



How to Change Yourself & Your World

A Manual of Co-Counselling Theory and Practice,

by
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Preface

What *is* co-counselling? It is a way of helping yourself, and others, change. When you learn co-counselling you acquire new skills and techniques, as well as appreciating better some you have been using all your life. As described in this manual, you do co-counselling in a pair, sharing the time equally with a partner. You act as 'counsellor' to help your partner, then they act as counsellor and you are the 'client'. Thus there is no outside expert, you are world expert on you.

Once you have learned to co-counsel you will probably find yourself applying certain of the ideas and techniques, and the style of caring relationship, throughout your life. With friends, family, colleagues and, if you are a 'helper' by vocation or avocation, with your clients, or pupils, or patients. We would also recommend co-counselling as providing an excellent personal support system for counsellors, psychotherapists, and professional groups who have to deal with people.

Who can [and cannot] co-counsel? Most people can! People with problems, people who want to be more effective; young people and elders; those who just could not wait to leave school, and professors of Sanskrit. However, if you fall into one of the following categories then co-counselling is probably not for you:

- if there is nothing you want to change about yourself or your life.
- if you are a compulsive helper of others and can't or won't take time to work on yourself.
- if you are deeply distressed in a way which means you cannot pay attention to someone else for any length of time.
- if you are taking psychoactive drugs to help you cope with life and cannot leave them off.

Since co-counselling is used in a reciprocal relationship, a crucial ability is to be able to pay attention to someone else--to take your turn as counsellor. If you have your attention trapped by depression, or anxiety, or aggression, and cannot climb out, then it will be difficult to give the necessary attention. Such distresses can still be worked on using co-counselling techniques, providing a skilled one-way counsellor is available.

We have practised co-counselling, each on our own behalf, for ten years now. The manual is the fruit of our own experience, and of others we have worked with and taught. It started in a rudimentary form as a few pages given to people on the first courses. Over the years the manual has reflected both the development of our thinking and our wish to communicate with a wide spectrum of people. It has been through many changes, most of them hurriedly done for a deadline of the next course. This version is more polished, and contains fewer errors and we hope it will be even more useful and enjoyed than previous versions.

The bulk of this manual is of a 'what's it all about?' and a 'getting started' character. There are also fragments and suggestions and ideas about what can follow--but in truth what follows is the rest of your life. None of the techniques and principles described here were invented by us. However we are responsible for the ways of

organising the techniques, and the linking of the principles with some of the scientific views of emotions.

We have sought to integrate our viewpoints and scientific backgrounds with our experience and with the principles arrived at by other co-counsellors. This has occurred by a process of discussion, argument, and repeated re-formulations as our understanding increased. In the end product of this process, it is not possible to tell which of us has contributed what; it has been a delightful mutual building on ideas. Nevertheless we are very different individuals, and some of this may come through as stylistic differences in different parts of the manual, not ironed out in editing.

In revising the manual thoroughly for publication we have aimed for clarity and consistency. We have tried to retain much of the personal flavour of earlier versions. We frequently refer to the readers as 'you' and ourselves as first person plural. We have tried to eliminate the use of 'we' in reference to generalised humanity, which was a feature of earlier versions. In the interests of confidentiality we have continued to use mainly examples from our personal experience.

This manual is primarily intended as an aid to people in co-counselling classes, or being taught in some other way. You can learn co-counselling without a teacher, but most people find a supportive group not only helpful but necessary when first learning the skills. Many of the techniques do require a learning period, during which feedback on progress is valuable. As experienced co-counsellors we continue to find useful support and challenge in a co-counselling group.

It is possible to find co-counselling teachers and classes throughout the country, and indeed in many countries throughout the world. In case of difficulty write to us, c/o Co-Counselling Phoenix, enclosing a stamped addressed envelope, and we will provide contacts.

Part I: Introduction

What is Co-Counselling All About?

Co-Counselling is about learning how to help yourself and others change.

What might you want to change in yourself or your life? This is a question no-one but you can answer. We can only offer some suggestions for you to consider and see if they are relevant.

- you might want to reduce the time spent with negative feelings, such as boredom, or anxiety, or irritation, or depression. Such feelings may be occurring in relation to a traumatic event in your life or along with more commonplace happenings.
- maybe there are things that you find yourself doing now that you'd prefer not to do; breaking or losing things, upsetting other people, making a mess of tasks you've been given.
- also consider the things you can't do now and would like to do--anything where you find yourself saying, "I can't. . ." or "I'm no good at. . ." or "if only . . .". It may be dancing, adding up, making friends, getting on with your children--or your parents!

We suggest you make a list for yourself as a starting point; then, before you dismiss the whole idea as impractical, read on.

What stops people changing in ways they want to change? There are no all purpose answers--you have to investigate for yourself in your own life. In our experience, however, there are some things which appear common to situations where a person finds themselves stuck. Here are some examples of that type of situation from Rose's life:

1. "I used to find it very difficult to ask people for things. I found myself embarrassed, feeling uncertain I had any right to ask and frightened of being rejected. I would try to avoid such situations. If avoidance wasn't possible, I would find myself tongue-tied and unable to find the words I wanted."
2. "I wanted to dance, but couldn't enjoy dancing, because I was very anxious about making a fool of myself, getting upset when I made mistakes and continually thinking that my partner must be fed up with my being clumsy."
3. "I couldn't say 'No', even to something I didn't want and thought I was justified in refusing--like more work than I could handle. I felt guilty and I thought other people would think me selfish."

What are the elements that these situations had in common? They all involve negative emotions; embarrassment, anxiety, guilt. Negative emotions seem to be associated with situations where people find it difficult to change. People frequently give their feelings as reasons for not doing things. Since she took up Hang Gliding, Rose has often been told, "I couldn't possibly do that; I'd be too frightened." Co-Counsellors use the label DISTRESS to describe these negative emotions.

Rose's autobiographical fragments also indicate another element found by many people in those situations where they are stuck, namely, words which go round in their heads. These words are usually negatively evaluative of the person and appear to have the status of unquestioned truths. Because the words appear to be saying how the world is, the possibility of change is not considered.

"I don't have any right to ask." "I'm clumsy and no good at dancing." "I'm selfish when I don't do what other people want." These words appear to be very powerful, even if they don't make sense when considered in a wider context. Rose, for example, is well co-ordinated muscularly and learns sports skills easily, so why should she be clumsy when dancing?

There is a third element in these situations where Rose is stuck. In addition to negative thoughts and feelings there are usually particular physical experiences; being "tongue-tied," muscular tensions, aches, body postures, action sequences. In our experience these occur repetitively along with the thoughts and feelings. Co-Counsellors use the word PATTERN to label those feelings/thoughts/behaviours which are repetitive, stereotyped and unresponsive to what is new and changing in situations.

Patterns seem to be like computer programmes in that once triggered they run off in exactly the same way, regardless of changing circumstances. A computer programme is written so as to be triggered under appropriate circumstances; ultimately it is under the control of a person. Patterns on the other hand often appear to be triggered by small and irrelevant parts of situations and are not under the control of the person.

You can try and identify some of your own Patterns by taking your list of things you'd like to change and seeing which of them represent situations where you are stuck. Check out what you experience in the situations in your life that are relevant to the things you want to change. What is stopping your changing? Can you identify negative feelings? negative repetitive thoughts? bodily experiences?

You will probably find that for some experiences you can identify all three types of element in the Pattern, but for some you may be only aware of some of the elements, and for others you may be vague as to what any of the Patterned pieces are.

It is typical for the thoughts piece to be missing from many Patterns: some time after starting co-counselling Rose realised that she could put words to a particular body posture and uncomfortable feelings (vague) that went along with it. The words were "I'm waiting to be judged by you and I expect to be found inadequate." This realisation was an important step for Rose in being able to tackle that Pattern and become free of it. Of course for some Patterns the thoughts predominate ("I'm no good at drawing.") and there may be little awareness of the feelings or tensions.

To summarise, Co-Counselling identifies Distress and Patterned behaviour as the major elements which interfere with people changing, growing, developing. The co-counselling "package" provides ways of minimising Distress and breaking up Patterned behaviour, so that people have their full range of skills available to them.

The skills learned in co-counselling enable individuals to do the following:

- to deal more effectively with distressing events in their lives, both those which are happening in the present and those from the past which continue to take up present time and attention.
- to break up or bypass the blocks to creativity and learning that most people seem to acquire.
- to become more aware of strengths and skills, so that these are more readily available when needed; so they can be built on and developed further.
- to learn how to focus their attention where they choose, without being either unwillingly or unwittingly distracted.

These skills are most readily learned by individuals utilising them for themselves to make changes in their own lives. The learning context is normally a reciprocal relationship. Once learned, any or all of them can be used to help others in a wide variety of helping relationships.

The Co-Counselling Model of Human Beings

The co-counselling model of what human beings are like focuses on how they interact with the world they live in: with other humans and with the physical environment. Part of everyone's experience is that individuals have two distinct modes of interaction with the world. In one mode they respond flexibly to different situations; take in information, evaluate on the basis of past experience and select or create an appropriate response. In the other mode individuals respond rigidly; they react on the basis of only part of the information, with the same response that has been used in the past. This rigid response is usually inadequate. When we talk about a 'response' we are including 'being' as well as 'doing': thoughts, feelings, muscular tensions are responses as much as actions. In the second mode both the experiencing and the acting of the individual are rigid.

Both the flexible and the rigid modes are part of human experience and both have their uses. However the important point is that humans can only grow and develop when responding in the flexible mode; rigid-mode reactions which constrain individuals to inappropriate responses are powerful blocks to growth. Such rigid-mode reactions are usually unpleasant to experience as well. Co-Counselling clearly distinguishes responding in the flexible mode from responding in a rigid mode. The jargon used is responding from the PERSON or responding from a PATTERN. Patterns are seen as distinct from the Person, parasitic on the Person even. Individuals are encouraged to equate both themselves and others with their Persons and not with their Patterns. At the same time the destructive power of many Patterns is taken seriously. The characteristics of the basic human being, the Person, that are emphasised, vary from one theorist to another, but they all appear to be talking about the same things, even though the language differs.

Harvey Jackins talks about inherent human qualities and singles out: having a vast intelligence; being zestful; being naturally caring and co-operative with others.

John Heron talks about human beings being distinguished by personal needs: to love and be loved; to understand and be understood; to be self-directing. He says infants have remarkable, though undeveloped, capacities for love, understanding and choice.

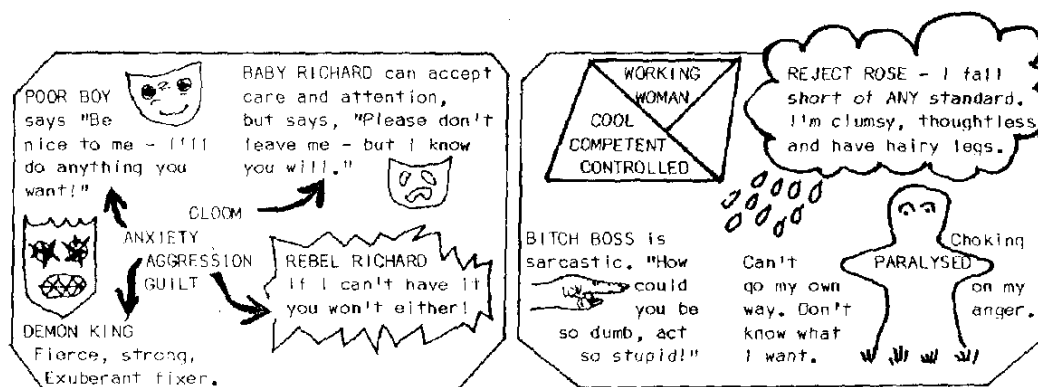
We use some of Harvey Jackins's language, but would underpin this with biological models. We consider the following basic characteristics the starting points of being human:

- a capacity for caring and co-operation with others, which comes from humans being highly successful, social animals.
- a highly developed capacity for learning, which is enhanced by the ability to use symbolic representation of the world in language.
- built-in emotional reactions to significant aspects of the world. Positive feelings form the natural ongoing state, and are reinforced when people are successful in caring for themselves and others and mastering problems. Negative feelings arise in response to threats to survival and wellbeing. They act to mobilise people's bodies and minds for action that can change the situation.

Using the model of individuals having a Personal self and a Patterned self, we can make an important statement: personal growth will result from any methods that enable individuals to alter the balance between flexible and inappropriate rigid responses in their lives--to alter their Person /Pattern ratio. Co-Counselling has a variety of strategies and specific techniques which enable individuals to alter their Person /Pattern balance in favour of their Persons. The core strategy in co-counselling is the disruption of Patterns, by removing the motivational energy which drives them. This is agreed to be inappropriate negative feelings, called DISTRESS in the jargon.

When people are in negative feelings their bodies are geared up for action and their minds are preoccupied with the threatening aspects of their environment. This is appropriate when the threat is real here and now and will expedite action. If, however, the feelings are inappropriate to the present situation then the responses are also likely to be inappropriate and hence not change the situation. The result is that the individual is trapped in Distress of body and mind with no way out. In contrast, with positive feelings, both minds and bodies are in a state where the individual has a lot of choice over what to do next and access to all the abilities which go along with being in the Person mode.

Some Examples of Patterns



Richard: *Poor Boy* says, "Be nice to me - I'll do anything you want. *Baby Richard* can accept care and attention but says, "Please don't leave me--but I know you will." *Demon King* is fierce, strong, an exuberant fixer. *Rebel Richard* says, "If I can't have it you won't either!"

Rose: *Working Woman* is cool, competent, controlled. *Reject Rose*--"I fall short of any standard. I'm clumsy, thoughtless, and have airy legs." *Bitch Boss* is sarcastic: "How could you be so dumb, act so stupid!" *Paralysed* is choking on anger. "Can't go my own way. Don't know what I want."

How Do Patterns Arise, and How Can They Be Disrupted?

Patterns arise from experiences in which an individual suffers Distress because of some kind of threat and does not succeed in removing the threat through some personal action. This means they do not end up in a positive emotional state--the experience ends with a problem being shelved rather than solved. In such circumstances the individual remembers the characteristics of the situation as a threat and associated with them will be the memories of Distress. When any of those characteristics are met in the future the individual's memory will supply the label 'threat' and the person will then react with the same negative feelings as before. This is called RESTIMULATION.

The feelings aroused will push the person in the direction which minimises the Distress. The only available responses for this are those of the initial situation and, since the threat was not mastered then, the responses will be inadequate now. The responses are likely to be those the individual produced at the time--commonly cowed or paralysed ones. Negative feelings activate responses quickly, without aware thought, so the Restimulated feelings will push the person to make the response which minimises the immediately perceived threat. Although the conditioned responses diminish the Distress they do not remove it. The person is still Distressed; their attention will be preoccupied by this. So they will not be able to make a rational judgement of the situation or think of alternative ways of acting.

The individual has become Patterned; they can only pay attention to the distressing characteristics and they are locked into the previous inadequate response. Note that the new situation may not be threatening in reality. The combination of the rapid action and the Distress still being present means that it is difficult, if not impossible, for the person to learn that the present situation does not contain the threat that the Restimulated situation did (#1). The person may now have the skills to change it, but has no means of finding that out and no access to their skills when the Pattern is running. In addition, the activation of the negative feelings and the Patterned responses will act to further strengthen the Pattern.

Initially Distresses arise in childhood when knowledge of their causes will be inadequate. There may be many repetitions of some situations. This can produce generalisations which result in some Distresses always being Restimulated. The resulting Patterns are labelled CHRONIC and they are often equated with an individual's personality. They correspond to Reich's character armour.

Discharge is the off-switch for distress. There are two ways in which Distressing events can end up with positive experiences. The first way is when the individual

discovers how to master the situation by actions which change it so that it's no longer threatening and unpleasant. The second way is when the individual DISCHARGES the negative feelings. Discharge is the name given to active processes which start with the individual in an aroused negative-feeling state and end with them in a positive mind and body state. All humans are capable of Discharging and children do it spontaneously unless stopped by adults. Crying, shaking, raging, yawning, laughing can all be Discharge processes. The particular ones which take place will be those which go along with the experienced feeling, e.g. crying when the feeling is grief, raging when the feeling is anger.

We would say that Discharge is the natural way our bodies deal with negative feelings which persist after the situation that activated them is over. It is possible to discharge Distress after two minutes or after 20 years. In the first case the individual will not become Patterned, in the second case they will start disrupting previously operating Patterns. This occurs because the end result of Discharge is a positive feeling state, in which it is possible to think about, evaluate, and find solutions to previously distressing situations. Co-Counsellors experience this happening spontaneously after Discharge and label it RE-EVALUATION. This phenomenon is so striking that it provided the name of the original Co-Counselling organisation (Re-Evaluation Counselling). Re-evaluation is the operation of the Person freed from the Pattern.

What's Stopping People from Discharging Distress Naturally?

In childhood people are stopped from discharging by parents and teachers (and by other children who jeer at non-conformity.)

"That's a childish way to behave." "Pull yourself together." "Control yourself." "Big boys don't cry." "Good girls don't get angry." "It's silly." (to show fear) "Don't give way to emotions."

Adults repeat to themselves phrases from childhood and use them to suppress discharge processes. These phrases are part of Patterns. Other parts of these Patterns will be muscular tensions which inhibit discharge. These Patterns are known as Control Patterns. Adults pass them on in their turn to their own children.

If the inhibition of discharge processes is as counter productive as we are claiming, how did it all start? Perhaps from inaccurate ideas about the connection between Distress and discharge processes. Distress distorts: the way people see the world, the way they feel, the way they act. Therefore people are keen to keep Distress to a minimum. In children the most obvious sign of Distress is the discharge process, like crying or a temper tantrum. When the discharge ceases the Distress appears to have gone away. So maybe people make every effort to stop the discharge on the assumption that the Distress will cease as well. It is this assumption that is doubtful—only a little self-analysis is needed to decide it isn't true for adults.

This type of mistaken assumption is not as unlikely as it appears--doctors spent many years interfering with the body's healing processes by bleeding patients on a similarly mistaken assumption.

Harvey Jackins suggests that the reason most adults want to stop others discharging is because observing Discharge is restimulative of their own distress. Co-Counsellors

work on the assumption that the end of Discharge signals the end of the Distress *only* when it ends naturally, i.e. when the discharge process has not been interfered with. Co-Counsellors can confirm from their experience that encouraging discharge processes gains them relief from present and past distress, provides ways of returning to rationality and results in the breaking up of restrictive and rigid behaviours.

Many people find their control patterns against Discharge are powerful and they have to relearn what children do naturally (Relearning how to let Discharge occur does not mean being forced to discharge in public--most people will save it for counselling sessions.) The powerful nature of Patterns and the need for experiencing a safe present, provide good reasons for clearly distinguishing what goes on in a co-counselling session from the rest of the person's life. Co-Counsellors make specific contracts with regard to time and behaviour to maximise the chances of breaking Patterns.

The basic strategy in co-counselling is discharging Distress in order to break Patterns. This strategy is assisted by three others for which we use the labels: CELEBRATING; ATTENTION SWITCHING; TARGET PRACTICE. The first two of these constitute a strategy of working from strengths--worth learning in their own right as well as for co-counselling. This is like putting on an asbestos suit and getting a supply of water on hand before you try and fight the fire, rather than rushing in without protection or means of putting the fire out. Target Practice is orientated towards life actions which aid or produce changes for the individual.

Co-Counselling Change Strategies

Celebrating

This strategy involves people learning to appreciate themselves, their abilities and skills; learning to talk and think without putting themselves down or judging themselves to be inadequate. This goes against cultural instructions about not boasting and most people find this hard. Celebrating is needed in building a strong sense of self worth. Becoming more aware of strengths and skills means they are more available and increases effectiveness in tackling life situations. People whose sense of being worthwhile is tied up with what others think of them and who cannot do what they want unless they have the agreement or liking of others, are not likely to be effective in solving their own problems or in helping others.

Attention Switching

This strategy covers any technique for switching out of distress and into positive feeling states. *Feelings follow attention focus*, so Attention Switching exercises call for focusing our attention outside ourselves or on positive memories. These techniques are not trying to convince you that the world is a pleasanter place than it really is. Events are neutral--it is feelings which assign value to them. The same events can be viewed as an exciting challenge or a depressing problem. (And wearing shit-coloured spectacles is actually more debilitating than wearing rose-coloured spectacles.) When a person can choose what they do with their attention it means that they can choose when to tackle their Distresses, rather than get stuck in them at inconvenient moments.

Discharging Distress

By Distress we mean negative feeling states which are not serving an immediately useful purpose. Such feeling states do not just exist in the mind; they include changes in the body: chemical changes, temperature changes, physical tensions. As long as these physical changes exist the feelings are experienced. However, minds and bodies can return to a resting and alert state naturally, following appropriate action to deal with the situation which triggered the feelings (fight or flight in the case of fear). Many threats, however, are psychological and the feeling states evoked can stay around a long time, unless discharge processes take place.

Such discharge processes are sometimes called "catharsis," though this term tends to be associated with traumatic events. Discharge refers to any physical release of emotion which results in the person being returned to a state of physical relaxation and mental alertness with their attention no longer being trapped.

The conditions for discharging distresses do not readily occur in most peoples lives-- particularly in our land of the stiff upper lip. This is the reason why in co-counselling, time is set aside to work on Distress and Patterns in a way that sets up the optimum conditions for success.

Target Practice

This refers to anything you do that is practising new actions, thoughts, and skills that you want to be able to apply in your life. This will include ways of applying the other three strategies in order to remain free of unwanted Distress and to deal with it quickly and effectively when it hits. New thoughts and ways of acting frequently become apparent after Discharge. Target Practice techniques are to help maximise the use of the work put in to trying to change in our co-counselling sessions. These techniques can include role-playing future events and action planning. A further important point is that you will learn skills in co-counselling sessions which are useful for the rest of life.

Celebrate me

Celebrate me, celebrate me

I am a very special person

No one but me can be me

I am strong and carefree

I am warm and tender and kind

Caring and loving to all mankind

Celebrate me, celebrate me

I am a very special Person

I am the most important person to me.

Gail Slover, Connecticut, USA.

Part II: Background Ideas

What is Meant by Emotions? What Are Emotions For?

By regarding Discharge as valuable, we are implicitly saying that emotions themselves are of fundamental concern. This focus on emotions leads to the questions: when people are experiencing emotion, what is going on? And why?

