the critic softens, and it gave some support to the factors of Conflict Resolution and the Gestalt concept of Contact and their interactive nature during decision-making for the decision of whether or not to remain married. The results also bring to light shortcomings in the theory in that it doesn't explain why Conflict Resolution and Contact do not interact as predicted throughout the decision-making process for all individuals. There is a possibility of other factors influencing the process. The concept of subject/object splits, embedded within the theory, sheds some light on how the factors of Conflict Resolution and Contact are obstructed in the decision-making process. This suggests that a possible pre-stage exists in which subject/objects splits influence the factors of Conflict Resolution and Contact and perhaps other factors as well. The concept of subject/object splits also relates to the more global theory of Gestalt therapy in which the major goal involves facilitating integration of aspects of self into a unified whole. Further extrapolation of the theory and the model would benefit practitioners.

While the focus of this study was an investigation of empirical support for the theory underlying the three stage model of the two-chair

technique, the findings raised some important considerations for divorce decision-making which require further research.

REFERENCES

- Albrecht, S. L., & Kunz, P. R. (1980). The decision to divorce: A social exchange perspective. *Journal of Divorce*, 3(4), 319-337.
- Allport, G. Vernon, P. and Lindzey, (1951) *Study of Values*. Revised Edition, Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
- Becker, G. S. (1974). A theory on marriage. in T. W. Schultz (Ed.), *Economies of the family*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Becker, G. S. (1981). *A Treatise on the Family*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Bergin, A. E., & Lambert, M. J. (1982). The evaluations of therapeutic outcomes. In S. L. Garfield & A. E. Bergin (Eds.), *Handbook of psychotherapy and behavior change* (2nd ed.) (pp. 179-181).
- Bohannon, P. (1970). The six stations of divorce. In P. Bohannon (Ed.), *Divorce and after* (pp. 33-62). Garden City, NY: Doubleday.
- Bohart, Arthur C. (1977). Role playing and interpersonal-conflict reduction. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 24 (1), 15-24.
- Bromley, D. B. (1986). *The case-study method in psychology and related disciplines*. Chichester: John Wiley & Sons.
- Bronowski, J. (1973). *The ascent of man*. Boston: Little, Brown, and Company.
- Brown, E. M. (1976). Divorce counseling. In D. H. L. Olson (Ed.), *Treating relationships*. Lake Mills, I. A.: Graphic Publishing Company.
- Byrnes, R. (1975). *An examination of Gestalt therapy personality theory using Q methodology*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Kent State University.

- Campbell, D. T. (1979). "Degrees of freedom" and the case study. In T. D. Cook & C. S. Reichardt (Eds.), *Qualitative and quantitative methods in evaluation research* (pp. 49-67). Beverly Hills: Sage Publications Inc.
- Campbell, D. T. (1989). Forward. In R. K. Yin *Case study research: Designs and methods* (pp. 7-9). Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications Inc.
- Clarke, K. M. (1977). *The differential effects of two treatments at a conflict marker in therapy*. Unpublished master's thesis, University of British Columbia.
- Clarke, K. M. (1981). *The differential effects of the Gestalt two-chair experiment and cognitive problem solving on career decision-making*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Loyola University of Chicago.
- Cochran, L. (1987). Framing career decisions. In R. A. Neimeyer, & G. J. Neimeyer (Eds.), *A casebook in personal construct therapy*. (pp. 261-276). New York: Springer.
- Cuber, J. F. & Harroff, P. B. (1966). *Sex and the significant Americans*. Baltimore: Penguin Books.
- Dompierre, L. M. (1980). *Differential effects of Gestalt two-chair dialogue and empathic reflection at a split in therapy*. Unpublished master's thesis, University of British Columbia.
- Donovan, R. & Jackson, B. (1990). Deciding to divorce: A process guided by social exchange, attachment, and cognitive dissonance theories. *Journal of Divorce*, Vol 13(4), 23-35.
- Doane H. M. (1983) *Famine at the feast*. Ann Arbor, Michigan: Eric Counseling and Personnel Services Clearinghouse.

