

Beauty and the Beast:
Clients' experience of counselling within a narrative framework,
considering concepts of containment and freedom.

Christina Bracegirdle

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ABSTRACT

The experience of opposition between what could be contained in my internal world, and what I wanted freedom from containing while a client in counselling led to the conception of this research. Containment and freedom seemed to form a polarity (Jung 1961; 1969) in that each notion became as necessary as the other. Clients who became participants were in counselling with other counsellors and were asked to keep journals on their thoughts and feelings after counselling sessions and these formed the data for the study. My interest in poetry guided this process as the journals were created by short phrases forming each line and this seemed to influence the writing and analytic process. The journals produced by the participants encouraged the original heuristic (Moustakas 1990) design to surrender the richness that was hidden within it as it became a narrative inquiry. Containment, freedom and the possible polarity between them are investigated as constructs of emotional opposition experienced by the client. The construct and categories which emerge from the data suggest aspects of containment and freedom that demonstrate how emotional movement may occur within the participants through the opposition between containment and freedom. The data also seems to image established theory within the journal stories. A relationship between poetry and the counselling experience is drawn together within the research process as the unconscious and the use of metaphor seem to elicit the discovery of the self. My experiences of personal life events that impact upon the study are held alongside the project as such experiences and the research develop my voice which is relevant to the process and outcome of the work.

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This thesis
is dedicated to the memory of:
my beautiful sister
Pamela Anne
1962 -1996

And her eldest son
who became one of my precious boys
Iain Robert
1985-2006

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ABBREVIATIONS: PSEUDONYMS OF PARTICIPANTS

WG - Wriggling Fish

LG - Little Girl

WAI - Who Am I

A - Alice

TO - Turned On

(W - Week)

CHAPTER ONE

THE VOICE OF THE PRESENT

“the creative process would seem to require a complex coordination between both conscious and unconscious forms of thinking and feeling to create a new identity that moves beyond both.” (Maltby 200; 66)

1.1. Introduction

This chapter intends to introduce the story of a personal journey and the research journey that followed. Long before this research journey began I was a teacher and youth group leader who used poetry and poetic writing as a way of helping young people describe experience. When I eventually left teaching and trained to be a psychodynamic counsellor I learnt how trauma may impact on the present and even the future. Then I had a family trauma of my own to work through. Living through trauma impacted on all areas of my life, changed my thinking, my perceptions, my voice and created change in all areas of my life. The significance of these changes is that they gave me the confidence to create and discover my voice of the present. For example the use I made of writing poetry though trauma enabled me to see the possibility of participants writing narratives in a poetic style. The influence on my original thinking of the fairy tale, Beauty and the Beast, demonstrates how the concepts of containment and freedom were fashioned within my internal world. Like myths, the symbolic content of the fairy tale has the potential to offer many possible arrangements (Gee 1991) which provide meaning. The personal story and experiences that led to the conception of this research provide context and an understanding of my passion for such theoretical concepts. The main aim of the research question will also be outlined in this chapter and will be followed by the objectives that helped

me to achieve that aim. The learning and processes of my story, like opposition, reflexivity, the search for meaning and creative writing all intertwine creating a many layered text where each part interacts with others. This multi-layered (Bond 2002) quality is mirrored throughout the thesis demonstrating the challenges and depths of narrative research.

1.2.The pre-conception of the concepts

The presumption that the conception of an idea is the genesis of that idea is all too easy to fall into. Prior to conception some meeting between thoughts, experiences, feelings or even individuals has probably taken place. Ideas may appear to pop out of the blue but in reality something has happened to create that moment of conception. Before this journey began I was already interested in containment as a process within counselling, perceived by Bion (1962; 1970) as a function of maternal reverie within the counsellor. As a counsellor, the concept of containing the client and enabling a process of “transformation of the self” (Solomon 1998; 225) was intriguing. From the perspective of the client I had experienced being contained by my counsellor and was aware of the value of such a process. However, after living through the trauma of murder within my family of origin my experience as a client was dramatically changed. I struggled to find a way to go on living with murder as part of my life experience. The violence of feelings which were brought into awareness felt uncontainable. Even if my counsellor could contain all I took to a session, I did not want to. I wanted to get rid of murder and all that followed in its wake. Within the process of being a client I felt bombarded by opposing feelings, thoughts and experiences; such conflicts within my internal world felt overpowering. Jung suggests (1969) that:

“The most intense conflicts, if overcome, leave behind a sense of security, and calm which is not easily disturbed, or else a brokenness that can hardly be healed. Conversely it is just these intense conflicts and their conflagration which are needed in order to produce valuable and lasting results” (26).

Working through such conflict created a security that has become a crucial part of my internal world which appears to confirm Jung’s sense of ‘lasting results’. It is a security that enables me to trust who I am, with a confidence not present before trauma. By working with the processes that followed murder, the counsellor within me became interested in what I contained and what I wanted freedom from containing. Somewhere within the chaos, as thoughts, feelings and experiences clashed together, a meeting between the concepts of containment and freedom (contained in the metaphor of Beauty and the Beast) began to take place, and an unformed idea started its journey towards the birth of this thesis.

1.3. My story

One beautiful summer’s day, over a decade ago, my youngest sister was murdered by her husband. The shock of such an horrific reality could not be taken into my internal world. My strongest feeling at the time was that everything changed. My internal world and the external world were suddenly so alien that an immense sense of isolation (Storr 1988; Fromm1942) invaded me. It charged the therapeutic relationship I was in as a client into a stormy commitment (Parkes 1972) of close engagement. Internal containment of physical, emotional and cognitive reactions was fought against as none of these experiences were wanted within my known self. Yet the internal freedom to feel the affect of such an experience was a primitive (Garland 1998)

response unable to be quietened in the transformed self who began to emerge. Without knowing, I made myself the primary data (Jackson 1989) of a personal story. In coming to understand my story there was also a desire to give voice to an experience that is often shrouded in secrecy (Ellis and Bochner 1992). Within this secret world opposition filled thoughts, perceptions and feelings as the unknown fought with what was known. The difficulty of accepting murder as a reality in my life led to the questions ‘how do I contain murder?’ and ‘how do I free myself from murder?’ In this way containment and freedom became aspects of me that I wanted to understand as well as opposites that fought for a place within me.

1.3.1. Containment, freedom and opposition

The processes of exploring myself following trauma led to an exploration of the nature of containment in the client in a counselling relationship. My difficulty in learning to contain, within the structure of the self, events and consequences that felt un-containable led to an increased awareness of this personal construct (Kelly 1963). The more that was discovered about containment the more its opposite - freedom - crept into this expanding field as these constructs became powerful opponents, yet necessary allies. Somehow they became more than constructs or notions, they became living breathing aspects of me. Opposition seemed to invade every aspect of life and slowly became as familiar and necessary as the air we breathe to maintain life. Yet this idea of opposition also changed as it came to be seen as a polarity (Koch 1959; Jung 1961; 1969; Bischof 1964; Wallace and Findley 1975; Bartal and Ne’eman 1993; Field 1994) where both aspects of opposition (i.e. containment and freedom) are in essential relation to each other enabling growth and movement within the person. The opposition between such new realms, and new ways of being in the world with trauma became a catalyst for change (Reason and Rowan 1981; Etherington 2005) and forward movement. The attraction (Fromm 1941; Kelly

1963; Bischof 1964; Jung 1969) of opposites became more meaningful as this dynamic movement, between opposites, was felt within myself. This passion to explore such apparently theoretical concepts was hewn out of personal experience (Polanyi 1958), which was felt as a real and concrete phenomenon of internal and external worlds. Taking on personal experience and creating a poetic narrative (Etherington 2004) of that experience brought me to an apprehension of learning that may never have been experienced without it.

The progression towards this study needed the therapeutic relationship, counsellor training and finding meaning, as contextual structures that were woven together through writing poetry. Context enables the journey towards personal meaning for “without context, words and actions have no meaning at all” (Bateson 1979; 15). The random pathways created by chaos held hands with the dynamics of reflexivity in order to find new contexts within an unknown world. The imbalance of having no context was experienced, while holding onto known contexts provided opposition, which in turn created movement (Bischof 1964; Jung 1969). Imbalance may be seen in nature for example when rain and sunshine co-exist in close proximity and create a rainbow. This was known before the murder, but the difference now is that I have felt it, suffered it internally and transformed it (Bion 1983; Etherington 2004). The delicately balanced structure of freedom (Fromm 1962) to choose growth has become the archaeology of my experience. Gutting (2005), looking at Foucault’s writing, suggests that:

“archaeology emphasizes that the stage on which we enact our history – as well as much of the script – is established independently of our thoughts and actions.” (34)

In this way my both conscious and unconscious history, thoughts and actions impact on my story and the story of this research, as I use my expertise as a former client (Resnik 1995) to explore unfolding processes (Marshall 1999) in others. Being willing to examine my own responses and reactions within the research process became a constant of the study. For example grief and loss experienced during the research created changes in my life and impacted on the study. My responses to grief become visible in the work as I realize that changes in the study occur because of these experiences. Grief initially took me away from the research back to writing poetry. But this grief writing also led me to the possibility of writing the findings poems (chapter 7) as I made connections about the research and my writing. In this way my voice grew stronger. I found a new confidence in the way the voice of poetry was influencing the whole study almost as if it took on a life of its own which I had to hear and use. This new voice enlarged the study for the containment that poetry provides seems to create a containment and freedom, a power, which is not present in the everyday use of language (Finch 2005).

A dictionary definition describes containment as: “The act or policy of preventing the spread beyond certain limits of a power or influence regarded as hostile” (Chambers 1983; 270). From my experiences and for the purpose of this research containment has come to be understood as an internal attitude (or internal hostile power) within the internal world of the client which may imprison the client in that it limits emotional growth or movement. However internal containment may also be experienced as holding and reparative, and therefore growth promoting.

Freedom is understood as an internal attitude which may be liberating in that it prevents the client from being bound by internal oppressive rules. In this way, like containment, it may lead to emotional growth. But internal freedom may also be experienced as destructive in that too

much freedom may lead to anarchy and such disorder may inhibit emotional growth.

The dual aspects of containment and freedom suggest that each concept may lead to internal feelings of opposition within the client. Just as I wanted to contain difficult experiences but also wanted freedom from them, a client may want to be loved and not want to be loved at the same time. Such opposition led to the idea of polarity. For this study polarity is understood as the opposition within an internal desire where both wanting and not wanting are the two poles of that desire. Chapter 2 looks at opposition as a polarity, a necessary duality that may enable emotional growth within the individual. The opposition between containment and freedom as internal concepts is investigated with reference to established theory. In chapters 4, 5 and 6 the opposition in the participants' narratives is felt in their words.

1.3.2. Reflexivity

As I discovered and met raw parts of myself that emerged through trauma (Etherington 2004) I was able to make conscious choices to change. In turn this allowed me to see that using a type of poetic writing might enable participants to create such transformation for themselves and demonstrate that movement in their writing. Marshall (2004) suggests that looking back over time adds to perceptions. In this way the journey through personal trauma may be investigated and fully integrated (Thorne and Lambers 1998). Yet it is also an unending process, which pursues its own seasons as understanding and experience, are brought together and informed by reflexive processes. Such processes enable past experiences to be re-experienced in the safety of the counselling relationship (Etherington 2004). This reflexive re-experiencing helped me discover meaning in past events which I had been unable to access during the original

experience. Reflexivity as it is used and perceived in this study is more than reflection. Reflection is understood as looking at an experience as if in the mirror; the experience is reviewed. But to reflexively re-experience is to go through the mirror and enter the “stream” (Rennie 1998;3) of the experience as it were again; to discover feelings or thoughts that were present at the original time but not accessible to awareness. After this kind of re-experiencing the meaning or understanding of the original experience may be added to or changed because new information is discovered through re-experiencing. The method used to collect data as described in chapter 3 demonstrates how crucial it is to the study as does the analysis of both the pilot and main study in chapters 4 and 6. The poetic reflexive stance that emerges over the course of the research is also a key aspect of the findings in chapters 7 and 8.

Reflexivity emerged through several aspects of my story, through personal counselling, counsellor training, the search for meaning and creative writing. Reflexivity seemed to emerge from a willingness to examine my internal world. The whole effect of trauma as taken to personal therapy is too much to record in a chapter, but may be summarised as shock, anguish, a murderous self, and the need to howl. There was both torment and relief in attending personal therapy. The torment of the amount of affect there was to experience stood against the relief that there was already a secure base in which to do this work (Bowlby 1988).

1.3.3.Shock

Shock, did not need to be discovered as it had been felt in awareness from the moment of hearing that my sister had been murdered. But the effects of shock needed to be examined. My world was suddenly different, nothing was recognisable, and it would never be able to return to what it

had been before. My known self seemed utterly lost so that nothing about myself was recognisable (Siegel 1996). Even the reflection of my face in the mirror looked nothing like the self I knew. This was an unbearable symbol of the unknown realm of being that was now inhabited. But I had gained enough knowledge from therapy and psychodynamic training to know that staying with the unknown and chaotic (Lees 2001) was part of the grieving process. However from this chaotic unknown some kind of order (Godwin 1994) needed to evolve, so that movement out of such chaos became possible. Re-experiencing feelings aroused by trauma and then reflecting on those feelings began what Marshall (2001) sees as the process of researching the self. This helped provide movement towards a felt sense of order. If the concept of reflexivity (Rennie 1998; 2001; Etherington 2004) had been encountered before the trauma of murder it might have been understood at a cognitive level but not experienced at a feeling level. Caught in shock, where time appeared to stop, feeling was re-experienced, brought into awareness, dwelt upon and cognitively investigated, in order to find some understanding of the processes that followed. In a sense I discovered my own reflexivity but had no name for it. Being able to name this process helped give credence and position to what felt like an alien world. Although in shock, this stuck place was like a platform. I was able to look around and see where I was. A stuck place was also discovered in the participants' journals and they were able to use it in the same way which can be seen in the analysis of the narratives and the participants' feedback.

1.3.4. Anguish

Before order could evolve anguish bled out of chaos as images of murder tormented me and tumbled out in the silent weeping that was a regular accompaniment during counselling training.

Without feeling personal affect and therefore weeping, it was impossible to hear the lectures because of the effort needed *not* to relate the learning, for the lectures seemed to make connections (at least in my mind) to my experiences. Cutting off from feelings was no longer an option, as if for a while I could do nothing but feel. The only way to listen was to feel, and to pay attention (Rennie 1998) to where that feeling came from so I could allow myself to stay with the process and on the training course. The embodied feelings (Sidoli 2000) aroused by the violence of trauma, could not be switched off. However they could be used so that it was possible to think about and symbolize (Woodcock 2004) the processes within my internal world. Personal therapy and counsellor training provided known worlds that could be held onto while at the same time enabling me to incorporate murder and the unknown world that accompanied it. This congruent and reflexive way of being emerged through the anguish and shock and enabled the continuation of my life as opposed to trauma arresting further development (Lanyado 1985). There were two consequences from experiencing this depth of anguish. Firstly it enabled me to more readily recognize anguish in others. My sensitivity to hear anguish in words that did not obviously betray it and might even try to conceal it was heightened. This ability helped me to understand the participants' narratives with a sensitivity that seemed to decipher anguish. Secondly feeling deep anguish helped me to allow the depth of my own feelings rather than defending against them. Recognizing such defences through feeling anguish enabled me to decode how anguish is demonstrated in the participants' journals so that their defences are also uncovered within their writing.

1.3.5. A murderous self

The raging self within me aroused by murder wanted to murder the perpetrator of the crime, and

allowing this self to exist was as arduous as it was easy. It was arduous because it was an unrecognised and rejected self, but easy because it was almost an automatic reaction of grief and revenge (Purnell 2004). According to Estés the reaction of rage:

“is part of the healthy instinctual psyche to have deep reactions to disrespect, threat, injury. Devout reaction is a natural and unexpected part of learning about the collective worlds of soul and psyche” (1992; 368).

Before trauma, fantasy allowed murder to be, only as fantasy, or as something that happened to other people. Now I was frequently aware of a wish to kill anyone who could not stay with the reality of what had happened. It was as if a Beast had awoken within me. Therapy enabled re-entry into such experiences so that over time even the most hidden responses could be re-experienced. This experiencing of self (Olesen 1992) in unrecognisable forms was unsettling (McCarthy 1984) and seemed to trigger reflexivity into being as it felt imperative to understand myself in this altered form. It was as if an objective part of me stood aside, from myself, and the world, as I watched myself live through what was happening. Coming face to face with such a dark side enabled me to accept such internal selves and be more willing to investigate them as opposed to disowning them by denial. Writing enabled this Beastly self to exist and be named, in my poetry which made it real. Writing compliments counselling and seems to enable the writer to grow in their own space. This personal space and previously denied selves would be found by the participants as they wrote themselves into their own internal worlds.

1.3.6. Howling

The inarticulate language of howling aided movement and felt primitive (Hering 1997; Sidoli 2000) and natural, yet the civilised self seemed conditioned not to want to incorporate this response into the grieving process. It had to be learned and nurtured into being. The therapeutic relationship provided space for an intimate freedom of expression (Kahn 1991). Howling out feeling's reflexive cycles (Rennie 1998) allowed a re-experiencing of past events to take place. It enabled feelings, thoughts, sensations and events to be integrated within myself and as new internal structures emerged the space was found for murder and me to co-exist. This kind of howling was physical and verbal in that it was the horror felt within, being cried out. In this way the "unintegrated" trauma (Sidoli 2000; 48) that I did not want to contain, was slowly integrated into my sense of self.

However howling felt more than a physical response. It was like the howling of my soul, felt internally but not necessarily demonstrated physically. It seems primitive in the sense that it may be part of the collective unconscious, "a pre-existent form" (Jung 1969: 43) that Jung sees as inherited as opposed to being part of a personal unconscious formed through personal experience. This howling is a kind of metaphorical howling, in that writing poetry enabled me to express howling in words. What was too awful to speak found a way to use words to express the inexpressible. Howling out grief in the form of poetry enabled: "memories, thoughts and reflections on experience to be explored and expressed" (Bolton and Latham 2004; 120). Such writing enabled me to break the silence of shock, communicate with myself and 'validate' (Thompson 2004; 75) my experience. In the moment of writing words took precedence over feeling. Later I would look back at the writing and become aware of the transformation that was

taking place. Howling through poetry seemed to enable this process of movement within my internal world for as Flint states:

“I think that the discovery of poetic space and its expression through the imagistic, metaphoric language of art or poetry, alteration occurs: that which was solid or frozen gains the possibility of movement and fluidity” (2004; 144).

The participants’ narratives seem to show their ability to howl with the words/metaphors they choose both consciously and unconsciously and this process appears to be aided by the way they were asked to write in a poetic style. It is also possible to witness the way they move from frozen/stuck places that had previously held them captive internally. Witnessing such transformations is a privilege of this study.

1.3.7. The search for meaning

It seemed so much of my known identity was lost that it felt as if there were no normal defences (Garland 1998) left against the reality of a chaotic world, and the meaninglessness of this was felt as madness (Kurtz 1989). The seductiveness of this felt madness forced the conflict between not suffering anguish and suffering anguish (Bion 1970) towards finding coherence within this turbulence of opposing worlds (Gleik 1987). The isolation within the new realm of being used the temporal affects of felt timelessness (Flaherty 1992) to think about my immediate condition. Shock it seems provided this space to realise myself in isolation (Moustakas 1961) so that a way could be found to create a fit between internal coherence and the requirements of the environment (Bateson 1979). Working with this self in therapy, in training and in writing poetry

enabled the black hole of murder to radiate its own peculiar energy (Nicolis and Prigogine 1989) as it became embedded into the vacuum of space and time. As this psychic energy (Jung 1969) was released and the circumstances took their place in reality, meaning began to enter into the context of murder.

The search for meaning (Yalom 1980) became a way of surviving within the new realm of being. In the external world I felt deserted by friends while at the same time isolating myself from them. My world and theirs seemed to have no meeting place, no point of reference (Maturana and Varela 1987) to which friendship could be anchored. Only in therapy, in personal writing, in training and in the company of close family, could connection to others and to the world be felt. These situations may have reflected the anguish of the circumstances but they were also places where meaning began to be discovered. Making sense of what had happened (Storr 1988) was needed for personal growth. Murder had to become part my life story in order to give meaning to this life. Part of this meaning making was using the story of Beauty and the Beast to understand what had happened between (and within) my sister and her husband.

Within the process of finding meaning in life it was also discovered that paradoxically, meaning had to be relinquished, as opposition made its presence felt again. If only meaning is searched for the self may become enclosed (Bachelard 1994) in something that may never be found. As Jacobs (2000) suggests meaning is as illusive as it is real. Meaning is needed in life yet perhaps it is also necessary to be able to live without it. It cannot be a means to an end for life is more than meaning. Life is full of uncertainties that co-exist alongside the meaning and certainties that appear to provide security.

The search for meaning is evident in the participants' journals and is brought to life by the way they were asked to write the journals. The analysis of the main study in chapter 6 demonstrates the usefulness of the search for meaning as the participants begin to find meaning in their histories and childhood experiences written out on the pages of their journals. Finding meaning seems to enable them to understand themselves as well as making sense of past traumas and the impact they have on their lives in the present.

1.3.8. Poetry

Writing poetry enabled me to work through my emotional responses to trauma. It gave me a safe space where anything could be written, thought, imagined, and played out in the protective space provided by my note books. Poetry, opened up language into the sphere of another world, the primal world of space, day dreaming, reverie (Bion 1962, 1967) and creativity, where the inside and outside of being invert their dimensions in the simple and complex space of poetic expression (Bachelard 1994). Here, meaning can be left in the outside world for in the creative, poetic space, the wonderment of expression, of the fit between feeling and language takes precedence. What cannot be spoken or made sense of in the internal world, finds its place in a poem, and moves into the external world, as it emerges on the page. The atmosphere created by such words transcends meaning. Understanding is replaced by a realization (Waddell 2003), as the unknown finds expression through the metaphors and symbols of the known world of language, discovered in the medium of the poem. Yet at the same time the expression of a poem gives a truth to understanding. There is knowledge, and a feeling, that I have gone through (Taylor 1997) the experience of trauma, lived it, and expressed the perceptions discovered in the poems. At the same time something new has been created. Each poem is a new creation, giving meaning to a moment for in expressing myself and finding new realizations, the world feels new

and even beautiful again (Bachelard 1994).

This writing out of self on the page (Hunt and Sampson 1998) in the form of poetry promoted the wish to discover what is, and yet is unknown (Bollas 1987). The process of writing poetry gave words to split off parts of the psyche (Green 2003) that could not cope with murder. This transformative and liberating aspect of writing poetry aided understanding as well as activating movement through trauma. The potential space for thought, provided by such a way of writing, is also a form of containment (Waddell 2003). The counselling or psychoanalytic theory of containment (Bion 1962; 1967) meets an aesthetic counterpart in the creative act of writing poetry. As the poetic reverie of the writer contains herself in the freedom of such potential space she is enabled to play with thoughts, feelings, and words, and create the capacity for emotional shifts or movement to occur in the internal world. By playing in this way there is the possibility that the mind of the writer will be fed by its internal objects (Harris Williams 1997). By being asked to write a short phrase on each line of their journals the participants demonstrate the usefulness of this poetic type of creative writing as their internal objects feed their thought/feeling processes.

1.4. The influence of Beauty and the Beast

Fairy tales may be used in counselling to stimulate memories/experiences within the client to enable the discovery of “preconscious aspirations” (Brun 1993; 17). Cooper (1984) suggests that the soul may be imaged in the fairy tale while Brun (1993; 5) calls fairy tales “symbols of the soul”. Fairy tales tell their stories through the use of “symbolic language” (Bettelheim 1976; 279) which enables the reader to look for the hidden meanings concealed in the symbols. Hayes (2004;19) suggests that the symbol “provides safety for the exploration of emotions”, which is

perhaps why I chose a fairy tale to help give meaning to a story that felt too dangerous to explore without the safety/distance provided by such symbols.

I used the safety of Beauty and the Beast to come to some understanding of what had happened between my sister and her husband. If my sister is represented by Beauty, she becomes that character within the story and her husband becomes the Beast. However in the symbolism of the story Beauty and the Beast are in fact aspects of one person. Separating them into two characters means that each are cut off from the opposing aspects of themselves. So rather than the happy ending of the marriage between Beauty and the Beast as the individual comes to accept opposing aspects of his/her character, there is the horrific ending of murder as the Beast refuses to acknowledge the Beauty within himself. He cuts off all hope of Beauty as he kills her, and remains only the Beast, wild and outside of the law. Beauty on the other hand is killed because she cannot find the Beast within herself who could have protected her.

The story of Beauty and the Beast became a key aspect of my understanding of containment, freedom and the possible opposition between them. In the story Beauty is a young woman who is obedient, cares for her family with no thought for herself, for she is a compliant 'good girl'. This 'goodness' is what makes her come to be perceived as Beauty. She is not a young woman who demonstrates her feelings but seems to keep them hidden inside, contained internally and invisible to the outside world. In this sense her goodness becomes a metaphor for the imprisoning pole of containment. She may in this sense be seen to represent the repressed child (Miller 1996) who has lost her own will and ability to be rebellious. Her fate is affected by her ineffectual father as she is given to the Beast to placate him when he has been angered by the

father. The meeting of Beauty and the Beast may be seen as the coming together of two opposites. Beauty is over-contained in that she is good, obedient to her father and does not appear to think and act for herself, in this sense her 'self' is imprisoned. The Beast may be seen as being over free in that he is wild, making his own rules as he thinks and acts only for himself. He does not care for others as Beauty does, and he howls, like a beast, and expresses his own feelings at the expense of others. He may be seen to represent the more primitive aspects of the psyche (Malan 1995) or the wild child who uses aggression to get his own way. If Beauty and the Beast are taken to represent the opposing sides of one person's internal world then their coming together suggests the integration that is possible when these two sides meet. Prior to this meeting they may be understood as being split off, or defended parts of the individual which are unknown or denied. In the story, it is only after they have met that Beauty finds that she can claim the power to make her own decisions, have her own feelings and choose not to continue caring for her family. The Beast on the other hand finds that he can no longer survive alone as he needs Beauty's goodness or reparative containment to curb his destructive freedom. The Beast, who had been under a spell, turns back into a handsome prince and the couple are married. But that marriage may be understood as the integration of opposing parts of the individual's internal world. Estés (1992) suggests that such integration occurs when the individual starts to care for hurt or damaged part of themselves. Beauty may be seen as damaged because she is unable to own her feelings and cares only for others whereas the Beast cares only for himself and not for others. The integration of these opposing natures enables the individual to incorporate more aspects of him/herself to feel whole or even healed.

Discovering my own defended selves after trauma, or the Beast who had awoken in me seemed

to validate just how much of an individual remains hidden. Many of these hidden selves emerged during therapy and writing poetry. The combination of therapy and poetry enabled such splits or unknown selves to be discovered and integrated so the desire to bring therapy and poetry together in research seemed apposite. The participants' journal narratives and the findings demonstrate the appropriateness of this link between poetry and therapy particularly in regard to reflexivity and the unconscious and this is discussed in the final chapters.

1.5. The legacy

The everyday realm of being that existed before trauma has not returned. Life exists in a new realm of being. Through the journey into this ever changing realm, external structures provided a secure base from which to work. This enabled a letting go of what was known so that the unknown could be investigated and integrated into myself. The process of experiencing the unknown led to the discovery of personal meaning which in turn developed into research giving value to my sister's shortened life as the atrocious act of murder becomes strangely transformed into a precious legacy. This legacy is perhaps best felt - rather than described or understood - in the following poem which intends to demonstrate my transformation through the processes already described in this chapter:

Howling

In the bottomless depths of an old phase
where light and dark entwine like foetal twins
the surging yawn of hell
gathers into being
against the brilliant eclipse
of deforming harmony.

And in this Hades of the heart
the virgin's voice
vanishes
for she only finds power to affirm life
through the dragon's blackest utterance
of blood drained decay.

Searching for her stolen tongue
she plumbs the veins of bullish night
scattering her shrill silence
round the jaws of witching time
where the spiralling fire of her presence
fills the firmament with coded tidings.

And her inaudible accent
echoes so profoundly
in the black hole of creation's heaving core
that it crescents in a labyrinth of enigmatic messages
where the two edged omen of all arguing adversaries
is wantonly embraced.

Now, in the drawn and quartered howls of anguish
hanging in a new moon's wake
the chalice of life, drinks death's tears anew
in every breaking day
and with a frown, rejoices.

Internalising opposition enabled and produced the above poem. Such opposition is visible in the participants' narratives as the way they were asked to write the journals seems to enable them to discover defended and hidden aspects of themselves. They find their own altered legacies from their pasts, in that they come to make sense of and find new meaning/understanding of past events/traumas. This is demonstrated in the findings poems in chapter 7 where their stories are displayed in poetry that attempts to capture their emotional movement over the period of the journal keeping. Their use of metaphors and symbols both hide and reveal aspects of themselves which are uncovered in the analysis of their narratives and in their feedback. The idea for the poetic type of writing that created their journal narratives came from my experiences as I felt the

link between poetry and counselling. My inner voice was sure this would encourage the kind of writing that would mirror and enhance their experience of counselling. However the reality of the narratives that emerged far outweighed my expectations.

1.5.1 Aims and objectives

The legacy of my experiences is perhaps also held within this study. I was challenged by my new-found voice to discover whether the concepts of containment and freedom exist as an aspect of emotional movement within the internal world of the client in a counselling relationship. The first objective to achieve this aim is to take account of the many voices which became evident during the process of the research. These include my voice, the voices of the participants, as well as the more hidden voices of my supervisors. All these voices attempt to discover whether the concepts of containment and freedom exist within the internal world of the client. If the concepts do exist it feels appropriate to discover how they are experienced by the client. But the research also enables the voices of the participants to grow and change. Just as my poetry created new voices within me, so their writing adds to their ability to hear and find a new confidence in themselves.

The second objective is to remain open to whatever presents itself during the process of the inquiry, so that every opportunity is taken to investigate the concepts from different perspectives. This may be seen in the analysis of the participants' narratives where more than one perspective enables a greater depth of understanding to be discovered. Different perspectives may also be seen in the participants' feedback on the analysis and the findings poems. The participants were able to realize that their initial responses were not necessarily their only reaction to the work. Remaining open also enables the study to progress and change as the participants give up their

anonymity and voice their desire to continue with the study. The study is also influenced by my remaining open to my own emotions as life experiences impact on the way I work and interact with the research.

The third objective is to examine the relationship between poetry and counselling as the form of the participants' narratives was inspired by poetry. It seems apposite to look at how writing in the way they were asked to write for the study influenced what they actually wrote. It appears possible that the embodied selves (Hunt and Sampson 2006) through which the participants write are present in their narratives. I found that writing poetry enabled me to embody unconscious thoughts and feelings which only became apparent when I looked back at the finished work as in the above poem. When I wrote the poem I was in a world of words but had no idea that I was also expressing a new understanding about my journey through trauma. In the same way participants discovered more about their thoughts and feelings when they had the opportunity to read the analysis and look back at their own writing.

Lastly, exploring the relationship between the client's experience of counselling and established theory may add to counsellors' understanding of the client's experience in relation to that theory. My experience as a client encouraged interest in the process of counselling and improved my ability as a counsellor. Examining the process of the participants' narratives provides interesting data that appears to show theory in action as well as giving the client's perspective on that theory. To have a view of the client's internal processing while in counselling, from the client's perspective provides valuable insights into a journey that tends to be shrouded in mystery and theory. The client's perspective, through the way the participants write their journals, is opened

up in a way that maintains the privacy of their counselling sessions yet displays processes that have been difficult to view through other methods.

1.6 The voice of the present in action

The intention to form this research resulted from a personal process which left me with the desire to use my creative voice within the research arena. The hope to engage myself was as crucial as the hope to engage others, both in the research process itself and in the potential reader. Initially I had no sense of how much using my personal process would influence the work. Only with hindsight do I see how I became a participatory researcher because I positioned myself, my voice within the research. As Bishop suggests, the positioning of the researcher is:

“part of participation. The researcher cannot “position” himself or herself or “empower” the other. Instead, through entering a participatory mode of consciousness, the individual agent of the “I” of the researcher is released in order to enter a consciousness larger than the self.” (2005;120)

In this way I entered the consciousness of the whole study in that I worked to place myself in the worlds of the participants’ data and in all the writing processes.

The work places itself as much within the poetic and artistic realms as it does in the world of counselling theory. For this reason it feels appropriate to ‘locate’ (Martin 2006) my voice in the first person. The intersubjective conversations within the work, between me and myself, between me and the theoretical and poetic components and between me and the participants demands

such a subjective stance. Woven alongside my voice, are also the voices of the participants whose stories create the data for this study. Together we give birth to questions, answers and possibilities that arise from this research (throughout this research ‘voices’ and ‘selves’ are used interchangeably to refer to different aspects of each individual involved in the work).

As I questioned how the process of therapy enabled emotional movement in the internal world of the client I realized that my experiences had impacted on the way I work as a counsellor. I seemed more able to tolerate the heights and depths of opposition with clients. One client, who had been in counselling with me for several years, wrote about the freedom she gained from the counselling process and brought the following poem at the end of the counselling relationship. It was like a gift to me and she gave permission for it to be used here:

Flying to Freedom

Broken, wounded, hurt.
Unable to bear more pain.
Need to weep and howl

Journey of the soul.
Journey to the heart of me
Begun, not ended.

Loved, held, nurtured, healed,
Strengthened, uplifted, restored.
Alive once again

Return to the world.

Bring with me a newer self.

Gradually emerge.

Stretch and spread my wings.

Set off for unknown future.

Flying to freedom.

She had not known that I was doing research connected with freedom so it was interesting to see from her perspective that some kind of internal freedom was felt to be an intrinsic part of her journey. She expressed her need to ‘howl’ at the start of her journey which reflects the importance of what feels to be a primitive emotional response that she had been unable to access prior to counselling. It seems that in the process of my holding her wounds and hurts, as the counsellor I enabled her to undertake the journey ‘to the heart’ of herself. She also appears to have discovered ‘a newer self’ as if she began to find more selves (Etherington 2001) inside herself. With more of herself available she could end the counselling and fly towards an unknown future and freedom. When she started counselling she had felt trapped and unable to change. The tension created externally by others in her life, and internally by aspects of herself filled this journey with opposition. Together we stayed with that opposition until she was able to tolerate it and make decisions for herself rather than doing what she felt she ought to do or what others expected of her – like Beauty. Her poem seems to show what a crucial journey it was for her, as well as demonstrating the growth of her own voice. Yet we each had an impact on the other for not only did I as the counsellor provide a relationship which influenced her life, she also influenced me. She taught me the importance of valuing her particular experiences of faith in difficult circumstances. In this way she added to my personal experience.

Both my personal experience as a client and counsellor are the stimulus for this study. Perhaps because of the reactions of some peers to the research I initially had concerns about using personal experience as the pre-conception for research. However my desire to explore, coupled with a new found security, enabled me to continue with the process. In the current professional context with a move towards evidence-based practice (Barkham and Barker 2003) backed up by quantitative research I wanted to demonstrate the relevance of qualitative research. There was a desire to create a subjective and reflexive space where clients, as opposed to counsellors, might highlight the internal process of the counselling experience. I also felt that this would be of interest to other counsellors as process is an integral part of our work, and demonstrating it, exploring it from the point of view of the client may add to counsellors' understanding of that process.

1.7. Conclusion

I have attempted to show how a journey through trauma highlighted reflexivity as a process of investigating myself. Containment, freedom, opposition and emotional movement emerged through the responses of shock, anguish, a murderous self and howling and the search for meaning. These responses were both contained and released in a narrative of poetry and prose. The discovery of the rich colours of experience hidden in the aftermath of the violence of murder, were found through a reflexive way of being that taught me to live life as inquiry (Marshall 2004). In turn these colours of experience changed the way I live and work, and led the way to research. Reflexivity and poetic writing helped provide tools that could be used to investigate the experience of the client through a multi-layered narrative. If my passion for this work is to provide “resonance with the reader” (Trahar 2002;196) then it seems important for

that audience to have some sense of the reflexive experience that gave birth to such fervour.

Knowing, being consciously aware of the original ground of the research may have its drawbacks. The desire to protect what are felt to be highly personal experiences of the research processes may cause aspects of the work to be protected from further investigation if they are not kept in awareness through reflexivity. The slippery ground (Charmaz and Mitchell 1997) of the uncertainty which risks feeling that the conception of research is crucial to such reflexive work may send me crashing into criticism. But the process of reflexive practice (Rennie 1998; Lees 2001; Etherington 2004) suggests that personal growth and subjective research may interact upon each other, holding the learning process within the dynamic worlds of opposition and attraction. If the creativity of reflexive narrative research (Douglas 1985; Hertz 1997) is to be understood and developed then the more experience that is shared about how such awareness comes into being, the better we may be able to apprehend the benefits of reflexive practice.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

“Multiplicity and inner division are opposed by an integrative unity whose power is as great as that of the instincts. Together they form a pair of opposites necessary for regulation, often spoken of as nature and spirit.” (Jung 1969; 51)

2.1 Introduction

This chapter explores how my ideas outlined in chapter one are grounded in the literatures and the way the study aims to contribute to knowledge. The introductory quotation above is suggestive of the divisions or tensions inherent in the work which seem to hold opposition throughout the whole process of the study. Such tensions which appear intrinsic to the concepts of containment and freedom are addressed in this chapter (and chapter 5). Containment, freedom and polarity are discussed in relation to counselling theory, to the literatures in which they appear and linked to the fairy tale of Beauty and the Beast. The place of poetry in this study and within narrative research is introduced alongside relevant literatures. The aforementioned concepts, theory, literatures and learning culminate in explaining how my voice gained confidence and created this study through the processes following trauma. Etherington (2003), in a collection of narratives shows “how individuals found ways of discovering, holding onto and strengthening their sense of safety and self through creating a narrative of their lives” (189). It seems that my poetry began my transformation which continues through this narrative research.

The experience of the processes outlined in chapter one led me to want to learn more about the process of change in clients. It is all too easy to hypothesise what the experience of the client is,

but do we really know? Theories, and case studies which back up the theories sell an ever growing number of books, but these are based on the counsellor's views. McLeod (2001) suggests that there is so much that we take for granted in relation to experience that it feels important to continue to open doors into the client's lived experience (Ellis and Flaherty 1992) of counselling to clarify and challenge these theories. Researchers are finding new ways to study the experience of the client (Rennie 1998; Ellis and Flaherty 1992; Payne 1992; Payne 1993; Etherington 2000; 2004) as collaborative paradigms (Reason and Rowan 1981; McLeod 2001) and subjective experience (Ellis 1995; Green and Scholes 2004) become more accepted forms of investigation. Books written by clients, promoting their views are also beginning to make their way into counselling literature (Little 1990; Lott 1999; Sands 2000). Counsellors have also used their experience as former clients (Bion 1985; Kurtz 1989) to inform their work and perhaps this needs to be a more openly affirmed part of written theory.

2.2. Containment, freedom and polarity in the literature

In investigating containment and freedom as a polarity in the internal world of the client in a therapeutic relationship, I have discovered no evidence of research that specifically relates to these concepts. Therefore different theories (Rogers 1961; Yalom 1980; Clarkson 1994; Siegel 1996) and ways of thinking (Buber 1937; Bowes 1971; Jung 1961; 1969; Wallace and Findley 1975; Jacobs 2000) that suggest areas of opposition and attraction, of polarities, that might benefit from research are reviewed in the literature.

2.2.1 Containment

Writings on aspects of containment, as a notion of the counsellor's holding of the client, are

dotted through counselling, psychotherapy and psychoanalytic journals (Gold 1982; Dehing 1994; Davor 1996; Rosenbaum and Garfield 1996; Symington 1996), particularly in reference to Bion's (1962; 1967) work. However there is no evidence of the construct of containment being perceived or experienced by the client. Theory does explore the concept of contents (Jung 1969) of the psyche and the client's internal objects (Klein 1975; Greenburg and Mitchell 1983). Such theory suggests that the clients' internal worlds contain their experiences, feelings, and aspects of themselves and others who have influenced their lives. In writing about the post-Kleinian model of the mind Meg Harris Williams (2005) brings together the ideas of Freud, Klein and Bion alongside classic poetry and the mythologies and metaphors that have influenced psychoanalytic thought. She sees counselling as an aesthetic process and suggests that "the emotional experience is a poetic marriage of contrary emotions" (192) (like the marriage of beauty and the Beast) where internal objects are able to communicate within the client. She feels that the anguish suffered by the opposition between these internal objects "if it can be undergone, is accompanied or followed by a revelation of its meaning" (192). This process seems to fit with my personal experience in that anguish caused by opposition led to me to new understandings about myself and the external world. However the terminology of internal objects feels distant and cold as if they are separate and not part of the self, whereas the internal selves I experience are close and passionate. These selves relate to the poststructuralist concept of multiple selves (Speedy 2004) and as Foucault suggests a single identity will never be discovered for we are: "a complex system of distinct and multiple elements, unable to be mastered by the powers of synthesis" (1984; 94). My experience of these selves was that they not only "regenerate" (Speedy 2004;26) but appear to increase in number as following trauma experience created a split between the way I functioned and the way I viewed myself. In other words there may be the potential for new

selves to be born out of powerful experiences. Harris Williams sees this split between function and self as being “essential to creativity” (2005; 87) which makes sense of my creative writing through trauma and my desire to create this study. But perhaps this split generates creativity in that the tension of opposition between function and self creates movement/transformation within our thinking and feeling processes. This idea that function is also part of the content of the internal world suggests that the individual does not only communicate with other selves but also with experience (as I communicated with the experience of trauma in the family). It seems that whichever terminology is used, objects or selves, much is contained within the internal world and therefore it seems likely that some sense of containment within this world may be experienced by the client in counselling.

Although Freud (1905) first originated the container concept as the body with its physical borders and openings symbolising the boundaries and thoroughfares of the mind’s functioning, Bion (1962; 1967) was the first to use a model of containment in order to think about the therapist's holding process. Using the mother-infant relationship he suggested an active three dimensional metaphor of containment. He postulated that the maternal function of reverie is an early, intuitive form of communication which responds to the infant’s feeling states as they are transmitted into the mother. She contains them within her, in her mind and returns them transformed, in more tolerable form into the infant psyche. Within the holding of the mother’s internal reverie the infant grows.

If, like the mother the counsellor contains the adult client (Kogan 1988; Quinodoz 1992) then it seems reasonable to wonder how the client experiences containment within the counselling relationship. The containment already introjected (Storr 1960) by the client in his/her life so far

may define how containment is experienced in the counselling relationship. In the search for integration (Jacobs 1986; Kogan 1988) the client's perceptions may effect his/her responses to the counsellor's containment. As counsellors we may understand the client's responses in terms of transference (Malan 1995; Rogers 1951; Siegel 1996) or object relations (Brown and Pedder 1979; Grotstein 1982) but this does not explain the client's experience as much as it perhaps explains the counsellor's experience. In order to understand more about the client's experience of containment we need to learn about the constructs and processes that form the reality of her/his internal world from the client's perspective (Bannister and Fransella 1986). It was my heightened experiences as a client that seemed to enable me to feel these internal processes so perhaps they may be present in others.

The three dimensional nature of containment (Kogan 1988; Quinodoz 1992; Rosenbaum and Garfield 1996), suggests the complexity of this construct. Godwin states:

“a healthy and robust system must be far from equilibrium and mathematically chaotic. Systems close to equilibrium do not have the resilience to withstand random fluctuations, which may break the system apart and destroy it completely” (1994:21).