Emotions are not ethereal happenings, bodily sensations are part of emotional experience. However, emotions do not equate to bodily sensations. Imagine walking down a road, seeing a dog and saying "I'm scared of that nasty looking creature." The 'being scared' may include: judging the dog to be a threat; taking action by crossing the road; directly experiencing the situation as unpleasant; speeding up your heart beat and pouring blood to your muscles; directing your attention rather narrowly and obsessively onto the dog.

So when I say "I'm scared," I can only be truly understood, indeed only understand myself, when these words are regarded as a kind of shorthand for one or all of the following:- (#3)

context: *me plus a dog in a street*

judgement: *danger*

actions: *crossing the road*

direct pleasure/pain experience: *nasty*

bodily changes: *arousal*

attention: *narrowly and fixedly focused*

Now to consider certain of these elements of emotion in more detail. People are able to be bodily aroused or completely quiet; they can vary their state of awareness in many ways--free to wander or tightly directed, divided or unitary; experiences can be rapidly labelled with the subjective flavours of nice/nasty, positive/negative. All these options, physiological as well as psychological, are of great potential value.

If you are woken from sleep by an unknown noise on the stairs, it is extremely *practical* to become bodily aroused, prepared for flight or fight; to be obsessively aware of every creak and groan, and often nothing else--the moonlight can be enjoyed another time. It will be practical for you to experience the situation as nasty--this gives you motivation to be wary and seek to neutralise any danger. Once having checked the staircase ... and found that the cat has got out of the kitchen again ... it is equally practical to be able to become bodily quiet; you need your sleep, to let attention drift, to experience the warm bed as a 'nice' place.

Not to be able to respond to life with emotion is a dangerous limitation. On the other hand, if emotions are aroused in ways unconnected with the current situation--if this afternoon a person is stuck with this morning's feelings--then this too is inappropriate behaviour, with its own limitations.



This view of emotion as a kind of motivational switch-gear for survival is certainly not the whole story. Not least since emotional expression acts as an extremely powerful signal to other people. Tears often bring needed help from others, anger sends warnings. This present account however focuses on the intrapersonal significance of emotions, not the interpersonal. Which is not to say that personal growth, or therapy, lack interpersonal consequences!

Emotions and Patterns

Earlier in this manual the co-counselling term 'Pattern' was introduced. This word is used to describe rigid and maladaptive ways of behaving and feeling, which people find difficult to change--or sometimes even to notice. Co-Counselling, in common with many other systems of personal change, considers that such ways of being inevitably involve negative emotions. Dealing in some new way with the negative emotions effectively breaks the grip of the Pattern, and helps people learn new ways of living in the world. Note that the phrase 'negative emotions' merely means 'emotions that feel NASTY,' it does not imply such feelings are bad, unnecessary or entirely avoidable!

Since co-counselling places so much emphasis on Discharge as a powerful way of dealing with negative emotions, this part of the manual will also emphasise Discharge. First, however, a question will be asked: how is it that negative emotions help to maintain and support Patterns?

After all, considering how very effective people are at problem solving and at learning new skills, then the very existence of Patterns does seem a little odd. To clarify this, a concrete example will be discussed. For a long time Richard behaved in a very rigid and predictable way whenever he went to see his boss.

	<p>"I agree, Sir, I agree." Richard's pattern: to agree with authority when in his boss's presence, then to leave and <i>not</i> do what he had 'agreed' to do. Only later he would think, "Oh, no! Not again!"</p>
<p>Why repeat this? How does distress maintain the pattern? In his boss's office Richard was <i>scared</i>. As soon as he acquiesced he felt less anxious.</p>	

In other words, there was a **pay-off** for such quite irrational surrender: namely, feeling less frightened. It's true that the pay-off was short term, and that in the long run there was a catch.

After all Richard did not want to do what he had 'agreed' to. In fact he usually did not do it, and you can guess how much resentment that caused: "Can't trust anyone these days." But in his boss's office he did get rewarded for acquiescence by feeling less anxious. So he gave in again ... and again ... and again.

This is one way, and doubtless there are others, in which negative emotions can maintain patterned actions. So if you can deal in a new way with negative emotions, then you have the chance to deal with life in a new way.

Some Ways of Mapping Emotions

Emotions are complex, with many dimensions. We have found that representing certain of the elements of emotions in a visual way can help many people clarify their thinking and decisions.

In particular the dimension of 'bodily arousal-bodily quiescence,' and the dimension of 'nice-nasty' (i.e. pleasure-pain) are especially valuable in the context of people wanting to change their lives.

Everyone is familiar with active and passive, nice and nasty experiences. So regarding arousal-quiescence (bodily aroused/bodily quiet) as the north-south on an emotional world map, and nice(positive)/nasty(negative) as the east-west, we can draw a diagram or map so:



It is important to remember at this point that nice-nasty (or pleasure-pain, or positive-negative) are NOT equivalent to good-bad, or to appropriate-inappropriate. Both nice *and* nasty feelings can be very useful: as rewards for, or goads to, action for instance.

An extension of this basic map comes from noting the strong connections between places on the feelings-map and STATES OF ATTENTION or awareness. A map of various attentional states seems to look like this:

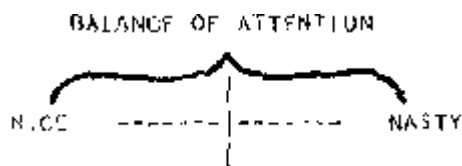


The significance of this extension to the feelings-map is that it clarifies the quite *different* states of attention which occur during nice, as compared to nasty, feeling states. Ignoring the extreme highs and lows of arousal, the following applies at all arousal levels:

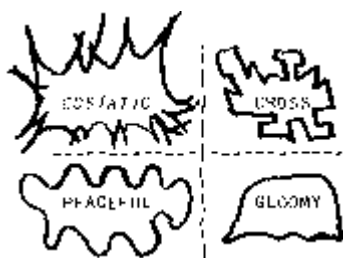
- During negative or nasty emotions attention is narrowly focused and there is difficulty in changing the direction of such TRAPPED ATTENTION.
- During positive or nice emotions people have FREE ATTENTION. This means they can choose what they pay attention to, they can choose a narrow or broad focus to that attention, and they can alter both these at will.

Such differences are very functional in everyday living. Thus short term hazards typically evoke negative emotions such as fear and anger. During such emotions attention will be trapped by the threatening situation. When you are fleeing that bad tempered dog for instance, this is fine. To spend time noticing that your shoes are dirty, or how pretty Mrs. Jones' garden is, would be an expensive luxury indeed. Once escaped from Fido however you will feel pleased with yourself. In this positive state your focus of attention broadens. With more Free Attention the situation can be thought about: you could notice and remember that the dog always barks before she starts chasing you; you could plan to go a different route and avoid the dog completely.

Negative feelings reduce attention in two ways; the arousal that accompanies them takes attention, and the preoccupation with the threatening stimuli take attention. (#4). This cannot be voluntarily altered, which is why we talk about Trapped Attention. An individual's span of attention is limited, so inappropriate negative feelings, by reducing available attention, impair efficiency in any task. Another characteristic of awareness, implicit in the above, and important in co-counselling, is the fact that our attention may be *divided*. Thus you can be aware of a distressing event that has just occurred *and* the fact that you are now quite safe. Such a BALANCE OF ATTENTION between distress and present safety is represented on the feelings-map as follows:



At this point it's possible to ask: how can the more COMPLEX EMOTIONS be represented on the emotional space of the feelings map? After all it is mostly the more complex emotions, and their expression, for which our language provides words. As an illustration of this, consider a few words used to label some varied emotional experiences: ecstatic, cross, gloomy, peaceful. Though such complex emotions cannot be adequately pictured with the simple image of the feelings-map, certain aspects of each emotion *can* be represented, so:



Ideas such as these four emotion-words are acquired along with the rest of our language; usually in a language-using family belonging to a language-using species. In the north-west, **ecstatic**, quadrant one would feel bouncy, gleeful, marvellous; one would deal with everything well. In the north-east, **cross**, quadrant one would feel tense and irritable. Blood pressure would be high, and thoughts would go round and round. In the south-west, **peaceful**, quadrant one would feel relaxed and quietly pleasant, with all sorts of new ideas popping up. In the south-east, **gloomy**, quadrant one would feel droopy and miserable, lack energy, and be unable to think of anything

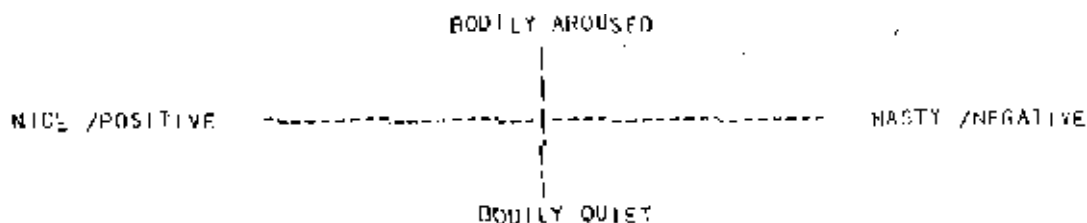
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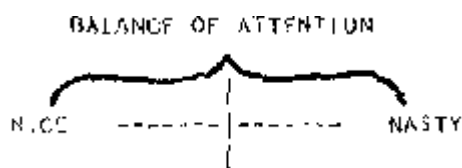


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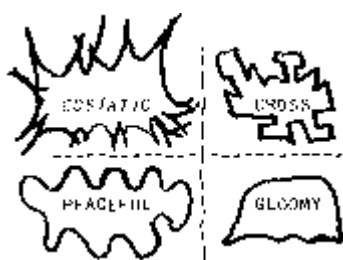
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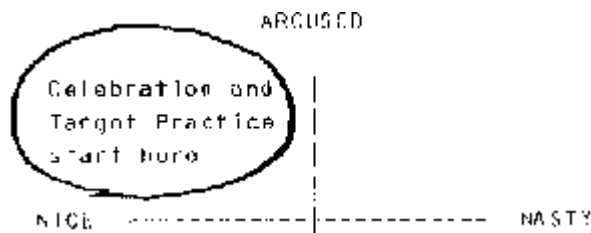
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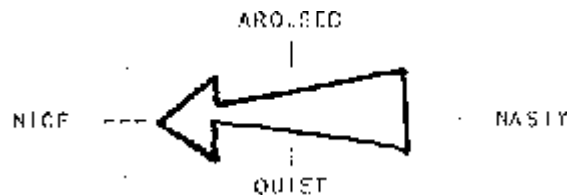
The Feelings Map and the Four Strategies of Co-Counselling

The four strategies were outlined in the Introductory part of this manual. Some aspects of these strategies can be clarified by use of the map.

To either CELEBRATE or to use TARGET PRACTICE people need to be wide awake and to have plenty of free attention. In terms of the feelings-map, Celebration and Target Practice need to start in the north-west quadrant:



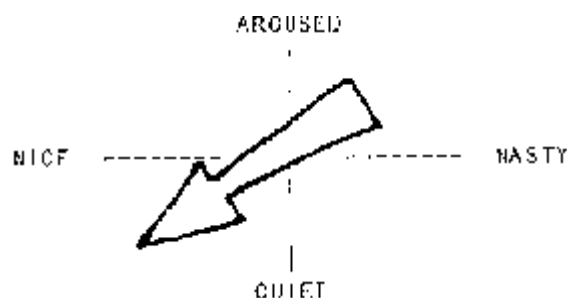
As people do not spend all their lives lively and distress-free, it is not surprising that co-counselling methods result in movement across feelings-space. ATTENTION SWITCHING for example can be represented as moving our focus from "nasty" to "nice." Thus:



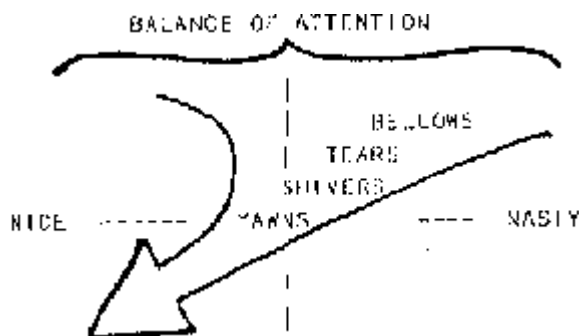
Precisely where the beginning and ending are depends on the circumstances and on which attention-switch is used.

The process of DISCHARGE is also one of emotional transformation, and hence of motion over the map.

Discharge takes people from certain distressed states (aroused, nasty and attention focused) to being more relaxed, feeling nice, with plenty of free attention. So we move from the north-east quadrant (aroused and nasty) to the south-west quadrant (nice and quiet).



Other aspects of discharge can now be added. E.g. the process occurs most readily when there is awareness both of Distress and of present safety: when there is a Balance of Attention. Typical bodily events associated with Discharge, such as tears, shivers, bellows, yawns, can also be added to the feelings-map.



Some Distinctions: Situation-Distress-Discharge

Our words for emotional experience often mix up the components of context, action, bodily changes, judgements and so on. This fuzzy nature of emotion-words does blur some important issues. This is illustrated by looking at the sequence of events involved in many feeling states, namely:

SITUATION -----> DISTRESS -----> DISCHARGE

In everyday language this whole sequence is often bundled up together. People say "I'm scared," or "Ugh--horrid." In keeping with this they commonly refer to a situation, or context, as "scary" or "horrid." However though a situation can be destructive, it is the people who have the feelings.

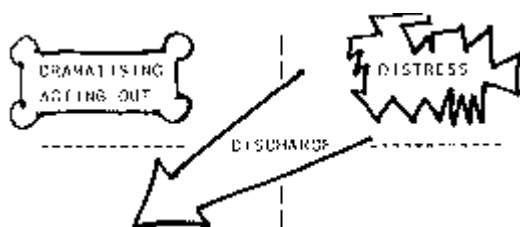
Moreover people often talk of 'nasty' feelings, such as fear or grief, as "bad." The ability to make rapid, precise judgements, to accurately label situations as 'nasty' or 'nice', is of course very useful. People do not want to pick up an angry wasp twice; they do need to go on caring for other people. It is only when judgements are incorrect; or when useful emotions cannot be experienced, or when people cannot stop experiencing inappropriate emotions, that there are catches. It is true of course that a person may fail to master a threatening situation, and then fail to discharge the left-over feelings. In such a case they may well remain distressed long after the situation, the context, has changed completely.

Another common confusion, probably passed on by well-meaning adults, is to equate Discharge with Distress. Most children are told "Shush, shush, it doesn't help to cry over spilt milk," or "Stop screaming dear, it's all right now Daddy's here." Underlying such caring, and incorrect, admonitions is the idea that when a child stops crying or screaming or shaking, then he's stopped hurting.

It is ironic that adults discovering therapy or personal growth, after years of emotional repression and suppression, sometimes go to the other extreme. They say, "Nowadays I always trust my feelings," or "It just feels right, so it's O.K." Alas--Patterns are no respecters of feelings!

So some people believe emotions are an irrelevance to 'real life,' whilst others believe emotions are 'real truth.' One or another of these viewpoints is so commonplace that a further statement of how co-counselling theory sees the possibilities is well worth while.

Imagine a time you suffered a loss, and cried and cried. Your tears were a direct expression of grief, a cry for help, and if the needed help came the tears would eventually cease. Suppose no help came however, and you could not get your attention free of the Distress. You couldn't Discharge. Like that you can grieve for years. On the other hand grief can be simulated, play acted, perhaps to manipulate someone, or to evade some responsibility. Sufficiently distanced from your Distresses, however real they are, you again have no Balance of Attention, and won't Discharge. However when you do achieve, whether in a counselling session or with some caring friend, a Balance of Attention, then tears will indeed be the visible sign of Discharge. Doubtless, tears may occasionally be mixtures of such possibilities. These ideas can be summarised on the feelings-map as below:



So What About Positive Feelings?

If negative feelings act as 'switches', to enable us to deal with events in our lives which threaten us, what do positive feelings do? And what is happening in our bodies when we experience positive feelings? First notice that some feeling states seem to be a kind of mixture of positive and negative: excitement seems to be like this.

If we think of times when we are quite unmixed, unconflicted, there do seem to be several characteristics of such states: bodily relaxation, mental and perceptual alertness, and enjoyment of whatever is happening with a feeling of having lots of energy. Thinking about this, it occurred to us that it would be very useful for people to have a 'finished' switch. One that would put us into a state with maximum potential free for the next task. This would include a body alert for action, yet not focused onto any narrow area; senses fully alert to scan the environment, helping to choose what's worth doing next. Linking a pleasurable feeling to this useful state would then help to ensure that we worked to achieve it.

It is interesting that Martin Seligman, who seems to us to give an account of the genesis of some common chronic patterns, also suggests that positive feelings are the reward for the mastery of a task, (#5). This seems close to our ideas.

Footnote: By alert relaxation we don't mean resting or sagging. When people are alertly relaxed they're supporting themselves with no wasted effort, ready for anything. Resting involves letting go, being supported by the floor, a bed, someone's arms. Sagging is patterned--neither alert relaxation nor restful flopping. For Richard, some signs of sagging include tensely crossed legs, sitting off-balance in a chair, leaning crookedly up against the wall.

A summary of basic negative and positive feelings states

Negative feelings	Positive feelings
Subjectively unpleasant.	Subjectively pleasurable.
Attention focused narrowly on distressing situation/object.	Attention free to focus as person wishes.
Body systems aroused and prepared for action to remove threat.	Body systems in a state of rest and high potential, or skilful performance.
Access to general memory and skills hindered. Responses are previously learned ones, whether appropriate or not.	Access to all of memories and skills. Appropriate already learned responses may be selected or new responses constructed.
Fine for dealing with emergency threats of straightforward kind. Poor if any problem solving required.	Aware decision-making too slow to deal with physical threat. Fine for problem solving.
Learning possible but only conditioning type. This can mean acquiring blocks.	Aware learning of knowledge and skills can take place.

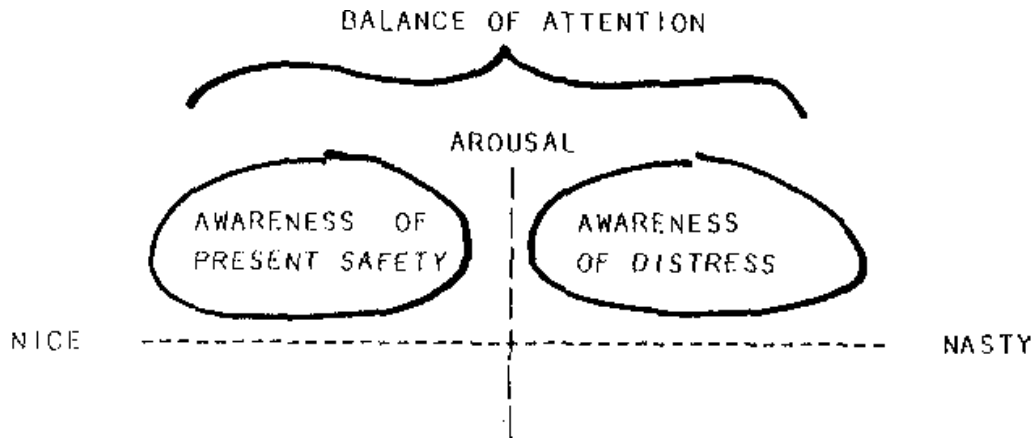
A Closer Look at How to Help Discharge Happen

Two major characteristics of co-counselling are encouragement of Discharge and an extensive collection of 'try doing this' suggestions which have been shown to act as aids to discharge. Both these features originally arose from a trial and error approach. In the present account, however, we will consider these practical techniques from the feelings-map viewpoint--that is, from a particular theoretical perspective.

As already noted, people can discharge when they have a balance of attention and are, or can become, bodily aroused (and vice versa). Indeed the co-counselling point of view suggests that whenever these conditions arise we are likely to discharge spontaneously. Think of a child who falls off a swing. She runs to her father and, once he's hugging her, cries. Adults socialised into the ways of a non-cathartic culture sometimes surprise themselves, and others, by sudden tears. "But I was so happy," they say. Happy enough to have lots of free attention, and so be able to acknowledge some related Distress, maybe?

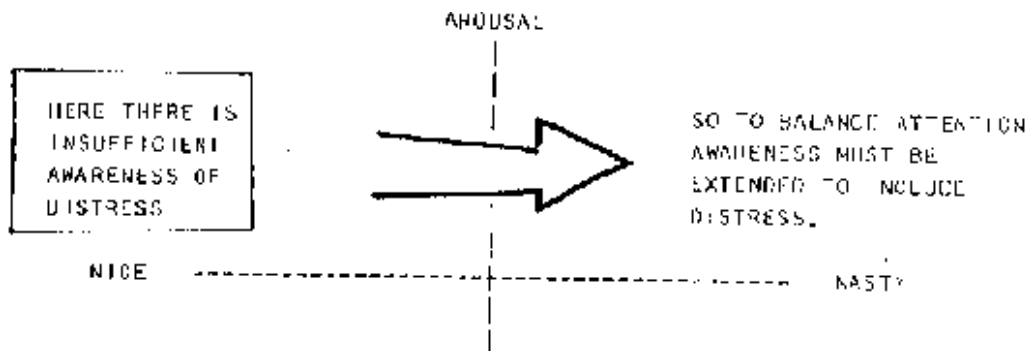
Be that as it may, most people often lack a Balance of Attention and the ability to allow or generate bodily arousal. This applies in everyday life, and can apply in counselling sessions. Consequently a number of techniques facilitating discharge have evolved within the co-counselling framework. In Part III of this Manual examples of these methods are grouped under the heading, **Helping Discharge Happen**. From the feelings-map viewpoint we can say that such techniques provide ways of moving people across their feelings-space to the 'discharge encouraging' region.

First a reminder of the feelings-map representation of the Balance of Attention and its elements.

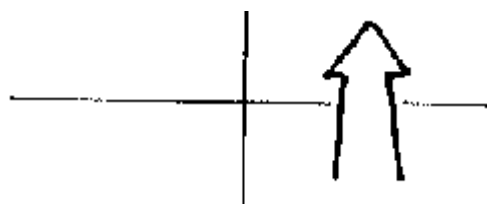


Often however, people do not wish to be reminded of their Distresses. (It is after all painful.) In the extreme this may take the form of denial of having Distress unless they are immersed in it. "Nothing's wrong with my life; I'll never get depressed again!" Note that this is not the same as maintaining attention out of Distress in order to get on with the immediate life task. Denial is a useful coping mechanism, but can be self defeating if used continuously. It does nothing to prevent the Distress happening again.

