EVALUATION OF COUNSELLOR TRAINING IN GESTALT METHODS

by

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This study evaluated the effectiveness of a Gestalt training group designed to train counsellors in the influencing skills of Gestalt therapy. The study involved eleven experimental group counsellors, a matched control group and four coached clients. A pre-test post-test research design was used. Counsellors in both groups were tested for similarity at pre-treatment levels. The dependent variables being examined were counsellor response to a split: actual use of the influencing skills of direct guidance, open question and non-verbal referent; intended use of the influencing skills of direct guidance, open question and non-verbal referent; and degree of personal growth goal attainment. Post-test measures were used as an indication of the effectiveness of the treatment. In the pre-test, each counsellor had a counselling session with a client coached to present a conflict split. The Wilcoxon Matched-Pairs Signed Ranks test of significance was used to analyze the counsellor response to a split and intended use of influencing skills. The dependent t-test was used to measure actual use of influencing skills. At the end of the training experience a Chi square test of independence was used to compare both groups on their degree of personal growth goal attainment. A Chi square goodness of fit was used to measure the experimental group on their degree of training goal attainment. Results indicated that the experimental group counsellors responded to a split with the Gestalt two-chair operation significantly more than did the control group. The experimental group used significantly more of the influencing skills of direct guidance and open question. In addition, they reported that they intended to use non-verbal referent significantly more than the control group. In the degree of attainment of personal growth goals the two groups were not shown to be different. The experimental group was found to have achieved their training goals. In summary, it appears that this Gestalt training group was successful in training counsellors in influencing skills.
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On a more personal note, I wish to express my gratitude to Graham Greig and Irene Barr for their generous gifts of time, effort and encouragement.
CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND OF THE PROBLEM

Considerable research has been done to evaluate the effectiveness of psychotherapy. Although researchers differ in their definitions of desired client change, most studies support the idea that counselling and psychotherapy are effective (Smith & Glass, 1977; Bergin & Lambert, 1978).

This interest in evaluating counselling outcome has coincided with an increased interest in the actual components of the effective counselling process. In addition, researchers are concerned with developing models for counsellor training which incorporate these effective skills and indicate their appropriate use within the counselling sequence (Pearson, 1978).

This current trend towards the specification of the effective counselling process was initiated by Rogers (1957). It has been further developed through the efforts of researchers such as Truax and Carkhuff (1967), Egan (1975), and Ivey and Authier (1978). Each of these researchers has contributed to the articulation of important therapeutic conditions and techniques. Also, each has attempted to delineate a model for counsellor training which incorporates the essential counselling skills.

Rogers' work has spearheaded research in identifying the components of good counselling. In a seminal article (1957), he argued that empathy, genuineness, and positive regard are the necessary and sufficient conditions for client growth. He stressed that these three skills are more than just techniques: the counsellor must integrate these qualities so that they become part of his/her essential attitude toward the client.
A number of researchers have questioned Rogers' three conditions as being sufficient to facilitate client change. The search has continued for more active skills which would not only give focus to the counselling session but would also more actively promote client change. Carkhuff's model (1969) which is an elaboration of Rogers' early work, attempts to meet this need. The responding dimensions of his model include empathy, respect and concreteness; the initiating dimensions include self-disclosure, genuineness, confrontation and immediacy.

Ivey and Authier (1978) have also contributed to the trend towards specification of skills. Their taxonomy of microcounselling skills also involves two categories - attending and influencing skills. Under attending skills they include open question, closed question, minimal encourage, paraphrase, reflection of feeling and summarization. Influencing skills involve directions, expression of content, expression of feeling, influencing summary, interpretation and direct-mutual communication.

The above taxonomies represent just a few of the many counsellor skill models that have been proposed. One recent study has attempted to evaluate, integrate, and reduce the complexity of research results into one comprehensive system. Hill (1978) factor analyzed eleven different taxonomies and found that the skills could be reduced to seventeen categories. Further analysis reduced the taxonomy to fourteen counsellor response categories. Her system includes minimal encourager, approval-reassurance, information, direct guidance, open question, closed question, restatement, reflection, non verbal referent, interpretation, confrontation, self-disclosure, silence and other.
A number of researchers have expressed concern about this growing emphasis upon skill training in counsellor education. Mahon and Altmann (1977) argue that while skills are important, the personal qualities underlying skills are even more important. They maintain that training programmes must also address the values, attitudes and beliefs of the trainees. They stress that only by effecting perceptual change in trainees can trainers hope to effect the desired behavioural change.

Other researchers echo this concern. Rogers has always stressed the importance of training the whole person. Although he was one of the first researchers to identify effective counselling skills, he also maintained that the counsellor uses him/herself as an agent to facilitate the client's growth (1957). This necessitates that the counsellor is committed to his or her own personal growth and is living his or her own life effectively.

This reaction to the proponents of skill training models has generated research in more balanced counsellor education programmes. The quest to develop effective counselling skills continues, tempered with a concern for the personal integrity of the counsellor. It seems important, therefore, that any new counsellor education model offer an integration of these two major themes of skill development and personal growth.

THE PROBLEM

In a recent paper, Greenberg (1980b) has outlined a model for counsellor education which attempts to meet this need for an integrated skill training and personal growth approach. The model is designed to teach counsellors the advanced skills of Gestalt therapy in a group setting. The training group is comprised of a knowledge component, a skill training component and an integrating personal growth component. The major focus of the group is to train counsellors in the Gestalt two-chair experiment.
The basic training programme involved twenty-four group sessions and six supervision sessions. The programme was led by the originator of the model (Greenberg, 1980b). In the group sessions the trainer presented the major theoretical themes, principles and skills of the Gestalt approach. A theoretical lecturette on each theme was followed by an experiential exercise. After a demonstration of the specific skill related to each theme trainees practiced the microskills in small groups. In the supervision sessions, the trainer evaluated videotaped sessions in which each counsellor used the new skills with a fellow trainee as client. A manual of the themes and programme content can be found in Appendix A.

This study was concerned with evaluating the effectiveness of this Gestalt training group. An evaluation of the training programme involved assessing the effectiveness of both the skill training and personal growth components. The first objective of this study, therefore, was to evaluate whether the Gestalt training group was a successful means of teaching counsellors the advanced skills of Gestalt therapy. These advanced skills have two components: perceptual and executive skills. The perceptual skill required of the counsellor is the recognition of different types of client splits. The conflict split is characterized by two parts of the self which are felt to be in conflict. "I want to get good grades but I can't seem to get down to any serious studying." In the subject-object split, the client describes him/herself as split into both the subject and object of his experiencing. "I'm constantly evaluating myself." The third category of split has two sub-types: the attribution of agency and the attribution of conflict. In the attribution of agency, the client discusses his/her experience as caused by another person or event. "He made me feel so stupid." In the attribution of conflict, the client attributes the cause of the conflict to a source other than him/herself. "I want to quit my job and go back to school but my wife won't let me."
The executive skills required of the trainee involve engaging the client in a dialogue with him/herself, increasing client self-awareness, and encouraging client expression of non-verbal behaviour. Each of these three executive skills has a distinct purpose. By using direct guidance, the counsellor initiates the client into the two-chair role-play. The counsellor then suggests certain experiments or activities to the client as a means of increasing the client's awareness and sense of responsibility for his/her own experiencing. By drawing the client's attention to non-verbal behaviours, the counsellor facilitates the client's awareness and exploration of his/her gestures, posture, tone of voice and facial expressions. In asking open questions, the counsellor focuses on the process of the two-chair experiment and encourages client exploration of his/her present experiencing.

To evaluate the skill training component of the programme, this study investigated whether the trainees learned to be more active and intervene at a split using the two-chair method. More specifically, counsellors' performances were judged as to whether they responded to a conflict by initiating a dialogue between the two parts of the client's self. Evaluation also included determining whether the counsellors used more directions, non-verbal referents and open questions over the session.

As described earlier, the model for the training programme includes an emphasis upon the trainees' personal growth. A number of authors (Rogers, 1957; Carkhuff & Berenson, 1974; Mahon & Altmann, 1977) have stressed the importance of ensuring that counsellor education programmes stimulate the trainee's personal growth as well as his/her skill development. They argue that counsellors who have not dealt with their own personal issues may do more harm than good.
Research has suggested that one effective means of facilitating the psychological development of trainees is through participation in a Gestalt workshop. Participants in Gestalt workshops have been shown to make gains in their personal growth immediately after the group and the experience seemed to stimulate further personal growth as evaluated in a six month follow-up (Foulds & Hannigan, 1976).

The personal growth component was integrated into the programme in two ways. Firstly, the training sessions were alternated with the personal growth sessions. During the personal growth sessions, trainees were invited to participate as clients in a session with the trainer. Secondly, the personal growth component was integrated into the skill training sessions. Trainees practiced new skills in triads, alternating as counsellor, client and observer. In addition to experiencing the effect of the skills, the trainee as client had the opportunity to work on real personal issues.

To evaluate this personal growth component, the study investigated whether the trainees were successful in achieving their personal growth goals. At the beginning of the programme, trainees were asked to identify important personal growth goals. At the end of the programme, trainees were asked to evaluate the degree to which the group experience facilitated the attainment of their goals.
DEFINITION OF TERMS

Gestalt two-chair experiment:

This operation is used when the client presents a conflict situation or split. The conflict may be between him/herself and another person, or between two partial aspects of the client's self. The counsellor first separates out the two parts, helping the client achieve a sense of identity for each part. The counsellor then encourages the client to create a dialogue between the two parts, using two chairs. While sitting in one chair, the client speaks for one part of the self or split, then changes to the other chair to respond as the other part.

Split:

"The split is a verbal performance pattern manifested by one person 'client' in interaction with another. The client here is conceptualized as being in process and the split is an observable process form characterized by a division of self process into two partial aspects of the self or tendencies. These tendencies or partial aspects of the self are related to each other in different ways and the different relationships between these tendencies define different types of splits. Four discriminative features of this process form are to be found in the client's behaviour productions. The four features are: part one of the split; part two of the split; a relational feature; and a qualitative feature. Together, they constitute the marker of the split" (Greenberg, 1975, p 178).

Principles of working with a split

1. Establishment of a contact boundary: establishing and maintaining clear separation and contact between the partial aspects of the self.

2. Responsibility: directing the person to use his or her abilities to respond in accordance with the true nature of his or her experience in each part.
3. Attending: directing the client's attention to particular aspects of his/her experience.

4. Heightening: highlighting aspects of experience by increasing the client's general level of arousal.

5. Expressing: instructing the client to do what is being talked about in each chair. Particularizing experience by moving from discussion or theory to a specific activity.

(Greenberg, 1980b)

General skills of working with a split

Greenberg (1980b) has identified a number of general skills involved in using the Gestalt two-chair role play.