For containment to be a robust construct, perhaps it has to be chaotic so that it is resilient enough to be dynamic (Rosenbaum and Garfield 1996). Just as Field (1994) suggests that there can be no notion of darkness without light, it seems logical, within this context, to assume that there can be no notion of containment without some form of opposition within its makeup. Such opposition (Wallace and Findlay 1975) stops containment existing in isolation and enables movement for

“all opposites seek to achieve a state of balance” (Jung 1961; 379). This seeking for balance may be the dynamic or energy that engenders change in the internal world of the client (Jung 1969; Bion 1990). It is proposed in this study that by giving containment some form of opposition and enlarging the concept makes containment a more dynamic system. Within such a construct both movement and moments of stillness or balance have the opportunity to coexist and be experienced by the client. Jung saw the presence of such opposition as:

“essential for progression, which is the successful achievement of adaptation, that impulse and counter impulse, positive and negative, should reach a state of regular interaction and mutual influence” (1969; 33).

According to Jung then this opposition is essential for progress or transformation to occur within the client. I experienced stillness and being stuck when caught in shock, while at the same time the opposition of movement in anguish and howling was also present. If these contrasting states can be made visible in others it might add to our understanding of the therapeutic process of how clients experience opposing states and through them create change.

Steiner (1994) sees containment as part of a process of development where the counsellor holds client projections until the client can tolerate them being given back in the form of counsellor interpretations. This suggests emotional movement held within the nature of containment. It also hints at the client's containment of his/her projections which move between the client and the counsellor. Grotstein (1982) states that the internal objects of the human being are “permanent yet constantly evolving states” (83) suggesting that there is always some kind of movement of

the internal objects within the client. Bion Steiner and Grotstein confirm the movement and process of life within the internal world of the human being. This being accepted it would seem to follow that the dimensions of containment within the person may also possess the qualities of dynamic processes (Godwin 1994; Rosenbaum and Garfield 1996; Hubback 1998), or the freedom needed to move and change.

Kogan (1988; 251) looks at the relationship between self, body and object exploring these three dimensions. In an analytic experience where the analyst represents a “second skin” (Kogan 1988; 259) various aspects of the client’s personality are contained as movement is found towards a “better integrated self” (Kogan 1988; 259). Quinodoz (1992; 634) looks at the analyst’s containing function as being expressed through the setting of the counselling relationship, which is itself an active container. Rosenbaum and Garfield (1996) bring together cognitive science (semantics) and the psychoanalytic theory of the mind, with the metaphor of containment. Their paper suggests that the three dimensions of containment are: perceptions of affects, phantasy and socio-interaction. The words and concepts may be different but Kogan, Quinodoz, Rosenbaum and Garfield all use three dimensions to draw an image of containment. Movement between the dimensions of containment in each of these articles is seen as omnipresent within the internal world of the client and outwith into the external world of the counsellor.

Despite their differences the literatures agree that containment is an active three dimensional concept where movement between the dimensions may enable emotional movement within the client. Although most of this theory relates to the counsellor and client and movement between their internal worlds perhaps it may also be seen as relating to the individual/client. As the

client's internal objects/selves are part of their internal world then movement must also occur between these parts of the client if transformation is to happen. I experienced this kind of movement and conversations between different parts of myself following trauma as expressed in chapter one. It made me aware not only of changes within myself, but of the process of transformation. Although based on what I contained and did not want to contain it was never the less my experience of containment and its intrinsic opposition that brought the difficulties of process and emotional movement into awareness. There was also the sense that containment (in the sense of holding emotions within like Beauty or my sister) was more acceptable to others, whereas showing the freedom of real feelings from trauma felt wild and unwanted like the Beast. This is how containment became Beauty, in that appearing contained was a more acceptable face to present to others. Having discovered this within myself there grew a desire to find out if opposition and the experiences of containment might be experienced by others. Such knowledge would add to counsellors' understanding of client process and might both confirm and add to established theory.

2.2.2. Freedom

Freedom has a strong philosophical background with roots in the existential counselling model (Hare 1963). In some thoughts about free will Storr (1960) feels that some potential between choosing alternative actions has to be present between the counsellor and client. In the context of free will Kelly (1963) believes that determinism is the opposite of freedom, suggesting that the individual sets the measure of his own freedom and his own bondage. Rogers (1978) suggests that once responsible freedom has been experienced by an individual that even though it may be suppressed in behaviour, it will never be completely extinguished. Yalom (1980) found no research on the notion of freedom within the counselling relationship and two decades later I

face the same problem. This lack of research into freedom or free will within the client is surprising when the concept is alluded to frequently in the literature (Storr 1960; Bowes 1971; Yalom 1980; Jacobs 1986). In the context of free association (Bollas 1987; Brown and Pedder 1979; Jacobs 1988; Storr 1979) it could be inferred that freedom is always part of the client's and the counsellor's experience of counselling. It feels important to provide a glimpse of the historical trajectories of the unseen forces of freedom as they have appeared in relevant sources.

After her experience of being a client Lott (1999) began the process of researching women's experience of counselling. This was partly influenced by one of her experiences collapsing into a short sexual relationship with the therapist and by conversations with other women in a writing group who shared experiences of therapy. Lott was concerned by the fact that there was an absence of clients' experience of counselling in the literature. She discovered that women wanted counsellors who could bring enough of their "real selves" (10) into the relationship whilst maintaining clear boundaries. Clarkson (1994) suggests that it is the therapeutic relationship which exists for the client, which is the most important aspect of therapeutic work. Yet Lott found that many of her participants never felt they could use the relationship for fear of being judged or not heard. She demonstrates that there is much to learn from the experience of clients who want their real selves to be heard by a real counsellor. Lott's research suggests that clients felt their counsellors did not bring enough of their real selves into the relationship, but relied too much on a theoretical stance. Polanyi provides a clue to what may be happening in such situations:

"From an aeroplane we can see the traces of prehistoric sites which, over the

centuries, have gone unnoticed by people walking over them; indeed, once he has landed, the pilot himself may no longer see these traces” (1969; 237).

Perhaps viewing the experience of the client within the counselling relationship, from the client’s perspective (as opposed to looking at it from an already accepted theoretical stance) may enable us to see what has not been visible before. As Polanyi suggests we may have been walking over ‘sites’ or intrinsic knowledge that we have felt too familiar with to really see in that there may not be enough distance between the counsellor and the client, or between the counsellor and a theoretical stance. In her research Lott discovered that many of her participants never revealed the “secrets” (Lott 1999; 287) that they revealed to her, to their counsellors. Perhaps, the theoretical stance of counsellors hid their empathy and prevented clients from sharing secrets. Or perhaps their counsellors were just not ‘real’ enough for the clients to risk sharing in that the counsellors’ real selves remained too hidden behind a theoretical stance. The tension aroused here is that a counsellor might argue that the clients were not ready, or were caught in the transference or were too defended to share their secrets but the fact that they did share with Lott could argue otherwise. This highlights the importance of putting the theory to one side and listening to the clients’ experience.

In Rennie’s (2001) study which uses either audio or video recordings of clients’ counselling sessions the discourse is replayed to clients to “stimulate his or her recollections of the experience of it” (83). Rennie looks at reflexivity as agency to demonstrate the flow of agency in and out of self awareness and puts the client at the centre of the study. However I was left wondering how much the replaying of a session affected the client and what differences would

there be if the client was just asked to recall the session without the replay. The power of the counsellor in a sense would still be present in the replay whereas the clients' recollections away from that power/relationship might be quite different. This is perhaps why I chose to ask clients to write in their own time away from the counselling session in the hope that there would be as little influence as possible from the perceived authority of the counsellor or me as the researcher. However Rennie's study did discover that clients' experiences were not always revealed to the counsellor. In regard to this he notes that within the client "particular desires arise from an overarching desire either to enter into or avoid inner experience" (82). He also acknowledges that there are "unconscious influences" (88) present within the client which seems to suggest that the client's agency is not always within their conscious control. If the client's agency is seen as an aspect of their freedom to choose what they do or do not reveal then it seems that such internal freedom is a complex concept. The question I asked myself in chapter one was about how to find such freedom. Maybe such a particular moment of questioning is where opposition or the lack of it affects the outcome of a choice. It seems likely that with opposition the internal world may feel chaotic but also aware of the choices available. Whereas without opposition there is no choice as such for the decision is made without the presence of other choices by an unconscious that is conditioned or instinctual (like Beauty and the Beast). Jung (1969) looks at choice as a volitional process but he also recognizes that instinctual processes may deny freedom of choice:

"As further contents of consciousness we can also distinguish *volitional* processes and *instinctual* processes. The former are defined as directed impulses, based on apperception, which are at the disposal of so called free will. The latter are impulses originating in the unconscious or directly in the body and are characterized by lack of

freedom and by compulsiveness” (142).

According to Jung then if the possibilities of choice experienced within the individual are open, that is the choice is not already fixed (Bowes 1971) by previous experience, then the choice made may be seen as being guided by freedom. He is suggesting that the individual’s ability to choose to experience his/her own feelings or decide upon his/her actions may be predetermined. In the same way I discovered that showing a contained face to the world felt more acceptable than the freedom of my real feelings. Family, social, historical and cultural values, rules assumptions or expectations (Parkes 1972; Bauman 1993) seem to create the unconscious instinctual processes that deny freedom. However Frankl (1984) might argue that the individual is ultimately self determining, and that whatever is chosen is based on his/her decisions, and not on the conditions that lead to that choice being made. In this way my sister could be seen as choosing to be murdered because she did not to use her power to prevent it. My experience of her was that she could not see alternative choices to the ones she made. As Beauty she could only do as she was told for her Beast was external and controlled her. Internal freedom (or her internal Beast) it seems is as much an illusion (Bauman 1993; Smilansky 2000; Jacobs 2000) as external freedom, yet both are felt and experienced as a reality in the moment of experiencing (Mandela 1994). Various sources suggest that internal freedom cannot be separated from psychological processes like consciousness, experience, ethics, morals and illusion (Kelly 1963; Bowes 1971; Bauman 1993; Mandela 1994).

Smilansky (2000) makes the distinction between different forms of freedom, such as political freedom, the freedom to find oneself, having a free spirit and the free will problem. The freedom

of finding oneself, or of discovering one's authentic self (Rogers 1961) or voice is nearest to the freedom being reviewed here. It has to do with the story of self actualization (Rogers 1951; 489) within the internal ethical norms that Hegel (Patten 1999) might suggest guide the individual's subjective practical reasoning, thinking processes and subjective experience (Ellis and Flaherty 1992). Such subjective freedom was demonstrated by Nelson Mandela (1994). He lost his physical freedom yet kept hope alive for the future of himself and his countrymen. He must have held onto the freedom to think his own thoughts (Bion 1990), despite physical imprisonment. When Mandela and his associates were sentenced to life imprisonment, they turned to the courtroom, smiled and waved their arms (Mandela 1965). Even in that moment they retained their inner freedom to believe in their struggle and demonstrated freedom in their physical movement.

Tillick (1952) sees freedom as man's power of life, where vitality and intentionality are united. If this is so then as an ingredient of the client's experience it would appear to be essential if the client is to risk exploring his/her internal world. Freedom, according to Yalom (1980) implies the internal states of loneliness, isolation, responsibility and authorship of oneself, he states:

“it is the facing of aloneness that ultimately allows one to engage another deeply and meaningfully” (362).

But if this internal loneliness is too well defended against, or too well contained the client may be unable to risk the task of exploration. Hirsch (1981) however, reminds us that it may be a person's anxiety with regard to freedom that brings him/her into counselling. Therefore the main

aim in counselling is for the client to find the freedom to enable him/her to detach him/herself from all forms of irrational authority (including the counsellor's perceived authority). The client may feel constricted or over-contained by these internal authorities so that exploration is difficult to embark upon without the opposition of freedom. For example following trauma I found the wish to murder the perpetrator of the crime and the desire for revenge incredibly strong. Finding the courage to examine the depths of such destructive affect was difficult for there was a felt cultural assumption that it was dangerous to experience such primitive emotions. However the freedom from authority provided by the counselling relationship enabled this exploration to be undertaken. The opposing containment provided by the counsellor created a safe place within my internal world to explore rage so that it could be worked through as opposed to acted out. Foucault's (1984) description of enlightenment could be considered as a process of an individual's freedom when he/she chooses to take risks in order to discover more about themselves:

“Enlightenment must be considered both as a process in which men participate collectively and as an act of courage to be accomplished personally. Men are at once elements and agents of a single process.” (35)

Just as Rennie (2001) sees the client as an agent, so Foucault sees the individual as an agent, making decisions. In this way the client may be seen as the agent, the driving force of their own learning. But such freedom can perhaps only be accessed through the processes of opposition. Without opposition the awareness (or freedom) to make a choice may never be brought into consciousness because of the unconscious or instinctual (Jung 1969) processes that may limit

choice. It feels difficult at this point to separate freedom from opposition as if there is an innate opposition embedded within the notion of freedom. According to Wallace and Findlay (1975) this seems possible for “its other” (173), that is the opposite pole of freedom seems intrinsic within freedom. This also fits with the metaphor of Beauty and the Beast. Inherent in the freedom or wildness of the Beast is the potential to contain his wildness, or the Beauty to care for others rather than harming them. In the same way the potential to be free or wild may be inherent in Beauty so that she can protect herself. This marriage between Beauty and the Beast is essential in the sense that the individual acknowledges their plurality and learns from opposition as opposed to shutting down parts of themselves by the denial of either Beauty or the Beast.

2.2.3. Polarity

A dictionary meaning of polarity (Chambers 1983; 992) states: “it is the tendency to develop differently in different directions along an axis as a plant towards base and apex; some animals towards head and tail.” In the client then, it seems possible that as growth occurs in the direction of internal containment, so it must also occur in the opposite direction towards internal freedom. This seems to confirm my difficulties in both wanting and not wanting to contain the experiences and consequences of trauma in that I felt myself pulled in opposing directions. The idea of dualities, of opposition, attraction and dichotomy, was promoted by Freud (Bischof 1964), Kelly (1963) and Fromm (1941). Jung is also an eminent example of those personality theorists who for decades used the concept of polarity (Koch 1959; Jung 1969) as a major principle in their work. He saw opposition and polarities (Jung 1969) as the key to movement within the client towards synthesis and the fleeting equilibrium which signifies progress. He states:

“Their working together makes possible the balanced regularity of these processes, which without this inner polarity would become one-sided and unreasonable. We are therefore justified in regarding all extravagant and exaggerated behaviour as a loss of balance, because the co-ordinating effect of the opposite impulse is obviously lacking. Hence it is essential for progression” (32-33).

If polarity is essential for progression as Jung suggests then attempting to discover this in the client may add to counsellors’ understanding of clients’ processes and experience of counselling. Shock, anguish, rage and howling split my internal world into unknown realms where opposing parts of my self-image struggled to accept unknown selves who were suddenly part of me. It was the imbalance of these polarities, these internal selves who were poles apart that began to teach me about opposition. The concept of polarity is implicit in counselling theory as may be seen in the opposing drives suggested by Freud (Salzberger-Wittenberg 1970; Greenberg and Mitchell 1983; Freud 1986), such as the drive towards life and the drive towards death. This notion of polarity (Koch 1959; Jung 1961; 1969) as a construct within the internal world of the client, allows the possibility of meeting between containment and freedom to form a single construct. Polarities and opposition (Jung 1961; 1969; Wallace and Findlay 1975) seem to be an accepted tension of the therapeutic relationship, indeed of life itself:

“The polarity of opposites seems integral to consciousness itself: it is a commonplace that without light there can be no notion of darkness: without up there is no down, and so on. Duality can be found across the whole spectrum of life” (Field 1994; 476).

This duality of opposites may suggest that internal containment and internal freedom do exist and may be experienced by the client. According to Jung (1961) the psyche of the individual possesses its own inner polarity which creates the dynamic that enables movement within the internal world. He states: “Nothing so promotes the growth of consciousness as this inner confrontation of opposites” (378). This was my experience following trauma, as the more I worked with opposition the more aware I became of different selves within me. The universal idea of polarity suggests that “conflict begets progress” (Bischof 1964; 182) yet such opposition may not only be about confrontation or conflict for:

“In opposition, the different is not confronted by any other, but by its other” (Wallace and Findlay 1975; 173).

Thus each pole of opposition is in essential relation to its other. In this way containment may be the polar opposition to freedom one moment while being complementary and necessary to it in the next moment. According to Jung, energy unites opposites:

“in a co-ordinated flow of psychic processes. Their working together makes possible the balanced regularity of these processes, which without this inner polarity would become one-sided and unreasonable” (1969; 32-33).

Opposition then becomes an imbalanced duality, or a polarity within which both parts are necessary for movement and growth to occur. Two contrasting illustrations in Wharton (1985) highlight the attraction and repulsion of fear and death in uncontained forms, noting the desire

for death as attraction and the fear of it as repulsion. Davor (1996) looks at transforming such a nameless dread (Bion 1967) so that it can be taken back in more manageable form. He sees it as the ability to distinguish between two states of being, “surviving or living” (Davor 1996; 302). There is a connecting flow of movement in each of these accounts which Eigen (1985) also highlights as he unravels Bion’s framework of containment. Travelling back beyond Kleinian thinking he shows that the paranoid schizoid (Ps) position and the depressive (D) position, are each dependent on the other (Ps-D). The traversable veil of psychic reality enables the containment of the counsellor to hold the split off elements of Ps so that the client has the opportunity to reach D and vice versa (Eigen 1985). This capacity to move, to transform, is also present in the counsellor’s free floating attention (Brown and Pedder 1979) which is described as “an alert readiness, an alive waiting” (Eigen 1985; 326) in which the client’s chaotic states are tolerated in the therapist’s mind. Movement, between polarities, between past and present, between the client and counsellor, between good and bad, (between Beauty and the Beast) seems to be the axis of therapeutic life.

2.3. Poetry

There was a desire to provide a way of collecting data that empowered the participants to use their own words (McLeod 2001b). The potential of creative writing as an aid to understanding the therapeutic process is an accepted aspect of counselling both for clients and counsellors (Bolton 1999; Etherington 2000; Daniels and Feltham 2004). Bolton (2003) feels that: “Poetic diary writing is an effective route to self-understanding as it uses images, metaphors and the voices of others, just as psychotherapy does” (121). So it was hoped that participants’ journal entries would provide a narrative of their lived experience of counselling that would disclose understanding for me and the participants.

Poetry, as a representation in words, and the interpretation of those words, has been discussed for centuries. From the time of the Bible to modern day poets representation fills our reading worlds. Aristotle not only felt that we learn through representation but that it is intrinsic to us:

“Representation is natural to human beings from childhood. They differ from other animals in this: man tends most towards representation and learns his first lessons through representation” (Poetics: 4).

Brittan (2003) suggests that this representation of abstract thought is brought into being by symbols and allegory. In other words what is unknowable is put into symbolic form so that what is unknown can be discussed because: “whatever is unknowable cannot be contained in language” (Brittan 2003; 147). Yet it seems that what is unknowable may be contained in allegory, symbols and metaphor which is language. The paradox/tension seems clear: what cannot be contained in words is contained in words. The power of this paradox is that the commonplace words that we use in speech everyday change as poetry makes them powerful (Finch 2005). This power appears to be demonstrated by Eliot (1996) when he describes how emotion is evoked in poetry:

“ The only way of expressing emotion in the form of art is by finding an ‘objective correlative’; in other words, a set of objects, a situation, a chain of events which shall be the formula of the *particular* emotion; such that when the external facts, which must terminate in sensory experience, are given, emotion is immediately evoked” (100).

Emotion and the unknowable in this way each seem to be made into an image, ‘an objective correlative’, which creates feeling. An example of this is the isolation created and felt in the first lines of John Clare’s poem ‘I Am’:

“I am: yet what I am none care or knows
My friends forsake me like a memory lost;
I am the self consumer of my woes.” (1966; 132).

A link or meeting is made between writer and reader or there is “an interaction between text and reader” (Brittan 2003; 204). In the verse above there is recognition of what it is like to feel alone created in the images evoked in the reader’s internal world. Initially, perhaps there is a meeting within the writer as his conscious and unconscious meet within the words. Hunt seems to describe this meeting when writing about reflexivity in the social sciences as creating an internal space:

“reflexivity involves an increased awareness of the rigidity of our ways of thinking about *ourselves* and our ways of being in the world, and the ability to distance ourselves from them in order for all the voices of the muffled silent parts of ourselves to be heard” (2004; 156).

Such reflexivity seemed to enable me to change the way I thought about myself following trauma as my rigid ways of thinking were questioned and I found more of my own voice. The intention behind asking the participants to write a short phrase on each line was that such

reflexivity might enable their unconscious or ‘muffled’ voices to be heard.

Creative writing, within the narrative approach has been used to encourage clients to re-write their own stories (White and Epton 1990; McLeod 1997). There is a growing trend within qualitative research looking at the benefits of creative writing which is linked to clinical practice (Fuchel 1985; Moskowitz 1998; Etherington 2000; Bolton et al 2004). There are also projects which facilitate creative writing and explore the benefits of the process (Bolton and Latham 2004; Bolton 2005; Hunt and Sampson 2006). One of these, the Kingfisher project set up in 1999, works in social care settings and aims to use creative writing to promote healing and well being (Harthill et al 2004). Creative writing workshops offer facilitators with a range of expertise in order to help health care users to deal with illness, or help them recover from illness. Etherington (2000) brought counselling and creative writing together when she worked with two adult brothers who had been sexually abused in childhood. Their stories are co-constructed through their journals which include poetry and prose and the resulting narrative is a powerful portrait of their stories which includes the story of the counsellor. There is an emerging sense in these projects of the “transformative power of language” (Harthill et al 2004; 111) within the individual. Reflexivity and the poetic space seem to be part of each other for both appear to aid transformation. The idea that language and poetry in particular may have transformative properties is confirmed by Flint:

“I think that the discovery of poetic space and its expression through the imaginistic, metaphoric language of art or poetry, alteration occurs: that which was solid or frozen gain the possibility of movement and fluidity. As change is made in the inner

metaphoric level so it will become manifest on the outer, both in the creation of the work and in the feeling that surrounds it” (2004; 144).

It is this sense of movement, of emotional shifts from a frozen/stuck position that I hoped would be discovered in the narratives of the participants. There was also hope that as change became manifest (in the body) that this physical embodiment of their words would add to the discovery of meaning. Just as the isolation of Clare in the above opening of his poem ‘I Am’ may be embodied in the writer, it may also be embodied in the reader as such loneliness is felt in the body of the reader. Hunt and Sampson make the link between the word and the body clear:

“Poetry shifts the meaning and experience of texts *further into* the physical world: it’s because we’re sensory creatures that we can experience and enjoy sound. Writing which *embraces* the aural elements of language moves outward from the merely instrumental to celebratory engagement in both writers’ and readers’ embodiment” (2006; 148).

Although the participants were not poets it was expected that they would use their emotional feelings when writing their journals. In this way their feelings might be expressed in their words and move out into the physical world where they could be experienced and embodied in me as the reader.

Poetry is also used to write up some of the findings, mixing my words with words from the participants’ journals and feedback. Few researchers seem to have used poetry in this way. However, writing on postmodern literary poetics of experience, Biley (2004) discusses the ‘Beat

Generation' of the 1940s to the late 1950s. He looks at the innovations in literature with particular reference to William Burroughs. He explains how Burroughs used 'cut up' or 'fold in' techniques taking text from random sources like newspapers or novels. Burroughs literally cut out text with scissors and then rearranged these cut up morsels of writing to form a new text. Biley used this type of cutting up as a new method of inquiry by taking client scenarios and re-arranging the text while seeing if new relations/patterns emerged within the client's story. He states:

“By using such a process, Burroughs achieves a disturbing and anxiety-provoking level of unease and vague feelings of familiarity” (142).

By using this process in his work Biley discovered that he experienced the emergent text as opposed to understanding it as if bringing into consciousness the unease and familiarity that was hidden in his original client scenarios. He sees the resulting text as confronting the researcher at a “subconscious” (143) level as opposed to a conscious level which intends to create a snapshot of the lived experience of the client. This fascinating concept immediately made me think of what I do as a poet. In a sense I cut up text even before I put pen to paper for I reduce thoughts into a minimum amount of words. It seems possible that poets when writing cut up the conscious in order to find a glimpse of the unconscious hidden in their writing. Writing and reading poetry is perhaps more about experiencing than understanding. Asking participants to write journals in a poetic style seems to have released this cutting up process into their writing and certainly I used a similar process in the findings poems. Even though I did not literally cut the work up with

scissors I did choose which words to use and which to leave out, and added some of my own, to attempt to present the reader with a glimpse of the lived/embodied experience of the participants.

Riessman (1993) uses a transcription method of writing up oral narratives which leaves out all the interviewers' conversation and forms the remaining participant's narrative into stanzas. This creates verses which look and feel like poetry and highlight meaning which enhances her analysis. The process:

“involves reducing a long response, parsing it according to a set of rules into lines, stanzas, and parts examining its organizing metaphors, and creating a schematic display to the structure” (1993; 50)

Riessman felt that working in this way enabled her to come closer to participants' subjective experience because it helped her to experience the tensions in the composition of the narrative. Putting the oral narrative into written stanzas seemed to enable such opposition to be experienced. In turn Riessman was discovering that opposition between the real life of the participants and their dreams enabled her to encounter something of their lived experience. The way the participants were asked to write in the current study, provides weekly stanzas of their experience of counselling which are then analysed. Only after the analysis of the journals is complete do I write the findings poems. In this way I attempt to bring together the unconscious of the participants with my conscious and unconscious responses. The participants' unconscious dilemmas are discovered during the analysis by analyzing metaphors and searching for the concepts of containment, freedom and opposition. The findings poems intend to provide the

reader with a glimpse of the lived experience of the participants as well as showing their transformation during the time of the journal keeping.

Much of my processing as a client in counselling was done outside the therapeutic hour, by writing poetry. Lott (1999) also discovered that her processing was mostly done outside of her counselling and this was confirmed in her research with other clients. Perhaps by asking participants to write about their counselling sessions I am tapping into and encouraging this processing. Certainly the internal space for writing in a poetic style seems to encourage a potential space for meeting with split off or defended aspects of internal selves. By writing only a phrase or a few words on each line, as opposed to full sentences the participants' usual writing processes appear to change. As Maltby (2003; 64) states: "The use of lines means the usual logic of sentences can be subtly disrupted." It seems possible that the space created by the loss of normal logical thought created a potential space where: "The writing itself becomes a container, a 'psychological holding station' as it were." (Lago 2004; 100). This space seemed to enable the participants to display unconscious messages in their writing. However Gee (1991; 9) suggests that "all speech is produced in terms of lines and stanzas" and he notes that opposition in narrative helps the narrator make sense of their history. Perhaps by asking the participants to write in short phrases they were enabled to access an unexpectedly natural form of expression. Their use of metaphor and symbols seems to enable their unconscious to provide hidden messages in their narratives which I attempt to discover during the analysis. According to Ricoeur (1978; 7) metaphor has the power "to redescribe reality" for he suggests that the metaphorical is what it describes although it is not what it describes. In other words the metaphor helps us describe the indescribable. My use of metaphor in writing poetry provided insights into

myself that I may not have realized at the time of writing but often discovered when returning to a poem at a later time, for I do not always know what a “poem contains” (Satyamurti 2003; 44). The writing contains my thoughts and feelings at a conscious and *unconscious* level of awareness so when I return to the writing at a later time I discover new or previously unknown aspects of myself. In this way:

“What in conscious thought can only be conceived with difficulty may, at an unconscious level be recognized through a form of felt experience. This constitutes a type of knowing that may achieve realization through an act of inspiration that can both unfold and enfold it in a particular created form” (Maltby 2003; 68-69).

Such a poetic stance that unfolds and enfolds enables the unconscious to be accessed through felt experience. It seems this was achieved by the participants through the way they were asked to write their journals. It is the intention of the research to explore the poetic stance and discover how it may be used in research and counselling.

2.4.. The search for voice

The search for voice, an integrated combined voice that enabled all aspects or previously split off selves to be heard seems to be a key aspect of my experiences and the research. To find such a voice I experienced strong feelings of opposition between containment and freedom as well as discovering the internal space in which to do the work. Writing poetry, alongside personal counselling provided a solitary meeting place where any part of me could be heard. When exploring the idea of meeting in the literature Winnicott (1965) emphasises the need for the capacity to be alone, which he suggests can only come into being with the experience of being

alone in the presence of another. This appears to be his way of describing the counselling relationship where the counsellor enables the client to meet split off parts of themselves in the safety of the therapeutic relationship. Buber expresses this: “The primary word I-Thou establishes the world of relation” (1937; 18). Or in Roger’s words the meeting is between two subjects, two people:

“It is the opposite pole from seeing the client or myself, as an object. It is the height of personal subjectivity” (1961; 202).

In this subjective way of being the unconscious desire of the client to merge (or not be alone) enables the counsellor through containment, to offer the freedom that is longed for (Meltzer 1988). Within this contained freedom the client comes into being, into meeting her/his counsellor and his/her own selves (Speedy 2004). Such meeting is complex, happening between, within and across each of the three dimensions (Kogan 1988; Quinodoz 1992; Rosenbaum and Garfield 1996) of containment. Winnicott (1965; 1971) stresses the need for holding, handling the baby (client) satisfactorily so that the baby can use the holding object, and feel it as if it is part of itself, created by itself. He uses this model to outline the client’s need to merge with the therapist so that s/he is able to relate without the need for projective elements, until separation (Hobson 1985) can be tolerated, or until the client can hear his/her own voice. Lanman (1998) distinguishes between Winnicott’s holding and Bion’s containment by laying them on a continuum, with containment being further along it than holding. In Bion’s model, when containment unfolds, rather than just holding, the therapist actively transforms (Bion 1983) the client’s projections. His suggestion is that there is a flow of movement, an active unconscious

meeting, an enfolding (Godwin 1991), which goes beyond supportive holding or even empathic listening. But as Harris Williams (2005) suggests this flow of movement is also within the client between internal objects or selves. Mahler, Pine and Bergman (1975) describe what they term as the hatching process. According to them the observed baby moves (hatches) into a new degree of wakefulness with a new look of alertness which is seen as the first movement out of the normal merged phase. The counsellor's ability to tolerate the merged state of the client both contains the client and enables the hatching process to be reactivated. Only as this process goes on developing, within and through the transference (Izakoff 1993) can the client's object relationships (Brown and Pedder 1979; Grotstein 1982) move towards real meeting and relating with others, and with him/herself. This movement in Bion and Mahler, Pine and Bergman's work is seen as happening between the counsellor and client. But movement within the client between internal objects must also be taking place and it is this emotional movement that enables the client to encounter different selves. But in my experience these meetings, these conversations/movements between selves are also experienced when writing poetry. The writer sits alone and through the writing meets/discovers the presence of other selves. So although as Winnicott suggests the writer may have needed to be alone with an external other before discovering the capacity to be alone, it seems possible that the writer grows and transforms by continuing to use this capacity alongside writing. In such a place (alone yet not alone) the participants seemed to find their voices, their selves as they wrote for this study. They find their own ways of merging, separating, 'hatching' and meeting split off selves as they narrate their counselling journey.

The search for voice then is seen as a search for selves, for what may be experienced as unknown

or new selves that have been hidden by past events, or voices that have never discovered how to speak and be heard. This agrees with Foucault's notion (1984) of the complex and plural structure that makes up the internal world. If part of the client is unable to speak, to voice their feelings then the confidence to speak cannot come into being for that part if split off, is inaccessible. Finding these selves through writing enables them to exist to have a voice and to be integrated into a more whole sense of self as if Beauty and the Beast begin to discover each other and unite.

2.5. Conclusion.

The complexity/plurality discovered in the client's internal world seems to be reflected in the complexity of the concepts of containment, freedom and polarity. Fluidity and movement appear to be accepted aspects of the inner world. There also appears to be accepted movement within the three dimensions of containment and in the natural opposition felt within freedom. There is movement suggested by polarity in the energy that seems to be created by the tension of opposition which both attracts and repels. So much movement adds to the complexity of writing as if the nature of the research gets into my thoughts where confusion (or the Beast) threatens to halt progress. But perhaps the strength of the complexities is that they also create the richness or colour (or the Beauty) of the work. The difficulty of holding such richness is perhaps managed in the narrative methodology that was eventually discovered by continually listening to my own voice and the voice of the research.

This research came into being due to a new found capacity to listen to my voice. The voices of theory are listened to alongside my voice to discover how the voice of the client may influence

what is already understood about the process of counselling. Taking account of all these voices required a method that could layer them into a coherent whole, a narrative in one voice that holds other voices within it. Such a narrative if it is to be reliant on one voice almost demands that I remain open to whatever presents itself during the process of the inquiry. Different perspectives need to be held alongside each other in order to allow the voices of the participants, the voices of the literature and even the voices of the concepts to be heard. It is remaining open that enabled the methodology to go through its own process of change as I learnt to let go of the bricolage that emerged from the original heuristic stance and heard the “collaborative” (McCabe 1991; x) narrative that was forming within the process of the work.

An understanding of the poetic stance that emerges through the study both changes and adds to the work as well as highlighting the similarities between poetry and counselling. The method of collecting data encourages the use of metaphors and symbols which demonstrates the fit between poetry and counselling as well as giving the participants a memoir of their counselling journey. Although initially I had an intuitive knowledge of the closeness of the relationship there was no sense of the impact that poetry would eventually have on the whole of the work. Here again there are so many links. For example listening to my voice, remaining open, being aware of the theory of splitting, and discovering opposition in many aspects of the work may all be seen as linking poetry and counselling (particularly in chapters 7 and 9). Poetry and counselling also meet in the methodology as the method of data collection and the findings poems reflect the processes of the counselling journey.

A multitude of polarities seem to have emerged, whilst continuing to emerge. Containment

holds them stoically in place, while freedom releases them out into the creative chaos of the mind's infinity. As a faint impression of order begins to be felt the embracing arc of a rainbow tentatively intrudes across my thoughts. This enfolding phenomenon only comes into being when natural polarities meet. The chaotic wonder of our world captures the scientist and the poet between the poles of storm and sunshine, as science and art meet (Cummings and Cummings 2000). The symbolic rainbow lets sight wipe out the disorder of its conception within the storm and opposing sunlight as polarities give birth to beauty which becomes the focus of the moment. Polarities fill life, yet become only half seen in the busy routine of living or by the evasion of their reality with false acceptance (Wisdom 1953). The containment-freedom polarity may be just one of many polarities, and perhaps a part of every other. As a personal construct (Bannister 1970; Rosen and Keuhlwein 1996), which has come into focus through lived experience the containment-freedom polarity may offer counsellors a way to understand the client's perspectives (Rennie 2001) of his/her personal experience of counselling.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY: A CREATIVE JOURNEY

As the true method of Knowledge is Experiment, the true faculty of knowing must be the faculty which experiences. (Blake 1952:427)

3.1 Introduction

This chapter will follow the development of the research as it evolved from all the voices that created it. The journal data provided by the participants and subsequent meetings with them, created conversations between us. These conversations encouraged the original heuristic bricolage to transform into a rich (Patton 1997) narrative. Alongside these dialogues were my internal conversations (Etherington 2001) created by the research and by the impact of personal life experiences:

“In this way, therapeutic (and other) conversations do not only describe experience; they generate experience and are both unique in the moment and limited by cultural assumptions and possibilities of their contexts” (Speedy 2000; 629).

Such experiences generated by conversations between me and the pilot study participants altered the possibilities of the study. Such unique experiences led to changes in the analysis and findings of the study while adding to the layered narrative that continued to emerge. From the recruitment of the participants through to the analysis and findings the ongoing conversations have been forming a poetic narrative.

3.2 Recruitment of participants

Participants for the pilot and main study were found by contacting students (who were also counselling clients) undertaking foundation/certificate/diploma counselling courses at training establishments (appendix 1). Finding participants via this route rather than through counsellors was felt to be less disruptive of the counselling relationship. Another reason for accessing participants via training establishments was due to the difficulty of finding clients via other routes. It was also felt that individuals who were in the early stages of counselling training might have the commitment and interest needed to take part in the study. I did contact local counselling agencies but they were unsure about research involving clients and were not willing to let me leave information at their centres.

The decision to explore containment and freedom through the experiences of counselling clients may have been influenced by the isolation I felt following trauma. Although I explored my own experiences through writing poetry there was no desire to use an autobiographical account. An autoethnographic study would have been all about my experience and such introspection did not “feel an appropriate substitute for data collection” (Delamont 2007; 2) which was what interested me. It also seems that I may have been a far too vulnerable observer (Behar 1996) to cope with the introspection that would have been needed for it may have added to my sense of isolation. Having spent so much time learning within my own internal world there was a strong desire to learn from others.

The students’ choice to take part in the study was personal in that there was no connection to training or counselling. It felt important that the participants valued their own autonomy

(Kockelmans 1981; Christians 2005) and used their own awareness about themselves. With the co-operation and permission of local training establishments a short presentation (appendix 4.) was given by me as the researcher to interested student groups who were enrolled on counselling training courses. Information advertising the presentations (appendix 2) was sent to training establishments so that students could choose whether or not to attend. Large numbers attended compared to those who chose to take part. The presentations were given in lunch breaks so as to remain as separate as possible from training. The aim of the presentations was to introduce students to the concept of research, the study itself, any ethical considerations and the participants' roles, including my role as the researcher. The students were assured that those who chose to take part could withdraw from the study at any time without any detriment to themselves. They were also given the letter of agreement (appendix 5) to take part in the study which was signed at the next meeting. Initially they were also assured of their anonymity in that the journals would be numbered and returned to me by post. They were informed that the study was researching into aspects of the experience of being a client in a counselling relationship. However the theme of containment, freedom and polarity as constructs in the client's internal world was not named in the pilot study. In the following main study the theme of the research was disclosed so that some comparison could be made between the two sets of data. The participants in the pilot study were informed that they would be told the theme after the collection of the completed data (appendix 7). This was in order to see if the concepts emerged spontaneously without prior direction, or whether they did not emerge. Otherwise the basic introduction and information given was the same in both studies. Those interested in taking part in the main study, attended three presentations on the theme to be certain that they acquired some understanding of it (appendix 10). After the presentations students were given details of how to

contact me if they were interested in taking part. They also had the opportunity to give me their details at the time if they wished to take part.

3.3 Data collection

Although I had hoped for about ten participants just six students chose to take part in the pilot study. One student never managed to begin her journal and after meeting with me to discuss how she was feeling about this she chose to withdraw, so just five students took part. All those who chose to take part were women. By the time I was ready to implement the main study I was aware that another five participants would provide ample material as the analysis of the pilot study had enabled me to see that there was a huge amount of rich data (Patton 1997) in each journal. Initially eight students were interested in the main study but by the time the journal keeping commenced three had withdrawn. The reasons given for not continuing were concern over the time that might be needed as they felt it might interfere with their studies. Again all the participants were women and one of these was a participant from the pilot study who asked if she could continue with the research. She found it was extremely useful in understanding herself and processing her counselling. One participant was introduced to me through a counselling colleague. They were acquaintances who knew each other in a social setting. The acquaintance was briefly informed that a colleague was looking for people to take part in research when they were discussing the counselling she was having. Later she was given my phone number (with my permission) and contacted me about taking part in the research. I did not know her or even know of her until this time. We met at her home and I presented her with the same introduction as the other participants. She was very excited about taking part as counselling was a new and difficult experience for her and she felt that taking part would help her learn more about it. It felt good to have one participant who had no other connection to counselling other than that she was a client.

At the initial meeting for those who had chosen to take part an outline of the procedure for the journal keeping that would form the raw data was explained (appendix 4). The data collection would last for fifteen weeks/counselling sessions in the pilot study, and up to forty in the main study, or when the participant felt comfortable ending the process, or they came to the end of their counselling. After each weekly counselling session an entry in the journal, reflecting on feelings from the session would be the initial contribution.

Time was taken to look more precisely at the requirements of the journal keeping. They were asked to write just one phrase, or a few words to make up each line of the journal entries. The aim of this way of writing was to condense (Maltby 2003) participants' feelings after counselling sessions, so that the essence, or what was felt to be the most important memory of their sensations and images, was put into words, providing a sense of the lived experience (Ellis 1995; White and Epston 1990) of the client in therapy. It was suggested to participants that by condensing sensations and images in this way the process of writing would not take too much time. It was made clear that long factual accounts of the counselling sessions were not required. However the participants could choose how much to write in that there was no limit to the number of lines they could write for each journal entry. These directions on the format for each entry were also typed in the front of each journal (appendix 6) so that the participants always had this information to hand. Occasional meetings and/or telephone calls kept me in touch with the participants over the period of the journal keeping so that they did not feel too isolated to maintain interest in the study. During these phone calls the participants were asked how they were coping with keeping the journal. These phone calls were also made because of my awareness that such "therapeutic writing" might cause an "increase in low mood" (Wright 2005;

114). By keeping contact with the participants I was able to ascertain how they felt about the process of keeping the journal and if it was affecting their mood. If anyone had been adversely affected by keeping the journal I would have met with them and if necessary suggest they bring the writing to an end. They appreciated the contact and talking about how they were finding the journal keeping. Their enthusiasm seemed to reflect their commitment to their participation in the work, and also appeared to reflect that the journals became personal records. The journals may have been started to please me as the researcher, but as the weeks progressed they became an intimate aspect of the participants' lives. They found themselves wanting to write because they seemed to be discovering new information about themselves.

Although writing as a way of collecting data was decided by my history of using writing I don't think any other method of collecting data would have provided the same content or context. Writing gave the participants their own space to reflexively look back on their counselling sessions staying with their own thoughts, even developing their own voices. In this sense participants used their own narratives to "reveal and revise" (Holman Jones 2005; 767) their own internal worlds. Their texts were not interrupted by an interviewer's questions, but only their own internal questions. This feels what is intrinsic to the work that they wrote their felt experience of counselling sessions in a condensed form that highlights the uniqueness of their experiences.

Meetings were held at the end of the journal keeping in the pilot study, to inform the participants of the theme, and to enable feedback on the process of the journal keeping (appendix 7). There was interest in the outcome of the study and this led to the pilot study participants continuing

with the research process. They were interested in the analysis of their journals and after discussions with me they agreed to provide feedback on my analysis of them. After the analysis was completed individual meetings were arranged with the participants at their homes. It was felt that this provided a familiar and secure environment for the participants to read personal accounts about themselves. They were first given the 'Introduction to the Theoretical Constructs' (appendix 10) paper to read to give them an understanding of how the analysis and categories had been arrived at. After this they read the analysis of their journal which was written alongside the copy of their original journal. While they were reading these papers I took notes on any comments they made, asking them to repeat what they had said if I was unsure of their comments. When they had finished reading I again checked out whether I had written their comments correctly. This aspect of the research was crucial to the organic growth of the project in that it became a collaboration (Chase 2005) as the participants influenced the process of the research by having their voices heard.

The main study journals and analysis were much larger than the pilot study so it did not feel possible for me to be with the participants while they read them and gave feedback. They needed to take much more time for this process so after contacting them by phone I posted the analysis to them and arranged to meet them when they felt ready. They were also sent questions for feedback which they could answer on a separate sheet or write on the script (appendix 14). I felt quite anxious about letting them do this alone because of the personal nature of the work but at the same time felt confident enough because of the positive responses I had received from the pilot study. Also the relationships that I had built up with the participants over more than two years led me to believe that they would manage the task. The meeting afterwards gave the

opportunity to discuss the process of their part in the research, to thank them for their contribution and to say goodbye. The findings poems that were written later were sent by post or email and in this way they were able to give their responses to them.

