A CRITICAL INCIDENTS STUDY:  
THE PROCESS OF DIFFERENTIATION  
WITHIN THE FAMILY OF PROCREATION  

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate what facilitates and hinders the process of differentiation of parents within their family of procreation. Participants of this study were involved in a parenting workshop which was based upon Bowen’s Family System Theory and his concept of differentiation. Using a critical incidents approach, participants completed daily logs of their experiences from which a category system detailing the process of differentiation was created. The category system suggests both the criteria for facilitating successful differentiation and the opposing criteria for hindering successful differentiation.

A review of the literature revealed that no prior research of this nature has been conducted. As well, the literature also revealed that very little use has been made of Family System’s Theory in terms of parenting programs. The dearth of literature suggests that more research is required in applying Family System’s Theory to programmatic attempts at helping families adjust over their developmental lifespan.

The research suggested that criteria for successfully facilitating the process towards greater differentiation involved behaviours indicating: Being Responsible, Acceptance of Difference, Control of Anxiety, Awareness of Triangles, Awareness of Self, and Fostering Connection.
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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The parental ability to raise children seems to have become lost. Past generations did not need instruction for raising their young. In former times there were traditions for child-raising which were upheld by society as a whole. Every family followed a common scheme. In our times it has become necessary to develop extensive programs of parent education. (Dreikurs, 1964, p.5)

Parent education/training courses have long been a popular means of attempting to promote healthy family functioning. Parents enrolling in such courses often attend due to immediate concerns such as acting-out behaviour by children, but just as important are their hopes that they will gain knowledge, and learn skills and techniques that will help them prevent future problems. Auerbach (1968) acknowledged that there is a growing need for such interventions and suggested that seen as small group counselling, parent education/training groups are effective tools in providing support services to a greater number of people in a shorter span of time. Parents want children to experience love and joy, to be successful and happy, to have a sense of self-worth, a sense of self-esteem, and to believe in themselves (Clarke, 1989), and to that end, as Anglin (1984) has metaphorically described the proliferation of courses, "It is now like a field with a thousand flowers blooming (p.3). Parent Effectiveness Training [P.E.T.] (Gordon, 1970), Systematic Training for Effective Parenting [S.T.E.P.]
(Dinkmeyer & McKay, 1976, 1983), Creative Parenting (Neufeld, 1980), How To Talk So Kids Will Listen (Faber & Mazlish, 1980), and Active Parenting (Popkin, 1983) are just a few of the more well-known flowers.

Most of the courses are based upon research from specific theoretical perspectives in the fields of Individual and Clinical psychology, eg., Adlerian, Behavioural, Client Centered, Communication, Developmental, etc., and although each perspective has made contributions toward programmatic attempts to enrich family life through parent education/training, it must be recognized that these programs have also been limited by the paradigm each theory operates within. Individual Psychology, for the most part, assumes that humans exist in isolation, or at most, as a being who is constantly under pressure to adapt to the influences of the environment. While Clinical Psychology has its roots in the medical model with its emphasis on pathology, that is, problematic behaviour as illness. Both paradigms make the assumption that the problems an individual experiences reside within the individual, i.e., are seen as the inability of the individual to adapt successfully to his environment (Coyne, 1985). Disruptions of the family caused by the externalizing child, i.e., the acting-out child, oppositional child or conduct disordered child, or by the internalizing child, i.e., the depressed, sick or suicidal child, are mainly characterized and defined by his/her effect on others--parents, teachers, and clinicians. Within these two
paradigms, parent-child problems are thus seen as a result of deviance or maladjustment to accepted social norms. Kearney (1986) points out that this makes it difficult to distinguish treatment for children from instruments of social control and this is reflected in the current parenting courses where much of the information given is packaged to help parents control children and make them mind.

However, it has to be acknowledged that if parenting education/training courses are limited in their effectiveness, it may not be the specific course material that is the limiting factor (Paddack, 1987). Rather, the limitations may be a result of the narrow view of parent-child relationships inherent in the Individual and Clinical Psychology paradigms. Seeing problems that arise in the family as existing within its individual members ignores the dearth of material generated by family systems research since the early 1950s.

**FAMILY SYSTEMS THEORY**

It has been 40 years since the interest in family research began. In the last 25 years the emphasis on this research has shifted from not only considering the implications of this new way of thinking about family problems, to also the development of specific techniques for intervening in families (Kearney, 1986). This research indicates that the child can no longer be seen as an isolated unit.
Instead, the child must be seen as a social being, forming part of a network of relationships and that this relationship approach must be integrated into the field of child psychological development (Hinde & Stevenson-Hinde, 1988). Yet, existing parenting programs do not reflect this evolutionary trend in thought. A review of the literature on parent education/training courses shows that this knowledge has not been incorporated in parenting programs, with the exception of specific settings (DeSalvatore, & Rosenman, 1986).

One particular theory which provides a useful and comprehensive way of accounting for the outcomes of relationship interactions, and therefore may have relevance for further enhancing parent education/training courses, is Murray Bowen’s Family Systems Theory (Bowen, 1978). Bowen’s theory sees the family as a dynamic emotional system in which each member of the system influences and is influenced by every other member of the system. Parent-child problems are not seen as residing within the individual, eg., the child, but rather are seen as being situated in the inevitable outcomes of faulty interpersonal interactions. Everyone in the system is seen as having a role to play, and a personal responsibility in the creation and the maintenance of any problem. By incorporating Bowen’s primary concepts, i.e., the family as an emotional system, triangling, the family projection process, chronic anxiety, the forces for togetherness and separateness, and differentiation of self, parenting programs may
be able to move on to a new level of effectiveness in promoting more productive and healthier relationships within the family.

Whereas current parenting education/training courses are aimed at helping the parent change the child, Bowen’s Family Systems Theory would shift this emphasis from focusing on what one has no control over, i.e., changing the other (the child), to what one has direct control over, i.e., changing self (the parent). The ultimate goal of Bowen’s theory is not to change or control others, instead, the ultimate goal is to increase one’s level of differentiation of self with the assumption that the higher one’s level of differentiation is, the more one is able to remain objective while taking part in emotional issues with significant others who may be emotionally reactive. In doing so, it is assumed that over time this ability will facilitate the differentiating of self process in those significant others.

PURPOSE

No literature indicates that Bowen’s Family Systems Theory has been incorporated into a parent education/training program. Yet it lends itself well to

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1 This may account for the reluctance of parent educators to include Family Systems Theory. Many parents, by the time they enrol in parenting classes are having feelings of being overwhelmed, of being inadequate, and of being totally helpless. As a result, they usually attend with the belief that it is up to the child to do the changing. Suggesting to the parent that realistically the only changes that the parent can make is in changing self, may be too threatening for many educators.
this format because it is a theory based on gaining knowledge about the "order and predictability of human family relationships...that underlie the.. seemingly random and even chaotic appearing family interactions" (Kerr & Bowen, 1988, p.4). The core concept of the theory is the goal of raising one's healthy, functional participation in the family by raising one's level of differentiation of self.

According to general systems thinking, if one changes the way s/he interacts in a system then it causes instability in the system. Systems can not tolerate instability so the movement is always from instability towards stability. If the person who has changed the way s/he is interacting with significant others can withstand the system's pressure to change back, then the system will make adjustments in order to restabilize, i.e., the force for stability causes all other members of that system to change the way they are interacting (Becvar & Becvar, 1988). In other words, if a parent works towards differentiating his/her self in relationship to his/her child, then the child will automatically become part of the process, with the result that the child will also become more differentiated. In this circular interactive way, the level of functioning of all family members increases.

It is not this study's intention to evaluate the question of the effectiveness of applying Bowen's theory to parent education/training programs. To do so, would be premature because of the unavailability of tested designs, however an
exploratory study might lead to the richness and usefulness of translating such a
theory into parenting workshop interventions. Therefore, the purpose of this study
is to explore the critical incidents that hinders or facilitates the differentiation of
self process of parents attending an eight week, 24 hour parenting program that
incorporates Bowen's Family Systems Theory. Given the novel nature of the
study, it is hoped that the information gained might indicate the practicalness of
applying Bowen's theory to future programs and be useful for subsequent
program development.

Furthermore, this study is important for another reason. The literature
delineating the process of differentiation of self is based primarily on doing what
is commonly referred to as Family of Origin work, that is, working towards
resolving, "the unresolved emotional attachments to one's parents" (Bowen, 1978,
p. 536). Commenting on this, Kerr & Bowen (1988) state that, "Objectivity about
one's parents promotes objectivity about self. A reasonable amount of objectivity
about self and others, coupled with the ability to act on the basis of that
objectivity when it is important to do so, is the essence of differentiation of self"
(p. 203). Raising one's level of differentiation by doing family of origin work can
only take place by entering into emotionally significant issues with members of
one's family of origin, and then by remaining emotionally detached or neutral.
This process, referred to as detriangling requires that one can stay objective in
respecting not only the beliefs of the other member(s) of the system, but also the actions that affirm them. Staying objective simply means having the "ability to define self without being emotionally invested in one’s own point of view or in changing the viewpoints of others" (p. 150).

Bowen felt that it was more productive to attempt differentiation of self by using one’s family of origin rather than one’s nuclear family because, "Efforts to gain objectivity and to control emotional reactivity in the nuclear family can remain for long periods on the level of emotional game playing in which the games of each spouse cancel out the potential gains of both" (p.545). However, with our society undergoing rapid changes, in which adult children with families of their own are often not within easy access to their siblings or parents, doing family of origin work to raise one’s level of differentiation is becoming less of a viable option. Therefore, new information is needed to learn more about these "emotional games" with the hope that raising one’s level of differentiation can take place within the nuclear family with as much success as it can by focusing on the family of origin. This study may provide some of that information.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This study describes emotionally significant incidents in the lives of the participants of a parenting education/training workshop which included Bowenian
principles. The study is designed to assist in understanding the possible usefulness of incorporating Family Systems Theory in this type of format. More specifically, the study intends to explore the experiences that individuals had, over the period of the study, that are related to the information given in the workshop, and how these experiences contributed to their process of becoming more differentiated from their significant emotional relationships. The research question is: "What specific events or experiences hinder or facilitate the process of differentiation of self?"

**APPROACH TO RESEARCH**

The critical incident technique developed by Flanagan (1954) lends itself well to this type of exploratory study. This technique requires that the participants record everyday experiences which would, "permit inferences and predictions to be made about the person performing an act,...which..occurs in a situation where the purpose of intent of the act seems fairly clear to the observer and where its consequences are sufficiently definite to leave little doubt concerning it's effects" (p.327). As already mentioned, Kerr & Bowen (1988) state that raising one's differentiation can only happen in issues of emotional significance in which "the ability to maintain objectivity in relationship to a problem produces a predictable outcome; the inability to maintain it produces another predictable outcome"
The critical incident method allows the participants to capture the richness and meaning of everyday emotionally significant experiences that could not adequately be created, controlled or measured in a laboratory or experimental situation without losing that quality which makes them everyday emotionally significant experiences (Boychuck, 1985). It is a reflective technique which allows the participants to describe objective facts of the experiences, that is, the who, the what, the where, and the when, in making sense of the outcomes. It is through these recorded, reflective descriptions that the participant becomes an observer of his own thoughts, feelings and actions. Furthermore, it is these reflective descriptions that begin to make the outcomes knowable and predictable. Hindering incidents are thus those experiences in which the participant lost objectivity, while facilitating incidents are those in which the participant did not lose objectivity.

**DEFINITIONS**

**Differentiation of Self**

As defined by Kerr & Bowen (1988) it is:

"The ability to be in emotional contact with significant others yet still remain autonomous in one's emotional functioning" (p.145). More specifically, "It is the process by which the separateness and togetherness forces are managed
Family Systems Theory

Although there are several different models of family systems therapy, Family Systems Theory is the name used by Bowen to describe his theory. Therefore, in this study it specifically relates only to Bowen’s model.

Togetherness Force

The Togetherness force is Bowen’s concept to account for the observable force that compels people to be together in meaningful relationships which provides them with a sense of security and belonging. Bowen saw this as being biological. Furthermore, a hermit, as an extreme example, is compelled to remain apart from society in emotional reactivity to this force. Therefore, the togetherness force can also account for physical and emotional distance.

Individuality Force

The Individuality force is Bowen’s concept to account for the observable (biological) force that compels people to be autonomous in their emotional and intellectual functioning within significant relationships. Individuality is not to be confused with selfishness, which can be seen as an emotionally reactive defense against the togetherness force. Rather, to be truly autonomous one must act in a self-determined and self-responsible manner while still remaining in contact with significant emotional relationships. In this thesis, Individuality and Separateness
are interchangeable.
CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

REVIEW OF PARENTING PROGRAMS

As mentioned in chapter one, there are a variety of popular parenting programs each having an underlying theoretical framework. Theories such as Adlerian, Behavioural, Client Centered, Communication or Developmental structure the philosophy, purpose and procedures of each program (Dunning & Wills, 1981; Paddack, 1987). To understand the differences in these programs the following is a brief review of the contributions each theory has made to the field of parent education/training, and how each influences specific parenting programs.

Adlerian groups such as S. T. E. P. (Dinkmeyer & McKay, 1976, 1983), are based on the premise that humans are personally motivated to escape an inferiority complex by working towards personal goals of social interest. Expanding on the Adlerian concept of goal directed behaviour, Dreikurs (1964) suggested that often children make mistakes in determining what are healthy and productive goals. Yearning for a sense of belonging and a feeling of worth in the belonging relationship, he posited that the misbehaviour of children is really only an attempt to fulfil this yearning through faulty perceptions that lead to
misdirected goals. Thus, by accounting for the socially inappropriate behaviour of children as arising out of the child's need to belong, he outlined four "Mistaken Goals of Misbehaviour" (pp. 57-68). Furthermore, he popularized the use of natural and logical consequences as being a useful technique for correcting the child's misperception.

Adlerian programs adamantly oppose the use of punishment and reward as put forward by the Behaviourists. Coloroso (1989), for example, states that the punishment and reward system tells the child what to think rather than how to think, making the child adopt either a compliant, dependent stance or a resentful, revengeful stance. The dependent stance creates an inability for the child to make goal directed decisions resulting in the child always depending on the parent for direction. The resentful or revengeful stance creates a child who only makes decisions in opposition to the parent's wishes rather then decisions based on what would be best for him or herself. Recognizing that this is a continuum, with these two stances being the extremes, Adlerian programs assume that behaviour modification and the use of rewards and punishments, thwarts the child's ability to achieve any personal goals.

Dreikurs (1964) claimed that in today's world, family life must be run on democratic principles. He elaborated on how parents could effectively intervene to help change mistaken goal directed behaviour into more socially accepted goal
directed behaviour. The premise, is that although a parent can not, nor should not attempt to control the child, he can create age-appropriate boundaries for the child and then allow the child to make choices in a self-determined manner within these boundaries. The model also suggests that a parent can guide the child’s decision making process by making it more comfortable for the child to make a wise choice then it is to make an unwise choice. For example, the statement "You may eat supper as soon as you finish your chores", implies the expectations or boundaries the parent has for the child. In other words, the parent expects the child to participate in the act of living in this family by being responsible for a share of the daily chores. Within these expectations the parent has given the child control over his life; first he may choose which chores he wishes to complete, then he may do the chores before supper and eat with the family, do the chores after the family has eaten and eat later, or not do the chores and not eat (Coloroso, 1989).

Although this concept bears some similarity to behaviour modification, it differs in that rather than using reward or punishment to change the child’s choice (behaviour), the child is allowed to experience the consequences of the choices he makes. Because the consequences are assumed to be a natural or logical result of the behaviour chosen by the child, any comfort or discomfort experienced by the child is not because it is imposed by the parent, but rather because it is the
outcome of the child’s choice. The parent is taught that to truly respect the child, the parent must respect the choices that the child makes by allowing him to take responsibility for his actions, i.e., experience the consequences. In the example above, respecting the child’s choice of not doing the chores on a particular day, implies respecting the child’s right not to eat for the rest of that day. In summary, Adlerian groups encourage mutual respect between parent and children, help create democratic parenting styles through the use of setting boundaries and allowing the child to be goal directed within these boundaries (by providing choices), and encourage open communication and problem-solving through the use of family meetings (Dreikurs, 1964).

Behaviour Modification programs work on the theory of stimulus-response. These groups are typically held in clinic settings and are primarily geared toward populations in which the children are diagnosed as having severe behavioural problems or special needs, eg. children diagnosed with Conduct disorder (Patterson, 1974) or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (Barkley, 1981). The goal is to help guide the parent in creating interactions which will ignore or punish negative behaviour, and reinforce or reward positive behaviour. The assumption made is that behaviours that are acknowledged or rewarded will increase in frequency, while behaviours that are ignored or punished will decrease in frequency.
Behaviour Modification programs are very prescriptive and deal in step-by-step training for parents (Dunning & Wills, 1981). The parents are taught how to assess and target specific behaviours for change, how to set up a reinforcement schedule, that is, immediate or delayed gratification of reward, and how to monitor the outcome (Becvar & Becvar, 1988). The main criticism of the Behaviour model are the implications that the parent knows which behaviours are right for the child and which are not right, and that it is the child who has the problem and needs to change. Thus, the child is little more than a passive recipient of the parent’s subjective authority. The child is seen as an object who needs to change and can be manipulated into obedience (Gordon, 1970). In summary Behaviourial theory has contributed to parenting programs the concepts of reward and punishment to not only help children learn more socially acceptable behaviours, but also to help them extinguish less socially acceptable behaviours.

Client Centered groups, such as Parents In Crisis, operate more like a support group than as an educational or skills based group. Based on the principles developed by Rogers (1951), the premise underlying this type of group is that the parent has all the answers and by discussing the problems of parenting in a safe environment, that is, an environment in which accurate empathic understanding, and unconditional positive regard and acceptance is created, the answers needed to resolve their problems will come into their consciousness. In
summary, Client Centered groups do not teach skills, rather it is expected that by validating the parents experience through empathy and acceptance, s/he in turn will gain the strength and motivation to interact in a more empathic and accepting way towards his/her child.

Parent education/training courses based on communication theory such as, Parent Effectiveness Training or P.E.T. (Gordon, 1970), or How to Talk So Kids Will Listen (Faber & Matzlish, 1980), suggest that if parents learn how to communicate effectively with their children, mutual respect and cooperation will naturally follow. The principle is in learning the skills of non-evaluative listening and honest communication of feelings the parent and child can work out solutions to problems that are acceptable to both. Misbehaviour is not seen as misdirected goals, nor as behaviour problems, rather problems arise due to yearnings that are not being acknowledged and/or satisfied. When this happens the parent and/or the child begins to protect him/herself by using defenses. Thus, problems are not seen as being the problem, rather, it is the way problems are handled that is seen as being the problem.

The assumption in this model is that whenever a parent-child disagreement arises, taking the time to communicate concerns, needs and feelings results in a situation whereby a "unique parent and his unique child can solve each of their unique conflicts by finding their own unique solutions which will be acceptable
to both" (Gordon, 1970, p. 200). Gordon calls this the "principle of participation" (p. 201) and states that it works because a person who has an investment in the decision-making process is motivated to carry out the results of that process.

Courses based on Communication theory differ from Adlerian courses because according to Gordon, far too often the logical consequences that the child experiences are parent created, that is, a result of parental authority rather than arising out of true democratic principles. Gordon suggests that the Adlerian approach is too susceptible to falling into the trap whereby the choices the child has are only illusions rather than real, that is, the choices given reflect only what the parent needs and/or wants and does not necessarily reflect what the child might need and/or want. He suggests that parents often solve problems using the win-lose method whereby the parent is the winner and the child is the loser. He also states that in reality there are no winners in the win-lose resolution because the underlying struggle for power creates guilt, loss of respect, and either the loss of the ability to ask for one's needs to be met, or the belief that everyone else is responsible for satisfying one's needs.

The communication model attempts to circumvent this by relying heavily on communicating with children in a way that creates a no-lose compromise, that is, both the needs of the parent and the needs of the child are taken into consideration in the formulation of the solution. In doing so, Gordon (1970)
suggests that in using the no-lose method there is more chance for a high-quality solution to be found because both the child and parent are involved; the need for power is eliminated, i.e., the parent needs to assume the role of the enforcer less often and the child needs to assume the role of being oppositional less often because both have a stake in the outcome of the process; the child’s thinking and cooperative skills are developed; it creates less hostility, leaving room for more love (pp. 200-203). In summary, the skills and techniques enhancing parenting courses arising out of Communication theory are nonjudgemental listening, "I" statements, and problem-solving using the "no-lose method" of compromise (p. 194).

Developmental programs have traditionally been directed at the adult education level (Paddack, 1987), however, Creative Parenting (Neufeld, 1980) is an exception. The Developmental approach is based upon the assumption that "what parents know about children's development is positively related to their skill in designing a supportive learning environment, and to their ability to interact in ways that stimulates a young child's development" (Whalen, 1983, p. 242). Developmental programs minimize the need for teaching discipline skills or effective communication techniques. The model makes the assumption that once parents become more aware of the potency of their behaviour on the emotional, and psychological development of their children, they will act to
ensure a supportive environment is provided. For example, if they require knowledge about discipline, or communication, they will actively seek further knowledge to facilitate what they have learned through the framework of the developmental course (Paddack, 1987). In summary, parenting programs based strictly on Developmental theory differ from other programs because they are not training courses. The courses are educational in nature and expose the parent to information about the physical, emotional and psychological development of children and how to enhance it.

EFFECTIVENESS OF PARENTING PROGRAMS

Although there have been many studies on parenting programs, according to Park (1977), most of the studies have focused on the immediate impact upon the child, while parental attitudes, beliefs, knowledge, cognitions and perceptions in regard to the parent-child relationship interactions have been largely ignored. Furthermore, when research has been focused on the parent-child relationship it has been as if the parent was only a reactor to the child instead of an information-processing organism who also contributed to the negative outcome of an interaction. In other words, the research, true to the paradigms of Individual or Clinical Psychology were conducted as if the problem with the interaction resided within the child.
In a review of the effectiveness of parenting groups Paddack (1987) concluded that of the three types of programs studied most often (P.E.T., S.T.E.P., and Behaviour Modification groups), each had its own value depending on the goal of the instructor and, of course, the instrument of measure. For example, in comparative studies, Schofield (cited in Paddack, 1987, p. 44) found that children in a P.E.T. group showed greater self-esteem than children in a behaviour modification group. Similarly, Stolzoff (cited in Paddack, 1987, p. 44) showed that an Adlerian group was more effective than a P.E.T. or a behaviour modification group for changing parental democratic attitudes and parental acceptance of the child. In her comparative study of the literature, Paddack (1987) concludes that the best that can be said is that the "research on parent training programs has shown that each of these programs have some strengths and some weaknesses" (p. 45). She goes on to say that the specific effectiveness of each program is dependent upon the assumptions of the theory underlying its development, structure and techniques so that no one program can be effectively compared to another simply because they aren't necessarily comparable.

Paddack (1987) states that the implication drawn from her research on parenting education/training courses is that they may be limited in their effectiveness. However, the author of the present study agrees with her that it may not be the specific course material that is the limiting factor. Rather, the
limitations may be a result of the narrow view, of parent-child relationships, inherent in the Individual and Clinical Psychology paradigms; a view that relies too heavily on techniques dealing with the content of the problems rather than on the process that underlies the development, and maintenance of the problem. This view ignores the dearth of material generated by family research since the early 1950s and in particular, Murray Bowen’s Family Systems Theory. Therefore, the author of this study suggests that Bowen’s theory may be useful in enhancing the effectiveness of parenting education/training programs because as a descriptive and explanatory theory, its concepts can account for the processes which lead to the creation and maintenance of parent-child problems.

FAMILY SYSTEMS THEORY

Bowen (1978), by observing clinical families, that is, families in which one child was schizophrenic, was able to discern and describe a relationship system involving reciprocal and recursive interactions. These "cycles were orchestrated with such precision and predictability within various family relationships that any explanation for them based on the psychological make up of individual family members seemed awkward and inadequate" (Kerr & Bowen, 1988, p. 9). Shifting from a psychoanalytic perspective to a general systems perspective, Bowen (1978) soon began to look beyond the description of the
process to the explanation of the process. In doing so, he discovered that "the
phenomenon invited an explanation based on seeing the family as a unit with
specific relationship processes that were present in every family" (p. 9), not only
symptomatic families.

Originally he developed six concepts which could account for or explain
the development, or lack of development, of problem or symptom formation in
a family (Bowen, 1966). Using his Differentiation of Self concept as a central
organizing principle (Henry, 1990), he conceived of five interlocking process
concepts which, if observed in a family could become knowable: nuclear family
emotional process, family projection process, triangles, sibling position,
multigenerational transmission process. Later, he added two more concepts, the
emotional cutoff and the societal emotional process (Bowen, 1976). The
interplay of these concepts in a person's family of origin, determined that
person's level of differentiation self. It is not the intention of this paper to discuss
in great detail any of these concepts, rather the paper will only give a brief
understanding of the concepts, so that in the latter part of this chapter it can be
seen how many of them might be useful to incorporate into the time limited
format of a parent education/training program.

SUMMARY OF THE BOWEN'S CONCEPTS
Bowen postulated that there were two primary systems, the emotional system and the intellectual system, which combine to determine a person’s ability to function in productive goal directed ways. The emotional system is a product of what Bowen referred to as the togetherness force. This force arises out of "the universal need for love, approval, emotional closeness, and agreement" (Bowen, 1978, p. 257). The intellectual system on the other hand is a product of what Bowen termed the individuality force which arises out of "the drive to be a productive, autonomous individual, as defined by self rather than the dictates of the group" (p. 257). He further postulated that when these two systems fuse, the emotional system dominates the intellectual system (Garfinkel, 1980). Fusion occurs whenever a person can not adjust to a situation that disturbs the usual balance of these two forces.

The fusing of these two systems is so universal that he believed that all people could be categorized on a single continuum which he theoretically conceived as the differentiation of self scale. Simply stated, differentiation of self refers to a person’s ability to remain self-determined while involved with others in emotionally significant issues. In other words, to be able to retain intellectual functioning of self in emotional situations so that choices are made on the basis of rational thought rather than reactive or emotionally driven thought. Bowen perceived that between any two people or groups of people the balance between
the pressures for togetherness and the pressures for individuality are in dynamic
equilibrium.

With the balance constantly fluctuating, one or both people or groups have
to constantly make adjustments so the two can co-exist. However, certain
situations arise where there is a threat overwhelming the ability of one or both
individuals or groups to make the necessary adjustments. When this threat occurs,
the pressure for togetherness dominates. The emotional system and the intellectual
system become fused with the result that intellectual functioning regresses from
being objective and rational, to subjective and reactive. The degree of anxiety that
any one person can withstand before fusion occurs determines where that person
lies on the differentiation of self scale. That point is conceived of as that person’s
basic level of differentiation and it is at that point where the person’s intellectual
functioning becomes dominated by the emotional system.

Although the differentiation of self concept refers to an individual, it can
only be assessed by observing the functioning of the individual in relationship to
others. Inherently, the concept implies the ability of an individual in making an
intrapersonal distinction between his or her own thoughts and feelings. As well,
it implies the interpersonal ability to make a distinction between his or her own
thoughts and feelings, and those of another person. Furthermore, the degree to
which a person is differentiated can only be assessed over time, by observing his
or her involvement with another person or group on issues of emotional significance.