These general skills are:

1. Creating "here and now" experiments.
4. Making behavioural observations.
5. Giving experiential feedback.

These general skills categories have been further defined into the micro-skills outlined in Table I. These microskills, together with the principles of two-chair work, comprise the skill training component of the Gestalt training programme.
<table>
<thead>
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<th>SKILL CATEGORY</th>
<th>SPECIFIC SKILL</th>
<th>ACTUAL BEHAVIOUR</th>
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<tr>
<td>Here and now experiments</td>
<td>Recognizing splits</td>
<td>It seems like there are two parts</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Directing person to &quot;get a sense&quot; of the different parts</td>
<td>What are you like as your strong part?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Identifying differences</td>
<td>What are your differences?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Directing the person to &quot;make contact&quot; with the other part</td>
<td>Say this to the other part.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process inquiries</td>
<td>Affect inquiry</td>
<td>What are you feeling or experiencing?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Desire inquiry</td>
<td>What do you want?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expectation inquiry</td>
<td>What do you expect or anticipate?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Avoidance inquiry</td>
<td>What are you avoiding?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Awareness inquiry</td>
<td>What are you aware of?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expression inquiry</td>
<td>What are you doing? or How are you doing this?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process suggestions</td>
<td>Language suggestion</td>
<td>Say &quot;I&quot; instead of &quot;it&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Attending suggestion</td>
<td>Become aware of your voice</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Focusing suggestion</td>
<td>Go inside. What are you experiencing?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Demand suggestion</td>
<td>Tell the other part what it should do.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Identification suggestion</td>
<td>Become your voice your judge etc.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Specificity suggestion</td>
<td>Will you be more specific?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Exaggeration and repetition suggestion</td>
<td>Say this again. Exaggerate it.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Behavioural observation</td>
<td>Behavioural observation</td>
<td>I'm aware that you are speaking softly.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Experiential feedback</td>
<td>Feeding a sentence</td>
<td>Will you try on, &quot;I want to be loved&quot;</td>
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<td>Personal awareness statement</td>
<td>I'm aware of feeling touched of losing interest.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Sharing hunches</td>
<td>My hunch is you're feeling like you want to hide. Does that fit for you?</td>
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(Greenberg, 1980b)
HYPOTHESES

The following hypotheses were tested:

$H_{10}$: There will be no statistically significant difference in the degree to which the Gestalt group trainees and the control group respond to a split with separation and contact as revealed by the Wilcoxon Matched-Pairs Signed-Ranks non-parametric test of significance.

$H_{11}$: There will be a statistically significant difference in the degree to which the Gestalt group trainees and the control group respond to a split with separation and contact as revealed by the Wilcoxon Matched-Pairs Signed-Ranks non-parametric test of significance.

$H_{20}$: There will be no statistically significant difference in the degree to which the Gestalt group trainees and the control group (a) use the influencing skill of direct guidance, (b) use the influencing skill of open question and (c) use the influencing skill of non-verbal referent as revealed by dependent t-tests.

$H_{21}$: There will be a statistically significant difference in the degree to which the Gestalt group trainees and the control group (a) use the influencing skill of direct guidance, (b) use the influencing skill of open question and (c) use the influencing skill of non-verbal referent as revealed by dependent t-tests.
There will be no statistically significant difference in the degree to which the Gestalt group trainees and the control group report that they (a) intended to use the influencing skill of direct guidance, (b) intended to use the influencing skill of open question and (c) intended to use the influencing skill of non-verbal referent as revealed by the Wilcoxon Matched-Pairs Signed-Ranks non-parametric test of significance.

There will be a statistically significant difference in the degree to which the Gestalt group trainees and the control group report that they (a) intended to use the influencing skill of direct guidance, (b) intended to use the influencing skill of open question and (c) intended to use the influencing skill of non-verbal referent as revealed by the Wilcoxon Matched-Pairs Signed-Ranks non-parametric test of significance.

There will be no statistically significant difference in the degree to which the Gestalt group trainees and the control group will attain their personal growth goals as revealed by a Chi square test of independence.

There will be a statistically significant difference in the degree to which the Gestalt group trainees and the control group will attain their personal growth goals as revealed by a Chi square test of independence.
RATIONALE FOR HYPOTHESES:

A number of studies have identified the skills of Gestalt therapy as more active in orientation than other traditional therapies. In a comparison of different therapeutic approaches, Ivey and Authier (1978) note that the Gestalt therapist frequently uses direction and role-play. In addition, the Gestalt therapist encourages the client to explore his/her non-verbal as well as verbal behaviours. In a recent paper, Hill (1979) also compares various therapeutic orientations. Her study evaluates Rogers, Perls and Ellis in their sessions with the same client in the film "Three Approaches to Psychotherapy". The results indicate that of the three approaches, Gestalt therapy was notable for involving more direct guidance, open questions and non-verbal referents.

Recent studies have suggested that the active skills of Gestalt therapy are effective in increasing client depth of experiencing. (Dompierre, 1979; Greenberg, 1975; and Greenberg & Clarke, 1979). In addition, research has indicated that depth of experiencing is positively correlated with client outcome in therapy (Klein et al, 1969). Therefore if a particular intervention facilitates depth of experiencing, then that intervention is an important skill in effective counselling. This finding suggests support for teaching the active skills of Gestalt therapy to counsellor trainees.

Counsellor educators have also highlighted the importance of integrating skill training with personal growth experiences. Greenberg (1980b) has stressed that active skills implemented without sensitivity could be used mechanistically.
In summary, there is research to support the effectiveness of the Gestalt two-chair experiment which incorporates the active skills described above. In addition, research supports the importance of personal growth experiences as an integral part of counsellor education programmes. If this study demonstrates that counsellor trainees can gain advanced skills and experience personal growth in the Gestalt training group, then the model proposed by Greenberg (1980b) represents a useful contribution to research in counsellor education.

ASSUMPTIONS

It was assumed that the pre-test and post-test counselling sessions were representative of the counsellors' usual counselling skills.

It was assumed that the control group would have no training in Gestalt skills between the period of the pre-test and the post-test.

It was assumed that the clients' problems represented an adequate match and sample of problems dealt with in counselling.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study was done with eleven counsellors who were involved in a Gestalt training group. All of the counsellor trainees had been trained at the graduate level in an empathy-based model. While this small number could raise questions concerning the generalizability of the results, the small size of the group was necessary in order to facilitate the personal and skill development of each trainee.

In addition, the study investigated only one group with one leader. Further research would be necessary to evaluate the effectiveness of different groups with different leaders.
JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

As discussed earlier, literature in the area of counsellor education indicates the necessity of teaching counsellor trainees advanced counselling skills. Research has shown that Gestalt skills facilitate depth of experiencing, change in awareness, and conflict resolution (Greenberg, 1975). These results suggest that counsellors trained in the active skills of Gestalt therapy can facilitate client progress in therapy more than they can with empathy skills alone. Therefore, if the Gestalt training group being evaluated is effective in enhancing the trainees' personal growth and developing their repertoire of active skills, then the model proposed by Greenberg (1980b) represents a viable counsellor education programme.
A review of the literature pertinent to this thesis includes research in the following areas: developments in counsellor education, reactions to skill training, the role of empathy in therapy, and the skills of Gestalt therapy.

DEVELOPMENTS IN COUNSELLOR EDUCATION

As mentioned earlier, Rogers was one of the first researchers to identify the essential skills of the therapeutic relationship. In addition he was one of the first educators to develop a systematic counsellor training programme. His training workshops involved students in:

1. listening to tape-recorded interviews of experienced therapists;
2. role-playing therapist with fellow students;
3. observing a series of live demonstrations by the supervisor;
4. participating in group therapy or multiple therapy;
5. conducting individual psychotherapy and recording the interviews for discussion with a facilitative non-directive supervisor; and
6. personal therapy.

(Matarazzo, 1978, p. 943)

Rogers' training programme was refined by Truax and Carkhuff (1967) and evaluated in several studies which substantiated its effectiveness (Barrett-Lennard, 1962; Lorr 1965; and Rice, 1965). Truax and Carkhuff describe their training model as:

1. A therapeutic context in which the supervisor himself provides a high level of therapeutic conditions;
2. Highly specific didactic training in the implementation of the therapeutic conditions; and
3. A quasi-group therapy experience where the trainee can explore his own existence, and his individual therapeutic self can emerge.

(1967, p. 242)
A current counsellor education model developed by Gerald Egan (1975) represents a further development which incorporates the contributions of both Rogers and Carkhuff. This model is represented in Table II.

The first stage of Egan's model involves the establishment of a facilitative client-counsellor relationship. Egan concurs with Rogers when he stresses the importance of empathy as the cornerstone of the effective therapeutic alliance. Like Rogers, he maintains that it is only within the safety of an empathy-based relationship that the client can feel secure enough to engage in the necessary self-exploration.

The second phase of the model builds upon these client self-explorations. Egan argues that the social influence of the counsellor facilitates the client's progress from self-exploration to an integrated self-understanding.

In the third stage of the model, Egan stresses the action component of counselling and draws heavily on the learning theories. The counsellor's role in this stage is to help the client move from self-understanding to the development and enactment of specific action programmes.

Egan's model represents an attempt to move beyond the responsive dimensions and give the counsellor specific action skills with which to facilitate client change. While the action phase includes all the skills of the two previous stages, it also incorporates a specific methodology with which the counsellor can assist the client in problem-solving.
This problem-solving procedure is an application of force-field analysis. In this approach the counsellor works with the client through each of the following steps:

1. Identify and clarify the problem.
2. Establish priorities in choosing problems for attention.
3. Establish workable goals.
4. Take a census of the means available for achieving established goals.
5. Choose the means that will most effectively achieve established goals.
7. Implementation: use chosen means to achieve established goals.
8. Review and evaluate the client's progress.

(Egan, 1975, p. 200)

Egan's model represents a systematic approach to counsellor education. The model suggests a small group as the most effective means of combining skill training and experiential learning. In particular the model stresses:

1. Extended practice in individual skills.
2. Modeling of extended counseling sessions by high-level helpers.
3. Supervised practice with extended sessions.

(Egan, 1975, p. 53)
### TABLE II
#### EGAN COUNSELING MODEL

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<th>Pre-helping phase:</th>
<th>Attending</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Helper's skills:</td>
<td>Physical attending, listening to both verbal and non-verbal messages of the client.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helper's goal:</td>
<td>To &quot;be with&quot; the client both physically and psychologically.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage I:</td>
<td>Responding</td>
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<tr>
<td>Helper's skills:</td>
<td>Accurate empathy, respect, genuineness, concreteness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helper's goal:</td>
<td>Responding to the client with respect and empathy, establishing rapport and an effective working relationship, facilitating the client's self-exploration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage II:</td>
<td>Integrative understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helper's skills:</td>
<td>All skills of Stage I. Advanced accurate empathy, self-disclosure, immediacy, confrontation, alternative frames of reference.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helper's goal:</td>
<td>Integrating the information produced by the client through his/her self-exploration, helping the client identify behavioural themes, teaching the client this integrative process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage III:</td>
<td>Facilitating action</td>
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<tr>
<td>Helper's skills:</td>
<td>All skills of Stages I and II. Development of action programmes and support.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helper's goal:</td>
<td>Helping the client develop specific action programmes, assisting the client to act on the new self-understandings, exploring with the client a variety of means for constructively changing behaviour, and supporting the client in his/her action programmes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Egan, 1975, p.30)
The microcounselling model proposed by Ivey and Authier (1978) represents another attempt to define the important skills of the effective counselling process. In this model, counsellor trainees learn these skills in discrete units. The counselling process is broken down into:

"specific skills and behaviour which can be defined, seen in operation, practiced and evaluated. Rather than confuse the interviewing trainee with an overwhelming amount of data, the component-skills approach breaks interviewing into workable and observable dimensions" (Ivey & Authier, 1978, p.45).