3.4 Autonomy of the participants

I did not know the identities of the participants' counsellors and the counsellors only knew of the clients' involvement in the study if the participants told them. This study is about the client's subjective journey and if the participants were told to inform their counsellors their autonomy to make this decision for themselves would have been denied. None of the participants were overly critical of their counsellors but simply told the story of their counselling journey. Whether they told, or did not tell their counsellor about the journal keeping, they all found that writing the journals added to their experience of counselling. As the researcher, I was very aware of wanting to keep the equality of my relationship with all the participants in that I did not want to make personal choices for them. Stewart (2004) in an introduction to working with the arts in community settings suggests that the quality of relationships is part of reflective practice. She suggests that such a relationship needs to be one that:

“respects autonomy and maintains professional distance, but at the same time fosters a unique kind of intimacy and trust.” (122)

The trust I had for the participants to make their own choice felt crucial to maintaining such unique relationships. Although the counselling relationship intends to be equal between two individuals, there is no doubt that from the perspective of the client, it is often experienced as

being unequal in that the counsellor may be experienced as powerful (Lott 1999). By making their own choice as to whether or not to tell their counsellors about the study the participants maintained a sense of their own power to be competent clients and competent participants. It could be argued that by not informing counsellors of the participants' role in the study that the counselling relationship may be undermined. But if the participants had been told to inform their counsellors this would have undermined their autonomy. Perhaps it is important to recognise that both researchers and counsellors may often find themselves at odds in the dialogue between differing research methodological, and counselling assumptions (Reason and Rowan 1981). It seemed the autonomy of the clients was what the counselling centres I contacted did not understand. They felt counsellors should be informed by me if a client of theirs was taking part and I felt ethically unable to do this as it would have undermined the client's autonomy.

All the participants valued their autonomy (Reason and Rowan 1981), and felt that it was their right to decide whether or not to tell their counsellors about the research. This was made clear in a discussion at the initial meeting. According to the participants who chose not to tell, they felt that the keeping of the journal was intimately their own. They were writing about their experience, in their time, outside of the counselling, and in that sense they felt it had nothing to do with the counsellor. This privacy felt important to them. They separated their personal experience of therapy from the person of the counsellor. Yet at the same time they all valued their counselling and saw it as a crucial aspect of change in their lives. Those participants who chose to tell their counsellors felt it important to disclose what they were doing. They said that the sharing of the information about what they were doing took only a few moments and according to the participants, was not referred to again.

3.5 Giving up anonymity

Initially the participants in the pilot study had been offered anonymity in that I would not know who had written each journal. It was intended that the journals, upon completion, would be returned to me by post. However four of the participants in the pilot study insisted on handing their journals to me during the meeting which took place after the journals were completed. They had been asked to post them prior to the meeting but had chosen not to. Although I asked them not to hand me the journals but to post them in the envelopes provided after our meeting they made it clear they did not wish to do this. It seemed they wanted me, as the researcher to know that they were the authors of their work, rather than remaining unknown to me. The fifth participant put a note in with her returned journal which she signed, thus she also chose to give up her anonymity. It feels important to emphasize that the participants gave up their anonymity. It was their choice and a very powerful way of expressing their autonomy (Elden 1981) which I felt ethically obliged to incorporate. This enabled a more equal relationship to be maintained as we became collaborators in trying to understand their stories (Polkinghorne 1988). Apart from wanting me to know that they were the authors of their work it seems there may have been an unconscious desire to continue with the study. It would have been a pitfall to ignore them for it enabled what was hidden in the initial design to emerge. Wanting to continue with their involvement in the work seemed to demonstrate their connection and commitment to the research and learning about themselves. As the work of the analysis progressed, I became aware that the participants' response to the analysis would confirm or deny the understanding/meanings that emerged from each analysis, and possibly verify some of the findings. This part of the design was then written into the main study contract (appendix 5).

3.6 Investigating new horizons: the analysis

Initially I read the journals in their original form. They were then typed out to make hard copies which were done as accurately as possible copying both lower and upper case lettering and any other marks or punctuation on the scripts. In this way the printed copies were kept as close to the originals as possible (appendix 13). The journals were then read several times while I dwelt on the content and made notes so that any initial impressions and responses were recorded. I did this until I felt that an overall understanding or feeling about each one had been achieved.

It was reading that enabled me to step into the shoes (Ellis and Flaherty 1992) of the participants and to almost read behind the words to find what was hidden within them. Reading in this way is perhaps more like reading or writing poetry in that it is essentially daydreaming (Bachelard 1994). This imaginative type of analysis perhaps allowed entry into unconscious messages hidden in the text. It illustrates the similar characteristics between poetry and counselling where transference for example may be understood as a special type of metaphor (Holmes 1985) rather than only a theoretical concept. The symbolism of words was intuitively grasped as they were investigated as holders of emotional meaning (Meltzer 1997).

The pilot study analysis was simple in comparison to the main study; simple in the sense that I was more focussed on searching for the concepts of containment and freedom than analysing the text. By looking for words that suggested, either emotional stillness, tension or movement, different aspects of containment and freedom were discovered and this led to the emergence of the theoretical construct. Lines in the journal were highlighted in different colours in order to differentiate between the emerging categories (appendix 13). Similarities between words used in

the journals helped define the categories as well as contributing to the emerging relationship between the categories which is looked at in detail in chapter 4. As with discourse analysis the intention is to filter out the categories with the most “explanatory potential” (Clarkson 1998; 131) about the opposition between containment and freedom.

Following on from my initial reading and note taking in the main study I began a more formal analysis attempting to make sense of the images created in each journal. My experience had grown through the process of analysing the pilot study and I was aware that these much longer narratives might need to be analysed differently. I was more certain of the existence of the concepts because they had been present in the pilot narratives. I took into account the way a journal was written. The visual impact of one completely written in higher case lettering had a very different impact from those less formally written. I looked for recurring themes in each narrative and changes in the emotions that were aroused within me. I was also more aware of the impact of metaphors as these had proved revealing in the pilot study. This process felt like decoding, or discovering what was hidden within the words. My emotional responses were an integral part of the process for it was these embodied responses that aided the overall understanding of each narrative. “Focusing closer and closer” (Bolton 2005; 7) into the internal worlds of the participants led to an often surprising accuracy of understanding. This reflexive way of analysing enabled a discovery of different selves (Speedy 2005) or voices within each narrative. Such conversations within each narrative created conversations within me and seem to fit: “within poststructuralist understandings about the fluidity and multiplicity of selves and identities.” (Speedy 2004; 26). As much as possible everything that could be taken into account was used in the analysis. Marks and drawings on the text were taken into consideration for it felt

that nothing was “too trivial or insignificant” (Bolton 2005; 7) in that whatever was on the page may have significance to the writer. Only after the initial analysis of each narrative was complete did I begin linking this to the constructs that emerged from the pilot study. With a good understanding of the texts I felt more equipped to begin this process. When it felt difficult to establish which category was the most appropriate for a journal entry I discovered by staying with the process that a relationship is formed. It is a relationship between the journal entry, the interpretation and the construct category. By subjectively entering into the analysis a feeling sense is gained of the client’s internal state at the time of writing. This is weighed alongside previous entries and the whole context of the journal narrative. There is then a need to objectively look at all the information in order to decide on the appropriate category.

The main study produced an image of each participant’s journal in the form of a finding poem. Another tragedy, a crisis created by loss in my own life impacted on the study which came to an abrupt halt. Months later when I attempted to return to the work I found myself unable to write up the findings of the analysis. Yet this crisis became:

“a turning point, a moment when conflict must be dealt with even if we cannot resolve it. It is a tension that opens a space of indeterminacy, threatens to destabilize social structures, and enables a creative uncertainty” (Holman Jones 2005; 766).

A new dialogue with myself was created by this further grief which brought a fresh challenge as I struggled to find a way back to the research, for I felt the study would be lost. Through the tension of not knowing how to return to the study, a new creative space emerged within me. This

confirmed the understanding that there had always been an autoethnographic element to the research. It grew out of personal process and trauma and in this sense had always been connected to death. Now death was in the foreground again and a supervisor enabled me to see that I had always been writing about death. The real death of others, and the many deaths of different selves (Etherington 2004) both within me and within the lives of the participants. This form of autoethnography is:

“research, writing, and method that connect the autobiographical and personal to the cultural and social. This form usually features concrete action, emotion, embodiment, self-consciousness, and introspection” (Ellis 2004; xix).

Without making connections between my life experiences and the research to the participants and their narratives the action of writing the findings as poetry (Holman Jones 2005; Etherington 2004) may not have been realized.

3.7 Poetry as findings

Poems written by reflecting on another’s work are known as ‘ekphrastic works’, which are meditations on others’ creative acts (Scott 1994; xi). According to Holman Jones:

“ekphrasis describes our attempts to translate and transmute an experience to text and text to experience” (2005; 769).

In this way my meditative writing up the findings as poetry attempts to give the reader or listener

an experience of the participants' lived experience. The poems are written using many of the participants' words and phrases and intend to honour them and their contribution. They are also written to evoke feeling in the reader, to give an experience which may be that of the participant, of me as the researcher and even an experience of you the reader depending on how you relate to the work. Richardson states:

“Poems are consciously constructed to evoke emotion through literary devices such as sound patterns, rhythms, imagery, and page layout, Even if the prosodic mind resists, the body responds to poetry. It is *felt*. To paraphrase Robert Frost, poetry is the shortest emotional path between two people” (2003; 189).

It is hoped that this felt embodiment (Meldrum 1993; Etherington 2004) of the themes of the research and the experience of the participants will be experienced in the reader as opposed to being only understood. I have come to realize the impossibility of proving something that I believe to be true, like the concepts in this study. Truth is limiting because what else would there be to discover if the truth is found. But perhaps it is possible to feel the embodied concepts, through the poems, and open doors to how such embodied knowledge can be represented? In covering a wide range of research projects Bondi et al (2002) state:

“All assume that knowledge is embodied; that is, that knowledge is produced by corporealized subjectivities. All assume that those bodily subjects are positioned in extraordinarily complex articulations of identity, including gender. And all assume that those identities are relational; we are always located in relation to others, not

least to those we research” (253).

Perhaps the knowledge that was originally embodied in the participants’ narratives may be transferred through our relationships into the findings poems where together their knowledge and mine unite in the writing.

Understanding how writing poetry can make aspects of the unknown accessible and knowable through metaphor and symbols (Waddell 2003) aids the journey towards understanding, and finding meaning in the data. For example, the processes outside the awareness of clients, may limit the value of research into the client’s experience (McLeod 2001b). However the process of keeping a journal, over lengthy periods of time, which uses the reflexivity of both participants and researcher, may make possible the apprehension of such unknown processes. The subjective, reflexive, and poetic stance, used in analysing the data allows me to make a personal relationship (Etherington 2001) to the research. This personal connection is felt physically in my body as I embody feelings that erupt from within the data and translate these into poetry. Neuroscience informs us that “*Every emotion is a biological dynamic*” (Maturana and Varela 1987; 247). Because feeling is based in the body, there is a physical reaction to the data, followed by the action of writing. In this way, the hidden or unknown processes of the participants are revealed to, or in, me as the researcher. There are many overlapping areas of interest between counselling processes and the world of poetry for both attach “unusual attention to the nuances of language” (Canham and Satyamurti 2003; 2). It is the engagement with internal and external experience (Waddell 2003), and the meeting ground between them, which is relevant to this research process.

The lived experience of each participant's narrative (White and Epston 1990) enables the voices of each participant to be heard. Such narrative data is a reminder that it is each participant, each client who is the expert (Rogers 1951) on themselves and this enables me to suspend any ideas of expertise (Etherington 2001). Narrative research provides a way of collecting and analysing people's stories (Etherington 2002; Chase 2005). The stories the participants bring to this study are of their experience of counselling, which not only cover the timespan of the journals but incorporate aspects of their history, their lives before being a client. According to Foucault (1970), because man has:

“a language, he can constitute a whole symbolic universe for himself, within which he has a relation to his past, to things, to other men and on the basis of which he is able equally to build something like a body of knowledge (in particular that knowledge of himself, of which the human sciences outline one of the possible forms.” (383)

In this way it was hoped that the language of the journal data would provide a view of the culture and relationships in which each story is embedded (Polkinghorne 1985) and may enable common themes to emerge among the journals. Analysis can then be based on notions that arise from the data, and notions taken from previously known theory (Etherington 2002). With all these elements of language, story, embodiment, metaphor and literary devices combined the findings poems attempt to create a sense of the lived experience of each participant.

3.8 A narrative journey: Methodology

The original heuristic (Moustakas 1990) orientation of this journey into uncharted territory grew

from self presenting states (Hess 1988) and enabled ethical approval to be gained from the University of Hertfordshire. In the latter stages narrative inquiry provided a growing understanding of the auto/ethnographic processes (Holman Jones 2005) that were intrinsic from the start of the research process. I was discovering that narrative inquiry offers “a rich but diffuse tradition” (Chase 2005; 651) as life experiences, the data, the work, and the participants interacted with, and upon me as researcher (Strauss 1987). Personal experience created this research and such individual experience became an intrinsic aspect of the methodology, for it incorporates my experience and that of the participants. Combining aspects of personal learning to create a research project that would add to knowledge in the world of counselling created a dilemma in finding a methodology that fitted the forming design. The heuristic voice as implemented by Moustakas (1990) appeared to suit the work because it is founded on personal experience:

“Qualitative depictions that are at the heart and depths of a person’s experience - depictions of situations, events, conversations, relationships, feelings, thoughts, values and beliefs” (1990; 38).

This also suits the journal data which provides an in-depth depiction of the counselling journey from the experience of the participants. However unlike Moustakas’ work which concentrates on the emergence of essence, this study is also a search for the oppositional forces felt to be inherent in personal growth. It written in my voice yet includes the voices of the participants. To hold together the participants’ and my subjectivity as well as the related themes of the concepts it seems that a firm yet pliable framework is needed. Such opposition in qualitative research is

described by Elliot and Williams (2001) as “the ultimate paradox” (183) for they suggest that research must follow rules in a field where no rules exist. It is no wonder that I struggled to find a methodology and a voice that fitted a design that unfolded (Patton 1997) as the study progressed.

To cope with the various emerging aspects I attempted to become an heuristic bricoleur (Etherington 2001; McLeod 2001; West 2001) as the forming design was pieced together, but without realizing it I was actually becoming a narrator. Elliott and Williams (2001) make it clear that some qualitative research “cannot be tightly planned in advance” (181) as such work unfolds. But perhaps such work also has its design enfolded within it and remaining open to the research process allows it to emerge. Yet even as a narrative inquiry this study is not straightforward. Ely et al (1991) point out that the qualitative researcher has to be flexible enough to adapt to change which makes sense of the changes brought about in this study because of the participants giving up their anonymity. Also I made changes because of personal life experiences that impacted on the work. The participants also enabled me to learn from them as I did when unravelling the meanings hidden in the metaphors they used:

“Narrative enquirers are receptive to learning from the participants as the expert on themselves, paying close attention to the power dynamics in the relationship, and attempting to suspend notions of expertise” (Etherington 2001; 121).

Having the participants respond to my analysis of their journals needed me to remain aware that they were the experts on themselves. These narratives between myself and the participants, the

narratives formed within me from these sources, with the inclusion of my own narratives influenced my understanding as researcher. Gee (1991) points out that “the meaning of story is rooted in history and the social group, not just in the personal mind” (8). I was learning that the story of this research is rooted in all our histories, not just in my mind, but in the participants’ histories and in the larger history of counselling. The process of creating a narrative by listening carefully to participants influenced my ability to begin to make sense (Josselson and Lieblich 1995) of the story of this narrative and the emergent findings. This collaborative (Angrosino 2005) life of the study enabled the growth of myself as researcher, and the growth of participants as their experiences were valued and used. This co-operative way of working felt more real to me in that my relationship with the participants was already one of ethical care (Olesen 2005) considering the personal stories which they shared. According to Riessman (2001) storytelling is collaborative and “a relational activity that gathers others to listen and empathize” (Riessman 2001; 679). Listening to the participant’s stories as I read their journals drew out empathy from me which influenced my relationship with them in that I embodied their emotions and valued not just their contribution but them as individuals.

The sense of creating a narrative in one voice, which held so many other voices only began to emerge as I came towards the end of the work and could look back at the journey to see and understand the narrative process. The benefit of initially creating a bricolage is that it increased my understanding of research and also demonstrated that qualitative methodologies overlap and evolve from experience. As Chase (2005) suggests narrative inquiry may “be characterized as an amalgam of interdisciplinary analytic lenses, diverse disciplinary approaches and both traditional and innovative methods” (651). The diversity within this research is due in part to beginning

with an heuristic bricolage and the discipline of reflexivity that constantly encouraged me to re-experience and re-think the developing processes. Through this amalgamated process the work has come to have an intertwined mix of artistic and scientific expression giving it an evolving form which seems to be acquired through interaction with the data (Strauss 1987). Reflexivity (Alvesson and Skoldberg 2000; Etherington 2004) was new to me in the sense that it was discovered as an aspect of research through reading. But it was not new in the sense that it was a tool I used regularly as a counsellor and poet. The reflexive aspect of this study is about my self awareness and the participants' self awareness. But it is also more than self awareness in that such reflexivity:

“creates a dynamic process of interaction within and between our selves and our participants, and the data that inform decisions, actions and interpretations at all stages of research” (Etherington 2004; 36).

This dynamic interaction was felt when the pilot study participants chose to give up their anonymity and continue with the study. Their actions influenced decisions about the progress of the research. Reflexivity appears intertwined throughout this study particularly within the poetic stance created by the method of data collection that promoted reflexivity in the participants.

Studying the client's experience of counselling is a difficult but important part of counselling research (Toukmanian and Rennie 1992; Rennie 1998; Lott 1999). It was essential to value the participants' integrity and their lived experience (Ellis and Flaherty 1992) of being a client, in accordance with the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy code of ethics (2005)

and practice. Valuing such subjectivity was a continual struggle as I attempted to put myself in the shoes of the other while constantly returning to my own subjective stance. The creation of such an intersubjective (Perakyla 2005) conversation is a constant of this research. This also highlights the impact of the participants on me as the researcher (Bondi 2005) and my impact on them as creativity was inspired by our relationships.

Part of the impact of the research relationships was discovering that narrative is a “meaning making system that makes sense out of the chaotic mass of perceptions and experiences” (Josselson 1995; 33) created by all the voices involved. This fits with my personal narrative of poetry created following trauma in that I was making sense through narrative. In the same way containment, freedom and polarity are experienced within the text as the phenomena they appear to be, or are, in each participant’s experience as well as in my philosophical engagement in the study. An underlying sense in this research philosophy is that meaning has to be lived, and “the narrative form constitutes human reality into wholes, manifests human values and bestows meaning on life” (Polkinghorne 1988; 159) that is not just understood in the way of knowing something. Frankl (1984:11) suggests that meaning is found “in suffering”. If suffering is seen as lived experience then suffering may reside in, and be felt in living, and through this meaning may come into being. Castoriadis (1997) sees the psyche as existing in meaning which is created by the external world:

“for the psyche, the ‘outside world’ is the *social* world, that the psyche *is* in and through meaning, and that the social world permits it to create a meaning for it” (368).

Meaning then seems to be brought into existence, into the internal world of the individual through their experience with the external world. Meaning has to be brought into my experience as the researcher so that it is felt, as well as understood, before an explanation of that meaning is possible. It is here perhaps that the researcher, poet, scientist and artist, meet, which may be seen as another way of describing the creative depictions of experience (which I have certainly discovered) in narrative research

During the writing up of the findings tragedy impacted on my life again when a young man who had become a son to me was killed in a road traffic accident. I found myself working in and with my grief. This highlights the reality that my life impacts upon the work for:

“Qualitative writing by its nature involves the Self too intimately to ignore wounds, scars, and hard-won understandings that are to some degree part of our baggage”
(Ely et al 1997; 331).

Initially this loss brought a halt to the work. But just as Payne found “self reflection, personal therapy, and supervision” (Payne 1992; 74) enabled her to access a greater range of feeling, so my use of reflexivity and supervision enabled me to be aware of my need to hold onto the study. The paradox here is that I had to let go of the work in order to hold onto it (Rowen and Reason 1981). This letting go is recorded in my journal:

Here is my wasteland
Encroached upon
By loss
There is no space
My dwelling place
Is

Full of emptiness
And I hide
Here.

Acknowledging I was hiding from myself enabled a return to the work. But in allowing myself the space to write I was perhaps also encouraging inspiration from a period of rest (Meekums 1993). Resting and reflexive writing promoted change as I discovered the possibility of writing up the journal stories and original analysis as poems. Without the grief it feels I might not have discovered this way of working. I could only cite methodological reasons for writing the findings poems but this would be a half truth or a “half tale” (Charmaz and Mitchell (1997; 212) and deny the reader full knowledge of the research story. The complex construction of this story using mine and the participants’ voices involves each of us in the process of exploration. To make this exploration whole as opposed to a half truth Walsh suggests that “the unmet challenge for qualitative researchers is to document this process in an open and honest way” (1996; 383). By including the impact of my experiences in the text I may make myself vulnerable (Behar 1996) but it feels congruent that in order to understand how I interpret others’ stories, I have to understand and interpret my story (Chase 2005). This in turn gives context and enables the reader to understand how the interpretations of all the stories are connected.

As qualitative research moves more into the realms of the personal (Ellis and Flaherty 1992; Etherington 2001; Solms and Turnbull 2002; Marshall 2004), the origins of this work gains relevance. If ideas are conceived (Trahar 2002) in the mind and lived experience of the researcher, then it may be crucial to the research process, to understand how that idea came into being. In other words what caused a question to be asked, how is an idea born, where does it come from (Marshall 2004)? If credence is to be given to the researcher’s personal investment in

the work, then the ground of such subjective history needs to be acknowledged and incorporated into the research process. Richardson (1992) changed her way of writing sociological interviews. She brought together the poetic and the sociological because of personal feelings about the passivity of the work which rarely touched her emotionality. She wanted sociological research that she would “want to read and want to write” (132), while still being of benefit to those it intended to inform and those it informed upon. Therefore it seems similarly appropriate to feel, that in counselling research, the roots and reasons for selecting a narrative methodology needs to be integral to the process of the work. As a psychodynamic counsellor I attempt to enable clients to make sense of their present, and promote change, by understanding how the past impacts upon the present. In the same way it is my past which led, or gave birth to, research. If the purpose of counselling research is to be defined as “the reconstruction of therapeutic practice” (McLeod 1999; 2001) then the origin of a study is integral to the work. Researching from such a personal framework however creates a need to be, “critical, challenging and developmental rather than self satisfied” (Marshall 2004; 2). My closeness to the work may be seen as biased and overly subjective but this is why the developmental process needs to be incorporated into the narrative. My passion for the concepts is not wrong because I had personal experience of them (Muncey 2005) but rather such passion enables the lived experience of others to be heard.

Understanding something of the personal history that created this narrative situates my voice (Hertz 1997) in order to give the potential audience the opportunity to understand my perspective. As the trauma that conceived the work, still impacts upon my life, it seems reasonable to assume that it will have some impact upon the research process. This is my truth (Douglass and Moustakas 1985) and although truth may be “a continually evolving concept”

(Muncey 2006) which evolves with this research, with it I am enabled to engage more fully with the research process. But if this truth is cut off from the research process, the knowledge formed from within that process will not create a comprehensive knowledge (Douglass and Moustakas 1985). This is perhaps why, without realizing it at the time, that I became a participant researcher. This “reciprocal process whereby each party educates the other” (Miller and Crabtree 2005; 615) came naturally to me as a counselling practitioner and it seems I transferred this way of working to research.

As I moved from practitioner to researcher (Payne 1993) I became aware of the impact of the research on my practice and of the impact of my practice on the research. My attention to the use and meaning of words in the research has heightened my sensitivity to the individuality of meaning with clients, in training with students and with colleagues. Yet my desire to learn more about individual clients and their process reminds me that I have always been investigating meaning. This makes sense of the idea that a ‘synthesis’ (Payne 1993; 27) occurs between research and practice where each may influence and interrelate with the other. In desiring to understand my process as a client in counselling and my process through more recent grief other personal dimensions are added to the relational context of the research. These interrelationships need to be held in awareness as they may influence meaning within the research. They also reflect the interrelationships within the research between content and context between “tellers and listeners” (Riessman 2001; 697) or readers, which help different meanings to emerge. This seems to link to Payne’s contradictions which suggest that:

“There are multiple realities not just different views of one reality, and that what is

real is actually different depending on one's perspective and ability to perceive different worlds of experience.” (1993; 30-32)

Just as different realities exist so it seems possible that multiple meanings may be interpreted from different perspectives and from interrelationships. In this way content and context each affect the other reminding me that holding different perspectives in awareness and the ability to reflect on my process need to be a constant in the research. Bond (2002) reveals the difficulty of writing multi-layered texts as he explores lived experience as narrative research. He suggests:

“The systematic use of narrative opens up the possibility of studying lived experience more directly and creates challenges in how to communicate new insight to the reader” (137).

Investigating meaning as a researcher, practitioner, as a former client and using my lived experience alongside the lived experience and narrative of the participants creates a multi-layered narrative that may produce multiple perceptions/meanings. Investigating meaning also fits with the narrative methodology in that “all forms of narrative share the fundamental interest in making sense of experience, the interest in constructing and communicating meaning” (Chase 2003; 273). Making sense of their counselling is what clients do in between sessions, either consciously or unconsciously. Offering participants the opportunity to write about this process encourages their ability to make sense while contributing to this research which adds meaning to all our journeys.

3.9. Conclusion

This chapter has mapped out the journey of starting from personal experience and attempted to bring the poet alongside the researcher. The research design needed to fit the prospective journey and to foresee the whole journey in advance was not possible. If the integrity and autonomy of the original participants had not been valued the journey may have been short and incomplete. By listening to the pilot study participants my understanding of the research process grew alongside the study. In this sense the lived experience of taking part in the research became part of the participants' collaboration in the study. Perhaps it is the autonomy of the research itself that explains the process of the methodology. It is as if the life or energy of the project is illuminated in its inherent richness through the reflexive narrative that emerged from the study itself.

The complexity of a many layered narrative creates an in depth account of the client's experience of counselling. The small number of samples are in themselves many layered narratives which tell individual stories full of information about the internal processes of a client in counselling. The poetic stance of the narratives fills them with the richness of metaphor as the conscious and unconscious seem to write together. If writing and reading poetry are aids to the therapeutic process (Morrison 1987) within counselling (as well as being aids to expressing and understanding opposition) then perhaps this aesthetic agent should be more widely recognised in the world of narrative research. Opposition appears to be used by the poet to express the inexpressible and the participants seem to have been enabled to do the same as they display containment, freedom and polarity in the lived experience of their narratives. Using poetic skills perhaps offers a subjective science (Solms and Turnbull 2002) that may help unravel the

experience of the client's inner world. Within this context where poetry and counselling meet the strength of my own voice gained precedence as I realized that this is a narrative mainly in one voice. My identity as a woman with a distinctive voice is revealed in this overall narrative.

As Bamberg states:

“Narratives, irrespective of whether they deal with one's life or an episode or event in the life of someone else always *reveal* the speaker's identity” (2004; 223)

However it took the whole process of the research for me to be able to either think or write this. It seems my knowledge of myself has grown through the process of the study as it has made me as much as I have made it.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE FIRST ANALYSIS: THE PILOT STUDY

4.1 Introduction

This chapter looks at the analysis of the pilot study to demonstrate how it was done by examining extracts from the data. It examines the interrelationships between the forming categories and shows how the categories were defined. The participants' responses to the analysis are included to show how they understood the categories and how the analysis seemed to enable them to discover more about themselves.

The analysis of the journals led to the emergence of categories that split the original constructs of containment and freedom into the following feeling states:

1. Uncontained-unfree
2. Overcontained-overfree
3. Fighting containment-freedom
4. Desire for containment-freedom
5. Towards containment-freedom
6. Containment-freedom

For example the category of uncontained-unfree was named through finding words in the

journals that implied that the participants felt stuck and/or unable to move from an internal position. This category implies a position of no movement, a stuck place where the client can neither, contain their own feelings or free themselves from the stuck position. The categories were formed by finding similarities within the journals. All five participants use the words safe/safety, and secure to describe their feelings (or how they wish to feel) with the counsellor. This seems to suggest a desire for containment which is protective/caring of the self. However opposing words like unsafe and vulnerable may suggest a desire for freedom as the client may also feel irritation towards the counsellor and want to escape from counselling. Such opposition within each category led to the construction of the joint categories which mirror the notion of what became the overall polarity of containment-freedom.

4.2 The analysis

Getting to know each journal was an important part of the analysis. Typing them out, accurately copying punctuation and format on the page was part of this process. Repeated readings of each journal created the first stage of this process so that I became familiar with them. Only then did the task of analysing the journals commence. Words and phrases were investigated as holders of emotional meaning, and placed in categories by colour-coding so that there was a visual reference to each category (appendix 13). However less time was spent interpreting the journal narratives than in the main study in that the interpretation and construct categories were worked on simultaneously. Unlike in the main study they did not know the theme of the research so the main aim of the analysis was to discover whether there was evidence that the containment-freedom polarity might exist.

The following extract from a pilot study journal provides an example of how the analysis

progressed and how the interpretation of text and construct were written about together alongside the journal narrative. Precedence was given to searching for opposition and discovering the potential categories through interpreting the meanings of individual words and phrases. Initially the whole entry was seen as being in the category of containment-freedom:

Extract 1a . Journal entry and analysis

Line Words from a journal Analysis

Line	Words from a journal	Analysis
		Containment-freedom
1.	Caught between	It seems possible that chaos is the client and salvation is the counsellor. If so then perhaps the space between where the client is caught (as in held) is the enabling space within which she can play / work. (Bion1962) Playing, she tips out the box - the contents of herself which are not usually seen, upon the counsellor /outside herself who is separate from her and unknown
2.	Chaos and salvation	
3.	I tip out the box	
4.	That is my secret self	
5.	Upon that tranquil space	
6.	Beyond the sky	

Initial Interpretations of extract 1a

The containment-freedom category appears to be present in the enabling freedom that the participant feels as she tips herself out. She seems to feel safe in this secret space where she can play and work. The ‘secret self’ suggests the split off aspects of herself so perhaps she hides from herself and the counsellor. Movement is felt in the words which hint at the creation of her internal world in the mix of ‘chaos’ which feels internal, and the ‘tranquil place’ that is so far away, ‘beyond the sky’, and external (in the counsellor perhaps). The quality of emotional

movement expressed suggests the dynamic of containment-freedom. But as I repeatedly returned to the data this one interpretation became insufficient as I wondered what she was hiding. It was undertaken again to see if there was the possibility of there being more than one perception of the entry:

Extract 1b. (Later Interpretation of extract 1a)

Line Words from a Journal Analysis

<p>1. Caught between</p> <p>2. Chaos and salvation</p> <p>3. I tip out the box</p> <p>4. That is my secret self</p> <p>5. Upon that tranquil space</p> <p>6. Beyond the sky</p>	<p>lines 1-2. Uncontained-unfree - a trapped place that prevents movement, on an axis that grounds the playful chaos of creativity and the very edge of the heart of darkness.</p> <p>line 3. Fighting containment-freedom an angry move -an emptying of self.</p> <p>line 4. Overcontained-overfree a place that holds her in “the box” of repetitive thoughts / actions</p> <p>line 5. Desire for containment-freedom she puts herself out of herself as if searching</p> <p>line 6. Towards containment-freedom perhaps she moves towards enabling containment but can’t quite define where she is - this place feels unknown, mystical, for it is not named.</p>
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Generating Interrelationships in extract 1b

This entry shows there may be benefit in categorising entries from more than one perspective, so that interrelationships between categories can be investigated. In example 1a the containment-

freedom category was chosen because it demonstrates dynamic movement created within the client. So perhaps the initial analysis is right in that, for the client, this did feel like an enabling experience. There is a sense of process, of transformation, as feeling trapped changes into more peaceful affect. Yet that feels too straight-forward for such a complex piece of reflexive writing. In example 1b the overtones of a desire to be merged with a lost mother are felt (line 5 /6), which is perhaps why there is a sense of the mystical about the entry. The first two lines may well suggest the space between the client and counsellor where the client can think and play (1a), but they may also demonstrate that in being trapped the participant is able to be still, and perceive where she is (1b). As the client tips out the box (line 3) she may be playing (1a), but she may also be angry (1b) like the Beast. Line 4 could then suggest that the participant may be throwing her “secret self” at the counsellor as she finds the Beast within her. Her possible overcontained-overfree state suggests she is anxious about being open with the counsellor – as if the Beast has to hide. There seems to be envy (line 5) of this tranquil place the client sees outside herself for she wants this containment (1b) or this Beauty. The move the participant makes towards containment (1b) suggests that she is unsure of just where this place is, for it seems she has never experienced it within herself. But perhaps the first interpretation (1a) shows the participant as beginning to experience this place internally. So, maybe both perspectives can be true, and perhaps this is what makes this way of categorising so useful, for there can be more than one interpretation. This suggests that there is often no one correct way of interpreting but many aspects which can be investigated. The entry itself, like a poem, also becomes the container (Maltby 2003) for the participant’s unconscious feelings, like her possible anger towards the counsellor. In the safety of the journal she finds the potential space (Winnicott 1971) where she can create something new (Satyamurti 2003).

It was examples like this above entry that led to the containment-freedom polarity becoming the structure (p.126) that holds all the other polarities. It holds movement and stillness, demonstrating the need for both in the internal world of the client. In this way it also holds all the other categories as a structure or framework within which to work. Because of this change in understanding about the containment-freedom category, it was not used as a category in the main study analysis.

4.3 Defining the categories

The categories were discovered through repeated readings of the journals and the search for similarities within words and meanings. But defining the categories also grew through my separation from the work and subsequent re-engagement. Time away rather than creating the loss of the study enabled a new engagement with the work. For example, when coping with several losses within my family of origin I struggled to work and felt that I might have to let go of the study. But as I emerged out of that grieving process hindsight enabled me to see that I had been stuck, perhaps within the category of uncontained-unfree. I was able to look around and see where I was and this looking around prevented me from letting go. It enabled me to hold onto the possibility of change within myself and the study. The physical and emotional space created during this time enabled a re-examination of the categories and of the work that had been accomplished so far.

4.3.1. Uncontained-unfree

A similarity that became apparent was that all the participants felt stuck or unable to move in some way reflecting my sense of being stuck in shock in chapter 1. The words and phrases associated with being stuck, not moving that were found in the journals were:

Table i. To show words relating to being stuck; not moving; not existing:

Stuck	Disappearing	Distant	Afraid to let go
Blocked	Caught	Too much	Cornered
Holding back	Lost in the crowd	Disconnected	Tightly hold
Tightness inside	Resistant	Rationalizing	Stranded
Distracted	Cold	Swallowed up	Nowhere to turn
Loosing threads	In a fog	Nothing to say	Shutting down
Powerless	Bored	Stranded	I blank her out

This stuck place where there is no movement became the axis of the polarity and was named uncontained-unfree (p. 122). There seems to be little difference between uncontained and unfree. Uncontained suggests that there is no holding of any kind whereas unfree suggests that there is no freedom of any kind. All the words and phrases in the above table suggest a stuck place where the client loses the possibility of internal shifts. They also suggest feelings of not existing within themselves which implies that they have like Beauty no power to act, or make choices within themselves. The following extract demonstrates the category uncontained-unfree:

Extract 2. Journal entry and analysis to show the category uncontained unfree.

Lines Words from the journal

Analysis

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. understood 2. listened to 3. warm 4. warmth 5. safety 6. content (not wanting to go) 7. afraid 8. wanting to “disappear” 9. stranded 10. “sick” 11. Alone, but “feeling” supported 	<p>It seems that the holding offered by the counselling takes the client back to a baby-like state where she feels the warmth of being held. In this comfortable state she does not want to leave and her desire for containment feels strong.</p> <p>The sudden change of feelings in the next line (7) suggest a move to uncontained-unfree. Leaving (line 6) seems to draw out fears of not feeling her own existence, a stranded place where she feels sick as if being sick takes her to an uncomfortable/familiar place of merger where she has no sense of her own boundaries unless she is supported, like a baby by another.</p>
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Feeling the safety offered by the counselling (lines 1-6) seems to enable the participant to get in touch with how she really feels. Her desire to contain and feel her own affect appears to be brought about by feeling the safety within the setting, as if she has no Beast with which to protect herself. When she accesses her own feeling she is in a frightening place (line 7) where she hardly seems to exist, like Beauty, with no voice of her own. It seems that feeling safe enables internal movement. The fact that the participant seems to access her own feelings could also suggest a move ‘towards containment-freedom’ which seems to demonstrate how all the categories may be present in a counselling session. This shows the importance of being able to

look at the interrelationships between categories, how one leads to another and may even incorporate the other. In this sense this whole section could also be put into the category of towards containment-freedom but then the movement of the participant may not be so apparent. Defining categories is complicated, but looking from different perspectives does seem to demonstrate movement. It seems possible that the way the participants were asked to write did encourage a condensing of thoughts and feelings which perhaps makes movement more obvious.

4.3.2. Overcontained-overfree

Just as I experienced anxiety and confusion following trauma and expressed these feelings in my writing which displayed opposition, so expressions in the participants' journals were found that suggested opposition. These expressions were often related to way participants felt that others (internal and external others) had expectations of them as if like Beauty they had to follow others' expectations rather than having their own. Sometimes there were derogatory thoughts about themselves which seemed to come from the past and from how others had viewed them. The participants felt that these internal voices did not really belong to them yet felt that they had to be listened to, but they also wanted to have their own thoughts and feelings. The words in this category are very varied but tend to suggest repetitive movement of some kind which reflects the felt confusion:

Table ii. To show words that suggest anxiety and confusion

Stomach churning	Palpitations	Uncertainty
Confusion	Frustrated	Second best
Shaken foundations	Rocked	Anxiety
What if I got it wrong	Falling and flailing	Over and over and over
Panic	Sick	Agitated
Coming apart	Shattering	Jumbled
Rushing	Rambling	Surge
Impatient	Overwhelmed	Stupid
Tap that will not turn off	Nervous	Where to settle
Pin me down	Mixed up	Selfish
Felt used	Others push me back	Stirs within

A few of the words like confusion, anxiety and frustration appear in more than one journal. While other phrases may only appear in one journal like ‘falling and flailing’, meanings may be seen as similar. For example ‘stomach churning’ may be seen as similar to ‘over and over and over’ in that both describe a repetitive movement. Also phrases like ‘where to settle’ and ‘pin me down’ both seem to describe an inability to keep still in the internal world. It is as if their internal splits keep them moving around.

Extract 3. Journal entry to show the category overcontained-overfree

<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Pouring out, emptying, of2. emotions, jumbled and confused.3. cloudiness of feelings like4. a muddy glass of water,5. shaken and mixed up. Gradually6. a pulling together a way7. of clearing the mist, a8. sense of putting each part9. of the confusion10. in its place.11. A cooler calmness coming12. over me.	<p>After a three week break from sessions the client returns and seems to be full of confusion - overcontained-overfree - and cannot see clearly - imaged in the muddy glass of water (line 4). She seems shaken up by the break as if she has not been able to contain her feelings over that time. But perhaps what she fights is her anger with the counsellor as she empties (line 1) herself over the counsellor. Perhaps the real confusion is that she fights the containment of her own feelings and projects them out over the counsellor. When she has done this she seems to see more clearly (line7) as if she has been blinded by anger. The ‘cooler calmness’ is perhaps the counsellor whose presence enables the client to begin to move towards the containment of her own feelings.</p>
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The participant appeared aware of emptying her emotions out in the session. Perhaps she was not aware of her anger towards the counsellor. This seems to be confirmed by the image of the ‘muddy glass of water’ (the break from counselling) that was not fit to drink. The words the participant uses both hide and display her internal world. Her anger is hidden in that it is never actually mentioned and yet it becomes visible through interaction with the text. The process that seems to be demonstrated here is that the client’s fight to both free and contain her own feelings happens consciously and unconsciously. Consciously she is aware of pouring out feelings and of the ‘good’ counsellor who enables her to do this. Unconsciously she throws her anger at the ‘bad’ counsellor who takes breaks, but who perhaps enables the transformation into the ‘cooler

calmness’ that comes over the client. It feels like seeing Bion’s maternal reverie (1962; 1970) in process, as if the client’s anger is returned transformed in a more acceptable form. Or perhaps the Beast is unconsciously acknowledged by the ‘calmer’ Beauty.

4.3.3.Fighting containment-freedom

There were several words that suggested battling or friction in the journals (of a Beast trying to be heard), which seems to reflect the friction of opposing selves trying to be heard which I experienced following trauma. As these were discovered they formed the construct of ‘fighting containment-freedom’. The words in the journals may be quite different from each other but it is what they imply that is important. There is a sense of not wanting to go to the counselling, or of feeling invaded by the counsellor, as well as various words that suggest actions or feelings of anger.

Table iii. To show words that suggest battling or friction.

Pursued	I don’t want her in	Out of control
Chased	Invaded	Got away with it
Avoiding	She’s not doing enough	Indifference
Feel got at	Anger	Excuses
Battle	I did not want to go	Small talking diversion
Don’t want to go	Running from	Don’t have to see her
Struggle	Tip out the box	Feel nothing towards her
Need to get out	Spilling blood	Don’t want to love her

Fighting the containment of their own feelings is understood from the words and phrases that are suggestive of running away or avoiding the counselling. Fighting the freedom (the Beast) of their own feelings may be seen in the words or phrases that suggest invasion or being chased by the counselling. However, some words, like anger or indifference, may apply to either side of the polarity for what is important in this category is the fight and tension between opposing feelings or ways of being - as if Beauty repels the Beast. For example the phrase 'she's not doing enough' seems to be an angry criticism towards the counsellor which implies that the participant does not think that the counsellor is working hard enough. In this sense the participant may be struggling to contain her anger whilst also fighting to have freedom from it, or to have it. Yet she may be angry with herself (rather than with the counsellor) for not working hard enough. Both the context of the journal and the words and phrases are needed together in order to define a category and which category a phrase or section fits into.

Extract 4. Journal entry to show the category fighting containment-freedom

Line Words from whole entry

Analysis

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No counselling this week 2. Thoughts go all over the 3. place when I don't get 4. my counselling. I wonder 5. if it's a test these weeks 6. I don't go to my session 7. to see if I will return! | <p>The client seems to use the journal to contain herself as she has no session this week.</p> <p>Lines 2-7 suggest that she feels lost without the counselling with thoughts all over the place. Yet although she wants the counselling she appears to fight containment as she seems to distrust the counsellor by imagining that not having a session is a test to see if she will return for counselling.</p> |
|---|--|

Line Words from whole journal

Analysis

8. I suppose I'm selfish and
9. it's "I want" still!
10. Family still demanding
11. thought I'd learnt
12. to say "no" - wrong!
13. I feel used again by
14. them all why can't I
15. get this right! Everything
16. with me takes so long
17. Why!

She appears to recognize her need in this (line1) but sees this as selfish as if she fights even allowing herself these feelings about the counsellor, as if she fights the freedom of her own feelings. Her demanding family (line10) may represent the demanding counsellor who gets to choose when to have a break. This leaves the client feeling used (line 13), so perhaps she feels used by the counsellor. Its as if she cannot really voice "no" (line 12) its not fair - to the counsellor, as she can't with her family. She again seems to fight herself as she sees herself taking too long to do this counselling and perhaps thinks the counsellor takes too much time off.