Emotionally significant issues can be defined as issues that disrupt the balance between the forces for togetherness and individuality in the relationship. This occurs when one of the two tries to attain more togetherness or more individuality than the other one is able to adapt to. When this happens, if one or both become undifferentiated, the togetherness force promotes thoughts, feelings and actions which attempt to make both individuals "as if" they were one. Typically, the one not making the move will become undifferentiated first. At that point s/he will put pressure on the other to return to the previous balanced state. As this one increases the pressure for either more togetherness or more separateness, the emotional field may escalate to a point at which the other might also become undifferentiated. If this happens, the other may either react in ways that restore the previous balance, or may react in ways that exaggerate the imbalance. In either case, neither of the two are acting in self-determined ways, but rather only in other-determined ways. In other words, how they act is strictly based upon the actions of the other. Bowen conceived this undifferentiated response as being an unconscious and therefore automatic biological response arising out of the "cyclical nature of the symbiotic relationships" that exist in families (Bowen, 1978, p. 104).
Human life begins with a symbiotic relationship between the primary caregiver (usually the mother) and the infant. This state, referred to as emotional oneness or emotional fusion, is essentially a state whereby one person is completely functioning for another. For example, the infant’s emotional responses determines the emotional functioning of the mother, and the emotional responses of the mother determines the emotional functioning of the infant. However, the symbiotic mother-child relationship spills over into all the other relationships within the family, creating what Bowen originally referred to as the undifferentiated ego mass, and later as the family emotional system.

From this symbiotic state, the child "slowly disengages from the original fusion with his mother and moves toward his own emotional autonomy" (Bowen, 1976, p. 86). The degree of emotional autonomy from the parent that the child achieves is seen as being relatively fixed by the time the child leaves home, and is regarded as being the person’s basic level of differentiation of self. Because the differentiation of self originates in an emotional symbiotic relationship with the parent(s), the child can only achieve a basic level of differentiation that is slightly lower, slightly higher or is the same as the basic level of differentiation of the parents. This occurs because of what Bowen termed the projection process in which the parent automatically, "thinks, feels and acts in ways that promote emotional separation of her child from her (individuality), and also thinks, feels,
and acts in ways that undermine emotional separation of her child from her
(togetherness)” (Kerr & Bowen, 1988,). However, although the projection process
begins with the parent(s), Bowen states that eventually it is reinforced by the
child, "In addition a child thinks, feels and acts in ways that promote emotional
separation from his mother, and also thinks, feels and acts in ways that undermine
emotional separation from her" (p. 197).

Bowen saw this projection process as being mutual, incorporating all
members of the family. This concept, which he termed the family projection
process accounts for how the anxiety arising out of an inability to adapt to a
fluctuation in the balance between the togetherness and the individuality forces
can create problems, "This ‘fusion of selves’ could involve every area of ego
functioning. One ego could function for that of another. One family member
could become physically ill in response to emotional stress in another family
member" (p. 105). Once the problem is created, the family projection process
results in all members of the family thinking, feeling and acting in ways that
maintains it.

This process originates within in the parental unit. It describes and
explains the patterns through which parents project the product of their
undifferentiation, that is, their anxiousness, onto their children (Garfinkel, 1980).
Unable to deal with the anxiety inherent in their dyadic relationship, the parents
seek to alleviate their anxiety by triangling in a child. Bowen stressed that a twoperson relationship is inherently unstable because it is so easily effected by anxiety, and therefore when tension or conflict arises, one of the twosome will automatically attempt to alleviate his/her discomfort by either joining with a third person or by diverting the tension to a third person, "Emotional conflict between two family members could disappear with the simultaneous development of conflict between two other family members" (Bowen, 1978, p. 105). When this happens the problems projected onto the child soon become incorporated in the child's attitude and belief system. The problem projected could be in the form of a creating a coalition with the child so that the child is placed into a position of sidetaking with one parent against another family member, or, it could in the form of a deficiency in the child that the parent becomes over anxious about. In either case the parent's projection diverts his/her focus away from the tension in the spousal dyad.

Once established, reciprocal and recursive patterns undermine the child's ability to separate and s/he begins to think, feel, and act "as if" the deficiency is real. Not being able to stand back and become objective about the process that created the problem, these faulty interactions set up an unconscious situation that Bowen referred to as unresolved emotional attachment to the parent. Resolving this attachment, the goal of any therapy based on Bowen's theory, is to help the
individual become more aware of the patterns of interaction that maintain the fusion of self and others in the family. The key to this shift in perception is to become more objective about the parent. Becoming more objective is accomplished through an understanding of triangles and the part they play in emotional interactions.

Bowen's concept of the triangle describes the facts of functioning in human relationships, "facts that can be observed as repeating over and over consistently so that they become knowable and predictable" (Kerr & Bowen, 1988, p.134). Bowen believed that what is important in raising one's level of differentiation is to become more objective. He stated that this can only be accomplished by becoming an observer of the facts. Triangles describe the what, where, when and how facts of the family emotional system. Becoming an observer requires that one give up asking the "why" of human functioning, "Why is only speculative and so is not a fact. Speculations are only fantasies so they might as well be ignored" (p. 134). Furthermore, speculating about why someone did or said something, usually results in an assignment of motive which immediately takes one out of a systems frame of reference. Observing and understanding the impact of triangling requires a system's perspective because, "Man can fail to see what is in front of his eyes unless it fits into his theoretical frame of reference" (Bowen, 1978, p. 105).
"The triangling process revolves around emotional attachment and the impact of anxiety on that attachment" (Kerr & Bowen, 1988, p. 145). One’s emotional attachment to others is a product of the established balance between the togetherness and individuality forces in each relationship. People with a higher level of differentiation are able to withstand greater amounts of anxiety within their emotional attachments. This means that the balance between the two forces can fluctuate more before the person is overwhelmed by anxiety and becomes undifferentiated or emotionally reactive. Once undifferentiated, the emotional system dominates the intellectual system and the reactive behaviour typically increases anxiety even more. The interplay of these two variables, anxiety and level of differentiation, determine the formation of a new triangle or the activation of one already established to help the person regain emotional stability. The activation of triangles is as automatic as the emotional reactions that create them.

The concept of the triangle as well as providing a description of the facts of human emotional interactions, also forms the basis for Bowen’s one therapeutic intervention; becoming more differentiated from one’s family of origin. By adopting a systems perspective, a person is better equipped to stand back and observe the interplay of the family emotional process, the family projection process and the resultant triangling process. Monitoring one’s emotions while observing the facts of this interplay during involvement in significant emotional
issues, equips one to stay differentiated, or emotionally detached. Remaining differentiated or emotionally detached, simply means not allowing one’s emotions to dominate one’s thinking.

For Bowen, becoming more emotionally autonomous in the nuclear family could only happen by working toward becoming more autonomous from one’s family of origin. Growing up in a family, the children range in their levels of differentiation. Adopting the work of Tolman (1961) on family constellation, Bowen observed that children adopted functional roles in the family emotional system which were predictable by their sibling position. This occurs because the families follow developmental patterns and the family emotional system reflects the stage that the family is at. Each child is born into an emotional system that is different from an earlier or a later born child. In keeping with Bowen’s interconnected concepts, the product of the anxiety in that emotional system will be projected onto each child differently. For example, a first child may be born into a family at the developmental stage where the parents are frequently and openly expressing love toward each other and the child. By the time the second child enters the family, it may be at a time when the loss of a second income, or an affair, for example, puts a strain on the expression of that love. Similarly, the parents of a first child may be anxious about their abilities to parent, whereas by the time the third child is born the parents are no longer anxious about their
inadequacies (Richardson, 1990).

Each child will adapt to the family, taking on, through the mutual family projection process, a functional role in the family. This role will be most noticeable when s/he is part of a triangle, activated to deal with the anxiety in the family emotional system. As a result, the child or children who are the focus of more of the anxiety, remain more emotionally fused to the family and will remain less emotionally autonomous when they become adults and have families of their own. The child or children who receive less of the anxiety will likewise be more emotionally autonomous from the family. Bowen placed so much confidence in the predictability of Tolman's work, that Family System's Theory states that any child who does not fit the characteristics of his or her sibling position, is the focus of the family's undifferentiated ego mass, and therefore will have the most unresolved attachment issues with the parents. In other words, s/he will be the least differentiated from the family.

Thus Bowen's differentiation of self includes a component that he conceptualized as a multigenerational transmission process. When children become adults, Bowen posits that they will only be attracted to partners that are at the same level of differentiation as they are (Bowen, 1978; Hendrix, 1988, 1992). This is because people who are at one level of differentiation handle stress and anxiety in ways that are unattractive to people at another level. Bowen
observed that when you examine several generations, some branches of the family will become more productive members of society, while other branches will become less productive. The multigenerational process accounts for this by explaining that the children who attained a higher level of differentiation of self eventually marry a partner at the same level. They produce children, some of which attain a higher level than them. These children then go on to marry a partner at that level and the cycle goes on. "People with higher levels of differentiation of self are able to divest more energy into principled, self-determined and goal-directed activity" (Bowen, 1978, p. 475) and therefore function better in society. Similarly, the process works the opposite way with less differentiated people having to "divest more of their energy into seeking love, approval, or attacking the other for not providing it" (p. 475), and as a result more of their life is spent in emotional chaos, or cutoff, interfering with their ability to adapt to social pressures.

Bowen's final two concepts, emotional cutoff and societal emotional process were added in 1976 and completed his theory (Kerr & Bowen, 1988). Bowen noticed that when fusion occurred, that is, when a person became undifferentiated, each person adopted a style of dealing with the anxiety. Emotional cutoff occurs when the anxiety in an individual's internal emotional system reaches a level that can no longer be tolerated. At this point the person
moves to calm it by distancing from the relationship which is triggering it. This is accomplished by triangling. However, in many cases the third apex of the triangle rather than being a person, will be an activity. For example, a person may achieve emotional distance from an anxious relationship through the distractions of sickness, hobby, work, sport or taking on social responsibilities.

In a triangle the movement is always away from tension toward calmness. In a family, calmness can come in the form of a coalition with another member of an activated triangle, or it can come through the distraction and emotional reinforcement of an activity. In all cases, although emotional cutoff may appear to be an act of a well differentiated person, that is, s/he may appear to be acting in a self-determined way, in fact, the action is due to emotional reactivity; retaining intellectual dominance through avoidance of emotional issues within the relationship (Bowen, 1978).

Bowen’s final concept, the societal emotional process, was added because he recognized that systems were always parts of ever expanding systems. For example, within the individual there exists several physiological systems, which are part of the individual’s emotional and intellectual systems. The individual is part of the nuclear family system which in turn is part of the extended family system, which is part of the various social systems. Each system influences and is influenced by the other systems. Although this paper is not focused on the
concept of the societal emotional process, an example will suffice to put this concept into context.

Christmas is a time when the family system is particularly susceptible to the societal emotional process. In Canada, situations arise that would be at other times quite bizarre. For example, a few years ago parents lined up, pushed and shoved, and sometimes paid exorbitant prices in order to get a Cabbage Patch doll to give as a present to their child. Asking why this would occur is merely conjecture. However, understanding Bowen’s family systems theory allows us to stand back and describe the objective facts. Placed within a context of his eight interlocking concepts we can see that a large segment of society regressed to a state of becoming undifferentiated. With the emotional system ruling the intellectual system, principles, such as integrity, fairness and honesty, got lost in the shuffle for the responsibility to provide the child with an object that would join the family with other families.

Bowen believed that the societal emotional process causes regression when the society becomes so focused on the responsibility to an individual or group that it loses sight of intellectually determined principles. This occurs when emotionally determined decisions are made to allay the anxiety of the moment. When Togetherness forces dominate, behaviour regresses to a more primitive state. A state in which fear and alienation increase to a point where people can even
"become violent and start destroying each other" (Bowen, 1978, p. 278).

Bowen's theory is an explanatory theory for human emotional and intellectual functioning. Its concepts are simple and yet so universally descriptive that it is easy for families to immediately grasp. People have what Young (1984) refers to as ordinary explanations for what they see happening. Bowen's theory, with its simple and yet universally descriptive concepts, puts these ordinary explanations of family interactions into a cohesive working model. Learning about the process of normal ordinary relationships makes the process visible. Once the patterns are observable, family members have more chance of remaining objective. For this reason, Family Systems Theory may enhance parenting education/training programs, taking them into the next generation. The following is the manner in which this study included the concepts in order to explore the critical incidents that facilitate or hinder the process of differentiation.

**THE PROGRAM**

The act of parenting defies description; it is an art rather than a science. Yet clinicians are often called upon to 'evaluate, enhance, improve and teach parenting as if it were a well defined set of behaviours, reducible to prescribed techniques.'

(Eldridge & Schmidt, 1990, p. 339)

As early as 1971, Haley pointed out that, "the focus of family treatment
was no longer on changing the individual's perception, his affect or his behaviour, but on changing the structure of the family and in particular the sequences of behaviour among groups of intimates" (p. 4). However, 20 years later, parent education programs still do not reflect this posture. For the most part, in attempting to diminish or prevent parent-child problems, the focus in these programs is primarily the presentation of techniques designed to change the child (Kearney, 1986; Hinde, R. & Stevenson-Hinde, J., 1988). Recognizing that these techniques are born out of well established theories, their importance must not be downplayed nor should the techniques be discarded, however, techniques ignore the etiology of problem or symptom development and therefore are inherently limited. Structuring a parenting course around Bowen's Family Systems Theory may decrease this limitation because "Differentiation is a product of a way of thinking that translates into a way of being; it is not a therapeutic technique" (Kerr & Bowen, 1988, p. 108).

This "way of being" simply refers to being able to remain emotionally nonreactive during interactions which involve emotionally significant issues. This is accomplished first by gaining knowledge about emotional systems, and then by playing a dual role; an observer and an active participant in interactions. Farley (1990) states the importance of becoming an observer:

The family's ability to observe may be the best prognostic
indicator of success or failure in family treatment. Observing is vital to the ability to accurately communicate between people. If a family does not have the ability to observe they must be taught before any lasting changes can be made. In order to observe the members must have the ability to remain emotionally detached or neutral in relationship to emotionally significant interactions. Being emotionally detached means to be able to respond to one’s own internal felt emotions without allowing them to dominate one’s intellect. (p. 92)

By remaining emotionally detached a participant can make choices based on intellectual reasoning as opposed to automatic emotional reactivity, "it involves following a sequence of events, communicating about the sequence, and modifying the interaction as needed" (Farley, 1990, p. 94).

Kearney (1986) also supports Bowen’s theoretical position by stating that it is a way of thinking, rather than a method of working, "When one understands how a system operates, one is free to choose a particular method of intervention". Further, he adds that, "when it is recognized that it is a new orientation to the human dilemma, it is clear that any number of methods might be taught and used" (p. 248). The following is a brief outline of the goals of the Parenting With a Purpose program and how the concepts of Family Systems Theory are integrated with techniques and methods currently employed by the various programs mentioned earlier.

**PARENTING WITH A PURPOSE: THE DIFFERENTIATION OF SELF**

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1 The intent of this section is to give a brief summary, of the assumptions and goals of the program given to the participants of this study. It is not within the scope of this research to evaluate this program. Rather, this section is included strictly for the interest of the reader. For a more complete overview, the eight-week format appears in the appendix.
The Parenting With a Purpose program was designed by the author of this thesis and had been conducted twice prior to the study. The information, techniques, and experiential exercises presented are structured around a model called the "Parent-child Interaction Roadmap". Models are useful in that they allow "concepts from one domain to be applied to another with the expectation that understanding of the second will be increased" (Davidson, & Neale, 1986, p. 28). The roadmap is intended to place theory into a visual context so that meaning and order can be applied to experiences helping the parents become proactive rather than reactive. In this way, they enhance their ability to consciously choose how they will act rather than unconsciously react with automatic, habitual patterns.

The program's title Parenting With a Purpose implies that differentiation is the purpose in parenting. In reviewing the literature, it appears that most researchers are in agreement as to what the parent role is in raising children. Bowlby (1973) says that lack of a solid attachment relationship in infancy and childhood generates a powerful sense of loss and anger which creates people who are unable to establish deep and lasting relationships in later life. On the other hand, Deri (1981) suggests that the 'acting-out' person is one who has not achieved any separation from those attachment figures. She states that language provide symbolic structures which can be used to make meaning out of our life. However, true understanding of self is only possible when we can understand our experiences as being separate from those of others. In other words, achieving separation is not only the basis of self-awareness, but it also allows others to exist, separate from self. Prior to attaining separation, language remains at a level of signs which "announce the object and evoke rigidly preformed, immediate reactions, similar to the sign of the bell and the salivating dog" (p. 181). Putting
these two together, the paradox is that prerequisite for achieving separation from attachment figures, is achievement of a secure attachment to them.

Parallel to the role of the parent, is the role of the family in contributing to the healthy development of the child. Freeman (1992) suggests that two major developmental goals of the family are to maintain and foster commitments to the family as a whole while helping its individual members be competent and independent. Finally, Carter & McGoldrick (1988) state that the family must be able to help its members achieve their individual needs, that is, their needs for belonging, and for autonomy, while at the same time satisfy and respond effectively to the expectations of the community. In compiling these ideas then, the three major goals of parenting within a family context seems to be in providing each individual member with:

1. A sense of belonging with attachment figures
   A sense of worth and meaning in the belonging relationship
   A sense that the family is worthwhile place to be, i.e., commitment

2. An acceptance of individual difference
   The encouragement to separate
   The support for independence & autonomy

3. Social competence

Bowen’s concept of differentiation of self, denotes the ability and degree to which individual family members will be able to attain these three objectives.

THE MODEL

The model concretely places the three objectives of parenting into a
"Parent-Child Interaction Roadmap". It makes the assumption, arising out of Family Systems Theory, that problems are created or activated when there is a shift in the balance between the force for Togetherness and for Separateness (Bowen, 1978; Kerr & Bowen, 1988; Freeman, 1992; Gilbert, 1992). As a result of the anxiety generated by this imbalance, people typically respond in automatic patterns in an attempt to re-establish the original balance, i.e., to draw the person creating the imbalance to their original posture. Guided by the Togetherness force, the goal of these automatic patterns is to eliminate the anxiety. Driven by the pressure for togetherness, they work against the possibility for difference. In other words, the system acts to lower the immediate anxiety in the system by demanding sameness rather than promoting the understanding of difference.

Returning to the original balance in this way lowers the immediate anxiety in the system, however, in the long run it contributes to the family's level of chronic anxiety. Increasing the family's chronic anxiety makes the family more rigid in their thinking, and less adaptable to future shifts in the balance between the two forces. This process forms the etiology of symptom or problem development (Bowen, 1978; Kerr & Bowen, 1988; Freeman, 1992).

Unfortunately, Bowen stepped outside of his theory by pointing the finger at the Togetherness force in terms of symptom development. By blaming the Togetherness force for the creation of problems, he failed to maintain a systemic
view. The Togetherness force and the Separateness force are forces in relation to each other. As a result, they both have a part to play in the development and maintenance of symptoms. When situated in a true systemic context, it is possible to acknowledge that there is both an unhealthy and a healthy response to the force for Togetherness just like there is an unhealthy and a healthy response to the force for Separateness. The healthy response to the Togetherness force is unconditional love and acceptance in achieving a sense of oneness with another. The unhealthy response is fear of difference motivating a need for sameness. While the first is based upon secure attachment, the latter is motivated by insecure attachment. Similarly, the healthy response to the force for Separateness is sensitivity and courage to stay in emotional connection while striving for more autonomy, whereas the unhealthy response is insensitivity and emotional cut-off. Stating it simply, healthy responses to the dynamic interplay between the two forces are based upon principles of understanding, patience, encouragement and support, while unhealthy responses are devoid of principled behaviour. Parenting With A Purpose places the Togetherness force and the Separateness force within a systemic perspective. Without honouring the importance of each, it is highly unlikely that any change in differentiation would occur.

The Parent-Child Interaction Roadmap (see p. 44) has two components. First, it situates all interactions as operating on three levels. It then suggests that
differentiation can be increased if these interactions proceed in a step-like movement, first recognizing the influence that the need for Togetherness plays, then the need for Separateness and finally, the need for Social Competence. By following the roadmap, parents have a concrete approach to slow the interational pattern so that it can be observed and acted upon consciously. In this way, anxiety control becomes a cooperative family venture which recognizes each individual’s struggle, how the struggle influences the family, and the influence the family has on the individual. Based on principles, following the roadmap helps to minimize reactivity because interactions are based on facilitating understanding, and acceptance of difference, so that the child can be supported and encouraged in his/her struggle of making sense out of the world and in coping with it. In this model, a the individual’s struggle to make sense out of life and to cope with it, is not seen as a threat to the family structure. Rather, each person is seen as being different and by honouring that uniqueness as a strength the family can work as a team to explore
and encourage it. In doing this, the family can tap into the creative potential that allows a family to remain flexible, preventing maladjustment and assisting crisis management.

The second component of the roadmap, is the separation of intellectual functioning from emotional functioning and the linking of these two to the three levels. In this way, parents can easily monitor the influence of affect on family interactions. Social Competence is enhanced by intellectual functioning and impeded by emotional functioning, while Togetherness is enhanced by emotions, feelings of love and self-worth and impeded by rational thinking. For example, problem-solving when the intellect is being emotionally driven, most often results in solutions that are more geared towards lowering or eliminating the anxiety being felt, than actually solving the problem. Similarly, whenever intellect interferes at the togetherness level, feelings of attachment and love often become conditional.

By visually separating intellectual functioning from emotional functioning, two aspects for healthy relationship interactions are opened up. First, by monitoring the emotions within an interaction, the parent knows at what level s/he should be operating at. Secondly, if a parent is operating at a level that is inconsistent with the observed emotions, the roadmap gives the him/her the permission to return to an earlier level or to go forward to the next level. For
example, if an individual observes that s/he is becoming emotional or that the other person is becoming emotional while attempting to resolve a problem, it is a sign that they need to address these emotions by returning to the Separateness level. In other words, they need to once again use the communication skills of immediacy and empathy to explore the experience that emotional one is having. Validating a person’s experience serves to bring emotions down to a level at which intellectual functioning can once again return. At this point, because the intellect is once again in control, they could proceed to problem-solving.

The aspect of permission is extremely important. It is my belief that many of today’s parents still subscribe to the myth of the traditional family, that they should innately know all the answers to all the dilemmas that arise in raising children, and furthermore, that they should have these answers on the tips of their tongues. In subscribing to this myth, if parents don’t, know the answers immediately, then feelings of doubt and inadequacy can begin to surface. This myth can create faulty interactions because to cover up for not being all knowing, parents often act impulsively. When this occurs, parents act in what appears to be efficient ways. However, in dealing with people efficiency is really only good for crisis management. For prevention, effectiveness is more important (Covey, 1989). In other words, in feeling the pressure to be all knowing, parents often enter interactions at the Social Competence level and for efficiency, attempt to
resolve problems unilaterally rather than cooperatively.

Effective prevention seems to take time and not having taken the time to recognize the influence of the other two levels on the problem, the parent usually makes decisions from a position of ignorance, and insensitivity. The hurt, anger, or resentment that results is added to the family's emotional system, creating an increasing probability that the same problem will recur time and time again. Viewed in this way, effective prevention is paradoxically far more efficient. By beginning each interaction at the Togetherness level, rather than at the Social Competence level the possibility dramatically increases that problem resolution will be a cooperative venture which draws on the uniqueness of each person concerned. In this way, current problems actually become creative learning opportunities that can serve in the prevention of future problems.

THE TASKS AT EACH LEVEL

Inherent in each level of the model are specific tasks that need to be accomplished before moving to the next level. The task at the Togetherness level is to experience and demonstrate the emotions of caring, love and unconditional acceptance. This is done primarily through conveying warmth through closeness and touch. The roadmap encourages the parent to prioritize. Given the importance
of secure attachments, it is suggested that the first step in any interaction, and in particular interactions around significant emotional issues, is to reaffirm that attachment. By prioritizing, the parent can keep in mind that dealing with the anxiety provoking situation is the final objective of the interaction, not the initial objective\(^2\). Delayed gratification is not only an important concept for children to learn, it is also an extremely important concept for parents to practice.

The information presented at the Togetherness level, as with each level, comes from a variety of sources. Bowen’s concepts of togetherness, and the family emotional system guides the presentation creating the dichotomy between healthy togetherness and dysfunctional togetherness. Compatible with Bowen’s theory, dysfunctional togetherness occurs when one ego thinks, feels and acts for another, eliminating distinctions between self and other. Functional togetherness occurs when the distinction between self and other is eliminated due to individual choice. Dysfunctional togetherness, on the other hand, is based upon the desire for security through sameness, whereas functional togetherness is based upon a

\(^2\) It is interesting that in dealing with parents of acting out children, that the parents do not make the connection between the child’s acting out and the parent’s reaction. In most cases, the parent, in attempting to resolve the problems created, becomes emotional. As stated previously, emotionally directed problem-solving usually ends up with impulsive solutions. In other words, the parent deals with the impulsive behaviour of the child, using impulsive behaviour. When asked which child causes the parent to regress to child like behaviour (impulsive), the answer is always the acting out child. As a result, the parent becomes the model for the child, who then acts like the parent, who then reacts and continues to model the very behaviour s/he wishes to eliminate.
desire for security through oneness. The first implies that we can only be secure if we are the same, while the second implies that we are secure through the feeling that we are connected even though we are different.

Attachment theory also contributes to this level. According to this theory, consistent availability of parental love and affection for the child, creates a lifelong confidence in his/her inner feelings of worth and meaning. When this occurs the child, feeling secure in his/her attachments, develops a natural curiosity about the world and seeks to autonomously challenge it. On the other hand, if attachment figures are not consistently available the child becomes focused on obtaining love and affection. In doing so, the child is always in a state of emotional fusion to attachment figures. When this happens the child acts in reaction to significant others, rather than in a self-directed way and as a result cannot separate and become autonomous. Paradoxically, in order to truly become autonomous and separate in relation to significant others, one has to become securely attached to them.

At this level, techniques and strategies to increase a sense of worth and meaning in the family are presented. These are the effective use of proximity, touch and chores. A sense of security does not come from a verbal statement or verbal commitment, rather it comes from the implications of the attachment figures behaviour. Children sense that they are secure when the parents behaviour
indicates that they are important. Taking the time to get close to the child, and/or to touch the child when communicating, or when reconnecting after being away, for example, gives the child the sense that s/he is important enough in the relationship for the parent to give up their time to get close. Similarly, chores are another important aspect of Togetherness. When handled properly, that is, respecting difference, they give the child the chance to invest in the family. The implication with investment is that what you invest in is important. Furthermore, by investing the child becomes important. Chores thus give the child the sense that the family is a meaningful and worthwhile place to be, and that s/he is worthwhile and meaningful because of his/her contribution.

The task of the Separateness level is to give symbolic expression to one’s experience of themselves, and of themselves in relation to others. Being able to honestly and safely express one’s thoughts and feelings through language minimizes the expression of them through reactive behaviour, minimizes the need for activating defense mechanisms, and provides an alternative to impulsive behaviour. Providing this type of environment requires that in parent-child relationships, as in all relationships, the parent has to master the task of effective communication skills. The two main tasks are to learn how to listen and how to speak. Listening means helping the other person further their understanding of their experience, i.e., the connection between their thoughts, feelings and actions,
while speaking means to express one's own experience from an "I"-position.

The listener, by using empathy is in the influential position of helping the speaker become more self-aware and make productive meaning out of their experience. The paradox, however, is that in opening oneself up to listening, one is also opening oneself up to being influenced. This can frighten a parent because in listening, one realizes how different an other experiences life. This is frightening because it opposes sameness. Typically, parents listen to their children only long enough to lecture, scold, give advice or analyze them.