The Ivey and Authier taxonomy of microtraining skills is as follows:

I. **Attending Skills:**

*Closed questions:* Most often begin with "do", "is", "are" and can be answered by the helpee with only a few words.

*Open questions:* Typically begin with "what", "how", "why", or "could" and allow the helpee more room for self-exploration.

*Minimal encourage:* Selective attention to and repetition back to the helpee of exact words or phrases. May also be represented by "Tell me more..." or "uh-huh".

*Paraphrase:* Gives back to the helpee the essence of past verbal statements. Selective attention to key content of helpee verbalizations.
Reflection of feeling: Selective attention to key affective or emotional aspects of helper behaviour.

Summarization: Similar to paraphrase and reflection of feeling but represents a longer time period and gives back to client several strands of thinking.

II. Influencing Skills:

Directions: Telling the helpee or helpees what to do.

Expression of content: Giving advice, sharing information, making suggestions, giving opinions.

Expression of feeling: Sharing personal or other people's affective state in the interview.

Influencing summary: Stating the main themes of the helpee's statements over a period of time.

Interpretation: Renaming or re-labelling the helpee's behaviours or verbalizations with new words from a new frame of reference.

Direct-mutual communication: Sharing personal feelings with each other and responding to these shared feelings.

(Ivey & Authier, 1978, pp 67-67)
Ivey and Authier have identified the above skills as the essential components of effective counselling. They indicate that this model is designed to be flexible and to adapt to the particular needs of the individual therapist. They stress however the importance of attending behaviour as the most basic unit of microcounselling (1978). More specifically, they define open and closed questions and minimal encouragers as valuable skills at the beginning of the interview. Paraphrase, reflection of feeling, and summarization are identified as more advanced attending skills. They describe these as "skills of selective attention" used to give the session direction or focus (1978, p. 92).

The second group of skills in the Ivey and Authier taxonomy are those of inter-personal influence. These skills involve the counsellor more actively in the session. By using self-expression, direction, expression of content, expression of feeling, self-disclosure, influencing summarization, interpretation, and direct-mutual communication, the counsellor attempts to influence the client to make positive personal changes (1978).

The model of Ivey and Authier not only represents a taxonomy of important counsellor skills, but also represents a system of categorizing counsellor skills into single teachable units. Their basic micro-counselling model involves teaching counsellor trainees each of the skills in a single unit, then integrating the components into a whole.
The stages of the model are as follows:

1. Baseline interview of five minutes on videotape.
   The trainee interviews a volunteer client about a real or role played concern. Depending on the situation, a specific issue may be agreed to by both participants before the session begins, or a simple, unstructured/unplanned interview may be held.

2. Training
   A. A written manual describing the single skill to be learned is read by the trainee.
   B. Video models illustrating the specific skill are shown to the trainee and discussed with reference to the single skill being taught.
   C. The trainee views the original baseline interview and compares his or her performance with the modeling tape.
   D. The supervisor/trainer maintains a warm, supportive relationship with the trainee, stressing positive aspects of the performance while constantly focusing on the single skill being taught.

3. Re-interview
   The trainee videotapes another session and gives special emphasis to the single skill being learned. This tape is reviewed with the supervisor/trainer.

   (Ivey & Authier, 1978, p. 11)

The authors note that this microcounselling model is based on several principles. They highlight the importance of:

1. focusing on single skills.
2. self observation and confrontation.
3. observing video models.
4. real interviewing.
In addition they note that the flexibility of this model means that it can be used to teach the counselling skills of very different theoretical orientations.

A number of studies have found the microcounselling approach effective in teaching interviewing and counselling skills. In one study (Moreland, Ivey & Phillips, 1973) a group of twelve medical students was trained in microcounselling while another group received a different but equivalent training. The microcounselling group was found to make more significant gains in skill development than the equivalent group on most of the experimental measures.

Another important study (Toukmanian & Rennie, 1975) compared the effectiveness of microcounselling training with human relations training based on the model developed by Truax and Carkhuff (1967). They note some significant areas of difference between these two approaches. Firstly, microcounselling used role-play while human relations training used discrimination and communication training. Secondly, the microcounselling approach used video tapes while the human relations approach used audio tapes. Finally, the microcounselling group obtained feedback from their supervisor and peers through an analysis of the video tapes. Human relations students obtained feedback through objective ratings of their counselling responses. The results of this study indicated that regardless of the different approaches, both groups gained significantly in the use of the skill "open invitation to talk". Both groups decreased significantly in their use of "closed question" and "advice and interpretation". In the use of empathy the microcounselling group gained significantly more than the human relations group. The authors speculate that this unexpected result may be due to the use of the videotape and the extra practice involved in the microcounselling approach.
Another recent taxonomy of counselling skills is the system developed by Hill (1978) for the purpose of measurement of counsellor behaviour. This Counselor Verbal Response Category System represents an attempt to integrate the various components of eleven existing taxonomies into one comprehensive system. Twenty-five separate categories were reduced to a system of fourteen counsellor response categories. These include minimal encourager, approval-reassurance, information, direct guidance, closed question, open question, restatement, reflection, non-verbal referent, interpretation, self disclose, silence and other. The complete taxonomy is reprinted in Appendix B.

**REACTIONS TO SKILL TRAINING**

While the identification of counselling skills and the elaboration of skill taxonomies such as those presented have gained considerable impetus, a number of researchers have expressed some concern about this recent emphasis. Although Rogers was among the first to identify core therapeutic conditions, he cautioned against a focus on skills alone (1957). Instead he stressed the importance of growth experiences in the training of the counsellor as a whole person. Recognizing the developing popularity of skill training, he noted how the client-centered approach differed from the current trend:

"Actually a client-centered philosophy does not fit comfortably into a technologically oriented society. Even psychotherapy is coming more and more to value 'efficiency'. Proper diagnosis, reliance on immediate cause and effect theories and other linear constructs are seen as ways to 'find out what is wrong and cure it', quickly. Client-centered therapy, lacking flashy methods and techniques, relying upon the evocation of the client's strengths, flowing at the client's pace, seems to many, naive and inefficient. It does not fit into a 'fix-it' culture."

(in Burton, ed. 1974, p. 213)
Other writers (Mahon & Altmann, 1977; Carkhuff & Berenson, 1977) have also highlighted the hazards of emphasizing skills over the personal integrity of the counsellor. They stress the importance of supplementing skill training with personal growth experiences in order to ensure that the new skills are used appropriately.

The counsellor education models discussed here represent some recent attempts to identify and develop counselling approaches which can facilitate client self-discovery. The research in this area, however, suffers from a major limitation. In a recent review of the literature, Matarazzo (1978) notes that most counsellor education programmes are designed to teach beginning skills to neophyte counsellors. There is a burgeoning need to develop counsellor education models which can offer the already-trained counsellor an opportunity to develop more advanced skills.

**EMPATHY**

One of the earlier skills defined in therapy was empathy. In his early work, Rogers identified empathy as one of the three conditions necessary and sufficient for behaviour change.

"The state of empathy, or being empathic is to perceive the internal frame of reference of another with accuracy and with emotional components and meanings which pertain thereto as if one were the person, but without ever losing the 'as if' condition" (1957).

In more recent years, Rogers re-defined empathy to reflect his changing perception of this important quality. This new definition reflects his conceptualization of empathy as a process, rather than a state.
"The way of being with another person which is termed empathic has several facets. It means entering the private perceptual world of the other and becoming thoroughly at home in it. It involves being sensitive, moment to moment, to the changing felt meanings which flow in this other person, to the fear or rage or tenderness or confusion or whatever, that he/she is experiencing. It means temporarily living in his/her life, moving about in it delicately without making judgements, sensing meanings of which he/she is scarcely aware, but not trying to uncover feelings of which the person is totally unaware, since this would be too threatening. It includes communicating your sensings of his/her world as you look with fresh and unfrightened eyes at elements of which the individual is fearful. It means frequently checking with him/her as to the accuracy of your sensings, and being guided by the responses you receive. You are a confident companion to the person in his/her inner world. By pointing to the possible meanings in the flow of his/her experience you help the person to focus on this useful type of referent, to experience the meanings more fully, and to move forward in the experiencing."

(Rogers, 1975)

Since Rogers first defined empathy as the critical element in therapy, considerable research has been done to evaluate the effectiveness of this variable. A number of researchers have found evidence supporting the role of empathy in facilitating self-exploration and process movement (Truax & Carkhuff, 1967; Carkhuff & Berenson, 1978; Kurtz & Grummon, 1972). Other research has suggested that early use of empathy in the therapeutic relationship predicts later success (Barrett - Lennard, 1962).

One important finding suggests that therapists consider the ideal therapist to be empathic. Raskin (1974) found that eighty-three therapists of differing orientations ranked empathy as the single most important therapeutic variable.

Other research suggests a positive correlation between degree of empathy and degree of therapist experience. In one study the variable of empathy was evaluated by clients (Fiedler, 1950); in another by qualified judges (Barrett - Lennard, 1962).
This is not to suggest that all experienced therapists are empathic. Raskin (1974) discovered that even though therapists generally agreed upon the importance of empathy, few demonstrated that quality in their own work.

Some research findings have particular relevance for counsellor education programmes. Two studies have found that the therapist's degree of empathy is unrelated to his/her academic competence or diagnostic expertise (Bergin & Jasper, 1969; Bergin & Solomon, 1970). In addition, other studies have suggested that empathy can be learned through training. This learning is best facilitated by individuals who possess that special quality of empathy themselves (Apsy, 1972; Bergin & Solomon, 1970).

These findings underscore the importance of empathy in the therapeutic relationship. However, other studies have questioned the supremacy of this single quality. Carkhuff (1969) has found that too much empathy too soon in the relationship may actually impede client progress. This suggests that skillful timing of the use of empathy may be an important variable.

Another research review (Lambert, De Julio & Stein, 1978) has examined the literature to evaluate the relationship of psychotherapeutic outcome to the therapist skills of empathy, positive regard and genuineness. The results suggest only moderate support for these core conditions of the client-centered approach. In addition, research offers relatively little support for the popularity of counsellor education programmes based solely on these inter-personal skills.