This entry demonstrates how the participant appears to battle with the containment of her feelings about herself and her counsellor. Perhaps an unrecognized self is 'demanding' that she listens to herself for the journal seems to enable her to contain all these feelings by writing them out. In the following entry of the journal she realizes that she is perhaps trying to do too much too quickly and has a sense of needing to care for herself by putting herself first. Fighting containment-freedom in the above entry seemed to allow her to shift towards containing her own feelings so that 'selfish' turns into caring for herself appropriately. This highlights how the whole journal narrative adds to the overall story. Taken on its own the entry above demonstrates part of the participant's process, the other entries add to this and create a story of process.

4.3.4. Desire for containment-freedom

One of the first similarities noticed in the narratives was that the participants all used words that showed that they felt safe with their counsellor, cared for, loved, or that they felt these feelings towards her. It seems they want the strength of the integrated Beauty and Beast that they sense she possesses. In the following table is a selection of the words used in the journals that allude to these feelings of love and safety:

Table iv. To show words that suggest feeling safe, cared for or loved.

Held	Contained	Heard
Supported	Secure	Warmth
Cared for	Acknowledged	Accepted
Trust	Grounded	Respect
Close	Thankful	Understood
Safe	Loved	Encouraged

Finding this need to feel safe and heard so often in the journals created the category ‘desire for containment’. These feelings of safety seem to reflect the safety I felt in already having a secure base in which to take trauma. The words the participants used seem to demonstrate the desire to feel the above states and also describe how they felt towards the counsellor. It seemed that what they felt for her was also what they desired most to feel about themselves. There was a need to look for words that suggested a ‘desire for freedom’ in order to see if the polarity to the desire for containment existed. This desire for freedom felt that it needed to be described by opposing emotions so that a polarity was felt. Words that helped to complete this category were:

Table v. To show words that suggest feeling unsafe, uncared for and unloved.

Lost	Insecure	Disappointed
Unleashed	Escaping	Felt obliged
Exposed	Irritated	Weary
Vulnerable	Annoyed	Needy
Unsafe	Frustrated	Hate

Whereas the words for the ‘desire for containment’ hold positive aspects of the clients’ feelings about what they feel for the counsellor, this other half of the category has more negative (Beastly) words that express again how the participants feels about themselves, and/or how they feel towards the counsellor, or how they feel the counsellor feels towards them.

Extract 5. Journal entry to show the category desire for containment-freedom

Line Words from the journal Analysis

<p>1. I fight hard against 2. Perceived injustice</p> <p>3. Because 4. I don't want others 5. To suffer it</p> <p>6. Like I did 7. We should all be loved 8. Just for being 9. Not for what we do.</p>	<p>A strong sense of a desire for freedom to fight against the injustice of her past. Lines 1-2</p> <p>She appears to fight for freedom so others not to suffer as she did. Perhaps she also fights for the containment of her own suffering. Lines 3-5</p> <p>What she appears to desire is the containment of being loved, and the freedom of being loved for who she is as opposed to being loved for what she has or has not achieved. Lines 6-9</p>
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This original journal analysis demonstrates the desire for containment freedom in lines 1-2 and 7-9. The words both hide and demonstrate the participant's wish to take care of herself (lines 1-2) and even love herself (line 7-9), in that she hides her desires for herself in the care she wants to have for others, like Beauty. By changing from the first person singular in the first two sections to the first person plural in the last section, she emphasises this desire for herself. When she writes in the first person singular she is referring clearly to others but in the last section she incorporates herself into what she is saying, which enables the reader to see behind her care for others and realize that the anguish of others images her own anguish. When this section was first analysed the lines 3-6 were put into the category of fighting containment-freedom. Now I would change this and put the whole entry in the desire for containment-freedom. Her wish that others should not suffer mirrors her own suffering and her hidden desire to allow herself to feel her own affect. Here she seems to recognize her anguish but does not appear to feel it. I felt my anguish (chapter 1) and cared for myself which enabled me to be more sensitive to others' anguish. But here the participant still needs to feel her anguish so that she can care for herself appropriately.

4.3.5. Towards containment freedom

This category was created from words that suggest movement towards the participants experiencing their own feelings (as in the meeting of Beauty and the Beast) and becoming aware of parts of themselves that had been hidden from awareness, or split off. They are feeling descriptive words that also suggest movement (see table vi below):

Table vi. To show words suggestive of emotional movement.

Frightened	Sad	Uncoiling
Deeper happiness	Lonely	Something clicked
Free flowing	Weeping	Burning tears
Hurt	Outpouring	Daring to voice it
Wake up call	Awkward	Too tired to pretend
Pain	Feel like a little girl	Trusted myself
Shame	Embarrassment	Oh sod it

This was a difficult category to pin down in this first study but there was enough of a sense of it being present to keep it rather than discard it. It was a felt sense of the participants letting go of overcontained parts of themselves and becoming aware of, and feeling their own affect. In theoretical terms the clients were shifting away from negative or damaging internal objects to internalising a more cohesive sense of self through the interaction within the counselling relationship. Perhaps participants' interaction with themselves in their journal writing also contributed to their emotional movement as can be seen on the extract below:

Extract 6. Journal entry to show the category of towards containment-freedom

Lines Words from the journal Analysis

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. justified 2. understood 3. fearful 4. tearful 5. weak 6. stupid 7. in touch with myself 8. able 9. hopeful 10. Empowered 	<p>This section starts with the client desiring containment-freedom (lines 1,2), to hold her own affect. She then moves towards containment-freedom as she accesses her own feelings (lines 3-6). However lines 5 and 6 appear to be over contained-overfree in that she seems to feel what others have put onto her. But she moves again towards containment-freedom as she senses that she is in touch with herself (line 7). This part of her can see her more positive selves (lines 8-10) and the active words convey a stronger sense of self.</p>
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The shifts demonstrated in this section seem to display movement within the participant. The single adjectives on each line, (except line 7) journey through feelings and seem to show her process through the counselling session. The sense of being held/understood by the counsellor seems to justify her reality so that she can feel her own affect. This may be seen as empathy and/or positive regard being present in the counsellor, from the perspective of the participant. Once the participant has accessed her own feelings she can let herself feel what others have perhaps put on her, as if a 'stupid' child steps into the session. But in doing this she continues to move by seeing that she is much more than this. The phrase in line 7 suggests a shift in awareness as if she accesses something new, a new self. This line particularly stands out because before and after it only single descriptive words appear on each line and this gives a sense of something unfolding. It is as if she moves through the emotions and feelings described by the

single words. Again, the way the journals have been written impacts on what they show and enfold.

4.3.6 Containment-freedom

Although this has become the overall structure of the categories it was used as a category in the pilot study. Originally words that were included in this category were ones that gave a sense of movement and of being able to hold more than one perspective. Table vii. below illustrates some of these words:

Table vii. To show movement and the possibility of holding more than one perspective.

Column 1.	Column 2.	Column 3.
Freer	Exploring	Cared for
Satisfied	Being	Held
Empowered	Consolidating	Mothered
Enlightened	Released	Supported
Hopeful	Honesty with myself	Valued
Linked up put together	Lighter	Focussed on
Drawn together	Experiencing feelings	Understood
Stronger	Confusion in place	Warmth
In touch with myself	Tranquil	Hate
Content	Calm	Safe
Balanced	Questioning	Detachment
Skip in my step	Searching	Accepted
Child inside	Felt like a child	

Reviewing the analysis and categories of the pilot study enabled me to see clearly that the words in columns 1 and 2 belong in the ‘towards containment-freedom’ category for they show movement towards a more integrated state in that the participants were more aware of their own feelings. They were the same as or similar to words already put into this category. The words in column 3 were the same or similar to those in the ‘desire for containment-freedom’ category. As the analysis was re-read the categories were more clearly defined and the polarity of ‘containment-freedom’ moved to become the structure (p.126), or even the container for the other categories. Noting the changes enabled progression to the main study analysis, as hindsight helped provide a clearer perspective of the developing construct and categories.

4.4 The participants’ responses to the pilot study

The participants’ initial responses to the analysis were encouraging. They were given a copy of their analysed journal plus an ‘Introduction to the Theoretical Constructs’ and the brief key of the categories (appendix 10). I remained with them while they read their journal analysis in order to be present if they were upset or confused in any way. It felt important to remain aware of the sensitivity of such personal data and therefore seemed appropriate to show this integrity of care (Etherington 1996). However they were also assured that their honest response to the work was essential if the evaluation of the study was to be viable (appendix 9).

At the meetings the participants are asked to read the ‘Introduction to the Theoretical Constructs’ paper and then their journal analysis. As they read the analysis of their journals they made statements about what they were feeling. Several of their statements which were written down by me at the time, and checked by them, are included below:

“I keep smiling to myself because I think how does she know that.”

“It’s bringing up tears but that’s alright.”

“Moving between objective and subjective when it’s about myself - that’s a weird sensation.”

“There’s part of me that I thought you would never be able to see from what I wrote.”

“It’s amazing that you can decode it.” (Pilot study participants)

Their overall opinion was that the analysis made sense in that it fitted their view of themselves and what was happening in their counselling and in their internal worlds at the time of writing. There was also a feeling that the analysis uncovered aspects of their internal journey that at the time of writing the journals was not available to their awareness. However with hindsight, and the analysis they felt that they were given something that added to their understanding of themselves and their internal processes. One said: “I feel as if I can learn a huge amount about myself from this.” She really seemed to appreciate the journal analysis as something that she could keep and use to understand the process of counselling and the way she worked as a client. Another participant after reading the analysis said: “No wonder it’s an exhausting process this counselling business” (*meaning being a client*). It seemed that she had never realized before just how much effort she put into her own process.

The constructs were also commented on by the participants. One stated: “I’m sure I do all of this in about thirty seconds - all of them”. What felt very key to this process was that the constructs were understood by all the participants in that they could relate them to their experience of being a client. It seemed that the constructs made sense of their process, as one stated:

“The pendulum fits with me - I do that a lot (she swung her arm from side to side) I feel very honoured and a little bit embarrassed - I’ve been given something really special for me”

(participant).

The above quote is a response to the category 'towards containment-freedom'. She seemed to feel embarrassed that I could have seen this vulnerable part of her that moved first in one direction and then another, but at the same time she appeared to feel that she had been given a gift. In turn this felt crucial to me as there had been a hope at the start of the journal keeping that participants would benefit from taking part in the research. Another felt that she related to the construct 'desire for containment-freedom' as she said: "This is absolutely spot on - wanting to be contained and not being contained and the absolute feeling of abandonment - very true." She made this comment after reading both the constructs paper and her analysis and felt that it fitted her very well, for she had felt a strong sense of abandonment at the end of most of her counselling sessions. On the construct overcontained-overfree another participant said:

"What I picked up out of it is my struggle to go for freedom I want it but can't really go for it - If I go for this freedom - then once I get that, then I'm not going to have somebody there to hold onto me. That whole section has made my heart go thump thump thump - its tugging at me" (participant).

This category seemed to give her a sense of what it was like to struggle with all the family voices (or internal objects/selves) that she longed to free herself from, while also defining her fear of isolation from them. It appeared to confirm and make sense of her experience as if it validated her experience as a client. Another participant thought that the category 'fighting containment-freedom' fitted the battle she felt with her counsellor:

"The battle, is a really bloody battle - I don't experience it with anyone else she's (the counsellor) my greatest adversary - wearing the head of everybody." (participant)

In theoretical terms this may be a good description of transference but it is transference from the client's perspective and seems to show how powerful this experience can be.

4.5 Conclusion

The analysis of the pilot study led the way towards finding different aspects of containment and freedom and enabled the creation of six categories. These were formed by looking for similarities in the words and experiences described by the participants. The responses from the participants appeared to demonstrate how these categories were beginning to capture a sense of the lived experience (Ellis 1995) of the client in therapy. The participants' feedback gives validity to the categories in that they understood/felt them and could sense a fit within themselves, between entries in their journals, how they felt at the time of writing, and the categories chosen.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE THEORETICAL CONSTRUCT

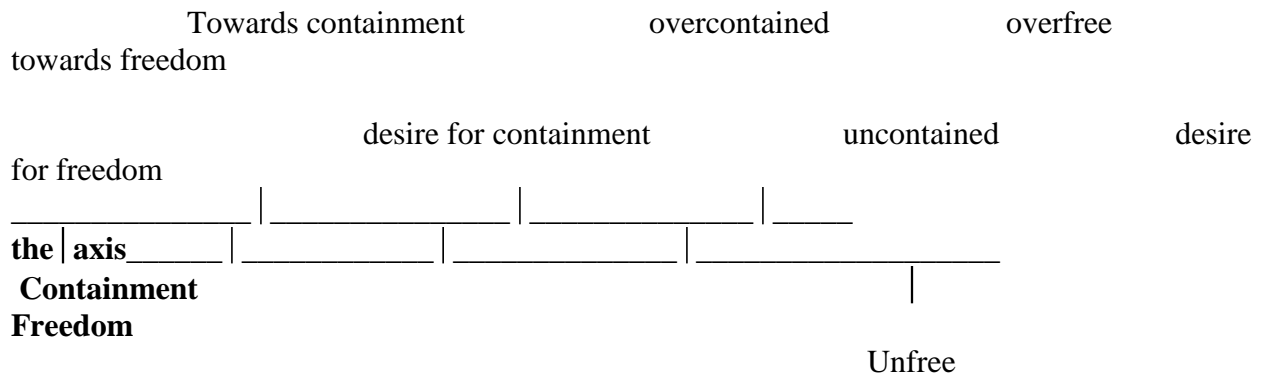
5.1 Introduction

In this chapter the polarity between containment and freedom is examined as the tension or opposition that holds the two concepts together while keeping them apart. Each of the categories that emerged is explored with reference to the participants' journals from which they emerged. They are perceived as places along a continuum (p.122) where no one state is better than another as each are seen as necessary parts of the whole.

The notion of a containment freedom polarity may have emerged from my personal experience as a counsellor and client but the key words were developed from the pilot study. Although six categories emerged from the pilot study the category containment-freedom became the overall structure (p.126) that held the other categories leaving the following five categories.

1. Uncontained-unfree
2. Overcontained-overfree
3. Fighting containment-freedom
4. Desire for containment-freedom
5. Towards containment-freedom

The Containment-Freedom Continuum 1



The axis demonstrates the point of no movement, where the client may feel stuck but may also be able to look around their internal world. Containment and freedom at either end of the continuum show that each stage may be an integral part of movement, as if to reach one it may be necessary to pass through other categories.

As the analysis of the following main study progressed, an overlap between three categories became visible and there was a need to re-examine their contents. The overlaps were between containment-freedom, towards containment-freedom and the desire for containment-freedom. These changes occurred through close engagement with the journal narratives and the realization that a visible structure might provide greater understanding of the notion of a containment-freedom polarity.

5.2 The analysis

During the analysis of the pilot study the categories were highlighted in the text with colour and every line that appeared to hold a category was highlighted in the chosen colour (appendix 13). Lines that did not appear to hold a category were left with no highlighting. However in the main study the journal entries covered a much greater period of time and looking for categories line by line felt unwieldy and too intense. It seemed appropriate to spend more time interpreting the text before searching for the constructs, particularly as I was struggling to re-engage with the work after an enforced break. As time gave space for reconsidering the pilot study it felt that each journal entry held one main category alongside others. For example in the following entry from the pilot study lines were initially put into categories:

Extract 7. To show how the pilot journals were categorized

Lines from a journal

Categorieis

Line 1. Nervous	Overcontained-overfree
Line 2. Held	Desire for containment-freedom
Line 3. Sad	Containment- freedom
Line 4. Deeply sad	Containment-freedom
Line 5. Tearful	Containment-freedom
Line 6. Held	Containment-freedom
Line 7. Enlightened	Containment-freedom
Line 8. Hopeful	Containment-freedom
Line 9. Fear (can I handle it)	Overcontained-overfree
Line 10. Fear (can she handle it)	Overcontained-overfree
Line 11. Re-assured	Desire for containment-freedom
Line 12. Held	Containment-freedom
Line 13. Free to be myself	Containment-freedom

In light of the learning from the main study this entry would now be put into one overall category, desire for containment-freedom. My new understanding of the categories would change lines 1, 9 and 10 into the category of desire for containment-freedom. There is a wish to be the same as the counsellor in line 9 and 10 and a nervous feeling towards her in line 1. These lines no longer fit within their initial category as the understanding of overcontained-overfree has

been more clearly defined. Also lines that were given the category of containment-freedom would have to change as this is now the overall structure. In fact these lines also fit the category of desire for containment-freedom which has also been more clearly defined. The pilot study provided a starting point for the categories but they have been altered through the process of the work. The above example shows the overlap that occurred through categories which enabled the formation of the overall structure. It also demonstrates the possibility of using one overall category for each journal entry. This need not exclude the possibility of other categories being present, for they may be within each other. This led to searching for one main category for each journal entry in the main study and omitting the highlighting. Although more than one category may be present in an entry it no longer felt essential to be so precise when working with such a large volume of narrative. There was also a sense that the existence of the categories felt more real and I was no longer working to prove something to myself which had been part of the pilot study. My comprehension of the categories was clearer through the familiarity gained from working with the journal texts over long periods of time.

THE CONSTRUCT

<p>The construct of the containment-freedom Polarity</p>	<p>The overall polarity that holds all the categories of movement are contained within it. It could be thought of as a rainbow, the arc which holds all the colours within it.</p>
<p>Uncontained-unfree</p>	<p>The still / stuck place where there is no movement. A place where the external and internal world may be viewed anew.</p>
<p>Over contained-over free</p>	<p>An agitated and confused place full of other people and movement that feels like panic, obsession or hyperactivity.</p>
<p>Fighting containment-freedom</p>	<p>A fight to change and a fight not to change, an internal struggle between self and others.</p>
<p>Desire for containment-freedom</p>	<p>A tug of war - wanting to be emotionally held, cared for and yet the opposition of feeling irritation or dislike of the other.</p>
<p>Towards containment freedom</p>	<p>The pull and swing of the pendulum, movement, owning up to and acknowledging what has been hidden.</p>

5.3 Containment, freedom and polarity

Both containment and freedom within the therapeutic relationship may be understood to be *enabling* in that the counsellor attempts to provide a safe (containment) space (freedom) where the client can think and feel his/her own experience in the presence of the counsellor. However both containment and freedom as experienced within the internal world of the client may be *disabling*. Life events may have provided a containment that was confining, even harmful so that any form of containment may be experienced as *disabling*. Freedom may have been experienced as dangerous or overwhelming so this potential space may also be experienced as *disabling*. Within the enabling containment provided by the counsellor the client may experience the very opposite of what is being provided. This seems to be demonstrated in the following entry from a main study journal:

Extract 8. Entry from WF journal W2. to show client's experience

Line 1. Still no better!
Line 2. Feel restricted!
Line 3. No warmth - can I hack this?
Line 4. Do I want to?? No!
Line 5. Uncomfortable.
Line 6. She is <u>so</u> astute!
Line 7. Caught like a fish on a hook!
Line 8. And I am wriggling.

It appears that in the containment offered by the counsellor the participant feels restricted (line1), uncomfortable (line 5) and caught like a hooked fish (line 7). Although in the language of theory this may be described as transference or countertransference these terms do not describe the client's experience from her perspective. It seems that from her perspective that she feels caught

and hooked as if she is stuck somewhere and can only wriggle but not free herself. This appears to show how disabling containment may feel to the client.

The key concepts of containment and freedom in this study are used to discover if these notions are understood and experienced by the client to the extent that the participant feels the analysis and the theoretical constructs fit his/her internal feelings as a client. My experiences that helped form this research enabled me to understand the importance of knowing consciously the effects or impact of particular life events. It was this knowing that in turn provided the freedom to reclaim myself from trauma and create a new life with a changed concept of self. Etherington (2000) states:

“Telling our story is a way of reclaiming ourselves, our history and our experiences; a way of finding our voice. In telling my story to others I am also telling my 'self' - and my 'self' (who is audience) is being formed in the process of telling. So there are witnesses to my story, the 'other' to whom I recount my story (which is what clients do in therapy), and the self who is growing within me as I hear my story retold as I speak or write it down” (17).

To reclaim myself, I told my story in therapy and in poetry. I journeyed through experiences that felt to be, both disabling and enabling forms of containment and freedom where these two concepts appeared inextricably linked. My reflections on the paradox of containment and freedom being both enabling and disabling led to the idea of a containment-freedom polarity.

5.4 Polarity

A polarity is generally understood to be the tendency to grow differently in different directions, along an axis, as a tree towards base and apex, or roots and branches. It is the opposition that Jung (Bischof 1964; Jung 1969) saw as engendering the movement which leads towards resolution and momentary equilibrium within the client. An extract from a pilot study journal demonstrates the opposing states that may exist within a client during a session:

Extract 9. From a pilot study journal to show opposing states

Line 1. Happy / content
Line 2. Uncertainty
Line 3. mild anxiety
Line 4. excitement / anticipation
Line 5. What do I say?
Line 6. Is this the day?
Line 7. Fear / high anxiety
Line 8. palpitations
Line 9. burning in stomach
Line 10. confusion

The participant moves between various feeling states from ‘happy/content’ to ‘palpitations’ and ‘burning in stomach’. The confusion at the end seems to say how she may really be feeling but the shift between so many feeling states demonstrates the possibility of polarities, of opposite poles of feelings being present.

In this study the polarity between containment and freedom is seen as internal growth (which affects the external life), rooting down into internal containment, and branching out into internal freedom. If the client experiences containment in their internal world as imprisoning then

containment within the counselling relationship may be experienced as disabling. If the client experiences freedom as overwhelming then the freedom provided within the counselling relationship may also be felt as disabling. In this sense containment with or without freedom may be felt as imprisoning, while freedom with or without containment may be felt as dangerous. It is suggested then that this opposition between containment and freedom forms a polarity (within the client) that may enable and/or disable emotional movement. When the client takes refuge in a disabled way of being that has been (unconsciously) learned through life events and experiences, the opposition between containment and freedom may come into awareness. As the counsellor attempts to provide an enabling and containing environment in the freedom of the space between them the client may discover a way to change by finding a route through this opposition to a new conscious knowing. It seems possible that this opposition provides various but constant emotional movement between containment and freedom. The client may experience this opposition as emotional traps, pitfalls and ways of escape from different aspects of their selves (Etherington 2000) that they find difficult to allow into consciousness. This opposition within the polarity may be understood as enabling the client to grow towards their own containment and their own freedom which may be likened to developing their own mature autonomy (Grotstein 1982; 83) or reconstructing their own self (or the marriage between Beauty and the Beast). The paradox of this opposition is perhaps that containment and freedom also appear to be necessary aspects of each other. But in the process of changing it is suggested that the client splits them apart in order to be able to experience the extremes of each aspect. In the space (between the client and counsellor) where anything can be known or experienced in the mind (Godwin 1991) the client may feel containment and freedom as different and split before then integrating them back together. Jung (1969) suggests that, “just as between all opposites there obtains so close a

bond that no position can be established or even thought of without its corresponding negation” (206). So the paradox of the containment-freedom polarity may be seen as holding containment and freedom together while also keeping them apart.

5.5 Containment-freedom polarity

As the research has progressed containment-freedom has become the overall polarity which encompasses the other categories. It holds the polarity and the paradox together by incorporating both movement and stillness. It holds both containment and freedom, Beauty and the Beast keeping them apart and linking them together so that their split provides clarification; while being held together they become supportive (Twachtmann and Daniell 1997). Beauty may never live fully without the Beast who she needs to protect her yet the Beast cannot live fully without Beauty who he needs to tame his wildness. In the same way internal containment may never appear to meet internal freedom yet freedom cannot exist without containment anymore than containment can exist without freedom.

5.5.1 Containment

I understand containment as a concept which defines the client’s search for a safe internal and external environment, in which s/he may be enabled to:

1. think his/her own thoughts, in a place where thought can be contained
2. play with notions, in a contained environment
3. experience feeling, in the safety of a non judgemental relationship

5.5.2 Freedom

I understand freedom as a concept which defines the client's search for an infinite space in which s/he may:

1. think her/his own thoughts, in a place where thought can be set free
2. play with notions, in a free environment
3. experience feeling, in the space of a non judgemental relationship

The above concepts of containment and freedom appear to offer identical opportunities for the client, yet never the less this study suggests that the client perceives and experiences these opportunities differently. It feels hard to hold this split between containment and freedom yet experience informs me that when freedom has been too terrifying to explore, then containment offered by the counsellor is essential to progress and if containment is not felt then exploration may be held up. This does not mean that containment was not offered or present but simply not felt due to the impact of the client's previous history (Etherington 2000). In these moments where emotional movement appears to be obliterated by previous experience what becomes important is the continued emotional presence of the counsellor. This is perhaps when, without the client being aware of it the counsellor holds what cannot be held or tolerated by the client. So in a sense it is the client's immobilised state which is contained (or freed) and which in being contained, frees the client to experience themselves (Klein 1995). In this way the client's own affects which have not before been brought into awareness may be experienced. As feelings are brought into awareness the client is enabled to move or remain stuck as opposition is either worked with or denied. However, even when opposition is denied and the client seems stuck

there remains the opportunity to examine this stuck position and from it view their internal world. The split between containment and freedom perhaps helps the client organise experience (Godwin 1994) so that some order begins to be created out of the chaos of their unaware unconscious. The overall structure of containment-freedom appears to hold both the stuck position of the client and various forms of movement which emerge in the following categories.

5.5.3 Uncontained-unfree

This polarity, like the overall polarity is also a paradox in that it is a polarity without movement which may be termed stagnant opposition because of the lack of movement. Perhaps it could be compared to being frozen with fear, or even an emotional paralysis that binds the client in the trauma of a past event, just as I was stuck in shock. In considering the existence of psychic energy Jung (1969) seems to describe this stuck position:

“ in the stoppage of libido that occurs when progress has become impossible, positive and negative no longer unite in co-ordinated action, because both have attained an equal value which keeps the scales balanced” (33).

It may be understood as no movement in that scales do not move when equally balanced. It also may be understood as ‘no feeling’ in that when feeling is cut off or denied it is not experienced or is outside of awareness. In this way uncontained-unfree may be seen as the axis, or centre point of the containment-freedom polarity.

Uncontained could be understood as having the same meaning as freedom but the apparent similarity between uncontained and freedom is not so simple. Freedom, by its very nature

suggests choice, but in an unfree place there is no choice in that choice cannot be experienced when the individual is stuck. Uncontained is a place of no movement, for there is neither containment nor freedom at this fixed point where nothing shifts. However if this stuck place can be brought into awareness through the containment and freedom provided by the counselling, then movement becomes a possibility as freedom, the possibility of choice comes into focus.

Unfree is the fixed polarity of uncontained. Each, exist together in the same place both superimposed and in opposition which is the bind that holds the client in a place of no reflections, and no movement. But again if this fixed point can be experienced and brought into awareness it becomes a place from where movement may be viewed and tested. It is perhaps somewhere along the continuum of this polarity that the capacity to be alone begins its growth within the individual. Aloneness may be experienced as a negative or unwanted state (Jacobs 1986). But as the experience of aloneness or isolation is felt within the therapeutic relationship it can be examined within the containment and freedom provided by the counsellor. Here, aloneness may be discovered in altered form as it comes to be realised in conscious knowing (Etherington 2000).

This category appears in participants' journals as a stuck place where they feel trapped or caught and unable to move towards change. But it is also a place where they appear to look around and examine where they are in their internal world. This example from the main study shows an entry that has been categorized as uncontained-unfree:

Extract 10. Entry from WAI journal W22.to show the category uncontained-unfree

Line 1.	Feeling disappointed with self
Line 2.	stuck + expecting to feel better.
Line 3.	Removing myself from situations
Line 4.	making others responsible for own mess.
Line 5.	Not allowing self to be dragged in
Line 6.	- do it differently + not explain how or why.
Line 7.	Keep asking as 'just in case'
Line 8.	stop asking + see what happens.
Line 9.	leave the load, relieve stuckness.
Line 10.	Accepting + respecting the others
Line 11.	paralysing fear.

The words used that suggest this category are; 'stuck' and 'paralysing fear'. However the full context of the journal also contributed to this construct being chosen. What can be seen is that the participant looks around to see what she does and she makes this clear in lines 3 and 4 where she suggests that she makes others responsible for what belongs to her. It is as if this understanding has only just come into conscious knowing.

5.5.4 Overcontained-overfree

This polarity appears to be an internal state of agitation that may affect the physical body and the external world as racing thoughts affect judgements and physical movement. It could be described as emotional hyperventilating, a kind of suffocating of the self and one's own feelings. It is like the chaos and confusion I felt following trauma when I did not know how to contain or find freedom from my experiences. Hiccups could be the physiological metaphor for overcontained in that with hiccups a person seems to be unable to control their body and the overcontained client does not seem to have control of their feeling states. However, unlike

uncontained where there is no movement or process, overcontained does have movement within but it is as if it is not owned or does not belong to the client in that it appears to be out of his/her control. The overcontained client is full of other people's thoughts and feelings rather than their own. The movement caused by this then is an attempt to get rid of the unwanted (Steiner 1993) thoughts and feelings while at the same time feeling restrained from doing this. Like hiccups which is caused by the involuntary contraction of the diaphragm while the glottis is spasmodically closed, it is as if the psyche contracts in the hope of expelling what does not belong to it while the insecure self spasmodically shuts itself down in deference to others' perceptions. The 'compliant' client who constantly tries to please everyone (like Beauty) including the counsellor might feel 'at home' in this category.

Overfree is the panic or hysteria which causes a rush of thoughts or feelings exhibited in movement which cannot settle. Such rushing around, may be destructive as it closes down the possibility of rational thought or action. There is a sense of feeling beyond help in the chaos of such hyperactivity (like the Beast who alone can only be wild). Perhaps obsessive compulsive disorders could be seen as a state where the client is almost completely taken over by this polarity as the client's attention seems solely taken up with the compulsive activity that relegates the underlying affect beyond reach. If these states can be brought into awareness and experienced within the safe environment provided by the counsellor, then the individual may find the freedom which enables these aspects of him/herself to begin the process of change.

This category appears in the journals as an internal place which appears to be full of other people's opinions and thoughts rather than those of the client. It also emerges as confusion as if

there is a kind of internal rushing around within a chaotic part of the self. An extract of a journal entry from the pilot study demonstrates how this construct came to be understood:

Extract 11. Entry from a pilot study journal to show overfree

Line.1	afraid
Line 2.	swallowed up
Line 3.	selective deafness!
Line 4.	“close call”
Line 5.	survived
Line 6.	phew!
Line 7.	Feel like I’m flying by the seat of my pants!
Line 8.	Got away with it and very pleased with my avoidance.
Line 9.	Feel got at
Line 10.	abandoned
Line 11.	alone
Line 12.	irritated / annoyed
Line 13.	frustrated

In the pilot study analysis constructs were designated to each line for example; seeing a fight between containment-freedom in lines 4,5,6 and 8; uncontained-unfree in lines 2 and 3 where the client seems unable to move. However since spending more time on the interpretation of the text in the main study this whole section would now be put into the category of overcontained-overfree. There seems to be a sense of repetitive internal movements through the whole section, as if the participant is unable to be still. There are several words that suggest movement including, swallowed, survived, flying, got away, avoidance, irritated and frustrated. It is as if she is ‘flying by the seat of her pants’ through the whole extract and cannot find a place where she can settle. There may also be links to the idea that she has ‘swallowed up’ her feelings as if her “consciousness had simply withdrawn from contents that were too painful” (Jung 1969: 146) for her. In this way she is unable to let the painful parts of herself exist yet neither can such parts

be got rid of. They are experienced in forms of repetitive movement which seem to be brought into awareness during the session and the journal entry.

5.5.5 Fighting containment-freedom

Fighting and avoiding containment-freedom seems to be both a fight to change and not to change. To give up familiar and known ways of being the self for an unknown, different and individual way of being, tends to cause battles.

This is a place that could be described as not knowing where or how to be, as the fear of losing familiar ways of being, encroaches on the desire to be dependent on the counsellor. The part of the client which needs care chooses to come for counselling, but the independent part of the client is threatened by the possibility of becoming reliant on the counsellor. Fighting or avoiding containment seems to be a necessary aspect of the process of movement. It is rather like the bad tempered baby who needs the reassurance of mother's presence, even as he tries to hit her. If containment has not been experienced, except for example as an unknown absence then perhaps the avoidance of containment is a fight against the unknown. The containment offered by the counsellor may also feel intrusive (Stern 1985) as if the counsellor is breaking through the client's defences. Fighting the containment of the counsellor may be part of the process of experiencing containment which develops the awareness of the self (Carstairs 1992) that enables the client to move towards separation from others as opposed to merger with others.

The freedom to be an individual, separate from others (as opposed to merged), is an isolating, and frightening way to be when first experienced. Just the separateness of the counsellor may highlight a sense of this aloneness for the client. The counsellor may seem distant, deaf or

emotionally absent to the client because of the counsellor's capacity to be separate. Freedom may be experienced as loss or emptiness inside, in that to think one's own thoughts without relying on previously learned beliefs or attitudes may feel very isolating. Fighting or avoiding freedom can be the intense reaction to the fear of being different from others, but the movement created by that fear has a volatile intensity which may enable growth. As with the other categories, fighting and avoiding containment-freedom is a necessary part of the client's journey. The fight may be passive and/or aggressive, but if a client wishes to change, then this upheaval of movement may provide the friction necessary to engender that new life.

Examples of this category appear to be expressed in the journals as a desire to end the counselling, being late for sessions or an inability to be dependent on the counsellor. It may also be present in words that express opposition and anger that may feel impossible to express. In the pilot study a section of one entry seems to show this category clearly:

Extract 12. Entry from a pilot study journal to show fighting containment-freedom

Line 1.	Feel "nothing" towards
Line 2.	her. Want her to
Line 3.	be a "non entity"
Line 4.	Do not want to
Line 5.	connect with her.
Line 6.	Don't care what
Line 7.	she thinks of
Line 8.	me - I don't want
Line 9.	to know.
Line 10.	Don't want to know
Line 11.	what I think of
Line 12.	her. Don't want to
Line 13.	"love" her because
Line 14.	its not forever.

The participant seems to demonstrate her distrust towards the counsellor by feeling nothing (line 1) towards her and wanting her to be a non entity (line 3). It is as if she cannot face the possibility of feeling love (line 13) towards the counsellor, for if she did she might feel dependent on her. It seems there is a fight to stay as she is, distrusting the counsellor but also a fight to love her. There seems to be a fear of love because it would not be forever (line 14). This suggests that the client has lost someone she loves and dare not love again. It is as if she regresses to an earlier time where she has suffered loss and she feels young and vulnerable in a place where she appears to have lost her balance. Her thoughts towards the counsellor may be seen as exaggerated as if there is no room for the other side of her feelings, no room for the poles of opposition. According to Jung (1969) it is the working together of the inner polarities that:

“makes possible the balanced regularity of these processes which without this inner polarity would become one sided and unreasonable. We are therefore justified in regarding all extravagant and exaggerated behaviour as a loss of balance because the co-ordinating effect of the opposite impulse is obviously lacking” (32-33).

The opposing feelings of the participant's desire to love seem to be hidden in lines 10 - 12 for she does not want to know what she thinks of the counsellor as if she is defending herself against her own feelings. In this sense there is a fight to stay the same and be independent and a fight to change by risking 'love', and becoming dependent on the counsellor. It is as if the tension between these opposing desires leads to 'a loss of balance' that the participant consciously experiences in the session.

5.5.6 Desire for containment-freedom

This polarity gives a sense of the enormous range of movement within the containment-freedom concept. There is a tug of war between wanting containment and wanting freedom (as I experienced in chapter 1) for while the two concepts are split they appear only to contradict each other rather than complement.

Usually a more conscious movement, wanting containment is a wish to be held or cared for by the counsellor. It is a desire to feel safe as well as recognised or known as an individual. It may be experienced as a desire to feel merged within the safe containment of the counsellor, to be liked, understood (Steiner 1993) and accepted by her, and even to feel like her, or for the client to feel that there is a likeness between him/herself and the counsellor (Siegel 1996).

Wanting freedom has a huge energy or movement which may be grasped with a sense of control or power. It may cause a feeling of dislike or irritation with the counsellor. It may also surface with feelings of isolation experienced in moments of separateness which may be too huge to contemplate as such. Yet there may also be the desire to be an individual, to be different from others rather than having to feel or be the same as others. This polarity may be seen in the journals as the client's desire to be accepted by others, particularly the counsellor. It may also be seen as the desire to be different, a unique or exclusive self (Anderson 1997; 364) who can bear to be outside the group and separate from others. An example of this category may be seen in the journal entry below:

Extract 13. Entry from a pilot study journal to show desire for containment-freedom

Line 1.	Felt safe, held
Line 2.	cared for
Line 3.	“loved” her
Line 4.	Relieved / thankful

In this small entry the participant seems to demonstrate her desire for containment of her internal world in that she appears to feel safe, held and cared for (line 1,2). She even seems to feel love (line 3) for the counsellor and this appears to cause her to feel relieved and thankful as if she now trusts the counsellor. Unlike in the previous example (p. 139 extract 12) when she could not access her own thoughts about the counsellor, here she seems to be able to find her own thoughts and realize that she feels relieved and thankful. It is as if the client’s ‘fight’ in the previous entry enabled the polarity between containment and freedom to work together for here she seems calmer, and able to access the other pole of her own affect.

5.5.7 Towards containment-freedom

The pull and swing of a pendulum is a useful image for this polarity. There is a sense of alternating emotional movement but still perhaps some indecision as to which way to go. There remains a desire to be merged and/or contained by another just as there remains a desire to keep one’s freedom and be separate (Field 1994; 477). These first swings towards either side of the polarity may be tentative and momentary, but are a strong indication of movement. This movement may be seen as a necessary aspect of progress in the client:

“it is essential for progression, which is the successful achievement of adaptation,

that impulse and counter-impulse, positive and negative, should reach a state of regular interaction and mutual influence” (Jung 1969; 33).

The concept of interaction in this study is perceived as happening between internal containment and freedom. Some vague sense of movement is perhaps the initial phase of a shift towards containment being felt within the client. It is strong, like the swing of a pendulum, but faint like the rousing of a child from sleep or the ‘hatching’ process described in chapter 2. Perhaps it can be seen as the tentative letting go of defended over-containment. Momentarily the client experiences the containment offered in the freedom provided by the counsellor, in that s/he finds the freedom needed to own a greater range of spontaneous feelings (Miller 1979). Perhaps this movement is always present in a working relationship for the uncontainable may be invisibly contained in what feels to the client to be the worst of sessions, in that unfamiliar affects are felt and these feel different and uncomfortable.

As with ‘towards containment’ this movement ‘towards freedom’ is a momentary shift towards separation and away from a merged state. It is a glimpse of the possibility of being a different self with new perceptions, feelings and values, or in Rogers’ (1951; 489) terminology, the beginnings of ‘self actualisation’. There is a sense of either stillness or movement where the client is able to feel satisfaction or understanding in holding or owning their own feelings. It is hard to visualise these two existing together for the struggling client, but perhaps that is what is so difficult, the reality that containment and freedom can coexist. Perhaps it is worth remembering that Beauty (containment) and the Beast (freedom) are aspects of one person that need to unite so that the individual begins to integrate opposing aspects within themselves.

Whether moving towards containment or freedom this polarity is demonstrated in the journals by the client's growing capacity to feel his/her own affect as opposed to what 'should' be thought or felt, or what is defended from feeling. It is an owning of parts of the self which have not been previously brought into awareness. Sometimes it may be the dynamic meeting of an 'unthought known' (Bollas 1987; 101). The example for this construct is taken from the main study:

Extract 14. Entry from A journal W44 to show towards containment-freedom

Line 1.	Enduring
Line 2.	Feeling passed on through generations
Line 3.	Fear of being trapped underground
Line 4.	Known + unknown side of people
Line 5.	My picture at the workshop
Line 6.	Want to be seen.

The participant meets a fear of being trapped underground, which has been symbolized previously in the journal but not owned as it is here. It is as if she acknowledges there is an unknown self that has been buried and that this fear was part of that unknown self. She starts to own more selves as she moves towards owning her own internal world, her own thoughts and feelings.

This category highlights containment and freedom experienced almost simultaneously as shifts occur for the client, but it also highlights still moments where a kind of holding, pleasure or understanding occur, which may also be termed 'balance' (Jung 1969; 33), or stillness. The entry feels mysterious and creates stillness in the way it is written. Bringing together opposing parts of herself she seems to demonstrate Jung's moment of balance as she realizes she wants to

be seen.

5.6 The structure

Visualizing or understanding the concept of a containment-freedom polarity feels almost impossible. But if the idea of a continuum is drawn out then it may be possible to have a sense of the movement and pull between the two aspects of the polarity (p.122). The continuum incorporates all the categories and the whole sits on the axis of uncontained-unfree, the stuck position. There is a sense that opposition pulls through the axis so that the categories move together shifting through each other along the continuum. All are part of a process of movement and in this sense every category has value. When the contents of a category are brought into conscious awareness the client discovers the opportunity to meet previously unknown selves. For example in the following entry from a main study journal the participant seems to realize that she is in a stuck position, that is uncontained-unfree:

Extract 15. Entry from WF journal W3. to show uncontained-unfree

Line 1. Still unsure - I am MAKING myself!
Line 2. Feel it <u>must</u> be happening for a reason.
Line 3. I feel so 'squirmy'
Line 4. The boundaries are <u>So</u> tight.
Line 5. She knows I have been 'testing'.
Line 6. Why am I being cruel to myself?
Line 7. She will make me 'get there'!

She says that she feels 'squirmy' (line 3) in this place as if she is trying to get out but making no progress. She recognizes the boundaries of the counselling, they feel 'so tight' (line 4). Both of these feelings suggest that she is unable to move internally. She also seems to question whether

she is cruel to herself (line 6) as if there is a realization that she keeps herself in this place. It seems she has the opportunity to experience and see where she is. She feels her apparent stuckness and then questions if she makes this happen to herself. It is as if she has a viewing platform, on the axis, where even though she feels stuck she is able to see something of where she is. This provides an opening for choice or movement away from one way of being into another. It is as if there is a desire for union within herself, brought into awareness by being stuck. The opposing parts of her seem drawn together:

“True opposites are never incommensurables; if they were they could never unite. All contrariety notwithstanding, they do show a constant propensity to union” (Jung 1969; 207).

Jung’s (1969) theory ‘On Psychic Energy’ provides a clear of understanding of the movement which I originally sensed within myself and then searched for in the participant’s journals. The fit between his theory and the construct (p.126) emerged from the study. His work seems to confirm the sense of movement between polarities and the need for the unity of the polarities.

5.7 Conclusion

This chapter has described the theoretical construct of the containment-freedom polarity and the categories that emerged within it. The categories that were created by the pilot study became clearer during the main study. This may imply that the participants who took part in the main study and knew the theme of the research did, whether consciously or unconsciously, covertly or openly, include the theme in their narratives. However, the categories may have become clearer through the more thorough analysis of the journals before looking for the categories.

Opposition/polarity seems to be inherent in the journal narratives and the attraction of opposition gains clarity through my interaction with the data. Beauty and the Beast deny each other yet want each other. The friction felt in opposing desires seems to be created by both desires being felt at once. Jung's work on opposition clarifies the categories and gives them credibility in that they correspond with established theory. Although it still feels difficult to hold the splits between containment and freedom together, this perhaps mirrors the difficulty of the client who struggles to recognize and accept opposing feelings.