- Duck, S. W. (1982). 'A topography of relationship disengagement and dissolution'. In S. W. Duck (Ed.). *Personal relationships 4: Dissolving personal relationships*. Academic Press: New York.
- Enright, J. (1970). Awareness training in the mental health profession. In J. Fagan and I. Shepherd (Eds.), *Gestalt therapy now*. (pp. 263 - 273). Palo Alto: Science and Behavior Books.
- Everett, C.A., & Volgy, S. S. (1983) Family assessment in child custody disputes. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, 9, 342-352.
- Everett, C.A., & Volgy, S. S. (1991). Treating divorce in family-therapy practice. In A. S. Gurman & D. P. Kniskern (Eds.), *Handbook of family therapy*, Vol. 2, pp. 508-524. New York: Brunner/Mazel.
- Fairweather, J. R. (1981). Reliability and validity of Q-Method results: Some empirical evidence. *Operant Subjectivity*, 5, 2-16.
- Frank, G. H. (1956). Note on the reliability of Q-Sort data. *Psychological Reports*, 2, 182.
- Froiland, D. J. & Hozman, T. L. (1977). 'Counseling for constructive divorce'. *Personnel and Guidance Journal*, 55, 525-9.
- Greenberg, L. S. (1976). *A task analytic approach to the study of psychotherapeutic events*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, York University, North York.
- Greenberg, L. S. (1979). Resolving splits: Use of the two chair technique. *Psychotherapy: Theory, Research, and Practice*, 16 (3), 316-324.
- Greenberg, L. S. (1980). Training counselors in gestalt methods. *Canadian Counselor*, 3, 174-180.
- Greenberg, L. S. (1983). Toward a task analysis of conflict resolution in Gestalt therapy. *Psychotherapy: Theory, Research, and Practice*, 20(2), 190-201.

- Greenberg, L. S., & Clarke, K. M. (1979). Differential effects of the two-chair experiment and empathic reflections at a conflict marker. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 26 (1), 1-8.
- Greenberg, L. S., & Dompierre, L. M. (1981). Specific effects of Gestalt two-chair dialogue on intrapsychic conflict in counseling. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 28 (4), 288-294.
- Greenberg, L. S., & Higgins, H. (1980). Effects of two-chair dialogue and Focusing on conflict resolution. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 27 (3), 221-224.
- Greenberg, L. S., & Rice, L. N. (1981). The specific effects of a Gestalt intervention. *Psychotherapy: Theory, Research, and Practice*, 18(1), 31-37.
- Greenberg, L. S., Rice, L. N., & Elliott, R. (1993). *Facilitating emotional change: A process experiential approach*. N. Y. : Guilford.
- Greenberg, L. S., & Webster, M.. (1982). Resolving decisional conflict by Gestalt two-chair dialogue: Relating process to outcome. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 29 (5), 468-477.
- Hellgren, R. K. (1983). *Construct validation of the Gestalt Q-Sort: An R-Method approach*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Kent State University.
- Herman, S. J. (1974). Divorce: A grief process. *Perspective in psychiatric care*, 12, 108 - 112.
- Higgins, H. (1979). *The effects of the two-chair dialogue and focusing on conflict resolution*. Unpublished master's thesis, University of British Columbia.
- Janis, I. L. & Mann, L. (1977). *Decision making: A psychological analysis of conflict, choice, and commitment*. New York: The Free Press.

- Kahle, R. & Lee, L. (1974). *A Q-Methodological study of attitudes toward resources and implications for using mass media in dissemination of water research results*. (Completion report, U S. Department of Interior, Project No. X-127-MO). Columbia, MO: Missouri Water Resources Research Center, University of Missouri.
- Kalb, M. (1983). The conception of the alternative and the decision to divorce. *American Journal of Psychotherapy*, Vol. 37 (3), 346-356.
- Kaslow, F. W. (1981). Divorce and divorce therapy. In A. S. Gurman & D. P. Kniskern (Eds.). *Handbook of family therapy*. (pp. 662-696). New York: Brunner/Mazel.
- Kerlinger, F. N. (1972). Q-Methodology in behavioral research. In S. R. Brown & D. J. Brenner (Eds.), *Science, psychology, and communication: Essays honoring William Stephenson* (pp. 3-38). New York: Teachers College Press.
- Kerlinger, F. N. (1973). *Foundations of behavioral research* (2nd ed.). New York: Rinehart & Winston.
- Kessler, S. (1975). *The American way of divorce: Prescription for change*. Chicago: Nelson-Hall.
- Korb, M. B, Gorrell, J., Van De Riet, V. (1989). *Gestalt therapy: Practice and theory* (2nd ed.) New York: Pergamon Press.
- Kraus, S. (1979). The crisis of divorce: Growth promoting or pathogenic. *Journal of Divorce*, 3(2), 107-119.
- Kressel, K. & Deutsch, M. (1977). Divorce therapy: An in-depth survey of therapists' views. *Family Process*, 16 (4), 413-444.
- Ladd, G. (1992). *The pattern of career transition*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of British Columbia.