Bergin and Suinn's review of the research in psychotherapy (1975) has also highlighted the diminishing popularity of empathy as the single most important variable of successful therapy. In particular, they cite the results of a study by Mitchell et al (1973) whose findings demonstrated no relationship between empathy and outcome.
In a recent overview of developments in clinical research, Greenberg (1980a) has summarized empathy's changing status over the last decade:

"Therapist communicated empathy has not fared well and has been relegated from the supreme position at the beginning of the decade as the 'core condition' of all therapeutic change (Truax & Mitchell, 1971), to a mid-seventies position of being possibly an important ingredient in client-centred therapy but not a sufficient condition in other approaches (Bergin & Suinn, 1975), to a position at the end of the decade as being possibly facilitative at particular, precise times in therapy" (Lambert, De Julio & Stein, 1978, Mitchell, Bozarth & Krauft, 1977).

**GESTALT THERAPY**

In general, research has failed to support the Rogerian hypothesis that empathy, positive regard, and genuineness are necessary and sufficient to facilitate positive therapeutic outcome. As a result, there has been a call to develop more active skills in counselling that go beyond the responsive dimensions.

In an effort to meet this need, Greenberg and Kahn (1979) have proposed the addition of a stimulation phase to the three-stage Egan model. This new stimulation phase is based upon perceptual theory which argues that behaviour is determined by perceptions and therefore behavioural change must be preceded by perceptual change. Greenberg and Kahn suggest that the addition of the stimulation phase meets an important need by offering the counsellor active tools with which to stimulate change in client perception.

The first stage of this expanded Egan model involves building a therapeutic relationship which will facilitate client self-exploration. The stimulation phase builds upon this empathy-based relationship and involves a number of active techniques. The skills of this second phase include Gestalt experiments, focusing, structured exercise, body awareness and guided imagery. These skills are used to stimulate more
actively the client self-exploration which leads to discovery and perceptual change. Greenberg and Kahn argue that as these skills promote deeper experiencing, they are more effective than reflective skills alone in facilitating client perceptual change.

In the third stage of this model, the counsellor uses his/her inter-personal influence established through the relationship to help the client gain new self-understandings. In the final stage, the counsellor collaborates with the client to develop suitable action plans and provides the necessary support and encouragement for the desired behaviour change. The expanded model is shown in Table III.

In a separate paper, Greenberg and Kahn summarize the rationale for the addition of the stimulation phase:

"The counselling process that fails to stimulate the client to deeper levels of experiencing and self understanding once safety and acceptance are established often lacks direction. In addition to confrontation, immediacy and advanced accurate empathy, the counsellor can use stimulation skills to add impetus and direction to client exploration. Stimulation of deeper experiencing and involvement by these more initiative methods often moves the client directly to emotional resolution of the problem being explored."

(1978, p.23)

In recent years, research has been done to evaluate the effectiveness of these active skills of Gestalt therapy. Greenberg found the two-chair method helpful in promoting client self-awareness and responsibility (1975) and in resolving splits (1979). Greenberg and Clarke (1979) found that the two-chair role play applied at a split deepened client experiencing. Dompierre (1979) found that the two-chair operation deepened client experiencing and also led to better outcome than did empathy when applied at a split. In another study Bohart (1977) found that Gestalt two-chair role play was more effective in reducing client anger, hostility and behavioural aggression than two other therapeutic procedures.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Stage 1</th>
<th>Stage 2</th>
<th>Stage 3</th>
<th>Stage 4</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Counselor behaviour</td>
<td>Responding</td>
<td>Stimulating</td>
<td>Influencing new understanding</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counselor skills</td>
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<td>Advanced level</td>
<td>Elaboration of action</td>
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<td></td>
<td>accurate empathy</td>
<td>Guided imagery</td>
<td>accurate empathy</td>
<td>programs such as problem solving techniques,</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Respect</td>
<td>Focusing</td>
<td>Self-disclosure</td>
<td>decision making processes</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Genuineness</td>
<td>Structured exercises</td>
<td>Immediacy</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Concreteness</td>
<td>Body awareness</td>
<td>Confrontation</td>
<td>programs, &quot;homework&quot;, and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Client process</td>
<td>Self exploration</td>
<td>Evocative reflection</td>
<td>Alternate frames of reference</td>
<td>training in interpersonal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Trust and rapport</td>
<td>Discovering</td>
<td>Dynamic self-understanding</td>
<td>skills. Support</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>(Greenberg and Kahn, 1979)</td>
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</table>
Research has also suggested that counsellor trainees are interested in learning active counselling skills. In a comparison of filmed excerpts of Rogers, Ellis, and Perls, counsellor trainees indicated a preference for the active skills of Gestalt therapy, developed by Perls (Kelly & Bryne, 1977).

These results seem to suggest that counsellor education programmes need to offer trainees the opportunity to develop these more advanced counselling skills.

In general, the literature seems to suggest that Gestalt skills are potent tools, useful in promoting the client awareness necessary for growth. Training methods in these skills need to be developed and evaluated. Because of the importance of using these skills appropriately, after the establishment of a trusting relationship, it seems prudent to offer these skills to counsellors with previous training in the responsive dimensions of counselling. It also appears important to train the "whole person" by encouraging the counsellor trainee's personal growth as well as his/her skill development.
CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This chapter will identify and discuss the population, sample, design, data collection and scoring procedure used in this study. The measuring instruments used in this research will also be presented with comments on their reliability. In addition, the selection and training of raters and clinicians will be discussed. Finally, the statistical analyses used will be identified.

1. POPULATION

The sample for this study was selected from a population of counsellors with a background in empathy skills. The population consists of counsellors between twenty-four and fifty years of age with a baccalaureate degree and at least one year of graduate level training in counselling. In addition, these counsellors have had one to five years of related professional experience.

It is assumed that the results will be generalizable to similar counsellors with empathy backgrounds who desire training in the advanced skills of Gestalt therapy.

2. SAMPLE

Subject Selection and Preparation:

The subjects for this study consisted of eleven counsellors who participated in a Gestalt training group. All of the subjects in this group had experienced at least one year of training (72 hours) in empathy skills. Their experience in counselling ranged from one to five years. The trainees in this group were selected partly through their own stated interest in the training group. In addition, the trainer evaluated each potential trainee for personal suitability.
Subjects were told that the study would be generally focused on counselling skills. They were not informed of the hypotheses under investigation.

Control Group

The eleven subjects chosen for the control group were matched with the experimental group in terms of age, background training and years of experience. These variables were judged to be of greatest relevance to the study. The control group was selected from a pool of counsellors who had the same empathy background as the experimental group. These counsellors had expressed an interest in this particular Gestalt training but were unable to attend due to scheduling difficulties, other commitments etc. A number of the control group had expressed their intention to participate in the training in the following year.

Clients

Four clients, two men and two women, were used in this study. All clients had had some previous experience with the counselling process including Gestalt therapy to reduce the novelty effect. Prior to the experimental session, each client was coached to present a conflict split to each one of his/her counsellors within the first ten minutes of the thirty-minute counselling session. The split was first presented in a general formulation and then in a more specific formulation as shown below. In this example, the split was the client's conflict between feeling he should contact an old friend but not wanting to do so.
General formulation:

Client: So now I feel kind of as though the ball is in my court. I feel I should* call him and see him again.

Counsellor: Mm hmm.

Client: Uh, probably because I said I would. Another thing. I think, I guess I feel guilty...

Counsellor: Mm hmm.

Client: ...that I didn't call him for over a year and he still* called me.

Counsellor: Right.

Client: So there must be something there.

Counsellor: Right.

Client: Yet on the other hand, I don't know if I like him that much now.

Counsellor: Mm hmm. Yeah...I understand it's kind of hard when you have been close friends with him.

Specific formulation:

Client: Yeah, I feel I should at least call him and give him a chance.

Counsellor: Yeah....

Client: And yet I think, why bother, why exert the energy?

* Indicates voice emphasis.
In the pre-test, each client had sessions with counsellors in both the experimental and control groups. In the post-test, each client again presented a split in each session with different experimental and control group counsellors. In order to help control for any interaction effect between client and counsellor, an attempt was made to ensure that each client had sessions with an equal number of experimental and control group counsellors. Although difficulties in scheduling prevented a completely balanced arrangement, no client was counselled by the same counsellor in both the pre and post tests.

3. RATERS AND CLINICIANS

Two raters, both graduate students in counselling psychology were used in this study. Both of the raters were familiar with the Gestalt two-chair experiment. Each rater was trained a total of twelve hours in the scoring procedures.

In addition two clinicians were used in this study. Both of these clinicians were familiar with the skills of Gestalt therapy.

4. DESIGN

The design for this study was a variation of the Pre-test Post-test Control Group Design (Campbell & Stanley, 1963). Because the subjects for this study were not a random sample, the control group was matched to the experimental group as described earlier.

Procedure

The treatment or independent variable of this research was the twenty-four session Gestalt training group described earlier in this paper. The purpose of this study was to evaluate the effectiveness of this method of teaching counsellors Gestalt skills and of promoting their personal growth.
Pre-test measures of skill and personal growth goals were obtained from both the experimental and control groups prior to the onset of the training programme. On completion of the training experience, post-test measures on degree of skill and goal attainment were obtained from both groups.

MEASURING INSTRUMENTS

Dependent Variables

The dependent variables in this study were:

1. counsellor response to a split
2. actual use of influencing skills
3. intended use of influencing skills
4. degree of goal attainment

1. Counsellor response to a split: (Appendix H)

To determine how the counsellor responded to the client - presented split, two trained raters listened to the first ten minutes of the tape session. The counsellor's response was judged according to the first principle of the two-chair operation outlined by Greenberg (1979). This principle of maintaining separation and contact has three components - getting a sense of the part, contacting, and defining differences. To help the client get a sense of the part, the counsellor encourages the client to speak as that particular part. To aid the client to make contact with the other part, the counsellor encourages the client to speak directly to him/herself in the other chair. To help the client define differences, the counsellor aids the client in clarifying the boundaries between the two parts of the self that are in dialogue.
If the two-chair operation was initiated in the first ten minutes of the session, the four-minute segment preceding the initiation was selected to determine whether the counsellor began the operation in response to the client-presented split. This four-minute segment was transcribed for rating of the counsellor responses. If the two-chair operation was not located in the first ten-minute segment, the specific statement of the split and the following four minutes were transcribed for rating of the counsellor responses.

Each rater evaluated three-fourths of the four-minute segments to determine whether the counsellor responded to the split with the Gestalt two-chair operation. This left one-half of the tapes to provide a check for inter-rater reliability. The Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was found to be $r = 1.00$, indicating perfect agreement.

2. **Counselor Verbal Response Category System:** (Appendix B)

(Actual use of influencing skills)

In evaluating the counsellors' actual use of influencing skills, the segment containing the client-presented split was analyzed separately from the other segments. The first four-minute segment was selected from the initial ten minutes of the session. To select the other two segments, the remainder of each tape was divided into four-minute segments. The final segment, usually involving summary and closure, was omitted. The remaining segments were categorized into the first half and second half of the session. Where the number of segments was uneven, a coin toss determined the allocation of the middle segment. For the analysis, one segment was then randomly chosen from the first half of the session and a second segment chosen from the second half.
To analyze these segments for actual use of influencing skills, the counsellor statements were divided into units according to the rules outlined by Auld and White (1956) and used by Hill in her development of the Counselor Verbal Response Category System (1978). Each rater evaluated three-fourths of the tape segments leaving one-half of the segments to provide a check for inter-rater reliability. They achieved a 91% agreement. Where differences occurred, the raters discussed the discrepancy until mutual agreement was reached.