CHAPTER SIX

ANALYSIS OF MAIN STUDY

6.1 Introduction

This chapter will tell the story of the main study analysis, including the difficult beginning, how the journals were interpreted and how these interpretations influenced the choice of category chosen for each journal entry. In the pilot study a process of categorising grew from the analysis, from repetitive reading and organising the data as it was continually questioned and as I lived (Denzin and Lincoln 1998) the fluidity of the process. Meaning, suggested by the participants' language influenced the choice of categories, as did the theoretical language already familiar to me (Strauss and Corbin 1990). The analysis of the main study began in the same way. However more attention was given to the analysis of the text and this eventually helped with finding the category for each journal entry. Due to a personal bereavement, I seemed to be more aware of loss and pain in the journals. Grieving brought opposition into focus in my life again, so this must have influenced the analysis of the journals. But there were also times when I struggled to work, to think at all and this also impacted on the analysis. As Etherington suggests qualitative research may create the potential for the personal growth of the researcher "because we write of ourselves in the process" (Etherington 2001; 119). It seems that as I grew through my grief, this impacted on the analysis making me more aware of loss in the narratives.

6.2 A difficult beginning

The analysis of the main study journals felt different to the first study in that the length of time the journals covered ranged from twenty five to fifty three weeks rather than the fifteen weeks of

the pilot study. The participants were asked to keep a journal for up to forty weeks but were also allowed to use their own discretion, or the ending of their counselling, to decide when to finish the journal. This enabled the participant's own autonomy to remain part of the work. At the start of the analysis I felt lost and rather overwhelmed by the quantity of the narrative to be worked with. There was also a sense of being out of touch with the construct that emerged from the pilot study as if I was unable to hold onto what had already emerged. My sense of conviction about the categories seemed lost. It was as if the work was too enormous for me to contain or even think about so there was an immense struggle to begin the main analysis. It was this inability to think about the work that helped me to make the decision to interpret the texts without thinking about categorizing. In this way it was possible to continue with the work rather than becoming completely stuck. Each of the initial interpretations travelled through many drafts as I allowed myself to become familiar with them. Naming the journals from their context happened as part of this process as names that seemed to fit each participant arose from the narratives, these were: Alice; Little Girl; Who Am I; Turned On; Wriggling Fish.

The names and story of each journal will be addressed in chapter 7. Only when each journal had been analysed did the search for categories begin and I found that there was an interaction between these two tasks as together they enabled a closer intimacy with the text. By interpreting the narrative without thinking about categories there was a greater knowledge and understanding of the texts before the categorizing took place.

6.3 Interpreting the journals

Firstly the journals were read and typed out, keeping as close to how they were presented as possible. Both lower, and upper case lettering, speech marks and any other symbols were

reproduced as accurately as possible. For example Wriggling fish in week thirty writes:

Extract 16 To illustrate markings copied from the original texts.

Line 1. Sunshine, feel 'lighter'.
Line 2. Thoughts of case study / client
Line 3. My hooks, client hooks, 8 !! yrs.
Line 4. Manipulation - weaving in & out.
Line 5. A spider's web, the rings, sticky.
Line 6. The web, ⊕ ←me the barrier ≡ ← me
Line 7. = NO WONDER STUCK !!!
Line 8. Circle, hands held tight !!
Line 9. White sculpture - female generations mine.
Line 10. Stones - role reversal - chaos!
Line 11. Want to feel support of ancestors!

The amount of exclamation marks, the drawing of a spider's web, upper case lettering and other symbols add to the impact of the entry. This is then taken account of in the relevant parts of the analysis as seen below:

Extract 17. From the analysis, to illustrate the impact of symbols, punctuation and varied letting on the interpretation of the text.

She provides the image of a spider's web (line 5) with sticky rings. She draws an arrow to the centre of the spider's web and labels this as 'me', as if she is caught in the centre of the web. She then draws a barrier and labels this 'me'. The equal signs seem to emphasize that these are two representations of her, as if she is both stuck in the web and trapped behind the barrier that she erects. She starts line 7 with another equals sign as if she realizes that this combination of web and barrier make her very stuck (line 7). She also writes this line in capitals again as if to draw the enormity of the revelation for herself. It also feels important that this enormity is noticed by me as the reader. Line 8 gives the image of hands, possibly hers, held in a tight circle, and it seems possible that this may be the white sculpture of the female generations (line 9) of her

family that she has inherited. The colour white hints at purity, and maybe she is concerned about damaging that purity. Perhaps the stones (line 10) represent something that cannot be moved, yet they seem to make her think of role reversal (line 10) and the chaos that could be caused by this. Exclamation marks at the end of some lines seem to emphasize the importance of all these statements. She ends with wanting to feel the support of ancestors (line 11) as if there is some fear that she may not feel their support if she is too different and reverses her roles. It seems there could be a desire to escape manipulation, escape the sticky spider's web and the barriers that hold her within the tight circle of purity.

All the elements in this entry add to the information about the participant's internal world as she recognizes how stuck she has been. They image the way she sees herself and this demonstrates the importance of copying the journals as accurately as possible.

In Little Girl the whole journal is written in upper case lettering. It gives a stark feel to the writing. It also gives a sense of how thought out each entry was and seems to illustrate the writer's pain at the same time. In week fifteen she writes:

Extract 18. To illustrate the starkness of upper case lettering.

Line 1.	SHE HAD GONE
Line 2.	LONG BEFORE
Line 3.	I LOST HER
Line 4.	SHE HAD GONE

The impact of these few words seems enhanced by the upper case lettering. It is as if she is learning to howl through her words as I did following trauma. The starkness of her loss seems to be laid bare by the way she writes out the words. This is reflected in the analysis:

Extract 19. To illustrate the interpretation of Little Girl's journal.

An image of unspeakable emptiness is created in these four lines. It seems that the client may be realizing the loss of her mother in a new way, as if she is feeling, even seeing, the grief of all she missed (week 14). Somehow her mother was lost to her even before she died. Perhaps there is also some realization that the client had lost herself, long before she had felt that she had a self to lose. There is a huge sadness wrapped up in these few words. This entry seems to hold a monolith of feelings. There is so much loss that more words would cover it up, hide the reality of how enormous this had been, and is for her. Perhaps this is why the client's style of writing is so precise, for hidden in the order of so few words, is the chaos of loss and trauma.

Initially the journals were interpreted from a linguistic/poetic and counselling standpoint in order to find the meanings and feelings both hidden and made clear in the words and symbols. During the interpretation of the first journal five sets of expression emerged which formed a basis for discovering meaning and understanding each journal. This kept a similarity of process within the work and provided a starting point for each analysis. These sets and their functions were:

1. Images: imaging the client's present condition
2. Questions: the client wondering what to do next
3. Exhortations to self: the client telling herself what to do
4. Action + reflection: the client recounting an action and reflecting upon it
5. Adjectives: describing the client's present condition

6.3.1 Images

Images were the metaphors or similes that created a felt or visual image in my body or mind and

formed a picture of the participant's internal world, or feeling state at the time of writing. The power of words appears to be drawn out in the images that were created. This seems to display the importance of the way the participants were asked to write with just a few words on each line. Their feelings appear to be condensed and highlighted by this process. The images created in the journals were often powerful in that they appeared to image aspects of the participant's internal world. The following extract from a journal demonstrates a powerful image:

Extract 20. From WAI journal W2 to illustrate a powerful image.

Line 1.	Felt good, valued,
Line 2.	embarrassed to be me.
Line 3.	Working on 'stuckness'.
Line 4.	Adult self - taking care of
Line 5.	child - pain, vulnerability
Line 6.	"frozen child" - pain + trauma.
Line 7.	Re-experiencing above -
Line 8.	need to find way of making it
Line 9.	OK, appropriate / liveable.
Line 10.	Recognition of loss in childhood
Line 11.	Co. feels good, real, not a book – human

In the following extract from the analysis I look at what the image/metaphor of "frozen child" suggests about the participant's present condition:

Extract 21. From the analysis to show the clients present condition.

<p>The client suggests that her adult self (line 4) takes care of her child (line 5) self and describes her child self as a 'frozen child'. This is a powerful image and surrounded by the words of pain, vulnerability and trauma suggesting the image of a child who is unable to move as well being</p>
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filled with emotive experiences. She is frozen, which is perhaps her present condition, cold as if she is unloved and possibly may struggle to feel the warmth of love. Part of her is perhaps still this frozen child. She appears to have re-experienced (line 7) some of her childhood feelings in the session and says that she needs to find a way of making the past okay, appropriate and liveable (lines 8,9). It feels as if the past was none of these things and perhaps the agony is that she cannot change the past and make it better.

Such images in the journals help to tell the story of the participant during this recording of their counselling experience. This frozen child seems to thaw out during the process of counselling and find out more about who she is and what she feels as she appears to access and take possession of her own feelings.

6.3.2. Questions

All the participants ask themselves questions in their journals and these seem to suggest what it is they want to do next. This is made clear when the outcome of a question is found. In week fifteen of her journal Wriggling fish writes:

Extract 22. From WF to show the impact of questions.

Line 1. Why was I angry as a child?
Line 2. I found out!
Line 3. Why do I need old patterns?
Line 4. The time flew.
Line 5. It feels safe and supported
Line 6. I have freedom but no containment.
Line 7. → in my life.
Line 8. I need to find a balance.
Line 9. And not struggle so!

The question which asks why she was an angry child (line 1) appears to be answered immediately for she says she found out. She appears to feel that she has freedom but no containment (line 6), so perhaps as a child and as an adult she feels that there is something that she is unable to contain or own about herself. The real answer to the question seems to begin to show itself in the next entry, week sixteen (below), for Wriggling Fish begins to experience overwhelming (line 3) feelings, even speak feelings which appear to be new for her for she also says that she is learning (line 6) to do this:

Extract 23. From WF to show a response to a question.

Line 1. Gut wrenching tears!!
Line 2. Two minutes yesterday
Line 3. Overwhelming today.
Line 4. I hated myself
Line 5. Tissues, pillows
Line 6. Learning to speak feelings
Line 7. And feel it is OK!!
Line 8. Safe, trust, supported.
Line 9. A smile.

Rather than only knowing where her feelings of anger come from, as in the previous entry, the participant seems to experience feeling. It seems that her anger has been hiding sadness which appears to be experienced during the session she writes about. Questions appear to move the participants forward as if enabling them to move internally. In this way the journals seemed to have enabled them to be reflexive about their counselling and themselves as if writing added awareness to their process.

6.3.3.Exhortations to self

The participants seem to tell themselves very clearly what they want to do or must do as if they exhort themselves to give themselves confidence. In week fifteen of her journal Alice seems to do this several times:

Extract 24. From a journal to show an exhortation to the self.

Line 1.	Concentrate on blankness
Line 2.	Split in half
Line 3.	How much do I want to find me?
Line 4.	Jealous of energy
Line 5.	Want it for me
Line 6.	Came in in fragments, went out
Line 7.	more whole.
Line 8.	Don't share T's burdens.
Line 9.	Say how I feel. Tell him how
Line 10.	he's made me feel. Be it.

Alice makes four exhortations to herself during this entry and they appear to enable her to shift internally. These exhortations may be seen by the way she tells herself to do things like 'concentrate on blankness', 'want it for me', 'say how I feel', and 'be it'. Four extracts from the analysis are included to demonstrate this movement:

Extract 24a. From the analysis to show internal movement.

<p>She appears to start the session by concentrating on her own blankness (line 1). She exhorts herself to do this as if there is a determination to cut off and be defensive. She sees that she is split in half (line 2), a strong image, that seems to help her see, with the exhortation, that there is a part of herself that she cuts off from, as well as naming her present split condition.</p>
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Extract 24b. From the analysis to show internal movement.

She is jealous of another's energy (line 4.) and wants it for herself (line 5) as if she can see in others the potential she has in herself. It is as if she is telling herself to have this energy.

Extract 24c. From the analysis to show internal movement.

She exhorts herself to tell him how she feels (line 9.) as if she needs to demonstrate that she is different. She perhaps wants to give him back his projections.

Extract 24d. From the analysis to show internal movement.

She exhorts herself to 'Be it' (line10), as if she is telling herself that she needs to be her feelings. But it also seems possible that a part of her still does not want to share her internal world, her burdens, with the counsellor, and is perhaps angry with her. If this story about 'T' symbolizes something of the client's relationship with the counsellor perhaps she is also wanting to 'be it', that is be her feelings in this setting. And perhaps part of that being is the anger she may feel with the counsellor for enabling her to be more aware of her feelings, and more aware of her way of looking at the external world from her defended spy hole.

Such exhortations to the self also help to demonstrate how the journals became part of the participant's journey through counselling, for they are writing to and for themselves as opposed to only writing to comply with my requests as the researcher. The length of the journals and the personal way they are written seems to confirm that they wrote as much, if not more for

themselves, than they did for me. This is confirmed by one of the participants. In a letter written to me by Wriggling Fish before she had the opportunity to feedback on the analysis, she wrote:

“I was reminded as I listened, of my participation in your research and I remembered how very helpful and insightful that was for me as a client - to write a few lines of lasting impressions of the session and of how helpful it was to read back through all the sessions to see the movement and to remember the moments of excitement and enlightenment and also the deep darkness at times” (WF).

6.3.4. Action + reflection

This set notes how the participants recounted an action that they had made and then reflected upon it. It seems to demonstrate their thoughtfulness and the care they took in keeping the journals. Again the journals can be seen as personal narratives of the counselling journey. In week 4, Turned On writes:

Extract 25. From a journal to show action and reflection.

Line 1.	This is my second week
Line 2.	without counselling and I
Line 3.	have mixed feelings about
Line 4.	it, I have survived on my
Line 5.	own and have not felt
Line 6.	too alone this week but a
Line 7.	little sad because I am
Line 8.	finding it difficult to
Line 9.	talk about how I feel
Line 10.	with anyone who is not
Line 11.	having help themselves
Line 12.	I'm losing touch with
Line 13.	them really don't feel
Line 14.	too bothered about it but
Line 15.	I suppose this makes me
Line 16.	do more work on me
Line 17.	and work things through
Line 18.	for myself, but not too

Line 19	sure that the end results
Line 20.	are correct. But I will
Line 21.	learn the hard way if
Line 22.	not!

The actions reported are how she had survived her second week without counselling and the difficulty she had in talking to anyone who was not having counselling themselves. These actions and reflections are included in the analysis:

Extract 26. From analysis to show action and reflection.

The second week without counselling (line 1,2) seems to make the client very thoughtful, reflexive as she moves in and out of feelings and actions and examines them. She has mixed feelings (line 3) which seems different to the confusion of previous entries as if she is managing to think and write more clearly. She appears to realize that she has survived the break on her own but seems aware that she feels further away from others who do not have help (line11), counselling, and who she struggles to talk to about her feelings (line 9). Although she feels that she is losing touch (line 12) with these others she also states that she is not too bothered about it (line 14) as if at this time she has some sense of the importance of working on herself (line16), without the intrusive opinions of others. Being more alone appears to help her work things through (line17) even though she is not too sure about the end results (line 19) of this working though being correct (line 20). She seems to suggest that if she is not doing this correctly that she will learn the hard way (line 21) as if there is an expectation that learning will be hard for her in the sense that she perhaps feels that she has always done things wrong or even felt wrong in who she is. Perhaps this being so 'hard' for her also describes her present condition in that this is a hard road for her to travel. It also feels important for her to get things right, 'correct', as if making a mistake or getting something wrong really matters to her. But she is also definite, even affirmative for she 'will' learn (line 20). There seems to be no room for self doubt here, she seems very determined as if the reflection on herself is exhorting herself to learn.

In reflecting on the break from counselling the participant seems enabled to think about her sadness at losing touch with friends. But she is also able to think about the process of working through such feelings even though she is unsure about the outcome of this process. The action of recognizing the loss of the counselling in a break, where she chooses to keep the journal, seems to create this reflexive dialogue with herself. Just as I wrote out trauma in the safety of my poetry so it seems possible that the journal became the container, or safe place, where the participant is able to write her thoughts and feelings. This then may be seen as part of the action and reflection in that the action of recognizing the loss of the counselling session is recorded by another action, writing, and seems to enable her to be reflexive.

6.3.5. Adjectives

Adjectives appear to describe the participants' present condition that is how they are feeling or experiencing themselves as they write. This is similar to imaging their present condition, and perhaps now I would put them both into one set to avoid repetition. However it is interesting to see how adjectives were used. When first reading Turned On, the journal feels simply written and not particularly descriptive yet it is full of feeling. It almost feels as if the adjectives are hidden in a kind of internal commentary. In the following extract from week two she writes:

Extract 27. From a journal to show the use of adjectives

Line 1.	My week has been low and
Line 2.	seemed dark, couldn't lift out
Line 3.	of it. Day of counselling come
Line 4.	didn't want to go felt it would
Line 5.	be better to stay home. But went
Line 6.	anyway and glad I did my
Line 7.	emotions are so raw I couldn't
Line 8.	have survived another week
Line 9.	on my own I felt comfort

Line 10. just from the room and went
Line 11. deep into the hurts that I
Line 12. have been holding onto for
Line 13. some time

The only adjectives used are: low, dark, raw, and deep yet with the other words they seem to describe what may be a depressed state and appear to show her felt condition at the time clearly. The journal Little Girl feels sparse in the way it is written yet when adjectives are used they create powerful images. In the following entry, week nine, she uses four adjectives:

Extract 28. From a journal to show the use of adjectives.

Line 1. JUST A FRIGHTENED
Line 2. LITTLE GIRL
Line 3. TALKING ABOUT
Line 4. A NOTHING
Line 5. THAT CAME SO CLOSE
Line 6. TO BEING
Line 7. A SOMETHING
Line 8. AND SHOCKED BY
Line 9. HOW MUCH
Line 10. IT HURTS.

‘Frightened’ and ‘little’ image how the client is in the moment and create the impression of a small cowering child. ‘Close’ appears to suggest that she came near to accomplishing something; while ‘shocked’ seems to say that her internal child is surprised by pain. On their own the adjectives may suggest the present feeling condition but it is difficult without looking at the other words to understand what is happening. There is also the fact that the entry needs to be looked at within the context of the whole journal. The interpretation of the entry puts the adjectives

together with these other aspects of the entry:

Extract 29. From the analysis to show how adjectives affect the analysis.

In this entry the client seems to tell us the reality of her present condition with the image of a frightened little girl (lines 1,2). While talking about a nothing (lines 3, 4) that came very close to turning into something (lines 5,6,7) she was shocked by how much it hurts (lines 8,9,10). She moves between the present and past tense and there is more sense of the session having happened rather than her still being in it as in other entries. But the hurts remain and still exist in the moment of writing as she seems to reflexively allow herself to re-experience the feelings. Perhaps she was shocked to realize that the anguish of the loss of her mother is still with her so strongly, still hidden in the words that she has previously hidden that reality in. The nothing seems to hide something very powerful. It seems that she is writing out the process of her counselling as it is affecting her. Perhaps she came closer to the hurts than she has ever done before.

The adjectives are only part of the image that is created. The other words move the whole entry through the tenses, perhaps through the past and present of the participant's life. There is so much of 'something' created by the image of a 'nothing' for the 'nothing' seems to have an enormous presence. In this way the whole of the journal context affects the analysis of each individual entry. For example in the above week of 'Little Girl' the loss of the client's mother in childhood seems present even though it is not actually written about in this entry. It seems no one entry can be interpreted without some reference to the whole.

6.4 From sets of expression to categories

The sets of expression enabled entry into the narratives at a time when I was unable to think

about the categories. However, as the process of analysing progressed it seemed to reawaken my enthusiasm for the work. It was as if I had been going through a period of gestation of which I was unaware at the time. There was also a realization that although one category might be seen as most evident in an entry that others may be implicitly present. This allowed the process of using the categories to feel more manageable and also enabled a growing clarity to develop. The more in depth interpretation of the narratives, separate from the construct categories, seems to have enabled a greater understanding of the construct to emerge.

6.5 The categories

The categories were confirmed in the main study analysis as they were defined and became clearer. Realizing that the polarity may be understood as a continuum (p.122) helped me to make sense of the categories being implicit in that one is within or alongside others. It seems impossible to view the categories without the interplay between them and the interpretation of the narrative being discussed alongside, for one, impacts upon the other. The form of the journal writing, condensing thoughts and feelings into short phrases also impacts on the categories for the way the participants write also creates rhythm and feelings within those rhythms. This weaving of all the elements makes for a complex analysis which adds to the richness of the work. All the participants are placed in each of the categories (appendix 12) several times in their journals. There does not appear to be any pattern between moving from one category to another. Some participants are in one category more than others but this seems to relate to the individual process of each participant rather than showing anything about order of movement which was not found.

6.5.1 Uncontained-unfree

This category can be difficult to define because although the client may be stuck, as I was stuck in shock, there may still be a feeling of desiring movement or looking around to see where they are. Other categories may also be present so the interrelationships then need to be investigated.

An example of this process may be seen in week fourteen when Who am I writes:

Extract 30. From a journal to show uncontained-unfree.

Line 1.	Sadness - feeling heavy.
Line 2.	Uncertainty of future, feels
Line 3.	like I have 'outgrown my
Line 4.	constructs'. much self-doubt.
Line 5.	"affair potential if I had the
Line 6.	confidence + self-esteem".
Line 7.	Huge, overbearing lethargic
Line 8.	sadness. Need to do it differently
Line 9.	How?
Line 10.	Greater nurturing of self + family
Line 11.	+ reduce the energy invested in
	'partnership'.

At first sight there appears to be movement in that she feels her sadness and wants to live differently so there may be a desire to contain her own affect but the analysis helps to show that she is perhaps stuck, yet looking around:

Extract 31. From the analysis to show how this influenced the choice of category.

This entry starts with a description of the client's sadness (line 1) which feels heavy and later she returns to add to this description (lines 7,8) as if writing the entry has made her more aware of how enormous the sadness is. Her future feels uncertain (line 2) and she feels that she has outgrown the constructs (lines 3,4) she has lived with until now. It appears the process of therapy is enabling her to question who she is or wants to be and perhaps this is what her self doubt (line 4) is about. The whole of lines 5 and 6 are in speech marks as if she is talking to herself very

particularly. Perhaps there is a part of her that would like to have enough self esteem and confidence to have an affair (lines 5,6) or maybe she needs an affair with herself which is what the counselling appears to offer – perhaps an affair between Beauty and the Beast. Yet it is after this that she describes her sadness again so perhaps she is unsure about this. It seems she wants to do life differently, or be herself differently (line 8) yet she says this is a need which suggests a desire to change. In questioning how (line 9) to do this she appears to be telling herself what to do next. She then seems to answer the question by saying that she wants to nurture herself and her family more and reduce the energy invested in the partnership (line 11) with her husband as if their relationship has been her main focus. Perhaps she has wanted more than he has been able to give in that she may have wanted him to save her from her past (be her Beast) rather than having to be her own Beast. An ‘affair’ with herself may enable her to save herself. Perhaps she needs to reduce the amount of energy that she spends on being the victim (Beauty) in her internal partnership with an abusive self.

The analysis goes behind the words and examines what may be hidden within them. Seeing the affair potential as the potential to have an affair with herself and discover more about herself suggests that her unconscious may place messages within the writing. She also seems to imply that she is lacking in self esteem and confidence and is too lethargic to have this affair and it is the lack of action in the lethargy that helps to decide on the category of uncontained-unfree:

Extract 32. From the analysis to show how this influenced the choice of category.

Although there appears to be a sense of movement she does not seem to actually make any progress. She seems to begin to feel the weight of her sadness yet does not seem able to find the freedom to have an affair with herself. She can imagine the possibility of change yet seems to take no action. It is as if she is trapped by her own lethargy. But in this non active state she seems to be able to view where she is and see that movement is needed.

This is perhaps where the language of poetry and the language of counselling meet. The way the journals were written encouraged focusing on thoughts and feelings so that like poetry the participants wrote themselves on the page. In the above entry the way the participant wrote the entry enabled a part of herself to be more present in the writing than she might consciously realize. It is a creative process that uses a complex bringing together of conscious and unconscious aspects of thinking and feeling to create a new sense of self that moves beyond both (Maltby 2003).

One participant seemed to write in full sentences even though she broke these up into short lines. But when examined the apparent full sentences are more like phrases strung together as if the grammar and punctuation has been forgotten. So it seems that the way she was asked to write did enable her to condense her thoughts and feelings. But unlike the previous example of uncontained-unfree the following one feels a very conscious entry. In week 25 Turned On seems to demonstrate the stuck state of uncontained-unfree very clearly:

Extract 33. From a journal to show uncontained-unfree

Line 1.	This week I have a strong
Line 2.	feeling of being trapped, taken
Line 3.	over by others, overload of
Line 4.	everything my need now is for
Line 5.	me to be free! Have to break
Line 6.	away from it all but I seem
Line 7.	to go mute when people make
Line 8.	demands of me which I don't
Line 9.	want - I'm really feeling the
Line 10.	struggle but I don't know it has
Line 11.	to be like this - I will learn.

The clarity of the participant's state fits well into the stuck position uncontained-unfree. It would be easy to assume that the analysis becomes unnecessary when the category seems so obvious but within the context of the whole journal the analysis helps define the participant's process:

Extract 34. From the analysis to show how it helps define process.

The client continues the theme of feeling imprisoned, trapped (line 2) even taken over by others (line 3) as if this is almost a continuation of the previous week. This seems to demonstrate her determination to be herself as she allows herself to experience her internal world, as if she realizes that this will enable her escape to a new way of being. She seems to feel such an overload (line 3) of other's perceptions within her that she feels a huge need to be free (line5) from these as she did the previous week – just as Beauty freed herself from her family. She seems to want to break away (line 5,6) from this old way of being and the past but is aware that she loses her voice, goes mute (line 7) when others make demands (line 8) of her – she has no Beast. She doesn't want (line 9) this anymore but seems to be aware of the struggle (line 10) within herself to be rid of the internal pressure from old internalised voices and from the pressure of external others. She seems to say that she did not know (line10) that the counselling journey was going to be like this, that is such a struggle, but she ends by telling herself that she will learn (line 11), as if she is again willing herself to continue with this journey.

The participant is aware here of how trapped she is by her internal and external relationships. She seems to have come to realize that she wants to free herself from old internal and present external voices so that she can find her own voice. The writing seems to help her do this. It is as if the counselling is beginning to make sense to her, even though the sense it is making appears different from her expectations. In this way the analysis maintains and exposes the participant's

story and process of counselling. Even when a category seems obvious the interplay between interpretation and category is crucial to the overall story of the narrative. The overall story of the narrative is important in that it demonstrates the internal movement of the participant over time as opposed to showing such shifts in just one entry.

6.5.2 Overcontained-overfree

This category is about being full of the thoughts and feelings of others as opposed to having one's own. It could be Beauty who cannot hear her own voice for it is drowned out by so many others. It seems to highlight confusion in the client as internal and/or external agitation or repetitive movement. In week 12 below, Alice seems to provide an interesting example of overcontained-overfree:

Extract 35. From a journal to show over contained-overfree.

Line 1.	Skirting round the edge
Line 2.	Dreams
Line 3.	Sexuality and rescuing
Line 4.	My client
Line 5.	My energy
Line 6.	Contain it within me
Line 7.	Don't let it drain away

At first sight no category seems obvious but the analysis helps to show what is present and happening for the client:

Extract 36. from the analysis to show defining a category.

<p>She appears to be dancing again in this session as she skirts round the edge (line 1) of what she really needs to bring. Yet having stated this action she seems to reflect upon it. It is a difficult entry to make sense of. It seems she remembered dreams (line 2) which may have skirted round</p>
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sexuality and rescuing (line 3), but these could have been other issues that she encountered. It seems she spoke about a client (line 4) that she sees, but this client could also represent the participant's self who is the client in this session and who tells herself what to do. She wants to contain her own energy (line 5 and 6), within herself and she exhorts herself not to let it drain away (line 7), as she again tells herself what to do. Perhaps she is fearful of losing the self she meets during her sessions, the self who feels and experiences. It seems she wants to stop concentrating on blankness (week 10; line 1.) and keep hold of the self who has more awareness and energy.

Even with the analysis there is still no clarity of a definite category yet perhaps this lack of clarity is part of the participant's hidden confusion and anguish. What helped define the category of overcontained-overfree, with the interpretation was the rhythm created by the words:

Extract 37. From the analysis to show how rhythm defined overcontained-overfree.

There is almost a panic in the rhythm of the words, an invisible beat at the end of each line as if she is overfree, or cannot quite hold onto herself, as if a part of her is slightly out of control, skirting round the edge. Perhaps she needs to feel this panic before she can move forwards.

The way the participants wrote their journals again comes into focus. There is a sense of rushing in the rhythm of the entry as if her unconscious confusion became explicit in the writing. This helps define the category of overcontained-overfree and shows how the interplay between the interpretation of the narrative, the rhythm in the words and the way the journals were written, all need to be considered in the overall analysis. In week 21 of her journal Wriggling fish provides a

clearer demonstration of overcontained-overfree:

Extract 38. From a journal to show over contained-overfree.

Line 1. I apologised - felt rather stupid.
Line 2. I had not expected her soft anger.
Line 3. The reddened neck spoke it.
Line 4. It somehow lacked caring
Line 5. I felt dishonest, it was the truth.
Line 6. I shared subsequent reasoning.
Line 7. It seemed accepted.
Line 8. Mixed high emotions, anger!
Line 9. Need to protect own space.
Line 10. Bicycle, gutter, shudder, fall.
Line 11. The need to 'get on' again
Line 12. Boundaries felt tight.

Extract 39. From the analysis to show the interpretation of the above entry:

After cancelling the previous session she apologises and feels rather stupid (line 1) but perhaps she is really feeling guilty and angry. She seems to experience the counsellor as being softly angry (line 2) with her, but it seems possible that this is projected onto the counsellor, and that she really feels angry with herself. She appears to see the counsellor as having a reddened neck (line 3) and it is this that spoke the anger. It is interesting that she sees the counsellor as having a red neck, for it is her own neck in previous entries that seems to hold the feelings that she cannot connect with, in that she seems to feel pain in her neck rather than feeling emotional pain. She feels that the counsellor lacked caring (line 4) but again it seems more likely that she is projecting out the lack of care for herself (like Beauty) in that she chose not to go for a session when she needed one, and in this way she denied herself experiencing the feelings aroused by the funeral. It feels as if she acted out her anger at the death by not attending the previous session. She then seems to recognize her dishonesty (line 5) presumably by using the snow as a reason to not attend (week 20). She also sees this as the truth (line 5) and goes on to share her reasoning

(line 6) from the previous week which she experiences as accepted (line7) by the counsellor. Having been honest, perhaps more importantly with herself than with the counsellor, she experiences what she calls 'mixed high emotions, anger!' (line 8). She feels a need to protect her own space (line 9) as if something feels intrusive. She then presents an image 'Bicycle, gutter, shudder fall'(line10). It seems she is feeling as if she had just fallen off the 'bicycle' of counselling so perhaps this is what the missed session now feels like. She recognizes her need to 'get on' (line 11) again as if she is aware of losing something if she does not. And she ends by saying that the boundaries feel tight (line 12) as if she has returned to the feelings noted in earlier weeks (week 2, 3).

The interpretation of the entry links it to the whole context of the journal as it notes links to a missed a session, a death, funeral and earlier entries. It is the metaphor of falling off a bicycle that helps confirm the construct of overcontained-overfree for she uses the word 'shudder' which feels like an internal agitated movement. She also refers to the 'tightness' of the counselling boundaries as if she feels hemmed in by them rather than freed or held safely. This is perhaps a reflection of the overcontained-overfree state of her internal world that holds the feelings and opinions of others rather than her own voice.

6.5.3 Fighting containment-freedom

In week 26 of her journal Alice seems to demonstrate her fight to own her feelings while her fight for the freedom to do this seems to be expressed in her use of colour. She seems to want to change by being more assertive yet the passive feel in the writing suggests that part of her struggles to consider such change:

Extract 40. From a journal to show fighting containment-freedom.

Line 1. Felt free to reflect on last session
Line 2. Felt safe
Line 3. Anger needs to be expressed for it
Line 4. to go away.
Line 5. Helps others and me if I am
Line 6. assertive.
Line 7. Visualising something can help
Line 8. make it happen.

The entry stands out from all the others because it is in red. The passion of red (of the Beast who can be angry) is seen in the colour of the words yet when read the words sound passive as if the battle within her to own her anger is made visible on the page. The interpretation of the entry looks at the use of colour:

Extract 41. From the analysis to show the use of colour.

Whereas the rest of the journal is written in blue, black ink or pencil, this one entry is in red. Perhaps there was a desire to express anger (line 3.) – to be the Beast - that was stronger than the client realized. It also seems possible that the red colour helped her to visualise (line 7.) her anger almost making it visible on the page. By writing in red she may also have a sense of making something happen (line 8.) as if she is making the anger happen. It seems she has done some processing during the break for she feels free enough to reflect on the last session (line 1.). She also feels safe (line 2.) as if there has been a shift in her ability contain her own feelings. She recognises that anger needs to be expressed (line 3.), but this does not feel the same as owning it, letting it be hers. She feels that if it is expressed, anger goes away (line 4.) so perhaps this is just another way of momentarily getting rid of it rather than owning it. It is as if she both wants power, in the anger, but also wants rid of it. She seems to connect anger with being assertive as she goes on to say that it helps her and others if she is assertive (lines 5 and 6.) which is a good

illustration of the Beast. Perhaps she needs to visualize (line 7.) being assertive, or even angry in order to make it happen. But it feels as if this takes away her spontaneity and enables her to keep her sense of control. Using the red ink on the other hand may have been a spontaneous action, even an unconscious action so perhaps a part of her was owning her anger.

The category fighting containment-freedom was chosen because she seems to want to have her anger and not have it. She does not own it, yet she seems to unconsciously express it in the colour red. It is as if she lets a part of her Beast out by writing in red but then denies this self by writing about it as opposed to owning it.

In week 19 of her journal Little Girl seems very angry as if she has found her Beast:

Extract 42. From a journal to show anger.

Line 1.	I SEE ME
Line 2.	AND I KNOW
Line 3.	WHO I AM
Line 4.	AND IF YOU
Line 5.	ONLY SEE
Line 6.	THE ME I WAS
Line 7.	HOW SAD
Line 8.	I HAVE LEFT YOU
Line 9.	BEHIND

The interpretation of the entry tries to uncover what the anger is about, to discover whether she is expressing her anger or using it as a defence against hidden feelings. To just presume what the category is would mean that a great deal of understanding would be lost for although this appears to be an angry entry it is also important to discover what that anger may be about and whether it is owned or repressed:

Extract 43. From the analysis to show what the anger is about.

The client appears to be reflecting on who she was and is. Although she appears to be writing to another, it seems that she is also talking to different parts of herself using the first and second person. She sees herself (line 1) and she knows who she is (lines 2,3). But she tells herself that if this other part of her only sees her as who she used to be (lines 4,5,6) that it is sad (line 7), because a part of her has been left behind (lines 8,9). It seems that the client wants to hold onto all of herself and not leave any part behind. It feels as if she really wants to integrate all aspects of herself, -like the marriage of Beauty and the Beast - while at the same time realizing that this might not be possible. This also feels like an angry statement, as if part of her really wants to take charge, and be in control. It is possible that this entry is also addressed to the counsellor, and perhaps this is the client's way of getting ready to end the counselling, and she wants to be seen as changed and capable. It may also show distrust of the counsellor. Her anger perhaps defends against being held by the counsellor or being dependant upon her.

Little girl does appear to be fighting containment-freedom whether she is speaking to herself and/or the counsellor. It feels she fights against owning her own feelings and fights against being dependant on the counsellor. Fighting containment-freedom appears to demonstrate the struggle for a client to own their own affect and to own their dependence on the counselling. But it is this tension between opposing feelings that seems to enable movement through opposition in that once the choice becomes conscious there is a greater possibility of change.

6.5.4 Desire for containment-freedom

This category could be seen as the longing for the split off selves, a desire to meet Beauty or the Beast. In Alice's main study journal the desire for containment-freedom (for a marriage between her selves) does not appear obvious at first sight. In week 23 of her journal Alice hides her desire

for containment-freedom in an apparently simple entry:

Extract 44. From a journal to show hidden desire for containment-freedom.

Line 1. (from memory)
Line 2. I felt free to be late
Line 3. Her anger was contained
Line 4. My anger was contained, felt safe.
Line 5. Is H. angry for all of us?
Line 6. (Apology slipped out at beginning,
Line 7. like being late for lesson at school.)
Line 8. So much from so little.

The analysis of this entry seemed to demonstrate Alice's need to remain merged with the counsellor and highlight a strong desire to contain her own affect. Although a short entry it is a complex piece of writing which took time to interpret:

Extract 45. From the analysis to show the interpretation of a complex piece of writing.

This entry is recorded later than usual again, (line 1.) but she is able to find the space to be reflexive. This time instead of feeling her anger with the counsellor in her lateness, she feels free to be late (line 2.). She presumes that the counsellor is angry with her for being late as she experiences the counsellor as containing anger (line 3.). It seems she projects her own anger with the counsellor onto the counsellor rather than having it herself. Perhaps her mother's anger was held in when she left the client in hospital, so that anger was experienced as dangerous because it was not expressed. She describes her own anger as contained (line 4.) but it seems more likely that she experiences it as being within the other. So perhaps she is still angry with the counsellor but unable to express it or allow herself to 'be it' (week 10, line 10.) as she has wanted to before. Containing her anger also feels safer (line 4.), as to show anger feels dangerous or frightening. She wonders if 'H' is angry for 'all of us' which may refer to a group but may also refer to the

many parts of herself. However she is still aware at some level of feeling very young for she notes that she apologised for being late earlier in the session like a child arriving late for school (lines 6 and 7). She also puts this comment in brackets which although on one level may make it seem less important than the rest of the entry also highlights it, making it stand out from the rest. Perhaps she is feeling very young and vulnerable in her sessions, like a child talking to a strict teacher. She ends by noting that so much comes out of so little (line 8.). This may refer both to the shorter length of time in that even in a shorter session than usual a lot of work was accomplished, but it may also refer to the fact that she worked with something that seemed small unimportant yet learned a great deal.

The interpretation again links the entry to the whole narrative which keeps it within the context of the whole. As there is anger it might seem that it should have the category of fighting containment-freedom. However anger is not felt in the words even though it may be implicitly present. The desire for her and the counsellor to be the same feels most important. The fact that an apology slipped out seemed to suggest her regression as if she was being the child who longed to be noticed and heard. In a childlike way she made herself noticed by being late. There was a strong sense of a lot having been accomplished as if the session felt useful. The category, desire for containment-freedom fits with her childlike regression and with her need to keep her and the counsellor the same.

6.5.5 Towards containment-freedom

Towards containment-freedom attempts to demonstrate the client's movement in that he/she begins to own and experience affect. It is a letting go of overcontainment and/or fighting containment-freedom, in that there is a shift towards containing what has previously seemed uncontainable within the internal world. Or it may be seen as a meeting between Beauty and the Beats. In week 6, Who Am I seems to make her first shift into this category. During the previous

five entries she seemed to have moved from; in week 1, a desire for containment-freedom; in weeks 2, and 3 to uncontained-unfree; and in weeks 4 and 5 back to a desire for containment. So the shift towards containment-freedom appeared to follow both a desire to contain her own affect and the stuck position from where she seemed to be able to view her internal world. In this way movement appears visible as the client shifts through various states in order to reach a more integrated sense of self. In week 6 she writes:

Extract 46. From a journal to show towards containment-freedom.

Line 1.	Deep painful revelations.
Line 2.	Pain of childhood - disconnection
Line 3.	of doll's head + body = abuse.
Line 4.	Mother not there 'head' could
Line 5.	not cope with what happening.
Line 6.	realized always alone + partly
Line 7.	parented self.
Line 8.	Surviving against all odds + seen as problem
Line 9.	Don't be so hard on self (Brenda/Co.)
Line 10.	Anger to self - staying so long in neg'
Line 11.	ways. Can be diff' to have someone there
	NEW

The interpretation of the entry was done with an understanding of the whole journal in that it was interpreted with knowledge of the whole context in which it was written:

Extract 47. From the analysis to show how the whole journal effects the interpretation.

The deep painful revelations (line 1) in this session suggest abuse (line 3) in the client's childhood, and although this feels like sexual abuse there is no way of being certain of this. She

writes of disconnection (line 2) as if she had to cut off from what happened to her. And this appears to be emphasized by the image of the separation of a doll's head from its body which equals abuse (lines 2,3). As her mother was not there (line 4) the client's 'head' was unable to cope with what was happening (lines 4,5) and this seemed to make her feel as if she was always alone (line 6), as if she experienced a sense of isolation when she was far too young to be able to deal with it. She also feels that this caused her to partly parent herself (lines 6,7) as if this isolated child had to manage what happened all alone. She seems to feel that she survived against all the odds (line 8) as if part of her realizes that to survive has been quite an accomplishment yet she was seen as a problem (line 8). Perhaps her childhood behaviour was seen as a problem by others who knew nothing of what had happened to her. Although she seems to be exhorting herself not to be so hard on herself she implies that these are the words of others which she perhaps needs to internalise. And it seems that she feels angry (line 10) with herself for staying so long in such negative ways as if she is still punishing herself. But she ends by suggesting that the past can be different (line 11) when she can have someone there with her. She notes that this is new - feeling the counsellor has been present with her as she has re-experienced the past abuse.

It seems that the client was able to regress and share something of an abusive nature that happened in childhood. The feeling of cutting her head off from her feelings is powerful as if in the past she had to cut away the Beast. Then she seems to begin to contain her own feelings about this event as if re-experiencing it with the counsellor enabled this process. But this process was perhaps also enabled by the previous sessions and journal entries which seem to lay out her process in the journal.

6.6 Conclusion

The process of interpreting the journals before even thinking about categories enabled a closer intimacy with the narratives. It kept in awareness the way the journals were written so that the poetic element of the texts influenced the interpretation and the categorizing of each entry. There

is a sense that the emotional movement of the participants is reflected in the process of the analysis. Just as they went through a learning curve as they attended counselling and reflexively portrayed their thoughts and feelings in the journals so the method of analysing reflects my process of engagement with the study. Time away when I was unable to work almost closed down my ability to think constructively may be the stuck position of uncontained-unfree. This seems likely as when I returned to the work there was an enormous sense of having been processing the study without even realizing it, as if internally and perhaps unconsciously, I had been constantly looking around to view where I was. There was a new understanding as well as a new enthusiasm for the work. It was at this point perhaps that the coming together of the participants' voices and my voice developed. Their stories have their voices, but as I interpret their narratives my voice takes over as I retell their stories, with my voice and make them part of the story of the research.

CHAPTER SEVEN

EMBODIED FINDINGS

7.1 Introduction

This chapter explains the process that led to the idea of the findings poems. Each of the findings poems is presented and followed by links to the categories within the theoretical construct. The participants respond to the categories and comment on their feelings when experiencing some of them as they connect with them. The findings poems bring the stories of the journal narratives into short performance pieces. They attempt to integrate the opposition I experienced in the journals so that the theme of the study is inherent in them. The participants also respond to the poems. The symbols, words and phrases used by the participants in their journals influenced the construction of the poems. Their symbols are transported from their journals into these poems. Hayes (2004) states that the symbol “circumvents rational thought, and is therefore uncensored by moral and cultural dictates” (19). This implies the power of the symbol that may enable the person to free themselves from family and social rules of familiar expression. However my concern is that in transporting the participants’ symbols I may either add to or deny the power that they ascribe to them. The change in the power of these symbols may be seen in some of the responses of the participants to these findings poems.