People wishing to use counselling time to break up patterns and to minimise the chances of being restimulated in the future often need help to re-experience the Distress. Where there is insufficient awareness of Distress, to balance attention, awareness must be extended to include Distress. Thus:

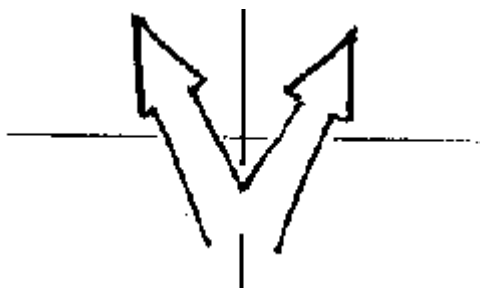


Various ways of assisting such a movement across our feelings-space are listed in Part III of this Manual, under the heading **Helping Discharge Happen: Focusing on Specifics**. This focusing on specific events which were distressing, in the safety of a counselling session, may be quite sufficient to encourage Discharge. Often however we will need to become more aware of our Distress, and also to become more bodily aroused.



Techniques which combine awareness focusing and arousal in this way are listed as **Helping Discharge Happen: Going with Negative Feelings**.

Other useful techniques aim to directly generate a balance of attention by making use of paradox and contradiction.



Look under **Helping Discharge Happen: Going Against the Negative Feelings** to find examples of these powerful paradoxes.

Some of these techniques also serve another function: that of disrupting 'Control Patterns.' That is, of interfering with those little tricks people have learned, usually quite unknowingly, that prevent them from being aware of their feelings. Many control patterns involve chronic muscular tensions. For instance if Richard watches a police-show on TV he *either* feels scared, sweats and shivers, *or* feels bored, and gets a gut ache and a sore back. Consequently relaxation may be used to allow people to become aware of their Distresses. Of course, other control patterns may well involve an inability to become bodily involved. In this latter situation the patterns can be challenged not by relaxing but by direct bodily arousal.

For an interesting discussion of the use of Balance of Attention by dramatists, see Tom Scheff's book (#6).

Part III: Working Techniques of Co-Counselling

Basic Contract Between Client and Counsellor

This section starts with a review of the reciprocal contract used by co-counsellors and then discusses the roles of both client and counsellor in relation to the use of Free Attention. A summary is then given of the major techniques and this is followed by descriptions and examples of those techniques. Firstly, we'd like to introduce the concept of Free Attention.

FREE ATTENTION: This is a very important concept: A person's Free Attention consists of all the attention available which is not either:

- Distracted by events in the outside environment.
- Distracted by internal distress.

BASIC CONTRACT: Nothing to do with lawyers, the co-counselling contract is a powerful and exciting tool for change. Making an explicit contract helps minimise the ways in which Patterns interfere with the counselling. Co-Counsellors meet as equals with each of them knowing the techniques available for use. They agree to share the available time equally between client and counsellor roles for both of them. They agree that clients are in charge of how they use their time and that counsellors *do not evaluate, interpret, or give advice* on the clients' problems. They also agree that everything within the co-counselling session is Confidential.

Client's Role

The client is in charge of his/her session, decides what to work on, how to work on it, how long to work on it: it is the client's time. The client is free to accept or reject the counsellor's suggestions. The client is working to liberate his/her own potential. The client needs to make clear at the start of a session what kind of contract he or she wants. The following represent the main possibilities.

1. Free Attention Only contract: the counsellor gives Free Attention only—does not make any interventions.
2. Normal contract: the counsellor makes occasional interventions when the client appears to have lost their way, to be blocked or missing a lot of cues, or to encourage the client to involve his/her body and put lots of energy into what they are doing.
3. Intensive contract: the counsellor is asked to pick up every distress cue and produce a suggestion about what the client can say or do. The suggestions are aids to producing Discharge. An intensive contract is particularly useful for working on Chronic Patterns.

Counsellor's Role

1. The counsellor is present for the client and gives as much supportive Free Attention as possible.
2. The counsellor does not offer judgements on the client's actions, thoughts or feelings; does not offer interpretations of the client's problems or reasons for the client's distress; does not offer advice on the client's life; does not comment on own experiences.
3. The counsellor makes suggestions on the basis of the type of contract agreed with the client. The suggestions are based on co-counselling techniques that are known to both client and counsellor. Wherever possible they are made in the form of direct proposals not questions.

The Counsellor's Free Attention

The counsellor is asked to give their Free Attention to the client and to give it in such a manner that the client appreciates that this is happening. We recognise that someone is attending to us when we notice them looking at us, and we are completely certain of their attention when there is eye contact. Thus it is suggested that counsellors look at the client, particularly at their face and usually at their eyes. The counsellor perseveres with this. Even if the client does not maintain eye contact the counsellor can be in the ready position so that the client can easily resume such contact.

In addition to eye contact physical touch can also serve the same purpose, and therefore it also helps for the counsellor to hold the client's hand or rest a hand on their knee. This type of contact is often helpful during Discharge when the client's physical posture may make eye contact difficult.

N.B. Sometimes physical contact will inhibit a client's Discharge--particularly crying--perhaps because touch has been part of the suppression of discharge in the past, hugging being accompanied by "There, there, don't cry." It is worthwhile checking this point with a client you don't know well, and keeping alert to the effect your touch has on Discharge.

These suggested behaviours for the counsellor are also an aid to the counsellor in maintaining the maximum amount of Free Attention. As counsellor you are likely to become very much aware of when your attention is distracted from the client by realising you are no longer looking at them, noticing them. Inexperienced counsellors are particularly likely to notice how easily they are distracted. There is no need to be discouraged by this; it is a stage most of us go through. Giving Free Attention is a skill which has to be learned and awareness of distraction is an important part of the learning process. *Giving supportive free attention is the crucial foundation of counsellor skills.*

The more experienced the client, the more likely it is they will only want your Free Attention; you will still be doing a crucial job; feelings of inadequacy or rejection are the counsellor's distress. Giving Free Attention becomes much easier with experience and you will notice you become relaxed and enjoy doing it. The amount of Free Attention you have will still vary. You are not expected to become perfect. (Any such thoughts are more Distress).

There is one obligation and that is not to cheat your client. If for any reason your Free Attention becomes really swamped--usually because of Restimulation by the client's Distress--then tell your client you cannot give attention at the moment and ask for roles to be temporarily reversed, i.e. you take a few minutes as client to climb out of your Distress.

When you are able to maintain a reasonable amount of Free Attention, then you can play a more active role in helping the client, by making suggestions to help the client move further into, or out of, Distress, or to celebrate.

The Client's Free Attention

As client, note that the conditions which favour Discharge involve a Balance of Attention between past Distress and present safety. Discharge will not occur without the Distress being actually re-experienced, and hence many techniques in co-counselling are aimed at bringing up, and reliving to some extent, buried Distress. (It may be simmering just below the surface or it may be a long way down). If however the Distress is experienced without consciousness of present safety, it will literally be a reliving of the record without effecting any change in it, like a nightmare. This can be a hazard.

Present safety is provided by the counsellor and particularly by your awareness of the counsellor's attention. As client, however, you can help yourself by learning how to maintain some Free Attention. This will be helped if you endeavour to look at the counsellor--even when discharging. Equally this is something which needs to be learned and the inexperienced client may find it very difficult. As a beginner it isn't a point to worry about, but as you become more experienced you will find it pays off and you will be able to do very effective work, experiencing a lot of discharge while very conscious of present safety because of the eye contact with your counsellor. At the beginning both eye contact, and Discharge, are likely to go in fits and starts.

Checklist of Basic Co-Counselling Techniques

1) CELEBRATING

- My qualities.
- My skills.
- My body and mind.
- Celebrating others.
- Celebrating differences.
- Non-verbal celebration.

2) ATTENTION SWITCHING

- Attention out to the environment.
- Physical actions requiring some attention.
- Simple mental tasks.
- Positive memories.

3) HELPING DISCHARGE HAPPEN: *Focusing on Specifics*

- Focus on a specific event.
- Talk through event using present tense.
- Use concrete literal description.
- Finish with "What's left unsaid."

HELPING DISCHARGE HAPPEN: *Going With Negative Feelings*

- Repetition of Distress signals.
- Increasing the loudness of the voice.
- Involving body in postures and gestures appropriate to words and feelings.
- Acting into Discharge.
- Role-playing.

HELPING DISCHARGE HAPPEN: *Going Against Negative Feelings*

- Contradictions of Distress: content; voice; gesture; posture.
- Celebrating Distresses and people who upset you.
- Reversing roles; playing the other part of the Pattern recording.
- Physical Relaxation; going against chronic tensions.
- Physical arousal; going against paralysis, shut down, sag.
- Direction holding against Patterns.

HELPING DISCHARGE HAPPEN: *Exploring Pattern Connections*

- Following associations that occur spontaneously.
- Moving to earliest or strongest similar memory.
- Scanning: listing and /or talking through events connected by a theme.
- Following signposts: making repeated responses to cue phrases.
- Exploring fantasies, images, symbols.

4) TARGET PRACTICE: *Coping with Restimulation; Moving from Pattern to Person*

Separations of past distress from present reality.

Constructing ladders out of distress and patterns:

a) Directions.

b) Attention switching associations.

TARGET PRACTICE: *Rational Rehearsal; Being and Acting as a New You*

- "What's left unsaid?"
- Future Role-play.
- Present and future reality.
- Commitment techniques.

TARGET PRACTICE: *Rational Thinking*

- Creative thinking and problem solving.
- Goal Setting, short and long term.
- Action planning.
- Creative actions and learning new skills.
- Reprogramming.

The next section deals with each of the four main strategies in more detail, following the order given in the above checklist.

Celebrating

Celebrating is searching for and appreciating those things about yourself that are positive--qualities, skills, parts of your body or mind, successes you've had. Celebrating will usually take the form of listing and enjoying whatever you are focusing on. Celebration is a positive focus technique, a way of working from strengths. It will act to strengthen a person's self esteem and enable them to have their strengths and skills more readily available for use.

Ask most people to spend three minutes talking about their skills and strengths and they have difficulty lasting one minute. Why is this? Well ,try it for yourself and see what makes it difficult for you. What are the interfering thoughts?

- Are you swamped by thoughts of weaknesses, failures, what you don't like?
- Do you think it's boasting and your listeners will think you arrogant?
- Will your listeners be upset because they don't have your skills?
- Does your mind just go blank--in protest, maybe, at a pointless task?

Whatever the reasons, most people seem to find it easier to concentrate on the negatives about themselves and to devalue themselves--in thought, word and deed. This applies even to many who appear outwardly successful and confident. Examined from the point of view of an outside observer, these devaluations usually appear irrational. They also actively take time and attention away from whatever the person is trying to do, acting as interference.

This interference means that whenever you notice yourself spending time thinking such things as: "I'm a slow learner," "Other people must be fed up/ impatient with me," "I'm not going to get it done in time," then you will be doing a worse job than you are actually capable of. In addition, you will probably spend time afterwards reliving all the ways in which you made a mess of things, even when you cannot change them. This time spent being distressed will be taken from other tasks or pleasures.

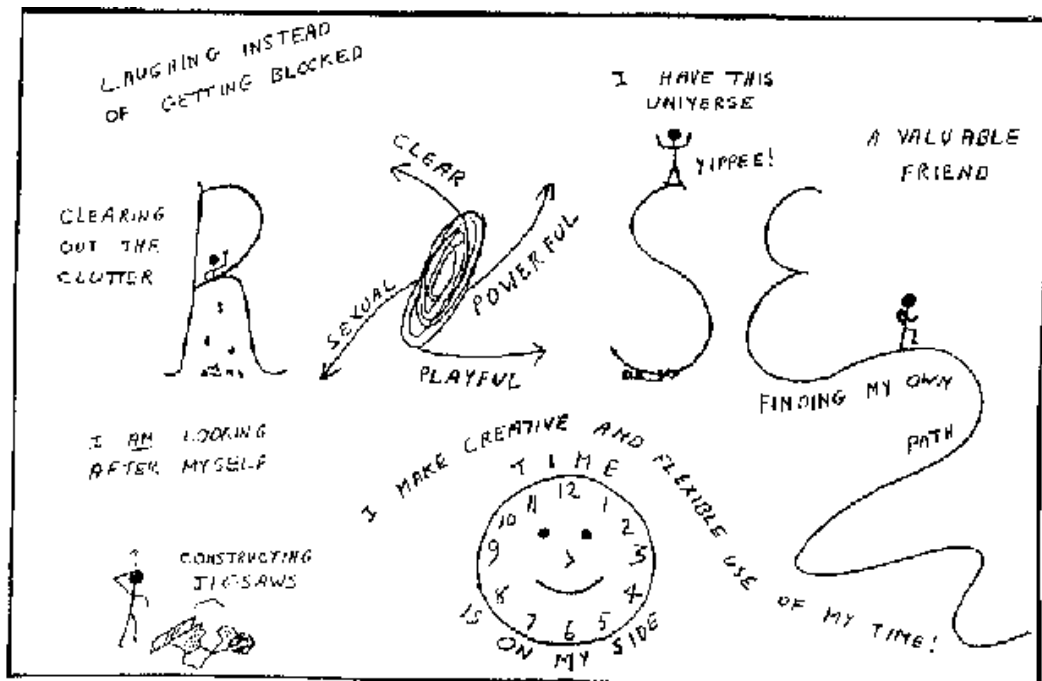
By noticing and celebrating your skills and successes you will enable yourself to use all your abilities to the full. The techniques for doing this are all varieties of self validation. It is important to realise that they do not have to produce Discharge to be effective, though they will do so at times. To celebrate yourself, formulate an unqualified appreciation of yourself. This doesn't mean it has to be 100% true; anything that is more than 50% true can be used.

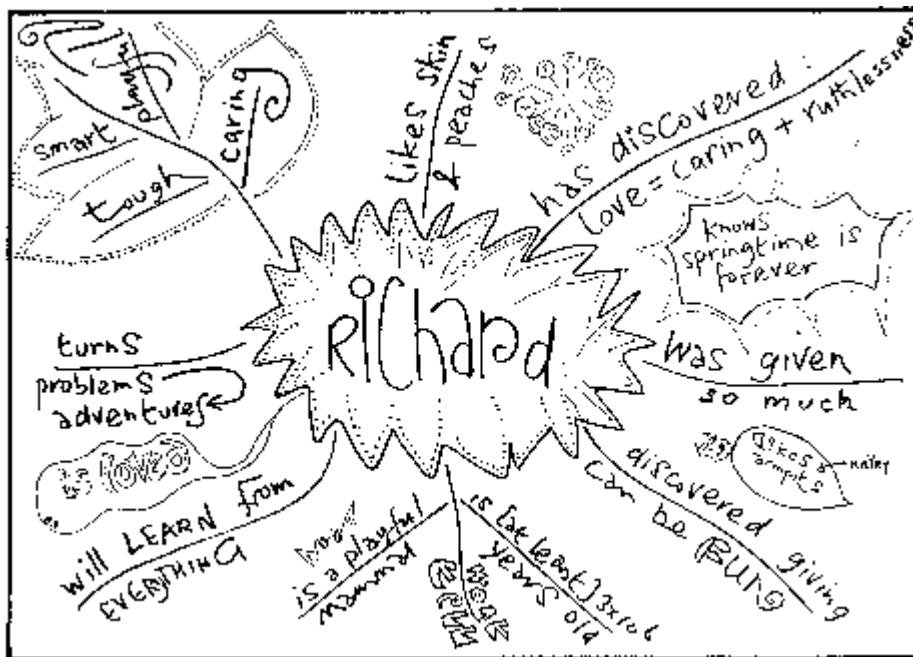
Celebration is useful both at the beginning and end of a co-counselling session: at the beginning it will help ensure that you are tackling your distress from a position of strength; at the end of a session celebration will help you return to the present time and to tackling your life with vigour and enjoyment. Celebration need not be restricted to sessions; use it whenever you notice you are thinking or saying things which devalue yourself.

USE YOUR NAME. Associate your name with your strengths; get used to saying it every time you validate or celebrate yourself. E.g. "I'm Richard, I'm CARING, CREATIVE, COMPETENT." Your name will then become an easily available reminder of your strengths, and enable you to call on them in difficult situations. If your name at the moment is really associated with a lot of negative distress, then try CHANGING it. Otherwise every time you hear your name you will be reminded of distress.

Start celebrating with the things about yourself that you feel most happy with, even if that isn't saying much. Concentrate on one at a time and work on noticing and removing the qualifications that you put in. These may be words like, "usually," "sometimes," "except when ..." or they may be non-verbal--snorts, sniffs, inaudible voice, drooping posture etc.

You can gradually celebrate more and more about yourself. When in your life you notice something worth celebrating about yourself, write it down. It's amazing how easily the old negative approach induces forgetting of the positives. Keep a diary perhaps just for 'News and Goods' and celebrations of yourself. Make celebratory posters with your name and all the celebrations you can think of noted on them. We always enjoy the colourful variety and ingenuity when we ask people to do them on courses. Many people are surprised by the artistic talents they show. Note, however, that composing the posters is not intended as an artistic competition. Nor should interpretations of your own or of other's posters be offered. (Examples of celebration posters done by us in March 1981 appear below; we do them frequently)





Celebrating Your Body

Find out the things you like about your body and begin celebrating. Take different parts of your body and try to find something you like about each one; your body works very hard for you and it will function even better if you appreciate it. We have taught our daughter to appreciate her body, explaining how pain isn't the fault of the piece that's hurting. It will be trying to do a good job of healing what is wrong. This healing can be helped by being appreciative of what your body is doing and hindered by being nasty to ourselves and complaining about the part that hurts.

Do not forget your mind. Celebrate that too. Everyone has the ability to learn new things, to remember far more than they need and to be creative, or at least, that's how they are born. If you want to recover more of these abilities then start celebrating your mind.

Celebrating Others

Celebrating others is a powerful aid to use with your client when you are counsellor, but can also be powerful to use as friend, colleague, or parent. Our culture makes it permissible to focus on the dreadful things in life and leave the pleasant things unsaid. Check this out with yourself. How frequently do you verbalise appreciations of others and how frequently do you criticise and put others down?

We found that we had to *learn* the skills of celebrating others. We suddenly became aware that we had always appreciated our daughter, from her birth, but didn't do the same with each other. An important point is that celebrating others does not mean being insincere or pretending, but *searching* for the things that *can* be appreciated about that person.

One way to use a co-counselling group to practice celebrating others is to set up a CELEBRATION CIRCLE. This will help everyone concerned to push against the Patterns which stop us doing more of this in everyday life. You form a circle, and someone celebrates the person on their left. That person then celebrates the person on their left, and so on, all round the circle.

When you are doing the celebrating, take time to think carefully and caringly; remember that even when you are more aware of the Patterns than of the Person, the Person is definitely there. When you are receiving the celebration take time to savour and appreciate. Experiment by saying "Of course," warmly, confidently, openly, and let any laughter escape. If you do think what you've received is inaccurate, don't argue, note the topic for later counselling.

Celebrating Differences

Celebrating differences is a highly subversive idea. Differences are usually threatening: differences of opinions, of cultures, of organisation. We seem to live in a culture where everything has to be graded as superior or inferior, we win or we lose; there is no concept of peerness in any area of life. Again this is not saying that differences of skills and strengths should be ignored or ironed out, but that everyone should be encouraged to fully develop themselves.

How is it possible to give more than lip service to individual differences--to celebrate those differences? The first requirement is to be able to celebrate ourselves. This will enable us to develop a strong self which is not dependent on the approval of others for support. Only from a base of this kind is it possible to be safe and unthreatened by differences and to begin to delight in sharing the richness of differences with others. Only when we are able to celebrate our differences can we really have a sense of unity, rather than conformity to social norms arising from threat of punishment.

Special Place exercises, which are described in Part IV, are also important in celebrating our strengths and making them readily available in times of crisis.

Attention Switching

Attention switching is the term used to describe any process whereby the person sets off to increase the amount of Free Attention they have. This involves focusing away from Distress in some fashion. This can be done by paying attention to a neutral but demanding stimulus, or by focusing on positive stimuli. Which technique you select at any one moment will depend on how much Free Attention you have available and how much you need to gain--enough to permit Discharge or enough to carry on with a task.

The techniques are arranged such so that the amount of Free Attention needed to undertake the task is likely to increase as you go down the list. They can be used as a sequence in counselling or at other times. All descriptive and memory tasks should be said out loud to the counsellor as this increases the attention needed. This does not however mean explaining things so that your counsellor understands what you are talking about! You are doing the exercise for you, and not for your counsellor. Any compulsion to explain or entertain your counsellor is part of a pattern.

Attention Out to the Environment

- Notice your immediate environment. Describe your counsellor, the room, look for six blue objects, ten different colours.
- Look at yourself from the outside. Follow your breathing with counting, count your pulse rate.

Physical Actions Demanding Some Attention

- Walk round the room placing your feet one immediately in front of the other.
- Balance on one leg.
- Build a tower with bricks.

Simple Mental Tasks

- Count up to a hundred in fives, or three hundred in fifteens.
- Say the alphabet backwards.
- Count the number of objects on shelves.
- Name all the objects beginning with "T" in the room.

Positive Memories

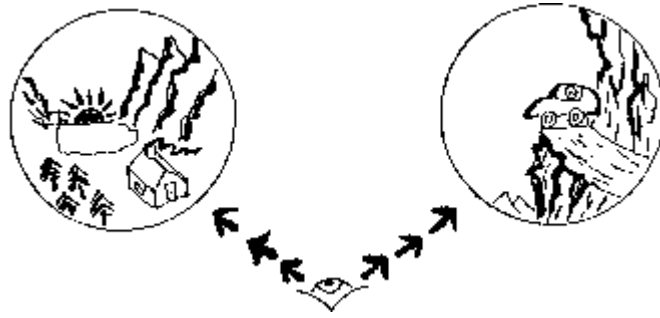
- Remember things you did earlier in the day which weren't distressing; give a literal description.
- Random pleasant memories, from any time in your life, in any order. Make a list and move on from one memory to the next quickly; if you hang around you are likely to surface something that was upsetting.
- News and Goods: Search for and list recent events that have been positive for you. These events do not have to be world shaking, anything which was pleasurable in a minor way--food, flowers, smiles--as well as any major ones. Again, do not hang around with any particular one.
- Positive themes in your life. (This begins to move into celebratory areas and this is fine, there is no hard and fast boundary.)

A note on jargon. Attention Switching techniques are also known as Present Time techniques, since Free Attention is the attention you have available for the present, as opposed to attention caught in Distress which is past.

There are two major uses of Attention Switching techniques in co-counselling:

A. To achieve a Balance of Attention in order to Discharge.

B. To return to an undistressed frame of mind at the end of a session. Attention Switching is useful any time you get distressed in your life--not just in counselling. It is also something you can use to help others--in family life, in learning situations, in upsetting situations, and whether they know about co-counselling or not.