The raters then identified each unitized counsellor response in the tape segments under the fourteen categories of the Hill Counselor Verbal Response Category System (1978). Recent research (Hill, Thames, & Rardin, 1979) suggests that this system represents a reliable taxonomy of counsellor verbal behaviour. In that study, the reliability was computed by determining the coefficients of agreement of all possible combinations of the three judges. The kappas were found to be .79, .78 and .81, indicating high agreement among judges. In this study, the inter-rater reliability was also determined by the use of Cohen's coefficient of agreement (1960) and found to be .83. Where differences between ratings occurred, the final choice of category was determined by a coin toss.

3. Counselling Session Follow-up Questionnaire: (Appendix C)
(Intended use of influencing skills)

To measure the counsellors' intended use of influencing skills, subjects were asked to complete a questionnaire immediately after the pre-test and post-test counselling sessions. The form required counsellors to identify the intentions of their counselling responses in the sessions. This questionnaire is a close adaptation of the Hill Counselor Verbal Response Category System (1978) described earlier. The categories of "silence" and "other" were deleted for the purpose of clarity, leaving twelve response categories.
4. **Goal Attainment Inventory** (Appendices D, E, F and G)

To determine behaviour change as a result of the training experience, a modified Goal Attainment Inventory was used. Research has suggested that use of the Goal Attainment Inventory to specify observable goals may represent a viable measure of outcome (Kiresuk & Sherman, 1968).

In the pre-test, experimental subjects was asked to specify both training and personal growth goals (Appendices D and E). Control group subjects were asked to specify personal growth goals only (Appendix E). In the post-test, the experimental group was asked to indicate to what degree they achieved both their personal and training goals (Appendices F and G). The control group was asked to indicate to what degree they achieved their personal goals (Appendix F).

**OTHER MEASURES**

**Client Evaluation** (Appendix I)

After each of the post-test sessions of both groups, each client evaluated the counsellor’s helpfulness in working with the presented issue on a five-point ordinal scale.
Clinical Evaluation (Appendix J)

Two clinicians in counselling psychology evaluated the post-test segments of the experimental group to obtain a measure of effectiveness and appropriateness of the counsellor interventions. Each clinician evaluated three-quarters of the tape segments leaving one-half of the tapes to provide a check for inter-rater reliability. The Spearman Rho correlation coefficient was found to be .77. In the event of differences between the clinical ratings, the final choice was determined by a coin toss.

DATA COLLECTION

1. Before the first experimental session, the client was coached to present the prepared split in a general formulation and then in a more specific format within the first ten minutes of the session. The counsellor was instructed to imagine that he/she had already spent four sessions with this client building a relationship. Since Gestalt skills are best utilized when a relationship has been established, this mental set was designed to allow the counsellor the choice of using more active skills if he/she deemed it appropriate. The counsellor and the client then engaged in a thirty-minute counselling session. The entire session was audio-taped for future rating.

2. Immediately after the session, the counsellor completed the Counselling Session Follow-up Questionnaire indicating the intent of his/her responses throughout the session (Appendix C). Each counsellor then completed the appropriate form of the Goal Attainment Inventory (Appendices D and E).
3. Two trained raters evaluated the initial ten minutes of each tape to determine if the counsellor responded to the split with the first principle of the Gestalt two-chair operation. This principle of maintaining separation and contact involves helping the client get a sense of the part, make contact with the other part and define differences (Appendix H).

4. In addition, the raters evaluated all of the counsellor responses on the selected tape segments according to the fourteen categories of the Counselor Verbal Response Category System (Appendix B).

All of the above procedures were repeated at the post test. Gestalt group counsellors completed Goal Attainment Follow-up forms for both personal growth and training goals (Appendices F and G). Control group counsellors completed follow-up forms for personal growth goals only (Appendix F). The following procedures were performed at the post-test only.

5. Each client completed a questionnaire evaluating the counsellor's helpfulness in working with the presented split. Both groups of counsellors were evaluated (Appendix I).

6. Two clinicians in counselling psychology evaluated the tapes segments of the experimental group to determine the effectiveness and appropriateness of the counsellors' responses (Appendix J).

The sequence of the pre-test and post-test measures is detailed in Table IV. After the thirty-minute counselling session with the confederate client, each counsellor completed the follow-up questionnaire and goal inventory. Raters evaluated the counsellor response to the split, and intended and actual use of direct guidance, open question and non-verbal referent.
In the post-test, each counsellor again completed the follow-up questionnaire after the counselling session. Counsellors in both groups then completed goal attainment forms, evaluating their own achievement. A measure of overall helpfulness of each counsellor was obtained from the client and a measure of effectiveness and appropriateness of the experimental group counsellors was determined by two clinicians. Raters evaluated the counsellor response to the split and intended and actual use of direct guidance, open question and non-verbal referent.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE IV</th>
<th>DATA COLLECTION SEQUENCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>PRE-TEST MEASURES</strong></td>
<td><strong>POST-TEST MEASURES</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i) Counselling Session Follow up Questionnaire (Co)</td>
<td>(i) Counselling Session Follow-up Questionnaire (Co)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) Goal Attainment Inventory (Co)</td>
<td>(ii) Goal Attainment Follow-up (Co)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iii) Counsellor Response to a Split: tape rating (R)</td>
<td>(iii) Client Evaluation (C)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iv) Counselor Verbal Response Category System: tape rating (R)</td>
<td>(iv) Clinical Evaluation (Cl) (for experimental group only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(v) Counsellor Response to a Split: tape rating (R)</td>
<td>(v) *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(vi) Counselor Verbal Response Category System: tape rating (R)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Key**

Co = Counsellor
R = Rater
Cl = Clinician
C = Client
DATA ANALYSIS

This section describes the data analysis for the four dependent variables under investigation in this study.

Counsellor response to a split

Two trained raters evaluated each counsellor's response to the client-presented split and determined the appropriate category on a three-point nominal scale. The data obtained from this evaluation were then subjected to a non-parametric statistical analysis to test for difference between groups. The Wilcoxon Matched-Pairs Signed-Ranks test of significance was used. This same procedure was repeated at the post test.

Actual use of influencing skills

In the pre-test, the tape segments of both the experimental and control group were analyzed to determine the actual use of influencing skills. For each counsellor, the segment containing the client-presented split was evaluated separately. The other two segments which had been randomly selected from the remaining tape as described earlier were then evaluated and mean scores obtained.

In the actual scoring, raters first unitized all of the responses as described earlier according to the rules of Auld and White (1956). Each unitized response was classified under the appropriate category of the Hill Counselor Verbal Response Category System (1978). The raters then determined the number of responses belonging in each of the categories of direct guidance(#4) open question(#6), and non-verbal referent(#9).

These scores, indicating the three selected influencing skills, were then converted to proportions, representing the percentage of the total counsellor responses in the four-minute segment which were defined as
direct guidance, open question and non-verbal referent. These proportion scores were passed through an arc sin transformation to render them appropriate for analysis. Three dependent t-tests were used. These procedures were repeated at the post-test.

**Intended use of influencing skills**

To measure intended use of influencing skills, the categories of direct guidance(#4), open question(#6), and non-verbal referent(#9) were selected from the Counselling Session Follow-up Questionnaires of both the experimental and control groups. This questionnaire was designed as an ordinal scale, suggesting the use of a non-parametric statistical analysis.

The scores for the experimental and control groups were compared in each of the three selected response categories. The Wilcoxon Matched-Pairs Signed-Ranks test was used to analyze the data of each of these response categories. This same procedure was repeated at the post-test.

**Goal attainment**

To measure degree of goal attainment at the post-test, two different analyses were used. In order to determine the degree to which the counsellors in the Gestalt group achieved their training goals, a Chi square goodness of fit test was used. In order to compare the degree to which both the experimental and control groups achieved their personal goals, a Chi square test of independence was used.

**Client and clinical evaluations**

In the post-test, each counsellor in both groups was evaluated for global helpfulness by his/her client. Counsellors in the experimental group were evaluated for effectiveness and appropriateness by two clinicians. Median scores and range were obtained for each measure.
CHAPTER IV
RESULTS

This chapter presents the results of all of the ratings and statistical analyses performed on the data. The pre-test measures of the experimental and control groups were compared to determine if their initial levels were significantly different. These pre-test measures included counsellor response to a split, actual use of influencing skills and intended use of influencing skills.

On counsellor response to a split, the scores of both groups were found to be identical. The scores are shown in Table V.

Dependent t-tests were applied to compare the scores of both groups on the actual use of direct guidance(#4), open question(#6), and non-verbal referent(#9) in the splits and the segments. The results yielded no significant differences between groups on any of these skills. Means, standard deviations and t-scores appear in Table VI.

In evaluating the intended use of influencing skill, the two groups were compared on their stated intentions to use direct guidance(#4), open question(#6) and non-verbal referent(#9). The Wilcoxon Matched-Pairs Signed-Ranks test indicated no significant difference between the groups. Medians, quartile deviations and T-scores are shown in Table VII.
TABLE V
PRE-TEST SCORES FOR COUNSELLOR RESPONSE TO A SPLIT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Unclear</th>
<th>Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experimental</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TABLE VI
PRE-TEST MEANS,* STANDARD DEVIATIONS* AND t-SCORES**
FOR ACTUAL USE OF INFLUENCING SKILLS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Means</th>
<th>Standard Deviations</th>
<th>t-scores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>#4</td>
<td>#6</td>
<td>#9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Split</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>#4</td>
<td>#6</td>
<td>#9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.03</td>
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<td>.01</td>
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<td></td>
<td>.01</td>
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<td>.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Control</td>
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<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Control</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.04</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

* proportions prior to transformation
** calculated from transformed scores
TABLE VII
PRE-TEST MEDIANs, QUARTILE DEVIATIONS AND T-SCORES FOR INTENDED USE OF INFLUENCING SKILLS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Medians</th>
<th>Quartile Deviations</th>
<th>T-scores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>#4</td>
<td>#6</td>
<td>#9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental</td>
<td>2.13</td>
<td>3.63</td>
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<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>1.75</td>
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</table>

The preceding analyses indicate that the two groups were matched at the pre-test level on the variables of counsellor response to a split, actual use of influencing skill and intended use of influencing skill. This allowed post-test scores to be compared for differences as a criterion of treatment effectiveness.

In the post-test measures the same analyses were applied. In evaluating the two groups on counsellor response to a split, the following hypotheses were tested:

\( H_{10} \): There will be no statistically significant difference in the degree to which the Gestalt group trainees and the control group respond to a split with separation and contact as revealed by the Wilcoxon Matched-Pairs Signed-Ranks non-parametric test of significance.

\( H_{11} \): There will be a statistically significant difference in the degree to which the Gestalt group trainees and the control group respond to a split with separation and contact as revealed by the Wilcoxon Matched-Pairs Signed-Ranks non-parametric test of significance.
The Wilcoxon Matched-Pairs Signed Ranks analysis revealed that the two groups were significantly different at \( \alpha = .05 \) level of significance. The null hypothesis was rejected in favour of the alternative. The scores appear in Table VIII.