Speaking is also a difficult skill for parents to master. Most parents are steeped in the tradition of finding fault and ascribing blame. Intuitively, it seems to make sense that if one can do this, then problem resolution is simply a matter of having the person at fault take the responsibility to resolve it. As a result, parents usually speak from a "You" position, rather than an "I" position. Again this is frightening because in speaking about self to another person, one is opening up to being influenced by that other person. As well, when one speaks from an "I" position, the implication is one is taking responsibility for their thoughts, feelings and actions.

Self awareness and self-other understanding increases the acceptance of difference. Through validation emotions are diffused, preventing the necessity for the emotional system to vie for domination of the intellectual system.
Furthermore, self awareness and validation creates a desire to take responsibility for the interactional patterns one engages in (Deri, 1981). Bowen’s (1988) concepts of projection, triangling, and sibling position as well as information about roles and scapegoating are topics that relate to this level.

Effective communication leads relationships to cooperative, creative and intellectual problem-solving which is the task at the Social Competence level. Social Competence is facilitated by the ability to make wise, self-determined, self-responsible decisions. Becoming more self-responsible entails two aspects. First, being more self-responsible means to be responsible for one’s thoughts, feeling, and behaviours, as well as for the consequences of the interplay between these three. Second, being more self-responsible means to not engage, promote or involve oneself in the irresponsibility of others. In other words, being self-responsible means to allow others to be responsible for their own thoughts, feelings and behaviours, and the consequences of their interplay.

This level is primarily concerned with embellishing, and teaching problem-solving skills. The goal at this level is three fold. First, as the child ages, discipline is slowly transferred from a parent-directed stance to a child-directed stance. The process of helping the child develop "self-discipline" is based upon an acceptance of difference by the parent which is directed at encouraging each child’s strengths and helping him/her compensate for his/her weaknesses.
Mistakes are seen as learning opportunities rather than signs of deficits or failure and part of the problem-solving process is to find strength in the mistaken behaviour, to acknowledge the strength, and build on it towards a more productive outcome.

Similarly, problem-solving goes from primarily a parent directed activity to a child directed activity, wherein part of taking responsibility is for a problem is generating how to solve it. In this way the child’s social competence is promoted by learning to take responsibility for problems created, and at the same time learning, that s/he can handle them. If the child does not experience these two simultaneously, social competence is thwarted and the child’s anxiety over making mistakes overwhelms his/her ability to generate solutions.

The Social Competence level is also the level where conditional love is placed. Conditional love is vastly different from unconditional love, while at the same time extremely important (Fromm, 1956). Unconditional love is love for the child simply because s/he exists. This type of love represents the powerful emotions of acceptance, concern and caring. It is the type of love that allows boundaries to be fused in a healthy, productive state of oneness. This state, as mentioned earlier, satiates the child’s need for security and frees him/her to separate from the attachment figures. Through separation, the child seeks challenge through activities of Social Competence. These activities are promoted
by conditional love.

Conditional love is love that is earned, and because it can be earned, it becomes a powerful motivator. It is also an intellectual exercise because giving it is based upon choice; I give it to you if you meet my expectations, and I withhold it if you don’t. The child who is increasingly invited to engage in problem-solving, becomes increasingly committed to the solution. In fulfilling this commitment, s/he has an opportunity to meet parental expectations and receive conditional love. As the child gets older, the process is one in which s/he not only increasingly begins to meet self-expectations, but also increasingly internalizes the parent’s conditional love and the child is able to conditionally love him/herself.

SEPARATION AND INTERPLAY OF INTELLECTUAL AND EMOTIONAL FUNCTIONING

The model, having three levels, allows for situating the emotional and intellectual systems in their appropriate task oriented levels. At the Togetherness level there is a recognition of a force or need for human beings to achieve fusion with a significant other. This occurs through a healthy fusion of boundaries based upon unconditional love and acceptance and relies upon the emotional system, that is, a feeling state that goes beyond rationality. Fusion at this level, because it
reaffirms attachment and meaning, is positive, and productive. It is based upon the ability to attain a feeling of oneness with another and still retain a sense of personal integrity.

At the other end of the roadmap, Social Competence, requires intellectual activities. Social Competence grows out of teaching and learning (discipline), and wise decision-making. Success at these tasks requires functioning of the intellectual system unimpeded by emotions. When emotional functioning controls intellectual functioning at this level, continuing to work at this level inevitably results in low quality decisions. An accumulation of poor decisions creates outcomes which undermine attaining social competence. Feelings of shame, guilt, doubt, inadequacy, etc. create situations in which decisions are increasingly made to lower the anxiety produced by these feelings, rather than on attaining growth producing goals.

The Separateness level, combines both systems, with the intellect being employed to explore, express and validate the emotional system. Through the practice of effective communication, understanding and acceptance of difference can be promoted. Seeking to understand and to be understood begins the process

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3 This does not imply that decisions do not involve sensitivity. Good decisions are based upon following the roadmap so that emotions are acknowledged and validated through understanding, prior to proceeding to the problem-solving level. In this way, good decisions involve consideration for all parties concerned so that creative, workable solutions are found.
of opening oneself up to being influenced. Rather than getting entrenched in opposing positions, control is given up as an impediment to growth so that creativity and flexibility can prevail.

In giving parents a concrete and visual guide that separates the intellectual system from the emotional system parents have more of an opportunity to rise above the chaos that family interactions often appear to create. Having a working guide through which to organize their experiences, they can become active observers and participants towards achieving a greater degree of differentiation of self by appropriate management of the two systems rather than having the two systems manage them.

**OBJECTIVES OF THE PARENTING WITH A PURPOSE PROGRAM:**

1. To present six of the eight concepts of Bowen’s theory, namely differentiation of self, family emotional system, family projection process, triangles, sibling position and emotional cutoff.

2. To reframe the problem from an individual concern to a family affair, i.e., from an individual perspective to a systems perspective.

3. To improve the ability to deal with and accept differences by increasing awareness of the role anxiety has on an individual’s ability to adapt and communications skills.

4. Develop an observational stance so emphasis in interaction can be placed on process rather than on content.
5. To shift perspective of discipline from an strategy employed to exact retribution to a philosophy of teaching/learning.

6. To increase problem-solving the families abilities.

7. To improve family solidarity, individual autonomy and social competence, by helping family to recognize its own expertise in handling family conflicts, problems, and coping strategies.

CONCLUSION

Parents today are in transition from a social system in which the authority of the adult was accepted and all roles in the family were clearly defined, to a social system based upon individual respect where the roles each member of a family can assume are varied and many. As a result, parenting has become a major challenge. Old methods of raising children, that is, those methods that the parent was raised by, are no longer effective and in many cases, unacceptable. In this review, I have presented information on current parenting programs which has shown that the research on family life, in particular Bowen’s research, has not as yet been incorporated in these programs. Also included, has been an overview of the philosophy and assumptions of a program which was developed to include Bowen’s research.

The information put forth by Family Systems Theory, explains the universal processes by which family life operates. In a society evolving toward
respect for the individual, respect for individual differences are imperative. Understanding the concepts described by Bowen may facilitate respect for individual differences by helping one to attain a greater level of differentiation of self. As of yet, no research has been conducted to examine just how the process of raising one’s level of differentiation of self takes place in the nuclear family. The focus of this study is to provide critical incidents which hinder and facilitate the process of differentiation of self in the nuclear family so that we may better understand how this process can be enhanced.
CHAPTER THREE

METHOD

INTRODUCTION

This study is designed to explore the process of differentiation of parents within their family of procreation; more specifically, the question is what types of critical incidents hinder and facilitate this process? The critical incidents technique, a qualitative method developed by Flanagan (1954), has been employed for this purpose. The critical incidents technique permits objective observational data, pertaining to significant and systematically defined criteria, to be collected. The technique is suitable for a study of this type as the data is drawn from self-reports by the participants in their experience of the research question, that is, what are the thoughts, feelings and actions they experience which contribute to attaining or not attaining a felt sense of being differentiated. The purpose of this chapter is to present information pertaining to the population and sample, as well as to the flexibility and usefulness of the critical incidents technique, the principles guiding the reporting of incidents, and finally the categorizing, and analysis of the data extracted.
POPULATION

The participants were drawn from a pool of referrals, by the workers in various agencies within the area, as well as by local family physicians, to Chilliwack Mental Health. These agencies included Chilliwack Mental Health, the Chilliwack School District, and the Ministry of Social Services and Housing-Chilliwack Office. The referring workers were professionals in the field of counselling, social work or childcare. In all cases, the referrals were observed as having a disrupted family environment visibly manifested by "acting-out" children. The participants were the parents of these children.

Drawing the participants from a narrow population that has been explicitly defined, fits well with the purposes of this study. Bowen (1978) stated that differentiating moves, that is, thinking and acting in ways that serve to increase one's level of differentiation of self in the family can only occur during times of increased anxiety resulting from emotional issues about which to relate. All the families in this population were assessed by the referring professional to be in a period of acute emotional reactivity due to the nature of their parent-child relationship and/or due to the problems the child was having in other areas of his/her life, eg. school life, peer relationships, community life etc.

Originally, Chilliwack Mental Health ran the Parenting With A Purpose program (Dionne, 1991), to serve as an early intervention, caseload management procedure. The objective was to funnel appropriate referrals into a parenting education/training course to increase parent knowledge and skills. The hypothesis made was that exposure to current effective parenting philosophies and techniques

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1 The program and model developed by Dionne (1991) is based upon the concepts of Bowen's Family Systems Theory. The purpose of parenting according to this program is the differentiation of self.
would increase parent competence, thereby decreasing the need for more intensive therapeutic family interventions. If the hypothesis was correct, then after completing the course a significant number of parents would not request further professional help.

In a preliminary study, conducted by Dionne (1991), the results were promising. The 15 parents who attended the initial program were asked four questions pre and post session about their theory of change in regard to their disrupted family situation:

1. Child Change
   Change might occur if the child became more mature, cooperative, responsible; less argumentative, negative, angry.

2. Parent Change
   Change might occur if the parent spent more time with the child, was more consistent in setting limits, had more patience and understanding, was more reliable.

3. Professional Help
   Change might occur with medical advice, counselling to resolve adult and marital conflicts, learning better communication skills, learning better parenting skills.

4. Change is impossible
   Tried everything and nothing works and nothing is likely to work. (p. 38)

The results supported the hypothesis. Of the nine parents who initially reported that change was dependent solely on the child changing, only one still held that view at the end, while the number of parents who felt that they could make the necessary changes in the family by changing the way they responded
rose from an initial 10 at pre-session to 15 at post-session. In terms of having the felt sense that more intensive, individual, marital or family counselling was needed, at pre-session 10 parents responded while the number dropped to 1 at post-session. At pre-session, only one parent felt that the situation was hopeless, while at post-session this dropped to 0.

The results of this study showed that the participants of the Parenting With A Purpose workshop reported having benefitted positively. Dionne (1991) concluded that it was an effective primary intervention for creating and maintaining family health and appeared to be an efficient method of relieving the increasing demand on the Mental Health Counselling team. However, the study did not examine the incidents which contributed to this positive change.

SAMPLE

Originally eight couples were selected from the pool of referrals to Chilliwack Mental Health. The individuals ranged in age from 27 to 48 and ranged from low to middle income. One couple was First Nations, one couple was French Canadian, while the other six were white anglo-saxon. All individuals spoke fluent english and were literate. As well, all couples fit the following criteria:

1. Participants were currently involved in parenting children
2. Participants recognized and agreed that they had a child who was experiencing behavioural problems at home and at school.

3. Participants had a desire to seek professional help in dealing with the problem.

4. Both members of the spousal dyad were willing to commit to attending eight, three hour workshop sessions, including a pre, mid and post-workshop interview. The pre-workshop interview served to outline the study, the workshop content and to assess suitability of the couple, and did not contribute to the collection of data. The mid and post-workshop interviews served as a data collection method.

5. Participants had the cognitive skills required for completing the daily log.

One couple attended only two sessions, prior to leaving the study for personal reasons. The data are therefore based upon the seven remaining couples.

THE CRITICAL INCIDENTS TECHNIQUE

Although Flanagan (1954) can trace the roots of this qualitative method back to Sir Francis Galton in the later part of the last century, he was instrumental in the development and refinement of the critical incidents technique during the second world war. In 1941, as part of the Aviation Psychology Program (APP) he was asked to select and classify recruits for aircrew positions. Flanagan states that the method first employed suggested several improvements were needed in order to help it reach its potential. As a consequence, it was refined over the course of several studies.
The original study by APP was carried out to analyze the specific reasons that 1,000 candidates, who were selected to learn to fly, had to be eliminated from the flight training schools program for their failure to learn to fly. In collecting incidents pertaining to this question from two sources, the pilot instructors and the check pilots, it was noted that the information gathered was limited in its usefulness because of the subjective nature of the responses. Much of the data was in the form of cliches and stereotypic observations rather than objective facts. Flanagan (1954), states that this study, "indicated very clearly the need for better procedures for obtaining a representative sample of factual incidents" (p. 328). A representative sample meant that it was not enough to focus on only one half of the question, the negative half. What was needed in order to increase the usefulness of the technique was a focus on both the behaviours that led to the success of the task, as well as those that led to the task being unsuccessfully completed, "the procedure was to obtain first-hand reports, or reports from objective records, of satisfactory and unsatisfactory execution of the task assigned" (p. 329). Only by comparison of the two was the data seen as being complete.

Flanagan (1954) states that the "principle objective in the critical incident technique is the determination of the critical requirements which are demonstrated as making a difference between success and failure in carrying out specific
functions" (p. 333). Furthermore he states that the critical incidents technique is based on a "flexible set of principles which can be modified and adapted to meet the specific situations of a study" (p. 335). The first principle is to clearly define the activity to be explored in terms of a functional description so that the reporter knows what he is expected to focus on. Second, the reporter must focus only on behavioural descriptions that will result in defining what is necessary to do or not to do if participation in the activity is to be successful or effective. Third, because the data will invariably come from memory, the reporter should be recording it as near to the time of the incident as possible. Fourth, in analyzing the data, because category formulation is subjective, the categories must reflect usefulness, be self-explanatory and cover all the incidents having significant frequencies. When these four principles are followed, Flanagan states that "the critical incident technique, rather than collecting opinions, hunches and estimates, obtains a record of specific behaviours from those in the best position to make the necessary observations and evaluations...making it possible to formulate the critical requirements of an activity" (p. 355). As a result, the technique has had widespread use (Wickert, Gordon, Folley, Eilbert, as cited in Flanagan, 1954; Flanagan, 1978; Boychuck, 1982; Cochran, 1985; Amundson and Borgen, 1987; Young, 1991).

In terms of reliability and validity of this qualitative method, Anderson
and Nilsson (1964) reported, in their study of job training requirements of store managers, that "it would appear justifiable to conclude that the information collected by this method is both reliable and valid" (p. 402). They found that analysis of the data showed the technique resulted in comprehensive and stable categories as well as good inter-rater reliability. In their study, the data collected was not significantly influenced by the method of collection, nor by having different interviewers recording them. They also found that the categories held up to the incidents being resorted into the established categories by independent sorters.

**DATA COLLECTION**

The data consisted of critical incidents observed by the participant which were seen as facilitating or hindering the process of differentiation of self. Flanagan (1954) describes an incident as "any observable human activity that is sufficiently complete in itself to permit inferences and predictions to be made about the person performing the act" (p. 327). In order for the incident to be critical "the incident must occur in a situation where the purpose or intent of the act seems fairly clear to the observer, and where its consequences are sufficiently definite to leave little doubt concerning its effects" (p. 327). The critical incidents were reported using two methods; a daily log, and a mid and post-workshop interviews.
Daily log

Most of the data resulted from the daily logs. The participants were asked to answer the question:

**What events and/or experiences have you had during the workshop sessions, and between the workshop sessions, which either hindered or facilitated your ability to differentiate?**

The participants were asked to take time each day to record 1-3 incidents on 3" by 5" index cards. To help organize the participants in this task, they were given instructions to record facilitating incidents on white cards and hindering incidents on yellow cards. As well, they were given a format to guide the writing of their responses. This format consisted of breaking the reporting of the incident into five aspects:

1. **Describe the event;**
   - What happened?
   - Who did what to whom?

2. **What was said;**
   - Who said what to whom?

3. **What were your thoughts?**

4. **What were your feelings?**

5. **Identify specifically:**
   - What makes this event facilitating or hindering?

By structuring the reporting of the incidents in this manner, it was intended that objectivity would remain high and that it would encourage
consistent, systematic, formulated answers to the critical incident question for each respondent and across respondents. Flanagan (1954) points out that without specific questions to guide the reporting, answers may not "provide relatively objective and factual information...nor...provide a complete record of the important events" (p. 328).

Moreover, by guiding the reporting of incidents in this manner, the study’s working definition of differentiation of self was also incorporated:

**Differentiation**

I have my own thoughts, feelings and actions and you have your own thoughts, feelings and actions.

I recognize which thoughts, feelings and actions are mine and which thoughts, feelings and actions are yours.

I am responsible for my thoughts, feelings and actions and the consequences of them and you are responsible for yours.

Questions number 1 & 2 are intended to elicit factual information concerning observable verbal and non-verbal actions, while questions number 3 & 4 elicit objective data about thoughts and feelings respectively. Question number four asks the reporter to make a subjective evaluation about whether the incident was hindering or facilitating. In this way, the evaluation as to whether the incident was hindering or facilitating is situated in reported objective
observations pertaining to the process. Flanagan (1954) suggested that it was extremely important that the reporters know just what it is that they are reporting on, and that researchers could enhance that understanding by relating the questions asked to the general aim of the study. In this case, the format served to help the respondents ‘remember’ and report the incidents as they related to the constructs of the differentiating process.

**Mid & Post-Workshop Interviews**

The purpose of the interviews were three-fold. First, to elicit further information about incidents reported in the daily logs on which the researcher needed clarification. Second, to explore other incidents in the participant’s life that could be classified as hindering or facilitating, that had not been reported in the daily log. Third, to comment on any incident observed during the actual workshop by the author of the study concerning the participant, which may have been an unreported critical incident.

Another purpose of the interview, unrelated to data collection, was to allow each individual participant to clarify for themselves, any aspect of the workshop sessions. This fell into two main categories. Most participants had some questions regarding various aspects of the information presented which needed to be addressed in order for them to process it and make meaning out of it.
Secondly, many of the participants had questions concerning the process of differentiation and the behavioural and emotional response that often resulted from making differentiating moves. Bowen (1978) states that, "any small step toward differentiation will be automatically accompanied by a small emotional upheaval in the family system. This is so predictable that absence of an emotional reaction is good evidence that the differentiating effort was not successful" (p. 495). Having an opportunity on a one to one basis to normalize this response as being predictable, seemed to reassure those participants who were concerned.

**Letters**

Following each session, the researcher wrote a letter to the participants (see Appendix D). This letter was intended to serve three purposes. First, because of the nature of the workshop, they were intended to facilitate the participant’s sense of inclusion in the workshop and in the research. Second, it was the author’s hope that the letter would help the participants continue the workshop experience between sessions. Third, it was hoped that in receiving a letter between sessions would encourage the participants to complete the daily logs.

**DATA ANALYSIS**

Flanagan (1954) states:

The purpose of the data analysis stage is to summarize and
describe the data in an efficient manner so that it can be effectively used for many practical purposes. The aim is to increase the usefulness of the data while sacrificing as little as possible of their comprehensiveness, specificity and validity. (p. 340)

As indicated, the critical incidents technique classifies the data under categories which are believed to be the most valuable in stating the behavioural requirements for success or failure of what is being studied. The first step in the technique’s systematic data analysis procedure, is to establish the frame of reference for category formulation. This is guided by such questions as, ‘What uses are to be made of the data?’, and ‘Who will most likely be using it?’. For this study it was the author’s goal that the categories would be useful for therapists using Bowen’s Family Systems Theory with families and in particular for those therapists/researchers whose goal it may be to develop parent education/training programs that incorporate Family Systems’ concepts. Thus, the frame of reference serves to guide the definitive phrasing of each category and sub-category so that both ease and accuracy of use can be balanced. This is what Flanagan referred to is the issue of specificity vs generality. Simply put, this means creating a useful and workable balance between the advantages of more categories which are more specific or definitive in nature, versus the simplicity of fewer, more general categories.

After establishing the frame of reference the next step is to go through the
actual process of sorting and categorizing the incidents. This involves differentiating between incidents, creating appropriate categories and sub-categories, and finally, labelling them with headings which will be self-explanatory. The sorting process is an inductive process, and being subjective, the usefulness of the categories depends upon what Flanagan (1954) calls "the skill and the sophistication of the formulator" (p. 344). In any case, the sorting procedure involves sorting and grouping the incidents so that general or main categories can be discriminated. The process is then repeated for each category until further discrimination results in the creation of sub-categories. The process is one of defining and redefining until the category system is comprehensive, that is, until all the incidents having significant frequencies are included, and until it meets the criteria established by the frame of reference for the study. Once the category system is defined its reliability and validity can be determined.

Reliability

To ensure the reliability of the category system presented in chapter 4, two methods were used:

1. Exhaustiveness of the Category System

   20% of the incidents were randomly removed prior to the sorting and establishing of the categories. To assess whether the categories were indeed comprehensive these were then sorted. The assumptions made were that if the removed cards can be sorted into the established categories then the system is thought to be
comprehensive, if however new categories need to be created to fit these cards, then the system is not seen as being exhaustive of the requirements needed to differentiate a self. In the latter case, the need for further research would be indicated before the category system could be seen as being useful.

2. **Independent Rater**

An independent rater was trained as to the use of the category system and given 50 randomly selected incidents to sort into the existing categories. The categories would be deemed to be reliable if the rater had at least 80% agreement.

**Validity**

To ensure validity of the category system, three methods were used:

1. **Opposition of Incidents**

Category validity is seen to be supported by the ability to create categories for hindering and facilitating incidents which are in direct contrast to one another.

2. **Participation Rate in the Category System**

It is assumed that 75% participation rate in each category represents support for its general validity.

**CONCLUSION**

This chapter was intended to outline information pertaining to the methodology used in this study. Information was given regarding population, sample, and the critical incidents technique including data collection, and analysis. Also given, were methods used to establish the reliability and validity.
of the categories developed. The next chapter will be concerned with the results of the study and the information will be situated within the context of the category system that has been developed.
CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

This chapter presents the results of the data analysis, that is, the categories induced from the critical incidents reported by the study’s participants. As stated in chapter 3, Flanagan (1954) was adamant that the category system must reflect the purpose for which it is being created. In other words, the issue of specificity vs generality of the category system is extremely important. It is hoped that this study will be useful in guiding therapists or group leaders, and the families they work with, towards attaining greater family health through understanding relationship dynamics leading to an increase in differentiation. For this purpose, the study has defined six categories that might serve as guides towards this goal. These six categories reflect the criteria which the participants report as being critical in successfully differentiating themselves from their children. The participant’s responses indicate that in attaining these differentiating thoughts, feelings and behaviours, the result is a sense of well-being and confidence.

DATA

434 facilitating and hindering incidents were collected from the participants through significant events journals, mid-session and post session
interviews. By reflecting on significant day to day incidents the participants were able to objectively describe the context in which the incident took place and an awareness of the experience in terms of personal thoughts, feelings and behaviours. As well, the participants were able to state whether each incident facilitated or hindered their sense of differentiation.

The following is a presentation of the six categories that were developed from these incidents. First there is a presentation of tables giving an overview of the categories, the numbers and percentages of incidents comprising each, as well as the participation rate for each. Then there is a more in depth description of each category, including a breakdown of each into subcategories.

The presentation is the same for each category. First, the category is given a self-explanatory title. Then the number of facilitating and hindering incidents that comprised the category is given as well as the number of participants who related incidents fitting the category. This participation rate is given in numerical and percentage form (out of a total of 13 participants). Next the category is explained in more detail by giving the range of incidents that were included. These are further delineated by being separated into those that characterize facilitating incidents and their opposing hindering incidents. The number and the participation rate for each of the subcategories are included as well as a more specific description and prototypical illustrations.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CATEGORIES &amp; FACILITATING SUBCATEGORIES</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. BEING RESPONSIBLE</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taking responsibility for self</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being able to state one's boundaries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allowing others to be responsible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2. ACCEPTANCE OF DIFFERENCE</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allowing others to have &amp; to express own thoughts/feelings, and to do things in own way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to express an opinion and stick to it in face of difference</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>3. CONTROL OF ANXIETY</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring self anxiety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring the anxiety of others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4. AWARENESS OF TRIANGLES</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to observe conflictual dyad without being drawn in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Giving support to each member of the conflictual dyad</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>5. AWARENESS OF SELF</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Awareness of strengths and weaknesses</td>
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<tr>
<td>Awareness of needs and wants</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>6. FOSTERING CONNECTION</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expectations of commitment to the family</td>
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<tr>
<td>Having the ability to engage in mutual problem-solving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having the ability to engage in mutual enjoyment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### TABLE 2

**CATEGORIES & HINDERING SUBCATEGORIES**

| 1. BEING RESPONSIBLE |  
|-----------------------|---|
| Inability to take responsibility for self |  
| Inability to state one’s boundaries |  
| Inability to allow others to be responsible |  
| 2. ACCEPTANCE OF DIFFERENCE |  
| Inability to listen to others expressing thoughts & feelings |  
| Inability to accept the thoughts, feelings or actions of others |  
| Inability to stick to own opinion |  
| 3. CONTROL OF ANXIETY |  
| Inability to monitor self anxiety |  
| Inability to monitor the anxiety of others |  
| 4. AWARENESS OF TRIANGLES |  
| Inability to stay out of conflictual dyad interaction |  
| Inability to solve a problem or conflict between self & other without triangling in a third person |  
| 5. AWARENESS OF SELF |  
| Insecurity in relation with other |  
| Confusion of needs and wants |  
| 6. FOSTERING CONNECTION |  
| Low expectation of commitment to the family |  
| Inability to engage in mutual problem-solving |  
| Inability to engage in mutual enjoyment |  

TABLE 3

NUMBER OF INCIDENTS REPORTED BY PARTICIPANT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUBJECT</th>
<th>FACILITATING</th>
<th>HINDERING</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S₁</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>9</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>S₂</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S₃</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S₄</td>
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<td>9</td>
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<td>S₆</td>
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<tr>
<td>S₇</td>
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<td>S₈</td>
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<td>18</td>
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<tr>
<td>S₁₃</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>32</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>269</strong></td>
<td><strong>144</strong></td>
<td><strong>403</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 4

INCIDENTS REPORTED = 434

FACILITATING + HINDERING = TOTAL PER CATEGORY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BEING RESPONSIBLE</th>
<th>ACCEPTANCE OF DIFFERENCE</th>
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<tr>
<td>Facilitating</td>
<td>74</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hindering</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONTROL OF ANXIETY</th>
<th>AWARENESS OF TRIANGLES</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Facilitating</td>
<td>61</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hindering</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AWARENESS OF SELF</th>
<th>FOSTERING CONNECTION</th>
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</thead>
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<td>Facilitating</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindering</td>
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<td>Total</td>
<td>45</td>
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</table>
TABLE 5

PERCENTAGE OF REPORTED INCIDENTS PER CATEGORY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>NUMBER</th>
<th>PERCENT</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Being Responsible</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acceptance of Difference</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>24.4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Control of Anxiety</td>
<td>68</td>
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<tr>
<td>Awareness of Triangles</td>
<td>47</td>
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<tr>
<td>Awareness of Self</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>10.4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fostering Connection</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>434</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I BEING RESPONSIBLE:

Number: 74 Facilitating + 50 Hindering = 124

Participation rate: 13 or 100%

Range: Inherent in being responsible are two separate aspects. The first is being responsible for self, while the second is not allowing oneself to engage in or support the irresponsibility of others. In other words, being responsible includes behaviours which indicate a willingness to accept the consequences of one's thoughts, feelings and behaviours, and to be able to define and state one's boundaries. As well, it means allowing others to be responsible for the consequences of their thoughts, feelings and behaviours. Excluded are such behaviours as rescuing others from the consequences of their thoughts, feelings or actions, elevating the importance of self at the expense of others through such behaviours as scolding, lecturing, or blaming, and the inability to clearly state one's boundaries and act on them.