Positive pleasant memories produce positive feelings.
 Negative unpleasant memories produce negative feelings.

Helping Discharge Happen

- Helping Discharge Happen: Focusing on Specifics
- Helping Discharge Happen: Going with Negative Feelings
- Helping Discharge Happen: Going Against Negative Feelings
- Helping Discharge Happen: Exploring Pattern Connections

The order in which the techniques are described is one in which they may well be used by inexperienced co-counsellors. This order goes from exploring a particular event, endeavouring to discharge any distress it brings up, to exploring a related series of distressing events. A product of exploring a related series of events is often to identify the Pattern(s) present in them all. Once identified, Patterns may be worked on directly, with the bonus that when the Pattern has been disrupted, it is equivalent to discharging the Distress in many events. Once techniques have been learned the order of use is flexible, and techniques are selected as appropriate. Hence from the viewpoint of the experienced counsellor this present order is arbitrary.

The 'Helping Discharge Happen' techniques encourage one or both of the following:

1. The re-experiencing of distressing memories and the feelings associated with them. This is done by encouraging recall of specific events.
2. The experiencing of *dischargeable feelings*, even if this was not what was experienced at the time the events took place. This is done by increasing the person's state of bodily arousal, which will often result in transmuting the original feeling into one that can be discharged.

Helping Discharge Happen: Focusing on Specifics

A) FOCUS ON A SPECIFIC EVENT rather than talking about a distress area in general. E.g. suppose I find it hard to make friends. To get in touch with the distresses that stop me, it will help if I choose a specific event to talk through. This could be the latest occasion when I was upset about not being able to make friends; or a remembered occasion which was traumatic, whether recent or not.

B) TALK THROUGH THE EVENT USING THE PRESENT TENSE. The re-experiencing is likely to be more intense if you are re-enacting the scene in the present, rather than telling it as a past story.

C) **USE CONCRETE LITERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE SCENES AND ACTIONS** that are happening. Evoking the colours, textures, smells and movements that actually happened will act to intensify the re-experiencing. All these suggestions are in contrast to 'talking about' distress, using the past tense, searching for reasons or interpretations of your behaviour and feelings. Note that talking through past events in a focused way often provides some Discharge without anything dramatic happening. If other forms of discharge do occur during the talking through, encourage them.

D) **FINISH WITH 'WHAT'S LEFT UNSAID.'** At the end of talking through an event (if you haven't done it before) think of what you would really like to say to the person or persons involved in the upsetting incident. This may be something you thought of but couldn't say at the time, or you may be formulating it now for the first time. Express the thoughts in the present tense as though the person were physically present, using a loud voice and adding any appropriate actions. The aim is to use uncensored thoughts, as you are not trying to rehearse what you might say next time you see the person. Repeat the 'What's Left Unsaid' phrase several times as energetically as you can. This may result in more Discharge. The importance of "What's Left Unsaid" is that it constitutes a change from what actually occurred in the past event, in a self-affirming direction. From this point of view it is also part of the Target Practice set of techniques. It is mentioned now because we regard it as important always to use some change techniques, even as a beginner.

We emphasise again the immediate purpose of 'What's Left Unsaid': not to rehearse what you might say in the future, but to Discharge the distressed feelings. After that you can then decide rationally how to tackle the real life situation if it is still relevant in your life.

Helping Discharge Happen: Going with Negative Feelings.

These techniques act to intensify negative feelings in two ways--by concentrating on those parts of the experience most closely associated with the feelings, and also by increasing the level of bodily arousal of the client. (Increasing the level of arousal helps transmute feelings into those which can be discharged.)

E) **REPETITION OF DISTRESS SIGNALS.** Distress signals are many and varied, and differ from one person to another. In addition to things the client recognises as containing Distress, the following suggestions are worth exploring as signals of Distress: words which are stumbled over or are difficult to say; negative evaluations of self or others; words where the voice has become squeaky with tension; non-verbal tension--gestures such as scratching, fist clenching, etc.

F) **INCREASING THE LOUDNESS OF THE VOICE.** This may be a general suggestion, applicable to everything the client is saying, or specific in terms of distress signals the client is repeating.

G) **INVOLVING THE BODY IN POSTURES AND GESTURES** appropriate to the actions and feelings being described. Doing this will help the person get in touch with the Distress, as feelings are bodily states. (One way we suppress awareness of our feelings is by tensing up our bodies so as to prevent feelings being expressed.) Note that, like repeating something louder, bodily involvement is worth doing energetically.

H) **ACTING INTO DISCHARGE.** This technique is often simply called Acting Into. However it can be confused with Role-playing, so adding on the Discharge portion of its label is useful. The technique is applicable when Distress is half felt or suspected as a particular negative feeling. The technique consists of going through the physical actions normally associated with discharging a particular Distress, e.g. hitting something for anger, shaking for fear. This often releases real Discharge. The Discharge released will not necessarily be the same as the acted feeling. Some detailed suggestions for Acting Into are given in Part IV.

I) **ROLE-PLAY.** This is directly acting yourself, or a sub personality of yourself, or an image of yourself in an earlier event. Use the present tense and talk directly to the other people in the scene. Use your counsellor as the person, or persons, you are talking to, and tell them how to respond to you. There is no hard and fast distinction between Role-play and talking through an event involving yourself bodily. Suggestions for useful types of role-play are given in Part IV).

Helping Discharge Happen: Going Against Negative Feelings.

These techniques also act to focus attention on and intensify negative feelings. All these techniques share an element of contradicting Distress in some way. They are often more powerful than Going With techniques, particularly in well worn areas of Distress. Perhaps this is because they inevitably involve a Balance of Attention. Thus attention is inevitably focused both on the Distress and on the contradiction. The aim of all these techniques is Discharge.

Once a Going Against technique has been used, then it can be intensified by using the Going With techniques: repetition, involving the body etc. The point is that putting energy into doing them will help bring Discharge. *You are not attempting to convince yourself that what you are saying is true!*

J) **CONTRADICTIONS.** Directly saying and doing those things which will contradict Distress and Patterns. Put attention and bodily energy into saying words and doing the actions which contradict Distress, in order to release discharge. E.g. say the opposite of any negative put-downs of yourself. You do not have to believe in a contradiction, but you are aiming to act as though you believed it. This will be very hard to carry out at times, and you may need to work up from contradicting the Pattern content in a soft voice, to shouting it with full actions. Contradict body postures as well as the distressing words; stand up straight and hold your head up; lift your arms outwards and upwards instead of at sides; unclench your hands.

K) **CELEBRATING DISTRESSES.** Boasting about how guilty you are or how good you are at kicking people. Attempting a celebratory phrase concerning someone you are distressed about, which is the opposite of the distressed thoughts. E.g. if someone has been tactless and cruel, try saying, "You are the most sensitive and kind man I know".

L) **PHYSICAL RELAXATION: GOING AGAINST CHRONIC MUSCULAR TENSIONS.** All discharge processes involve a loosening and relaxation of body musculature, and in some circumstances relaxation can set off Discharge. Possible reasons are: A gentle caring massage, or relaxation into the counsellor's arms, by providing extra safety, may result in a Balance of Attention which was not there before. Secondly, chronic muscular tensions may be part of a Control Pattern, or a

dramatisation Pattern. Hence some form of relaxation before or during the exploration of the Distress may act to interrupt the Patterns and allow Discharge to start.

M) PHYSICAL AROUSAL: GOING AGAINST PARALYSIS, shut down, sag. Any form of arousing physical activity is likely to take the person into a different feelings space. Try jumping up and down or running round the room. If the arousal is closely associated with pain, as in bioenergetics exercises, or with verbalising about a Distress area, then the feelings space is likely to be negative and the probability of Discharge will be high. On the other hand, if the arousal has no distress associations, the result may be that a positive feelings space is entered.

N) DIRECTIONS. A 'Direction' is a statement (a word, gesture or expression) which releases Discharge, especially on an ingrained Pattern. To 'Hold a Direction' is to work as client, by repeating the direction, to maintain a flow of Discharge. It is necessary to put energy into the repetitions, and to work at removing verbal or non-verbal qualifications. The client allows time for the Discharge to occur between repetitions. Direction holding sessions are often held in groups, with the time available shared out. Each person will use their time to keep holding a direction and discharging on it. The remainder of the group will give Free Attention.

Directions are often contradictions, but not necessarily so; they may be exaggerations or parodies of the distress. Some directions affect most people: "Good-bye. I have no regrets," or "You really love me," or any form of total self-appreciation. However many directions are very individual, and the client has to explore which words and/or gestures are most powerful for them. Words which produce a smile or laugh when you hear them or think them, or which horrify you at the thought of saying them, are highly likely to produce discharge.

There are some general points to note about Directions. Short and pithy directions tend to work better than long winded ones. Formulating a Direction as a positive statement is often more effective than a negative form. E.g. try saying "I'm very brave," rather than "I'm not afraid." When you find a powerful direction, write it down, as they are easily forgotten. Once discovered, directions can be used to disrupt patterns in our lives. This takes us into the area of target practice techniques, dealt with in the next section.

Helping Discharge Happen: Exploring Pattern Connections

The techniques listed previously were set in a framework of counselling on one event. Such techniques remain as core aids. However the aim of spending more time in our Person and less in our Patterns is assisted by identifying, and working directly on, such Patterns. Patterns usually derive from, and are active in, many incidents. Identifying a Pattern enables a person to work with it directly, thus saving time relative to working on all the events separately. As clients people will spontaneously find some of the links which allow them to recognise their Patterns. The techniques in this section all act to encourage this generalisation process.

O) SCANNING: Reviewing your past experiences in order to discharge the distress, identifying and working on any Patterns in order to get rid of restimulation and making the information contained available for use.

Some kind of a theme is selected. It may be time related as in scanning "Minor upsets of the past week," or event related as in "Changing jobs," or feelings related as in "Times I've been bored." The jump from one theme experience to another may be made randomly according to what comes to mind, or in a time sequence. For any substantial piece of scanning the recommendation of experienced co-counsellors is that the person starts with their earliest memory and proceeds forward in time to the present. This reduces the chances of the person getting deeply involved in early distresses before being ready to deal with them.

P) FOLLOWING ASSOCIATIONS: Noticing and mentioning the associations that pass through your mind when you are client is usually worthwhile; they may be reminders of events that are similar in some way, of people, or of images. Once noted, you can decide whether to follow such associations or not. Associations representing earlier and more powerful experiences or people in your life are usually worth following immediately. When acting as counsellor this type of association can be picked up by asking the client, "What's the thought?" after they have been quiet for a while or if you notice a sudden change in their facial expression. As counsellor you may also ask, "What does this event remind you of?"

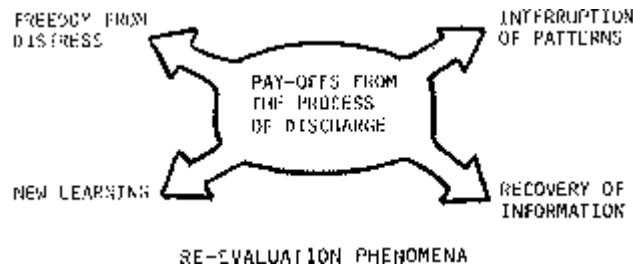
Q) EARLIEST OR STRONGEST MEMORY ASSOCIATIONS: This is when there is a deliberate attempt to move the client to events likely to have formed the original basis of a Pattern. The move may be initiated by the client or suggested by the counsellor. This type of suggestion is likely to be particularly relevant if client is working on recent material in which the people involved are authority figures. Some examples of what the counsellor might say: "Who does this person remind you of?" "Who are you really saying that to?" "Try saying that to your father/mother." "What's your earliest memory of a situation like this?"

R) FOLLOWING SIGNPOSTS: This technique consists of making repeated responses to cue phrases. The client may keep returning to the cue phrase, or may ask their counsellor to keep prompting them. The client is seeking to respond with their first thoughts. Examples of cue phrases: "And then what?" "If I do X you will ..."--where X is something you want to do and can't. "What are you doing in America, Richard?" "I can't because"

S) EXPLORATIONS OF FANTASIES, IMAGES AND SYMBOLS: There are many activities which fall in this area. Some people find it easier to think in terms of images rather than words, and most people can benefit from encouraging images which can be turned into words at some point. Rose has used an image of her guilt feelings as a black monster attached to her leg by a chain, which she is managing to starve slowly. Some other examples we have personally found useful:

- Describing your feelings: colour, shape, weight, texture, sounds
- Becoming an animal and acting out what you would do--at home, work etc.
- Taking a guided fantasy tour through pleasant countryside to a small house which, when you open the door, reveals your favourite Pattern.

What Might Happen After Discharge



A wide variety of things can be expected after Discharge, whether in a counselling session, or at any other time in our lives.

A. FREEDOM FROM DISTRESS: When Discharge ends naturally people are in a body-mind state of relaxed alertness, feeling positive and with a lot of free attention. Sometimes they will be zestful and bubbling with energy. The change in feelings state will show in facial expression and posture, and will be noticeable to others. Counsellors can enjoy this and give feedback on it to the client.

B. INTERRUPTION OF PATTERNS: because Discharge is an alternative action to those actions driven by Distress and because it takes people out of the Distress, it acts as a powerful disrupter of Patterns. This takes place in counselling sessions in the first place, but the effects transfer to the rest of life. Even Chronic Patterns which need many sessions' work will become noticeably weaker. It is helpful to keep aware of what is changing, rather than getting sucked into feeling that nothing has changed because the Pattern has not totally disappeared.

C. RECOVERY OF INFORMATION: Distressing memories are normally avoided because it is painful to think of them. This means the information they contain is inaccessible, 'buried in distress.' It is also isolated, not available for normal thinking processes. Discharge enables access without pain, so details of the events can surface and be available for thinking.

D. NEW LEARNING. The spontaneous making of new useful connections between ideas and events, and the solving of problems. This arises from having both access to the information and a lot of free attention, and often occurs as a striking flash of inspiration, the Re-Evaluation phenomenon.

Target Practice Techniques

Target Practice techniques are oriented towards life actions involving personal change. They are techniques which will directly help the person move in a direction they want to go in their lives. It is possible to spend a whole session on Target Practice, however it will usually be done after Discharge in a session. After Discharge Re-evaluation will frequently take place spontaneously. In this case Target Practice techniques will go on from there.

However Target Practice techniques can be applied even if discharge hasn't finished for the area of work, or if Re-evaluation hasn't taken place. We would recommend some form of Target Practice takes place every session, and that sufficient time is allowed for this before the finish time. Target Practice techniques may be exploratory,

or they may be based on the individual's rational choice of what they want to do, or be, in their lives. The techniques can be divided into three types.

1. Coping With Restimulation

Techniques which provide ways of going against restimulated Distress and Patterns which the individual expects to have to cope with outside co-counselling sessions.

A) SEPARATIONS OF PAST DISTRESS FROM PRESENT REALITY. This involves the client being able to make statements of the following kind: "I am no longer that frightened child." "I can look after my needy child." "I'm no longer that past self." "In the present I'm strong and skilled."

When we are working on a particular area of Distress and have not fully broken all the Patterns, we are still likely to be restimulated when the Distress cues occur outside our counselling sessions. It is useful to identify the cues which cause such restimulation, as half the battle is knowing when we are distressed or patterned. This means being able to label it in terms of which particular piece of our past it comes from. If we can recognise restimulation as it occurs, and label it as past Distress, then we can often act against it immediately. In considering what cues can be looked for, consider stereotyped thoughts and actions as well as negative feelings.

B) CONSTRUCTING LADDERS OUT OF DISTRESS. This means building associations between the distressed, patterned state and the rational self so that the association acts as a ladder for climbing out of the Distress. If these associations are practised in sessions, the result can be automatic emergence from the Patterned state after Restimulation. First learned in counselling sessions, the ladder can then be used in the rest of life. The ladder may be built on a Direction that disrupts the Pattern, when it is called Holding a Direction in life, or on Attention Switching.

1) In a situation where you feel lost for words you could say under your breath the direction, "I can say anything I like."

2) Finding a link between something in the distressing situation and your Special Place. (More about Special Places in Part IV.) This is most powerful if it is something that can be touched. This would be an Attention Switching association.

2. Rational Rehearsal

Techniques in which the individual rehearses how they want to be and act.

A) FUTURE ROLE-PLAY. This is taking a situation you will have to meet in the future, and acting out how you wish to behave. You might apply this to a specific situation already arranged, like an interview, or to an event you want to set up, like asserting yourself with your boss.

B) PRESENT AND FUTURE TIME REALITY. As client you make the assumption that you are Distress free now and you give an account of what this means, and how you will act. (Expect to discharge with this technique.) This is mentioned as 'Take charge now' in John Heron's 1979 manual.

C) COMMITMENT TECHNIQUES. These are currently being used in Re-evaluation Counselling and reference should be made to their literature.

3. Rational Thinking

Any techniques which utilise rational thinking as an aid to changing. (Note that rational does not just mean logical or emotionless. It is used to mean the flexible, caring Person with access to all their skills.)

A) CREATIVE THINKING AND PROBLEM SOLVING: Think out loud on any topic of relevance to you--how to relate better to your children, your pet scientific theory, the purpose of the universe, buying new clothes. A topic we often suggest at the end of workshops is, "What I want for myself in the next six months." This can be done as a group exercise, when it is known as a 'Think and Listen.' Counsellors are asked to give Free Attention only and not ask questions or make comments during or after the exercise. It is not necessary to talk all the time, but it is suggested you put your thoughts into words as much as possible. In doing this try to free yourself from organising your thinking before expressing it; it is not an exercise in presentation, and you are free to change your mind at any time.

B) GOAL SETTING: Setting goals for yourself, sorting out priorities, and making general aims into specific changes that you want to make in actions or feelings.

C) ACTION PLANNING: Moving general plans into specific detailed forms. In this you can ask your counsellor to support you by asking you such questions as; "What are your aims?" "How will you know you've achieved them?" "What's the first step you need to take?" "Who do you need to talk to?" "When will you do it?" "What will you do/say?" "What might stop you?" "How can you overcome that difficulty?"

Another thing that can help is making a contract with your counsellor for support at crucial times, and for them to check with you how you are progressing. A mutual contract can be helpful.

D) CREATIVE ACTIONS AND LEARNING NEW THINGS. Anything where you want to improve your skills or which is likely to be hard. Try dancing, painting, drawing, singing, writing poetry or an important letter or computer programming, car repairs--whatever you want or need to do. Being able to do these things with your counsellor's attention, plus encouragement to discharge if you get distressed, means optimum learning. Such opportunities are hard to come by normally in people's lives.

E) REPROGRAMMING. This can be done in various ways. A simple method involves setting up some reprogramming statements for yourself--celebrations and descriptions of how you would like to be. Listen to the statements while in a relaxed state. This can occur naturally after Discharge or you can use a relaxation routine. (Practice in this will be needed if you do not already use one.) The statements can be said by your counsellor or can be read by you onto a tape beforehand; your own voice is probably more powerful if you can do this. (It's possible to buy one minute loop tapes for use here.) Counsellors need to be watchful that the client remains relaxed, and to stop the process if negative reactions begin to occur.

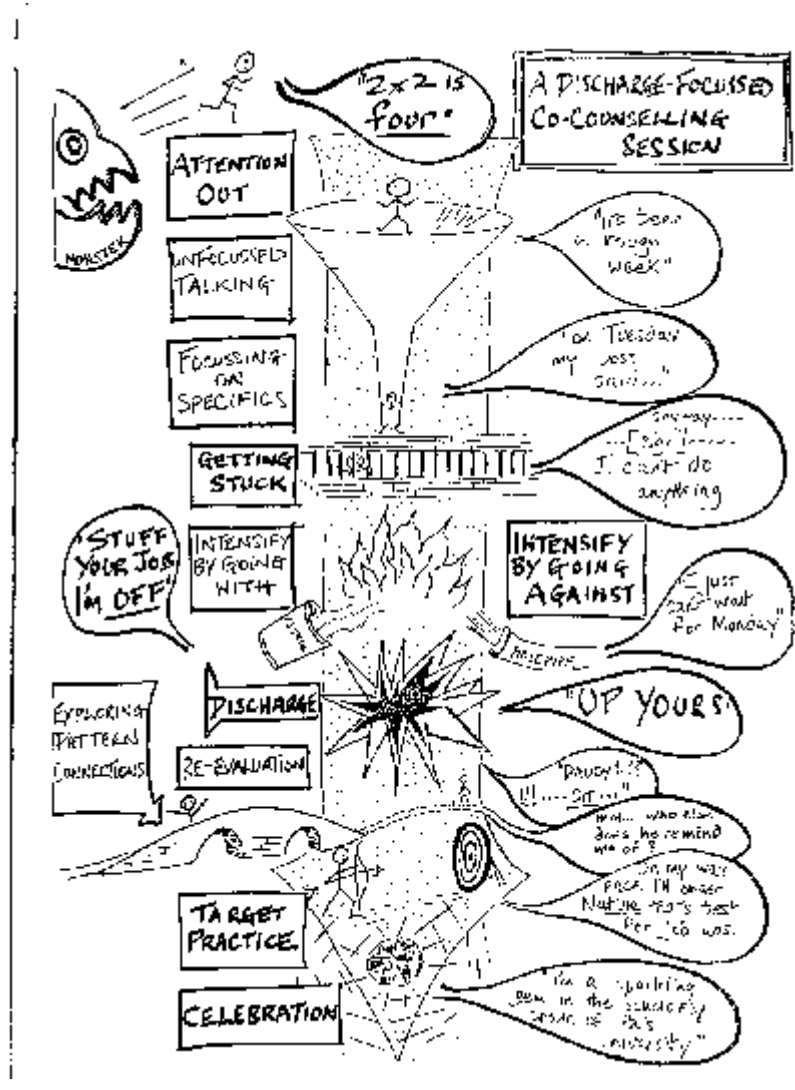
Target Practice techniques can be used as the basis for a whole session. This is useful when you find you have a lot of free attention at the beginning of a session and in areas where you have already put in a lot of work on the distresses and patterns.