### TABLE VIII

POST-TEST SCORES FOR COUNSELLOR RESPONSE TO A SPLIT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Experimental</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Control</strong></td>
<td>11</td>
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<td>-</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

In evaluating the two groups on the actual use of influencing skills the following hypotheses were tested:

\( H_{20} \): There will be no statistically significant difference in the degree to which the Gestalt group trainees and the control group (a) use the influencing skill of direct guidance, (b) use the influencing skill of open question and (c) use the influencing skill of non-verbal referent as revealed by dependent t-tests.

\( H_{21} \): There will be a statistically significant difference in the degree to which the Gestalt group trainees and the control group (a) use the influencing skill of direct guidance, (b) use the influencing skill of open question and (c) use the influencing skill of non-verbal referent as revealed by dependent t-tests.

The four-minute segment containing the client split was analyzed separately and the dependent t-test revealed that in the use of direct guidance (#4), the groups were significantly different at \( \alpha = .05 \) level of significance. Part (a) of the null hypothesis was rejected in favour of the alternative. In the use of open question (#6) and non-verbal
referent(#9), the two groups were not found to be significantly different at $\alpha = .05$ level of significance. Parts (b) and (c) of the null hypothesis were retained. Means, standard deviations and t-scores appear in Table IX.

On the two four-minute segments, the same hypotheses were tested by dependent t-tests. In the use of direct guidance(#4) and open question(#6), the two groups were found to be significantly different at $\alpha = .05$ level of significance. Parts (a) and (b) of the null hypothesis were therefore rejected in favour of the alternatives. In the use of non-verbal referent(#9), the two groups were not found to be significantly different at $\alpha = .05$ level of significance. Part (c) of the null hypothesis was therefore retained. Means, standard deviations and t-scores are shown in Table IX.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Means #4</th>
<th>Means #6</th>
<th>Means #9</th>
<th>Standard Deviations #4</th>
<th>Standard Deviations #6</th>
<th>Standard Deviations #9</th>
<th>t-scores #4</th>
<th>t-scores #6</th>
<th>t-scores #9</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Split</strong></td>
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<td>1.50</td>
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<td>.04</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Segments</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<td>.04</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* proportions prior to transformation
** calculated from transformed scores
$\diamond$ significant at $\alpha = .05$ level.
In evaluating the two groups on their intended use of influencing skills, the following hypotheses were tested.

H₃₀: There will be no statistically significant difference in the degree to which the Gestalt group trainees and the control group report that they (a) intended to use the influencing skill of direct guidance, (b) intended to use the influencing skill of open question and (c) intended to use the influencing skill of non-verbal referent as revealed by the Wilcoxon Matched-Pairs Signed-Ranks non-parametric test of significance.

H₃₁: There will be a statistically significant difference in the degree to which the Gestalt group trainees and the control group report that they (a) intended to use the influencing skill of direct guidance, (b) intended to use the influencing skill of open question and (c) intended to use the influencing skill of non-verbal referent as revealed by the Wilcoxon Matched-Pairs Signed-Ranks non-parametric test of significance.

The Wilcoxon Matched-Pairs Signed Ranks analysis revealed that in the intended use of direct guidance(#4) and open question(#6), the two groups were not significantly different at \( \alpha = .05 \) level of significance. Parts (a) and (b) of the null hypothesis were therefore retained. In their intended use of non-verbal referent(#9) the two groups were found to be significantly different at \( \alpha = .05 \) level of significance. Part (c) of the null hypothesis was rejected in favour of the alternative. Medians, quartile deviations and T-scores are shown in Table X.
To measure the counsellors' degree of goal attainment, two different analyses were used. In a comparison of the two groups on their degree of goal attainment, the following hypotheses were tested:

\[ H_{40}: \] There will be no statistically significant difference in the degree to which the Gestalt group trainees and the control group will attain their personal growth goals as revealed by a Chi square test of independence.

\[ H_{41}: \] There will be a statistically significant difference in the degree to which the Gestalt group trainees and the control group will attain their personal growth goals as revealed by a Chi square test of independence.

Goal Attainment forms were completed by ten of the eleven Gestalt group counsellors. The matched control group counsellor was eliminated from the following two analyses. The Chi square test of independence revealed that the two groups were not significantly different in their attainment of personal growth goals at \( \alpha = .05 \) level of significance. The null hypothesis was retained. The frequencies are shown on Table XI.
The second analysis evaluated the degree to which the experimental group counsellors were successful in achieving their training goals. The Chi square goodness of fit analysis revealed that at $\alpha = .05$ level of significance, the sample deviates significantly from the expected frequency. The observed and expected frequencies are shown on Table XII.

The client evaluations of counsellor helpfulness for the experimental group were found to have a median of 3.9 and a range of 3 to 5. The control group evaluations had a median of 3.2 and a range of 3 to 5.

The clinical evaluations of the post-test experimental group answered two questions. For counsellor effectiveness in promoting client exploration, the median was 4.19 with a range of 3 to 5. For the appropriateness of the counsellor skills the median was found to be 4.14 with a range of 3 to 5.

TABLE XI
TEST OF INDEPENDENCE FOR ATTAINMENT OF PERSONAL GROWTH GOALS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>-2</th>
<th>-1</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>+1</th>
<th>+2</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>20</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

$x^2 = 2.21$
### TABLE XII
GOODNESS OF FIT TEST OF OBSERVED AND EXPECTED FREQUENCIES
FOR ATTAINMENT OF TRAINING GOALS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
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<th>E</th>
<th>0-E</th>
<th>(O-E)^2</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Improved</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worssened</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ x^2 = 10 \]

Significant at \( \alpha = .05 \) level.
CHAPTER V
DISCUSSION

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The results of the present study suggest that the training programme under evaluation was effective in teaching counsellors advanced influencing skills of Gestalt therapy. Counsellors demonstrated the ability to recognize and respond to a split with the two-chair operation and their responses to the split showed significantly more use of direct guidance. The results also indicate that counsellors used significantly more direct guidance and open question once the two-chair role-play was in progress. In addition, results indicate that counsellors felt that through the Gestalt training experience they were successful in attaining both their personal growth and training goals.

In the counsellor response to a split, ten of the eleven counsellors responded with the Gestalt two-chair role-play. The single counsellor who failed to respond to the split within the first ten minutes did use the two-chair operation later in the session. All counsellors who initiated the two-chair operation in response to the client-presented split continued with that process until the last few minutes of the session.

Although it can be argued that trainees performed the two-chair operation in response to experimental demand, the results do indicate that counsellors had learned the perceptual and executive skills required of this operation. In addition, both the client and clinical evaluations of the counsellors in the experimental group were favourable, suggesting that this particular intervention was used effectively and appropriately in the session.
Further examination of the results of this study yields a number of interesting contradictions. One major discrepancy occurs between the counsellors' intended use and actual use of influencing skills. Counsellors in the experimental group were significantly higher than the control group in the use of direct guidance. However, in their stated intentions to use direct guidance, the two groups were matched with relatively low scores. One possible explanation lies in the fact that all the Gestalt group counsellors had first been empathy-trained. This type of background discourages the counsellor from using direct guidance and emphasizes instead the importance of the client providing direction. Therefore, although the Gestalt group counsellors used direct guidance fairly consistently throughout the sessions, they may have been reluctant to recognize that skill as part of their repertoire. This highlights the need for more theoretical or conceptual skills to bring the counsellors' attitudes and behaviour closer together. Although the issue of control and direction was discussed in the group, it was done so only briefly and no attempt was made to challenge the trainees' beliefs about non-directiveness.

Another discrepancy occurs between intended and actual use of open question. At the pre-test, the scores of both groups on intended use of open question were fairly high, while in actual use the scores of both groups were relatively low. These scores for intended use suggest that empathy-trained counsellors regard open question as a valuable skill and believe that they use it more than they actually do. At the post test, the experimental group increased their actual use of open question in the segments, bringing their performance more in line with their stated intentions.
A third discrepancy occurs between intended and actual use of non-verbal referent. In their intended use of non-verbal referent, Gestalt group counsellors were significantly higher than the control group. In actual use however, the Gestalt group counsellors demonstrated very little of this skill. The scores of this group on actual use were not significantly different from those of the control group.

One possible explanation for this discrepancy lies in the experimental nature of the sessions. In a real counselling situation, a counsellor would not normally use active skills until the relationship had become established. For the purposes of this research, counsellors were given a mental set designed to facilitate the use of active skills within the single thirty-minute experimental session. Prior to each of the experimental sessions, each counsellor was instructed to counsel as if he/she had previously spent four sessions with the client building a therapeutic relationship. The results of this study suggest that the mental set was successful in encouraging the use of direct guidance and open question but not the use of non-verbal referent. Non-verbal referent, which is designed to bring the client's non-verbal behaviour into his/her awareness, can be a potent tool. It may be that in spite of the mental set, counsellors regarded this skill as too intrusive or confrontative for a person they were seeing for the first time and therefore avoided using it.

Another possible explanation for the discrepancy between intended and actual use of non-verbal referent lies in the nature of the two-chair operation. Separating out the parts of the client's self and initiating a dialogue between the parts requires consistent use of direct guidance. Non-verbal referent is typically used once the dialogue has begun, primarily to heighten the client's awareness. It is important that this skill is used selectively in order not to distract or confuse the client. In an entire session, the counsellor might use non-verbal referent only two or three times. This would suggest that the sampling procedure used in this study may not be the most appropriate method for
evaluating the use of non-verbal referent. A more meaningful measure of
the actual use of this skill might be obtained by examining the entire
taped session. This approach could possibly yield more accurate
information about the use of this skill in the Gestalt two-chair
role-play.

Another important observation concerns the proportion scores indicating
the actual use of the Gestalt influencing skills. In the post-test, the
mean proportion score of the experimental group representing combined
Gestalt influencing skills was .33. This score represents one-third of
the total responses, leaving two-thirds of the responses designated to
other categories. An examination of the data indicates that although
counsellors were using Gestalt influencing skills, many of their other
responses involved reflection or restatement. This indicates that the
Gestalt-trained counsellors were using their new skills in conjunction
with their empathy-based skills.

In addition the single most commonly-used response found across all
counsellors was minimal encourager, a skill designed to indicate
understanding and encourage the client's self-exploration. A mean
proportion of the use of this skill by the post-test experimental group
was .39. When this single skill is removed from the analysis, the mean
use of direct guidance in the segments increases from .18 to .28. The
use of open question increases from .15 to .23. With this adjustment,
the use of the combined Gestalt influencing skills increases from .33 to
.51 representing a substantial proportion of the total counsellor
responses.

The final observations concern the counsellors' achievement of their
personal growth and training goals. It was anticipated that experimental
group counsellors would achieve their personal growth goals significantly
more than would the control group. The results indicated however that
both groups felt they had achieved their personal growth goals. Upon
consideration, these results are not surprising. As a programme and as a profession, counselling psychology emphasizes the importance of the counsellor's own personal growth. Students in the counselling programme and recent graduates are likely to be interested in their own personal growth. As a result, they may see themselves moving successfully towards that goal.