- Latner, J. (1973). *The Gestalt therapy book*. New York: The Julian Press, Inc.
- Levinger, G. (1965). Marital cohesiveness and dissolution: An integrative review. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 27, 19-28.
- Levinger, G. (1979). A social psychological perspective on marital dissolution. In G. Levinger & O. C. Moles (Eds.) *Divorce and separation: Context, causes, consequences*. New York: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Lewis, R. A. and Spanier, G. B. (1979). Theorizing about the quality and stability of marriage. In W. R. Burr et al. (Eds.). *Contemporary theories about the family*. New York: Free Press.
- Lyon, E., Silverman, M. Howe, G. W., Bishop G., & Armstrong, B.. (1985). Stages of divorce: Implications for service delivery. *Social Casework*, Vol. 66(5), 259-267.
- McKeown B., Thomas, D. (1988) *Q Methodology*. New York: Sage Publications, Inc.
- O'Grady, D. F. (1986). *The effects of adding a somatic intervention to the Gestalt two-chair technique on career decision-making*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Loyola University of Chicago.
- Oz, S. (1994). Decision making in divorce therapy: Cost-cost comparisons. *Journal Marital and Family Therapy*, Vol. 20, No. 1, 77-81.
- Passons, W. R. (1975). *Gestalt approaches in counseling*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
- Perls, F. (1969). *Ego, hunger, and aggression*. New York: Random House. (first published in 1947, London: Allen and Unwin).

- Perls, F. (1970). Four lectures. In J. Fagan and I. Shepherd (Eds.), *Gestalt therapy now*. Palo Alto: Science and Behavior Books
- Perls, F. S., Hefferline, R., & Goodman, P. (1951). *Gestalt therapy*. New York: Dell Books.
- Polster, E. & Polster, M. (1973). *Gestalt therapy integrated*. New York: Brunner/Mazel.
- Price, S. J. and McKendry, P. C. (1988). *Divorce*. New York: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Rinn, J. L. (1961) Q Methodology: An application to group phenomena. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, Vol. 21(2), 315-329.
- Salts, C. J. (1985). Divorce stage theory and therapy: Therapeutic implications throughout the divorcing process. *Journal of Psychotherapy & the Family*, 1(3), 13-23.
- Scanzoni, J. and Szinovacz, M. (1980). *Family decision making: A developmental sex role model*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications Inc.
- Stephenson, W. (1953). *The study of behavior: Q technique and its methodology*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Stephenson, W. (1963). Independency and operationism in Q-Sorting. *The Psychological Record*, 13, 269-272.
- Stephenson, W. (1985). Perspectives in psychology: Integration in clinical psychology. *The Psychological Record*, 35, 31-48.
- Storm, C. L. & Sprenkle, D. H. (1982). Individual treatment in divorce therapy: A critique of an assumption. *Journal of Divorce*, Vol 5, 87-97.

- Strube, M. J., & Barbour, L. S. (1984). Factors related to the decision to leave an abusive relationship. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 46, 837-844.
- Thibaut, J. W. and Kelley, H. H. (1959). *The Social psychology of groups*. New York: John Wiley.
- Thweatt, R. W. (1980). Divorce: Crisis intervention guided by attachment theory. *American Journal of Psychotherapy*, 34, 240-245.
- Turner, N. W. (1985). Divorce: Dynamics of decision therapy. *Journal of Psychotherapy & the Family*, 1(3), 27-38.
- Webster, M. (1981). *Resolving decisional conflict by Gestalt two-chair dialogue: Relating process to outcome*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of British Columbia.
- Weiss, R. S. (1975). *Marital separation*. New York: Basic Books.
- Wiseman, R. S. (1975). Crisis theory and the process of divorce. *Social Casework*, 56, 205-212.
- Yin, R. A. (1989). *Case study research: Designs and methods*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