Subcategories: Facilitating = 3, Hindering=3

FACILITATING INCIDENTS:

1. TAKING RESPONSIBILITY FOR SELF implies that one is able to accept responsibility for one's own thoughts, feelings and behaviour when interacting with others. This includes accepting the consequences of those thoughts, feelings and behaviours, and being able to admit mistakes. Taking responsibility often
requires problem-solving, gaining new knowledge, and asking for appropriate help, as well as taking the responsibility to act differently in faulty recursive and reciprocal interactions. Incidents in this category include such things as asking others to share the work of managing a family and home, actively engaging in changing one's mood from depression to nondepression, getting self more organized after living in "chaos", to apologizing for misunderstandings and inappropriate actions.

(Number: 11, Participation rate: 6 or 46%).

A. Typical Behaviour

1. Accepting consequences of one's thoughts/feelings/actions (T/F/A)
2. Deciding to act differently in a faulty interaction
3. Asking for appropriate help where needed

B. Typical Incidents

1. Taking responsible for own mood and for changing mood
2. Organizing to get out of chaotic lifestyle
3. Apologizing for misunderstandings, inappropriate actions, mistakes
4. Asking others to share housework

C. Illustrations:

_I have always been the one who has instigated cleaning up the house. It never fails that we get into an argument once we start because my kids always tell me that I never said they had to do certain things or do it by a certain time. After thinking about this recurring problem I decided to write up a schedule detailing what had to be done, who had to do what and time they need to be done by. The_
kids did the jobs and we didn’t fight.

I sometimes suffer backpain, but I always continue doing what needs to be done. This often makes me cranky and miserable to be with. This time I thought "I need to take care of myself", so I told my husband I wanted to go to bed and asked him to take over. In the past, I would not have asked for help, but when I did he gladly gave it.

2. BEING ABLE TO STATE ONE’S BOUNDARIES, denotes the ability to use "I" statements to clearly explain how self intends to act when sensing the irresponsibility of the other. In this category, typical incidents are stating a bottom line for staying in a relationship interaction, leaving the interaction if the bottom line is not satisfied, consciously not debating a stated boundary, to observations that in stating a bottom line the other person usually becomes more responsible in his/her behaviour.

(Number: 38, Participation rate: 11 or 85%).

A. Typical Behaviour

1. Using "I" statements to state what self will do in response to irresponsibility of another

B. Typical Incidents

1. Stating bottom line for staying in relationship interaction
2. Leaving interaction if bottom line not met
3. Consciously not debating or defending a bottom line

1 The illustrations are edited statements rather than direct word for word quotes. In editing, the author has paraphrased what the participants reported in their daily logs using their words and phrases as close as possible.
C. Illustrations:

My son and I were the first ones up this morning and my husband had left a bag of tortilla chips from last nights shopping on the table. My son became upset because I told him he could not have any so early in the day. He began to holler at me so I said, "You can have some for lunch. If I continue to be hollered at, I am leaving the room." He continued to holler and I left the room. Within seconds he stopped and came to find me so we could have breakfast together.

Fridays are our clean-up days. My son wanted to have a sleep-over at his friend’s house and wanted to leave right away. I told him he could sleep over as soon as he finished doing his chores and cleaning-up his bedroom. He complained and said he wasn’t going to clean-up. About fifteen minutes later his friend phoned and he was cleaned up and out the door about 20 minutes later. I felt really good about knowing that he would probably whine and complain about having to clean-up, that I could give him that choice, and the choice as to whether or not he wanted to sleep-over.

3. ALLOWING OTHERS TO BE RESPONSIBLE suggests that one has the ability to step back and allow others to assume responsibility for the consequences of their thoughts, feelings, and actions. This implies having faith that others can handle their problems. Inherent, is the knowledge that interfering in another’s process towards the development of self-responsibility is irresponsible behaviour. It signifies that self can let go of thoughts and feelings of being responsible, or being held responsible for others. Incidents in this category suggests the knowledge that learning to be responsible is more productive when a person gets to experience the consequences of a choice, then it is when the person experiences the consequence and a subjective evaluation by another person in the form of lecturing, scolding etc., or when the person is rescued from experiencing the
consequences and only receives a lecture or a scolding in its place.

(Number: 25, Participation rate: 9 or 70%).

A. Typical Behaviour

1. Allowing others to take responsibility for their T/F/A
2. Not feeling responsible for consequences of others T/F/A

B. Typical Incidents

1. Letting others take responsibility for consequences
2. Not lecturing or scolding another because of their mistakes

C. Illustrations:

Yesterday my son went to the park. The rule is that if he leaves the park to go elsewhere he has to come home and ask for permission. I went to get him for lunch and he was not there. When he came home I reminded him that because he choose to leave the park without asking me, he had chosen to stay home the next day. Today he stayed home and didn’t even complain. I felt really good because I felt I was responsible for giving him the ability to make choices and because he was responsible for his choice.

I found out that my son had missed a class because he had gone and sat at the office for the period. When I asked him about this he said that he was being bugged by another student and knew that he was going to react and get into trouble. I felt really excited about hearing that he was beginning to deal with his problems differently and about the fact that he felt he could make that type of decision. In the past, I would have lectured him about how he was wrong for skipping out of class, or I would have scolded him for staying and getting into trouble.

HINDERING INCIDENTS:

1. INABILITY TO TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR SELF suggests that one is unable to accept responsibility for one’s own thoughts, feelings and behaviour
when interacting with others. The incidents in this category include not accepting the consequences of one's thoughts, feelings and behaviours, but instead having a tendency towards blaming, attacking, lecturing or scolding. In this category the metaphor of a robot whose buttons can be pushed by someone else, is often used as a rationalization for not having to be responsible.

(Number: 27, Participation rate: 10 or 77%).

A. Typical Behaviour

1. Not accepting responsibility for "mistakes"
2. Wanting to blame others or ignore taking consequences

B. Typical Incidents

1. Using "Buttons being pushed" metaphor as justification for inappropriate behaviour
2. Blaming, attacking, lecturing or scolding others

C. Illustrations:

I have PMS and when it hits I am a bitch all day. I yell at everyone, "Get up!", "Get your rooms clean!", "Get the basement clean!". When my kids don't listen I get even madder. When I am a bitch I expect everyone to jump.

I am a rage-oholic. I grew up in a home where my sister and my mother were also rage-olics. Whenever I get into a disagreement and someone pushes my buttons, I go into a rage. I now know that I allow my rage to get out of control in order to try to control others.

2. INABILITY TO STATE BOUNDARIES AND ACT ON THEM suggests an inability to use "I" statements to define one's bottom-line and then act on it.

In this category one of the most distinguishing aspects is the affect which
accompanies this inability. The incidents relate feelings of guilt, inadequacy and thoughts of self-doubt.

(Number: 14, Participation rate: 5 or 39%).

A. Typical Behaviour

1. Not using "I" statements
2. Using "I" statements but not backing them up with action

B. Typical Incidents

1. Reports of feeling bad about self- guilty, inadequate, self-doubt

C. Illustrations:

My mother invited me to go out for supper with her. She made a casserole for my husband to serve our kids. As I was leaving, my husband made some cutting remarks about me always being away from the family (I also do all the driving for the kids activities). I left but was unable to enjoy myself without feeling like I am causing everyone else a problem. I feel I am not entitled to anytime to myself.

I want to eat at home and have our own family instead of eating at my wife's mother's place six times a week and getting home only in time for bed. I often ask my wife if we could eat at home but she just asks "Why?" and refuses to. I feel helpless, like I have no control over our family. I keep asking but I never do anything about this recurring issue.

3. INABILITY TO ALLOW OTHERS TO ASSUME RESPONSIBILITY FOR ACTIONS implies that one has no faith in others being able to handle the consequences of their thoughts, feelings, and actions. The incidents describe situations in which the person takes over and assumes responsibility for the mistakes of others and/or, lectures, scolds or berates the other for making
mistakes.

(Number: 9, Participation rate: 4 or 31%).

A. Typical Behaviour

1. Acting as if one has not faith in ability of others to assume responsibility

B. Typical Incidents

1. Taking over or rescuing then
2. lecturing, scolding, berating etc.

C. Illustrations:

My daughter did not wash her clothes early enough and she was still waiting for them to dry when she should have been on her way to school. In the end she had to take them out and wear them wet. I scolded her by saying, "Why didn't you wash them earlier so you would not be late? Now hurry up, you are going to be late."

My oldest son babysat his younger brother and sister last night. The instructions were for him to be in bed by 11:00. When we returned home at 11:15 he was still up and refused to go to bed until he finished watching the TV show that ended at 11:30. The next morning he would not get out of bed in time to catch the school bus. I subsequently was run off my feet trying to get all the kids to school. They had missed their separate buses because I was so focused on him. I am always running around like a mad person! No time to stop and talk to my kids or feel good about the day because I am so busy making up for his behaviour.

In summary, Being Responsible is extremely important to Bowen's concept of differentiation and to parenting. It situates the learning process in a context best summed up by the phrase, "We learn by doing and by making mistakes." Helping parents to make a shift in perception from thinking that
mistakes or inappropriate behaviour is bad to one in which they are seen as learning opportunities promotes growth and development. Furthermore, in seeing inappropriate behaviour as an unwise choice, i.e., a mistake, the parent is much more likely to experience feelings of disappointment, anger and hopelessness and instead work towards creating a learning opportunity that will begin the process intended to lessen the likelihood of that choice being made again. With this shift in perception, Being Responsible allows parents to model an acknowledgement of their own mistakes and then handling them, as an effective way to teach their children the same behaviour. Daily log incidents comprising this category suggests that for parents, Being Responsible gives them a greater ability for intellectual functioning during times of significant emotional stress. The ability to maintain intellectual functioning is a cornerstone of Bowen's concept of differentiation.

II ACCEPTANCE OF DIFFERENCE

Number: 56 Facilitating + 42 Hindering = 106

Participation rate: 13 or 100%

Range: Acceptance of Difference also has two aspects. The first is to recognize how self is different from others, and the second is to recognize how others are different from self. It entails respecting that difference. Acceptance of Difference
includes the ability to be able to allow others to express themselves in their own way, to be able to communicate to increase understanding and validation, and to express an opinion and stick to it in face of difference.

Subcategories: Facilitating = 3, Hindering = 3

FACILITATING INCIDENTS:

1. ALLOWING SELF AND OTHERS TO HAVE & EXPRESS THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS WHICH ARE DIFFERENT, AND TO ACT DIFFERENTLY without experiencing an overwhelming emotional reaction leading to the need to control, lecture, scold, or blame, the other person.

(Number: 22, Participation rate: 10 or 77%).

A. Typical Behaviour

1. Being able to listen or watch without becoming emotional
2. Not needing to take over conversation because of anxiety

B. Typical Incidents

1. Letting others say things, want things or act in ways that are different from self
2. Going along with others even though it is different from self’s way
3. Agreeing to disagree

C. Illustrations:

My daughter and I had a talk about our family nights. She said that she only joined in because of us not because she wanted to. I told her that I could understand that at her age she would rather be with her friends and so told her she could make that choice. I felt good that we could have this type of conversation and it was nice that she did not have to leave feeling guilty or bad
It was time for my son to go to bed. He always tries to stay up later than he is supposed to. Tonight he was faking being asleep. I decided to let him play his game. I went up to him and hugged, rocked and tickled him as I said, "It's time for bed." It turned out to be fun and he went to bed happy.

2. SELF/OTHER OPENNESS implies creating a safe environment in which personal thoughts and feelings can be shared to increase understanding and validation. It includes the ability to not be threatened by difference and/or a need to impose the thoughts or feelings of one on the other. This category involves incidents in which two or more people are able to discuss issues of emotional significance simply as a statement of who they are, what they think and how they feel.

(Number: 25, Participation rate: 9 or 69%).

A. Typical Behaviour

1. Creating a safe environment for disclosure of personal thoughts
2. Being able be vulnerable and express personal thoughts

B. Typical Incidents

1. Situations in which two or more people are able to disclose personal thoughts

C. Illustrations:

I usually don’t talk about the fact that I am having difficulties in my life, but today a friend came over and I told him about the visualization we did in the parenting class and how it took me right back to my childhood home. This was a milestone for me in my life and I felt excited to be able to talk to openly about
who I am with someone who is a true friend.

The other day my step-daughter came home and I was the only one home. She came into the room where I was working and we began to talk about her and my relationship. This was really nice because I realized that we never really listen to each other, we only seem to fight. I found out that she doesn’t do things to irritate me, she is only doing things because that is who she is.

3. ABILITY TO EXPRESS AN OPINION AND STICK TO IT IN FACE OF DIFFERENCE implies an acceptance that self may have different thoughts, feelings and behaviours from others. Furthermore, it implies the ability to keep one’s position in light of opposition. Incidents in this category range from making statements that are contrary to those of a spouse, to taking actions based upon those statements. The incidents do not imply forcing or coercing others to accept the position.

(Number: 9, Participation rate: 5 or 38%).

A. Typical Behaviour

1. Acceptance that others might disagree with opinion of self
2. Ability to keep one’s own opinion in light of another’s contrary opinion

B. Typical Incidents

1. Stating one’s opinion
2. Accepting that it is different but still keeping it
3. Not trying to change another’s opinion to agree with self

C. Illustrations:

My daughter was told by the principal that she was going to have to take an earlier bus home afterschool. I phoned the principal and told him my concerns
about this change. He disagreed with my concerns, but I was not intimidated like I used to be. Instead, I just continued to tell him that it was unacceptable and that I hoped that he would change it back. It felt good standing up to the principal and clearly stating my thoughts and feelings.

Our car needed repairing and I was tired of driving it the way it was. I told my husband and he said that he did not have time to fix it. I told him I wanted it fixed and so was going to take it to a garage and would pay for it myself. He was strongly against this, but I simply told him my safety was more important to me than my money and that was the end of the conversation. The next day he fixed it for $4.00.

HINDERING INCIDENTS:

1. INABILITY TO LISTEN TO OTHERS EXPRESSING THOUGHTS & FEELINGS, without an emotional reaction geared towards preventing the other to continue. Incidents in this category describe automatic defenses used to maintain self, such as attacking the other's thoughts and/or feelings, or ignoring the other by cutting-off from them emotionally or physically.

(Number: 5, Participation rate: 4 or 31%).

A. Typical Behaviour

1. Experiencing an emotional reaction to what is being heard or seen
2. Trying to stop other from continuing

B. Typical Incidents

1. Attacking the other
2. Cutting off from the other
3. Coercing the other

C. Illustrations:
I got up this morning and announced that it was time to clean the house. My son said he had other plans. I told him he could help clean up and then go out. He said that I never do anything around the house and then get into a flap and make everyone else clean up. I got even more angry thinking that no one knows how much I do around here, and I began to yell "I do this and I do this and I do that", and ended up attacking him by calling him lazy.

We are going to move. We were discussing going to look at houses and my daughter said that she did not want to move to far from where we live at now. I told her that her statement was ridiculous and that there was no point in moving if we didn’t move to a new neighbourhood. She began to yell at me for saying she was ridiculous and I told her that if she wanted to argue she could go to her room and stay there until we got back.

2. **INABILITY TO ACCEPT THOUGHTS, FEELINGS OR ACTIONS OF OTHERS**, without an overwhelming emotional reaction. The defining feature about this category are incidents in which the self can not differentiate from the emotional field of the other and as a result experiences negative self-talk, feelings of being responsible for the problems of the other, or feelings of hopelessness, inadequacy, and low self-esteem.

(Number: 29, Participation rate: 9 or 69%).

**A. Typical Behaviour**

1. Changing self to go along with other but at expense of negative feelings
2. Being negatively overwhelmed by other’s emotional field

**B. Typical Incidents**

1. Giving up and going along with the other
2. Experiencing negative self-talk, feelings of hopelessness, inadequacy, low esteem
C. Illustrations:

I was working on a repair and was having some difficulty getting the machinery to work properly. I was initially frustrated because I don't like doing this type of work anyway, but then certain vocal individuals who depend on the machine began to make me feel bad about not getting it fixed fast enough. This put me in a bad mood for the rest of the day and I found myself swearing under my breath and saying things to myself which were like beating myself up for a job I was not doing well. I just couldn’t stop owning the disappointment and frustration of those people.

I volunteered to take my nephews on the holidays so my sister, who is a single parent, could have a break. My husband yelled at me that I am always helping other people, but won’t ever do anything to help him. I tried to get him to see my point of view but in the end I just ended up feeling sad and alienated.

3. INABILITY TO STICK TO OWN OPINION, suggests an inability to accept self as having important opinions that may be different from others. These incidents reveal the person devaluing their opinions through deference to those of the other.

(Number: 16, Participation rate: 8 or 62%).

A. Typical Behaviour

1. Inability to accept self as having important opinions

B. Typical Incidents

1. Devaluing own opinion
2. Feeling stupid

C. Illustrations:

We were playing games as a family and I stated what I thought a rule meant. My husband "corrected" me and we played it according to his interpretation. I became depressed because he always makes me feel stupid. I
have told him how I feel but he just keeps on doing it.

My husband’s mother came over. After a short visit with me she went in to see my daughter who was suppose to be cleaning her room. The next thing I know they are both cleaning and then standing at the door with an overnight bag of clothes for her, saying good-bye to me. I asked what was happening and Grandma answered, "She is coming over for the night and you can pick her up when you come for supper tomorrow." I didn’t think her behaviour warranted a treat like this, but what Grandma says goes. I didn’t tell her that I don’t like it when she does this type of thing. Instead I spent the rest of the day going from being angry at her to being angry at me for being so selfish.

In summary, Acceptance of Difference appears to play a major role in allowing parents to maintain intellectual functioning during times of significant emotional issues. The incidents in which the participant’s were able to accept difference had significantly more positive outcomes then those in which there was a low tolerance for acceptance of difference. These positive outcomes were described in terms of experiencing a greater sense of well-being, and confidence in their relationship interactions. Acceptance of Difference appears to promote openness and flexibility in resolving difficulties and in doing so contributes to the process of differentiation.

III CONTROL OF ANXIETY

Number: 61 Facilitating + 7 Hindering = 68

Participation rate: 12 or 92%
Range: Inherent in anxiety control is the ability to be aware of one’s internal state of anxiety and to monitor it, so that one does not slip into emotional functioning at inappropriate times. It requires the ability to observe and monitor the anxiety level of others and to act appropriately when others inappropriately slip into emotional functioning.

Subcategories: Facilitating = 2, Hindering = 2

FACILITATING INCIDENTS:

1. MONITORING SELF ANXIETY implies being aware of the effects of anxiety on self and taking ownership of those effects. Incidents in this category demonstrate the ability to be aware of and experience anxiety, while thoughts and actions still reflect intellectual functioning. The incidents reported in the daily logs indicated strategies for dealing with increasing anxiety during interactions such as using "I" statements to acknowledge emotional states and using "time-out" procedures. In other words, monitoring self anxiety decreases the likelihood of emotional functioning taking over.

(Number: 28, Participation rate: 9 or 69%).

A. Typical Behaviour

1. Awareness of experiencing anxiety, while at the same time
2. Consciously thinking about how to deal with it in terms of the interaction with the other

B. Typical Incidents
1. Using "I" statements to acknowledge the anxiety being experienced
2. Using time-out procedures to regain control of intellectual functioning

C. Illustrations:

My husband, myself and my teenage son were discussing the fact that he has been smoking. After we had all expressed our concerns I could see that we were beginning to go around in circles. I began to get nervous that the conversation was going to end in a power struggle, so I said, "We have all heard each other's point of view, so I think we should end this discussion for now so we can think about what we have heard." Then I got up and walked away. They did too. This was great because even though we have not settled this, it did not turn into a fight.

My daughter was at a home of one of her friends. She had arranged to stay there much later than she is normally allowed to stay out because the friend's mother had said she would drive her home. Just as I was about to go to bed, I got a phone call from my daughter asking me to pick her up. Apparently the mother got mad at her daughter and told my daughter she had to leave right now and that she would not drive her. I was furious. I mean, I might not have been home and my daughter would have had to walk home several blocks after dark. As I was driving to pick her up I became aware of how upset I was and decided to wait until I calmed down before talking to the mother. It was amazing. When I finally did talk to her I was able to understand how frustrated she had become, clearly express my concerns, and she apologized for acting so irresponsibly.

2. Monitoring the Anxiety of Others implies observational skills and the ability to avoid being swept up in the emotional functioning of the other. The incidents forming this category demonstrate an ability to become detached from the other's emotions, allowing self to remain objective, and to act in a productive manner.

(Number: 33, Participation rate: 12 or 92%)

A. Typical Behaviour
1. Noticing that the other person is becoming increasingly emotional
2. Consciously think of strategies to end interaction without escalating other's emotions

B. Typical Incidents

1. Remaining objective
2. Consciously detaching from the other's emotions instead of reacting to them
3. Using strategies such as validation and time-out to lower other's emotions

C. Illustrations:

It was my step-daughter's birthday today and things did not go all that well for her. At bedtime I was sitting on her bed talking about the party when I noticed that she was becoming more and more upset and that our conversation was starting to be a "I did not/You did too!" type of argument. I decided that neither she or I needed this kind of thing so I said, "It's late. Let's continue to talk about this in the morning." Then I got up and left. I was glad that I could see she was too emotional to be reasonable and that I had the sense to quit talking to her. In the morning we continued to talk about her disappointments without the 'I did not/You did to!' thing happening.

My husband was working on our truck at night and he asked me to hold the light. He began to get angry and started to swear a lot. I hate it when he does this and it usually I get angry at him and he starts to swear at me. This time I decided to not get angry. I felt nervous and upset about his behaviour, but instead of telling him to stop, I began to use humour about the situation. Within minutes we were both laughing. It was neat to take responsibility for my own reactions and stay calm when he was swearing.

HINDERING INCIDENTS:

1. INABILITY TO MONITOR SELF ANXIETY implies a lack of awareness of the effects anxiety has on the thoughts, and actions of self. The incidents in this category suggest an inability to either be aware of inner anxiety as it
increases, to express the observation of inner anxiety or to effectively deal with it when it is observed.

(Number: 4, Participation rate: 3 or 23%)

A. Typical Behaviour

1. Not being aware of or acknowledging effect of emotions on intellectual functioning
2. Continuing interaction even though self is emotionally driven

B. Typical Incidents

1. Not acknowledging or not caring that one is acting from an emotional stance
2. Not dealing with emotional reactivity productively (yelling, attacking, cut-off)

C. Illustrations:

I went to Abbotsford with my step-daughter. Our trip was really bonding until I found out that the bus we were going to have to catch back home would get us there later than I had wanted. The anger started to build up in me and I began to talk to my step-daughter as if I was blaming her. She soon got angry at me and stormed off. In this case the situation could not be helped, but I lost control and started acting irrationally. I could have dealt with my disappointment by taking the time to continue to bond but I didn’t.

On family evening time there is supposed to be no phone or TV. The phone rang, my son & daughter both ran to answer it and I immediately got angry. When they came back I asked them why they had broken the rule. My son said that he wasn’t breaking the rule, he had just got up to go look for his earring. I got mad and sent them both to their rooms for lying. I reacted with hate and anger in this incident instead of calmly trying to deal with the situation.

2. INABILITY TO MONITOR THE ANXIETY OF OTHERS suggests an
inability to see how another person’s frustrations, worries or fears are directly related to how they are behaving. Instead, the behaviour becomes a conduit for the emotions of the other to be transferred to the self. Incidents in this category reflect the self becoming anxious and emotionally reactive to the other, leading to feelings of anger, resentment or guilt.

(Number: 3, Participation rate: 2 or 15%).

A. Typical Behaviour

1. Not recognizing when another is acting emotionally
2. Becoming reactive to the emotions of the other

B. Typical Incidents

1. Reacting to the emotional reactions of another person
2. Experiencing feelings of anger at the other person and guilt

Illustration:

*My wife thought it would be a good day for me to spend some time with our teenage son who is having some problems. I agreed and we went off and spent the day together. When we got home at 4:30 my wife was cooking supper, but not without banging the pots and pans and by being really distant. Finally, she yelled at me that things never change. She had stated that she was not going to do the cooking on the weekends and here she was doing it again. Instead of seeing her frustration, I became angry back and yelled, "First you want me to spend time with our son and then you get angry at me for not being at home to cook the supper. I can't please you no matter what I do." I stormed off first feeling angry and then feeling guilty.*

In summary, **Control of Anxiety** is vital to the positive outcome of relationship interactions. Preventing emotional functioning from taking over and
controlling the intellectual functioning at inappropriate times seems to be facilitated by recognizing the emotion, accepting it as being there, and then making a conscious decision how best to respond to having the emotion, rather than automatically allowing the emotion to dictate its usual response. In parenting, impulse control requires emotional language. When parents model impulse control through the use of emotional language it helps them to more effectively deal with their anxieties and provides learning opportunities for their children. Inherent in Bowen’s concept of differentiation is the ability to function intellectually even while experiencing significant emotion, thereby diminishing or eliminating the effects of the mutual projection process.

IV AWARENESS OF TRIANGLES

Number: 13 Facilitating + 34 Hindering = 47

Participation rate: 10 or 77%

Range: This category is also comprised of two different aspects. First is observing of a conflictual dyad and consciously making a decision to either not get involved, or to become involved as an objective, detached mediator/support person for each of the conflictual pair. The second aspect is being involved in a conflict with another, and making a conscious decision not to triangle in a third party for support, or blocking to block the other’s attempt to do draw in a third
1. ABILITY TO OBSERVE CONFLICTUAL DYAD WITHOUT BEING DRAWN IN indicates an ability to understand relationship dynamics and the need to resist entering into a conflict between a dyad. It suggests the ability to observe, monitor and have faith that the conflictual couple can resolve their own issues. It further suggests an understanding that involvement of a third party can complicate resolution rather than simplify it. Incidents depicted sibling arguments, spouse-child conflicts, grandparent-spouse disagreements and teacher-child school management problems.

(Number: 8, Participation rate: 3 or 23%).

A. Typical Behaviour

1. Seeing or hearing a conflict between two others and consciously deciding not to get involved

B. Typical Incidents

1. Not getting involved in sibling, other parent-child, grandparent-child or teacher-child conflicts
2. Stating to one or both people involved that they have to settle it themselves

C. Illustrations:

At supper time my daughter sat where my son usually sits. He asked me
to tell her to move. I said, "There are enough places for everyone. This is between you and your sister. I know you can work out something." I thought that sitting in the same place all the time really isn't fair to those who wish to sit somewhere else. I'll see how they work it out. If they decide not to eat, that's ok. They worked it out quite quickly once they realized I wasn't going to get involved.

My husband gave my son a large glass of water and ice cubes at the table and immediately my mother took it from him and gave him a small quarter filled one. My son started to cry and my mom told him to stop because "big boys don't cry." Later that night, my husband complained to me about my mother. I told him that if he had a problem with her he should be talking to her not me. I felt good about this because I did not feel the need to rescue him by taking over his conflict with my mom.

2. GIVING SUPPORT TO EACH MEMBER OF THE CONFLICTUAL DYAD indicates an ability to observe a conflict between a dyad, and to become engaged as a support to each person, or as a mediator. It suggests the ability to stay objective and detached while validating the personal experience of each person. What defines this category is the implication of a high level of emotional control and intellectual functioning. It indicates the ability to get involved in a conflict in a conscious, productive, resolution oriented manner as opposed to side-taking. Incidents depicted sibling arguments, spouse-child conflicts, and teacher-spouse school management problems.