In their evaluation of their training goals, counsellors in the Gestalt group indicated a sense of achievement. On many of the feedback forms, counsellors noted that they saw the learning of new skills as an on-going process and hoped in time to gain more experience and confidence with their new skills.

It could be argued that this group would want to see themselves as achieving their training goals due to the considerable investment they had made in terms of time, effort and expense. In addition, the very fact that they had undertaken advanced training suggests that they represent a highly-motivated group of counsellors, desirous of achieving specific goals. However, the results of this study confirm that the counsellors were successful in learning Gestalt skills. Also, evaluations by both clients and clinicians suggest that in using these new skills, the Gestalt counsellors were appropriate, effective and helpful.

DELIMITATIONS

In general, the results of this study suggest that the training programme being evaluated was effective in teaching counsellors some of the advanced skills of Gestalt therapy. What is needed now is evidence concerning the generalizability of these results. In order to apply the results of this research more generally, it is important to examine the effectiveness of other such groups led by other trainers.
The results of this study are subject to a further limitation. One of the major confounding variables of training research is that of experimental demand. Given that these counsellors were completing a training programme, it would not be unexpected that they would attempt to demonstrate competence with the trained skills. It seems important therefore that a follow-up study be done to evaluate the long-term effectiveness of the training experience. Results of a follow-up study could indicate whether the counsellors had successfully integrated and retained their new skills.

CONCLUSIONS

To date, training of Gestalt therapists has been primarily experiential with no clearly articulated skill base. Using this combined approach of skills and personal growth, it appears possible to train counsellors in the effective use of specific Gestalt skills within twenty-four sessions. Assuming that the results are generalizable, the study suggests that this method of training counsellors in Gestalt skills represents an important contribution to the counsellor education literature. It now seems important to evaluate whether this particular approach is more effective or more efficient than the previous personal growth or experiential approaches.


APPENDIX A

THEMES AND PROGRAM CONTENT
(excerpted from Greenberg, 1980b)

Awareness

Lecturette and Experiential Exercises. The first training session begins with a "here and now" based awareness exercise. Each member of the group is asked to say how he or she feels "right now," in order to focus on actual present experiencing. This provides an opportunity right at the start to experience the vitality of the process of awareness. A lecturette is then provided on different aspects of awareness. A discussion of Perl's three zones of awareness (1969) and the difference between thinking and sensing is followed by another experiential awareness exercise. An exercise is used in which people in dyads share present awareness and present imagining and explore different aspects of their own awareness (Stevens, 1970; Passons, 1975).

Skill Training. Counsellor skills which are designed to aid client awareness are the first to be introduced in the skill training. Client and counsellor dyads are formed and the clients are instructed to talk about recent unfinished situations. The counsellors are instructed to refrain from reflecting. In place of reflecting content or feeling, counsellors ask their clients to become aware of their present experiencing. The distinction between "talking about" and "experiencing" is thereby clarified at this early stage in the
training process. The counsellor inquires into the client's present state by saying, "What are you aware of as you say this?", or "What are you feeling right now?" The micro-skills being taught in this exercise are awareness inquiries and affect inquiries. Use of these micro-skills highlight the presence of the inner process that accompanies content. In addition, this exercise provides the first experience for the counsellor in engaging in a directive inquiry style.

Following this exercise the roles are changed and the counsellors are asked to bring to awareness visible phenomena, such as gestures or hand movements that their clients may be making while they are talking. This is done by utilizing an attending suggestion, e.g., "become aware of what you are doing with your hands, eyes, mouth, etc.". Again process is emphasized over content and the counsellor has an experience in timing a suggestion and having to interrupt the client verbalization to bring something to awareness.

Introjection

Lecturette and Experiential Exercises. First a brief lecture on introjection (Perls et al., 1951) is given. Perls' notion of Top Dog and Underdog and the self manipulation game are presented. The dialogue between the "bullying authoritarian" part of the personality and the "sabotaging avoiding" part is demonstrated in a role play. The function of introjection in the creation of conflict
is discussed and the importance of separating the two parts of a conflict into the introjected "shoulds" and the organismic "wants" is stressed.

The basic process of introjection and the method by which it is resolved in the two chair process is exemplified by an exercise focusing on the tyranny of "should" by which many people govern their lives (Stevens, 1970). Other exercises involving awareness of "shoulds" and Top Dog/Underdog dialogues are used if time permits.

**Skill Training.** The definition of a conflict split is provided and the first principle of two chair work separation and contact is presented. Briefly the trainer discusses the idea that clients often present splits characterized by two parts in felt conflict, e.g., "I am not sure if I want to get married and have kids or continue at my school", "I just can't seem to decide" or "I should work harder but I just can't get going, I don't know what to do". The fundamental skill in dealing with splits is the setting up of the experiment by separating the two parts into different chairs and having them make contact or begin a dialogue. The first microskill emphasized in the creation of this experiment is the skill of getting a sense of yourself - getting each side to describe itself and what it is like by saying, "get a sense of what this part of you is like; tell me who you are as this part". The second skill emphasized is the skill of getting the parts to make
contact - instructing the parts to talk to each other rather than to the counsellor by saying "tell this to your other part."

Client, counsellor and observer triads are formed to practice the skills. The first experience is made as easy and error free as possible by asking the person in the client role to take responsibility for separating out the parts and conducting their own dialogue and having the counsellor merely occupy the role of counsellor without the responsibility for doing anything. Clients unfold their own dialogues and the counsellor has only to be aware of what it feels like to be in that role and make observations on client process. The observer similarly observes and the experience is then discussed.

Clients are then asked to express a conflict split to their counsellor and the counsellor engages in paraphrasing the felt split to insure that the client feels understood and that the counsellor understands the issue. The counsellor must then find an appropriate time to create the experiment and recognize the split by observing that, "it seems like there are two parts of you" and identifying and locating the parts in two chairs. This is followed by the getting a sense of and make contact interventions.

The whole group meets to discuss this experience. From the discussions the importance of using the clients' descriptions of unique parts to capture the essence of the conflict is emphasized. The counsellors are encouraged to direct their clients to make contact with their imagined other parts rather than to seek understanding
from the counsellor. Contact between parts of the self rather than between counsellor and client is stressed as a vehicle of change and the potential medium for facilitating self-acceptance which comes about by literally 'listening to oneself' in the two chairs. In addition the importance to the whole experiment of getting a true felt sense of the opposition in the conflict is emphasized. The counsellor discourages the client from 'talking about' the conflict or the parts and encourages the actual experiencing, here and now, of the two different tendencies or parts. Identifying the opposed forces correctly is the major task for both counsellor and client in the creation of this experiment.

**Retroflection**

**Lecturette and Experiential Exercise.** Perls' notion of retroflection, the turning back of activity against the self, is presented and the role of the musculature in the squeezing of the jaw, the neck, the throat, etc. is discussed (Perls, et al., 1951). This topic can be explored at various depths depending on time and interest but the essential concept to be conveyed is that of activity against the self. The importance of people taking responsibility for what they do to themselves as the first step toward change is stressed.

The fact that people 'do things to themselves' is explored experientially by asking students to become aware of how they interfere with their own integrated functioning as witnessed in
statements like "I judge myself, I hold myself back, I frighten myself, I pressure myself, I egg myself on, etc." The students are asked to pair up and one of the pair is designated as "the self". The other members of the dyad then proceed to enact what they do to themselves, on their partner. They are instructed to actually "do" things to their partner both verbally and physically and not just "talk about" what they do to their partner. They proceed to experience themselves as active agents of their own distress by 'sitting on' their partners, 'dragging them' around the room, 'squeezing' their necks and 'barraging' them with criticism, etc. This is usually a highly enjoyable and illuminating exercise which by the embodiment inculcates in the trainees the Gestalt 'mentality of responsibility' that it is I who am responsible for much of my own experience.

**Skill Training.** The definition of the Subject/Object split is presented and the second principle of two chair work Responsibility is discussed. Briefly the trainer presents the observation that often clients make statements in counselling characterized by the fact that they are split into being both subject and the object of their statements, e.g., "I dislike myself", "I watch myself".

It is pointed out that having separated the sides in this and other splits it is important to get the person to take responsibility for their experience in each chair, i.e., to respond in accordance with the true nature of their experience in that chair. The
micro-skills of affect and desire inquiries and language and demand suggestions are emphasized as ones which promote the taking of responsibility in each chair. A language exercise in which trainees experiment with the use of sentence beginning with 'it', 'you', 'we', 'I' respectively is used to ground this skill in experience (Stevens, 1970; Passons, 1975).

Triads are again formed with client, counsellor and observer. The clients are asked to express a split and the counsellor sets up the two chair experiment and focuses on the use of one of the responsibility micro-skills, like language suggestions. The observer is asked to be alert to possible responsibility interventions. The notion of the observer as a "surrogate" counsellor to whom the counsellor may turn for assistance is introduced at this point. This provides some needed support for beginners who are often overwhelmed by the complexity of the client stimulus material and their responsibility as moment by moment initiators.

In the group discussion following the feedback in the triad several issues are discussed. The idea of the appropriate timing of interventions within the dialogue so as to promote experiencing rather than cause 'diffusion' of experience is discussed. Clients whose counsellors intervene too slowly or infrequently "talk about" their experience whereas those whose counsellors intervene too quickly and too often without allowing a theme to develop report feeling scattered and confused without meaning developing from their experiencing.
**Figure/Background**

**Lecturette and Experiential Exercises.** The fundamental importance of awareness as the source of experiencing is stressed. The figure background principle of perceptual functioning is discussed and the two principle of attending and heightening which function to sharpen awareness are introduced. In the attending session, awareness exercises emphasizing non-verbal communication both in body and voice are used (Stevens, 1970) and Gendlin's (1969) focusing exercise is given to emphasize inner attending. Body exercises (Fadiman and Frager, 1977) of hitting a pillow or shouting "yes-no" or "I will - you won't" are used as a heightening exercise to increase the general level of arousal. An exaggerated role play exercise is also used (Stevens, 1970) to experience heightened awareness of roles.

**Skill Training.** The awareness inquiry, attending suggestion, and focusing suggestion micro-skills are practiced and the importance of the client's awareness as the medium of the whole experiment is emphasized. It is stressed that if ever a client or counsellor is confused, a method for getting back to what's important for this client is to simply make an inquiry such as "What are you experiencing?" as the way to heighten awareness and experiencing. The exaggeration and repetition skill is practiced as a method of heightening.

**Projection**

**Lecturette and Experiential Exercises.** Perl's ideas on projection are discussed and the distinction is made between
projection of standards and disapproval (you think I am not O.K.) and projection of feelings and impulses (you feel angry towards me).

Projection is described in a non-analytic framework and an attribution of one's own thoughts and feelings onto the environment and as a hypersensitivity to minor manifestations of attitudes and feelings in other people (Enright, 1970).