Come Co-Counselling

*I celebrate myself and you,
Try to switch attention.
I scan the week and recognise
Lots of irritation.
I feel safe with my counsellor;
Discharge what I'm feeling,
Let my anger come right out and
Find it very healing.
I'm gloomy, grey and miserable
So everything is bad.
"What's New and Good?" I hear you
say
And soon I'm feeling glad.
When asked what have I left unsaid,
I look back on my day
I haven't said, "I really care
And wish that you would stay."
I try some repetition now
I've lots to contradict.
I discharge pain and sadness for
The pattern has been tricked.
Persistent patterns slowly lose
Their powerful hold on me.*

*I find who you remind me of
And then it's "you" I see.
I let myself be open when
You ask me, "What's the thought?"
You share my tears and laughter
And offer me support.
I try some acting into fear
And very quietly feel
I'm back into that scary place--
It always feels so real.
I shake a lot and wonder if
This body's really mine.
But when the shaking goes away
I'm feeling really fine.
I celebrate my body now,
My curly, shining hair
My strength, my warmth, my
playfulness,
My joy, my love, my care.
I keep on growing every day
My world is open wide.
Exchanging time has helped me feel
There's someone on my side.*

Wendy Linsley, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, U.K.



Part IV. Special Exercises and Expansions of Techniques

This section contains a number of special exercises which are typical of co-counselling, and also discusses some important working methods in more detail.

Checking Recognitions: an Exercise Concerned with Restimulations

If you had a bad time in hospital as a child, you may be aware of disliking hospitals, but be unaware of all the restimulations from this; you may get upset by resting in bed, women who remind you of an unkind nurse, machinery, white walls etc. Suppose a particular disinfectant smell restimulates feelings of anxiety and depression. This may be experienced in several ways:

- A.) You are aware of the connection with the previous bad experience, and when the feelings happen you identify them as belonging in the past, and you are unaffected by them.
- B.) As above, but this time identifying where the feelings come from doesn't make them disappear; whenever reminded of the hospital, you spend time miserably going over the experience and memories.
- C.) You have the feelings but are totally unconscious of the connections, so the feelings are either totally mysterious or you attach them to things in your current life and over-react to current events.

Co-Counselling techniques are aimed at identifying restimulations (sometimes directly, sometimes indirectly), and breaking up the habitual responses, whether these are negative feelings, or actions or beliefs about yourself. The general result will be to help change reactions of type B or C above towards type A. The checking recognitions exercise is a very useful one for illustrating Restimulation and then working against it.

The exercise is concerned with identifying restimulations which are produced by the appearance and actions of other people. It is particularly important when you find you have a strong reaction to someone when you first meet them, whether the reaction is positive or negative. The suggestion is that any such strong reactions are likely to be restimulations, as you can know very little about someone you have just met. Strong negative feelings are likely to lead to a prejudiced view of the person's ideas and actions, and to avoiding the person concerned. Strong positive feelings are likely to lead to expectations of positive actions and responses which are out of proportion to the present-time relationship. In this latter case, the danger is that the person having such expectations may be resentful or feel rejected if they aren't met, despite the fact that the other person is behaving normally for a new acquaintance.

This type of exercise may be looked upon as a particular type of Pattern identification. The primary purpose of Checking Recognitions however is to help the client distinguish between their Patterned perception of someone else, and the perception of

the other person as they are, here and now. The effect of restimulation is analogous to what analytic therapists call transference, but the method of using it in co-counselling is different from that in the analytic tradition.

The suggestion to use the routine may come from the client or the counsellor. It is always being used for the benefit of the client. The following sequence is a useful one:

1. The counsellor asks, "Who do I remind you of?" The client sees what thoughts come into her head. It sometimes helps for the counsellor to say, "First thought!" or to provide a signal like snapping the fingers.

The client tries to respond with the name of a person. It may be, however, that the images are of a more general nature--'a father figure' or 'the girl next door,' or a stereotype like 'teacher' or 'politician,' and no specific name comes to mind. In this case use the image as though it was a person.

2. When the client has produced a name the counsellor then asks, "In what ways am I like X? Tell me how my appearance is like X's."

The client then tries to pull out as many similarities as they can in terms of physical appearance, concentrating on concrete, literal description and avoiding interpretations. The counsellor needs to prompt as necessary and remind the client of being concrete and descriptive. If the client says things like, "You're a friendly person," then the counsellor should ask them to detail how they have decided that; it may be they have seen the person smile a lot.

3. When the client is unable to provide any more details, the counsellor asks "What's left unsaid to this person /or group?" The client tries to formulate and say what they would really like to say, without censorship. The client should try to use the present tense for this and say it as though the person were physically present. This may put the client into Discharge and, if so, this is fine; deal with by the usual techniques if necessary. If at this stage it becomes apparent that the client has a lot of Distress in this area then the counsellor can suggest Attention Switching and the setting aside of time to co-counsel on it at a later time.

4. The counsellor then says, "In what ways am I not like X? Tell me about my appearance first." The client then searches for differences, and again the counsellor should push for concrete literal details. Again actions and appearance can be asked for. Interpretations should be examined to see what observations they represent. This stage is particularly important if the counsellor is the person who reminds you of someone, as the person being counsellor may have found the identification distressing. It is also important for the client, as without sorting out differences, restimulations are likely to continue. The process illustrates a general principle of Target Practice and Pattern breaking, namely the separation of past distress from the present moment, person, and situation, in a clear fashion.

5. A final possibility which also is in the Target Practice/ Pattern breaking area is that the counsellor can ask, "If you drop into the restimulation, how are you likely to behave?" This can provide cues for when restimulation is occurring in the rest of life. When the client notices these cues, they can look for the Restimulation and find a way to climb out of the Distress, rather than go along with the Pattern.

There are several ways of using the routine:

- a) In a class situation where the exercise is being tried out. In this case the suggestion would be that people try to pick as partners someone they had strong feelings about on first meeting. However if that choice is not available, the suggestion would be to work with whoever you are paired with and see what happens. Most people experience restimulations, it is the strength of them that varies. Sometimes people are surprised by the result of this exercise.
- b) With a new co-counselling partner it is useful to Check Recognitions both ways round, to minimise restimulations which might interfere with trust.
- c) When important new people enter your life, then doing the Checking Recognitions exercise will help separate them from past people. In this case you will use your normal counsellor and the questions will refer to the person you wish to check out. Comparing authority figures and new intimates with parents can often be fruitful.
- d) A useful exercise can be to check out all the important people in your current life, in order to see them more clearly.
- e) With familiarity with the routine the exercises can be carried out without a co-counselling partner.

Role-playing Possibilities

1. Play yourself at an earlier point in time, with the counsellor acting as the person causing you distress. It is helpful to programme the counsellor with one (or a few) powerful phrases, and tell them to keep using them with you. These phrases can either be memories or what you think the other person could typically have said. E.g., "Eat it up for Mummy," or "You're a very naughty boy!" In responding speak directly to the person using present tense and involving body in actions.

Try ending with a response which is a validation of yourself.

There is a limit on using your counsellor in this way, and that is you need to remain conscious that they are your counsellor. If the role-play is too threatening you may think they personally are distressing you, and so lose your Balance of Attention. If this tends to happen then keep that particular distress for when you are in a group situation, and can have someone as a role-player in addition to someone as your counsellor.

2. Sometimes it is useful to role-play the person who has caused you the distress. This is known as 'playing the other end of the record.' This can parody the situation for you and be Pattern breaking, or sometimes you will discover you also have the chronic pattern you have suffered under. (This identification with the oppressor is quite common.) In either case the aim is to discharge in order to break up the Patterns concerned.

3. Sometimes you may be aware that your Distress is in the form of a conflict in yourself which results in an impasse; one thought is immediately countered by its opposite, and you are blocked from making any progress. This can be unlocked by separating the different sides and allowing each to speak in turn. This is helped by

making a physical separation--having two cushions or chairs for example. Sit first on one cushion and let one part have its say, and talk to the other cushion as the other part of you. When one part has had its say (or if interrupted by the other part) then move to the other cushion and reply as the other part. Continue in this manner. The probability is that neither of the two parts is rational--both are distressed. The aim is for Discharge, whichever part you are role-playing. When some resolution has been reached or time is nearly up, move to a position away from both cushions and become the rational person. Review what you have learned and use appropriate Target Practice techniques to finish.

4. Role-playing dreams can be fruitful. There are at least two different ways of doing this:

a. Treat the dream as though it were an event that actually happened and work on it with the usual techniques.

b. Take any person or object that appears in the dream and assume it is you and let it talk. E.g., "I am the grass, I am being walked over." Again use the usual techniques to get Discharge.

5. Future oriented role-play; going through situations you are about to have to cope with or expect to meet. Treat them as present time, and set the scene with literal description and speak directly to the others involved. Ask other people to play roles for you as appropriate. Repeat key phrases you wish to say and try to get voice, posture, etc. in line with complete confidence in yourself. Allow Discharge to happen if it comes up, and then go back to what you were saying or doing.

A useful variant of this is to use two cushions. This time use one cushion for the rational you, where you start. Use the other cushion for the distressed you; move there whenever you feel upset. When on the distressed cushion the aim is to return to the rational you as soon as possible, by discharging or using a ladder out of Distress. For a full description see Person and Pattern Cushion exercise later in this chapter.

Acting Into Discharge

- Acting Into Embarrassment
- Acting Into Grief
- Acting Into Anger
- Acting Into Fear
- Acting Into Disgust

Genuine Discharge may often be triggered by the client going through some of the characteristic physical actions that would take place with Discharge. In order to do this the client needs to know, or suspect, what the Distress is--anger or fear for example. Thus Acting Into will be useful in a session for intensifying feelings when the client knows what the feelings are. Acting Into Discharge exercises are also a form of Control Loosening, and therefore can be worth doing on their own. If done in this way, or in a teaching group for demonstration purposes, it is helpful to suggest to people that they set off with an image likely to produce the appropriate emotion: e.g. "Think of a person who has recently made you angry." or "Scan things that frighten you."

When Acting Into is used in this way then at the end the client should do two minutes of random pleasant memories or equivalent to make sure they are out of any distress brought up.

Acting Into Embarrassment

Most people have not entirely suppressed laughter discharge, so it is a case of giving permission and encouraging people to make their laughter louder and more prolonged. Nevertheless as an exercise it is worth doing. Take a deep breath to start with and try to laugh loudly and as long as possible. Try different types of laughing, giggling, tittering. Unlike some growth methods, co-counselling does not value one form of discharge more than another. With co-counselling experience, people laugh much more than is usual. After we had been co-counselling for several years we went to an encounter group and in the closing resentments and appreciations were much resented for laughing too much!

Acting Into Grief

1. Imagine you are a baby and lie down on the floor in a suitable posture and think of being miserable and abandoned. Try crying as you think a baby does; screw up your face and make noises.

2. Think of a major loss in your life, deliberately loosen your jaw muscles and also try to loosen forehead muscles. This can be aided by placing hands on the top of head and sliding scalp around. (Shutting off crying can cause headaches so that the corresponding relaxing of the muscular tensions can aid crying.) Again try to make some kind of miserable noise.

Acting Into Anger

1. Hitting a cushion is a popular way of Acting Into Anger. There are several recommendations about this. Firstly, to kneel up rather than remain sitting. Secondly, to use both hands simultaneously to hit with (a precaution against wrenching back muscles). Thirdly, to start lightly and aim to hit several times with each blow getting harder, ending with the final hit being as hard as you can. Then start the sequence again. Fourthly, get your voice to join in; make a noise, or, if you want to use a word, make it a short one like, "No" or, "Me."

The reason for the suggestion about working up to a climax is because anger is very easily patterned; a stereotyped repetitive pounding is unlikely to be discharge. Anger discharge is an explosive and relatively short-lived action pattern, appropriately called 'storming' in Re-Evaluation Counselling. Any sustained monotonous action or noise is unlikely to be discharge. Similarly, whole body movement with tense muscles is not discharge. It is more likely to be the kind of acting out of distress that results in smashing up telephone kiosks and similar vandalism.

2. Tearing up cardboard boxes is a releaser of anger for many people; the noise made by the tearing is very satisfactory. Alternatively, kicking or jumping on the box can be very potent. Where the anger is with particular people a name or face can be put on the box. Sometimes people feel it appropriate to burn the pieces. As with the other Acting Into methods, try and let out noise, or say 'What's Left Unsaid.' Where there

seems to be an intensity of hate that is difficult to discharge, then the use of a *blunt* knife to attack a cardboard box can be effective for releasing discharge. John Heron recommends to all parents that they symbolically murder their children at least once a month, on the basis they can then remain sane and loving with them the rest of the time.

3. Yet another method of Acting Into Anger is to pick a small cushion that can be twisted in the hands and "wring its neck." A point illustrated by the variety of methods is that each person needs to explore different ways of Acting Into, and see which are the most powerful for them.

Acting Into Fear

1. Many people find that fear discharge is the most difficult one to learn how to release, and that it only starts to happen after many months of co-counselling. Moreover some people find fear discharge starts without any aware knowledge of what it is about. This was Rose's experience. After a group session on a Gestalt weekend she found herself upset and had a bout of shaking and teeth chattering for 45 mins, with no images during or afterwards. This was the start of fear discharge for Rose. Further episodes culminated in teeth chattering all through a film in a Norwegian cinema. A counselling session afterwards resulted in Rose being able to come to terms with fear. Afterwards more awareness of what her fears were about accompanied discharge. For Rose such discharge has led to a more specific awareness of fear, and a corresponding reduction in chronic anxiety. She can also handle fear much better.

An exercise which will give you some idea of how shut down you are likely to be is to try shaking your body, starting in one place--hands or shoulders or knees--and try to get the shaking to spread throughout your body. What happens? Typically some parts of the body are stiff and won't move or aren't co-ordinated with the rest.

2. Some useful Acting Into can be done with parts of the body. List things that frighten you and try one or more of the following after each item. (With all of these keep mouth open and allow noises out.)

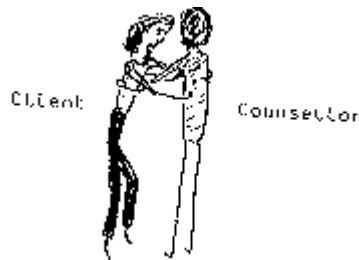
- let arms hang loosely and shake hands vigorously.
- deliberately try and shudder shoulders.
- take a deep breath and as you let it out loosen your jaw and let it shake.

As an aid to control-loosening and encouraging Discharge in the rest of your life it is worth doing one or more of the above whenever you notice you are anxious or frightened.

3. Safety is particularly important for fear Discharge and usually some form of touch and support is needed in a co-counselling session. This should be provided in a way which doesn't hinder the client's movements. A useful position for within-session fear Discharge is as follows:

Both client and counsellor stand up and face each other. The counsellor places arms around the client, either under the client's arms or over the client's shoulders depending on their relative heights. The counsellor makes contact with the client's

back, with their hands cupped so that only the fingertips actually touch. The counsellor is thus providing contact and support without restricting the client's movements. The client also supports themselves, with their fingertips on the counsellor's back in a similar fashion. The client's arms should be horizontal with elbows bent outwards. The client leans slightly forward and puts their weight onto the ball of the foot and lets their head hang down. In this position it is easier to let the arms shake and the rest of the body join in. Client should let their jaw go loose and encourage the emergence of noises.



Acting Into Disgust

Disgust appears to be concerned with getting rid of poisons or avoiding contamination and this applies psychologically as well as physically. Disgust noises, which seem to be low level retching, can be used for Acting Into exercises. Scanning people or situations which make you feel sick and making appropriate noises can be useful. These differ for different people. At a recent skills course one woman reported she felt sick when she sat in front of the computer screen. Note that some people do actually vomit as the Discharge of psychological poison.

We are uncertain whether vomiting or vocal noises of the 'Ugh', 'Yuck' type do constitute a separate discharge process or not, but they certainly exist as a component of other types of Discharge and they are psychologically powerful. We would certainly recommend the making of appropriate noises when the feelings are in this area; most people will have no difficulty thinking of suitable yucky situations for Acting Into.

The popularity of a certain "Green Slime" is probably due to the Discharge opportunity provided, as well as its appeal to junior sadists. Another Acting Into which specialises in this area of contamination consists of painting with the seven shades, or with bilious greens, or with your own favourite colour evocative of contamination, vomit, shit etc. Make appropriate noises. This exercise could also act as a source of material for a session. (We saw a couple doing this many years ago in an art room, when we were on a growth holiday. We discovered afterwards that they were co-counsellors.)

John Heron suggests an exercise for Acting Into called 'Mad dog.' Imagine a mad dog has got hold of one foot, and try to shake the dog off, using voice and arms to emphasise your efforts to get rid of it. Trying to get something nasty away from your body, or outside of it, seems to be a special kind of fear--mixed up with the getting rid of poisons by vomiting perhaps.

Bodywork in Co-Counselling

- Re-experiencing distress
- Contradicting bodily patterns
- Control loosening
- Getting into distress through direct-bodywork
- But what about the client being in charge?
- Being a client: initiating and receiving
- Bodywork and the feelings-map
- A celebration and a warning
- Using our bodies to celebrate and build new life skills

Involving our bodies is important as part of all co-counselling techniques. When caught up in specific Patterns we can behave as though parts of our bodies and minds are split off from the rest and from our awareness. In our Persons however we are integrated harmonious wholes.

Co-Counselling is an intensely body-orientated approach to personal change. Effective discharge *always* involves us bodily. So why devote a special section to 'bodywork'?

One reason for emphasising the bodily aspects of co-counselling is that involving our bodies is the key to the successful use of co-counselling techniques, and we want to emphasise this. Secondly, in our experience there is often confusion inside and outside co-counselling in this area. People sometimes misunderstand and complain that co-counselling is too verbal. Co-Counsellors are sometimes wanting to know about new techniques because they feel stuck in their counselling. While this can be for all sorts of reasons, we have frequently found that such people have strong Control Patterns about physical involvement and hence are not actually using the co-counselling techniques.

The word 'bodywork' is an import into co-counselling from other personal change systems. Since some counselling /therapy/personal growth systems are very verbal, a variety of corrective reactions have occurred. Out of Freud came Reich, and so on. However, when you look at what Reichian and Bioenergetic therapists, Alexander teachers, or Rolfers do with their clients, you will find they typically engage in a lot of verbal work: to make connections, and links, and generalisations.

A useful preliminary tip to remember and practice is INVOLVE YOUR BODY IN APPROPRIATE ACTIONS TO WHATEVER YOU ARE SAYING--GESTURES, POSTURE, FACIAL EXPRESSION, VOICE (TONE AND VOLUME). Involving your body in this way will make it easier to re-experience your Distresses, easier to contradict your Patterns, and to build new life skills to replace patterned actions.

Re-experiencing distress or how not to be just a talking head

Talking in the present tense helps you get the 'feel' of what was happening. Suiting actions to words will help further. (Sensory memories are stored separately to verbal ones.) When repeating a word or phrase, say it LOUDER and then again LOUDER STILL. This increases bodily arousal, which is likely to take you into specific feelings. Notice what your body is doing and try to exaggerate this. Maybe fist clenching, hand wringing, crouching down. As counsellor, you may notice such actions, and want to make a suggestion to the client. A typical co-counselling intervention is "Do that

again." or "Clench your hands tighter," or--often more powerful--a suggestion to do the opposite.

Interventions such as, "What are you doing with your fists?" or "What are you feeling?" on the other hand tend to result in clients getting into their heads, and trying to respond with reasons or interpretations for the sake of the counsellor. Co-Counselling suggestions take people past analysing their posture or feelings into discharging the Distresses they represent.

If no words seem to go along with the action, try making a noise; let it come out as it will. You are fitting back another piece of your self, one that is often cut off. Your voice will often betray the feeling that's around; maybe anger, fear, or revulsion. You can then ACT INTO the appropriate Discharge. ACTING INTO DISCHARGE consists of going through the appropriate bodily motions for discharging a feeling you catch a hint of. It can act as exploration and will often trigger off genuine discharge processes.

When using "What's Left Unsaid" or any kind of Role-play, make sure you put in the appropriate actions. These may involve standing up and walking around! If you find you get cramp or counsellor's knees, check how much you involve your lower body. Always sitting on the floor may well be a 'living up to others expectations' Pattern adapted to co-counselling norms. Try doing a whole session without sitting down at all; you are likely to be much more conscious of the physical parts of your Patterns, and to include them in your work. Many of these suggestions will enhance your awareness of Patterns.

Contradicting bodily patterns

As you become aware of your bodily Patterns you can start contradicting them: before, during, and after counselling sessions. Some Patterns which seem very widespread in our culture include: looking at the ground; not looking at people; sagging at shoulders or hips; occupying minimum space. Contradict them: Look UP! Straighten UP! Throw your arms UP! Or, more accurately, do whatever best contradicts these Patterns for YOU.

Words are important too. The aim is not just to become your sensory experience, but to integrate all aspects of your experience. Find your physical contradiction and add to it your celebratory phrase, and the two together will be more powerful than either separately. We need the words to generalise our experience.

Any verbal contradiction in a counselling session needs bodily contradictions adding to it. You can contradict patterned posture, voice level, voice tone, rate of speaking. Look in a mirror to see your habitual expressions and postures and the way you walk. Listen to your voice on a tape recorder--maybe tape some sessions. Find and use contradictions to ALL the rigid pieces of yourself.

Control loosening

Some patterns seem to exist specifically to prevent Discharge. You might notice words in your head that say, "That's foolish/childish /unnecessary." These Patterns include strong muscular tensions which inhibit the 'letting go' processes. It requires great effort to block Discharge. Such patterns are known as Control Patterns. You often

need to work on such controls before you can reach other Patterns. The patterned thoughts which are part of Control Patterns often say that discharge means being 'out of control'--a terrible sin in British culture!

It is ironic that, in reality, being able to discharge means being more able to choose your feelings, being more in control. CONTROL LOOSENING is the general term given to describe working against such patterns--generally physical ones. A form of Control Loosening already mentioned is Acting Into Discharge. This is a technique for when you already have some idea of what the distressed feeling is.

A different starting situation is when you are too distressed to work or Discharge. An example of this state is when people say they feel 'shut down.' They are now at the opposite end of the attention spectrum from trying to re-experience Distress; they are trapped in distress. They will need Attention Switching to achieve a Balance of Attention. However, being shut down is a low energy state and it is difficult to get going on 'New & Goods' or 'Random Pleasant Memories.' Physical arousal exercises are easier to do, and act as Control Loosening. Actions worth trying are: running round and round the room without bumping into the furniture, hopping, jumping on the spot, doing cartwheels--anything which increases bodily arousal.

Getting into Distress through DIRECT-BODYWORK

When using Direct Bodywork you will be getting into your Distress by using bodily manipulations, without any scanning or verbal work. This can be achieved using massage, pressure on sensitive points, stress exercises (as in Bioenergetics), and hyperventilation. These techniques, whether used actively by you as client on yourself, or passively with the counsellor manipulating your body, tend to put you in touch with chronic Distress--usually reaching back into your childhood. This means they are powerful techniques, and we recommend you use them only after you have a fair amount of experience and can discharge relatively freely. It is also a good idea to work with an experienced counsellor, since you are bypassing the usual safeguards which in co-counselling usually ensure you do not get further into Distress than you can handle. You need to know that your counsellor can fish you out of deep Distress if you get caught in it.