(Number: 5, Participation rate: 5 or 39%).

A. Typical Behaviour

1. Getting involved in a conflict but not taking sides
2. Setting up the situation so the ones in conflict can settle it
B. Typical Incidents

1. Defusing the emotion of the conflict by stepping in and shifting the perspective
2. Encouraging both by validating each person's concerns as being important to him/her.

C. Illustrations:

At breakfast the phone rang and my husband answered it. When he returned to the table my son asked who it was for. He said it was for my son and that my son could probably guess who it was. My son said, "I don't want to guess! Who was it!." My husband ignored my son's request and told him he would have to guess. I jumped in and said, "Gee, your dad sure is in a good mood today. Let's see how you can easily guess. List off the names of all the girls you know until we hit a name that will fit into this riddle". By jumping in and adding humour, the conflict changed to fun.

My daughter came home upset because she needed to complete a major homework assignment for the next day. My husband immediately began to lecture her on getting her work done ahead of time. This started an argument. I said to my husband, "I know that you are really concerned about her being in a panic, but how about just letting her see how she makes out tonight." Then I said to her, "Why don't you just get started and let's see how it goes. We can talk about getting into a panic later if it doesn't go well." They both stopped fighting and she got her work completed.

HINDERING INCIDENTS:

1. INABILITY TO STAY OUT OF A CONFLICTUAL DYAD INTERACTION suggests either an inability to recognize triangular relationship dynamics or lack of emotional control. The incidents in this category suggests both conscious and unconscious reactions to increasing anxiety of self due to the observation of conflict between two others. In the conscious case, the person acts
"as if" s/he is fed up with the conflict and gets involved to stop it, while in the unconscious case the person gets involved automatically just because the conflict is occurring. Hindering incidents of involvement in triangles typically include taking over and preventing resolution of the conflict by authoritarian means, i.e., "Both of you shut up and go to your rooms!" or by taking sides.

(Number: 19, Participation rate: 7 or 54%).

A. Typical Behaviour

1. Involving self in a conflict between two people either because:
   a. the person does not recognize a triangular process and steps in
   b. the person sees the process but decides to take sides anyway

2. Use of side taking and/or authoritarian means to end the conflict

B. Typical Incidents

1. Feeling sorry for one of the two and stepping into rescue, or protect by taking sides

2. Fed up with conflict and step in ordering one or both people about

C. Illustrations:

I can’t stand it when my husband and my son of 18 months get going. The other night they were fighting over putting on pyjamas. Finally I stormed into the room and said to my husband, "Give it a break! I can’t stand listening to you two squabble any more! I’ll do it." I get triangled in because I want to. I just can’t stand listening to them when my husband does it. Of course, each time I do this the more my husband gets angry at me.

My daughter would not listen to her mother about leaving for school. They were arguing. I stepped in and yelled at her to stop arguing with her mom, to get her coat and get out the door. She left in a temper. I can’t stand it when my kids don’t listen to their mother because it makes me so annoyed at them.
2. INABILITY TO SOLVE A PROBLEM OR CONFLICT BETWEEN SELF & OTHER WITHOUT TRIANGLING IN A THIRD PERSON. In this category, the incidents described conflicts between self and other which quickly led to one of the dyad triangling in a supportive third party to side-take or to rescue the person from the conflict.

(Number: 15, Participation rate: 4 or 31%).

A. Typical Behaviour

1. During a conflict between self and other, one person triangles in support
2. Self or other engages in story telling or gossip about the other to a third, supportive person

B. Typical Incidents

1. Self asks another to solve a problem s/he has with another person, rather than deal with it him/herself
2. One person tells stories or gossips about the other to another person to gain support, rather than resolving the conflict with the original person

C. Illustrations:

_Tonight it was my son’s turn to do the dishes. I noticed that they were still looking greasy so I went into the living room and told my husband that my son was not doing a good enough job. He immediately went out to the kitchen and told him to start over. He did, but I felt disappointed because I always let my husband deal with these situations._

_My wife and I go to her parents place almost every weekend for supper. It seems that no sooner do we get there and she begins to complain to her mother about how stupid I am or about how I do everything wrong etc. I told her that it makes me embarrassed that she does this but she just tells me that I’m being too sensitive and that all she is doing is carrying on a conversation._
In summary, **Awareness of Triangles**, like the category **Control of Anxiety** requires being able to observe relationship dynamics as they occur. Triangles are not good or bad. They occur as basic interactions. However, how one manages him/herself in them determines whether or not the outcome is productive. Productive management of triangles requires that the conflict between two people remain within the dyadic relationship. Unproductive management results in sidetaking which leads to the conflict shifting to third person or to deeper entrenchment in opposing positions. Recognition of one’s involvement in triangles and dealing with it productively facilitates the process of differentiation.

**V AWARENESS OF SELF**

*Number:* 29 Facilitating + 16 Hindering = 45

*Participation rate:* 11 or 85%

*Range:* The Awareness of Self category comprises a knowledge and productive acceptance about one’s strengths and weaknesses. It implies a knowledge of one’s attitudes, beliefs and values which lead to the ability to formulate and express opinions, to be able to comfortably accept praise from others and/or to engage in self-praise, and to be aware of one’s needs and wants. Incidents in this category which are facilitating indicate feeling secure about one’s self in interactions with others, while hindering incidents suggest an inability to maintain a sense of
security about self within relationships.

Subcategories: Facilitating = 3, Hindering = 3

FACILITATING INCIDENTS:

1. AWARENESS OF STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES allows one the ability to make conscious choices towards achieving productive ends based upon self knowledge. It implies an optimistic acceptance of one's abilities allowing self the space to offer help, to ask for help, and to "practice" building on weaknesses or the perceptions which lead to weaknesses. As well, it suggests the ability to accept praise and criticism from self and from others. Incidents in this category describe feeling better about self due to greater acceptance of self, being able to contribute information and help to another person or group, and admitting that one is not very good at a certain activity but is willing to try doing it.

(Number: 19, Participation rate: 6 or 46%).

A. Typical Behaviour

1. Acknowledging abilities without diminishing self, welcoming praise and criticism
2. Asking for help
3. Trying to improve weaknesses by learning or practice, not out of guilt, but out of optimist attitudes

B. Typical Incidents

1. Confidently offering suggestions, or help to others
2. Accepting praise as acknowledgement or criticism as being helpful
3. Demonstrating a willingness to do something new, or to stretch one's abilities
C. Illustrations:

At work I often find myself in situations with people who I think know more than me or are higher up in importance than me. Often they will stew about a problem when I have a good idea that I am unable to offer for fear that they won't accept it because "what do I know". I decided to stop making myself feel bad about my self and so the last time this happened I told them my idea. They liked it. I felt good about recognizing that I am ok and that sometimes I have good things to offer others.

The other day some people who were visiting said that they saw a big difference in me as a parent since beginning this course. They said that before they thought that I over reacted and that they sometimes felt sorry for my children. Now they said that I handle them in a much more calm and respectful manner. I was surprised that other people saw such a change in me. I know I feel it. I was also surprised at how I didn't get offended by what they said about how I used to be, but instead patted myself on the back for the work I have been doing.

2. AWARENESS OF NEEDS AND WANTS implies a knowledge of the connection between one's internal state, i.e., thoughts and feelings, and the external world. The incidents in this category suggests that the greater awareness of this connection the more the person is able to shape the external environment by consciously acting on it to meet these needs and wants in a sensitive manner. Being sensitive further implies a willingness to change one's perceptions on how to act based upon new information.

(Number: 10, Participation rate: 3 or 23%).

A. Typical Behaviour

1. Recognizing when something does not feel right, is uncomfortable or is missing and taking steps to change it
B. Typical Incidents

1. Standing up for self and asking that things be different, or be changed
2. Identifying what need is unsatisfied and taking steps to satisfy it

C. Illustrations:

My son had broken his glasses and I was getting the run around about when they would be ready. I was really concerned about how long it was taking, and feeling more and more uncomfortable about him having to go to school without glasses. Finally, I decided that enough was enough and that I had to do something, so I decided to 'hiss'! I phoned and told the optometrist, "I have been told that my son's glasses would be here on three separate occasions. It has been two weeks and I think that you guys are giving me the run around. Should I take him to someone else or can you assure me when they will be ready?" They were ready by the end of the day.

I have not gone out with friends for years and I am beginning to feel like I have no life. I told my husband and my kids that I wanted to start going out with some friends and they told me they thought it would be a great idea. I went out to a bar with two girl friends and while I was there I phoned home to see how they were doing. They told me not to worry and to have a good time. It felt really good to have my family support me like this. I don't know why I didn't do it earlier, but I know that I will be doing it more often in the future.

HINDERING INCIDENTS:

1. INSECURITY IN RELATION WITH OTHER suggests a lack of acceptance for one's strengths and weaknesses resulting in a sense of low self-esteem, and hopelessness. Incidents in this category depict deferring one's thoughts or feelings to those of another and subsequent feelings of anger at others or at self, feelings of discouragement or hopelessness, and emotional cut-off.

(Number: 6, Participation rate: 3 or 23%).
A. Typical Behaviour

1. Easily feeling defeated because of a comment from another, then ruminating with and hanging around with a friend called internal negative self-talk
2. Giving up, cutting off physically and/or emotionally due to comment from other

B. Typical Incidents

1. Giving up trying to change because effort either criticized or not acknowledged
2. Escaping from an interaction because of comment or criticism from another

C. Illustrations:

We went out bowling as a family and I decided to stop getting frustrated and angry with my performance. After a bad shot, I turned to my wife and said, "See, I am still smiling." She mumbled a sarcastic "Uh-huh!" and that just brought me down. I thought if I am trying this hard and she can't even notice, what is the point so I stopped trying.

I can't fart right or blow my nose right without my wife or her family responding with some irritated tone of voice. I may not be the best parent but at least I try. No matter what I do, it seems I am always being blamed so I think "What the hell, I might as well turn my son over to them to raise!" I just feel overpowered by her and her family and it makes me want to just cut-off from them emotionally.

2. CONFUSION ABOUT NEEDS AND WANTS suggests not being able to formulate what one needs or wants in order to feel comfortable, or when finally deciding, easily being swayed by the opinions of others. It is, in a sense, a fusing with the other by thinking and acting under their direction or in reaction to their direction. Inherent in this process seems to be a tendency for self-deprecation
using negative self-talk.

(Number: 10, Participation rate: 4 or 31%).

A. Typical Behaviour

1. Generally acting sad, depressed, or miserable because of an unidentified need or want, or because of not feeling entitled to act on unmet needs or wants
2. Feelings of guilt, self-doubt, powerlessness etc. preventing self from taking actions to satisfy personal needs and wants

B. Typical Incidents

1. Wanting to give up rather than make changes
2. Wanting to take corrective action, but unable to rise above self-doubt to do it

C. Illustrations:

*I miss not having a family. I have one but we don't get along very well. As a result, I spend all my time with my wife's family. In the beginning it was great, but now I realize that they are not my family. I told this to my wife, thinking that it would be a nice idea to start having my mom and dad over more often. She doesn't like them and thought it was a foolish idea. I seem to feel guilty about not having relationship with my family, but I feel it would be selfish to have one because of my wife's feelings about them. I am really mixed up on this issue.*

*The place where I work has a hiring freeze on. The work keeps piling up. I know that there is not enough hours for us to do all the work. It seems that I am always fuming inside about this but I am afraid to say something because maybe I should be able to work harder or be more efficient.*

In summary, **Awareness of self** seems to be a critical category. Awareness of strengths and weaknesses, wants and needs, and acceptance of that awareness,
facilitates being able to separate self and other. Subsequently, this increases the ability to be responsible for how one is thinking, feeling and acting, minimizing projection processes, and feelings of disappointment, embarrassment and guilt, which hinder the process of differentiation.

VI FOSTERING CONNECTION:

Number: 27 Facilitating + 17 Hindering = 44

Participation rate: 10 or 77%

Range: The incidents in this category are distinguished from the other categories in that the focus is the ability for self to be connected to the other, rather than separate from the other. The incidents imply the ability to make commitments to others, to ask others to make commitments to self, and to engage in activities of mutual problem-solving and mutual enjoyment.

Subcategories: Facilitating = 3, Hindering = 3

FACILITATING INCIDENTS:

1. EXPECTATIONS OF COMMITMENT TO THE FAMILY includes making commitments to the family, and creating an appropriate expectation of others to make commitments to the family. The implication is that each member has a meaningful contribution to make to the family which other members of the family can depend on. The typical incidents in this category are defining and assigning
of household chores, working together, and trusting others to do important tasks.

(Number: 5, Participation rate: 4 or 31%).

A. Typical Behaviour

1. Defining and making commitments to the family and depending on each member to fulfil their commitment
2. Acknowledging and appreciating the commitment and expecting amends for broken commitments

B. Typical Incidents

1. Working together to divide up and commit to doing household chores
2. Inviting members to work together
3. Verbal appreciations meeting commitments and consequences for not meeting commitments.

C. Illustrations:

We created a chores list and divided them up and each of us volunteered to do our share. This seemed to be an easy way to show that we are all important parts of our family, that this is OUR house and that we are all equally responsible for helping each other and keeping it clean.

My daughter was full of energy this morning and she was playing around. I had asked her to get ready for school a couple of times but she hadn't so I told her that if she hurried she could help me finish making the lunches for everyone. She seemed really happy with my invitation, ran off, got dressed and we made lunches together.

2. HAVING THE ABILITY TO ENGAGE IN MUTUAL PROBLEM-SOLVING, intrinsically means that the thoughts, feelings and needs of all members of the family are meaningful and important, and are embedded within the resolution of any problem. The types of problems described in these incidents ranged from deciding on appropriate consequences, to determining curfews, to
coming up with new ways to deal with the frustrations of living in family relationships.

(Number: 15, Participation rate: 8 or 62%).

A. Typical Behaviour

1. Listening to and appreciating others point of view as being important
2. Inviting other to help resolve problem as opposed doing it unilaterally

B. Typical Incidents

1. Stating that a problem needs to be solved and making a time to discuss it
2. Compromising so that both people are satisfied with the solution

C. Illustrations:

We came home and found our daughter had two friends in the house. The rule is no friends in the house when we are not there and she is not to go into a friend's house if the parent is not at home. We said, "Please send your friend home. We need to sit down and discuss this rule again." She sent her friend home and we sat down and discussed the problem. In the end we were all satisfied.

My wife and I have come to the agreement that we should not enforce our thinking on how to manage our child effectively with each other, even if what the other person is doing may seem incorrect. Part of the agreement is that if we do feel the need to talk about something that we don't like about the other's parenting, we will discuss it at a later date. In this way we will hopefully prevent attacking or defending. I think this is a major step in beginning to respect each other's reality.

3. HAVING THE ABILITY TO ENGAGE IN MUTUAL ENJOYMENT implies the ability to achieve a sense of togetherness through feelings of relaxation, fun, joy and/or cooperation while engaged in a common activity.
Mutual enjoyment is derived out of a sense of appreciation for each other as unique individuals rather than out of the need for sameness, i.e., for everyone to think, feel, and act the same. The incidents entail sports activities, shopping, family nights, special meals or dinners, etc.

(Number: 7, Participation rate: 4 or 31%).

A. Typical Behaviour

1. Planning and spending time with other members of the family in an activity
2. Indicating appreciation for each other as unique rather than insisting sameness

B. Typical Incidents

1. Family night activities
2. Engaging in sports, shopping, dining, school activities, etc. and enjoying each others company

C. Illustrations:

On tuesday night, which is our family night, we did some of the exercises with our kids that we have done in the parenting workshop. They thought they were a good idea and it was amazing how easy it was for them to listen and to find out what the other person was talking about and how they felt. We all enjoyed the evening and by learning a new way to communicate we learned new things about each other.

We went shopping for jeans and came home with everything but jeans. Even though we were frustrated at trying to find what we wanted there were no confrontations or arguments. It was great to know that even with frustration we did not allow ourselves to wreck the day with fighting.

HINDERING INCIDENTS:
1. LITTLE EXPECTATION OF COMMITMENT TO THE FAMILY implies a weak commitment to the family and that consequences from breaking family commitments by self or other are usually nonexistent, inappropriate or unproductive.

(Number: 4, Participation rate: 3 or 23%).

A. Typical Behaviour

1. Not expecting or having to experience a related consequence for breaking commitment
2. Breaking commitment to family by ignoring responsibilities, rules etc.

B. Typical Incidents

1. One family member invests energy in taking over responsibility for a broken commitment rather than in making sure commitment is fulfilled
2. Family member(s) have knowledge of well defined commitments, or family rules but ignore them

C. Illustrations:

My kids had a day off from school today and so I told them what they had to do before they went out to play with anyone and how they were supposed to leave a message for me so when I came home I would know where they were. When I got home the jobs had not been done and I did not know where they were. When they came home, we ended up in a fight, I grounded them for the rest of the week, and sent them to their rooms. I ended up doing most of the work I had asked them to do. It’s not fair.

On Friday night my son phoned and asked me if he could stay out until midnight. He is only 13 so I said, "No, 11:00 is late enough." He did not return home until Sunday morning. I was angry that he did this and hurt that he did not seem to care that I was worried sick about him.
2. **INABILITY TO ENGAGE IN MUTUAL PROBLEM-SOLVING** results from the inability to consider the thoughts, feelings and needs of the other as being important in problem resolution. In other words, the goal is to achieve a resolution that only satisfies either self, or other. Incidents in this category represent a breakdown of communication in which one person is able to overpower the other or one person gives up and defers the resolution to the other out of resentment.

(Number: 8, Participation rate: 6 or 46%).

**A. Typical Behaviour**

1. Only T/F/A of one person is paramount in problem resolution
2. Breakdown in communication
3. "Powerless" person gives up, defers to other and feels resentment

**B. Typical Incidents**

1. Discussion of parent/parent or parent/child issues resulting in arguing, or cut-off/resentment rather than resolution

**C. Illustrations:**

*My husband and I have a difference of opinion about when our 17 year old son should be in bed. He thinks it should be earlier than 10:00 and I think it could be as late as 11:00. He is a responsible boy and I think that my husband is still treating him as if he were a child. Whenever we talk about it my husband eventually becomes quiet and then at night he tells my son it is time to start getting to bed when 9:30 comes around. This makes me angry that he gets quiet and we are cut-off.*

*My young teenage daughter wants to have sleep overs almost every weekend. I would prefer that she not have any sleep overs. Whenever we discuss*
the issue she just gets angry at me and tells me I am so unreasonable. I guess I
don't care because I don't feel comfortable with her sleeping at other people's
places and I am not going to allow her unless it is something special that I can
feel comfortable with.

3. INABILITY TO ENGAGE IN MUTUAL ENJOYMENT occurs when
tension between family members arises due to the need of one or more members
to dominate or control others during activities. The methods used to achieve this
are along the lines of humiliation, coercion or threats.

(Number: 5, Participation rate: 3 or 23%)

A. Typical Behaviour

1. Tension between family members increasing during activities due to
intolerance
2. Threats, humiliation or coercion used in attempt for compliance

B. Typical Incidents

1. Family outings or activities turning into arguments which lead to
emotional distance

C. Illustrations:

I can not believe our family. Every time we plan on doing an activity,
before we even get started someone has to wreck it for the rest of us. For
example, on Sunday we were going to go for a hike. As we were getting ready,
I noticed that my son had on his favourite shirt even though it was dirty. I asked
him to change it and the next thing I know we are in this big argument in which
I tell him to change it or else. First he is not going to change it, and then he
changes it but is not going to come with us. By the time we are in the car we are
so emotionally uptight that we don't even talk to each other.

My son and I went skiing together. I thought it was going to be a great
day and I was looking forward to it. He has not skied many times before, and I
know that falling can be frustrating, but before we were even finished the first run he was in tears and wanting to go home. I guess I was really disappointed because I spent a great deal of the time telling him to quit crying like a baby and to get his act together. In the end I think that we would have been better off going home after the first run because we were both so miserable.

In summary, **Fostering Connection** is crucial to healthy family interactions. By engaging in activities together, family members develop a sense of importance and worth in being attached to each other. **Fostering Connection** appears to require taking conscious action towards that end. Whereas the first five categories contribute to Bowen's concept of Separateness, this category contributes to Bowen's concept of Togetherness. The facilitating incidents in this category demonstrate the ability of unique family members to act as one (family) without the need for sameness. Hindering incidents on the other hand, seem to result from family members needing to lose their uniqueness in order to be one. The process of differentiation is facilitated by the ability to feel a sense of oneness without demanding sameness.

The critical incident method enables the researcher to make sense of the data collected and allows optimum flexibility in making the data useful. It is expected that the critical incidents will represent successive approximations that allow categories to be discerned. Bowen's concept of differentiation is primarily an explanation of self-other interactions, and the anxiety that these dyadic
relationships produce. As such, these themes are reflected in all the incidents. Flanagan (1954), as mentioned previously, stated that the aim in using the critical incident method was to "increase the usefulness of the data while sacrificing as little as possible of their comprehensiveness, specificity and validity" (p.340). Thesis categories extracted from this data are thus intended to be specific enough to make each distinguishable from one another while at the same time general enough to provide a system that is not cumbersome or unmanageable for practical use in helping to guide family members towards a process of greater differentiation from each other.

**RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY OF THE CATEGORY SYSTEM**

**Reliability**

Reliability of the category system was determined by the following:

1. **Exhaustiveness of the Category System**

   In order for a category system to be useful, it has to be comprehensive in its ability to include all the varieties of behaviour and experience that the focus of the research would expect to cover. To assess the exhaustiveness of the category system 80 incidents, approximately 20% of the total, were excluded from the initial sort which led to the establishment of the six categories. Once the categories were finalized, these were sorted to see how well they fit within the existing system and in particular, whether any new categories would emerge as
a result of this "new" data. All incidents fit with into the existing six categories. This provides evidence of the exhaustiveness of the category system created as a result of this study.

2. Independent Rater

It is possible that any study could be contaminated by the subjectivity of the researcher. Using an independent rater a check can be made to assess the degree to which the incidents can be reliably re-sorted into the established categories. To this end, an independent rater was given a description of the six categories. A training period ensued in which she was given a chance to sort 10 incidents while asking questions of the researcher to ensure that she was clear as to the object and nuances of the category system. Then she was given the task of sorting 10% of the incidents, a total of 50, into the categories. The incidents selected were prototypical facilitating and hindering incidents representing each category.

The Independent rater was able to correctly place 88% or 44/50 of the incidents in their respective categories. The implication is that the six categories distinguish separate aspects of the process being studied. However, at the same time it is recognized that the incidents, being examples of real life experiences, can not be seen as definitive. In other words, within any one incident there are nuances that indicate an overlapping of two or more categories. The category
system is thus best seen as being able to distinguish the incidents within the limits of successive approximation. For example, if any two categories are conceptualized as being at either end of a continuum then an overlapping incident would fall somewhere along the continuum between the two. Whether the incident were to be seen as more likely corresponding to the requirements of one category than the other would be influenced by the subjectivity of the rater.

Prior to the study it was established that the category system would have reliability at an 85% level. At 88% reliability the category system created for this data can be seen as reliable. In other words, the influence of researcher’s subjectivity or of chance on the category system, is at an acceptable level.

Validity

Once reliability was established validity was assumed using the following checks:

1. Opposition of Incidents

In establishing the category system it is assumed that incidents which facilitate the process of differentiation will be in opposition to those that hinder the process of differentiation. Furthermore, is expected that in creating a category system for each category there will be subcategories that will be in direct opposition, that is, for each facilitating behaviour or experience reported there will be similar hindering behaviours or experiences reported. In this study, there
were equal numbers of opposing subcategories within each category for all categories except for category #2 **Acceptance of Difference** (see Tables I and II) in which the behaviours and experiences of one of the oppositional hindering subcategories were such that they could be distinguished into two separate aspects. With oppositional subcategories arising within each of the six main categories, the validity of the category system is supported.

2. Participation Rate within the Category System

In chapter three it was stated that if each category was represented by a 75% participation rate or higher, validity of the system would be indicated. Of the six categories all had participation rates of over 75% (see Table VII).

**TABLE 6**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>NUMBER</th>
<th>PARTICIPATION RATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Being Responsible</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceptance of Difference</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control of Anxiety</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awareness of Triangles</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awareness of Self</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fostering Connection</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The validity of the category system is supported by the high rate of participation in each of the six categories. The lower participation rates in the
categories **Awareness of Triangles** and **Fostering Connection** are most likely a result of the fewer number of incidents that comprised these categories. Considering however that there were less than half the number of incidents in these categories than in those with 100% participation rates, a 77% participation rate is an encouraging indicator of the validity of the system.

**CONCLUSION**

The critical incident method used in this study revealed six categories. The first five, **Being Responsible, Acceptance of Difference, Control of Anxiety, Awareness of Triangles** and **Awareness of Self**, are related to Bowen's (1978) Family System's Theory concept of the Individuality Force, whereas the last category, **Fostering Connection**, is related to his concept of the Togetherness Force. Bowen postulated that differentiation was a product of having the ability to keep these two complementary forces in balance. Furthermore, Bowen stated that being differentiated required the ability to be an observer of relationship interaction dynamics, and to be able to consciously discriminate one's emotional system from one's intellectual system. Facilitating incidents within each of these six categories reflect these two abilities, whereas hindering incidents indicate an absence of these two abilities.

Chapter five is a discussion of how the category system, in defining the criteria for success in the differentiating process, has theoretical implications in
terms of questioning Bowen’s original stance as to the ability of an individual raising his/her level in the family of procreation. As well, the chapter summarizes the implications for possible future research, and finally, suggests practical applications for promoting family health.
CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION

Today's child has become the unwilling, unintended victim of overwhelming stress—the stress borne of rapid, bewildering social change and constantly rising expectations. The contemporary parent dwells in a pressure-cooker of competing demands, transitions, role changes, personal and professional uncertainties, over which he or she exerts slight direction. We seek release from stress whenever we can and usually the one sure ambit of our control is our home. (Elkin, 1981, p. 3)

INTRODUCTION

This research study was set up to examine the process of differentiation within the context of the nuclear family. To do this Flanagan's (1954) Critical Incidents method was used. This method was selected because of its potential to extract criteria for success or failure on a defined task. The participants in this study recorded critical incidents which either facilitated or hindered their ability to differentiate themselves from others in interactions of emotional significance. The six categories extracted from the incidents suggest this criteria, with the 14 facilitating subcategories revealing what the basic requirements are of a parent who can successfully differentiate, and the 15 hindering subcategories revealing what prevents a parent from differentiating. In all cases, the facilitating and hindering subcategories are in direct opposition to each other. This means that if
a parent were to act according to the descriptors within the facilitating subcategories during emotional interactions, the outcome would be a felt sense of being differentiated, whereas if a parent were to act according to the descriptors within the hindering subcategories the outcome would be an interaction in which this felt sense of being differentiated would not occur.

The importance of this is two-fold. First, it takes the outcome of emotional interactions out of the realm of being random, and into the realm of being predictable. In other words, the category system creates knowledge which can be used to make conscious decisions as to which outcome the individual prefers to create, that is, a differentiating outcome or an undifferentiating outcome. Second, processing knowledge that can predict outcome allows an individual to later reflect on his/her contribution to an undifferentiating interaction. Reflection with the guidance of the six categories can help an individual turn 'bad choices' into learning opportunities for promoting future differentiating behaviour.