A number of experiential exercises can be used to explore the ideas of projection and attribution (Stevens, 1970). An awareness exercise in which people report their awareness and their imaginings used in the first session can be repeated in order to emphasize the importance of distinguishing between fantasy and reality.

**Skill Training.** Two attribution splits are discussed. The first is the Attribution of conflict split in which clients report opposition from the environment, e.g., "I want to leave school but my father says I shouldn't and I don't know what to do". The second is the Attribution of agency split or giving up of one's power, when clients report that their experience is the result of another's actions, e.g., "she made me feel embarrassed". "I need his reassurance".

The triads work on attribution splits utilizing all the skills learned to date. They are now able to introduce other people or parts of the world into the other chair. The process of reowning the attributed part and the tendency for this to often be accompanied by a lot of feelings is discussed.
Process, Structure and Feedback

Lecturette and Experiential Exercises. The importance of discovering the "what" and the "how", the content and the process of experience, rather than the "why", the cause of experience, is discussed. Exercises designed to show how being more specific and becoming aware of how one is doing something are used. In dyads one person is instructed to repeatedly ask the other 'what do you want?' and to follow the others answer with a specificity question "please be more specific". This highlights that by becoming more concrete and specific in expression, experience is deepened. The difficult Gestalt intuition, that of becoming aware of "how" one does things, is approached by asking people to become aware of "how" they are doing or just did something, e.g., they are asked "how are you interacting, how did you get what you wanted, etc.?" In discussing feedback it is stressed that it is the medium in this experiment for counsellors to maintain genuine contact with their clients and to share their own awareness, experiences, perceptions and hunches that relate to the client's work.

Skill Training. The skills to be learned relating to expression are those of making an expression inquiry and specificity suggestions and these are practiced in triads as part of a two chair experiment. In addition the skills of feeding back to the client behavioural observations and making personal awareness statements are practiced as part of two chair work.
APPENDIX B
COUNSELOR VERBAL RESPONSE CATEGORY SYSTEM

1. Minimal encourager. This consists of a short phrase that indicates simple agreement, acknowledgement, or understanding. It encourages but does not request the client to continue talking, it does not imply approval or disapproval. It may be a repetition of key word(s) and does not include responses to questions (see information).

2. Approval-reassurance. This provides emotional support, approval, or reinforcement. It may imply sympathy or tend to alleviate anxiety by minimizing client's problems.

3. Information. This supplies information in the form of data, facts resources, theory and the like. It may be information specifically related to the counselling process, counselor's behaviour or arrangement (time, place, fee etc.) It may answer direct questions but does not include directions for what the client should do (see direct guidance).

4. Direct guidance. This consists of directions or advice that the counselor suggests for the client, or for the client and counselor together either within or outside the counseling session. It is not aimed at soliciting verbal material from the client (see closed or open question).

5. Closed question. This is a data-gathering inquiry that requests a one-or-two word answer, a "yes" or "no" or a confirmation of the counselor's previous statement. The possible client responses to this type of inquiry are typically limited and specific. If statements are phrased in the form of a closed question but meet the criteria for another category, they should be put in the other category.

6. Open question. A problem requests a clarification of feelings or an exploration of the situation without purposely limiting the nature of the response to a yes or no or a one or two word response. If statements are phrased in the form of an open question but meet the criteria for another category, they should be put in the other category.

7. Restatement. This is a simple repeating or rephrasing of the client's statement(s) (not necessarily just the immediately preceding statements. It typically contains fewer but similar words and is more concrete and clear than the client's message. It may be phrased either tentatively or as a statement.
8. Reflection. This is a repeating or rephrasing of the client's statement (not necessarily just the immediately preceding statements). It must contain reference to stated or implied feelings. It may be based on previous statements, non-verbal behaviour, or knowledge of the total situation. It may be phrased either tentatively or as a statement.

9. Nonverbal referent. This points out or inquires about aspects of the client's nonverbal behaviour, for example, body posture, voice tone or level, facial expressions, gestures and so on. It may be phrased either tentatively or as a statement.

10. Interpretation. This goes beyond what the client has overtly recognized. It might take one of several forms. It might establish connections between seemingly isolated statements or events; it interprets defenses, feelings, resistance, or transference (the interpersonal relationship between counselor and client): it might indicate themes, patterns, or causal relationships in the client's behaviour or personality. It usually gives alternative meanings for old behaviour or issues. If a statement also meets the criteria for a confrontation, it should be put in confrontation.

11. Confrontation. This contains two parts: The first part may be implied rather than stated and refers to some aspect of the client's message or behaviour; the second part usually begins with a "but" and presents a discrepancy. This contradiction or discrepancy may be between words and behaviour, between two things the client has stated, between behaviour and action, between real and ideal self, between verbal and nonverbal behaviour, between fantasy and reality, or between the counselor's and the client's perceptions.

12. Self-disclose: This usually begins with an "I"; the counselor shares his or her own personal experiences and feelings with the client. Note that not all statements that begin with an "I" are self-disclosure, it must have a quality of sharing or disclosing.

13. Silence. A pause of 5 seconds is considered the counselor's pause if it occurs between a client's statement and a counselor's statement or within the client's statement (except after a simple acceptance of the counselor's statement, e.g., "yes," pause).

14. Other. These include statements that are unrelated to client's problems, such as small talk or salutations, comments about the weather or events; disapproval or criticism of the client; or statements that do not fit into any other category or are unclassifiable due to difficulties in transcription, in comprehensibility or incompleteness.
APPENDIX C
(Pre and post-test experimental and control groups)

COUNSELLING SESSION FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONNAIRE

Below are 12 response categories which represent different counsellor interventions. Please indicate, by circling the appropriate number, to what degree you intended to use each of the following types of responses during your counselling session:

1. Were your responses intended to indicate agreement, acknowledgement, encouragement, or understanding through the use of short phrases or single words?

   1  2  3  4  5
   not at all  seldom  sometimes  often  very often

2. Were your responses intended to provide emotional support, approval, reinforcement or reassurance, or to alleviate the client's anxiety?

   1  2  3  4  5
   not at all  seldom  sometimes  often  very often

3. Were your responses intended to supply information in the form of data, facts, resources, theory, etc?

   1  2  3  4  5
   not at all  seldom  sometimes  often  very often

4. Were your responses intended to offer direct guidance through directions or suggestions?

   1  2  3  4  5
   not at all  seldom  sometimes  often  very often

5. Were your responses intended to ask data-gathering questions which request a one or two word answer or a "yes" or "no"?

   1  2  3  4  5
   not at all  seldom  sometimes  often  very often
6. Were your responses intended to ask questions to clarify feelings or explore the situation without limiting the nature of the response to one or two words, or a "yes" or "no"?

1 2 3 4 5
not at all seldom sometimes often very often

7. Were your responses intended to repeat or restate your client's statements in similar words but more concretely or clearly?

1 2 3 4 5
not at all seldom sometimes often very often

8. Were your responses intended to reflect or rephrase the implied or stated feeling in your client's statements?

1 2 3 4 5
not at all seldom sometimes often very often

9. Were your responses intended to point out or inquire about aspects of your client's non-verbal behaviour eg. posture, voice, facial expression, gestures?

1 2 3 4 5
not at all seldom sometimes often very often

10. Were your responses intended to establish connections between seemingly isolated statements or events, indicate themes in your client's behaviour or interpret defenses, feelings, resistance or transference?

1 2 3 4 5
not at all seldom sometimes often very often

11. Were your responses intended to confront contradictions or discrepancies in your client's information, feelings, perceptions or behaviour?

1 2 3 4 5
not at all seldom sometimes often very often

12. Were your responses intended to self-disclose i.e. share your own personal experiences and feelings with your client?

1 2 3 4 5
not at all seldom sometimes often very often
APPENDIX D
(Pre-test experimental group)

GOAL ATTAINMENT INVENTORY (Form A)

We are interested in determining what goals you have for yourself in the Gestalt group. Please answer the following questions as clearly and specifically as you can.

a) What do you hope to achieve from this training experience as a counsellor? What specific skills do you hope to acquire?

2) What do you hope to achieve from this training experience in terms of your own personal growth? In what specific ways would you hope to be different at the end?
APPENDIX E
(Pre-test control group)

GOAL ATTAINMENT INVENTORY (Form B)

Counsellors in training programmes and recent graduates experience a number of changes in terms of their personal growth. We are interested in discovering what sort of personal growth goals you have set for yourself.

As fully as possible, please state what your goals are in the space below. In addition, please describe the specific ways in which you will be different once you have achieved your goals.
APPENDIX F
(Post-test experimental and control groups)

GOAL ATTAINMENT FOLLOW-UP

In the first session, you identified certain personal growth goals for yourself.

1. Please indicate by checking next to the appropriate answer, where you are now in relation to where you started.

-2 _________ Much worse than before
-1 _________ Worse than before
 0 _________ Same as before
+1 _________ Better than before
+2 _________ Much better than before
APPENDIX G
(Post-test experimental group)

GOAL ATTAINMENT FOLLOW-UP

At the beginning of the Gestalt training group, you identified certain training goals for yourself.

1. Please indicate by checking next to the appropriate answer, where you are now in relation to where you started.

   -2 ________ Much worse than before
   -1 ________ Worse than before
    0 ________ Same as before
    +1 ________ Better than before
    +2 ________ Much better than before
APPENDIX H
(Pre and post-test experimental and control groups)

COUNSELLOR RESPONSE TO A SPLIT

RATER: _______________________

COUNSELLOR: _______________________

Indicate by circling the appropriate number, if the counsellor responded to the client split by initiating the separation and contact of the Gestalt two-chair role-play.

1  2  3
No Unclear Yes
APPENDIX I
(Pre-test experimental and control groups)

CLIENT EVALUATION

COUNSELLOR: ____________________________

CLIENT: ____________________________

Please indicate to what degree you feel your counsellor was helpful in working on your issue by circling the appropriate number.

1  2  3  4  5
extremely unhelpful  somewhat helpful  extremely helpful
unhelpful  helpful  helpful
APPENDIX J
(Post-test experimental group)

CLINICAL EVALUATION

COUNSELLOR: ________________________________

CLINICIAN: ________________________________

Please indicate your evaluation of the counsellor's responses by circling the appropriate number.

1. Was the counsellor effective in promoting client exploration?

   1  2  3  4  5
   not at all  not very  somewhat  effective  very effective
   effective  effective  effective

2. Were the skills that the counsellor used being used appropriately?

   1  2  3  4  5
   not at all  not very  somewhat  appropriately  very appropriately
   appropriately  appropriately  appropriately
Dear Counsellor:

Thank you for your willingness to participate in this research.

Your total participation as a counsellor will involve two half-hour sessions and completion of four questionnaires. You will be paired with a client for a first session now and paired with a different client for your session in March.

All clients have had some previous experience with the counselling process and will be coached to some extent. However, the problem that your client presents will be a real one.

In the actual session, please assume that you have already spent some time, about four sessions, building a relationship with your client. Then proceed to counsel your client as you normally would in a regular session. Please be sure to tape record the entire session.

Again, many thanks for your co-operation in this project.

Sincerely,