7.1 The process that led to the findings poems

The analysis of the journals intended to uncover stories hidden in the participants’ journals. It also looked to discover whether containment, freedom and the polarity between these concepts existed in the client’s internal world, as expressed in the journal texts. Having completed the

analyses I was searching for a way to both tell the stories and demonstrate the findings when tragedy impacted on my life and brought the work to a standstill. My response to the tragedy was to turn to writing poetry to help me through grief. This eventually enabled a return to the work as it seemed possible to write up each journal and its analysis as a poem. It seems important to be aware that this came about through my grief. My senses were heightened, my feelings close to the surface, whereby I felt as if I was overwhelmed. Yet this way of being enabled an entry into the work that may not have been possible otherwise. I cannot deny that my state of mind does not impact upon the work. Balancing this personal subjectivity so as not to lose objectivity in relation to the journal data feels crucial to the work. Etherington states:

“Researchers and supervisors need to understand that subjectivity is not an end in itself and that heurism invites us to filter our participants’ experiences *through* our own, *not* to supplant their experiences with our own” (2004; 125).

By putting the construct and categories aside while writing the poems the inherent opposition in the work seemed to filter the participants’ experiences through my experiences of writing and grief. Grief enabled me to see that death was an always present part of the work, from the preconception in response to trauma, and in the many different deaths that were part of the changes in my internal world. There were the actual deaths and losses in the participants’ external lives and the internal deaths and losses of parts of themselves and these became clearer through my experiences. Perhaps, as one of my supervisors suggested I have been writing about death from the start of this process. This appears to be demonstrated in the following poem, written as I struggled to continue with the writing up process:

Truth is Beauty.

I see beauty
reflected back.
Death has left
its truthful
unwanted mark
in the face
of my selves
again.
It haunts each moment
and yet enhances it.
The truth
of living to die
while dying to live
turns this work
into anguish
into beauty
where each
searched for word
stalks my soul
in the hope of meeting
of making sense.

To deny the impact of such life experiences on the process of this research might ethically undermine the location of my voice. The truth and beauty of the process would remain unknown. This “interpersonal responsibility” (Mieth 1997; 93) maintains my moral obligation (Denzin and Lincoln 2005;1118) to the participants, to myself and to the potential audience of the work. There is a sense of relief in owning the part that death plays in this research more fully. In discussing her fictional writing Mantel states that “the good thing about being a writer is that you take your bad experiences and make them pay” (2005; 3). Perhaps the good thing about being a researcher is that I can use such bad experiences to locate my voice as truthfully as possible.

7.3 Findings Poems

Each of the poems is written using many of the participants' own words and phrases interlinked with my words. They remain the participants' stories but they now also become part of the research story. They are titled with the names given to the participants' journals.

7.3.1. Wriggling Fish

The following poem condenses the story of Wriggling Fish yet also highlights the opposition that led to movement. There is a wish not to explain the poem too much for to me it appears self explanatory but for this study none of the poems can be left only as performance pieces (Holman Jones 2005), although they do stand on their own. There is a need to demonstrate the presence or absence of the constructs as well as including the participants' feedback to demonstrate relevance to the study.

WRIGGLING FISH

It took a long time
To discover where I was -
Lost in no-man's land
Repeating the games of generations.
A fish out of water
Floundering around
Being everybody else's fish
But not my own.
I loathed the cold counsellor
I disagreed with colleagues
I squirmed with resistance.
Rigid with neck pain
Trapped even by my body
Wriggling was all that was left.
But being so firmly hooked
Made seeing where I was unavoidable.
Searching for release
Brought my hated selves into focus;
The worst mother

The angry child
The rejected adult
Fought until
Bruised and battered
Gut wrenching tears
Let feeling speak.
With no energy left
I shot down my barriers
And within a tight circle of purity
I saw my golden nan ascending
Into me.
The roots of ancestors
Bubbled up the gift of integration
So that even the black plastic bags
Of death and hate
Could be undone.
Restrictions had kept me wriggling all my life
But this awful process
Lifted the stone from across my throat
And opened a clean, white, blank page
To give me the freedom to speak myself
To become myself
To swim off into the future
Grounded in the water of my own rebirth.

At the start of her counselling Wriggling Fish experienced the boundaries as being very tight and the counsellor as cold, yet she seemed to feel caught by her and stayed with the relationship even though it felt restrictive. In being caught she was perhaps stuck, hooked, uncontained-unfree and unable to move emotionally, or like Beauty she was being a good girl doing what was expected of her. But it is from this uncontained-unfree place that she is able to look around. Here she can see where she is and begin the process of changing herself, by letting herself off the hook - to free herself. She agreed with the construct uncontained-unfree when she felt stuck and wrote:

“Although I don’t like this construct - it was how I was feeling - it was extremely powerful - It brings to mind two opponents in a boxing ring - sizing each other up before the fight”(WF).

The constructs seemed to make sense to Wriggling Fish in that they fitted with her feelings at the time. Initially she thought that they did not fit but after taking the time to weigh them against the criteria of the constructs she felt that they all fitted.

The counselling seemed to enable Wriggling Fish to see that she was caught in cycles of previously learned behaviour. Realizing her need to change she both fights against change and fights for it, demonstrating the opposition/polarity within her. The tension created by opposing desires seems to enable emotional movement. Over two weeks she feels huge anger towards the counsellor and feels rebuffed for asking if the counsellor has a cold. However this enables her to express her anger (be the Beast and a new self rather than denying her angry self) and following this the relationship begins to change. It seems that she both fought against containment by the counsellor and also fought against containing so much angry emotion. She agreed with the construct fighting containment-freedom and wrote:

“It had not been appropriate for ‘a good girl’ to show anger before - and I liked to be liked - and anger would stop this - I felt I wasn’t ‘liked’ by the counsellor - so doing anger didn’t matter so much. However, it was very hard to express - but once started it felt an immense relief” (WF).

This expression of anger enables a shift in the counselling relationship. Wriggling Fish felt that the counsellor stayed with the anger and she began to feel safe with her which moved her into the construct of desiring containment-freedom. This seems to demonstrate how the tension enabled movement. Feeling safe enabled her to risk exploring more of her selves and she describes feeling safe as essential for her counselling process to be effective.

Feeling where she is in what she describes as no man’s land seems to create the desire to shift internally. Her sense of wriggling and floundering suggested the construct of being

overcontained-overfree, bound by the opinions of ‘generations’, and also by the counselling course she was attending. Like Beauty she does not feel free enough to be herself. She is confused and no longer sure about becoming a counsellor. There is a sense of her being out of control, in turmoil, and this seems to affect her body as she gets a stiff neck and has trouble moving. But the embodied pain in her neck seems to enable her to think about what is happening to her and brings her emotional anguish into consciousness through writing in the journal.

Death was very much part of Wriggling Fish’s journal, including the deaths of friends in her external life. However there was a death that was hard to recognize. I did not know what the ‘black plastic bags’ were, or what they represented when writing the analysis. However I sensed the enormity of feeling around them, a kind of horror and suggested the construct towards containment-freedom. It seemed that she was beginning to contain her own feelings even though I was not certain what this was about. Wriggling Fish confirmed the importance of this entry as she was referring to giving away her late husband’s clothes after his funeral. There was a real sense of her having the freedom to contain her own emotions. This also confirms the way the participants were asked to write the journal for an immense amount of feeling was put into a few words. There was also a sense of appreciation in the participant that I had understood the enormity of feeling hidden in the work.

The process of movement is slow as she moves back and forth between wanting to change, fearing change and therefore not wanting to change. Yet the very aspects that seemed to hold her back also released her for it is her ‘nan’, one of the ‘ancestors’, who enables movement. This internalised part of herself begins the process of her seeing herself differently. She is ascending

as opposed to being hooked. She appears to be fed by her internal objects (Harris Williams 1997), her selves. Rather than keeping her caught as she was at the start of the journal, by repeating the games of generations, now the roots of ancestors enable integration of different selves. Through reflexive writing she begins her process of transformation. This fits with Jung's (1969) suggestion of inner polarities working together. The part of her that was initially hooked was beginning to work with the part that was ascending as opposed to fighting against each other.

She is able to look at selves that she hated and in the process of accepting them she appears to let them change demonstrating the unity of Beauty and the Beast. It seems a painful process to let go of herself, whether as a wriggling fish or as a hated mother. Although these selves may always be part of her, they no longer control her and she seems able to change her attitude towards them. The loss of the power of such selves that were known is like a death, a letting go of a part of the self, and risking being different in the sense of moving forwards, rather than remaining as she had always been. This 'awful' counselling process was painful but enabled her to find a freer self who has a voice of her own as opposed to voices of previous generations. Writing out her anguish in metaphors enables her to find meaning in her history and use other selves, like nan to enable change.

This new found freedom seemed to enable Wriggling Fish to give honest feedback. Although she felt that the categories fitted, she did not always feel that the analysis was correct and she wrote comments on what it felt like when it was wrong:

"I felt as though my counsellor was being supported and I felt hurt and left out....but

when I felt that it had been interpreted correctly - it gave me a warm glow of being understood”(WF).

She did agree with the majority of the analysis but understanding what it was like for her when the analysis felt wrong feels important, reminding me of the sensitivity of the experiences being analysed. This perhaps demonstrates the importance of the length of time the journals were recorded over as this gave the opportunity for me to get to know the participants within the context of their journals and to analyse the narratives from more than one perspective.

For Wriggling Fish the least helpful part of the research was the time needed to undertake the feedback but she also thought this may have been influenced by the fact that she was looking back at what had been a very painful time for her. The most helpful aspect was being able to see how her boundaries had changed:

“from a feeling that I wriggled within the confines of too strong a boundary - to feeling them too loose and not safe - to eventually it becoming a ‘good fit’- safe, comfortable and workable. It feels as if I was going through painful growing years of rebellious teenage to now a feeling of growing up” (WF).

Another of the participants felt that she was also growing up through her counselling so this is perhaps a common theme along with personal learning and searching for themselves.

The main impact of taking part in the research for Wriggling Fish was the reflexivity that keeping the journal gave her between weekly counselling sessions. She found this helped the work on herself continue during each week and felt this may have moved her more quickly than if she had not been doing it. The impact of reading the analysis has stayed with her and brought up a feeling of protection for her journal.

On whether the notions of containment-freedom as a polarity has stayed with her in any way she wrote:

“I still find it hard to get my head around - but as I read the different constructs - I could see what reluctant clients are battling with and in fact how as a counsellor, it can sometimes feel like a battle for me too So I found that really helpful”(WF).

It is interesting that the research appears to have influenced her counselling practice. She also said that the original talk I gave at her training establishment had stayed with her in that she had not expected so many variations in the understanding of one word - containment. This helped her to realize how easy it is not to be understood as the client because the meaning of a word can be so different for any two people.

She liked the way she was asked to keep the journal, particularly the short phrase on each line as:

“It made me condense my feelings and experience, usually very difficult for me, - it felt punchier - more to the point - concentrated - but as I needed to be a good girl then - I noticed that I wanted to fill in most of the page - or could it be that I try to fill life and not leave too many spaces”(WF).

This feedback demonstrates that the way the journals were written had the desired effect both for the participant and for the research. But what I really appreciate is that even as she writes the feedback Wriggling Fish is still working on herself as she wonders about why she had to fill almost every page and she is open enough to have more than one perspective of this. It also suggests that part of her was being the ‘good girl’ Beauty doing what she imagined was expected of her.

In response to the poem Wriggling Fish wrote:

“It feels very strange to read about counselling that happened in what seems like another world now ...it somehow swirls with what I experience now ...like mixing a pot of paint....I have just read the poem through once and thought how talented you

are to put together the essence of all those sessions - it appealed to me and showed me what a difficult journey it had been - sitting each week in that chair...but it also reflected the 'happy ending' and a wonderful sense of freedom to me -which totally ties in for me, the swimming across the world to start up a whole new life - as the hook came out ...but...I had to smile because I still occasionally feel the 'stone across the throat ...more self to be created soon....!! It is all strange though - I had a very happy childhood - felt totally loved and cared forso if I felt wriggly....how much would I have squirmed if childhood had held a different story..??" (WF).

It feels important that the poem contained what Wriggling Fish saw as the essence of the journal. For her this seemed like a good fit but it also enabled her to see the continuation of her own story. I like the fact that she feels her freedom so strongly for it seems the Beast really gave her power to change her life which the 'good girl' might not have managed without him.

7.3.2. Who Am I?

Who Am I, wrote with powerful images that stayed with me after reading her journal. She felt very alone hardly alive as if part of her was not really living or not able to live fully. She may be seen as Beauty because so much of her feels unavailable as if she lives a life that others expect of her.

WHO AM I?

A frozen child
Trapped in painful, unreal perfection
Pleasing others.
Lost in a lonely ice-age
Where there is
No sound
No hope
No help
No others
For I am stuck in my disconnected head
By
Old

Cold
Memories.

Who am I?

An abortion
That never happened.
A negative thought
Confused by unknown beginnings
Where choice was the stolen possibility
Of future longings
And power was the enemy of this sabotaged world
Where opposition did not exist.

Who am I?

A self without form
For this 'I' has no being.
Doing, is a resistant sadness
Where change
Is never conceived
But obscured in the myth
Of each expectant Should.
Cracks of hope are bound by action
Imprisoning my voice in the negative foetus
Of a victim's curse.

Who am I?

In the talking hour
Defences start defrosting
As thawing tears uncover glimpses
Of unborn selves,
While anger crashes through the icebergs of misconception.
She warms me
I risk dependence.
I begin to be
And even this writer's understanding may be criticized
For power becomes a friend
And opposition feeds the tension
Of new life
As I free my own creation
For I am heard
Raised from the depths of an arctic death
I am alive.

This participant asked herself ‘who am I?’ several times in her journal and there was a strong sense of her wanting to find out who she really was as if she was stuck in her past, in the shock of something that had happened to her. She seems to demonstrate the construct of uncontained-unfree very clearly for she describes herself as ‘a frozen child’. This powerful image of Jung’s “stoppage of libido” (1969:33) suggests there is no movement, for the frozen child is unable to move. Who Am I agrees with the construct of uncontained-unfree and in response to the analysis writes:

“worked hard in the session - doing the counsellor part! Perhaps this was a way of avoiding? Not knowing how? It was terrifying, the memory still creates tension in my stomach”(WAI).

She still seems to experience something of trauma in this response, in her physical feelings, but this shows movement in that she is no longer frozen. It suggests that in finding her own metaphor for her anguish that she alters her frozen space (Flint 2004) and begins to move emotionally. In her feedback, she describes what she felt was happening when I put another entry into this category:

“Learning to trust inner voice/self. Experimenting with not having to be and not being like some others. Beginning to enjoy being self but still frozen but with some idea about choices”(WAI).

This demonstrates that the uncontained-unfree place enables her to look around and feel where she is, for not only is she aware of enjoying being herself but is able to see possible choices as if she is discovering the Beast of internal freedom.

Who Am I, felt stuck in the past, as if she was contained by her memories. Living by pleasing others like Beauty seemed to keep her in an overcontained-overfree internal world. Here she was disconnected from herself, and full of old cold memories, as if she replayed the memories over

and over in her head. In her responses to the analysis when I had suggested that there was a fear of losing this known way of being she agreed and added: “even though this way of being was exhausting and stressful and totally unfulfilling” (WAI). She seems to find meaning through this process as she comes to understand herself more. This relates to my sense of not knowing who I was following trauma (chapter 1) and writing seems to help her to explore the unknown just as it helped me.

Knowing that her mother considered having an abortion seems to stop her from living fully. There was a strong sense of anguish in her words as if she was howling out grief in her writing. She was unable to find out more about where she came from because she knew nothing of her father. This perhaps sabotaged her ability to learn more and felt a powerful part of her need to know who she was. Control in this way feels external and suggested again the construct of overcontained-overfree, where power is external and the prerogative of others. This perhaps confirms Payne’s (2006) suggestion of someone living a ‘canonical’ narrative in that she was trying to fit into a ready-made stereotypical narrative in order to be the same as others, creating: “a source of distress and loss of identity when our lives fail to correspond to them” (21). In this sense it appears hard for Who Am I to have a different identity to others and confirm her individuality as if she cannot exist unless she is the same as others.

She had a longing ‘to be’ rather than always being caught up in doing, particularly for others, as if this doing gave her an identity, again like Beauty. This busy activity seemed a denial of opposition which she begins to discover during the counselling. Although she says that she did not knowingly think about the theme of the study while she was writing, some unconscious

knowledge of it seems to appear in her journal for she clearly looks at opposing feelings. She desires to take care of herself in one entry but is unable to say no when asked to help another, which would not aid caring for herself. She agrees with my analysis of this section writing “very true”. She also agrees with the construct of fighting containment-freedom, and writes: “did not realize this at the time, but it was exactly what happened” (WAI). With hindsight and the analysis, she seems to recognize that she was fighting with herself. Her fight to change and to know herself seemed empowered by her metaphors which again suggest that the way she was asked to write the journal may have helped condense her thoughts and feelings and create a melancholic stance as if she was writing poetry.

She became aware of her defences and uses them in the journal to keep the small foetus part of herself safe. Being aware of her defences enabled her to question herself and begin to desire and move towards containment-freedom. She appeared aware of changing. Her desire to change felt powerful and seemed to enable shifts in her internal world as she became dependant on the counsellor and started to trust the process of counselling. She seems to make this clear in a response to the construct of desire for containment-freedom:

“Yes. Also some desire not to be over reliant on the counsellor. Lean on her, dump, be challenged but be separate” (WAI).

Her awareness of counselling theory seems to help in her desire to be separate, but this could also be a defence against being reliant on others. What feels important is that she agreed with the construct and even has opposition in her response in that she wanted to be reliant but not over reliant on the counsellor.

As she progressed through the journal there appeared to be moments of movement as she seems

to gain energy, perhaps by the opposition evoked in her. These shifts categorized with the construct towards containment-freedom were felt and responded to by the participant. Again the need to be separate is commented on after I felt she was finding more power and taking hold of the freedom to be herself as if she was discovering the confidence of the Beast: “letting me be separate and different was a huge struggle-very powerful”(WAI).

Next to the same construct later in the analysis, I comment that she is owning her feelings and attempting to be herself separate from others, she writes:

“Also to be myself not a role - mother - wife etc - to enjoy and experience life, perhaps from a different perspective”(WAI).

She seems to agree with the construct and adds to how she was feeling at the time as if the analysis helps her to continue with her internal processing.

Who Am I, stated that the journal became important to her and that she enjoyed writing it, which confirms my sense of the journals becoming personal documents that were not only written for the study. I was also aware that she would criticize her poem if she felt I had misunderstood anything, for she was becoming her own creation, with her own voice, as if Beauty and the Beast were uniting within her. There was a strong image in her journal of her being raised from the dead as if this is how she was feeling - born again into her own selves. This may describe the hatching process that Mahler, Pine and Bergman (1975) use to describe the process of individuation.

This participant did not answer the separate questions but wrote comments on the analysis text. It comes across clearly that she enjoyed reading the analysis and felt the journal was mostly

correctly interpreted. Where I did appear to make a wrong interpretation of her experience she did not seem to feel upset that I had not understood. Overall she was very pleased with the accuracy of the interpretations. On the process of keeping the journal she wrote:

“I would like to think that whilst in writing the journal many entries seemed to be feelings without always much thought process. They eventually meant a great deal to me and the changes I made in life situations” (WAI).

This demonstrates how the journal came to be a personal account for her and shows the impact it appeared to have had in her life in that it added meaning.

She could hardly believe on reading the analysis just how much progress she made over that period of time. She appeared to want me to know how important the counsellor/client relationship was to her, that it was a positive experience and that she continued to work on the themes in the journal after her counselling finished.

On her first reading of the poem, Who Am I was critical as I felt she might be:

“I think I was initially surprised by the content of the poem as I found it quite harsh. We are possibly looking at things from a different point of view and as I have moved on from my writing at the time, perhaps that is why it feels that way”(WAI).

She simply underlined the lines of the poem that she felt were harsh and responded again several weeks later:

“I have been delaying my reply as my previous response called the poem harsh and I have been trying to see things differently. The word abortion feels ‘sensationalistic’ and I wonder if it was necessary to include. Over time I have accepted this as your interpretation and whilst parts of it feel as if they focus on the negative to a great extent, overall I see how you have interpreted the change that I felt occurred” (WAI).

It feels as if it was very difficult for Who Am I to see words that she used transformed by the

findings poem. The word abortion was in her journal but moving it into another context it seems 'sensationalistic' to her. Yet to me it feels full of anguish and the howling of her soul which is why I chose it. This perhaps is the risk of this method of writing up findings. Her story has become part of the story of the research. What felt important to include because of the embodied emotion created within me seems inappropriate to her. Perhaps the word abortion took on more power in my use of it than she gave it in her journal. Although she does see that I interpreted the change that she felt occurred what feels more important is that she has the strength of voice to respond to the poem. She does not just accept it but shares her opinion with her own voice.

7.3.3. Alice

Alice's name came about because so many images that suggested she was underground, searching for herself. This reminded me of Lewis Carol's Alice who ventured down the rabbit hole. The Alice of this poem appears to look at the world through an underground spy hole which seems to distort her perceptions. From the first reading I felt an immense weight of sadness in this journal. She is a Beauty burdened by caring for others.

ALICE

Tears struggled to surface
From deep within
Blood sucking leeches
drained energy
A crocodile bit away affect
While the spyhole
Screened
All I did not want to see
Yet later
Perhaps its fine pin prick of light
Illuminated the garbage
That had felt irrelevant,
Like the blankness
That constrained me

But protected me
Until discerning splits
Bridged across my throat
To swallow the enduring holocaust
To take it in
to honour it.
Such unknown memories
Restrained sadness
Into buried shadows
Where I did not exist at all
But acted out another generation's longings.
Stuck in a charmed life
Exploring for monsters could not be faced.
For
No sorrow compared
No tears qualified
No burdens counted
Hiding underground
Beneath my leaf
Senses were bizarrely reversed:
Laughing for crying
Absence for presence
Careless for spontaneous
Dying for living
I was not me.
Power
Being
Was submerged
Within the woman
As a four year old
Abandoned in hospital
Was still searching the bars
Of another angry prison
Where disabled selves
Needed another
To restore them in the cold sea
Of rebirth
To shock them back
Onto the roller coaster of life
To feel that a headache
Could be all of me
Where fingers
Talked to my heart
As fascination
Let me dance
Let me find

Let me be
My own story.

After she had read the analysis Alice wrote on the text that her mother is a holocaust survivor, and I suddenly understood the enormity of sadness I embodied when reading her journal. It is as if the journal embodied the howling of her soul that could not be herself. The weight of the burden now made sense as she was carrying the burden of the holocaust. How could she have her own feelings when she knew how dreadful her mother's early life had been? Nothing compared, she was caught in her own kind of holocaust where no negative feelings were allowed. Instead she could only have a charmed unreal life like Beauty where the Beast of the holocaust and her own feelings is denied. It seems the weight of such a burden stole Alice's freedom as she compulsively took on the burdens of others. This can be likened to the impulses which Jung (1969:142) sees as unconscious "instinctual processes" which are characterized by such a lack of freedom.

Alice was amazed by the amount I learnt from her journal. She agreed with the construct of uncontained-unfree but thought it was an awful place to be. However later in the analysis she also notes these stuck places are familiar to her:

"Yes - these 'stuck' places are familiar to me, but now I reflect on it, are not nearly as frequent as they used to be" (A).

She confirms her agreement with the construct and tells me she is still processing within her internal world. She is aware she continues to change in that she feels she does not get 'stuck' as often as she used to. Like counselling, it seemed the research process continues processing within Alice, even after the collection of the data had finished.

Opposition was present in her journal as feelings were mixed up and even reversed suggesting opposition and anguish. What could not be contained - the holocaust - seemed to become a burden she knew was not hers, but she could not put down. It appears she found meaning in her suffering (Frankl 1984) for carrying others burdens gave her purpose but denied her needs. This suggested the category of overcontained-overfree as she appeared to be controlled by others. Alice agreed with most of the analysis but struggled with the categories, she wrote:

“Because I don’t understand the constructs fluently, I’m finding it hard to categorize them (meaning the weeks in her journal), but yes, week 5 could be overcontained-overfree” (A).

The pull of opposites in the journal is powerfully felt. Unable to free herself from her mother’s burden Alice struggles in her underground world to find her own story. There is a strong sense of guilt at times that she has feelings at all. Yet the tension created by such a powerful polarity - the pull of her mother’s story and the pull of her need to find her own - enables movement. She tells of feeling abandoned in hospital, aged four, and the image of being behind her cot bars and her mother’s prison seemed to meet here. I found an understanding of her story that I would not have had without her feedback in the analysis, and this helped in writing the poem.

Alice did not comment in any detail on the category of fighting containment-freedom however she did write yes on the text several times to show that she agreed with the category. She did not say anywhere that she disagreed with this construct when it appeared. Her desire to find herself to have the freedom to contain her own feelings and story enabled her to start to hear her own voice and feel her own affect. She allowed herself to be emotionally held by the counsellor however she also kept herself merged with the counsellor by keeping them the same, as she did when she felt they were both angry. This demonstrated her desire for containment-freedom and

she responded to this part of the analysis:

“Excellent Tina. You’ve seen what I usually cannot see. Now you’ve put it into words, I know you’re right” (A).

It feels as if she is recognizing something that a hidden part of her has always known, and also that she appreciates being able to see something through another’s eyes. It is as if she is enabled to be objective by looking at herself from my perspective.

As Alice starts to gain awareness she realizes that she is not fully present in some sessions. In realizing this she moves towards containing her own feelings. This category is not always commented on in her feedback but she does think on one occasion that it feels like a good fit and on another she writes a response next to the construct but about the analysis:

“I always thought of it as ‘swallowing something down that wanted to come up’. now you’ve suggested I could be ‘swallowing something in’. I’ll have to think about this” (A).

I had suggested that swallowing was to do with taking in and keeping her feelings as opposed to those of others. It feels that the way I suggest possibilities enabled Alice to think. It seems there was no threat in my suggestions but rather an offer of more space, where she is enabled to think.

Alice also appeared to be contained by her journal and even by me for she wrote in her feedback, “I felt accepted and appreciated by you” and also, “Impressed that you have seen and heard so much” (A). This again demonstrates the appropriateness of the way the participants were asked to write. Without realizing it they condensed their feelings and experiences as if writing poetry.

After the analysis was completed she wrote:

“Talking with you on the phone and you saying the short phrase on each line was like a way of getting a poem, makes a lot of sense to me now and links with where I am now in my work. I wouldn’t have understood it before though” (A).

Apart from affirming the way participants were asked to write the journals this statement also demonstrates how working over a long period of time, (which was increased when I had to take time off), was not necessarily detrimental to the study. If I had not taken time off Alice may have gained some information before she was ready to use it or process it.

Alice was able to question the analysis if she did not agree with me. When she did not record in the journal I wondered if the sessions had been too difficult to record, and suggested she could be stuck in the uncontained-unfree category. Alice thought that it was far more likely that she was pressed for time and therefore the category did not fit. In another entry she disagrees again with this construct and felt some frustration that I had not got it right. But on reading the analysis for a second time she changes her mind as she does not have the same reaction to what she reads and thinks after all that I was correct. She also wrote no on sections of the analysis that she disagreed with. This would be followed by yes when I offered a different perspective later in the analysis that Alice thought was correct.

Alice wrote clearly about the experience of reading the analysis:

“It was daunting to start with, and I felt something like embarrassment reading it, but that changed to a feeling that I couldn’t put it down. I was fascinated by it. I read through the analysis and then went back to your introduction to the theoretical constructs. Now I am on the point of going through it again with a better idea of how you arrived at the constructs. The notion of containment-freedom as a polarity or as separate constructs had not stayed with me, but I’m pretty sure that having read this they will now” (A).

This gives hope that the construct is credible and fits with the client’s experience. Alice found the experience of reading the analysis and the constructs paper useful and felt it helped her to understand herself more which was very affirming about the way the research was conducted.

In response to the finding poem Alice wrote:

“I am impressed by your poem for me. It’s like you have caught the essence of me that was in the journal you asked us to keep, and have managed to connect up the jumble that was so overwhelming at the time. If I was to give it a title it would be ‘living with death” (A).

It seems that the poem made sense to her and even sorted out the feelings that were so overwhelming at the time. What was interesting was what she wrote prior to her response to the poem. I had explained briefly in the email I sent her with the poem, the reason why she had not heard from me for over seven months. This lapse of time had not been expected. She wrote in response to my loss:

“The death of a younger person seems such a heavy weight to me. There have been several young people’s deaths for me too this year and I am aware of feeling not so safe as I used to. Your poem seems to link some of this together here, now, and there is another because my youngest daughter is going to Poland, to Auschwitz this weekend” (A).

It seems that my recent loss reflects a great deal for her in the present, as well as also reflecting the history of the holocaust still impacting on her family. Yet there seems to be a real difference in that it is not secret as it was in her journal, for it appears to be present and talked about because of her daughter’s visit.

Alice’s feelings of being accepted and appreciated by me were also important. It felt crucial that participants experienced me as someone who appreciated their collaboration with the research. My sensitivity to the intimacy involved in the work enabled them to feel safe while sharing such personal affect. I also felt the humility of helping Alice to understand herself for she thanks me several times in her feedback. The attitude of ethical equality that listened to the first study participants and respected their autonomy and ability to contribute to the research seems to have

been maintained throughout the research process.

7.3.4. Little Girl

Little Girl's name came from her writing out a well known nursery rhyme as one of her entries: 'There was a little girl'. Already someone who wrote poetry she wrote in a style that was well rehearsed. This was stark in that she wrote very little yet with such precision that her few words hid a wealth of information.

LITTLE GIRL

Good girl
Building walls
Catching others
When they fall
Hide my pain
Behind
The wall

Horrid girl
Climbing walls
Waving flags
Above the parapet
To be seen
To be found
To be

Fighting girl
Reloading
The ammunition
To shoot
The target
A tiny self
To pieces

Dangerous girl
Budging bricks
One
Nearly falls
To reveal
This is
All about me

Frightened girl
Afraid of losing
Everything
And ending up
With
Nothing
At all

Buttoned up girl
Terrified
Of men
Who steal
Making
Me
Of no value

Angry girl
Not really here
Not wanting
To play
The game
That someone else
Has set

Hurt girl
Shocked
By talking about
A nothing
That came too close
To being
An abusive something

Incapable girl
Hands everything
Over to others
Preferring
Not to see
The unknown
Inside me

Christian girl
Shouldering the devil
Who beseeches me
To disappear
Into
An insignificant
Self

Grieving girl
Seeking
Love
From mother
Who had gone
Long before
She was lost

Strong girl
Falls
Picks me up
And I feel
Shout
I am not
Bambi

Powerful girl
Taking off
In a red
Two seater
Convertible
Sports car
Dust rising

Poetic girl
Carving images
In
Fleeting words
Catching
All my selves
Changing

Little Girl chose not to write on the text of the analysis, so there are fewer responses from her

than from other participants. However participants were given this choice and she gave comprehensive feedback on a separate sheet.

Little Girl's journal demonstrates many aspects of her growing selves and this is what I tried to include in the above poem. She never previously realized how much she still needed to grieve for the mother who died during her childhood. The grieving girl was still being discovered and allowed to feel even during the feedback on the analysis. This surprised her and she wrote: "on re-reading the entry (about her loss) I felt so sad - almost moved to tears - that I had felt this way" (LG). It was as if she momentarily met the howling of her own soul. This entry was also one that she singled out as having a good fit between the category towards containment-freedom and the journal entry. She states:

"As my journal entry suggested, I had lost her long before she died (in my mind) and the holding of the counsellor gave freedom to voice this notion" (LG).

It felt she was moving towards the freedom to contain her own affect and she confirms this in her sense of needing the holding of the counsellor to give her the freedom she was still learning to give herself.

There seemed to be opposition between her seeing herself as a capable independent adult and seeing herself as a grieving dependent child. This was a powerful battle but the tension created enabled movement. In wanting to hand everything over to others she became the child, the Beauty who denied her own anguish. But in imagining the red two-seater sports car she seemed to be taking her power and uniting with the Beast who could protect and drive her.

There was also opposition in how she saw herself. She saw herself as a Christian yet found

herself listening to the 'devil'. But meeting both the Christian and the devil as different selves enables the child who is fearful of disappearing to be heard. Perhaps this allowed the spilt off parts of her psyche (Maltby 2003) to have a voice. Opposition seemed to enable her to think for herself, to find her own opinions and even her own faith rather than following those who appear more powerful. The good girl had always done, thought, even believed what she was told by others. The 'horrid' girl (the Beast) perhaps wanted to be seen and found by her. There was a real sense of her doing this almost without knowing it at the time. In our final meeting she was proud of having her own faith and opinions.

Commenting on when the analysis of an entry and a construct did not fit Little Girl was able to comment:

“Week 19 I am not so clear about a parallel here. My anger was aimed at a fellow student. I had worked hard at exploring myself and my history and becoming more aware both of myself and others during the counselling course but, during a group sculpting session, she positioned me as separate with my back to the rest of the group. This was quite distressing” (LG).

It seems I had been unable to decode her entry, yet the anger and hurt felt by me did seem to be correct. It also felt difficult for her to see the entry from another perspective. But for her, it was about a very specific event. What feels important is that she was able to comment. She wrote that when I got something wrong there was a feeling that my insight had let me down rather than her feeling anger or sadness that she had been misinterpreted.

Like other participants there was a strong sense of Little Girl searching for herself. This seemed to be a real impetus in helping her continue her journey through the counselling and research. However at times she seemed unable to take what was offered to her in the counselling. This is

clear in her feedback where she seems to want to show me how far she has come. She writes in her comments:

“Even at this distance in time I can clearly recall the main thrust of particular sessions and see in my mind the main protagonists. For example, week twenty referred to my fears for my own daughter’s well being and a dream that left me in the wings while she tried to dance but fell. The counsellor seemed to disapprove of an ‘over dependent inter-relationship’ which I could not (or did not want to) see. What I now understand is that a woman bereaved of her mother in childhood will seek to reclaim that mother/daughter relationship through her own daughter and that that relationship may become unhealthily inter-dependent for both of them” (LG).

At the time she was unable to take what was offered by the counsellor, as if she was not ready. However she seems to have made good use of the whole process of her collaboration in the research, perhaps because time passing enabled her to change and accept what was previously unacceptable. She came to see a dual process in her journals that she had not seen before. The fact that an experience in the journal symbolized a past event enabled her to learn more about herself. She had not understood the possibility of this dual process previously, in that the past may affect how she is in the present. It also turned something that she had first seen as an intellectual exercise into a much more personal journey:

“When the analysis, entry and process were ‘in synch’ it was very revealing and pleasing to see interpretations of my journey that I had not seen” (LG).

The fact that Little Girl used the research so well for herself demonstrates how being a participant gave her a great deal. She learned more about herself and about the counselling process as well as contributing and sharing herself through the research.

In her feedback she felt that the least helpful part of the research was the time lapse between sending me the journal and the follow up analysis. However when we met she seemed to have changed her mind about this. She realized while we were talking that if she had received the

analysis earlier she might not have been in a place where she could have understood or agreed with some of it. She had also gained a stronger sense of her life story in that her story is still growing and she could see this in the process of being a participant. She was not sure about the construct for she did not feel the categories had stayed with her. But she felt she “sometimes had a sense of the opposition happening, but don’t ask me to give a talk about it”(LG). She also wrote in her feedback:

“On reading the analysis and rationale I can see parallels with some of my own client work and I am sure I will gain useful insights into some of these therapeutic relationships” (LG).

So it seems something from the research process has stayed with her. The most helpful part of the research for her was keeping the journal for she feels it has given her a memoir of her journey through counselling. She felt that the way she was asked to write the journal was important for her:

“I think that the means of presentation really suited my style of thinking and writing and made it easier to maintain both the presentation and the continuity. I naturally veered towards a poetic feel as this is how I have processed my thoughts and feelings in the past and it seemed to best reflect my feelings at the time” (LG).

This indicates that the way participants were asked to write suited the task as writing short phrases fitted with the counselling experience in that it helped condense affect and image participants’ feelings.

In response to the finding poem Little Girl wrote:

“On first reading the poem I felt unable to connect with the words - I have spent the last few months writing a book of poetry reflecting on grief and how relationships impinge on it, so to see an interpretation of my poetic reflections in someone else’s words seemed presumptuous. However, having read it a second time I can see where you are coming from and can relate to what you have written. As a way of presenting the whole in a concise way it seems to work” (LG).

This was the poem I was most nervous about sending to a participant because Little Girl is a talented poet and perhaps I felt presumptuous while writing it. However, she was able to think about what the poem was for and see that it fitted the task of representing the whole.

7.3.5. Turned On

Turned On felt like a classic Beauty because she felt she existed for the benefit of others. However she wanted the freedom to experience her own thoughts, feelings and opinions. Her name came from a journal entry when she felt as if she had been turned on, as if previously she had been switched off. Although she was not aware of remembering the theme of the study she does use the word freedom several times in the sense that she was looking for freedom from the control of external and internal others. This again suggests that the theme of the study may have been present (even if unconsciously) for the participant at the time of writing.

TURNED ON

I
Was not alive
When this journey started
For life had been spent
Saying Yes
Never No.

I
Was a complacent mute
Told what to do
What not to do
And blamed others
For my responsibilities.

I
Was rejected
Not important
But here to care for others
Whose voices

Ruled my world
Keeping me in limbo
Where pain and anger
Were selfish emotions
And space to feel
My own thoughts
Did not exist.

I
Was a vulnerable five year old
Collapsing inside
At so many new schools
Which were doorsteps
Into fearful unknowns
of bad reactions
Where why
Was a million questions
I
wanted my counsellor
To answer.

I
Wanted her
To tell me what to do
Tell me what's normal
To arrange my future
To keep me forever
A client
A child
Who felt unimportant
And rejected
When she forgot
Her keys.

I
Found raw feelings
Self worth
Comfort
Just in the room
Where permission to rest
Felt given
Where love
Met myself
Where freedom
Discovered
I can do what I want!

I
Wanted something good
Something nice
to happen
To take away
The emptiness
The loss
The forgotten me
And all the while
I was making
Something happen
In that room.

I
Was led into life
Turned on
I put me first
Said No
With 'to hell what others think'
For I have rights
To my life
My thoughts
My feelings
Even my confusion
Excitement and fear.

I think
It's bloody hard growing up
But great stuff
Because I'm free
To be me!

The mute complacent child, who does not feel as if she is alive, demonstrates the uncontained-unfree construct. At the start of her journey Turned On seemed unable to move, but being so silent and stuck seemed to enable her to look around and see where she was. It is as if she saw that she was not alive, not switched on. She regularly feared that she was not making progress and that she would need a counsellor for life. The opposition and anguish caused by these feelings created the tension that enabled her to risk changing. One of her comments after the uncontained-unfree construct was used was: "I remember feeling so powerless at this point in

life. This is spot on, very true” (TO). It seems that the tension caused by such feelings of powerlessness enabled her to stay in counselling and use the energy of opposition to turn herself on, or discover the freedom of her Beast.

Having felt unable to say no to the requests from others, she saw the ability not to say yes as a growing up process. She came to see herself as someone who had not grown up. Several times she wrote that she wanted something to happen as if her world was ruled by external events. This demonstrates the overcontained-overfree construct and Turned On was able to relate well to this category. She thought her counsellor was trying to control her life by not wanting to work with her. The counsellor arrived one week without keys to the building where they met and Turned On felt rejected by the counsellor. In her feedback she agreed with the construct and wrote:

“Really felt I was the problem here and that the counsellor didn’t want to come for my session.” (TO).

She laughed about this when we met as she recalled how she used to feel and spoke of her gratitude to the counsellor and to the analysis of her journal.

Through her life Turned On said yes to everything that external others expected of her and she seemed to have internalised this way of being, as if she had no Beast within her to protect her. The opposition/anguish created by her desire for freedom from this way of being and her actual inability to say no seemed to create the tension that enabled emotional movement. After one entry where the construct was fighting containment-freedom because of her wish to say no, and her struggle to do so she wrote:

“This really tells me that I always was Cinderella, not any more I have moved on from there” (TO).

She records the delight she felt on being able to say no on one occasion (in her journal) and this makes her want to do it even more. There is a strong sense of her fighting against herself in order to achieve this shift. She agreed with this category each time it appeared in the analysis. With hindsight she tries to describe her feelings at the time and writes on the analysis:

“Going from the old way and moving on to new pastures felt frightening - always felt I was getting things wrong - Just wanted to be liked I think so pleased anyone”(TO).

The analysis helped her to look back and understand how little she received from her mother as a child. She was able to express compassion for herself back then and this added to her understanding of herself.

Her fight to stay in counselling was worthwhile as she stayed for several years and learnt a great deal from it. What she liked from the analysis is that I appear to have understood that although part of her threatened to end the counselling this would not happen. She would stay and make something happen for herself. She appeared to be instigating change by desiring the freedom to contain her own feelings and opinions. Where the category of desiring containment-freedom appears in the analysis she wrote:

“This seemed like a coming out of a wilderness; felt hungry for freedom, but scared, so great fit.”

And “Remember feeling like a small child at this time and scared I wouldn’t grow” (TO).

She starts to trust her counsellor and realize that life may have more to offer her if she stays with the process of wanting to change.

She felt her counsellor ‘led her into life’(TO), as if she had been led out of darkness into light, or even out of a kind of death into life. However she made this process happen for herself by

continuing with the counselling and not giving up. She had a very strong determination to change which suggests that her Beast was waking up. It was as if she had glimpses of freedom, and was resolved to get more for herself. This agrees with Tillick's (1952) idea that freedom is man's power of life, for Turned On's desire for freedom seems to create a vitality and internationality that she had not experienced before. She comments several times on this category as these were times when she appeared to feel shifts occurring in herself:

“Had feelings at this point of a sort of closeness to my counsellor which I should have had with mother but didn't - If only!”
And “felt very moved by this (the analysis and construct). Started to feel I belonged”
And “it felt as if I was meeting myself for the first time” (TO).

I felt when I met with Turned On after she had read the analysis, that I was meeting a very different person. She was confident, full of life, not at all the unsure person I experienced at the start of the study. She felt her counselling and taking part in the research had contributed to the changes. Responding to the analysis she wrote:

“I had a lot of emotions going through the papers and a few tears. I found some of it moving and I also felt sad that I didn't know very much about me, that's why I was angry all of my life, it felt as if I was drowning” (TO).

She looked back to when we first talked about her taking part in the study and felt that she had been asked to do so, even though she had shown an interest in taking part:

“When you first asked me to take part, I was stunned, why were you asking me? I don't have the intelligence and I was taken back to think I could qualify. It was a compliment being needed” (TO).

It really felt that Turned On had come a long way from the person who thought she did not have the intelligence to keep a journal. Even if at the time she agreed to keep the journal to please me, the opportunity of taking part gave her something. Apart from feeling the whole process of being a participant gave her self esteem and confidence she also said:

“It explained to me the difference between freedom and containment. I needed to

understand freedom because I wanted it. I started to love words, looked them up in the dictionary. With my lack of education, being in counselling for four years, being there and doing this, starts the grey matter moving” (TO).