Having got into Distress through the Direct Bodywork, you can then use other techniques to work as usual. Firstly Discharge as thoroughly as you can. Secondly explore the features which re-stimulate the Distress; and discharge more as necessary. Thirdly, make a clear distinction between past and present. Build positive Directions which can take you out of the Distress by operating against the Patterns involved. This latter suggestion is, of course, not only for your co-counselling sessions, but also for the life situations where Restimulation is likely. For further discussion see section on Target Practice techniques.

But what about the client being in charge?

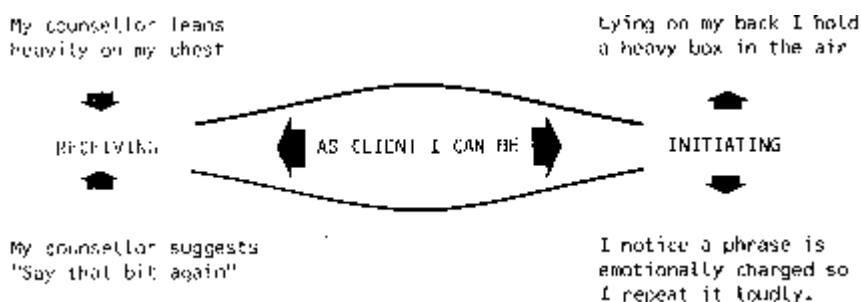
Sometimes people say "But how do you square a counsellor intervening by Direct Bodywork with the idea that the client is always in charge?" We would say there is little difference between asking your counsellor to say, "I really love you," and asking them to cuddle you. Similarly an intensive contract may encourage your counsellor to pick up every distress-word you say and make a suggestion about proceeding, or to

push a thumb into your tense lumbar musculature. In either case the client may have asked for what they get, or not. The precise nature of the contract may have been agreed or not. The issue of the verbal or physical character of interventions is another issue, separate from the type of contract.

However, physical interventions do feel very different from verbal interventions. And, role-playing apart, verbal suggestions like, "Try doing X," can be rejected before experiencing them. This is not necessarily the case with physical ones. A thumb in the small of your back can only be removed. So, make clear contracts with your counsellor. If you make an intensive contract then your counsellor's suggestions could take the form of direct manipulations of your body, without asking your permission first! Of course, you can make it clear to your counsellor what you do, or do not want, in this area.

Being a client: initiating and receiving

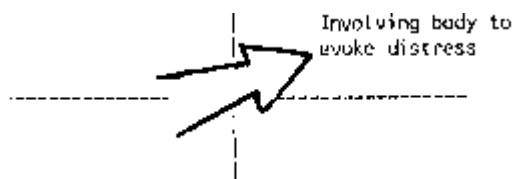
When you are a client you can act in a self initiating way, or you can respond to the suggestions of the counsellor. This is not the same as active and passive, since both modes will involve client activity. The initiating-receiving polarity exists as much with bodywork as when other methods are used. Thus:



Bodywork and the feelings-map

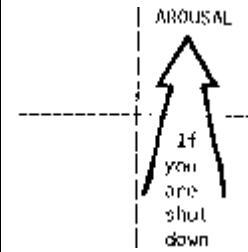
The feelings-map image can be used to illustrate ways in which discharge-oriented bodywork fits into the basic co-counselling strategies. Remember the core condition for Discharge seems to be a Balance of Attention (between an awareness of our Distresses and an awareness of present safety.) PLUS bodily arousal.

Thus the antidote bodywork offers for the 'talking head' syndrome involves Focusing on Specifics and this can be portrayed so:

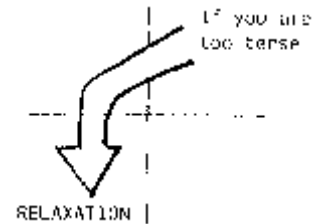


Contradicting bodily patterns, going against the feelings, can be attempted in many ways. It all depends what you are going against! For instance:

If you are shut down, try for bodily arousal.

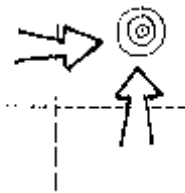


If you are too tense, try for relaxation.



The first of these possibilities is typical of *Control Loosening* methods. These are particularly useful when you feel shut-down, gloomy, guilty, depressed.

Acting Into Discharge involves both bodily arousal AND focusing our thoughts. You Act Into Discharge when you already guess what the distress is about, when you have a known target.



Direct Bodywork on the other hand typically starts from a neutral feelings state. Now you aim to move directly into an aroused, distress conscious state: but you do not know where you will end up. |



A Celebration And A Warning

Experiencing the loosening and freeing of your physical being, and the freeing and integration of your voice, is very exciting and liberating. Initially any such control loosening is useful. However Patterns can persist in different forms; thrashing around and being noisy can be compulsive too. If you find yourself thinking, "I'm the best (noisiest) client around here," take another look at yourself. Use the cues of repetitiveness, rigidity, monotony, to spot this type of Pattern or acting out, and work to move on.

The differences between Discharge and patterned feelings, or acting out, can be observed at a bodily level. Discharge not only acts to relax muscles but, in addition, discharge processes are antagonistic to wholesale muscular tensions. When someone is acting out you can see that large groups of muscles are tense; a hand, an arm, a leg or the whole body. Similarly patterned movements are going to involve whole segments of the person's body in a rigid way. When you are used to observing Discharge, you

will be able to spot clients starting to discharge and then stopping it by tensing up their muscles. This may happen many times in a few minutes, or even in a few seconds. It also happens to you when you are client of course, but it's harder to see past your own Patterns.

When complete relaxation into the Discharge does occur, this is frequently highlighted by the client re-evaluating afterwards; up will pop some relevant memory or new thought or new association.

Using our bodies to celebrate and build new life skills

Last, but by no means least, any celebration of ourselves is Target Practice for the person we can be. Once again, words need to be united with bodily actions. Is my tone of voice confident and celebratory? Does my posture indeed signal celebration of myself to others? Can I look my counsellor proudly in the eyes?

Move from general celebrations to specific enactments of them: "As a creative person I will ... redecorate my room/make a new dress/ think of a new way of communicating X ..." As you do this simulate the actions involved as appropriate.

We sometimes notice that even when clients put a lot of energy into intensifying Distress, they may put little into celebrating. Try leaping joyously in the air and shouting, "ME" or "YIPPEE!" Always stand up for celebrations. When clients are celebrating, counsellors can very usefully push them by making suggestions like "Louder," and, "With actions."

Working with Chronic Patterns

Chronic distress patterns are those which continually dominate our feelings and behaviour. They have been restimulated past a critical point so that they play the record all the time. They are so much a part of us that if we are aware of them we tend to label them as part of our personality. Richard has a Chronic Pattern which is, "I've got to get it right or you won't love me." He has been discharging on this for some time, but still notices it popping up--in teaching a class, in writing a research paper, making love, digging the allotment. Rose has one which says, "I'm always being judged and found wanting." At the bottom Chronic Patterns all seem to be variants on the individual not being acceptable or worthwhile as they are; "I'm not O.K." This is the basic point to remember in trying to deal with them.

Chronic patterns are very difficult to work on. If you want to work on a Chronic Pattern, the basic suggestion is to ask your counsellor for an intensive contract. The most effective technique appears to be Direction Holding. It will help if you inform your counsellor about the Pattern you want to work on, and the Directions you have found useful. The most effective Directions appear to be those where you express complete appreciation of yourself, without any reservations. The 'without any reservations' is the hard piece, but the most useful piece. It needs to be applied in word, tone, facial expression and posture (no sitting down for this).

When working on Chronic Patterns in this way most people will find two types of hazards. Firstly, the Chronic Pattern under attack will often be routed during a counselling session, only to appear full-blown as soon as the session is over. This leads

to helplessness, and to depending on counsellors to tackle the Pattern. This dependency problem can be resolved by the client persisting in thinking of self-appreciative Directions 'without any reservations,' combined with applying such Directions both in and out of counselling sessions. Applying such Directions outside counselling sessions is another example of 'Holding a Direction in life.' Anything which detracts or gets in the way should be labelled a reservation to be fought, regardless of how reasonable it appears to the client. Fighting reservations is a useful way to think about the process, since it is so easy to accept them as rational.

Secondly, the use of self-appreciation techniques against Chronic Patterns has the effect of bringing self-doubt and self-criticism vividly to mind. These self put-downs appear to the client to be eminently reasonable, and hence the self-appreciation gets to look increasingly ridiculous. To counteract this effect, it is helpful to voice all negative or interfering thoughts out loud, as soon as you experience them. The next step is to formulate a Contradiction, and to say this loudly and confidently several times. Such negative thoughts are often accompanied by a sagging or closed up body posture and this should be contradicted at the same time. Thus, the client could be saying, "I'm stuck," or "I can't do it," when trying to say a different Direction. Such comments should be taken as the Distress to be worked on, since they are the Distress that is occupying the client's attention.

Counsellors can help by encouraging clients to be persistent and to return again and again to the Directions which produce Discharge. It is worth noting that when a counsellor suggests a Direction which hits home the client will usually laugh or collapse into Discharge; minimally an amused or horrified snort is likely. If the client takes the suggestion and modifies it slightly such that it no longer produces Discharge, the client is probably dodging. Suggesting a return to the original Direction is likely to produce results.

Counsellors should also watch out for the client getting distressed and losing their Balance of Attention. A helpful way to counteract a client's tendency to get sunk in Distress is to suggest a lighter Direction to the client--a parody or one with a humorous twist. Another possibility is for the client to add "Yippee" or similar words onto the end of a heavy Direction. Some Attention Switching can also be suggested.

If the client gets stuck and is silent, the counsellor can ask, "What's the thought?" in order to get the 'on top' Distress verbalised. The verbalisations can then be worked with. If silence persists the counsellor can try validating the client, persisting gently but firmly, even if the client rejects it.

Most Chronic Patterns come out of childhood experiences, maybe some from birth experiences; so the position of the person in the grip of the Pattern is usually that of themselves as child. Hence it is often useful to encourage the client to say the Direction to their Mother or Father (as appropriate); adding their childhood name for the parent on to the end of it. E.g. "I'm all right as I am, Mummy."

Towards the end of a session working against a Chronic Pattern it is useful, as part of the process of separating past and present Distress, to distinguish between the past distressed child and the present skilled person. Helpful statements include: "I'm no longer the child who needs love," "I'm no longer the child who fears my father." A general theme is, "I'm no longer the helpless victim of that child's Distress; I have

many more skills and I can change." Some people also find the image of themselves as an adult, being able to care for and comfort the needy child within them, is a useful one.

Separation statements and Directions can be followed by celebrations of the present you. Celebrate the ways you are working to help yourself. Even after a session in which you do not seem to have got very far, you can celebrate the fact you are working. Search for a positive Direction against the Distress or Pattern you have been working on to use in your life circumstances. Any Direction you have been discharging on within a co-counselling session can be used against Restimulation in the rest of your life. I.e. you can use such Directions as Ladders out of distress.

We suggest that you always set time aside towards the end of a Direction holding session to plan how to interrupt and counteract the Patterns in your life. One possibility is to display Directions on your walls, or in places where you will find them when starting on tasks you expect to be restimulating. Effective Directions discovered in sessions are best written down, as they are easily forgotten. Enlist the help of your counsellor and of other co-counsellors in your living circles if you can; mutual reminders and validations can be powerful.

Person and Pattern Cushion Exercise

This Target Practice exercise is useful for the following purposes:

- 1) Rehearsing a future event, trying to use the behaviours which are deemed to be best for achieving the person's objectives. (Future role-play)
- 2) Devising an action plan to achieve a particular objective.

You may decide to use the whole of a session in this way. The client uses the two cushions by sitting on one cushion when operating in their Person and on the other cushion when distressed or Patterned. The assumption behind the technique is that people will be more effective if they are able to both rehearse the skills involved and deal with the Distresses and Patterns which prevent full access to their skills.

PROCEDURE:

1. The exercise is best done using another person as counsellor or support.
2. The client uses the physical props of two chairs or two cushions or two marked areas on the floor. One cushion is designated as the PERSON cushion--for use when the client is being rational and has access to all their strengths and skills. The other cushion is designated as the PATTERN cushion--for use whenever the individual becomes Distressed or Patterned.
3. The client starts by sitting on the Person cushion and proceeds to act and talk through the future event as they would wish it to occur. The counsellor may be asked to play a role, or just to prompt the client to talk in the present tense and add appropriate actions. If the client becomes distressed then they should immediately move to the Pattern cushion. The counsellor should watch for distress cues, and prompt the client to move if they don't do so spontaneously. (Typical signs of Distress are hesitations, stumbling over words, self-putdowns, apologetic tone of voice, aggression.)

4. When on the Pattern cushion the client's aim should be to return to the Person cushion *as soon as possible*; they are not trying to work on the Distress any more than necessary. This may be achieved by Discharging, or saying, 'What's Left Unsaid,' or Attention Switching, or taking a Direction against the Distress. The client is trying to rehearse the future situation as they would like it to be, including climbing out of any restimulated Distress they find themselves dropping into.

5. The client moves back to the Person cushion as soon as possible and continues rehearsing. Then back to the Pattern cushion if more Distress arises.

If the client is trying to action plan then they use the Person cushion for sorting out their priorities and detailing action sequences. The counsellor can help by pushing the client to give details and fix times. In the same way as with the Future Role-play, on displaying any signs of Distress the client should move to the Pattern cushion.

This technique is most likely to be useful when the distresses the client hits are ones which they have already worked on, otherwise the session is likely to become a discharge-inducing one, rather than a future rehearsal one.

Special Places Exercises

These exercises are celebratory in their own right. They are also powerful ways of building associations which can be used by an individual to maintain or regain their rational Person when under stress conditions. The stress may be generated entirely by Patterns or may arise because an external emergency is activating patterns. The versions given here are as used by Tom Sargent and bear his name. The account follows the description in an article by Tom in 'Self and Society' 1980 No. 8.

Imaging and association (relaxed)

Short relaxation exercises are used. Often these will include breathing instructions and tension followed by relaxation. Sometimes participants are merely instructed to relax. Music is used both to develop associations and to cut out any background noise. Tom used the flute and harp music of either Rampal or Galway, preferably the western sounding Japanese music, because it has few associations which will intrude upon the exercise.

With the music on and the people comfortable and relaxed, they are asked to go to a Special Place for them, alone. They are urged to use a wooded place, a beach or a mountain, and are told that a quiet room or the like is fine. For the first exercise, the leader describes some elements of such a place. This is annoying to some and necessary for others. The leader uses a quiet and firm voice tone. The people are told to look around the Special Place, with eyes closed to keep out the interference of the room they are in.

As the participants look around their Special Places, they are asked to notice how the environment feels on their bodies, and say their first names.

"Say your first name and feel the breeze or the sun, and how your body stands, sits or lies on what you are on, and say your name. Now reach out and touch some things around you, and say your name. Select one thing to touch, and say your name, and touch what you touch. Your name and touch. Look around and notice how all the

things in your Special Place are different, one from another. Say your name and touch what you touch. See how you are different, and the trees and the rocks are different, and you are different, and say your name and touch. Now notice how you are different, and some things about you that you appreciate, and say your name and touch. Now select one of these appreciations, and touch and say your name and the appreciation of yourself. And now start to come back to the room, and say your name, touch and appreciation. Say your name, touch and appreciation, and when you feel like it, open your eyes and say your name, touch and appreciation."

Even this shortened version, read and without music, will provide the exercise. For most, the touch is the magic ingredient. Recalling the soil or the rock that is touched will bring it all back. Gradually extensive areas of self appreciation are integrated through this exercise. It is a beautiful vehicle for both personal exploration and structured recall.

It is usually the touch that provides the most powerful association for use in life situations that are distressing. It is useful, as a foundation for the association, to practice returning to the Special Place and building up a sense of your strength and skills, associated both with your name and the Place. Then, within a counselling session, practice taking your Special Place into a future situation you anticipate having difficulties with.

The next step is to imagine you are taking your Special Place with you in the real life situation. This can be enhanced by having an object with you that gives you a touch sensation from your Special Place. This could be a pebble or piece of bark or material, carried in your pocket. The evoking of your Special Place by the touch will return you to rationality and access to your strengths and skills. It will act as a 'ladder out of distress'.

For some situations, particularly ones where emergency situations require action, it is worthwhile using a more energised version of your Special Place. Tom describes it in the following fashion.

Imaging and association (energised)

In this case, the relaxation exercises are those that will relate to standing, and centering; for example, imagining a cord up the centre of the spine and out of the top of the head. This is pulled and relaxed as breathing exercises are done. The music is Spanish Guitar, with the most unfamiliar music available.

Participants are asked to go to a highly energised and pleasant Special Place, such as skiing, sailing, motorcycling, or running. Here, the body sensations are important; the strength, co-ordination and energy. The participants are asked to feel the environment on the body, as they stand with their eyes closed. The leader uses the same associations, but the voice will be louder, excited and firm. The whole exercise tends to move much more rapidly. The associations are brought back to the room in the same way. They will bring back a variety of touches, a mast stay, ski pole, motorcycle handle bars, and maybe even a periscope handle.

This particular exercise is most useful for recovery of the image in high stress situations. It is less useful for self exploration. Making an association between a touch image from your Special Place and an object in the environment where you could be

under high stress will mean that it can provide a ladder out of Distress when an emergency occurs. This means that touching the object will switch attention out of Distress and back into rationality, and facilitate the use of strengths and skills.

Tom gives an example of a surgeon in New Jersey using this method to maintain his flexibility and awareness during stressful situations which may occur during an operation. The instruments which he uses remind him of the exercise, in which he re-experienced himself on a ski hill. He can feel the ski pole in his hand, the flexibility of his body and of his response to the environment. The surgeon focuses emotionally on the ski hill; this allows him to also focus awarely on the events of the emergency. Another example is a nuclear power plant engineer making an association between the handlebars of his motorcycle and the handle of one of the turbine controls. If an emergency occurs then his hand on the control brings back both the exercise and his cognitive flexibility and enhances his ability to cope.

Feelings Map Exercise

This is a powerful exercise that demonstrates a range of core co-counselling techniques. We usually use it with beginners; it can be equally valuable with more experienced co-counsellors. It can also be used with non co-counselling groups to demonstrate how people can be in charge of their feelings. (Useful since so many people believe they have no choices concerning their feelings.)

In the context of a co-counselling course we would introduce the exercise on the following lines:

"We are going to do an exercise which will take you on a journey through your feelings space. We shall guide you to various possible destinations, though what will happen to you while you are there we do not know. We can however assure you that we have ourselves been to all the destinations many times and we do guarantee to rescue you and bring you back again whatever happens."

"You will work in pairs and share the time. The person who goes first will go on all the legs of the journey. Then the other person goes on the journey. While one person is on the journey their partner acts as support and counsellor, giving free attention and following any requests we make to them. Form into pairs and we will begin the first part."

The following stages are then briefed, and carried out by the first person.

1) "Think of a time when you felt particularly frustrated, helpless, unable to get what you wanted. It may be recent or from the past. Tell the story of that event to your partner. Do this in the *present tense* and with as much detailed description of what happened and of the surroundings as you can remember. Partners are asked to listen and give attention without interrupting in any way." (This goes on for four minutes)

2. "Now stand up, and go in for some kind of vigorous exercise--running on the spot, jumping, swinging arms and legs or anything else that's possible in the space. Partners, encourage the traveller to put lots of energy into this and keep them doing it."

(There is usually a need to keep encouraging vigour. This is likely to take 3 to 4 minutes, longer if it takes time to get people going.)

3. "Travellers can sit down again now. Return to the event you were talking about before and talk some more about it. Start with whatever comes into your head now, telling what's important to you. Still using present tense. If you are uncertain where to start, tell the main part of the story again." (Again four minutes. Usually louder voices and more animation are observable in this section, maybe Discharge.)

4. "In this next portion of the journey, think of the event you've been talking through, and think of 'what's left unsaid' concerning that event. This may be something you thought of at the time, but could not say, or you may be formulating it now for the first time. You may want to say it to the person, or persons, involved in the event, or to the universe. It may be a positive or a negative thing. Try and make it as uncensored as you can. We would like you to stand up to say it, then say it loudly as you can, and keep saying it--the same words. As you say it, pick up one of the cardboard boxes and tear it up. Partners, encourage the traveller to speak loudly, to keep saying 'what's left un-said,' and to tear up their box vigorously."

(Allow 5 mins for this process.) Again general encouragement to stand up, talk loudly, and to tear up the box will be needed from the teacher, plus attention to evoked Distress and Discharge. A good supply of cardboard boxes of assorted sizes and toughness need to be on hand.)

5. "Last piece of the journey for this traveller. Think of as many different peaceful memories as you can, and share them very briefly with your partner. Any things which are positive and relaxed for you. Partners are asked to give attention." (Allow two minutes after everyone has settled.)

6. "That is the end of the journey, but before moving on spend a couple of minutes reviewing what happened to you and what you now think about the event you chose to talk about. Share with your partner."

The whole journey is repeated in the same way for the second person. Ample time for discussion and review should be allowed. After some initial sharing of experiences we introduce the idea of the Feelings-map. We use the following stages: (refer to Part II of this manual for more details)

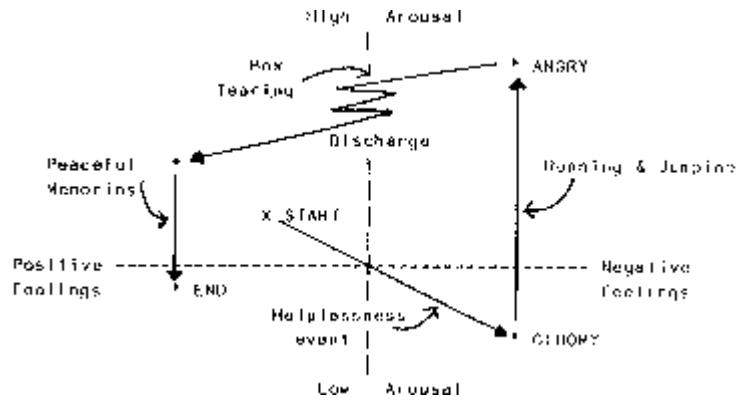
A. Drawing the Feelings-map axes, and locating some common emotions in the different quadrants. We discuss having common labels for feelings, but individual experience.