APPENDIX A

Initial Letter of Contact

Hello,

I am conducting a study which involves marital decision-making, specifically the decision of whether or not to remain married. The purpose of the study is to obtain experiences of the decision-making process that occurs while undergoing Gestalt therapy which has an emphasis on the two-chair technique. The Gestalt two-chair technique has been found to be effective in facilitating decision-making.

The study is being conducted for my doctoral dissertation research project under the supervision of Dr. W. Borgan (822-5259) at the University of British Columbia.

Participation will require approximately 10 - 12 hours. It will involve 10 sessions which will include interviews, 6 sessions of therapy with an experienced therapist, and a sorting of items that describe your decision-making process. Involvement in the study will provide participants with an opportunity in a therapeutic environment to explore and resolve a personal dilemma regarding whether or not to remain married. We hope that being involved in the study will be an interesting and useful experience.

All identifying information will be deleted in order to insure confidentiality and to protect participants' privacy. Participation in the study is completely voluntary and participants are free to ask questions at any time, and are able to withdraw from the study at any time without jeopardy of any kind.

If you have any questions about the study, please feel free to call me at 224-7252.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Bea Mackay, M.A.
Doctoral Student

APPENDIX B

Study Participants Consent FormResearch Project:

Decision-making regarding whether or not to remain married using the Gestalt two-chair technique.

This study is being completed as a doctoral research project by Betty [Bea] A. Mackay (phone 224-7252) under the supervision of Dr. W. Borgen (phone 822-5259), U.B.C. Department of Counselling Psychology. The study is about the experiences people go through when they undergo therapy for decision-making using a specific therapeutic technique called the Gestalt two-chair technique. This technique has been found to facilitate decision-making.

All interviews will be video-taped and the tapes will be erased at the end of the project. Interview material will be transcribed and all identifying information will be deleted to insure confidentiality and protect your privacy. You are free to ask questions concerning the project. You may refuse to participate and withdraw from the study at any time without jeopardy of any kind.

By signing this document you are agreeing to participate in the study and are acknowledging you have been given a copy of this consent form.

Date

Signature of Participant

APPENDIX C

Degree of Resolution Scale - Splits

Received from Greenberg, L. S. in 1992.

Short form of Degree of Resolution Scale on Page 193 in

Greenberg, L. S., Rice, L. N., & Elliot, R. (1993). Facilitating emotional change: A process experiential approach. N. Y. : Guilford.

1. The client describes a conflict with which he or she is currently struggling in which one aspect of the self is not in harmony with another aspect and is unaccepting or coercive toward the other part of the self. The two aspects may not be clearly delineated and the opposition between the two parts may not be the focus of the client's attention.
2. The client begins to actively criticize or coerce the self in a negative fashion. The two aspects of the self are clearly delineated and are brought into contact with each other highlighting the nature of the opposition between the two sides. The criticisms expectations or judgment of the self are clearly expressed in a concrete and specific manner and the self reactions begin to be explored and expressed.
3. The client's underlying feelings in response to the criticisms emerge and are differentiated until a new feeling is arrived at.
4. The needs or wants associated with the newly experienced sense of self are expressed clearly and challenge or throw into doubt the guiding standards and ideals that underlie the criticisms.
5. For the first time greater consideration is given to the expressed feelings and needs. Compassion, concern, or respect for the self may be shown. The self is recognized and accepted as a trustworthy and responsible agent in the process of self determination. The client genuinely accepts his or her experience. The client expresses either a caring or comforting type of self-embrace or describes a clearer stronger sense of self and freedom to be.
6. There is a clear understanding of how various needs and desires may be accommodated and how previously antagonistic sides of the self may be reconciled in a working relationships. The discourse may involved some negotiation between the aspects and may involve planning how to function in greater harmony. The client may experience a sense of wholeness or inner harmony as aspects of self previously in conflict are felt to be more in unison. There is sense of real inner listening and contact and openness to the self as it most fundamentally is.