In examining the facilitating and hindering incidents, what becomes clear is that having a sense of being differentiated is not based upon the feeling state of the individual. Rather, it arises out of what the individual thinks about those feelings, and how the individual manages them. Bowen (1978) stated that differentiation can only occur during times of emotional significance. Compatible with this assumption, the facilitating incidents involved experiencing feelings of
high anxiety, anger, frustration, excitement, joy, calmness, etc. The distinctive aspect of having a sense of being differentiated is that in all facilitating incidents, the participants reported being aware of their feelings, while at the same time being in conscious and intellectual control of their behaviours. In the hindering incidents, on the other hand, the participants were not able to separate their feelings from their behaviour with the result that the behaviours were automatic, and emotionally driven.

Another aspect of maintaining a sense of differentiation is that it appears to be empowering. In order to guide the reporting of the critical incidents, a five question format was used (see Appendix B). The fourth question asked the participant to record the feelings that s/he was aware of experiencing during the incident. As mentioned above, in the facilitating incidents participants reported a wide range of feelings. The response to this question could then be compared to the response on the last question. The participants were asked to evaluate whether or not the reported incident facilitated or hindered their process of differentiation. On all the incidents judged to be facilitating, the participants reported having acted not on what "felt right," i.e., their feelings, but rather in a goal-directed manner. Furthermore, in acting on the courage of their convictions, rather than on the power of the feelings that were being experienced, they felt like they were in control.
Kerr & Bowen (1988) state, "Functioning based on principle requires tolerance of anxiety and a willingness to focus on self" (p. 133). The facilitating incidents reported by the participants in this study are congruent with Bowen’s Family System’s Theory. The level of differentiation a person attains is not based so much on whether a person can act in a principle-oriented and goal-oriented manner, but on how consistently a person can act in this manner. Focusing on self, an awareness of the family emotional process, and the ability not to be governed by anxiety and emotional reactivity are all components of a long-term effort to increase one’s level of differentiation. All of the participants in this study reported attaining a sense of differentiation, and the six categories extracted from the data defines the criteria they used to successfully do it. It would thus appear that promoting parents to engage in the behaviours outlined by the six categories would enable them to tolerate anxiety to an ever increasing degree, empowering them to raise their level of differentiation over time. In doing so, it may minimize the transmission of anxiety from parent to child that Elkin is referring to in the quote at the beginning of this chapter.

The following is a discussion of the limitations of this study, its theoretical implications, including possible future research directions, and a discussion of the practical implications as related specifically to parenting education/training programs.
LIMITATIONS

This study was intended to be an exploration of the process of differentiation within the nuclear family. Family Systems Theory suggests that a person's level of differentiation is set in late adolescence prior to leaving the family of origin (Bowen, 1978; Kerr & Bowen, 1988; Freeman, 1992). Similarly, the same authors believe that any possible increase in one's level of differentiation subsequent to leaving home can only occur by doing what they refer to as family of origin work (Bowen, 1978; Kerr & Bowen, 1988) or multigenerational family therapy (Freeman, 1992). Their premise is that within the nuclear family, the day to day stress and emotional fields are too strong to allow for any consistent effort in gaining objectivity or controlling emotional reactivity. They suggest that what happens is that instead of making gains in one's level of differentiation, the family "remains for long periods on the level of emotional game playing in which the games of each spouse cancel out the potential gains of both" (Kerr & Bowen, 1988, p. 449). As a result, research has focused not on the nuclear family, but rather on the effects of family of origin work on raising an adult child's level of differentiation.

As an exploratory study, the results of this study are inherently limited. With no previous studies to support its findings, the six categories may not be generalizable. The sample was relatively small, and specific. It consisted of white
middle class couples selected from a pool of referrals to a Mental Health Unit. The couples had been referred as having difficulty handling at least one of their children. Although the selection was made because it ensured participants who would be experiencing family interactions of significant emotional intensities, it is possible that the experiences effecting their sense of differentiation may differ from a population not having the same degree of difficulty in parenting a child. Similarly, it is also possible that the sample was relatively homogenous in its level of differentiation at the time of selection, and the category system may only be applicable for parents at that level.

Another factor regarding the sample also needs to be considered in terms of how it effected the data. Generally, parenting classes are largely composed of mothers. This sample, being composed of couples, had an equal number of mothers and fathers. Thus, the data was partly based upon men who might have had more interest in the parenting role than men in general. It is possible that this could effect the generalizability of the results in two ways. First, the male sample may have responded to the critical incidents report format differently than men in general. Second, parenting, even as we approach the 21st century is still for the most part seen as a female activity. It is possible that the categories formulated would be different if the study reflected this phenomena, i.e., a sample consisting of mothers only.
In light of the limitations suggested above, the following implications for theory, research and practice can be considered.

THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS

The six categories obtained from the present study suggest a clearer understanding of the process of differentiation. The facilitating subcategories demonstrate what enhances the ability to differentiate, while the hindering incidents demonstrate what prevents the ability to differentiate. While the categories are supported by Bowen (1978), his work on differentiation was always with adult children working through family of origin issues. This study seems to suggest that the same process might be possible within the nuclear family, by giving the parental unit knowledge, skills and support.

As mentioned earlier, this study did not set out to assess whether or not the participants raised their levels of differentiation as a result of the intervention. According to Bowen (1978) this is only possible by resolving family of origin issues. However, if the process can be discerned by examining critical incidents occurring within the nuclear family, it calls into question this assumption. It may be premature to suggest that it is possible to raise one’s level of differentiation in one’s family of procreation, but by helping the parental unit become aware of and put into practice these criteria, the implications for promoting family health
are stimulating.

In today’s world, it is not always possible to make contact with members of one’s family of origin due to lack of proximity, death of a parent, or issues involving trauma such as neglect, physical and sexual abuse which precludes any desire to associate with them. Thus, raising one’s level of differentiation is severely limited by the current assumptions of Family Systems Theory. Freeman (1992) and Richardson (1984) point out that even if you can’t work directly with your parents, there is usually someone who knew them intimately enough during certain periods of their life, to help you construct a history that will help in doing family of origin work. However, this approach is limited simply because any information that is not gained from the source is really little more than gossip; gossip, like secrets, is considered by systems theory to be a primary source of family dysfunction and as such, an impediment in differentiating. However, if it is possible to raise one’s level of differentiation in the family of procreation, then individuals that can not make contact with members of their families of origin have hope in doing so.

In doing family of origin work, it is common for there to be long breaks

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1 Gossip occurs in the triangling process. Information or conflicts that one person has with another is diverted to a third party rather than communicated directly to the person who is directly involved. The only way conflict can be resolved is for the two people involved to reach an understanding that both can feel comfortable with.
between contacts with family members. This might explain why the process seems to be so slow. Richardson (1984) points out that it took Bowen 12 years to complete his process of differentiation. If this is a factor, the family of procreation, with its daily interactions, might in fact be more of an ideal place for becoming more differentiated. Through conscious observation of family dynamics, the family of procreation provides a setting in which the daily planning and executing of differentiating moves might be accomplished. It is possible that Bowen, in basing his theoretical perspective on his own experiences, was too pessimistic about the ability of people doing differentiating work within the nuclear family.

It might also be possible that Bowen, was not that intimately involved in the parenting process of his own children to see the potential for growth that parenting children can have. This research suggests that the process of differentiation is one which is based upon six aspects, **Being Responsible, Acceptance of Difference, Control of Anxiety, Awareness of Triangles, Awareness of Self, and Fostering Connection.** In my experience as a primary caregiver to my children, I am constantly presented with situations in which these

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2 Being a parent can not be confused with parenting. The term parent simply denotes a biological or legal process. Parenting is the active role of caring for, guiding and nurturing children on a daily basis. Buying the diapers is not the same as changing them.
tasks come into play. Combining knowledge of the category system, with these situations may challenge present theoretical thought.

Bowen’s Family Systems Theory explains relationship dynamics using concepts that make intuitive sense out of "seemingly random and even chaotic appearing family interactions...(creating)...order and predictability to family relationships" (Kerr & Bowen, 1988, p. 4). Furthermore, the power of the theory is that these patterns of interactions are played out consistently from family to family, regardless of specific family values, attitudes or personalities. Bowen saw the emotional system as being an instinctual and natural system, and as such evolutionary. Just as no other theory has ever been an end in itself, it makes sense that this theory is also subject to the natural process forming the evolution of thought. In defining the process, we may have now evolved to a point in which the theory may need to examine some of its basic assumptions. From this several theoretical questions arise which might not only guide future research, but as well have practical implications.

**PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS**

I'm convinced that too often parents are trapped in the management paradigm, thinking of control, efficiency, and rules instead of direction, purpose, and family feeling.

(Covey, 1989, p. 103).
This section deals with the more practical implications of incorporating the results of this study into existing parenting paradigms. Getz & Gunn (1988) have developed a summary of parent education strategies that could be connected with an assessment of different family dynamics. They suggest that family system dynamics can be delineated into three issues, Family Communication, Emotional Distance, and Family Role Structure. By conducting a family assessment in these three areas, parent education approaches can be individualized to meet the needs of the family. It is their contention that "teaching the same skills to all parents regardless of the specific characteristics of each of those families...may aggravate pre-existing patterns" (p.165). They suggest that teaching families new methods of interacting to replace methods that are already working may cause parents to doubt their competence and feel more guilty about their ineffectiveness than they did before receiving the new information. When this happens parents can become paralysed, afraid to do anything in case it is not the right thing to do (Doherty & Ryder, 1980).

Using this assessment system, they suggest two formats for helping families experiencing trouble. After assessing the families individually to determine which of the three areas need adjustment, the parental unit could either be seen individually or placed in a group format with other parents experiencing similar difficulties. Then using an integrative approach in which techniques and
strategies from various established parenting programs, i.e., P.E.T., S.T.E.P., Behavioural etc., are borrowed, adjustment can be promoted without the risk of undermining the parents existing abilities.

I suggest that the above strategy does not go far enough in making the paradigm shift parents need for long term independent change in behaviour. It is my contention that today, parents seem to need more than diagnosis and strategic intervention. Diagnosis and strategic intervention might bring about change, but it is likely to only result in first order change rather than second order change (Becvar & Becvar, 1988). First order change results in a change in the system but only according to the rules of the system. For example, a family whose structure leans towards the authoritarian model may learn about discipline and using natural and logical consequences and then adjust their meaning so that they become synonymous with authoritarian control and punishment. Or, a parent may learn more about how to communicate more effectively with his/her child, but instead of using the skills learned to further understanding of the child's experience, may use the information heard against the child.

Second order change, on the other hand, involves a change in the rules of the system and therefore in the system itself. There is no doubt that families who are successful have clearly understood rules, but as well, they have rules that can change the rules whenever the original rules become counterproductive. A rule
maybe broken, and a consequence may follow, but instead of expecting retribution for the mistake, second order change can allow discipline and communication to turn the broken rule into a potential valuable family learning experience. Using the examples above, and combining the categories Being Responsible and Acceptance of Difference, the parent might seek to understand the child's struggle in growing up, making mistakes and having to deal with the consequences of them. Instead of taking on the struggle, giving advice or imposing a consequence/punishment, the parent disciplines by supporting and encouraging the child's struggle in solving the problem (the consequence). In this way, the learning potential of the experience is increased for the child and according to the natural laws of a system, for the whole family.

To accomplish this, parents need a theory that will help them change the rules of how their system operates, as well as techniques and strategies. They need a theory which will guide them in creatively modifying the techniques and strategies to fit into their family structure and to change their family structure to fit the techniques and strategies. In this way, techniques and strategies have more potential in preventing future problems. Interventions that only focus on minimizing or eliminating problems in the short term, (first order change) may be useful in resolving crisis situations, however, they limit what is needed for promoting family growth in the long term (second order change). Thus, having
a theory that promotes the understanding of changing relationships takes techniques out of the realm of being a ‘bag of tricks’ and puts them into a realm of useful knowledge. Family development in our evolving society is a dynamic lifespan process that requires flexibility. Parents who have a theory based upon natural laws will more likely be able to attain the flexibility to meet the demands of these ever-changing relationships.

In the past, most parents followed a traditional model of parenting that was based upon a social norm. Some of the typical ‘golden rules’ were, Kids should be seen and not heard, Respect your elders, Don’t talk back, Do it because I said so, etc. In this model, intimidation, coercion, abuse of authority and a heavy hand were basically all the techniques a parent needed to know and these were easy to learn and master. In this model, the man was at the top, the little woman was next in line and children were, at best, ‘black box’ possessions. If a parent was weak in mastering these techniques, the grandparent, the teacher, the minister, the neighbour, or for that matter, the man on the street, was always there as a reminder to children that there was a correct way to be, and was entitled to act in whatever way thought necessary to keep the child in line. Today however, society does not subscribe to this model, and no one model of parenting has replaced it.

Doherty (1992) states that in the last half of this century the family has
undergone two transitions and is now into a postmodern stage. Until the late sixties, the family could be described as the Institutional Family or traditional family in which family tradition, loyalty, and solidarity were more important than individual goals or romantic interests. At that time, various factors such as the coming of age of the baby-boomers, the Vietnam war and the rapid rise of feminism, gave way to the birth of what he calls the Psychological Family. This family was more nuclear, more mobile, less tied to extended kinship, and based on the premise that the personal satisfaction and fulfilment of its individual parents was most important. If responsibility was a hallmark of the Institutionalized Family then personal satisfaction was the chief value of the Psychological Family.

In the 90s, as an outgrowth of this value, we have entered the age of the Pluralistic Family in which the average child of the immediate future will, "grow up in some combination of: a one-parent family, a two-parent family, or a step-family, and will go on in adulthood to cohabitate, marry, divorce, remarry and perhaps redivorce" (p. 35) and Doherty states that the new family value will be flexibility. Elkin, (1992) refers to this family as the Permeable Family for obvious reasons, but states that he sees an emergence of yet another form which he calls the Vital Family, "In the Vital Family, the modern value of togetherness is given equal weight with the Postmodern Family value of autonomy" (p. 79).
In the Permeable Family, children are seen as having competence way beyond their developmental abilities. This serves the purpose of helping to relieve the parental anxiety and guilt that is inherent in trying to raise children in an atmosphere of two career families, single parent families and inadequate daycare, but this competence is only an illusion. As a result, in the Vital family, children are no longer seen as being competent but "are seen as growing into competence needing the help and support of the parents" (p. 81). Elkin sees that for the first time in history, parents and children can both have the same goals, that is, to satisfy their need to belong (Togetherness) and their need to become (Autonomy).

Nevertheless, for most people, the family is still the place in which the frustrations of trying to satisfy these needs can fall prey to unrealistic expectations and emotional reactivity. When this happens, anxiety increases activating old patterns of faulty interactions or establishing new faulty patterns of interactions. These serve the purpose of temporarily lowering the anxiety by unfairly displacing it on others. However, just as faulty interactions may work in the beginning, they soon create their own anxiety which then only exacerbates the original problem. In other words, although these faulty interactions may seem to resolve the problem, it is only an illusion, and in most cases the anxiety becomes more intense and the unresolved problem becomes more difficult to resolve. Faulty interactions, without a theory that makes sense out of them, become rigid.
and because of the reciprocal nature of a system, recursive.

The concepts within Bowen’s theory, such as the family emotional system, the mutual projection process, and the triangling process, explain how faulty interactions are created and maintained, while the categories of Control of Anxiety, Acceptance of Difference and Awareness of Triangles, generated in this study, can guide parents in making the second order change required for elimination and prevention. They give parents the permission for Being Responsible in their interactions with their children. In this way, each parent can become more Awareness of Self, and use problems to Foster Connections in which strengths are built upon and weaknesses are compensated for. In adopting Bowen’s theory, and letting the six categories guide their behaviour, parents can seek to enable and empower themselves to engage in prevention rather than in crisis.

Dunst & Trivette (1987) reiterate this position. They state it is time to change our orientation of working with families from one of a deficit model to one of enablement and empowerment. The deficit model is based on either laying blame or on inherent family deficiencies that can only be corrected with professional interventions. It is a model that robs the family of their power by placing the power into the hands of the professional expert. On the contrary, enabling families refers to helping families seize the opportunity to display
competence, which then contributes to the family feeling empowered or seeing themselves as having the ability to bring about change. In other words, instead of the focus being on error or weakness elimination, it is on individual family strengths so that weaknesses are accepted and compensated for. Family Systems Theory can make a major contribution to this new orientation to working with parents. This theory, by explaining relationship dynamics within emotional systems can help families begin to observe, detach and make sense out of faulty interactions, and then plan differentiating moves to correct them. In other words, the theory enables and empowers the family to make the changes necessary to promote belonging and becoming.

By recognizing the force for Togetherness and for Separateness, the theory accounts for problems as arising out of the family’s inability to cope with the dynamic shifting balance of these two forces over the lifespan. Differentiated behaviour is the doorway to making adjustments whenever a change in the balance of the two forces require it. Because it is based upon acting on principles rather than on emotional reactivity, it creates the flexibility Elkin (1993) is

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3 It might serve to clarify a point about acting on principles rather than emotional reactivity. Although Bowen suggested that principles were "intellectual" as opposed to "feeling", he opened up much space for confusion and criticism. Principles are natural laws of humanity and as such come into our awareness through a combination of our intellectual and our feeling states. Principles based purely upon intellectual functioning are simply insensitive subjective judgements.
Principles arise out of natural laws, and as such, exist within each individual. At the higher end of the scale, the individual is seen as being influenced more by these inner principles than by the forces of the external environment. However, I believe that parents need to have permission to access this principled behaviour and believe that Bowen’s theory, and the six categories generated by this study, represent the key to that access.

Parents of young children have come out of an age in which authoritarian rule has been rejected. There has been much discussion in parenting circles about what to replace it with. After decades of being told how a family should be and how a child should act, it makes sense that the first shift would be social control in the guise of discipline. However, I believe that parents are now ready for second order change; to begin raising children based upon honouring difference and using inner principles, such as fairness, integrity, honesty, nurturance and encouragement. Discipline means to teach, not to control and I believe that parents want to teach their children by giving them permission to access these inner principles so that the whole family might become principle-oriented and goal-directed.

In light of this, the practical implications of the six categories are evident. The facilitating subcategories outline the requirements for successful differentiation, while the hindering subcategories outline the requirements for
failure in differentiating. In presenting Bowen's Family Systems Theory, to the parental unit, the parents have a theoretical base from which to make the required second order change and I think that the six categories derived from this study, can guide them in implementing that change. With the theoretical basis, the parent is in a much better position to make changes by predicting the outcome of any interaction before it starts. The six categories demonstrate the conscious choices the parent can make at the outset in choosing to respond in a differentiating way.

This study has not produced any new parenting interventions or strategies. However, the six categories can be taught, and practised so that they replace the unconscious thoughts, feelings and actions that lead families down the road towards poor adjustment through faulty interactions. The current parent education strategies are really only skills for helping people relate. These strategies can be used to support the parent in incorporating the theory and developing their use of the six categories. Table 8 is a summary of the six categories and the parent education strategies which support and facilitate attaining a sense of differentiation.

Differentiation is very clearly a process and as such involves several steps. First is gaining the knowledge of the theory and the six categories. Second, is practice and remembering to practice. This means letting go of those times in which emotional chaos interferes with remembering to put knowledge into
practice. This can be done by living the philosophy that mistakes are learning opportunities. Rather than let guilt sabotage the process, forgetting to remember can be turned into a reflection of how to remember the next time. Third is time. Becoming differentiated is a process and time is an element. Fourth is commitment. Changing one's way of being is going against the homeostasis of the system. As much as there is a desire to change, in the beginning of any change there is an equal or more powerful pressure to change back. Only by making a commitment can change take place. I think the common sense of Bowen's theory and the six categories can greatly support that commitment. Furthermore, by being able to distinguish the criteria that facilitates this process, and by being able to link it to existing parental education and techniques, there is the possibilities that greater family health and adjustment can be promoted.

Table 8 is an attempt to link current programmatic parenting techniques and strategies with the six facilitating subcategories. What is noticeable about this approach is that the subcategories are intended as a philosophy of being while the techniques become the skills that support the philosophy and through which the philosophy can be lived.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUBCATEGORIES</th>
<th>PARENTING STRATEGIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>BEING RESPONSIBLE</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taking responsibility for self</td>
<td>Using &quot;I&quot; statements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being able to state one's boundaries</td>
<td>Practising active listening, empathy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allowing others to be responsible</td>
<td>Discipline, i.e., teaching responsible behaviour through the use of problem-solving and consequences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ACCEPTANCE OF DIFFERENCE</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allowing others to have &amp; express own thoughts/feelings, and to do things in own way</td>
<td>Active listening, empathy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ability to express an opinion and stick to it in face of difference</td>
<td>Giving choices, and problem-solving &quot;I&quot; statements</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>CONTROL OF ANXIETY</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Monitoring self anxiety</td>
<td>Effective communication (&quot;I&quot; statements &amp; active listening)</td>
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<td>Monitoring the anxiety of others</td>
<td>Use of time-out or time-in to dissipate increasing anxiety</td>
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<td>Adequate sleep and exercise</td>
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<td><strong>AWARENESS OF TRIANGLES</strong></td>
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<td>Ability to observe conflictual dyad without being drawn in</td>
<td>Practising observational skills</td>
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<tr>
<td>Giving support to each member of the conflictual dyad</td>
<td>Using empathy to validate experience of both people, encouraging mutual problem-solving</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>AWARENESS OF SELF</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Awareness of strengths and weaknesses</td>
<td>Using effective speaking skills</td>
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<tr>
<td>Awareness of needs and wants</td>
<td>Allowing for flexibility in changing rules, i.e., the convince me technique, negotiation</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Establishing boundaries using rules</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>FOSTERING CONNECTION</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Expectation of commitment to the family</td>
<td>Establishing cooperative family work, i.e., chores</td>
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<td>Having the ability to engage in mutual problem-solving</td>
<td>Effective use of proximity, i.e., using closeness and touch to create sense of importance and belonging</td>
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<tr>
<td>Having the ability to engage in mutual enjoyment</td>
<td>Unconditional and conditional love and acceptance</td>
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IMPLICATONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Prior to any longitudinal study being initiated to examine the usefulness of the category system in promoting differentiation within the family of procreation, the categories need to be subjected to more rigorous study to determine how generalizable they are. By replicating the study using a variety of populations such as single parents, parents without hard to manage children, blended families/step parents, etc., the degree to which the critical incidents collected fit the existing category system could be assessed. One possible outcome of this type of study might be the discovery of new categories or a refinement of the existing one.

If the category system were to hold up, research could be conducted into the usefulness of the system. One possible use could be in converting it into a family diagnostic instrument. Farley (1990) has developed what he refers to as a Family Developmental Task Assessment: A Prerequisite to Family Treatment, which may provide a prototype format for this type of diagnostic instrument. Farley suggests that his instrument be used as an interview tool on which the strengths and weaknesses of a family can be assessed on five different aspects, Regulation of individuation, Management of affect, Regulation of sexual and aggressive impulses, Self-other observation, and Severity of socio-biological stressors. The results of the assessment can then be used to guide interventions
that would recognize and utilize the strengths as well as build on the weaknesses. Getz & Gunn (1988) have also created a format in which Family Communication, Emotional Distance and Family Role Structure are assessed for each family then related to parent educational strategies.

Another important direction for research, could be to determine if knowledge of the six categories would, over time, actually raise one’s level of differentiation. It is one thing to have knowledge of the basic requirements for the mastery of a task, it another thing to be able to put them into practice in order to attain that mastery. The optimism of Bowen’s theory is that a person can, by being proactive, "carve out a rational self capable of detachment from the primitive emotionalism that too often overwhelms the human capacity to think" (Simon, 1991, p. 2). Being proactive requires that a person has the knowledge of what to do, has the skills which enables him/her to do it, and the desire to want to do it (Covey, 1989). In the past, research has only focused on doing this type of work within an adult’s family of origin.

A longitudinal study could be set up which divided subjects into one of three groups. The first group could receive instruction in the six categories, taught skills to incorporate them, and then given ongoing support and encouragement in being proactive. The second group could also receive instruction and skill training but not be given continued ongoing support. Finally,
the third group could be seen as a control, not receiving knowledge, skills training or support. In this way, the categories could be assessed as to their usefulness to raise one's level of differentiation over time by comparing the first two groups to the control group. Furthermore, by comparing group one to group two, the categories could be assessed as to what degree ongoing support and encouragement would play in raising one's level of differentiation as compared to only receiving knowledge and skills.

Finally, I conclude by proposing future directions for improving the existing state of parent education/training courses. My review of the literature highlights the paucity of programs in which the research into family and family dynamics over the last ten years has been incorporated. Courses which have a linear perspective of dyadic interactions contribute to a lack of understanding about human behaviour and therefore are inherently limiting. Each relationship within the family, whether it be a spousal relationship, a parent-child relationship or a sibling relationship is only part of an interconnected emotional system. Parent-education programs which focus only on one of these relationships, i.e., the parent-child relationship, and/or focus on controlling the child’s 'misbehaviour' through manipulative techniques or strategies exploiting the inherent power imbalance, are out-dated. It is time that new parent education/training programs be developed incorporating family theory and
research, such as Bowen’s Family Systems Theory, and the six categories revealed in this study. Obviously, any program developed would need to be subjected to research and evaluation so that its efficacy could be validated.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study has revealed six categories which can guide the process of differentiation within the family of procreation. The categories were based upon critical incidents reported by participants in a parent education/training workshop which integrated Bowen’s Family Systems Theory, and techniques and skills from parenting programs based upon communication, Adlerian, and behavioural theories. The study suggests that Family Systems Theory, and in particular the concept of differentiation has a place in promoting healthy adjustment of family interactions. In doing so, it further suggests that Family Systems Theory has a contribution to make to the future of a comprehensive theoretical model of parent education.
REFERENCES


Unpublished thesis for Master of Arts degree, University of British Columbia. Vancouver, Canada: U.B.C.


APPENDIX A

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM
Consent Form

I ___________________________ consent to participate in the study Parenting With A Purpose: The Effects of a Couples Workshop on Differentiation of Self. This study is conducted by Robert Dionne, a Master’s Degree student in Counselling Psychology at the University of British Columbia, and supervised by Dr. Larry Cochran, Professor. This study will examine what conditions facilitate and what conditions hinder the differentiation of self.

Data collection for this study will take four forms:
1. You will be required to complete three, 1/2 hour interviews, of which the mid-session and post-session will be audio-tape and transcribed to ensure more accurate data collecting. In the pre-session and post-session interviews you will be asked to complete three questionnaires. In the mid and post-sessions you will be asked to relate information pertaining to your personal process of differentiation.
2. You will be asked to complete a daily log. This is estimated to take 10-15 minutes a day. As well, the leader will record observations as a result of the interactions during the sessions.
3. Your file information at Chilliwack Mental Health pertaining to the research maybe accessed.
4. The teacher of your child will be asked to complete a questionnaire pre-session and post-session. This questionnaire takes about 10 minutes to complete.

All identifying information will be deleted from any recorded material to ensure confidentiality. Your name will remain confidential. All tapes will be erased and all written material will be incinerated upon completion of the study.

The study requires a commitment to attending three-hour workshop sessions and ten to fifteen minutes per day reflecting and writing of a daily log. You have the right to refuse to answer any questions, participate in any exercise, and may also withdraw from the study at any time without consequences of any kind. Participation in this study is voluntary.

Any questions or concerns can be directed at either Robert Dionne (224-1731) or Larry Cochran (822-5259).

I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTOOD THE ABOVE AND HEREBY CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY. I ACKNOWLEDGE RECEIPT OF THE CONSENT FORM AND ALL ATTACHMENTS.