B. Mapping the journey suggestions, as on the diagram below. It is important to point out the following:

1. For any effect to be experienced the person has to use the technique being suggested.

2. People's experiences can differ a lot, even though most people will experience the changes shown. E.g. many people will move on to the positive side of their feelings with the arousal process.

3. The diagram shows only minimal movements across the feelings space. Feelings can and do change very quickly, and most people will have moved around much more than shown on the diagram.



C. Individuals record their own journey on Feelings map axes. They work along with the partner they had in the exercise, so that they can consult over what happened for them.

D. Sharing of journeys is encouraged; what happened to people and whether their view of the event they chose to work on changed by the end.

E. Relating the journey suggestions and peoples' experiences to the main co-counselling techniques.

The Significance of Feelings

*The significance of feelings
 Is that they are not truths
 But instructions
 My feelings don't tell me
 What the universe is made for
 Or whether I'm worthwhile
 Or what my lover would be like to live with
 (happy ever after?)
 No!
 Feelings
 Tell me
 What TO DO.
 That's all
 And of course
 Like any other authority
 They are often wrong.*

Richard Horobin

Part V: Suggestions and Guidelines for Ongoing Co-Counselling

A collection of useful hints, tips and proposals (gained from painful experience) for those taking up co-counselling.

Choosing a Co-Counsellor

Whose Responsibility?

Answer: Yours! You may be offered help; you may need to ask for help and that's fine, but don't expect co-operation with your dependency or blaming patterns. You have to want to help yourself sufficiently to set up the basic conditions of obtaining a Co-Counsellor and setting time aside.

What type of person should I pick?

Most people find it difficult to co-counsel with people they already know well; intimate friends, professional colleagues, partners. There are probably various reasons for this, but certainly the chances are high for mutual restimulation of Distress and/or mutual avoidance of important areas. There are also likely to be more difficulties around trust and confidentiality.

After mastering the techniques it is very helpful to have co-counselling friends and intimates, and to be able to share short sessions when needed. The authors have been married 20 years and co-counselling for 10 of those. We do use each other as co-counsellors when necessary. We do not however, even now, use each other as our main co-counsellors. As with much of our lives, an already good relationship has been much enhanced with co-counselling skills.

It is not useful to try and counsel with someone you dislike, but equally, strong attraction to someone you do not know may not be helpful either. However there is no point in waiting for the perfect counsellor; pick another struggling human like yourself and get on with it. The on-the-job learning is much more important than the initial selection. Remember you are not stuck if your first choice does not work out for any reason.

We suggest making a contract for six weeks at a time with someone. Then review whether you have another six weeks or change to other partners. (Distresses around choosing and being chosen, or not, are very useful ones to put time into dissolving initially, as they hamper us so much.)

How often do I have to co-counsel?

Regular working once a week is recommended, with at least 40 mins each and preferably an hour each way. As you learn the skills you will be able to make use of shorter pieces of time. If you have a Co-Counsellor handy then two lots of 30 minutes each per week can be fruitful. Precisely what time you spend, and how, can be flexibly arranged with your partner.

If you find yourself very upset by some event, try and fix up a session as soon as possible. Be willing to settle for 15 mins each way immediately rather than wait several days for your hour. Using the telephone helps in an emergency. If you do have another Co-Counsellor on the spot, try five minutes each way at the end of the day or on getting in from work; it's amazing how useful this can be.

How many co-counsellors can I work with?

There are no restrictions on this. Most people find it helpful to have a regular Co-Counsellor. Working with the same person means you can tackle the initial problems of trust building and set up working habits with maximum efficiency. Experienced counsellors also find a lot of payoff for having a regular partner; this is much more effective for working on chronic Patterns.

There are also payoffs for using several co-counsellors from time to time; people find they counsel on different things with different people. Take opportunities to counsel with more experienced counsellors when you can--at workshops for example. Ask more experienced people in your community for sessions occasionally. If you feel you cannot offer good counselling in return consider what else you could offer in exchange for their time.

Take opportunities to attend workshops whenever you can; you will find them useful and exciting; you are likely to learn a lot in a short time and do a lot of work for yourself.

How can I become a good counsellor?

The basic contract involves offering your time and free attention. There are certainly more skills you can learn. The best way is to become an expert client, as the more you are able to use the techniques yourself the more you will be able to make useful suggestions for others. Some people find it is hard to change their normal way of talking to others, particularly if they are 'helping persons' professionally or voluntarily. If in doubt keep quiet and concentrate on giving attention. In co-counselling everyone is learning to be counsellors for themselves, both in sessions and in their lives.

I might be learning to be more selfish/aggressive/arrogant in my life

Some people find the idea of spending time on themselves rather than working to directly help others upsetting. However the experience of all strands of counselling is that the most successful helpers are those who value themselves and spend time working on their own distresses; the more you learn how to become a helper for yourself the more effective you can become for others.

In general remember that thoughts about selfishness are more likely to be Patterns than a rational appraisal. What you do and say in counselling sessions is *not* directly impacting on the people concerned. The reason for doing it is to have *more control* over your feelings in the rest of your life, and *more choice* about how you spend your time and what you do. After Discharging your Distresses you are likely to spend less time either kicking yourself or hurting others. You will become more able to solve problems and change the world; either by directly helping others or through political action, as you'll have more time and energy. Expect to gain much more time than you use in sessions. This goes along with giving others *more care and attention* not less.

Sources of Material for Co-Counselling Sessions

When people discover that we have been co-counselling for several years they often ask us, "But what do you find to work on after the first few weeks?" We can remember we had such thoughts initially, but not for very long. The question seems to arise from the idea that co-counselling is only for people who have PROBLEMS and as the speaker is a normal functioning person then they do not have problems. These days we notice that what people regard as normal includes having lots of things they find very difficult to cope with, and this frequently means they have a high level of Distress.

In our experience it is true that many people start co-counselling at times in their lives when they are having special difficulties. However, co-counselling is also about growth and development, and provides tools to help people change any part of their lives they wish to. Co-Counselling is not only for therapy. We have been using co-counselling to change areas of lives we were dissatisfied with for ten years now. We have not yet run out of topics worth working on, and we keep making changes for ourselves in directions which mean less Distress and more zest and enjoyment in our lives.

Our personal criteria for areas of our lives that are worth working on are that we should end up by saving more time, to spend as we choose, than we spend on our co-counselling sessions. Of course if you do not have things in your life you want to change, there is no point in spending time in co-counselling sessions.

The following may be useful suggestions when there is not a distressing event in the forefront of your awareness:

1. Scan minor Distresses of the past week, or since your last session. Talk through them in present tense, with concrete imagery and encourage Discharge by the usual techniques.
2. Relax and let your mind drift. Notice your associations and pick up either the event or the theme that begins to take prominence in your attention. Use talking through and the other appropriate techniques.
3. Pick a theme to scan on, starting with earliest memories and working forwards in time. Pick areas that you know involve Distress--though in practice most themes will do. Some commonly useful ones: sexual experiences; working life; school life; learning new things; asserting yourself; boring times, frustrating events; religious experiences--the list is endless.

Harvey Jackins has suggested that everyone can benefit from telling the story of their lives at least once; you may of course need more than one session for that. For distressing themes where you want extra time and support you could consider making a contract with a counsellor for a number of sessions on that theme--sexual experiences for example. There are many advantages when both people are working on the same theme, though the disadvantage is restimulation of the counsellor. You may need to allow time for whoever is counsellor in the second part of the session to get rid of restimulation from the client's session.

4. Role play typical Distresses of childhood, with your counsellor acting as a parental figure. E.g. eating up food, toilet training, having to go to bed or to school. This process may surface specific memories, and usually produces copious laughter Discharge and

often Discharge of other kinds as well. You may find there are other remembered dislikes. At a recent workshop someone remembered having their hair washed roughly and someone else how painful face washing had been. Both parties found the distresses more powerful than they originally thought and well worth working on.

5. Scanning or role-playing a future event which you are anxious about. The techniques for doing this are the same as scanning past events; talk through in detail and encourage Discharge as you hit Distress.

6. Checking Recognitions. Try using this exercise with the major people in your life, as well as any new people you meet.

7. Direction Holding against chronic Patterns: When you have identified some of your chronic Patterns you will probably find it useful to allot some time to working on them in most sessions you have. Chronic Patterns, by definition, are hard to see and difficult to pay attention to. Because of this it will pay to enlist your counsellor's co-operation, by detailing the Pattern you want to work on, and by having an intensive contract for this part of your session. (See Direction Holding details in *Helping Discharge Happen*.)

8. Distressing dreams can be worked on as though they were real events in your life, as can distressing fantasies, or images of yourself that are self-deprecatory.

9. Bodywork can be used to surface Distress. Massage for example will frequently produce associations when tense muscles are worked on. Stress positions of the body as used in bioenergetics will have the same effect, as can hyperventilation. When associations come up, work with them by the usual methods. Note that this type of bodywork can bypass the controls which ensure that the client is working on material they can handle. Our personal recommendation is that bodywork is only used when both the client and counsellor are experienced, and when the contract is specific about level and type of counsellor intervention.

10. When you have a lot of free attention--at the beginning of a session or after Discharge--you can decide to focus on learning a new skill, or to use the time for action planning or creative thinking. When you do any of these things it is helpful to decide whether you want a no intervention contract, a 'Think and Listen' type, or whether you want your counsellor's help over contradicting self-putdowns or for discharging Distress.

Using Your Co-Counselling Sessions

An idea many beginners find helpful is to use some 'flash cards' of the common techniques, as reminders during a session. These can be made by writing on file cards. The suggestion is that they are laid out where both client and counsellor can see them.

The ones we use for workshops are:

- "Focus on an event."
- "Try using present tense."
- "Say that bit again."
- "Say it louder."
- "Try a contradiction."
- "What's left unsaid?"
- "What's the thought?"

The following points are all relevant to using co-counselling sessions:

1. Consider techniques you might use before starting your session.
2. Both people have three minutes each way on News and Goods before starting.
- 3. Who starts?** Whoever feels most distressed. If you both lack attention, then both spend some time Attention Switching and Celebrating--e.g. "News and Goods" "My strengths and skills". Otherwise the most experienced Co-Counsellor could start. If none of this applies toss a coin.
4. For the main session use 30 minutes each way, or more if possible; an hour each way once a week is useful: make an explicit contract over times.

5. As Client

- a. Tell your counsellor what sort of a contract you want; also any useful things she might not know--whether being held helps or hinders crying discharge for instance.
- b. Start with some positives and celebratory things.
- c. With a new counsellor do the "Checking Recognitions" exercise. Note that it can be useful to do this several weeks running, new things can emerge.
- d. If nothing is on top to work on try: Closing your eyes, relaxing and letting mind go blank. Try working on what comes up, however apparently trivial or far from your previous thoughts. If all that comes is blocking thoughts such as, "I'm stuck" try contradicting them, or using them as a theme for scanning: "Times I've been stuck." Or scan the events of the past week, using the appropriate methods for intensifying the feelings; re-experience them and try to allow Discharge.
- e. Try to focus on specific events rather than talk about Distress in general. Pay attention to using the present tense and literal description of events. Use "What's Left Unsaid" before leaving an event. Try to maintain eye contact whenever you can.
- f. Leave time at the end of your session to finish off! If sunk in Distress use one of the Attention Switching methods to get attention outside yourself--finding coloured objects in the room perhaps. End with a celebration of yourself.

6. As Counsellor

- a. Remind yourself of the basic contract: "My client is responsible for himself or herself; I'm not responsible for my client". Also "I have agreed to give as much Free Attention as I can to support my client."
- b. Offer physical contact to the client--holding hands or a hand on their knee. Do not force it on the client, and stop if it hinders Discharge.
- c. Aids to keeping your attention free and on the client include: eye contact, looking at your client's face and silent validation (i.e. thinking to yourself "She's a very worthwhile person; I can appreciate her for doing something important for herself.") and so on.
- d. At the start of the session encourage your client to celebrate--loudly, and with actions.

- e. Respond to a prolonged silence with, "What's the thought?" This is also useful if you notice a sudden change of expression on your client's face.
- f. Only suggest techniques to your client (notes d. and i. apart) if your client has asked for more than Free Attention, and if you as client are already using them.
- g. When offering interventions try to make them straightforward suggestions, without preambles or asking whether client wants to try them; this is less distracting and easier for the client to either follow or reject.
- h. Be aware of time passing and tell the client when they have only five and then only two minutes left, or at the times they've requested.
- i. During the last few minutes of the session encourage your client to regain Free Attention if necessary (and at other times in the session if the client appears to have lost touch with present safety).
- j. When your client is brimming over with Discharge, forget about anything else (except note i.) and encourage the Discharge happening.

Confidentiality

The condition of confidentiality is a basic one for a trusting counselling relationship. We offer some guidelines:

- * NEVER disclose ANY information acquired in a session to any third party, however trivial it may seem to you.
- * If you think that the condition of confidentiality is not being met by your partner, share your fears with them. There is no need to be accusative, but DO be explicit!
- * Imagine you are talking to a Co-Counsellor and you realise they are giving you information from someone else's session. However trivial it may seem, point out the breach of trust and on that basis politely decline to listen further.

This may seem over dramatic, but gossip patterns are well fixed in most people and breaches of trust can destroy co-counselling pairs and damage co-counselling communities. However tough it sounds, people who do not keep their mouths shut will not keep their counsellors!

Social and Sexual Interactions and Attractions Between Co-Counsellors

The general issue is counselling with intimates: friends, lovers, partners, colleagues. This involve several factors:

- * Mutual restimulation, i.e. the better you know someone, the more potential exists for upsets around mutual patterns. This means it's harder to stay in the counsellor role, and harder to feel safe as client.
- * Mutual collusion, i.e. certain areas of distress are never noticed or are avoided; this is usually done unwaresly, but very restrictive of growth for both.

* Despite the two dangers above, your intimates are the people with most to gain from you getting rid of Distress, so if two people are committed to each other's growth, they can be powerful allies for each other. A useful guideline is to start working together in terms of Attention Switching (News & Goods at teatime!) and appreciations (before and after joint tasks?). When both partners have a reasonable mastery of techniques, they can then have sessions on events involving others and not each other.

Now consider attractions between people who first meet as co-counsellors. It is normal to appreciate and love your counsellors. This can be a mind-blowing experience initially, and it can be hard to remember that some of the delights arise because of the mutual contract, and are likely to be hard to sustain if you saw more of each other. It is also generally true that sexuality is one of the most distressed areas in our culture, and many patterns express themselves disguised as sexual attraction.

The general approach of co-counselling is not that the co-counselling community becomes the living group, but that it is used to enable people to go out and remake the lives they are leading outside the group. Thus if you are short of friends, an excellent Co-Counsellor will help you break the patterns that stop you making lots of friends.

If you try to turn your Co-Counsellor into a friend then, at most, you gain one friend, and maybe not even that. Experience suggests that attractions to people you first met as co-counsellors should be viewed as opportunities to counsel in the area. It may be you really have met the love of your life; usually you have not, it is distress running you. If the attraction is undistressed, you can only benefit from counselling on it. In Re-Evaluation Counselling communities there is a firm rule that no social events are organised, and people who insist on taking up social or sexual relationships may well be excluded.

Within CCI there is much less clarity, and in our opinion that is to the detriment of the communities. We would personally follow the guideline of not having organisation of purely social events by a co-counselling community. People who think a co-counselling community needs social events to hold it together have not experienced the full power of co-counselling. However, we would not want to exclude people on the grounds of their personal choice to socialise but would try to alert people to the issues in this area and help them be aware of choices they are making.

How do you deal with a client who starts declaring their love in a way which expects return? There are several suggestions. Get them to check who you remind them of. Get them to be concrete and literal about what they want to do about it. Push them for the details. Try, "And then what?" And of course make the usual co-counselling suggestions to intensify any Distress and push for Discharge. If your own distress prevents you from continuing usefully as counsellor, then acknowledge this, and find yourself another partner to have a go at your own patterns in the sexual area.

None of this is to suggest you should give up friends you knew before co-counselling. In the short term they may not be your best co-counsellors, but in the longer term they may be excellent.

Chemicals that hinder discharge

Everyone has learned ways of trying to cope with distress in their lives; some of these ways may encourage Discharge, many of them provide temporary alleviation or suppression. In addition to psychological defenses and Control Patterns, many people use chemicals which have effects on their moods and mind states. Some chemicals may be so much a part of life that people do not stop to think how they are using them, e.g. caffeine, alcohol, nicotine. Others are specifically prescribed to counteract the effects of stress, depression, mental illness.

All such chemicals are likely to interfere with discharge processes, as they form ways of suppressing Distress rather than letting it out. So, experienced co-counsellors strongly recommend that people do not take in chemicals at times which would mean that the chemicals are likely to be active in their bodies during co-counselling sessions. Thus smoking, drinking alcohol, using tranquillisers and sometimes drinking tea and coffee are likely to be discouraged or specifically prohibited during co-counselling workshops. Many co-counsellors who have put work into the area of food and drink choose to exclude drugs and mood changing chemicals from their bodies all the time. However everyone needs to work on their own distresses in the area and see what happens.

Thoughts about Artificiality, Spontaneity and Co-Counselling

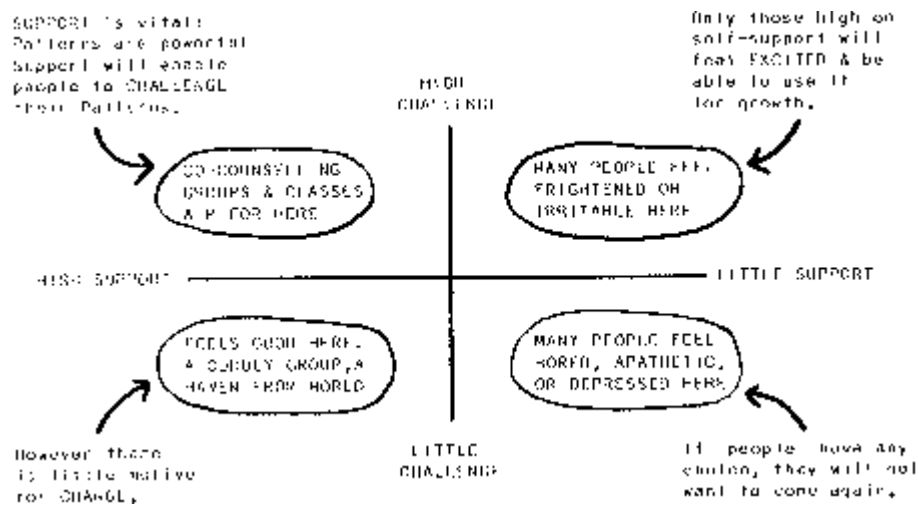
Faced with a collection of techniques and ground rules of the kind written about in this manual, or talked about in co-counselling classes, beginners sometimes worry about 'feeling awkward' or 'lacking spontaneity.' In our view there are two separate issues here, both worthy of comment.

Consider first the situation where you are setting out to learn 'how to do it.' As you learn to trust and use the co-counselling relationship and methods you will probably move from saying, "This seems artificial," to "When I'm co-counselling it now all goes by itself." This is the same as most people experience when learning to drive a car or to dance; early stages feel awkward; self consciousness is part of learning, though we don't usually call it artificial in these cases. When you are skilled and can do it, it will seem spontaneous. You don't have to be aware, you just respond appropriately. We see spontaneity as a useful word to describe the feeling accompanying the activity of creative intelligence; of responding flexibly and appropriately to new situations; of responding smoothly without interference from distressed baggage from the past. This is often described as "flow"--a marvellous experience.

We do note however that the word is often used differently. "I'm going to act spontaneously," often means I'm escaping from Distress. "I don't want to do what I was going to do because it will be too distressing." In these cases people 'spontaneously' want to do something different; go out into the country, and so on. And, just like everything else, co-counselling techniques can be applied inappropriately, without flexibility--can be put to patterned uses. However what most people experience in co-counselling is learning to distinguish between distressed spontaneity and skilled spontaneity--the experience of creative 'flow'.

Working in Co-Counselling Groups: Support the Person, Challenge the Pattern

Consider the following map of group experience (which is followed by an explanation in words):



Co-Counselling groups and classes aim for the north-west quadrant, where there is both high challenge and high support. Support is vital. Patterns are powerful. Support will enable people to challenge their Patterns.

Many people feel frightened or irritable in the north-east quadrant, where there is high challenge but little support. Only those high on self-support will feel excited and be able to use it for growth.

In the south-west quadrant, there is high support but little challenge. It feels good--a cuddly group, a haven from the world. However, there is little motive for change.

In the south-east quadrant, there is little challenge and little support. Many people here feel bored, apathetic, or depressed. If they have any choice, they will not want to come again.

The diagram shows the Challenge and Support characteristics of situations as perceived by the people taking part in them. We are using it to look at the possible climates of growth groups. For most people life lacks outside support, so we would call this the essential ingredient; however without the challenge, growth is unlikely. One definition of growth is the person moving from outside support to self support.

We recommend attending classes or getting together in groups relatively frequently. Some people will find there are no problems as they are in an already established community. Others will find that they have to initiate things if they want group support. Within many communities people set up peer groups without teachers. Here are a few tips from our personal experience.

Firstly, that co-counselling groups have the same sort of contract as pairs do: confidentiality, sharing time, no judgements of others or self, no interpretations, no advice. The purpose of this is to enable people to work on their Patterns in safety. Without this contract powerful Patterns disrupt and interfere, and much time is wasted. Sometimes people feel that setting up structures goes against taking

responsibility for self. Patterns of course are totally irresponsible, and to hope to be responsible all the time is to ignore the fact that people are doing co-counselling because Patterns are powerful; people need the support of special conditions and time set aside to be able to disrupt them. For us, rotation of roles, and variety of structures, is the aim rather than abolition of either. We hope to minimise the domination of oppressive Patterns, whether they operate with official labels or not. When meeting in a group we recommend:

1. Appoint someone to be responsible for helping the group keep the contract. Deal with this at the beginning of the meeting if it has not been decided before, and remind everyone of what the contract is. Do not expect perfection; using 'foul' in a light-hearted way for breaches of the contract is helpful. If there is a teacher present then they will usually fulfil this role, but this does not have to be assumed. In a group of inexperienced co-counsellors it is best to take turns to facilitate, rather than assume everyone is responsible. Someone needs to ensure that any individual, or the group, does not sit around sunk in distress.
2. When someone is working in the group then everyone else is asked to give free attention. If a counsellor is required then one person should be designated, rather than everyone offering suggestions.
3. Opening and closing circles are useful rituals and working opportunities. For opening circles we would use positive focus themes and celebrations. We pick topics for closing circles which are oriented towards changes people are going to make for themselves, and celebrating strengths that will help them.