Turned On really felt that taking part had taught her to learn, even though she is in her sixties. It was good to hear that she had enrolled on a course and was continuing learning. She noticed in the analysis that I never criticised her but would seem to explain what she did, and notice her, the real her. She noted that I commented on the lack of adjectives in her work and that she used the word stuff a lot rather than actually saying what she meant. She felt I had showed her something very important so her new love of words felt very real.

Responding to the poem Turned On she said: “I could cry, so moving, unbelievable you got me right, you certainly have” (TO). It seemed the poem encapsulated just how she was and felt at the time of keeping the journal. She felt she had been given a gift in the poem and was delighted. Her new sense of life being a journey appeared to have grown from her counselling and taking part in the research. She felt the journey through each of these had led her to know herself and she seemed proud of the achievement. She also felt the journey of getting to know herself continues and that she is enjoying it now.

7.4 Conclusions

The participants’ narratives report events in their counselling over time and also:

“communicates the narrator’s point of view, including why the narrative is worth telling in the first place” (Chase 2005: 656).

They express their emotions, thoughts and feelings and particularly the opposition which enables

transformation demonstrating that their stories are worth telling which also confirms the appropriateness of the method for collecting the data. Writing as they were asked both concealed and revealed. It concealed what their thoughts were about yet also revealed their emotions and process. A good example of this was Wriggling Fish's 'black plastic bags' which hid that she was thinking about her husband's death yet revealed the enormity of her loss in the feelings that emerged from the text. Their journals embody opposition just as my poem 'Howling' (p.28) does. But the opposition is also transformed (Hunt and Sampson 1998) by the symbolism in the words and phrases, creating emotional movement. The journals themselves, holding the process of each participant's journey make it clear that their stories are worth telling. The findings poems seem to show the internal movement of the client in counselling demonstrating their individual process.

CHAPTER EIGHT

CREATIVE FINDINGS

8.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to explore the relationship between the client's experience of counselling and established theory, where this is relevant to the study. It feels important to compare the participants' experience with how that experience may be understood by counselling theory. The main counselling theoretical orientation drawn upon is psychodynamic. There may be links between established theory and the construct which will be explored alongside the client's experience. The connections between poetry and counselling are examined including poetry and the unconscious, loss and death, and opposition.

8.2 The transferences

Transference, which may be positive or negative, is understood as feelings from other relationships, either from the present or past which the client transfers onto the counsellor. Originally Freud (1895) observed transference in hysterical female clients who tended to fall in love with their counsellor and he regarded this as an obstruction or irritant to the therapeutic process. However, depending on how the counsellor reacts to, or uses the transference it may become a "corrective experience" (Winnicott 1958; 258). It seems possible that Wiggling Fish experienced a negative transference when she experienced her counsellor as cold. Whether or not the counsellor was cold is not at issue here. What is thought to be important is that the counsellor stayed with the anger. Her responses enabled Wiggling Fish to experience anger without the

counsellor reacting to it. It seems crucial for Wriggling Fish that she felt the counsellor did not like her because she liked to be liked. Only because she did not like her counsellor did she feel she could show anger. After this episode the relationship changed. She started to feel safe with the counsellor, and was able to use the relationship, after what may have been a corrective emotional experience, brought into being by the transference. However it is also important for the counsellor to fail, or to repeat, disappointments in relationships from the past. It is then possible to share these with the client and help them by working through their feelings about failing (Winnicott 1958). This could also have been what happened between Wriggling Fish and her counsellor. The counsellor may be seen as failing in that she appeared cold to Wriggling Fish and this led to her being able to have, express and work through her angry feelings.

It is also worth considering another perspective. Countertransference can be the feelings within the counsellor as a result of being receptive to the client's transferred feelings (Salzberger-Wittenberg 1970). In other words the counsellor may have been mirroring the client's feelings. It could have been Wriggling Fish who was cold and this coldness was perhaps transferred onto the counsellor, so the client was seeing a mirror image of her own feelings. The outcome is not necessarily changed by this but it is another way of perceiving what may have taken place. The reality perceived by Wriggling Fish was she experienced her counsellor as cold. The impact on her was to be angry and experience an emotion that she felt she did not 'do'. This helped her make progress in the relationship and discover that it could be safe to be angry. This experience also made her determined to be a warm empathic counsellor herself, to attempt to show others empathy as she felt empathy encourages a more intimate relationship. Perhaps counsellors need to find the grace to acknowledge a client's differing perceptions and be more real as Lott (1999)

suggests. This episode could also be understood as the counsellor's theoretical stance preventing her from feeling real to the client. Even when the client's perceptions seem unreal to the counsellor, the client's perception is real to the client and having this acknowledged may encourage the intimacy of the relationship.

Wriggling Fish was showing concern, being real when she wondered if her counsellor had a cold. Although it may not be appropriate for the counsellor to disclose too much about herself the question here could be whether or not it would be harmful to acknowledge what the client perceived if it was true. In this case it might have stopped the client from finding her anger, or it may have enabled her to feel safe with the counsellor sooner than she did. But this is only conjecture and perhaps it is important to stay with what was experienced by the client.

Transference can also be positive. Alice appeared to have a relationship with her counsellor that enabled her to risk examining her monsters and the unknown. This could have been enabled by a positive transference that allowed her to feel like the counsellor as she did when they laughed together or talked about some dancing they had both watched. Such a positive transference may help a client feel safe enough to explore themselves and Alice was certainly able to do this.

It could be argued that a positive transference disables the ability to work because it may stop anxiety or frustration being felt in the client. However Kohut (Siegel 1996; 76) suggests that the positive or "idealizing transference" be treated with interest and respect (Kahn 1991). This is because the positive transference may enable the counsellor to discover something the client lacked in their relationships with parents or main care givers. Alice seemed to lack the ability to

be spontaneous and free. However she experienced this with her counsellor during the session after the dancing, so this could be seen as a corrective emotional experience. It could also be seen as adding to the “structure” of herself (Kohut 1977; 88), or her “selves” (Speedy 2004; 26) as she grew through the counselling experience.

The transferences as they appeared to be experienced by the participants may be seen within the categories. When Wriggling did not like her counsellor and felt these feelings were returned by the counsellor uncontained-unfree was used because she felt stuck. In the second entry she feels herself to be caught and wriggling so she is able to look around inside herself and feel where she is. By the third entry she still appeared stuck but seemed to see that her counsellor was astute and senses herself as squirmy. It may be the negative transference is experienced by the client as being caught, disliking the counsellor and feeling disliked herself, but this omits the client’s perspective. So although the client may not understand this is transference this is how it may be understood theoretically. However within the positive transference that seems to be part of Alice’s relationship with her counsellor, (when she feels a similarity between them), the construct that appears at this time in her analysis is a desire for containment-freedom. The positive transference may be seen then as a desire to be like the counsellor or even to be liked by her. This is seen again in Wriggling Fish’s journals when she experiences her anger, which the counsellor stays with enabling her to feel safe. This could also be interpreted as the transference shifting from negative to positive.

8.3 Making links between the past and the present

Making links between the past and present is used particularly in psychodynamic counselling. The transferences discussed above may be used to make these links. An overall explanation of

the reason for making links to the past is described by Jacobs:

“the view of development taken here is that unfinished business and unresolved issues from the past can have a damaging effect on living in the present, just as by contrast satisfactory resolution in the present facilitates negotiation of the future” (1986; 5).

A good example of the usefulness of linking the past to the present is given in Alice’s journal. She tells the story of feeling abandoned when left in hospital at four years old, which appears to be unfinished business in that she stills feels abandoned. The image created in her writing was that she was imprisoned. This also seemed to relate to her mother being a survivor of the holocaust. Alice feels alone through much of her journal, where she seems to be underground looking through a spy hole in a leaf. Even in the present she is underground, yet it is decades since she was abandoned in hospital, alone and crying but she still feels abandoned. Making the links to her past would enable her to see why she still feels alone in the present. There had been no resolution for the little girl who felt abandoned. Perhaps because of the holocaust her mother was unable to be emotionally present for her even when she was with her. Thus from an early age Alice may have felt as if she cared for her mother’s feelings so when left in hospital not only was she alone but she could no longer care for her mother. If she felt as if she was keeping mum alive, by carrying her burdens then there would be a primitive fear of the real loss of mother when she was without her. Such a huge void may well have felt like death, terrifying the infant Alice. To reflexively re-experience the power of such past feelings would enable some resolution to be found in the present. Through understanding, through compassion for herself and through

the intimacy of the counselling relationship her story was listened to and accepted as real to her. Alice was becoming aware of more aspects of herself as the journal progressed. Being in touch with a greater range of feelings confirms the relevance of linking the past to the present. It seemed to enable her to be herself and make her own life story rather than having her mother's, or the one her mother wanted for her.

Turned On presents a good example of making links to the past for she acquired a way of being early in life that made her the family carer. She was unable to say no to any request and was expected to be the family carer both for her mother and her disabled sibling. By examining this way of being in the present, and by making links to the past, she found some resolution to this problem and began to see she was allowed to care for herself by saying no to others. Her future changed in that she could now see one for herself and she began to live life more fully and start to learn new skills. Both of these examples confirm the relevance of the theory and in the journals it is possible to feel the client's progress as they make changes in their internal and external lives.

All the journals seem to demonstrate how the participants used their past to make links to their present, whether or not this was their intention when writing. Little Girl made links to the child self who still needed to grieve for the loss of mum. Wriggling Fish brought her ancestors into the journal and they seemed to help her integrate different aspects of herself. Who Am I looked back to the feeling created by being an abortion that never happened so all of the participants used their past in their journals suggesting that it was present in their counselling.

When Alice was remembering being in hospital she was angry with the counsellor for not being available when she wanted her. When Turned On was thinking of her family she was angry that they still seemed to control her. She even experienced the counsellor as controlling. In these two instances the category chosen was fighting containment-freedom as both were struggling to free themselves from a way of being they no longer wanted. It was as if they were fighting to change while also fighting to remain the same. However when Little girl was remembering and grieving the mother she lost in childhood the category was towards containment-freedom because she was having feelings that seemed to be appropriate for what she was re-experiencing, as opposed to fighting these feelings. The same category was used for Wriggling Fish when she was remembering and using her nan for she seemed to be shifting towards freedom. Who Am I was also allocated this category when she remembered that she was an abortion that never happened. But again she was feeling her own affect and owning change as opposed to fighting it. So although all the participants made links to the past the construct that was designated for that particular entry depended upon their feeling response to what they were remembering. The question I asked was whether they were feeling their own affect appropriate to what was being remembered/re-experienced, or whether they were feeling emotions that had been learnt from previous experience and did not actually fit the situation.

8.4 The unconscious

The participants show they have an internal world, peopled by internalised parents and others who have influenced their lives. This also seems to demonstrate that unconscious processes exist and influence their lives and their internal worlds (Waddell 2003). This feels a difficult concept to demonstrate for it feels impossible to show how an entry held unconscious processes. However it seems worthwhile to look at how the language used may have hidden and revealed

something of unconscious processing. Heninger (1978) suggests:

“Poetry exposes unconscious forces to consciousness and organizes them into understandable form. This is a therapeutic process. It makes arrangement out of derangement, harmony out of disharmony, and order out of chaos” (57).

The opposition in Alice’s journal, her fighting to have her own feelings seems to have brought harmony out of disharmony through the counselling and the journal. Although she may have had some sense of this at the time her feedback reveals that with hindsight she gained more understanding of what was happening. For example she wrote in her journal about a headache that was all of her which feels like the disharmony/opposition of her sense of self. At the time this was all it was, a headache, yet now it may be seen as the burden of the holocaust she was carrying. The unconscious process of bringing this burden into greater awareness seems to be an aspect of the whole journal as she revealed to herself the harmony of the feeling adult and child who were both concealed by this burden.

Who Am I, on the other hand appears to be very conscious of looking for herself. However the frozen child seems to conceal as much as she reveals. Only by staying with this metaphor was it possible to imagine how feeling frozen trapped her in a life that she did not want. It seems that finding the image helped her to think differently about herself as well as helping me to understand her ‘thawing out’ (WAI) process. This gave a sense of her need for the warmth of the counsellor and the importance of the relationship she needed to help her come to life. It may be suggested that her unconscious gave her the image and the counselling and the journal enabled

her to be receptive to previously hidden aspects of herself. The use of metaphor, like the headache and the frozen child seems to show how metaphor and symbols influence participants' journeys towards understanding themselves. Such images appear to demonstrate how the way the journals were written encouraged the formation of symbols and metaphor and agrees with Ansell (1978):

“The poem and the unconscious share a major feature; both are represented in compressed form” (13).

The participants appear to have compressed their thoughts and feelings and provided themselves and the research with meaning that is concealed in their words and revealed in the analysis and their feedback.

Finding their child selves by writing in a poetic way seems to agree with Edar's conclusion that attempts to find:

“Empirical support for the Jungian hypothesis that the self emerges in hierarchy - the child being the first manifestation, followed by the hero, the immediate prototype of the self. The investigation of the poems of three patients suggests that the first projection may be a parathy itself; the individual writes about his preoccupation, the illness. When the child archetype first appears in the poetry of the patient, this may be taken as evidence of movement in therapy” (1978: 39).

He suggests that writing poetry may do the same as dreams in awakening unconscious elements and thereby instigating emotional movement in the client. All the participants wrote about their child selves. Little Girl found the child who was good, bad and grieving and who needed to let herself feel. Turned On found the child who was moved from one school to another so often that she struggled to learn. Alice found her underground child who could not explore, while Who Am I discovered her frozen child who needed warming and Wriggling Fish found an angry child who needed to find her freedom. For all of them, finding the unconscious child archetype appears to be part of their journal stories and leads to their eventual movement to finding themselves.

8.5 Splitting

All the participants demonstrate splitting (Klein 1975; Greenburg and Mitchell 1983) in their journals. A simple explanation of splitting is provided by Gray:

“A defence that allows us to keep separate what are really two sides of the same coin. It is a mechanism that we see in operation all the time: good/bad, black/white, god/devil, male/female, etc” (1994; 154).

The very definition of splitting fits with the concept of opposition and the metaphor of Beauty and the Beast in that the idea of splitting is about dividing something that is a whole. For example it does not feel possible to have light without dark for even in sunlight shadows are cast. Every person has male and female chromosomes within them. And perhaps it is impossible to consider the idea of a god without the opposition of a devil.

Near the start of her journal Little Girl demonstrates splitting when she writes a nursery rhyme as

one of her weekly entries. It is about a little girl who is very, very good when she is good, but when she is bad she is horrid. Klein (1975) suggests that the hatred of such bad parts of the self result from them being experienced as persecutory. For example the horrid girl who shot herself to pieces in the journal did appear very persecutory – a Beast. This split between the good and bad girl almost sets the scene for the journal. Yet it is also a place from where Little Girl moves and the counselling seems to enable her to discover new and different aspects of herself which she begins to integrate rather than separating them by denying one aspect. It is in discovering new selves that seems to enable Little Girl to realize that there is so much more to her than just the good and the bad girl. The relationship with the counsellor and perhaps with the journal appears to help Little Girl feel safe enough to examine these split off parts of herself. The bad girl feels hated to begin with but there is a sense by the end of the journal that Little Girl no longer has to hate parts of herself that others might feel are bad, she can have her own opinion about this and discovers that she no longer has to persecute herself. It is as if she has married the Beast and uses him to give her confidence.

The category when Little Girl writes the nursery rhyme is uncontained-unfree because she feels stuck in childhood where grownups and others are good and she is bad, but bad under the guise of being good. Who Am I, may be seen as split when she writes about being a frozen child for although she senses this part of herself, she feels very apart from it. Because of this the category uncontained-unfree is chosen, for the metaphor of being frozen suggests an inability to move. However Alice actually writes that she is ‘split in half’ (A), but she is beginning to see that she concentrates on blankness in sessions as a way of avoiding her feelings. She appears to process this information and begin integrating the split during the session so the category given here is

towards containment-freedom, as she appears to demonstrate that she wants to stop concentrating on blankness.

8.6 Object relations

Splitting may be seen as part of object relations theory (Fairburn 1952; Guntrip 1961; Greenberg and Mitchell 1983) which understands that the individual's main drive is through relationship with others in different ways throughout their life. These others may be external as well as internal others that have been introjected (Greenberg and Mitchell 1983) through life experience. Early relationships may be internalised (Brown and Pedder 1991) in that a child who experiences mother as often cross may internalise the cross mother so she becomes a part of the self that is always telling the child off even when she is an adult. Turned On seemed to have internalised a caring role for the family which felt particularly strong because she could never allow herself to say no when asked for help. Perhaps emotionally she had to care for her mother's feelings from a young age, making her the carer rather than mother. In fact she became the carer of a disabled relative feeling that she had to do this. Over the course of her journal she became enabled to talk to this part of herself and discover that she had a right to a life of her own. This dramatically changed her life as she was able to let her disabled relative move to an appropriate care home. The internalised parts of her that kept her in the role of carer lost their power and Turned On was able to make decisions for her life that were hers as opposed to those that seemed to have been internalised from others.

Internalising objects, both good and bad (Jacobs 1986) seems to occur throughout life. Little Girl may have internalised a good mother before her mother became ill. But ill health may have distanced and spoiled this relationship so that Little Girl began to feel unloved and therefore

unlovable, or not good enough to be loved. This could account for the many parts of herself that she seemed to dislike. Part of the counselling process may then have been about integrating these disliked, unwanted or denied aspects of herself. She seems to demonstrate the process of integrating (Brown and Pedder 1991) her selves/objects through her counselling journey, the journal and the research. Different unwanted selves come into focus through the journal as if she has conversations with these internal objects. In this way they become more integrated because they are recognized and known rather than being ignored and hidden. The different parts of her are made explicit in the finding poem 'Little Girl' because these differences were so explicit in the journal. The research itself seems to continue to help her integration as she discussed the changes in herself during our meetings and also demonstrated emotional movement in her feedback.

Construct categories varied with internal objects. When Alice's internal object is the burden of her mother's history she appears to be uncontained-unfree because she seems stuck but able to look around. However when Wriggling Fish uses her nan as a good object to help her change the construct is a desire for containment-freedom, because she is wanting to change and experience her own feelings. The categories allotted varied in that it was the relationship to these objects that was a deciding factor in the choice made.

8.7 A psychology of the self

Finding the self may be linked to object relations theory in that the participants seem to be attempting to differentiate themselves from internal objects, or trying to find themselves through these objects. This feels closer to Kohut's (1977; 14) notion of the "restoration of the self". This restoration seems to become possible when the idealization of parents or others are gradually

withdrawn (Siegal 1996) from the client's internal world. Then new structures are created that take on the functions of the idealized parents but without the personal qualities that were internalised by the child/client. Siegal describes how this psychology of the self maybe understood:

“A psychology of the self describes how self cohesion evolves from early and later self-object experiences and culminates in the healthy expression of the self's innate nuclear programme” (1996; 117).

This perhaps explains the participants' sense of becoming themselves, finding themselves or simply discovering that they were able to 'be' themselves from a theoretical viewpoint. Whenever participants made discoveries of different selves the category used tended to be towards containment-freedom as there was a strong sense of movement within their internal worlds. This notion of the participants constructing or reconstructing themselves through their counselling and the journals also fits with Kelly's (1963) theory of personal constructs. While keeping the journals they seemed to construct their own identities/stories and started to make their own choices whereas initially they seemed to be more influenced by others, and struggled to be the person they wanted to be. All the participants felt they had changed during their counselling and the research and all still feel that they continue this process of growth and change.

However the search for the self may also be linked to the creation of the stories of the participants' lived experience which becomes a joint autobiography founded on the idea of

multiple selves (Bruner 1990; 91). Wriggling Fish seems to confirm this in her response to her finding poem for she wrote of her sense of there being more self to be created soon, as she seems to see the creation and re-creation of her selves to be an ongoing process. This perception of a self or selves is explained by Speedy (2000) as: “A self, range of selves, or sub personalities, that are ‘inside’ waiting to be disclosed”(630). This concept seems closer to the participants’ experience of finding different parts of themselves. Having looked at object relations, Kohut’s restoration of the self and the notion of multiple selves or sub personalities it seems possible that there is a process through these different concepts. The first part of such a process would be recognizing the internalised objects that appear to control the client, as when Alice recognized the burden of her mother’s history. The second stage would be the restoration of the self, where different experiences enable the client to restore their own self. This is demonstrated clearly when Turned On starts to be able to say no when she is expected to help or care for others. The third stage may then be the discovery of multiple selves who may be influenced by the original internal objects but not controlled by them. A good example of this could be Wriggling Fish for she wriggled in the trap of ‘previous generations’ (WF) as she recognized that she was caught by them. She then began to find herself and with the help of her ‘golden nan ascending’ (WF) she was able to let her ancestors help her find freedom. With this new found freedom it seems she finds much more of herself or even more of her selves which enabled her to create a whole new life.

8.8 Empathy

The participants’ experience of empathy seems to be a difficult notion to demonstrate from the journals yet it also feels to be one that is crucial to their ability to work with their counsellors. Empathy may be understood as a skill of the counsellor that enables him/her to enter into the

client's world, which helps the client to feel heard. If, for example, Wriggling Fish had continued to feel that her counsellor was only cold it seems unlikely that she would have chosen to continue or been able to work with her. Empathy feels crucial from the client's perspective in that there is a need to feel safety and warmth from the counsellor in order to work with her/him. Safety may also be provided by the boundaries but it appears that empathy is also part of this safety. Rogers (1961) describes the process of empathy as experienced by the client when:

“the therapist is sensing the feelings and personal meanings which the client is experiencing in each moment, when he can perceive these from “inside,” as they seem to the client, and when he can successfully communicate something of that understanding to his client” (62).

Perhaps feeling understood creates an internal sense of safety with the counsellor who appears to understand the client from 'inside'. Such an internal feeling of safety seems an important part of the client's experience of empathy. The participants appear to experience empathy as feeling heard, understood, safe, secure, close, supported, held, warmth, acknowledged, cared for and loved. These words appear in the journals when participants describe their experience of how they feel when with the counsellor. They imply that participants have felt understood by the counsellor, or that the counsellor was with them in the shared experience. Even though Wiggling Fish found the experience of being with her counsellor difficult, it seems that there must have been some sense of feeling understood that enabled her to stay and work. It was getting angry with the counsellor, and feeling that the counsellor stayed with her anger that enabled her to feel safe, which she states in week five of the journal:

Extract 48. From WF journal to show the client's experience of anger

Line 3. I DID ANGER!!
Line 4. And she stayed!!!
Line 5. It felt safer
Line 6. I began to like her.
Line 7. It feels like a huge release
Line 8. A movement.

This safety, to feel anger, enabled Wriggling Fish to start to appreciate her counsellor and may be seen as the empathy of the counsellor letting her know that her feelings were understood.

Empathy according to Kohut (Siegal 1996) is the means by which the counsellor gathers information about a client. He gave empathy two levels of experience, a higher and lower level. In the lower form of empathy the client experiences being held in the “empathic merger by the understanding” (Siegal 1996; 189) of the counsellor. This feels very similar to what Dosamantes (1992) describes as the counsellor providing the matching words and meaning to the client’s unconscious experience, which she suggests creates a way out of a merged state of being. Kohut however adds to this by proposing that only after the empathic merger created by the lower level of empathy has been experienced, can the client mature and experience the higher level. Then the counsellor is experienced as more distant (or separate, as opposed to merged) as interpretations or explanations of the client’s history are provided by the counsellor. This enables the client to understand their own life experiences. Alice seemed merged with her counsellor on several occasions when she appeared to see them as having the same emotion, laughing together, both

being angry, and watching some dancing together. But perhaps this can be seen as a process of empathic merging, rather like the early holding the baby experiences with mother when the baby feels very physically close, or the same as mother. Alice realizes she carries her mother's burdens, yet she struggles to let these burdens go. Perhaps understanding more about her history and how it impacts on her enables the process of finding her feelings and her own self. This could describe an experience of Kohut's higher level of empathy being present, as Alice begins to understand her own history of a 'charmed' (A) life. She certainly makes this clear in her feedback as she does her need to be understood both by her counsellor and by me.

8.9 The relationship between poetry and counselling

Gray (1994) describes the function of the counselling frame:

“ the frame is not intended to inhibit spontaneity, its function being to contain and embrace all feelings” (13).

The intended function of the journals was also to encourage spontaneity and feelings. The participants' feeling selves became transparent on the page. They seemed to show that they felt safe as they did in their counselling sessions, and that they could be spontaneous within that safe place. The idea that creative writing can be a place that holds feeling is confirmed by Eriksson (2004):

“A poem gives shelter to and can contain what it evokes, such as strong emotion. The poem can be a place of safety” (50).

Just as counselling may provide a safe place in which feelings may be contained, the poem also

may be used as a safe container for emotions. This quote also suggests that the poem evokes feelings, which is similar to the spontaneity suggested above by Gray. It seems the experience of a safe place both in counselling and in writing poetry may evoke feelings, or encourage spontaneous feelings to come into being. This confirms the idea that feeling is embodied in the writer and that this embodiment may be transferred to the reader. Hunt and Samson (2006) suggest the writer calls up the ‘reader’s body’ so that:

“Bodies are thus an immanent physical ground on which text grows. And in this sense all texts could be called vocative. They call up the reader” (149).

Wriggling Fish, demonstrates safety and spontaneity embodied in her journal in her first entry, which was experienced in me as the reader. It is also her first session with a new counsellor and she appears to feel safe enough in her writing to express her feelings:

Extract 49. From WF journal to show spontaneity

Line 1. Want my old counsellor back!
Line 2. Feel resentful!
Line 3. She does not like me!
Line 4. I do not like her!
Line 5. Coldness, aloof, psychodynamic!
Line 6. Ugh! Do NOT want this!

Her use of exclamation marks suggest her spontaneity and she demonstrates her feelings in the desire to have her old counsellor back and in the feeling words she uses like resentful, and ugh. Feeling is also expressed in the phrases that say she does not feel liked by the counsellor or like

her. Feeling also seems to be expressed in the upper case letters in the last line. The power of this last line was felt in my body as I read it, confirming the concept of embodiment.

Turned On, tended to write quite long entries which are detailed, but her fifteenth entry is short and feels more spontaneous because of this. It also seems that it is safe enough to be herself:

Extract 50. From TO journal to show spontaneity and safety

Line 1.	Really don't feel much
Line 2.	different than last week
Line 3.	still feel lost in limbo its
Line 4.	as if I'm waiting for something
Line 5.	to happen. Don't feel today as
Line 6.	if I have gained anything
Line 7.	this week.

This entry is full of feelings such as 'lost in limbo', 'waiting for something' and a feeling of not having gained anything from her counselling. There is also the feeling evoked by the whole entry which seems flat and sad. The frame provided by the journal seems to give her the safety to be how she feels. Each participant's journal contained spontaneous strong feelings suggesting they all found a safe enough space, within their journal writing, to evoke and contain their feelings.

8.9.1 Poetry and the unconscious

When looking at Thomas Hardy's poetry Shulman (2003; 145) writes of the 'dream-like quality' of Hardy's work created by the images used. This dreamlike quality is seen as being the unconscious at work in Hardy's poetry. The unconscious in this sense feels difficult to apprehend if all that may be looked for is a dreamlike quality. However Maltby (2003) suggests that:

“the unconscious is, by definition, not known to us. We can only know it in terms of its products” (51).

So perhaps one of poetry’s products is a dream like quality. But there must be other products of the unconscious. Canham (2003) reminds us that it was Freud who discovered that words had the capacity to reveal more than their most apparent meaning. And perhaps Freud’s ‘free association’ (1986; 131) is also suggestive of the attitude of the poet whose thoughtful and internal attitude may appear to be that of day dreaming. In counselling the words and phrases of the client, however apparently unimportant are the material the counsellor works with. Phillips (2000) suggests that the images, metaphors, mixed meanings and enigmas are the essence of counselling. But perhaps they are also the essence of poetry and the unconscious.

In her tenth entry Who Am I wrote about feelings, about herself and about what she thinks others try to do to her. But the images and words used seem to create different feelings to those she says she feels. Perhaps her unconscious is revealing other feelings:

Extract 51. From WAI journal to show possible unconscious feelings

Line 1.	Felt good, tired but also a
Line 2.	little rail - roaded.
Line 3.	Many people appear to feel the
Line 4.	need to motivate me. Why?
Line 5.	I just feel tired + am taking
Line 6.	time for myself.

She expresses how she feels with words like ‘good’, ‘tired’ and ‘a little rail-roaded’. But it feels

difficult to be a *little* railroaded as railroaded feels such a powerful word. In lines 3 and 4 she feels weighted down with sadness as she makes a statement and then asks why. She ends by saying she feels tired and what she is going to do about it. But the feeling of sadness remains and there is also a sense of loneliness perhaps created by the ‘many people’ (line 3) who try to motivate her but who appear not to be listening to her. The feeling of loneliness also seems to be evoked by the word ‘railroaded’ as this may suggest being shunted to one side by others. The idea that others do not listen is not written but feels hidden between the lines and even in the words. Perhaps it is embodied in the writing. This could suggest that the unconscious message of sadness and loneliness is how her unconscious is feeling.

Alice, in her ninth entry appears to be aware of what is happening for her in her counselling but perhaps she also wipes away the real importance of what is happening:

Extract 52. From A journal to show possible unconscious messages

Line 1.	Feeling of strength
Line 2.	Feeling lighter
Line 3.	Why is it so?
Line 4.	That’s just the way it is
Line 5.	Not carrying ***’s burden will
Line 6.	unburden her too.
Line 7.	Love for counsellor
Line 8.	Crying inside

She notices the change in her feelings but does not acknowledge how this has happened (line 4), giving no credit to the counsellor. It almost feels as if she unconsciously wipes the counsellor out

but then later says she loves her (line 7). Although ‘feeling lighter’ she is ‘crying inside’ which suggests sadness. The mixed meanings create a wealth of sadness as if she is only just beginning to uncover what is hidden within her. The last line changes the whole entry. Her unconscious seems to tell a very different story to the one she tells on the surface.

The participants seem to bring together the similarities found in poetry and counselling by unconsciously using the ‘nuances of language’ (Canham and Satyamurti 2003; 2). The journals condense their feelings and use symbolism on an unconscious level. Ogden (2001) makes this similarity between poetry and counselling very clear:

“We are known as we had not known ourselves because, up to that point, we had not been ourselves as fully as we are becoming in experiencing the poem and as the poem experiences us. Similarly in the analytic relationship, patient and analyst as individuals each read and are read by the unconscious of the other” (177).

This seems to describe how I was able to read the unconscious of the participants in their narratives, and embody them. For example, in the thirty first entry of her journal Wriggling Fish writes about black plastic bags:

Extract 53. From WF journal to show an embodied message

Line 1. Anger, hurt.
Line 2. A cushion ↔ a person
Line 3. I hit out and remembered.
Line 4. Black plastic bags !! Tears!
Line 5. I actually admitted to ‘hate’!

Line 6. I don't 'do' hate !?
Line 7. Separation anxiety - even the dogs !
Line 8. The need to put 'right'
Line 9. To see 'differently'.
Line 10. The generations ?? How?

Because of the amount of anger and strong feeling felt in the reading of this whole entry I felt that the black plastic bags were an important symbol of something/someone that had to be thrown away or let go of. I felt an embodied sense of horror, perhaps created by the first three lines. I also felt that there was a fear of being alone because although she appears to slip defensively into theory in line seven with 'separation anxiety' the fact that she follows this with 'even the dogs' changes the line. The exclamation of 'even the dogs' seems to suggest so much more than the dogs, and so much feeling. In her response to the analysis Wriggling Fish told me that this had been about letting go of her husband's clothes after his funeral. So my sense of her having to let go, of many strong feelings, and a fear of being alone were perhaps embodied messages from her unconscious to mine.

As I read and became well acquainted with each of the journals I experienced a great deal of emotion which was not clearly present in the words alone. But it seems to be present in the juxtaposition of the words to each other. Little Girl, who used very few words and wrote as an accomplished poet, highlighted this unconscious embodiment for me. My sense of the anguish and pain at the loss of her mother in childhood was so present in her writing. She agreed in that she had not realized just how much the loss had, and still influenced her.

8.9.2 Loss and death in poetry

In his poetry, John Clare (1966) seems to long for death in the sense of longing for peace from

suffering. Yet although he appeared to long for his physical death he may have been wishing for freedom from his mental ill health which kept him locked away in an asylum. Yet the healthy part of him continued to write poetry. He had suffered both internal and external losses and his response to these losses was not understood by his contemporaries (Reeves 1966). Barrows (2003) shows how the capacity to cope with loss and death is demonstrated in Shakespeare's sonnets. She sees her appreciation of clients' losses as being enriched by her understanding of the sonnets. In the same way my understanding of loss, death and anguish has been enriched by my experiences and analysing the participants' journals and creating the findings poems. For example, Alice wrote a great deal about carrying other's burdens throughout her journal. It seems she carried the burden of her mother's experience of the holocaust and lost the right to be her own feeling self. This was one of her losses. Having taken on her mother's burden this became one of her roles as she took on the burdens of others. She became an advocate for others but realizes, in the journal writing, that she touches her own hurt when she protects others. This felt an important realization about herself, so it seems the writing helped her get in touch with the hurt, lost parts of herself and find the voices of her own feelings.

Who Am I does not seem to know who she is, as if all of her is lost. It seems that she has lost her identity which I feel as anguish. She knows almost nothing about her father and this seems to be a crucial part of her not knowing who she is. But through the journal she begins to find herself. She writes about the messages she was given about herself as a child and realizes that she does not have to own them. She names her different roles such as wife and mother and begins to see that she is more than these. She starts to take care of herself and listens to her feelings. She feels heard by the counsellor and seems to begin to hear herself. She begins to use the phrase 'I am' as

if she has found herself and is giving herself being. There is a real sense at the end of the journal that there is more of her and she has a strong voice.

Wriggling Fish is surprised that she feels caught at the beginning of her journal as though she never realized this about herself before. It seems she lost the freedom to have any power. She writes about the deaths of friends and leaves me as the reader feeling that parts of her are also dying. It seems the selves she needs, like her powerful self, has been killed off or never allowed to live. In the journal she begins to discover that she has the power to do whatever she wants in life as if she has had no real sense of her power before. She releases herself from old ways of behaving and finds a new and adventurous self.

Turned On starts the journal switched off from her own feelings, as if much of her is dead. She appears to have little sense of herself or her freedom to be a self. She has gone through life doing as she was told by others and become a carer of others. There is no space for her and she has nothing to look forward to in life. But through the journal she turns herself on. Instead of always saying yes when family ask things of her she starts to say no. She recalls her childhood with regular changes of school where she struggled to learn. Yet by the end of the research process I met someone who was loving learning, who had found a passion for words and who had a future to look forward to.

Little Girl seems to be stuck in childhood at the start of her journal. She does not appear to like herself very much and she feels small as if there is little of her. Yet through the journal she seems to discover many different selves. At the start she shoots herself to pieces and it as if these

fragments are the beginning of the other selves. She realizes how much losing her mother still affects her and how she lets men take her power from her. She moves from wanting others to do things for her to wanting to do things for herself. There is a real sense of her power, her voice by the end of the journal.

Perhaps the power of the losses experienced by the participants is lessened (Barrows 2003) by the re-experiencing of their feelings both in their counselling and their journals. As the reader of the journals, the variety of loss and death and how these losses were experienced had a powerful impact upon me. What stays with me is that even though loss may be hidden away in symbols and metaphor it remains present in between the lines, between the words. Although I did not intend to look for loss in others it is there in all the journals. Perhaps unconsciously I knew it would be but this was not recognized at the start of the research. Here it feels important to recognize my own working through of loss and death during this study. Although I recognized that working from my own experience might be part of my need for reparation I perhaps did not understand just how much this would be present in the process of the work. Yet I was willing to risk using my own material as a starting point and this may also reflect my need for reparation, to make the world, at least in some part a better place, for:

“The capacity to be recruited, the willingness to risk ridicule or disappointment, to risk sticking one’s neck out for something one feels to be worthwhile reflects a reparative instinct, a drive to make the world, or a part of it better” (Jones 1991:162).

Perhaps this reparative instinct was present for the participants too, for they risked giving a very

personal part of themselves to this research. The loss for all of us is that we give up or lose something of ourselves, both in the writing and in the letting go of it to another. Loss is embodied within us and escapes onto the page where the reader may take it into themselves.

8.9.3 Poetry and opposition

Keats (1966) in his poems ‘Ode on a Grecian Urn’ and ‘The Nightingale Ode’ brings together the opposites of life and death, joy and sorrow. Hilton (1971) sees the melancholy of Keats poems as:

“not just a ‘fit’, nor is it a mood, but rather a state of mind in which these opposites may be brought together” (Hilton 1971:106).

Poets throughout history to the modern day bring opposites together in their work. It seems that the reflexive space provided by writing enables poets to achieve this melancholic state of mind which encourages the possibility of exploring opposites. The participants seem to demonstrate this state of mind in their journals as they bring opposites together. Wriggling Fish tends to demonstrate opposition in many entries but in entry twelve there is opposition in just a few lines:

Extract 54. From WF journal to show opposition

Line 1. Week ‘off’ - glad.
Line 2. Neck pain, confined!
Line 3. Cannot drive.
Line 4. Turmoil / emotional
Line 5. New Zealand and life calling!

Although she is glad at the beginning because she has a week off from counselling the next three lines are about pain, her inability to drive and emotional turmoil. This gives the impression of a distressed or unhappy way of being, yet in the last line she seems full of optimism and the adventure of life. There is discomfort felt in the opposition as if the entry does not make sense. But perhaps it can be understood by her forthcoming move to another country. This may be what she wants in her external life, but perhaps she also wants to move this much internally, to get rid of the restrictive neck pain and find the freedom of her own feelings.

Alice has several entries which show opposition and seem to embody her sadness but also her desire for change. It seems that feeling opposition in the world and in herself enables her to learn about herself:

Extract 55. From A journal to show opposition

Line 1.	Sea Saw
Line 2.	Want what I can't have,
Line 3.	don't want it when I can have it.
Line 4.	Control and out of control
Line 5.	How to find the right balance?
Line 6.	Got to know plant
Line 7.	Feel I'm getting closer.

There is a real sense of the up and down movement of the sea saw, the swing between opposite desires. Feeling and being aware of internal opposition seems to make her wonder about finding the right balance. This appears to take her away from the movement for balance may be seen as being still. She goes further away by writing about a plant that was in the counselling room but ends up feeling she is getting closer, perhaps to herself. But the real movement of the entry

seems to be in the first four lines and this is what opposition, with its melancholy, seems to give to the process of exploring the self.

Turned On moves in her journal between feeling confused and feeling that her thoughts get clearer. In the first five lines of her first entry she shows this confusion:

Extract 56. From TO journal to show opposition

Lin1	1.	This seemed to be a very
Line	2.	confused session for me
Line	3.	today back into deep family
Line	4.	difficulties and feel not
Line	5.	worthy. Have to prove myself

She seems to have returned to a place that she has been before, deep into family difficulties which appear to make her feel unworthy. Yet immediately afterwards it seems she has to prove herself which feels the opposite of being unworthy. She berates herself regularly through the journal and appears to be seeking to like/love herself and these opposing states seems to help her move emotionally. But there is always the feeling of melancholy with such opposing feelings as she finds a state of mind that enables such opposition to be felt.

Little Girl seems to see herself as a little girl when she writes out the childhood rhyme 'There was a little girl'. Yet in week seventeen she declares 'I am not Bambi' as if she is saying the opposite. This moving between feeling very young and very grown up is a constant part of her journal. She is so very grown up in the way she writes with such accomplishment that opposition feels inherent throughout the journal. In week eight she writes:

Extract 57. From LG journal to show inherent opposition

Line 1.	SO MANY WORDS
Line 2.	BUT NOTHING TO SAY
Line 3.	AS IF
Line 4.	BY TALKING
Line 5.	YOU CAN HIDE
Line 6.	WHAT IS REAL.

It seems that there have been many words in the counselling session yet she feels that nothing has been said. The opposition here feels encased in sadness for the talking seems to hide what is real as if her reality has been hidden by all the words. Her reality feels hidden here and yet so present in the embodied sadness.

Opposition in the journal of Who Am I seems hidden yet it is felt. It is particularly felt in the sadness or melancholy of her entries:

Extract 58. From WAI journal to show melancholy

Line 1.	Tired, exhausted, virus.
Line 2.	Irritable bowel playing up,
Line 3.	tension + stress → shoulder, neck
Line 4.	pain.
Line 5.	Feel want to be left alone to
Line 6.	do nothing.

Here she seems to state very clearly that her physical body is holding her feelings. She wants to be left alone to do nothing, yet she does not leave herself alone for she still writes which is doing

something as opposed to nothing.

If Hilton (1971) is correct and it is a melancholic state of mind that enables opposition to come into focus for the creative writer, then it makes sense of my writing following trauma and the sadness I felt when analysing the journals. It was embodied within me, just as it is in the journal writers.

8.10 Conclusion

The participants' journals exceeded all my expectations and provided a wealth of material that even now seems only partially used for the study. There is so much that may be linked to counselling theory and poetry that I feel as if I have only scratched the surface of all that may be embodied in the narratives. However the fact that established theory appears to be visible in the journals does confirm that theory may be deduced from the client's perspective. The journals also seem to provide a way of looking at the process of internal growth from object relations through the restoration of the self to a more modern view of multiple selves. The similarities between the poetic space and the counselling space where the individual/client may discover a safe place where the unconscious may emerge is intriguing. It makes sense of my desire to enable the participants to use poetic skills without actually asking them to write poetry.

CHAPTER NINE

CONCLUSIONS

“Thought is no longer theoretical. As soon as it functions it offends or reconciles, attracts or repels, breaks, dissociates, unites or re-unites; it cannot help but liberate and enslave. Even before prescribing, suggesting a future, saying what must be done, even before exhorting or merely sounding an alarm, thought, at the level of its existence, in its very dawning, is in itself an action – a perilous act. (Foucault 1977;5)

9.1 Introduction

This chapter first looks at the differences between the two studies to show how the overall process of the work impacted on it. Then possible changes to the study in the light of completing it are looked at. Next the findings are reconnected with the literature firstly in relation to the poetic method for collecting data which highlights how the poetic/melancholic stance of the work evokes opposition; secondly in relation to the theory concepts and process of the work which intertwine yet when viewed together also bring some clarity to their inherent confusion; thirdly in relation to the findings poems which link my lived experience to the process of the work. The contributions that the study brings to practice, methodology and knowledge are examined and followed by some recommendations for future research.

9.2 Differences between the two studies

The comparative shortness of the pilot study journals that were kept for fifteen weeks is in sharp contrast to the much longer narratives of the main study. At first sight the difference in length and the fact that the theme was not disclosed in the pilot study, but was disclosed in the main

study appear to be the only differences. The main difference is in each analysis and the processes that followed.

Knowing the theme of the research did appear to make a difference to the data of the main study. Freedom was a key word/desire in some of the narratives whereas this was hardly demonstrated in the pilot study. One pilot study participant wrote once that she was free to be herself and another wrote 'free-flowing speech' suggesting that she was speaking freely without really thinking about what she was saying. Otherwise the term freedom as such was not mentioned. But words and phrases that could be interpreted as pertaining to freedom were present, like wanting to escape from the counselling, or wanting to find their own thoughts. The verb 'contain' was also used in the main study narratives while only being used once in one journal in the pilot data. However the pilot study data did use words that suggested or alluded to containment. They suggested that what containment may be seen as providing in the positive sense of feeling safe or understood was present. The opposite feelings of being trapped or cornered were also present in the pilot data suggesting the other side of containment. Opposition was present in both study narratives.