Participant: ________________________________

Researcher: ________________________________
APPENDIX B

DAILY LOG
**DAILY LOG**

You have been given fifty white and fifty yellow index cards. You are to use these for your daily log recordings. At the end of each day you are asked to spend ten to fifteen minutes contemplating on your daily events and write down:

"What events and/or experiences have you had during the workshop or between the workshop sessions, on a daily basis, which either facilitated or hindered your ability to differentiate?"

**Differentiation** simply means:
I have my own thoughts, feelings and actions and you have your own thoughts, feelings and actions.

I recognize which thoughts, feelings and actions are mine and which thoughts, feelings and actions are yours.

I am responsible for my thoughts, feelings and actions and the consequences of them, and likewise, you are responsible for yours.

Write facilitating events on white cards and hindering events on yellow cards. Write one to three cards daily. Bring these to the next workshop session.

Thank you.
DAILY LOG

1. **DESCRIBE** the event;
   - What happened?
   - Who did what to whom?

2. What was **SAID**?
   - Who said what to whom?

3. What were your **THOUGHTS**?

4. What were your **FEELINGS**?

5. **IDENTIFY** specifically, what makes this event **facilitating** or **hindering**?

**Example of a Facilitating Event**

1. My son made a mess in the kitchen and then went and sat in front of the T.V. without cleaning it up. I went to cook supper and all the counters were dirty.
2. I went into the family room and told him he had a mess to clean up and asked him if he wanted to do it with the T.V. on or off.
3. I thought that I am not going to be able to cook in this mess and that he had to clean it up quickly so that we would be able to have supper on time.
4. I was angry that there was a mess, and was anxious to get supper started.
5. This was a facilitating incident because even though I was feeling angry and anxious, I was able to ask my son to clean up the mess in a way that motivated him and did not start an argument.

**Example of a Hindering Event**

1. My son made a mess in the kitchen and then went and sat in front of the T.V. without cleaning it up. I went to cook supper and all the counters were dirty.
2. I went into the family room and shut the T.V. off and told him in no uncertain terms that he had better get his butt out into the kitchen before I ground him for he week.
3. I thought, I’m tired of being a maid around this house.
4. I was frustrated and angry at his irresponsible behaviour
5. This was a hindering event because in the end we had a terrible argument and I sent him to his room and cleaned up the mess myself.
Jan. 30, 1992

Dear

Thank you for participating in my research study. I think that the research will be valuable for extending the knowledge that we have of family interactions. I can also appreciate how difficult it is to attend a first night session. Walking into a group situation can be threatening, and I thank you for your courage. From my experience in running groups, I have found that it takes three to four sessions to develop comfortable feelings with the group process.

After attending the first session, it is quite common to feel that your expectations might not be met. However, previous participants to this workshop have, in retrospect, indicated to me how satisfying the total experience was.

I can also appreciate that through the duration of this workshop, you and your partner might experience some conflict due to the everyday stresses that families are besieged with. Attending the workshop regardless of this conflict can be quite a growing experience. It offers an opportunity to put the process of differentiation into practice.

I also realize that in the beginning, writing your daily log might seem like a chore. Having gone through the experience myself, I found that my persistence was rewarded as I learned to enjoy this private daily time. Should you find that you are having difficulty understanding the task, I hope that you will bring it to my attention before or after our session so I can assist you. I can assure you that it is simple and it will get easier.

I am looking forward to seeing you February 5, at 7:00 pm.

Sincerely,

Robert Dionne
February 6, 1992

Dear

Here are some after thoughts arising from our last workshop that I thought I would like to share with the two of you. First of all, after reading the facilitating and hindering event cards, I must compliment you on the effort that you are investing in our research project. I especially like to comment on the depth of description on many of the cards. I will be curious to read your event cards, and to hear your comments about having written them for a second week in a row.

I was quite concerned after our last session, because I had to eliminate certain activities that I had previously planned. I mentioned this to my team and they pointed out to me that it was a sign of how keenly you were involved in the process. Their point was that I had a group that was highly motivated for change, and that I had to expect that your thirst for knowledge needed to be satiated. In retrospect, I see that my team is 100% correct in their evaluation of you.

I will be looking forward to our next meeting. At that time we will looking at how our communication patterns can lead to recursive faulty interactions. Many of you have expressed the desire to master this fundamental skill of parent-child interaction. We begin the process of mastering effective communication on Feb. 12, 7:00 pm.

Sincerely yours,

Robert Dionne
February 13, 1992

Dear

I had fun at our last session, how was it for you? It is debatable whether you are learning more from me or I am learning more from you, thanks.

Keep those cards coming in. I really appreciate the fact that you are willing to share your life with me, and as well help me do my research. Although the thesis will be in my name we are really doing it together.

An analogy could be made to a steak house; the questionnaires are the croutons on the salad, the interview is the baked potato and the cards are the steak. You might be able to substitute for the croutons and possibly, with some difficulty for the baked potato, but when you run out of steak you bankrupt the steakhouse.

We have just begun our journey through the difficult challenge of trying to learn to listen for understanding rather than downplaying what our children are trying to tell us by lecturing, scolding, analysing, etc. The next session we will expand on these communication skills and go on to learning how to make ourselves understood.

Sincerely,

Robert Dionne
February 19, 1992

Dear

At the end of our last session I tuned into my self, doing my own differentiation work and realized that I felt quite energized. I wonder if you felt the same way? Remember, being differentiated means allowing others to have their own thoughts, feelings and actions. In other words, if you did not feel energized, that’s ok, it would be a sign of your ability to differentiate and not let my enthusiasm get to you.

I was impressed by the large number of facilitating/hindering events that you as a group handed in this week. In family therapy we have discovered that we live our lives by the stories that we create that give special meaning to our experiences. Stories have a being, a middle and an end. They disclose to us what led up to the event, what happened during the event and what followed after the event was over in terms of thoughts, emotions and actions. It just occurred to me that is what you are doing when you write your event cards.

As we tell our stories, we grow along the storyline. What this means is that our stories end up becoming our reality. Therefore, when we have more stories that indicate a growing differentiated self, we should find that our thoughts, feelings and actions follow along those lines, that is, we will become more differentiated. In this way, writing the cards facilitate differentiation.

Because it is the half-way point of our workshop, it is time to schedule the mid-interviews. The purpose of these is to help me explore your events in more depth to make sure that I fully understand your experiences. I can start seeing couples on Saturday 29. Think about a time that would be most convenient for you and let me know next session.

Our 5th session will give us more opportunity to practise the communication skills we have learned so far, to add to them and take them a step further to look at how to instill a sense of Togetherness through making the family a worthwhile place to be. Yes, that’s right! I’m talking about chores and giving children a chance to feel meaningless through the contributions s/he makes around the home.

Have a good week,

Robert Dionne
February 27, 1992

Dear

I just realized that there are only three more sessions left to go in our workshop. There is a lot we could do and so little time left. However, I'm confident that we will make the most with the least amount of time.

Keep those cards coming in! I always look forward to reading them. I likewise feel privileged to have this window view into your inner world.

By now, I feel bonded with our group and see ourselves as special partners in our personal growth. I look forward to seeing you in our next group session.

I'm wondering how much resistance you might be experiencing in instituting chores in your home, who in the system is resisting the most and how you might be handling it with your new knowledge of differentiation and the family as an emotional system. In our next session we will be continuing on with our communication skills, and moving on to look at discipline. I look forward to hearing how well you were able to put into practice what you were introduced to last session.

Sincerely,

Robert Dionne
March 4, 1992

Dear

By now you have become real experts at writing your cards. Novak’s Fourth Principle tells us that most personal growth occurs during the last period of any intervention. Therefore, we can predict that this is the primetime for you in your process of differentiation, and so don’t be surprised if you have a lot of cards to write.

Novak’s Third Principle tells us that people who write things down gain approximately twice as much benefit from the experience than people who don’t. Her Second Principle states that perseverance is the winning edge to overcoming resistance, implying that resistance is the major stumbling block to change.

On a less theoretical note, how has giving up punishment been effecting your system? Do your children like taking responsibility or are they fighting against it? If they are how are you resisting changing back? This workshop is a process and next session we are going to go further by looking at problem-solving and how communication and discipline are so important to that process.

See you soon,

Robert Dionne
March 12, 1992

Dear

It is hard to believe that we will be meeting for the last time on March 25. It really seems that the past seven weeks have gone quickly. I guess the old adage must be true..."Time flies when you are having fun."

I found that the comment made by one of the participants probably applies to many of us:

"Although I am at the end of the workshop, it feels like I am just at the beginning of an exciting journey of doing my own work."

On the scale of 'Readiness for Personal Work', where do you feel you fit?

0____1____2____3____4____5____6____7____8____9____10

This is the last call for handing in facilitating and hindering cards. In other words, this is the last opportunity for you to give me your exess baggage. Feel free, I am differentiated enough to take it.

But, I'm not sure if I am differentiated enough to ask you whether you have read any of my letters. It takes a certain courage for me to make such an inquiry, since the code of silence about the letters has not been broken once during our sessions. Sometimes I have nightmares that one day I'll wake up to find a bag of letters stamped "RETURN TO SENDER" on my doorstep.

I would like to ask you to bring a symbol of your level of differentiation at this point in time, to our last session. This would be an object that is a metaphor for where you are at in your relationship with self. For example, for myself it is a seashell. This object represents how I think and feel about myself. A seashell provides safety and a sense of home no matter where I go, while at the same time it represents a freedom of movement that allows me to explore my ever expanding horizons.
On the other hand, I can still remember the lowest time in my life when I felt stuck and deflated. My metaphor, at that time was a flat tire.

Looking forward to our parting party on the 25th.

Robert Dionne
April 2, 1992

Dear

When it comes time to say good-bye I sometimes question my level of differentiation; this is one of those times. On the one hand, I realize that saying good-bye means that we have been on a really rewarding and successful journey together, while on the other hand I shall miss our weekly meetings. I became attached to you as a group. I wonder, was it as good for you as it was for me?

I certainly appreciate your commitment to attending the sessions and investing you energy into participating in the activities. In particular, I really appreciated the trust and hard work it took to consistently write out the daily events. Thank you for making the research project possible.

I wonder where you predict your level of differentiation will be in a year from now? I would be curious to know how aware you will be about your awareness of the impact this eight week workshop will have on your successful process of differentiation? What wisdom have you learned in this process that you would like to tell others who might want to follow in your pioneering footsteps?

Differentiatingly yours,

Robert Dionne
APPENDIX D

OUTLINE OF THE PARENTING WITH A PURPOSE PROGRAM
THE PARENTING WITH A PURPOSE PROGRAM

This program was developed by me and conducted twice prior to using it for the purposes of this research. It consists of eight, three hour workshop sessions. It is different from other parenting programs currently on the market because it is based upon Bowen’s Family Systems Theory. Bowen’s theory is a theory of relationship dynamics. It explains these dynamics in simple concepts which can easily be observed and experienced within any significant relationship.

The program is also different from other parenting programs because of its objectives. Most parenting programs, with the exception of Gordon (1970) are designed to more or less teach parents how to get greater compliance from their children through techniques of social control. These programs are aimed at teaching parents skills to help them make their children mind. In other words, the primary aim of these programs are to change the children’s behaviour, not the adults. As such, these programs could be classified as falling within a crisis management paradigm because the information, and techniques introduced to the participants are geared towards managing the acting out behaviour of children when it occurs.

The Parenting With a Purpose program, on the other hand, is designed to help parents enjoy the parenting through a process of becoming more self-aware of the role they play in creating and maintaining the acting-out behaviour of their children. The focus is not on knowledge and techniques designed to change the child’s behaviour, but rather it is on knowledge and skill training to help the parent change his/her behaviour in relation to their children. Consistent with Bowen’s theory, Parenting With a Purpose is a parenting program that seeks to instill a philosophy of parenting based upon principles and uses current effective
parenting education skills and techniques as an adjunct rather than as means to an end. Thus the program falls within a relationship management paradigm in which the parents are empowered to take on a leadership role in modelling healthy, self-responsible relationship behaviour during both crisis and non-crisis interactions.

The program is based upon the system’s perspective that faulty interactions occur because each member involved has a part to play in creating and maintaining them. Ascribing blame is seen as a useless behaviour which impedes responsibility rather than enhances it. In other words, changing faulty interactions by demanding that the other person change is outside a system’s perspective. Rather, system’s thinking assumes that change occurs by becoming more self-aware and self-responsible. Each person has control over the way he or she is thinking, feeling or acting, and so this program focuses on encouraging the concerned parent to focus on changing his/her self rather than on changing his/her child.

By stepping back, and assuming the role of active observer, the parent is able to act differently towards lowering or eliminating his/her concern with action based upon principles rather than on emotional reactivity or control. Change in the child’s behaviour occurs indirectly because of the reciprocal nature of interactions. Parenting With a Purpose places total responsibility for change in the interactions on the parent because it is usually the parent who has the concern, and because the parent is seen as being the more mature individual within parent-child relationship. These two factors are assumed to be motivational and are more likely to lead to initiating change that will alter faulty family interaction patterns.

In the beginning of each workshop there are usually some parents who are so frustrated with their children that they resist such an idea. These parents are operating within a paradigm that states that the child is to blame because s/he is
immature and irresponsible. This paradigm robs parents of any hope for change because it sees change as lying outside of their control. These parents subscribe to the "my child pushes my buttons" metaphor as a way to justify their own regressive behaviour in dealing with problems in an emotionally driven manner, and to alleviate the guilt they feel as a result of not being able to control their child's behaviour.

With control being seen as outside of their grasp, these parents are usually looking for "pixie dust" miracles that will transform their children into mature and responsible children. Parenting programs that teach techniques and strategies that recognize and exploit the power imbalance within the parent-child relationship give the illusion that these techniques and strategies are the miracle pixie dust that will do the trick. If knowledge means power, then many of the programs currently on the market are unintentionally giving parents knowledge so that they might have more power over their children. Power that may in the short term appear to be efficient, but in the long term may not be effective.

Parenting With a Purpose professes no such illusions. Age appropriately mature, responsible children are a direct result of living within a mature, responsible relationship built upon principles of integrity, honesty, fairness and human dignity. Parents who are constantly regressing to childlike behaviours in their interactions with their children are modelling that to be an adult means being impulsive, and emotionally reactive. Today, both adults and children are expecting to be in relationships which are based upon the principles mentioned above and exploiting a power imbalance is contrary to those expectations.

The principles of integrity, honesty, fairness and human dignity are supported by the model "Parent-Child Interaction Roadmap". It promotes cooperative relationships through relationship knowledge and the use of patience,
nurturance, communication and encouragement. Children need to be instilled with love for themselves and others, and a sense of self-discipline. However, parental interventions designed primarily for social control rob the child of the very thing it is that the parent is trying to encourage because social control is extrinsic not intrinsic. Techniques of social control often base discipline upon the threat of withholding love. However, love and discipline are complementary concepts and when one is used as a tool against the other, or without regard for the other, then the child has more difficulty becoming self-directed. Having no security in primary relationships, the child falls into the trap of making other-directed decisions. In other words, without security, s/he makes decisions at a survival level; "I must act in such a way that will ensure that I get love", or "I can not get love so I must act in a way that will protect myself.

Becoming self-directed is a process relying upon making conscious decisions at the Separateness level. For children who are not able to satiate their need for Togetherness, only the illusion of Separateness occurs. True Separateness can only occur when the child feels secure enough in his/her relationship to attachment figures. In a sense, it is a paradox, the child can only truly separate by securely attaching. Inherent in making self-directed conscious decisions is the unconscious believe that "I will be loved and accepted no matter what decisions I make". In Parenting With A Purpose, the assumption is that good decision making only arises out of the learning opportunities that poor decision making presents. By focusing on these learning opportunities, rather than on blame, retribution or social control techniques, poor decision making is elevated to a conscious level.

Therefore, instilling a sense of self-direction, self-discipline and cooperation in a child has to be based upon the child's need to be part of
meaningful relationships. Self-love, the basis for loving others, is based upon the child knowing that s/he is worthwhile within the most meaningful relationship s/he has, the parent-child relationship. The child is born with self-love and maintaining it requires the emotional and intellectual growth of child to be situated in an atmosphere in which problems are seen as mistakes. Furthermore, these mistakes need to be expected, predicted, and accepted as opportunities for learning. Solutions to problems are not seen as end points, but rather only as a vehicles within which learning opportunities can be promoted, and solutions that work out or don’t work out, are seen as providing important growth facilitating information for further learning.

Parents who see their children as immature or irresponsible and use threats of punishment, coercion or withdrawal of love are working against the child’s ability to change towards becoming more mature and responsible. I don’t think that the labels are necessarily bad. They give verbal expression to observations, How parents use these observations is what makes the difference. I believe that all parents want the best for their child and act with the best intentions. Without knowing more effective ways to help their children, their methods often work against the very change they are after. Punishment, coercion and withdrawal of love are all methods of low emotional and intellectual maturity.

Parenting With a Purpose recognizes this and uses Bowen’s Family Systems Theory to encourage growth towards greater emotional and intellectual maturity by helping the parents attain a higher level of differentiation. Becoming more differentiated simply means learning how to stay in emotionally charged situations without losing intellectual functioning. In parent-child relationships, emotionally charged situations often arise out of the child’s behaviour. Being able to remain in intellectual control, to see that the child’s behaviour was based upon
a decision, the parent can help the child explore the child’s experience. By bringing the decision to a conscious level, it can be explored to learn more about other possible decisions that could have been made, and to problem-solve how to handle the consequences of the behaviour.

Parenting With A Purpose is a program designed to help parents learn how to enjoy the parenting process for what it can be, that is, a format for personal growth. In this way, it places the onus for change in the parent-child relationship on the parent. Consistent with system’s thinking, when any change in the system occurs it reverberates throughout the whole system causing it to adjust. Bowen’s theory states that when one member of a system raises his/her level of differentiation then the whole system benefits by creating space within which each member of the system has a greater opportunity to raise his/her level of differentiation.

Bowen’s theory is a teachable theory and the philosophy of Parenting With a Purpose gives parents permission to act differently. In an atmosphere of support and encouragement the parent is enabled to learn, to practice, and to observe how differentiated behaviour changes faulty interactions. In learning that change occurs by changing self in relationship to others the parent is empowered, and learns to gain control over the way s/he responds in crisis and non-crisis interactions.

The following is a brief outline of the format of the program, and the topics covered session by session. It is only intended to give an overview of the program so that it might provide some relevant information to the inquisitive reader of this thesis. It is not intended to give the reader step by step instructions on conducting the program, however, wherever appropriate brief theoretical perspectives will be boxed to increase the understanding of the activity. It must be reiterated at this point that the main objective of the Parenting For A Purpose
program is not to give the parents the knowledge and skills to increase their ability to control their children. Rather, the Parenting With A Purpose program is designed to inform the parents of normal emotional relationship dynamics, and to instill a philosophy of relating that is based upon principles of honesty, fairness, personal integrity, human dignity, unconditional love, nurturance and encouragement to name a few. I firmly believe that all people desire to be self-responsible and at the same time connected to others. I believe that teaching a philosophy that makes sense, giving parents knowledge about emotional systems, and teaching them skills for effectively relating to others will do more for parents in helping parents enjoy the parenting process than teaching them strategies for making their children mind. It is my firm belief that the joy in life comes from the recognition that much of life is a struggle for meaning, and in creating a sense of oneness with unique others in finding that meaning.

For further information as to the exact nature of instruction, the author can be contacted through either Chilliwack Mental Health or the Chilliwack School Board.

**PARENTING WITH A PURPOSE**

**SESSION ONE**

**Overview:**
1. To create a feeling of inclusion, that is, to create a sense of togetherness among the group members.
2. To Introduce the concept of differentiation and relate it to common family experiences.

7:05 Objective- Welcome, information about leader and site
Time- 10 min.
Activity- Introduction of the leader
Debrief- Any questions

7:15 Objective- Group process: Inclusion\(^1\)
Time- 10 min.
Activity- Learning names of each participant by going around and saying name, then each person attempting to repeat everyone’s name. Not a contest, but a fun inclusive activity that works wonders.
Debrief- What was it like to take a risk like this? Did you feel anxiety? What emotional words would you use to describe the feeling (nervousness, fear, embarrassment, excitement etc.) Are you surprised that you learned everybody’s name so quickly? What emotion are you aware of experiencing now?

7:25 Objective- Group process: Inclusion

\(^1\) As a group facilitator, I am always aware of the three stages of group development that individuals within the group, and the whole group will cycle through. **Inclusion** means having the felt sense that you belong to the group and that the group belongs to you. Inclusion can be compared to the Togetherness level of the Roadmap model. **Control** is the tension within the individual and within the group that arises out of deciding how much to be influenced by the group or individual members of the group, and how much each member wants to influence the other members individually and as well as the group. This can be compared to the Separateness level of the model. **Intimacy** occurs when the tension surrounding the issues of Inclusion and Control have been resolved for the individual, as well as for the group as a whole. Intimacy is also at the Separateness level of the Roadmap model and the degree of Intimacy attained within the group will be reflected in the degree that individuals will be open and honest about sharing intimate stories with the group. The success of **Group work** (the Social Competence level) is dependent upon the three tasks being successfully mastered so that the individual wants to make the group successful. In successful groups the group becomes more important than the individual members, however the implication is that to the degree that the group succeeds so too will the individual.
Time- 25 min.
Activity- Divide into fours
Introduce selves, name and ages of children and reason for wanting to take a parenting class.
Debrief- Group comes together

7:50  Objective- Group process: Inclusion
Time- 25 min.
Activity- Divide into fours, different from the first activity.
Have participants discuss and record hopes and fears of taking this course.
Debrief- How are the hopes and fears different/similar?

8:15 Coffee-break

8:35  Objective- Group process: Inclusion through shared experience of typical home life...Demonstrate concretely, faulty interactions and parent's part in maintaining them. Begin ongoing metaphor of parent as actively involved observer.
Time- 45 min.
Activity- Sculpting (Virginia Satir) the "Acting Out Child Family":

1. Demonstrate how the family is often positioned by asking for volunteers and sculpting one "possible" family dynamic.
2. Ask for volunteer to sculpt own family with facilitators guidance.
Debrief- Discuss what was observed and learned....thoughts, feelings and insights into own behaviour and family dynamics.

9:20  Objective- Group process: Psychoeducation; Introduce two of Bowen's concepts, the family as an emotion system and differentiation
Time- 20 min.
Activity- Mini-lecture introducing a systems perspective, and how emotions fit into the system and proceed to defining
differentiation (ability to maintain intellectual functioning during emotionally significant interactions.)
Promote concept of observing skills facilitating differentiation and differentiation facilitating observing skills.

Debrief-
Questions, discussions, personal relevant stories.

9:40 Objective-
Closure, homework assignment, debrief evening
Time-
15 min.
Activity-
Discussion centered around handouts and expectations
Explain about the facilitating and hindering incident sheet.

Debrief-
Questions about workshop
Comments on session

9:55 Objective-
Group process: Inclusion (doing chores)
Time-
10 min.
Activity-
Investment in group by working together to put room back in order. Expectation that everyone can make a worthwhile contribution to the group. Saying goodbye.

SESSION TWO

Objective:
1. To introduce the concept of behaviour being linked to developmental tasks.
2. To introduce the systems concept of becoming an observer and how being a detached observer is complementary to remaining differentiated.
3. To introduce the Roadmap For Parent-Child Interactions.

7:00 Objective-
Group process: Inclusion
Time-
10 min.
Activity-
Welcome everyone back, repeat name learning activity from session one.

Debrief-
Was it easy to remember everybody’s name
How much anxiety was each participant aware of in taking risk?
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| 7:10  | Group process: Inclusion & Control sharing | Discuss experiences individual participants wish to share based upon last session and on facilitating & hindering sheets. (Leader’s role is to use this time to diffuse any control issues that will naturally begin to develop, by sharing control through strategic questions and comments:  
- Has anyone else had an experience similar to this one? Tell us about it. What was different about the way you handled it? What emotions were you aware of experiencing? What part did they play in the outcome?  
- Did listening to that story make you think of something? Would you care to tell us about it?  
- That sounds similar to what Joe told us earlier. Joe is it similar?  
Debrief- | Normalize family life by asking for thoughts and feelings about the experiences that have been related (predict that each family has situations more similar than different) |
| 7:30  | Group Process: Group work; To begin the process of having parents take on the role of active observers (observers of self and others) | Hand-out Developmental worksheet (Erickson’s stages of development and tasks to be mastered). Leader directed discussion. Divide into developmental groups (having children of similar ages), ask participants to discuss how these stages might be applicable to what they observe in their child’s behaviour, how they typically respond to that observation and how it relates to the sculpting that was done in the last session, that is, what part do they play in any faulty interactions that arise from their child trying to master normal developmental tasks?  
Debrief- | Bring groups back. What have parents’ discovered. Have they had any shift in perception about their child’s |
behaviour? Normalize child’s behaviour by situating it in the context of mastering developmental tasks.

8:15 Coffee-break  (Coffee breaks are stimulating and bonding experiences for the participants in that they relate to each other in an unstructured, informal way about the material and their observations of their own families. Thus on-site coffee-breaks serve a very useful purpose.)

8:35 Objective- Group Process: Inclusion and Psychoeducation; To introduce parents to Parent-Child Interaction Roadmap.
Time- 25 min.
Activity- Role play by leader to demonstrate use of the roadmap:
   1. Parent enters interaction beginning at Social Competence level with outcomes of anger, yelling, screaming, non-compliance, hurt feelings, control, resentment etc.)
   2. Same interaction beginning at the Togetherness level, which leads to a greater possibility for compliance, support & encouragement, positive feelings for each other, relaxed feelings, etc.)
Leader lecture on specific nature of the model including separation of Intellect and Emotions.
Debrief- What are your thoughts? Does it seem realistic? Which outcome do you prefer? Which entry point is most likely to give you that outcome?

9:00 Objective- Group Process: Inclusion. To situate faulty family interactions as being partly created and maintained by unhealthy and ineffective communication patterns.
Time- 30 min.
Activity- Video of Communication blocks (Active Parenting) Hand-out of parent-child role play scripts. Parent stands or steps up onto a chair, while the child kneels in front of standing parent or stands in front of parent on chair. Parent scolds, lectures, etc. as per role play in congruent tone. Then participants switch roles and
Debrief - go through it again.

Group comes together. What was your experience in the role of the parent, of the child? How do you think these parental behaviours contribute to faulty interactions, unproductive outcomes etc.? What is the role of the intellect in this type of communication? What is the role of emotions? Which leads to more productive outcomes, intellect or emotions? Which outcome would you prefer, productive or unproductive? (The idea behind this type of questioning is the implication that emotionally driven behaviour in problem-resolution, increases the chance of unproductive outcomes occurring. Through questioning the participants are led to what Epston and White call a dilemma, that is, knowing which choice of behaviour leads to a more productive outcome, they have no choice but to take responsibility for their part in the outcome.

9:30 Objective -

Group process: Psychoeducation; reiterate self-responsibility and its relationship to Bowen’s concept of differentiation

Time - 20 min.

Activity - Mini-lecture reviewing the concept of differentiation, systems concept of faulty interactions resulting from the interaction between people rather than within people. The concept of differentiation is broadened to include the inner separation of one’s emotional and intellectual functioning as well as the separation of thoughts, feelings and behaviour of self from those of another person.

Review of facilitating and hindering incidence worksheets

Debrief - Questions, insights etc.

9:50 Objective -

Group process: Inclusion (doing chores)

Time - 10 min.

Activity - Investment in group by working together to put room back in order. Expectation that everyone can make a worthwhile contribution to the group. Saying goodbye.
SESSION THREE

Objective:

1. To situate faulty interactions within a communication breakdown that is based upon an inability to accept difference. (problem creation and maintenance is a result in not being able to adjust to the dynamic, shifting balance between the Togetherness and Separateness forces.)