In addition to a opening circle, mini-sessions are useful even if the main item on the agenda is long sessions in pairs. They encourage variety of partners and help people get to know each other. A surprising amount of work can be done with a variety of quick sessions, 3 to 5 minutes each way.

4. Because many people have choosing Patterns, try using different ways of pairing as well as free choice. Randomly pick names from a hat; or have two hats, each with half the names, divided by experience, or gender, and so on; pairing can be within the hats, or by picking one name from each.

Similarly there are many ways of deciding on order in circles or turn-taking exercises like Direction Holding. We only occasionally use random ordering which depends on people making bids to be next; it tends to take more time than other methods, and we think most people could be using this time more fruitfully. We do usually ask for someone willing to be first, and then go round the circle from that point, asking the first person to decide to go right or left. With this system we say people can pass if they really need to, and they are then returned to at the end.

For longer exercises the following all work:

- a. Before starting, have the group make bids for which slot they want. Those people who really want to go early or late get the chance. Those who do not mind, or cannot make their mind up, have the positions left.
- b. Appoint a cushion as the hot seat, where whoever is going to go next moves to sit while the first person has their turn. This helps minimise time loss, while allowing

people to choose more on the spur of the moment. If this is not working then the next method can be resorted to.

c. The first person to go chooses the next, with no restrictions on choice. Use of an object, like a cushion, to be passed on is helpful.

Keeping groups going in the long-term raises organisational issues like membership, decision making power, leadership, conflict resolution, teacher accreditation, recruitment. These issues are beyond the scope of this manual. For groups facing these issues we would recommend they acquire the information about how other groups organise and tackle these issues, both within Co-Counselling International type communities and Re-evaluation Counselling. John Heron has some useful things to say in his **Co-Counselling Teachers Manual**. Also see articles in **Co-Counselling in the World**.

The Social Context of Co-Counselling

This co-counselling manual has the character of a starter. Where you start is by discovering *you* can change. However, as you continue you find that many of your Distresses and Patterns--though in some ways very individual--are in other ways shared. Not odd, since we acquire our Patterns in our families and schools, with our friends. So our 'individual' Patterns link into 'society's Patterns', and particular social forms depend on individuals possessing particular Patterns. Think of the interlock of 'oppressor' and 'helpless victim' Patterns. Consider for example these elements in the relationships men-women, white-blacks, adults-children, rich-poor.

As people learn to change themselves they soon come up against society's Patterns. Thus Richard learned to give more support and challenge to the medical students he teaches, rather than crushing or spoon-feeding them, and then he became aware of the oppressive character of the medical training institution. As we attempt to change society we experience our own shared 'social Patterns'--a peace group may fall apart due to angry quarrels over tactics, or left wing movements may have very sexist behaviours.

We are truly social creatures, the personal and the social cannot be held apart. Readers looking for accounts of the wider applications of co-counselling could start by reading materials published by Rational Island Press.

Boundaries of Co-Counselling

Since co-counselling is founded on basic human abilities and potentials it is not surprising that both in principle and practice it overlaps with other forms of growth and therapy. Most of the principles and techniques which are typically co-counselling are eminently exportable. Thus working in pairs with the time shared equally can be applied both to other growth systems, and to educational settings for all sorts of learning purposes, as can Attention Switching and Celebration. Encouragement of Discharge can be done in any setting, though ingenuity may be needed when flouting the cultural norms. John Heron, using the label of 'cathartic interventions' has popularised this amongst helping professionals as a legitimate type of intervention.

What about importing techniques from other methods into co-counselling? We say fine, as long as they are operated within the basic co-counselling contract, and are not contradictory to co-counselling principles. The clear statements of principles and methods set out in co-counselling enable you to work out which principles and practices are contradictory. Indeed we have found that the clarity of the four main strategies, and of the conditions needed for encouraging Discharge, enables us to analyse the principles that other growth methods are working on, even when they themselves are unclear.

You may well like elements of other methods which are contradictory to co-counselling. Again we say fine, use them, but we suggest you keep them distinct from your co-counselling. This is said as a practical consideration; contradictory elements make any system weaker and less effective. If you however wish to assemble your personal eclectic system from elements of co-counselling and other systems, we wish you every success, but note that it will be misleading to describe this as co-counselling.

We ourselves have sampled many other growth methods over the time we have been doing co-counselling, often fruitfully for ourselves. We find the parallels and contradictions between co-counselling and other methods a fascinating topic. Here we would like to mention those issues which crop up repeatedly, particularly with beginning co-counsellors, and which we consider are contradictory to co-counselling to a greater or lesser extent.

- That going with your feelings is always good. This denies the existence of Patterned, inappropriate, feelings; and leads to techniques which are contradictory.

- Interpersonal confrontation: this is outside the Co-Co contract for pairs and groups during counselling time. Thus feelings about others present (positive or negative) are treated as material for counselling on, not for directly expressing. This does not apply to the whole of life and co-counselling communities need to decide on forms of interpersonal conflict resolution and about the sponsoring of social events.

- Offering or asking for interpretations: this is not a co-counselling technique. It can easily arise with people previously trained in an analytic tradition, as are many helping professionals. It can also arise in connection with celebration posters when people are used to art therapy approaches.

- Committing yourself to obey or depend on a guru of any kind conflicts with the co-counselling position of the client being in charge, and being encouraged to take charge of their own Distresses.

- Reflecting. Its most likely effect is to encourage talking about feelings. If skilfully used reflection may move people in the direction of Discharge, but much less effectively than the usual co-counselling techniques.

- Questions of the kind: "What are you feeling?" or "What are you doing with your hands/feet etc.?" These tend to put people into their heads, rather than directly moving towards discharging their feelings. Co-Counselling techniques directly suggest actions to intensify feelings and move towards Discharge.

Appreciations

* To Harvey Jackins, Mary McCabe and their collaborators in the US of A for devising and putting into practice so many of the methods, and the reciprocal relationship described in this manual.

* To John Heron, for introducing us to co-counselling and for the continuing challenge of his thinking and experience.

* To Keith Turner, for helping establish co-counselling here in Sheffield.

* To Dency and Tom Sargent, for showing us what celebration really means.

* TO *all our co-counsellors for their care and attention*, which has enabled us to change so much.

* To Jenny Allen and Di Curtis, for spending many hours battling with our stylistic quirks and our spelling, for the benefit of readers.

This manual is dedicated to our delightful daughter Petra, with whom we have been growing up for fifteen years.

We welcome comment and suggestions concerning this manual, both about content and clarity. We would also like to hear of your experiences and your thoughts on the theory. Please write to:

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About the Authors

ROSE EVISON earns her living as an Independent Consultant, working with industrial, commercial, health-care and educational organisations. Her background is in science, psychology and teaching. She designs and facilitates learning environments in all the skills concerned with people working, and living together. She says, "I first wanted to teach co-counselling because I experienced it as the best support system for the counsellors I was training at that time. With further experience I've seen its applications in all areas of life. I apply it in my work with organisations, in the learning environments I create, and as one of the tools for people to use."

RICHARD HOROBIN earns his living as a biologist and teacher in the Department of Anatomy and Cell Biology at Sheffield University. He is a leading scientist in his own area of tissue staining techniques. He says "Teaching, whether one-to-one or in a lecture theatre with 180 people, is always a challenge. And working as a scientist has been one of the liberating experiences of my life. Co-Counselling for me is a tool-kit for personal change. After using it for myself over several years, I delight in sharing this with others."

They both started co-counselling in 1973, taught by John Heron when he was within the Re-Evaluation Communities. They started to teach the process themselves in 1975, no longer within Re-evaluation Counselling. Since then they have run many courses, both individually and as a duo, both fundamentals and more advanced courses and co-counselling teacher training. Rose and Richard this year celebrated twenty years of a rich and growing relationship. They have a daughter Petra, now thirteen, who is a delightful, caring and competent human.

An Annotated Co-Counselling Reading List

Some thumbnail sketches of books, magazines and articles about co-counselling. Only items thought to be currently (1983) available are listed.

Suggestions for obtaining these publications can be found later on page 83.

Introductions to Co-Counselling

The Human Side of Human Beings: the theory of re-evaluation counselling, Harvey Jackins, 1975, Rational Island, Seattle. This is Jackins' original published outline of what co-counselling is about, written in the 1960s, and his views on why the process works.

Co-Counselling: "everyone is a psychiatrist", Jerome Liss, Chapter 17 of his book **Free to Feel**, 1974, Wildwood House: London. A sympathetic account and commentary. Liss, a professional therapist, says "I've co-counselled with a number of people and have gained personally."

Ordinary Ecstasy, John Rowan, 1976, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London. The chapters on 'personal growth' and 'counselling' include an informative and sharp introduction to co-counselling. A refreshing perspective by someone outside organised co-counselling of whatever persuasion.

What's Co-Counselling?, A poster designed by Rose Evison, published by Co-Counselling Phoenix: Sheffield. The question is posed and answers proposed on a 20" X 30" three-colour poster. The format comprises a strip-cartoon dialogue between an Enquirer and a Cat who seems to know a lot about co-counselling.

How to Do Co-Counselling

Co-Counselling, John Heron, 1979, Human Potential Research Unit, University of Surrey, UK. The Forward states "this manual is offered as an aide-memoir only. It is given to participants in basic training courses ... and it presupposes experience of such

a course." Check lists of methods and techniques make up the guts of the manual. There is also a prefacing essay on the principles of the process. Overall emphasis is on the client role.

Fundamentals Of Co-Counselling Manual, Harvey Jackins, 1970, Rational Island, Seattle. The original manual, by one of the original co-counselling gurus. Though subtitled "for beginning classes in re-evaluation counselling" this book is a valuable general account for anyone. We've gone back to it many times. This manual emphasises counsellor skills.

Co-Counselling Practice, Ideas, Applications, Organisation

Three collections of articles, pamphlets and talks by Harvey Jackins are available. These cover a wide range of topics: political implications of co-counselling; bases of effective learning; living for ever; relationship counselling; sexuality; health care.

The Human Situation, 1973; **The Upward Trend**, 1977; **The Benign Reality**, 1981; All published by Rational Island Publishers.

John Heron has also put some of his thinking into book format, e.g.: **Catharsis in Human Development**, 1977, Human Potential Research Unit, University of Surrey, UK. In this book John discusses the varieties, origins and consequences of human distresses: and of catharsis as a positive response. The nature and effects of catharsis are discussed, as is the issue of "catharsis in a noncathartic society."

Another collection on articles is available, mostly though not entirely by us: **Co-Counselling In The World**, Rose Evison & Richard Horobin, 1983, Co-Counselling Phoenix, Sheffield. A range of subjects is discussed: social implications; practical applications to parenting and teaching; how to become a more skilful counsellor, one way counselling, conflict resolution in communities, and more.

Transcripts of Workshop Sessions

Rough Notes from Buck Creek I, Harvey Jackins and others, 1979, Rational Island, Seattle. Buck Creek I, the first inter-community re-evaluation counselling workshop, was held in Washington, USA, in 1970. Fascinating and useful. Not least for its perspective of Jackins as a guru who turns out to be another struggling human being.

Rough Notes from Liberation I and II, Harvey Jackins and others, 1976, Rational Island, Seattle. Presentations, discussions and counselling sessions from two workshops for co-counsellors committed to liberation movements: against sexism, racism, capitalism ... The 'Jackins and others' is a rather ironic insight into the politics of Re-evaluation Counselling. A meaty volume, self *and* society taken seriously.

Outsider Criticism

Co-Counselling: the sharpest people we know, R.D.Rosen, 1978, in **Psychobabble**, Wildwood House, London. A muck-raking account of therapy-personal growth in the USA in the '70s . A journalist's prose style (co-c03 April 2001 14:00 - 15:00 - Glyn comes 4 sessionounselling is "an auto-mechanics course in feeling"), and a barely acknowledged enthusiasm for psychoanalytic theory and practice, frame an intriguing sketch.

Manuals for Teachers of Co-Counselling

There are two manuals for actual and would-be teachers of co-counselling, one from within the Re-evaluation communities, and one from outside it.

A New Kind of Communicator: the Re-evaluation Counselling Teacher, Harvey Jackins and Mary McCabe, 4th edition 1976, Rational Island, Seattle. Rewritten magazine articles & workshop presentations by two RC stalwarts. They assume teachers will be within their organisation, which will provide training opportunities and, eventually, authorisation for satisfactory candidates. The tone is formal, tending towards 'experience has shown.' The style is discursive, with lots of headings but few lists. The vocabulary is basic American-English. The manual is extremely clear and easy to read.

Co-Counselling Teachers Manual, John Heron, 1978. New edition available from Dept. of Educational Enquiry, The University of Surrey. A distillation of John's thoughts on this topic, aimed at people within the independent co-counselling communities. Consequently there is discussion of community building, decision making, teacher training and accreditation; no overarching community rules can be assumed. The approach is personal, leaning towards 'my experience is.' The style is rather telegraphic, favouring lists of possibilities and alternatives. The vocabulary is uncommonly rich: sometimes evocatively poetic, sometimes obscure.

Differences apart, both books discuss useful characteristics of co-counselling teachers, including modelling what's being taught; the need for rigorous presentation of theory, for screening of class participants, and for the use of assistant teachers. Both books offer outlines for fundamentals of co-counselling classes.

Magazines

Across the globe many co-counselling groups produce useful magazines and newsletters. Limiting ourselves to those magazines which are generally available means however looking at those produced 'centrally' by the Re-evaluation Counselling communities. There is a general interest magazine, **Present Time**. This describes new ideas and counselling methods, accounts of applications of co-counselling in the world at large, and a great deal of personal experience. Re-evaluation Counselling also publishes many specialist magazines: **The Re-evaluation Counselling Teacher**, for the teachers and leaders of RC; **Black Re-emergence** for black counsellors; **Classroom and Colleague** for teachers in schools and higher education; **Sisters** for women; **The Caring Parent**; **Older and Bolder** for people over fifty; **Complete Elegance** for the physically different; **Pensiamentos** for Latin Americans; **Side by**

Side for gays; **Recovery and Re-emergence** for mental health workers; **Wide World Changing** for social activists; **Young and Powerful** for young people; ... and there are others.

A fantastic wealth of experience shared; the successes and failures of co-counsellors in so many areas of their lives. All the editors belong to the interest group concerned, and most of the published material is 'by' them too. These literary riches pose intriguing questions. Do the magazines exist in spite of the organisational pyramid, or because of it? Or both?

How to Obtain These Publications

Librarians practically anywhere, and many bookshops (e.g. Compendium (Camden High Street, London NW1), are amazingly useful. Otherwise try these addresses:

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References

[1] **Affect Imagery Consciousness**, vol.1 **Positive Affects** vol.2 **Negative Affects**, S S Tomkins (with editorial assistance of B P Karon), 1962 & 1963, Springer, New York & Tavistock, London.

Tomkins regards emotions as the basis of our learned (and re-learnable) motivational system: "affects, a motivational system of great freedom." He regards interest, joy, grief, fear, shame, disgust, and anger as basic. Startle/surprise is a resetting emotion, changing relaxation to arousal. Discharge, of which he has no concept, is in his terms another resetting emotion, changing arousal to peacefulness. Tomkins describes adult responses to the expressed feelings of young people as shaping the kids future emotional styles: the origin of many chronic patterns? In particular shaming and shame are explored in detail. To Tomkins, as to us, his model is full of hope: "affects are transformable".

[2] Tom Scheff researches the processes & outcomes of discharge. As well as his book (see p.84) his articles are worth reading. E.g.:

Towards integration in the social psychology of emotion, T J Scheff, 1983, **Annual Reviews of Sociology**, vol.9, 333-354. This critiques the academic literature on emotion, and reviews some of TJS's own experimental work. We found it fascinating to compare his observations with our own co-counselling.

A theory of catharsis, 1984, T J Scheff & D D Busnell, **Journal of Research in Personality**, vol.18, 238-264. The familiar co-counselling discharge theory, but cast in the framework of social science and psychology. Plus more experiments.

The taboo on coarse emotions, T J Scheff, 1984, in **Review of Research in Personality**, vol.5, **Special issue on emotions, relationships & health**. Documents this taboo--in academic psychology & in Freud's shift from emotions to instincts. Also describes how the taboo is installed in us, as children.

[3] **Dynamics of autogenic neutralisation**, vol.5 of **Autogenic therapy**, Luthe W, 1970, Grune & Stratton, New York.

Luthe developed his cathartic therapy (autogenic neutralisation) by extending autogenic training. His book gives many practical ideas, and observations on what happens with clients; little theory. Samples include: for therapeutic homework his clients tape-record their sessions; listen to the tapes; make and read transcripts; then make commentaries and cartoons and pictures about them. Luthe regards puking as cathartic, and keeps a bucket in his therapy room. As in co-counselling, clients are explicitly taught how to be effective clients.

[4] **Emotional Expression in Psychotherapy**, R A Pierce, M P Nichols, & J R DuBrin, 1983, Gardner Press, New York.

This book, by and for counsellors and therapists, concerns a cathartic therapy system paralleling co-counselling, though of largely independent origin. Their models and methods are described in language non-provocative to conventionally trained therapists. Their system uses one-to-one sessions, plus discharge groups, plus client-client co-counselling. There are transcripts of sessions; and a summary of outcome research validating use of discharge. After you have read it, lend it to your more orthodox counsellor friends.

Notes and Further References

These are brief notes on some of the references we have found which link in with the principles of emotion and Patterns and Discharge expounded in this manual.

#1. **Learning-Based Client-Centred Therapy**, David G Martin, 1972, Brooks /Cole, California.

This book illustrates from experimental data that destructive behaviour directed at self or others, learned under the goad of negative feelings, is difficult to unlearn, because the person is unable to discover that the conditions of reward or punishment have changed. The author thinks this implies a conflict model underlying neurotic behaviour. He goes on to discuss therapy based on providing support for the client in conflict situations, to enable relearning to occur.

#2. Two relatively clear statements which correspond to the Balance of Attention concept are given by Paul Dewald, a psychoanalytic psychotherapist, and Michael Holden, an associate of Janov's concerned with research into Primalling.

See p.274, **Effective Principles of Psychotherapy** (a paper in which well known therapists of different persuasions answer questions) in **Cognitive Therapy and Research**, vol. 4, no. 3, Sept. 1980.

The Sensory Window and Access to Primal Pain, Michael Holden, ch 6 in **Primal Man**, A Janov & E M Holden, 1977, Abacus edition, Sphere Books, London. See pages 158-159 in particular.

#3. The model of emotions used here in the manual is after that of Shibles. **Emotion: The Method of Philosophical Therapy**, H. Shibles, 1974, Language Press, Whitewater, Wisc. USA.

#4. "The amount of capacity available for any task facing an individual is a function of other tasks and other capacity-demanding inputs with which some fixed limit of capacity must be shared." page 182.

Talking about negative feelings arousal: "In short, the problem of stress is twofold, both the internal autonomic signals, and the conditions that generate those signals require part of the conscious capacity, and thereby interfere with the performance of same target task or skill." p.188.

Thought Processes, Consciousness, and Stress, George Mandler, in **Human Stress and Cognition**, Eds Vernon Hamilton & David M Waburrton, 1979, Wiley & Sons.

#5. "I suggest that joy accompanies and motivates effective responding" page 98. In a section labelled 'A speculation about success and depression' pp 96 - 99. The whole of this book is well worth reading for many themes concerned with depression and anxiety and treatment which have many parallels with the co-counselling views.

Helplessness: On Depression, Development, and Death, Martin Seligman, 1975, W H Freeman, San Francisco. #

6. **Catharsis in Healing, Ritual, and Drama**, T J Scheff, 1979, University of California Press. This is a wide-ranging book, with discussion of history and use of catharsis, and discussion of Balance of Attention in this connection. The second half of the book discusses the applications in the title.

Appendix: Changes in the 1985 Edition of the Manual & Additional References

We have changed the table of 'Events, Distress Labels, Signs of Discharge' (in What Conditions Favour Pattern-disrupting Discharge?) which previously followed Harvey's table. These changes result from noting the practical experience of ourselves and others and the logic of the theory of emotions we are using.

Firstly we have added SHAME to the section on embarrassment. We think shame and embarrassment are the same emotion at different intensities. They represent the

importance of other people to us--the negative side of being loving and caring for others as part of our nature. Laughter is always prominent at our workshops. We see it as crucial. Our own recognition of the importance of embarrassment, and consequently of laughter, was heightened by reading Tomkin's books on emotions [1] and talking to Tom Scheff [2] about his work on shame.

In line with this, our appreciation of working from strengths, and particularly the celebration of self, has been heightened. This fits in with Harvey Jackins' long time emphasis on the use of 'the complete appreciation of the self' as the most powerful direction for producing Discharge.

Secondly we have removed the line containing Boredom. We think the table contains those basic emotions for which we as humans have built-in Discharge processes; the 'coarse emotions' as Williams James called them. These are the negative emotions which fall into the top right quadrant of our Feelings Map. Boredom does not appear to belong here, either from theoretical considerations or in practice. We find that if class members scan times they've been bored, what commonly comes up is anger. This anger seems to be the response to frustration of being prevented from seeking stimulation. The label 'boredom' occurs, not in simple cases of lack of stimulation, but where more complicated distress patterns have already been set up.

Non-repetitive talking appears to relieve Distress by allowing lots of bits and pieces of Discharge of different types; rather than being a separate discharge process.

Thirdly we have had the confidence of our convictions and added Disgust as a primary emotion. We had previously suggested this in the section on Acting Into. We have since met more people who experience nausea as a psychological response---feeling they have taken in what is poisonous to them. Some people need to vomit to feel better. Others, including ourselves, find themselves spontaneously making retching and disgust noises. Both Tomkins [1] and Luthe [3] regard contempt/disgust as a primary emotion.

We have retained yawning as a discharge process for pain and tension, and note that psychologically it appears to be closely tied up with discharge of conflict, experienced as being stuck. Scheff also comes to this conclusion and adds emotional conflict to pain and tension as distresses discharged by yawning; this was not mentioned by Harvey in his original manual. We have experienced a vast increase in yawning, in and out of Co-Co sessions. This was unexpected as we had not seen it reported in Re-evaluation Counselling literature.

Yawning is an undervalued form of Discharge. Those new to co-counselling are surprised by yawning and can label it artificial. Recently we asked a group of therapists familiar with discharge methods what they thought about yawning as a discharge process. Initially they denied that yawning could have anything to do with progress in therapy. Then several of them told stories about clients, in which it was clear that yawning had been very significant.