2. To relate how the Parent-Child Interaction Roadmap facilitates acceptance of difference

3. To introduce effective communication skills designed to work at the Separateness level, i.e., explore difference and validate thoughts and feelings and in doing so, prevent travelling on to the Social Competence level if emotional functioning might interfere with intellectual functioning.

7:00 Objective-
Group process: Inclusion, Control & Intimacy
Time- 20 min.
Activity- Welcome everyone back
Encourage discussion of experiences, as related to the workshop that happened since last seeing each other:
- Conscious use of the model "Roadmap"
- Conscious awareness of communication blocks
- Conscious experience of awareness of emotions and intellectual functioning and the outcomes of various situations.

Debrief-
What was learned in the sessions and between sessions that is useful?

7:20 Objective-
Group process: Psychoeducation; Systems dynamics-
Problem creation and maintenance.
Time- 55 min.
Activity- Lecture on Togetherness force and Separateness force.
Have volunteers come up and be joined together by hanging onto ropes. Have one move closer or farther away (Tautness of rope symbolizes balance in two forces. To regain balance volunteers can either move with the other person, i.e., regain old balance, or give more rope/tighten up rope, i.e., create new balance).
Questions can be asked about the volunteers’ immediate thinking/feeling reaction to the change in tautness of the ropes, do they want to “let go” (allow difference) or “pull back” (fear difference).

Problems are seen as a change in the balance between these two forces. A change in balance between a dyad changes the balance between everyone in the system. Demonstration of a system in balance using skipping ropes to join all members of a family (2, 3, 4, 5, etc.). All ropes joining each person to every other person is taut. When one person makes a movement the whole system of balance is upset (some ropes become tighter, pulling on those connections, while others become looser, leaving those connections loose). This change can represent movements towards more separateness or more togetherness.

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Debrief- Thoughts, feelings, insights of group and how this lecture/demonstration relates to what they observe happening in their family.

8:15 Coffee Break

8:30 Objective- Group Process: Group work, Inclusion/Control; Experiential exercises designed to concretely, isolate strengths and weakness in communication style

Time- 45 min.

Activity- Series of Experiential exercises to determine whether communication style leans towards speaking or listening. The idea is that we can build on the stronger role and use the stronger role to help compensate for the weaker role.
Communication skills-Experiential exercises:

1. Mary, Mary quite contrary: listener constantly disagrees A, tell B, things that they like, B are instructed to disagree or say Why would you like that, You really shouldn’t, You better not do that etc.
Debrief: How do you feel about telling B about your life? What do you think might be the long term effect of this style of communication?

2. The Chatterbox: listener constantly interrupts B, try to tell A about an experience, while A instantly interrupt (interruptions can be relevant or irrelevant.
Debrief: How do you feel about telling A about your experiences? What do you think would be the long term effect of this style of communication?

3. Mirroring: i. Partners face each other, hold hands and take turns physically mirroring each other. One partner represents the speaker and directs the movement of the arms, while the other partner, represents the listener and follows.(No talking allowed). Then the roles reverse.
Debrief: How difficult was it to follow; to direct? Which is your strength, as a speaker or as a listener?
ii. Partners close eyes and take turns directing and following without talking.
Debrief: How difficult was it to coordinate directing and following? Did one person do more of one? Were you paralysed into no movement? Did you
battle over directing?

The point to all these exercises is to determine each individual's strength in communication. Typically, individuals will feel more comfort in talking or in listening. Comfort in speaking can be reframed as having courage to express oneself, while comfort in listening can be reframed as sensitivity. Effective listening requires both courage to express oneself and sensitivity for the other person. Those individuals who need more courage can learn to express themselves then fall back on sensitivity when needed, while those who need more sensitivity can be sensitive and then fall back on courageously expressing their fears around being more open.

9:30 Objective- Group process: Intimacy, Increase listening skills
    Time- 20 min.
    Activity- Identifying feeling behind the story. The leader reads out short dialogues of a child. Each one can be associated with a narrow range of feelings. Participants volunteer the feeling they think the child is experiencing.
    Debrief- How do you think the child might have reacted by having you listen for feelings?
    How did it feel to you to be listening for feelings?

9:50 Objective- Group process: Inclusion (doing chores)
    Time- 10 min.
    Activity- Investment in group by working together to put room back in order. Expectation that everyone can make a worthwhile contribution to the group. Saying goodbye.

SESSION FOUR

Objective:
1. To introduce the systems concept of triangles and the role they play in problem formation, and maintenance.
2. To investigate family roles, specifically scapegoating, linking roles to typical patterns of interactions, i.e., communication (percentage of praise vs criticism given to children in different roles), expectations,
rewards and punishments.

3. To continue communication exercises

7:00 Objective- Group process: Inclusion & Intimacy; To provide a forum in which all participants are witnesses and supporters of "doing something different" behaviours.

Time- 20 min.

Activity- Welcome everyone back
Encourage discussion of experiences, as related to the workshop that happened since last seeing each other:
- Conscious use of the model "Roadmap"
- Conscious awareness of communication blocks
- Stories of outcomes based on using effective communication
- Conscious experience of awareness of emotions and intellectual functioning and the outcomes of various situations.

Debrief- What was learned in the sessions and between sessions that is useful?

7:20 Objective: Group process; Psychoeducation, review of roadmap to focus group on model

Time: 10 min.

Activity: Mini-lecture; Quick review of Roadmap and its usefulness in helping to differentiate between intellect and emotion, and to help parents keep goal of interactions in mind so they can judge where they should be on the Roadmap.

Parents often lose sight of the connection between the outcomes they are hoping to achieve in parent-child interactions, and their own behaviour. As a result, they often experience frustration, disappointment, or feelings of inadequacy or resentment when, instead of cooperative behaviour, they end up with an outcome of noncompliance. Most faulty interactions could be resolved effectively if problem-solving (an intellectual activity) was initiated only after emotions were under control instead of when they are still out of control. On the roadmap, parents are encouraged to become observers of the emotions of self and other. When problem-solving, they are encouraged
to not attempt to problem-solve until emotions are dealt with or to go back to the Separateness level (communication connecting feelings to story/experience) if emotions interfere.

Parents are often driven to go for the efficiency of a win/lose paradigm, rather than for the effectiveness of a win/win paradigm. That is, parents often want to resolve the problem NOW with as little input of time as possible ("You did wrong, now fix it!"), rather than put it on hold until it can be resolved effectively ("So tell me what was happening for you when this occurred?; What were you thinking/feeling/doing?"). The Roadmap helps parents make sense out of the results of seemingly chaotic recursive and reciprocal faulty interactions by separating the forces that are interplaying as well as by separating emotional functioning from intellectual functioning.

7:30 Objective: Group Process: Inclusion (group demonstration) & Intimacy (observation and sharing of personal experiences).

Introduction of concept of triangles and how effective communication can contribute to healthy triangles instead of unhealthy ones.

Time: 60 min.

Activity: Mini-lecture- (20 min.) Introduce the concept of triangles (Bowen's Family Systems Theory)
Demonstration- (15 min) Have volunteers come up and select other volunteers to represent number of people in their families. Have each member of family hold skipping ropes so that the family becomes a series of dyadic relationships. Add more skipping ropes to create triadic relationships. Record number of triangles in each size family (family of 3 members, of 4, 5, 6, 7, or more members). Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of more or less triangles within families.
Small group work- (15 min) Divide into triads. Triads go through following role plays:
1. Two people having nice pleasant conversation while third watches. Discuss observations (T/F/A)² about

² Thoughts/Feelings/Actions
being on the inside and on the outside.

2. Two people having nice pleasant conversation, third one breaks in and begins conversation with one of original two. After short time that one breaks in and begins conversation with one of those two. Discuss observations.

3. Two people having an argument, third party breaks in and takes side. Discuss what was observed.

4. Two people having an argument, one of insiders triangles in third party to take sides. Discuss observations.

Debrief: What was it like to be on the inside, on the outside? What ineffective communication patterns happen in triangles? What would be more effective communication patterns to use?

8:30 Coffee

8:45 Objective: Group Process: Intimacy (shared personal experiences and observations).

Time: 30 min.

Activity: Group identification of roles they have observed in their own families such as angel, acting-out or rebellious, pleaser, criticizer, brain, athletic, energetic, lazy, scapegoat, etc. Discuss and group these into classifications of mature, responsible behaviour and immature, irresponsible behaviour.

Which person in the family is the scapegoat most often? Discuss in which relationships parents observe themselves as acting more mature and responsible and in which relationships do they observe themselves as regressing to less mature and responsible behaviour (typically they act less mature and responsible with the less mature and responsible child). Link the discussion to the Family Systems concept of reciprocal interactions, i.e., each person is influenced and influences the other person. In creating change, reiterate the Family Systems concept of being 100% responsible for one’s contribution to any
interaction and how changing faulty interactions occurs when one person changes their contribution.

Debrief: Discuss what meaning they can make out of this discussion.

Objective- Group process: Group work; Continue communication work: Listening skills (connecting feelings to content).

Time- 45 min.

Activity- Break group into triads; a listener (parent role), a speaker (child role) and an observer. Hand-out scenarios of parent-child interactions and have the three rotate through the three roles.

Debrief- What was it like to listen, to speak, to observe. How much awareness did the listener and speaker have of the observer, when was the awareness increase (triangle awareness).

9:30 Objective- Introduction of "I"-statement; Learning to increase self-responsibility through effective speaking.

Time- 20 min.

Activity- Teach the components of an "I" statement.

The "I"-statement allows for the expression of thoughts and feelings from a self-responsible position. Instead of focusing on the other person and ascribing blame or motive for a situation, it keeps the focus on the speaker. Through the "I" statement the speaker can take responsibility for the way s/he thinks, and feels. The "I" statement thus tells the listener what it is that s/he is going to do or how s/he is going to act, rather than telling the listener how to be or act.

Debrief- Discuss the meaning that the theory of the "I" statement has for the participants.

9:50 Objective- Group process: Inclusion (doing chores)

Time- 10 min.

Activity- Investment in group by working together to put room back in order. Expectation that everyone can make a worthwhile contribution to the group. Saying goodbye.
SESSION FIVE

Objectives:
1. To continue to build effective communication skills
2. To teach a method of anger management that allows for emotions to be kept at the Separateness level
3. To further define problem formation as an inability to adjust to the balance between the force for Togetherness and for Separateness. Basically, this boils down to the inability to accept difference, that is, typically the parent doesn't mind the child being different as long as the child is different in a way that is acceptable to the parent. In other words, "You can be different as long as you do it my way".
4. To encourage the parent to initiate greater faith in the relationship they have with their children by enabling them to demonstrate their ability to make and fulfill commitments to the family.
5. To begin the process of using effective communication, knowledge of emotional systems and the Roadmap to eliminate faulty interaction arising out of a lack of acceptance for the experience of others.

7:00 Objective- Group process: Inclusion & Intimacy; To provide a forum in which all participants are witnesses and supporters of "doing something different" behaviours.

Time- 30 min.

Activity- Welcome everyone back
Encourage discussion of experiences, as related to the workshop that happened since last seeing each other:
- Conscious awareness of Relationship dynamics and differentiation
- Conscious use of the model "Roadmap"
- Conscious awareness of communication blocks
- Stories of outcomes based on using effective communication; validating feelings and using "I" statements
- Conscious experience of awareness of emotions and intellectual functioning and the outcomes of various situations.

Debrief- Any further questions or reflections
7:30 Objective- Group process: Psychoeducation/group work; Becoming responsible for emotional management and in particular, anger management.

Time- 30 min.

Activity- Story of the "Hissing Snake"
Discussion of the projection process whereby anxiety is projected inappropriately onto another rather than it being dealt with by the person experiencing it. Discussion of using the "I" statement to help in by taking responsibility for the anxiety.

In terms of anger, model the technique of the 60 sec. scolding which combines the assertion of an "I" statement and the nurturance of acceptance. In other words, courage and sensitivity.

Divide into dyads and try "Hissing".

Debrief- How was the experience of intellectually controlling anger rather than emotionally allowing anger to control you? What are some likely responses by the other person to this type of assertive expression as compared to the more emotionally driven aggressive expression?

8:00 Objective- Group process: Psychoeducation/Group work; Learning not to assume or mind read

Time- 20 min.

Activity- Using the "Do you mean" phrase for clarifying the other person's position to facilitate greater understanding.

Demonstration, then divide into dyads to practice technique, combined with the use of empathy (connecting feelings to content).

Debrief- What is it like to be able to ask for clarification of another's experience. How close were you to understanding what the other was experiencing?

8:20 Coffee-Break

8:35 Objective- Group process: Psychoeducation/Group work; Presentation of knowledge and skills to make the family a worthwhile place to be.

Time- 45 min.

Activity- Chores and Family Service Jobs
Chores are jobs that need to be done on a regular basis, i.e., washing dishes, making meals, vacuuming floors, taking out garbage etc. Family Service Jobs are jobs that never get done mainly because although they maybe important they are not urgent, i.e., cleaning out junk drawers, washing windows or baseboards, organizing or dusting bookshelves etc.

Chores can be understood as contributing to healthy Togetherness by using an economic metaphor. If we invest in something, we do it because we think it is important and worthwhile to invest in. The greater the investment, to a point, the greater the implied sense of importance and worth. Family members can feel important and worthwhile as a result of making important and worthwhile investments in the family. However, chores can also contribute to unhealthy togetherness. Chores that are unrealistic, take too much time to complete, are not clearly laid out in terms of expectations, can defeat their potential for healthy togetherness. As well, chores laid on in a strict manner in which children have no flexibility to be part of the decision making process, to seek help in doing them, or are restricted in engaging in important activities because of them, will create anger and resentment and work against healthy togetherness.

Family togetherness is based upon a sense of cooperation. Children need to know that parents will help them in their chores when the going gets tough and when the parent has the time to help. This help is seen from the perspective of cooperation, support and encouragement. The goal is not to help the child and make the child feel inadequate, but rather to instill a sense that the child is part of a family that can support and encourage each other when needed.

Chores & Family Service jobs are defined and group is divided into fours to make a list of jobs that fall under these categories. Group is brought back to discuss their lists.

Suggestion is made to divide chores by number of family members, including parents. It is suggested that chores be selected by each member and an important daily privilege (supper, TV, video games, playtime etc.) be contingent upon completion of the daily chore. This gives family members four choices: first, what chores to commit
to, second, to do the chore and receive the privilege at expected time, third, to stall the chore and the privilege till later, or forth, to not do the chore and not receive the privilege. Linking chores to an important daily privilege eliminates faulty interactions like nagging, gives the child an excellent opportunity to learn how to make wise decisions.

Family Service Jobs are useful to allow flexibility in the family. These jobs can be negotiated for several purposes. For example, whenever chore can not be done because of other commitments or activities (sports events, club events, sleep overs, etc.) the chore can be exchanged for a family service job to be done at a negotiated later time, for negotiating making extra money, or as a negotiated consequence in exchange for a logical consequence that would better serve the family system. Allowing them to be used to be exchanged for a logical consequence of some behaviour, they can serve as an excellent method of retribution to alleviate guilt for the child’s unwise choice. They serve two purposes in this way, first they allow the child to make a positive contribution to the family at the same time as experiencing a consequence and second, they give the child a further choice or alternative to the logical consequence. Giving people control in their lives, i.e., choices, increases their ability to become wise decision-makers and problem-solvers, and increases the likelihood that they will honour the commitment they make without resentment.

Debrief- Questions about effectively using Chores and Family Service Jobs. How do you think chores and Family Service jobs can be facilitated by an acceptance of difference (child gets to make ‘which & when’ choices in doing chores and by communication skills already learned

9:20 Objective- Group process: Psychoeducation/Intimacy; To link completion of chores to a privilege
Time- 30 min.
Activity- Barbara Coloroso Video tape demonstrating Premac principle, and three healthy responses to not getting own way. Discuss idea of linking chore to privilege in order to give child control.
The parents are given two guidelines about a child receiving a privilege contingent completion of a chore. These are that the privilege has to be important to the child and something that the child likes to have or do each day. The purpose of linking the privilege to the chore is to eliminate faulty interactions around chores, to give the child power over his/her life, to create an opportunity for family investment and cooperation and feelings of worth and meaning. In theory and in practice, the privilege is not withheld from the child by the parent, rather the child has control over whether or not s/he experiences the privilege. In reality the child has three choices: To do the chore and receive the privilege, to do the chore later and receive the privilege later, or to not do the chore and to not receive the privilege. If parents decide to use "Your chores need to be done before dinner", that parent has put clearly stated when the chore has to be done by. The child can then chose when s/he wants to eat dinner. The parent then only has to repeat the phrase, "As soon as you finish your chores, you may have dinner" rather then get into debates, nagging or arguments. The parent is not preventing the child from eating, if the child wants to eat, the child can make the decision to do the chore.

Parents need to anticipate that employing this change will meet with some resistance, and that, as in the example above, the child may choose to not eat with the family for a night or two. Because this can be predicted the parents can anticipate how they will resist entering into faulty interactions around scolding, lecturing, etc. A review of family systems concept of homeostasis may be necessary.

**Debrief:** Make predictions about how the child will react to this type of change to try to get the parent to change back, and how the parent will resist this force to restablize the system by changing back.

**9:50 Objective:** Group process: Inclusion (doing chores)

**Time:** 10 min.

**Activity:** Investment in group by working together to put room back in order. Expectation that everyone can make
SESSION SIX

Objectives:
1. Discussion of Bowen's concept of fusion and operational style on the continuum from emotional cut-off to enmeshment.

7:00 Objective- Group process: Inclusion & Intimacy. To provide a forum in which all participants are witnesses and supporters of "doing something different" behaviours.
Time- 30 min.
Activity- Welcome everyone back
Encourage discussion of experiences, as related to the workshop that happened since last seeing each other:
- Conscious awareness of Relationship dynamics: family emotional system, differentiation, triangles, projection, family roles
- Conscious use of the model "Roadmap"
- Conscious awareness of communication blocks
- Stories of outcomes based on using effective communication; validating feelings and using "I" statements
- Conscious experience of awareness of emotional functioning and intellectual functioning, and the outcomes of various situations.
- Chores and the three healthy responses
- Stories of courage and sensitivity (the hiss)

Debrief- Any further questions or reflections

7:30 Objective- Group process: Psychoeducation; To further expand on fusion which creates unhealthy Togetherness (fusion) and unhealthy Separateness (emotional cut-off).
Time- 30 min.
Activity- Mini-lecture on fusion and operational styles of emotional
cut-off and enmeshment, (often described by parents in terms such as pursuer-distancer, or needy-cold, clinging-detached). Suggest that in unconscious systems, if one person takes on the role of pursuer, then the other will likely take on the role of distancer.

Have parents reflect on family and assess the typical operational style of each member.

Ask for sharing of personal observations.

Debrief-
What meaning does this lecture have in terms of parenting or observations of how individual family members interact?
How does this knowledge give the parent information about changing the way s/he acts within faulty interactions?

8:00 Objective-
To define punishment and discipline

Time-
30 min.

Activity-
Lecture on difference between punishment and discipline, and how they relate to the concept of differentiation.

Parents often want children to pay for their crimes (punishment). Parenting With A Purpose does not subscribe to a "child is evil" paradigm. If a child acts inappropriately those actions are seen as being a mistake, that is, an unwise choice. In this way, mistakes give the parent information on what the child needs to learn (discipline) and creates excellent learning opportunities to increase the likelihood of making wiser decisions in the future. The learning opportunity is often interfered with because of the manner in which the parent approaches problem-resolution. When a parent uses the roadmap, the child gets a sense that s/he is still accepted and loved even though a mistake has been made (Togetherness level), is helped to explore his/her experience leading up to and after the mistake (Separateness level), and is supported in taking responsibility for the consequences and in handling the consequences of the mistake (Social Competence level). When a parent interferes by using punishment, the focus is taken away from the mistake and is directed towards the parent-child relationship. This is usually in the form of emotional reactivity, resentment and anger. When this happens, the child misses an important opportunity to demonstrate remorse and self-responsibility.
Debrief- Clear up any questions about the difference between punishment and discipline.

8:30 Coffee-Break

8:45 Objective- Group process: Psychoeduction; To define natural, logical and related consequences
Time- 30 min.
Activity- Mini-lecture to define what a natural, a logical and a related consequence is and how they can become expectations of all decision-making.

No decision is consequence free. Therefore, an expectation of being responsible for the consequences of those decisions should not be in question. Becoming more self-directed requires opportunities to make decisions, and to handle the consequences of those decisions without interference by parental judgements, labels or punishments. The parent needs to shift perception from making the "child pay for his/her behaviour" to one of expecting that the child makes mistakes because the child has either made an uninformed decision (one in which knowledge of the consequences of the decision were not known) or an informed decision (one in which the consequences were known). In either case, the child is expected to take responsibility for the consequences and the parent's role is to support and encourage the child in that process by following the roadmap. Family System's Theory sees personal responsibility as being more productive than ascribing blame.

Debrief- Observations, questions etc.

9:15 Objective- Group process: Group work/Control; To give participants experience in recognizing consequences.
Time- 35 min.
Activity- Divide into groups of four and give them each a series of scenarios in which children have acted in 'inappropriate' ways. Ask them to generate consequences by following the guidelines for consequences (related, reasonable, respectful). Have group come back, share and critique the consequences
Debrief-
How does using discipline compare with using punishment? Which is likely to be more efficient? Which is likely to be more effective? In making a switch from parent taking responsibility for child’s decisions to child taking responsibility for own decisions, it is likely, from a system’s perspective that the child will attempt to sabotage having to do it. How will the parent resist not changing back? What changes does the parent have to do in order to begin trusting that their child can handle the consequences of his/her decisions without interference from the parent?

9:50 Objective-
Group process: Inclusion (doing chores)

Time-
10 min.

Activity-
Investment in group by working together to put room back in order. Expectation that everyone can make a worthwhile contribution to the group. Saying goodbye.

SESSION SEVEN

Objectives:
1. To introduce a problem-solving model.
2. To suggest that problems are not resolved unless they are win/win solutions.
3. To practice using Roadmap to get to win/win solutions.

7:00 Objective-
Group process: Inclusion & Intimacy; To provide a forum in which all participants are witnesses and supporters of "doing something different" behaviours.

Time-
30 min.

Activity-
Welcome everyone back
Encourage discussion of experiences, as related to the workshop that happened since last seeing each other:
- Conscious awareness of Relationship dynamics:
family emotional system, differentiation, triangles, projection, family roles
- Conscious use of the model "Roadmap"
- Conscious awareness of communication blocks
- Stories of outcomes based on using effective communication; validating feelings and using "I" statements
- Conscious experience of awareness of emotional functioning and intellectual functioning, and the outcomes of various situations.
- Chores and the three healthy responses
- Stories of courage and sensitivity (the hiss)
- Stories of taking responsibility and giving responsibility

Debrief- Any further questions or reflections

7:30  Objective- Group process: Group work/Control; To shift perspective from win/lose
      of problem-solving
      Time- 30 min.
      Activity- Arm wrestling exercise: an experiential exercise designed to compare cooperation (win/win) with competition (win/lose). Partners asked to get into position whereby their elbows are resting on a surface. They are instructed to join hands as modelled (do not say arm-wrestling at any point), and are quickly told that you are going to time them for 30 sec. in which they have to count the number of times they feel the back of their hands touch the surface. Start timing. At end of time ask them to add the two figures together and record them on a board. Typically, those that cooperated will have high numbers and those that competed will have low numbers.
      Debrief: How did you decide to interact? Was it better to co-operate or compete? Which do you think is more fun? Which is more your style? Which would be more productive in problem-solving?

8:00  Objective- Group process: Psychoeducation; To introduce a problem-solving model
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Debrief</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>08:20</td>
<td>Coffee-Break</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08:35</td>
<td>Objective: Group process: Psychoeducation; Demonstration of model</td>
<td>Group process: Group work/Control; To practice problem-solving</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Time: 15 min.</td>
<td>Time: 45 min.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Activity: Audio and video demonstration of model (How to talk so Kids Will Listen-Adele Faber).</td>
<td>Activity: Divide into triads (parent-child-observer) and give scenarios that need require problem-solving. Have parents practice starting at the Togetherness level (Unconditional love and acceptance), proceed to the Separateness level (exploring experience using communication), and finally to the Social Competence level (problem-solving).</td>
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<tr>
<td>09:35</td>
<td>Objective: Group process: Intimacy/Inclusion; To bring to participants' attention that next week is final session. To discuss concept of metaphor as a concrete way of expressing where each participant is in his/her process of differentiation.</td>
<td>Time: 15 min.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Time:</td>
<td>Activity: Discussion of metaphors and symbols to concretely represent view of self in relation to the workshop and to process of differentiation.</td>
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<td>Activity:</td>
<td>Debrief: Questions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>09:50</td>
<td>Objective: Group process: Inclusion (doing chores)</td>
<td>Time: 10 min.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Time:</td>
<td>Activity: Investment in group by working together to put room back in order. Expectation that everyone can make</td>
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</table>
a worthwhile contribution to the group. Saying goodbye.

SESSION EIGHT

Objectives:
1. To reiterate the importance of satiating the force for Togetherness so that the force for Separateness can be healthy.
2. To create a forum in which each person's growth can be witnessed.
3. To have a celebration and to say good-bye to friends.

7:00 Objective- Group process: Inclusion & Intimacy; To provide a forum in which all participants are witnesses and supporters of "doing something different" behaviours.
Time- 30 min.
Activity- Welcome everyone back
Encourage discussion of experiences, as related to the workshop that happened since last seeing each other:
- Conscious awareness of Relationship dynamics: family emotional system, differentiation, triangles, projection, family roles
- Conscious use of the model "Roadmap"
- Conscious awareness of communication blocks
- Stories of outcomes based on using effective communication; validating feelings and using "I" statements
- Conscious experience of awareness of emotional functioning and intellectual functioning, and the outcomes of various situations.
- Chores and the three healthy responses
- Stories of courage and sensitivity (the hiss)
- Stories of taking responsibility and giving responsibility
- Stories of using the model in its entirety
Debrief- Any further questions or reflections

7:30 Objective- Group process: Control; To emphasize the importance of satiating the force for healthy Togetherness.
Time- 20 min.
Activity:
   Story: "Dory the Cat"
Debrief:
   Discuss the various meanings that the participants created while hearing the story and how each meaning relates to the workshop they are just completing.

7:50 Objective:
   Group process: Group work/Control; To practice employing the complete model
Time:
   30 min.
Activity:
   Divide into triads: Observer, Parent, Child
   Practice using the Roadmap with scenarios
Debrief:
   Now that the participants have some experience in using the Roadmap ask: How things will be different in their families in six months if they work towards using it consistently? How will things be different in their families in six months if they don’t work towards using it consistently? Which difference would they prefer? Now that they know that they are 100% responsible for their contributions to all interactions.

8:20 Objective:
   Group work: Inclusion/Control/Intimacy; To solidify learning from workshop metaphorically
Time:
   45 min.
Activity:
   Each participant presents a metaphor or a symbol of their growth towards becoming more differentiated. All other participants are witnesses to this metaphor and can encourage, support and validate the presenter’s experience.
Debrief:
   Thank the group for the intimacy that takes place

9:05 Objective:
   Group process: Intimacy; Saying goodbye to new friends
Time:
   45 min.
Activity:
   Informal ritual of saying good by; each person gets to share warm expressions of appreciations for the support, honesty, encouragement etc of other participants. This is done while sharing special coffee break goodies.
Debrief:

9:50 Objective:
   Group process: Inclusion (doing chores)
Time:
   10 min.
Activity:
   Investment in group by working together to put room back in order. Expectation that everyone can make a worthwhile contribution to the group. Saying goodbye.