In the pilot study I had to search for the concepts and learn more about them from the data and the literature. It is here that the understanding and interpretation of words takes on a crucial role. It is also where poetic skills and the interpretation of the narratives become vital to the work. If the original pilot study participants had known the theme I might not have had to search for the concepts in the same way. The pilot study established the presence of the concepts and gave credibility to the research through the participants' responses to the analysis. They agreed with

the analysis in the sense that I had discovered aspects of their inner worlds that they felt had not been visible in the journal data. It is their feedback that gives credibility to the findings. It could be argued that I found what I was looking for but the participants' feedback suggests that the analysis is valid. Looking for opposition, discovering the construct and the poetic stance of the work all aided the interpretation of the data. The main study added to the depth of this learning and clarified my understanding of the categories that had emerged from the pilot study. It enabled the idea of the construct of the containment-freedom polarity to develop into a continuum.

The study seemed to need all the time it took including the breaks that apparently interrupted it, yet perhaps enabled it to evolve. In the first few years of the study I had felt easily criticised by more experienced researchers when I used my own voice. But as time and experience allowed the narrative to emerge my voice began to gain confidence. I needed to use the power of the Beast to defend my voice. In this way, using my voice, or all my voices as a counsellor, researcher, writer and story teller of the participants' stories and my story, I let go of inappropriate criticism and owned my voice. Qualitative postmodern research methodologies suggest that claiming ownership of the whole of this process is appropriate for:

“The researcher is always speaking partially naked and is genuinely open to legitimate criticism from participants and from audience. Some researchers are silenced by the invitation to criticism contained in the expression of voice”
(Clandinin and Connelly 1994; 423-424).

Owning my own voice and becoming open to legitimate criticism enables the narrative to grow as my voice speaks through my words and improves my writing ability. My lived experience of research was growing alongside the study as was my ability to listen to and trust my voice. As these abilities grew I felt more confident and realized that analysing the main study and writing the findings poems used more of my ability as a writer. In this way the writing itself became part of the inquiry for as Speedy (2005) states, writing is:

“a form of research that uses writing both as a research tool or craft in its own right and/or as a method of re-presenting the words of participants”
(63).

The writing itself seems to have become part of the methodology (Speedy et al 2005) in that it tells a story which is made up of many stories. It includes a narrative approach which incorporates the whole, the narrative of the participants, the findings poems and all the conversations between me and the participants that took place over time. In this sense it creates an “ongoing conversation” (Speedy et al; 67) that is invited and encouraged by the texts within the whole. It is the processes of analysing both studies improving my writing skills over time and owning the confidence I have in my own voice that creates the main difference between the studies.

9.3 Possible changes to the study

Looking back at the study now, I feel that it might have been of benefit to have been more persistent in looking to find participants via counselling centres so that they would have had no training connection to counselling. From their narratives it is possible to see that four participants

have some understanding of the counselling process and this could be seen as influencing the research. However their own words also suggest that their cognitive knowledge did not influence their process. For example when Wriggling Fish mentions separation she adds ‘even the dogs’ which made me realize that something else was also happening. It seems that the poetic method enabled unconscious messages to override their cognitive understanding. In other words their cognitive understanding may be seen as a defence which their unconscious displayed for what it was while revealing the hidden processing of the unconscious. My concern originally was also that clients with no connection to counselling might lack sufficient commitment to take part in the study. However the one participant who had no counselling training connections demonstrated that just her counselling gave her the commitment to take part in the research, suggesting that my concern about commitment was groundless. It also reminds me that I should listen to my own words, the words in this study and learn from the experience of the client. Yet this one participant could also be seen as the saving grace of this study because by having her alongside the others it is possible to see that they each wrote their own stories and any connection to counselling just became part of the story.

I am also aware that no men took part in the study. Perhaps finding participants via counselling centres might have provided male participants. The tendency in the analysis demonstrates that all participants struggled to find the Beast or the freedom to be themselves. Their place in their internal worlds as Beauty who tends to do what others expect of her gave each of them a similar starting place. It would be interesting to see whether or not there is a male-female divide. In other words would men be more in touch with their power, their Beast who has no care for others and struggles to connect with Beauty as the one who cares for others. It will take another research study to find out.

9.4 A new poetic method

The method used for collecting data proved itself to be complementary in that it fitted with the counselling process. The narratives produced by asking participants to write just a few words or phrase on each line evoked a melancholic state (Hilton 1971) in participants that highlighted opposition. They provide insight into the client's experience of counselling as well as demonstrating movement in the emotional shifts that become visible and felt through opposition and metaphor. The literature review saw how Ricoeur (1978) suggests that metaphor describes reality and how Britton (2003) suggests that the abstract, that which cannot be spoken is brought into being by symbols. However the participants' narratives seem to do more in that they present their lived and felt experience on the page. As was hoped the writing itself becomes a container (Satamurti 2003; Lago 2004) for the participants' feeling and experiencing selves. For alone, but in the presence of *their* others they discover the freedom to find their authentic (Rogers 1961) selves. It seems that such a method creates a space that makes it possible to learn more about the client's experience which Lott (1999) felt was so lacking in counselling literature. Gee (1991) feels that writing with such short phrases is a natural form of expression while Maltby (2003) suggests the use of lines disrupts the normal logic of sentences. However in this study it also enables participants to talk to their denied/hidden selves, as if a *natural* way of talking with ourselves is provided by such writing. Such a reflexive way of being enables the muffled and silent selves (Hunt 2004) of the participants to find a voice.

The most interesting outcome/finding from the study for me, and perhaps for other counsellors, is that the participants' ability to tolerate opposition came from their sadness or melancholic way of being. I found this space after trauma enabled me to howl out the agony of opposition and anguish as I gave my feelings validity through writing poetry. The safety of the journal space

allowed the participants the validity of their feelings as they re-experienced past events and the sadness these evoked. This fit with the melancholic poetic/reflexive stance that brings opposition into focus is crucial to this study. Although as counsellors we might have a sense of this from our work, to see it on the page gives credibility to the work we do. The opposition creates tension or friction within the participants and enables them to make emotional shifts within themselves. Emotional movement/transformation in the internal world of the client does seem to be visible in the journal narratives. It confirms our understanding of how, when clients are able to reflexively re-experience their previously denied feelings or experiences, they relate to the opposition within these states and are able to move emotionally as opposed to being stuck.

9.5 Theory concepts and process

The literatures demonstrate that the concepts of containment freedom and polarity are recognized as present in the world of counselling and psychotherapy. Jung's writing on the presence of opposition, polarity and instinctual processes gave authority to these concepts and helped clarify the categories that emerged within the main construct. Polarity, the pull between two poles of opposition that appears to create emotional shifts within the individual became visible in the participants' narratives. These narratives demonstrated the presence of opposition within the participants' internal worlds and this was confirmed by their responses to the analysis and the findings poems. The participants were also able to express some understanding of the categories which gives credence to the idea of a containment-freedom polarity as a construct for understanding the client's experience.

Aspects of the client's experience of containment demonstrated the polarity of this concept in the participants' descriptions of being trapped/stuck or safe/cared for; while the polarity of freedom

is demonstrated in their metaphors of power/confidence and agitation/frustration. Opposition becomes visible in the participants' opposing desires which seem to be encouraged by the melancholic poetic stance as unconscious messages are released and discovered within the narratives. The instinctual processes that Jung (1969) describes are at once visible in the participants' inability to change and then transformed through opposition into Rennie's (2001) and Foucault's (1984) agency as they begin to change and make choices. In a similar way the client's merged state which Winnicott (1965; 1971) suggests is needed for the client to learn how to use the counsellor may be visible in the participants' desire to be cared for by/be the same as the counsellor; while their process of separation may be seen in their metaphors that describe waking up, being turned on, like Mahler, Pine and Bergman's (1975) hatching process.

So much information emerged that intertwined theory, experience and the concepts that I omitted the attraction of polarity on the original continuum. This lack omits the idea of the poles of opposition being drawn towards to each other. This is made clearer by adding attraction to the continuum. (p.259). The containment-freedom continuum perhaps does help demonstrate how the categories are all essential if emotional movement is to occur. With containment and freedom at either end of the continuum it shows that each category may be an integral part of movement, as if to reach one it may be necessary to pass through other categories.

As the axis of the continuum, uncontained-unfree (the stuck position) perhaps holds the key to understanding the construct and as such is easily recognized by all the participants. Understanding from the analysis that this was a place from where they could look around and see where they were gave it meaning, it was more and less than just being stuck. In the same way all

the categories seem to make sense of experience. By bringing opposition into focus the categories make experience meaningful as opposed to being an experience which either cannot be explained or is explained as a theoretical concept that does not feel as if it fits experience. This agrees with Harris Williams (2005) belief that the suffering of opposition if it can be tolerated and worked with is followed by the discovery of meaning. This does not mean that theory is not relevant to the counsellor from her theoretical perspective. But for the client it is his/her own experience that needs to be made sense of, not the counsellor's experience. The categories provide a way of understanding the client's experience in that they seem to provide meaning to experiences that the participants had felt lacked meaning. For example Alice found meaning because she began to understand more about why and how she carried her mother's burden and this enabled her to begin to relate differently to that burden so that it did not seem to have so much control over her. In this way discovering meaning seemed to enable participants to make emotional shifts as they continued their journeys towards growth and change. The continuum suggests that there is no possibility of ever achieving a state where the individual stops moving or growing. Just as movement and change is a constant of life, so movement between the categories may also be seen as a constant. What does perhaps change is the ability to recognize the stuck position (or any of the other positions) and do something about it more readily than may have been done previously. One of the most valuable aspects of the participants' feedback is that all of them, from both studies, felt that they had experienced each of the categories to some degree. So for a counsellor to have some understanding of such experience may enhance the intimacy of the relationship in that the client will feel understood and that his/her experiences are meaningful. To refer back to Lott (1999) they may feel they are in a real relationship with a real counsellor who is experienced as more than a theoretical stance,

which also reminds us of Clarkson's (1994) view that the relationship is the most important aspect of counselling for the client. The lesson from Wriggling Fish demonstrates the power of the counsellor in how an experience stays with a client. She makes it clear in her feedback that the experience remains with her even years afterwards for it made her feel that she was not worth a real response and left her with the sense that this was not a real relationship. The counsellor did not respond when asked by Wriggling Fish if she had a cold. Such a response emerges from a theoretical stance which may initiate a negative transference in the client but for this participant the coldness and distance she felt with the counsellor remained with her. She could see that her counsellor was astute and chose to stay and work with her but never felt she had a real relationship or a relationship with a real person. With reference to applying these findings to the practice of counselling it appears that being open to a client's perspective, even if the counsellor feels that perspective to be incorrect, may add to and improve the intimacy or the client's experience of a real working relationship. The positive transference as seen in the journals by the care participants feel from/towards the counsellor demonstrates that this working relationship enables clients to feel that they have a real relationship with someone they can trust. Although theory may be visible in the client's experience it is that experience that as Polanyi (1969) reminds us demonstrate 'sites' or intrinsic knowledge that has felt too familiar for us to really see. Through attending to the client's experience we may see that we have been stepping over their contribution to our understanding of theory and practice.

Little Girl's experiences of her crumbling internal world are powerful. To witness, as the reader, what appears to be the process of the "deconstruction" (Hunt and Sampson 2006; 172) or fragmentation of the self is humbling. Little Girl may have metaphorically shot herself to pieces

but she afterwards she started a process of reconstruction or meeting/talking to her selves as opposed to being shot by them. To follow this process on, and see how differently each participant examines split off aspects of themselves is fascinating and extraordinary. They each appeared to follow a similar process where they linked their past to the present, discovered their internal objects, their child archetypes, and then related to these objects/selves as they restored their selves to more conscious control. The selves who were emerging within each participant seemed to have more power over their internal and external lives with a conscious freedom to make choices that had not initially been evident. The split suggested by Harris Williams (2005) between function and self did seem to be crucial to creativity in that the opposition between self and function appears to create movement/transformation within the internal world. When a participant's action was at odds with her perceived or desired self opposition became unavoidable and choices became visible. Their writing seemed to be a part of this process in that it appeared to encourage them to relate to split off selves. Beauty and the Beast, their known and unknown selves became visible, embodied on the page as participants met and used opposition to transform their selves.

Embodiment, which seems to be inherent in the poetic/reflexive stance, has been a theme that has linked much of the work together. The participants all demonstrate that feelings are felt and inhabit the body, in that they write about their feelings which create physical symptoms of pain. But even when they do not mention physical pain, the pain of their emotions, their feelings are embodied in the writing and transferred to me as the reader. In counselling we may refer to this experience as empathic understanding but perhaps what counsellors do is embody clients' feelings. I can explain this to others from my perspective but it is difficult to demonstrate or

prove for it is perhaps beyond text. But in the journal narratives, (and the findings poems), the reader can share this experience to some extent for it may be felt because it is embodied in the writing, in the words and even in the spaces/silences between the words. The embodied experience of the participants is transferred from the text into the reader as the “mutuality of embodiment” (Hunt and Sampson 2006; 148) or inter-subjectivity brings the writing to life in the reader.

The many layers of such a narrative seem to interconnect and make it difficult to feel the links between established theory, the containment-freedom polarity and participants’ process. Perhaps this may be clarified by using the metaphor of Beauty and the Beast. If the containment-freedom polarity is seen as the ‘Beauty-Beast relationship’ the split between selves is inherent in Beauty-Beast; while relationship relates to the kind of connection those selves have; whether they are communicating and acknowledged or denied and hidden. Also polarity is present in each of their opposing characteristics in that Beauty may represent trapped/stuck and safe/cared for while the Beast may represent agitation/frustration and power/confidence. The image created in the mind by Beauty and the Beast provides a more concrete and visible idea than that created by the term containment-freedom polarity. Just like the metaphors in the participants’ narratives that create visual images so the Beauty-Beast relationship is a metaphor that may be visualized/felt and so clarify understanding. It also relates to counselling theory where (in chapter two) containment is given three dimensions (Kogan 1988; Quinodoz 1992; Rosenbaum and Garfield 1996) and movement is seen as omnipresent happening within and between each of the dimensions. Beauty-Beast relationship (containment-freedom polarity) may be seen as holding three active dimensions/relationships in that movement may occur between and within each

dimension/relationship.

9.6 Findings poems

The findings poems appear to be strongly linked to the way the participants were asked to write their journals. Just as they may be seen as cutting up (Biley 2004) their thoughts and feelings to reveal unconscious processes so I cut up their words to give the reader a sense of the relations and patterns which emerged in the narratives. Riessman's (1993) transcription method of writing up interviews enabled her to experience the tensions in the composition of the original narrative. My intention in the findings poems is to give the reader a glimpse of the tension and opposition inherent in the original narratives in order to give a sense of the lived experience of the participants. My own words included in the poems add a sense of my lived experience of the research process including my relationship with the participants, the concepts and the journey. The overall intention is to give the reader a sense of the whole and to add their own emotion/lived experience within the process of reading. This agrees with Flint's (2004) idea that the poetic space enables changes that occur through metaphor internally, to become manifest outside in the physical body of the writer and reader, where it is embodied (Hunt and Sampson 2006). My function of reflexivity in writing and counselling enabled the selves and feelings found in shock, anguish, a murderous self, howling, and a search for meaning to be experienced following trauma. Through reflexivity the participants discovered similar selves within their counselling stories. There is the shock of their re-experienced feelings when they connect with childhood trauma and more recent trauma through death and loss; their anguish of the opposition created by these feelings coming into experience; their denied selves (or murderous selves) being met, like the grief stricken little girl, the worst mother and the frozen child; their howling is re-experienced as metaphors enable their lost/unconscious feelings to be made conscious on the

page; their search for meaning helps them make sense of their history to discover who they really are and who they want to be. My personal experiences led to the discovery of such processes in others by the way the participants were asked to write their journals and then by the writing of the findings poems. Yet the findings poems came into being through grief which took me back to where I started with my own writing processes. Such grief seemed to return me to a place where I re-discovered my passion for the work and enabled the lived experience of others to be heard (Muncey 2005) with a means that is integral to the method already established.

By listening to my voice of the present the research journey continued as opposed to being halted by grief. My own metaphors reminded me that I was in a place of opposition where there was a choice between living fully (continuing with the study) and denying that right to live fully (letting the study go). I chose to live fully and continue with the research and in so doing the anguish experienced though such opposition revealed the creativity that produced the findings poems. The concepts are intertwined even within the process of shaping the poems. Beauty and the Beast were never far from me in that I needed the Beast to protect me as I took time away from the work and wrote out the wildness of grief in poetry; and I needed the opposition of Beauty to refuse the death of the study as I held onto it and continued to care for others, the participants who had given so much of themselves to the work. This takes me back to Gee's (1991) belief that the meaning of stories is embedded not just in the individual mind but in our backgrounds and history or as Smith suggests:

“A hermeneutics of moral dimensions that tries to explicate how ethical feeling and action emerge from a fuller understanding of *where* we come from and find

ourselves” (2005; 220).

Where I come from in relation to my experiences impacted on the research just as where the participants come from also impacted upon the research. Their experiences, traumas, histories of place and time created relationships with me and with the research as we each searched for a fuller understanding of ourselves and of the world we live in. The history of the participants’ lives, their stories, their impact on me and the study, the history of counselling and my history and present grief are all part of the meaning of this story. All these voices needed to be heard and the impact of so much history and meaning was not lost through grief but rather heard through grief.

9.7 Key contributions to practice, methodology and knowledge

The participants found that keeping the journals increased their self awareness and gave them a memory of this emotional journey. For counselling practitioners offering such a form of creative writing to clients may be worth exploring as a way of enhancing or contributing to the work. All the participants felt that the journals aided the weekly processing in between sessions which Lott (1999) felt was so much a part of her and her research participants’ experience of counselling. It may be possible to take such journal entries into the counselling room where the metaphors and symbols created by clients in between sessions may contribute to the process of the counselling journey. It also seems possible that keeping this kind of journal might help clients understand their own process. The participants found the journals useful personal records even without the analysis as they let their feelings emerge on the page. They became records that they valued because they held so much of their internal journey. Without fully understanding the unconscious

processes or messages within them they still added meaning to their counselling experience. So even if clients chose to keep the journals private and not take them into their counselling sessions there remains the possibility that the writing would aid their process in between sessions.

To see theory in action from the perspective of the client gives credence to the way psychodynamic counsellors work. Perhaps the most interesting aspect of the journal narratives and analysis is not just that they appear to show theoretical concepts like the transferences, the unconscious and empathy, but that they seem to show the process and emotional movement of the client. It has already been established that discovering more about the client's experience of counselling is a key aspect of counselling research (Toukmanian and Rennie 1992; Rennie 1998; Lott 1999). Yet in discussing the difficulty of identifying client processes from the experience of the client McLeod (2001b) suggests:

“there is a limit to the values of this research, since there may well be significant therapeutic processes which are outside of the awareness of clients” (41).

In this research however, the poetic and reflexive stance of the data collection seems to enable the client to provide evidence of these processes that are outside of their awareness. So perhaps the way the data has been created provides the possibility for finding out more about these processes from the client's perspective. The participants' feedback on the analysis enables them to say if there is a fit between the analysis and their experience. They all felt that the analysis helped them to understand more about themselves in that it increased their self awareness. In particular they were enabled to relate to previously hidden or denied parts of themselves.

Although the participants each record these processes differently the similarities are crucial. They all aim to know or understand themselves better; to change themselves internally and change their external lives; to discover who they are and who they wish to be. They all achieve these aims to varying degrees and all feel the success gained through their counselling. This is what stays with me; the participants' narratives seem to show that counselling works. They demonstrate that qualitative narrative research can provide evidence to support the counselling process. According to Solomon:

“The psyche accomplishes its transformation through the creation of symbols which are capable of bringing together opposing aspects of the self” (1998; 227).

The way the journals were written encouraged the use of symbols which in turn seemed to allow participants to find opposing aspects of themselves. This is how the emotional movement or transformation of the participants became visible in the journals. It fits with known theory and with the poetic stance of the data. It is the making visible of such processes, the movement between dimensions that adds to our knowledge of counselling processes and demonstrates the value of narrative research. Practitioners, and researchers such as Payne (2006), Speedy (2005), Biley (2004), and Riessman (1993; 2001) have enabled me to “link language, subjectivity, social organization and power” (Richardson and St. Pierre 2005:961). The “centre piece” (Richardson and St. Pierre 2005:961) being language that has drawn the work together by the poetic/reflexive stance that helped create it. Language constructed the journals and helped the participants to reconstruct their identities, their selves. In this way language enabled them to discover their own

reflexivity, to find their own meanings and re-write their stories. At the same time my story and the story of the research was co-constructed alongside. It seems that my writing, like the participants' journals, became as much a part of "a method of data collection" as well as "a method of data analysis" (Richardson and St. Pierre 2005; 970). My writing may be seen as data by the way the story was conceived and by the attitude of remaining open. Remaining open enabled the inclusion of my poems, thoughts, embodied feelings and emotions that were key parts of the process of the work. Writing allowed data and analysis to almost combine to release opposition. The contradictory nature of opposition that holds attraction within its poles seems to have supported the way I attempted to use objectivity and subjectivity together. But perhaps by using such different perspectives I actually moved away from objectivity and subjectivity to a dialectical stance where there is neither, subject or object but "process, always emerging through a self contradictory development" (Reason and Rowan 1981; 241). Foucault (1970; 1977) suggests the possibility of freeing thought from subject and object and perhaps because I was unaware of such a prospect it was possible to accomplish it for it is only with hindsight that I can feel the likelihood of this freedom. For example to understand the findings poems in terms of objectivity and subjectivity would be complex but to understand them in terms of process emerging through contradictory development seems a good fit.

9.8 Recommendations for future research

The future of this research feels as if it is embedded in the poetic/reflexive stance. As all the participants liked the way they were asked to write their journals it may be of value to take this further, away from the world of trainee counsellors to clients who have no other connection to the world of counselling. The one participant who had no such connection other than being a

client in counselling felt the research was of great value to her, suggesting that such a way of collecting data may be of value to future participants.

At a recent presentation of this research two of the audience were interested in the stuck position of uncontained-unfree. They related this to victims of abuse and domestic violence who struggle to move physically and emotionally from where they are. This was interesting as I had not mentioned the trauma that gave birth to the research in the presentation. But there may be a strong link to those who suffer from domestic violence as I have sometimes been aware of my sister's inability to move from where she was. Unconsciously, perhaps I have experienced that stuck place from her perspective. So to use this particular form of journal keeping with clients who have experienced domestic violence may be worth considering. However there would be a need to be aware of the risk inherent in such work. Wright (2004) looks at the work of Bolton (1999), Hunt (2000; 2004) and Hunt and Sampson (1998) who use forms of creative writing in writing workshops and in connection with educational and health care settings. She notes the importance of being aware that such writing would not be appropriate for "disturbed or psychotic patients" (9) who would need more therapeutic care than some practitioners might be able to offer. There would be a need with any future use of the method in research and practice, to be sure that such ethical concerns for those taking part be taken into consideration. Bolton presents examples of writing by women that show the fierce inner critic within them. Although this may enable them to identify this aspect of themselves and make it conscious there remains the necessity to be aware of the power of the emotions that might arise in such circumstances. Motion (2000; 6 in Wright 2004) reminds us of the power of creative writing for "poems are a hotline to our hearts, and we forget this emotional power at our peril." Such power needs

counsellors/researchers who have the experience and sensitivity to recognize when keeping a poetic type journal may not always be appropriate for the wellbeing of the client/participant.

Although the method for keeping the journals may not be suitable for all researchers of lived experience it does feel applicable to counselling research for as counsellors we use our sensitivity to listen to and interpret clients' stories. Without always realizing it we listen to fragmented sentences where normal logic is disrupted. We hear this natural form of expression whenever we are with clients. Symbols and metaphor are an integral part of the work we do as we listen to clients trying to find the words that fit their experience. It is this similarity between what we do as counsellors and the way the participants were asked to write the journals that creates a method that fits counselling. By taking what we do with the spoken word and transferring it to the written word the narratives created using this method seem to enlarge our understanding of the client's experience and process. It creates the opportunity to witness the client's experience from the client's perspective. To take this further by using the method with clients with specific problems like grief/trauma or eating disorders for example may give practitioners more understanding in these areas of interest.

9.9 Conclusion

This final chapter highlights how the varied aspects of the research are bound together by the use of voice and the poetic stance. Keeping my processes, my different voices in awareness through the progression of the study enabled language, the poetic stance to remain at the centre of the work. My passion for the impact that language can create through symbols and metaphor remained central whether looking at the concepts of containment, freedom and polarity or

established theory. Language both contained the data in the journals and contained the history of all the stories that were told; and language released the data as the participants shared their lived experience of counselling in their narratives and as I shared the lived experience of a narrative process. The participants helped create a new method, as they added to our understanding of the client's process as opposition generated transformations that became visible on the page. From their journals a huge amount of information was created as the concepts, established theory and the process of narrative research all intertwined. As I struggled with the confusion of information even in this conclusion Beauty and the Beast became the metaphor for the containment-freedom polarity. In a sense this had always been but I had not contained it in words, not freed my thought into the action (Foucault 1977) of writing out 'Beauty-Beast relationship'. The process of such contained freedom has enabled a new method, a construct, a polarity, lived experience and meaning to be displayed. Language has enabled a showing of what may be, a knowledge of possibilities, a process emerging through contradictory development, and this seems to be enough.

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APPENDIX 1.

Letter format to counselling training institutions

Date.....

Tina Bracegirdle
3 Havelock Road
Biggleswade
Beds SG 18 ODB

Training Institutions name and address.

Dear

I am a psychodynamic counsellor and co-ordinator of counselling at Stevenage and North Herts Counselling Centre am also a research student studying towards a PhD at the University of Hertfordshire and it is in connection with this that I write. My preliminary study is on aspects of the therapeutic relationship. To further this innovative programme of research I need the collaboration of clients in counselling who are willing to keep a journal of their weekly counselling sessions for fifteen weeks. Rather than find clients through their therapists, which would be too disruptive of the therapeutic relationship, I am hoping to find counselling certificate students who are also clients in personal therapy/counselling. I wonder if your training course has students who might fit this criteria.

Apart from the journal keeping the research will include five or six (local) closed group meetings to be held at the University of Hertfordshire or another appropriate venue, where the research process and the journal keeping can be discussed. If you have students undertaking counselling I would appreciate it if you would help me arrange to contact them. Would you be kind enough to distribute the enclosed leaflets which have SAEs attached and display one leaflet and this letter on your notice board. This will enable interested students to contact me so that I can arrange an initial meeting where I will explain the research process and answer any other questions they may have.

Please write or phone if you have any questions about this study. The project should take place from.....to.....

I look forward to hearing from you. SAE enclosed.

Yours sincerely

Tina Bracegirdle
PhD Candidate.

APPENDIX 1

Letter format to counselling training institutions

Date.....

Tina Bracegirdle
3 Havelock Road
Biggleswade
Beds SG 18 ODB

Training Institutions name and address.

Dear

I am a psychodynamic counsellor and co-ordinator of counselling at Stevenage and North Herts Counselling Centre. I am also a research student studying towards a PhD at the University of Hertfordshire and it is in connection with this that I write. My preliminary study began exploring the concepts of containment and freedom in the therapeutic relationship and the main study will enlarge on this theme.. To further this ground breaking programme of research I need the collaboration of clients in counselling who are willing to keep a journal of their weekly counselling sessions up to 40 sessions, over a period of one year. Rather than find clients through their therapists, which would be too disruptive of the therapeutic relationship, I am hoping to find counselling certificate students who are also clients in personal therapy/counselling. I wonder if your training course has students who might fit this criteria?

Apart from the journal keeping the research will include approximately eight (local) closed group meetings to be held at the University of Hertfordshire or another appropriate venue, where the research process and the journal keeping can be discussed. If you have students undertaking counselling who may be interested in participating and contributing towards this research I would appreciate it if you would help me arrange to contact them. Would you be kind enough to distribute the enclosed leaflets which have SAEs attached and display one leaflet and this letter on your notice board. This will enable interested students to contact me so that I can arrange an initial meeting where I will explain the research process and answer any other questions they may have.

Please write or phone if you have any questions about this study. The project should take place from.....to.....

I look forward to hearing from you. SAE enclosed.

Yours sincerely

Tina Bracegirdle
PhD Candidate.

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE?
MORE ABOUT COUNSELLING?
MORE ABOUT YOU?

THEN COME AND JOIN THIS RESEARCH GROUP
AND CONTRIBUTE TO FURTHERING OUR UNDERSTANDING
AND OUR KNOWLEDGE

Being involved in RESEARCH means we actively contribute
To the field of learning that forms the new horizons of
The counselling/therapeutic world.

This research aims to explore aspects of the therapeutic
relationship - by participants (YOU?) keeping journals of counselling
sessions over a period of fifteen weeks.

To take place starting.....date
And including several confidential closed group meetings.

*If you would like to know more come to the introductory meeting
on.....date.....place.....time.....*

RESPONSE SLIP

AND/OR FILL IN THIS SLIP AND SEND TO

TINA BRACEGIRDLE
3 HAVELOCK ROAD
BIGGLESWADE

NAME.....

BEDS SG18 ODB

ADDRESS.....

TEL.....

Please reserve me a place at the introductory meeting date.....time.....place.....

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE?
MORE ABOUT COUNSELLING?
MORE ABOUT YOU?

THEN COME AND JOIN THIS RESEARCH GROUP
AND CONTRIBUTE TO FURTHERING OUR UNDERSTANDING
AND OUR KNOWLEDGE

Being involved in RESEARCH means we actively contribute
To the field of learning that forms the new horizons of
The counselling/therapeutic world.

This research aims to explore the concepts of containment and freedom
in the therapeutic relationship. By keeping a weekly journal of your
personal counselling sessions over a period of one year you could be a
participant in this innovative study.

To take place starting.....date
And including several confidential closed group meetings.

*If you would like to know more come to the introductory meeting
on.....date.....place.....time.....*

.....

RESPONSE SLIP

AND/OR FILL IN THIS SLIP AND SEND TO

TINA BRACEGIRDLE
3 HAVELOCK ROAD
BIGGLESWADE

BEDS SG18 ODB

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

TEL.....

Please reserve me a place at the introductory meeting date.....time.....place.....

APPENDIX 3 Ethics approval

APPENDIX 4

PILOT STUDY Presentation for initial meeting

Meeting with counselling students interested in taking part.

To take place at the appropriate training establishment or at the University of Hertfordshire, Meridian House, or at another appropriate central location. (one hour)

1. Introduce myself as a counsellor and as a research student. Distribute consent/contract forms.

2. Ask the participants to introduce themselves

3. Questions for discussion.

What is research? Ethical Research. BAC Guidelines.

What is the role of the researcher?

What is the role of the participant?

Discuss informally in pairs and return to the group to disseminate thoughts and ideas.

Emphasize the importance of their role in the research.

4. What is this research about?

Introduce the idea of aspects of the therapeutic relationship

For example - What sort of relationship is this? - professional

- short term / long term

- confidential

- personal

Discuss the participants' thoughts about the relationship

5. How will we be doing this research? Talk about keeping a journal What will this involve?

Introduce the collaborative and confidential group meetings, giving assurances that this will be a closed group. Length of study - fifteen weeks for keeping the journals

Number of meetings - up to five or six including the workshop on journal keeping and the final debriefing to disclose the theme of the research.

6. Discuss their right to withdraw from the research at any time.

7. Discuss - that they may have access to my findings from the data.

8. A question time for any aspect that has not been understood, or that needs to be clarified.

9. Signing and return of consent forms.

10. Set up date/time/place of workshop meeting. Thanks-for their time and contribution to this meeting.

APPENDIX 4 PILOT STUDY Outline for workshop on journal keeping.

For those interested in taking part in the research.

To be held at the appropriate training establishment or at Meridian House, University of Hertfordshire, or another appropriate central location. (one and a half hours duration)

I need to be aware of encouraging the group with their writing and making the session enjoyable.

1. Welcome to the beginning of our research together.
2. What does keeping a weekly journal of therapy sessions involve?
Time.....Commitment
An ability to be reflective.....An opportunity to play with ideas
Group discussion.....Suggested reading
3. A few moments to reflect on the session so far
Ask the group to write a few words or a few lines on the thoughts and experience they are feeling about the workshop and the idea of keeping a journal.
4. Is anyone willing to share what they have written?
And / or write a group piece to work with.
5. Look at what has been used in the shared thoughts - metaphor, simile, feelings
How does the writing enhance our understanding of what has been felt/experienced?
Discuss and play for example with metaphor.
6. How to keep the research journal.
Date each entry - Date missed entries
Clear writing -Large margin
Short phrases - Spontaneity
Thoughtfulness - Simplicity
Their own words
Assure the group that the above information will be written in the front of each journal so that they can refer to it.
7. Distribution of participant consent/contract forms. Discuss
8. Distribution of journals to those who want to take part.
9. Any other questions?
10. Confirm date / time / place of the rest of the group meetings. To take place after completion of journals. Close meeting.

APPENDIX 5 The researcher and participant contract/consent/letter of agreement

Participant's name.....

I understand that I will be taking part in a research study investigating aspects of the counselling/therapeutic relationship.

I will be known as a participant in this research study.

I understand that I will keep a journal of my thoughts and feelings after weekly counselling session. The journal is to be kept for fifteen weeks to cover fifteen counselling sessions.

There will be an individual/group meetings with the researcher after the completion of the journal. I understand that the main theme of the study will be disclosed to me at this time.

I understand that I am able to withdraw from the research at any time.

I understand that the researcher agrees to respect the confidentiality of the journal when analysing and transcribing it. In the final documentation my anonymity will be guaranteed.

The data in the journal may be shared with an academic supervisor but a pseudonym will be used to protect my identity and maintain anonymity.

I understand that the above intentions and information may be reviewed at any time during the course of the research and that some changes may occur.

Participant signature.....

Researcher signature.....

Date.....

APPENDIX 5 The researcher and participant contract/consent - main study

Participant's name.....

I understand that I will be taking part in a research study investigating the concepts of containment and freedom as experienced by the client in a counselling relationship..

I will be known as a participant in this research study.

I understand that I will keep a journal of my thoughts and feelings after weekly counselling sessions for up to 40 weeks or until I feel ready to finish.

There will be individual meetings with the researcher after the completion of the journal where I will have the opportunity to read the analysis of my journal, read any relevant papers and give feedback on the researcher's work.

I understand that I am able to withdraw from the research at any time.

I understand that the researcher agrees to respect the confidentiality of the journal when analysing and transcribing it. In the final documentation my anonymity will be guaranteed.

The data in the journal may be shared with an academic supervisor but a pseudonym will be used to protect my identity and maintain anonymity.

I understand that the above intentions and information may be reviewed at any time during the course of the research and that some changes may occur.

Participant's signature.....

Researcher's signature.....

Date

APPENDIX 6 Pilot study; Journal information

INFORMATION PRINTED ON THE INSIDE COVER OF EACH JOURNAL

Journal No

Contributing to a preliminary research study exploring aspects of the therapeutic relationship.

(for the main study it will read - exploring the concepts of containment and freedom in the therapeutic relationship....)

1. Number each entry
2. Number missed entries - or even write about them!
3. Write clearly and make crossings out clear
4. Leave a large margin on the left of the page
5. Write only on one side of each page and on every other line
6. Enjoy your own words
- 7. If you find you've not kept to any of these directions - don't panic - Just carry on with the journal !**

Tina's contact number.....

APPENDIX 6 Main study journal information

INFORMATION PRINTED ON THE INSIDE COVER OF EACH JOURNAL

Journal No

Contributing to a research study exploring the concepts of containment and freedom in the therapeutic relationship

1. Number each entry
2. Number missed entries - or even write about them!
3. Write clearly and make crossings out clear
4. Leave a large margin on the left of the page
5. Write only on one side of each page and on every other line
6. Enjoy your own words
7. Do not worry about trying to keep to the theme of the research - this is primarily about your thoughts and feelings
- 8. If you find you have not kept to any of these directions - don't panic - Just carry on with the journal !**

Tina's contact number.....

APPENDIX 7 PILOT STUDY Disclosing the theme of the study

Meetings/presentation to disclose the theme of the research

1. Introduction and thanks for keeping the journals.
2. Tell the story of Beauty and the Beast
3. Explain the idea that Beauty and the Beast may be seen to represent one person.
4. What does the split between these two parts of one person cause to happen?
5. Discussion
6. Make clear links between Beauty and containment, positive and negative aspects
And between the Beast and freedom, positive and negative aspects.
7. Discussion. - introducing the ideas of containment, freedom and opposition as aspects of themselves. Also introduce idea of continuum.
8. Ask them to produce their own continuums of containment and freedom
9. Thank them for their time and work. End meeting.

APPENDIX 8 PILOT STUDY Continuums designed by participants

Continuums of containment-freedom designed by pilot study participants after the theme of the study was disclosed.

Rules / laws controlled trapped liberated gripped
 squashed empowered powerless restricted confined
 secure in a home lifted up
 loss of freedom silenced
 cradled supported freedom
 vulnerable super-glue balance
 safety

TO BE HELD
 IMPRISONED

CONTAINMENT CONTINUUM

comfort suffocating armed forces
 cementing school
 straight jacket boundaries
 smothered water wings stuck in a
 relationship grounded
 in a coffin hospitalised
 hostage
 muzzled space
 buried

APPENDIX 8

something to break out against
self control responsibility animal farm
open doors
wanting to be alone
being rules getting rid of clutter
doing
drowning creating space
restriction
naked time limits
imposed
fear riot
crushing
LIBERTY FREEDOM CONTINUUM
ANARCHY

panic splashing in the sea eating jelly babies
murder
dying with embarrassment nudism giving up work
alone no boundaries to break
out from
headless chicken timeless
uncertainty holiday

APPENDIX 8

health

commitment

swimming

money

travel

job
studying my subject

divorce

guilt

beach

love

nudity on a

structure
belonging to family group

CONTAINMENT -----a conductive polarity---
-----FREEDOM

personal role
new experiences

rules

circumstance

conforming to expectations safety

space to think
controlled

speech
family responsibilities
to be

children
choice
learning structures

lack of money

solitude

hobbies

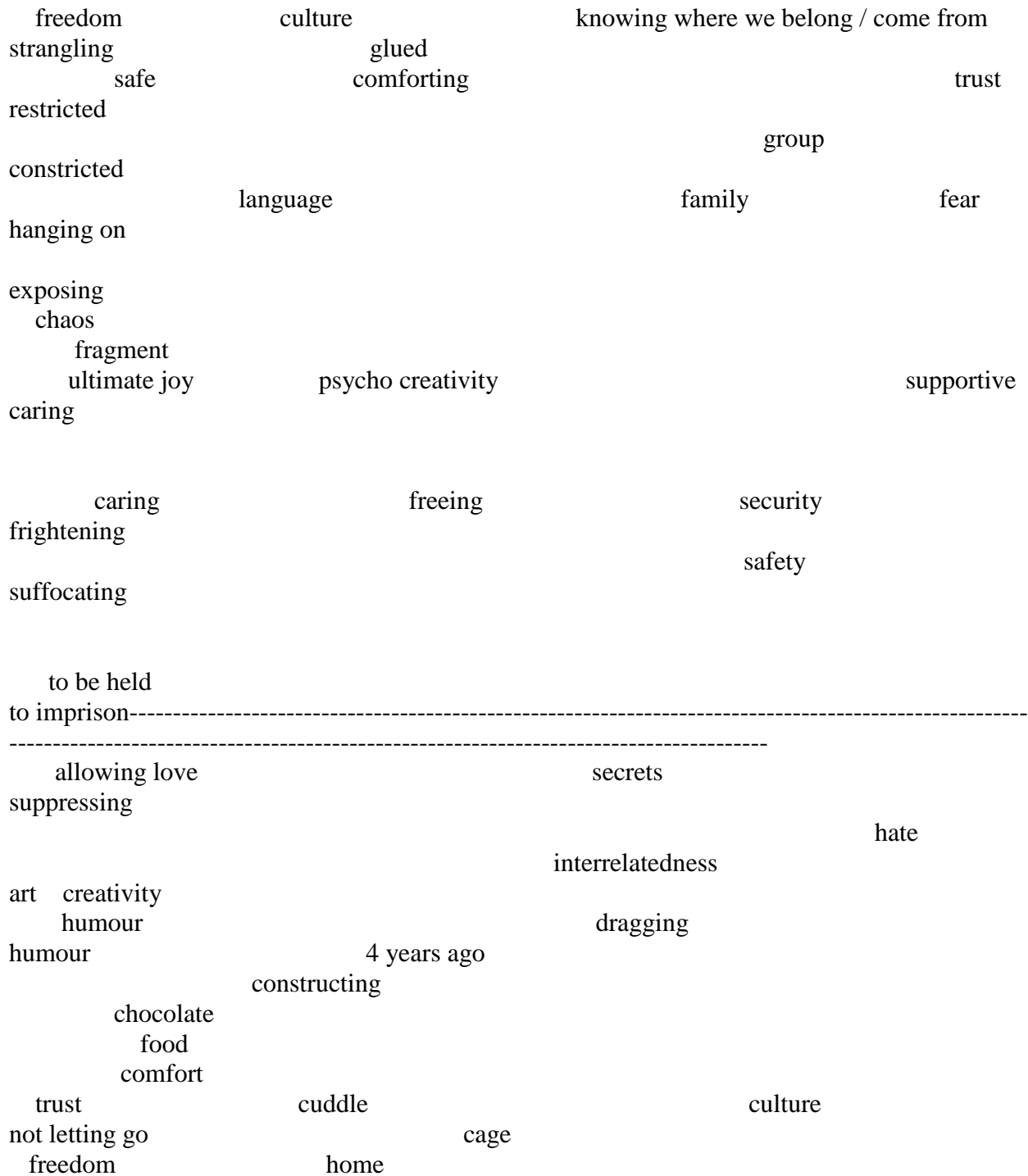
behaviour
behaviour motivated by love

motivated

by

fear

APPENDIX 8 CONTAINMENT CONTINUUM - main study participants



APPENDIX 8

trap
belonging religion
wall
naked vehicle
war
clothing
judgement
"you cannot do it wrong"
understanding religion faith love
home
no leaks warmth
closed corset /
community home
underwear
clothes
no way out

FREEDOM CONTINUUM

letting go power
not letting go
(not letting go) choice
imprisoned
creativity
compliant hanging on chaos
bossy
being real
super creative
noticed shared understanding
challenging no order
knowing the boundaries

APPENDIX 8

keeping things out no boundaries
 non-restricted
GOD
 slow change
unsafe destructive
 lightness
creativity rebellion ??
 not noticed
fast change noticed

LIBERTY-----
-----ANARCHY

chaos safety space
 freedom unrestrained
no rules dogma
 taking off clothes belief
not noticed
choice 2 × anarchists = fun
danger
devil
 space openness
danger control
 fair
rules rebellious
 naked
fear
opaque critical
tied

APPENDIX 9 PILOT AND MAIN STUDY. Information for participants

Information for participants before the meeting at which they read their journal analysis and other papers.

It is extremely important for you as participants in this study to be aware how much your honesty is valued. You may be very tempted to agree with the analysis and papers I have written in order to please me and feel that in this way you are helping me with the research process. However this would be detrimental to the validity of the research. Your honest evaluation of the work and whether or not it fits you will be the most rewarding way of forwarding the study. If you disagree with anything I have written it is in the interest of the study that you are able to tell me, for then the results of the study will be based on your felt responses and this will make it a viable study which will be of worth to the counselling world and to me.

APPENDIX 10 Introduction to theoretical constructs

FOR PILOT STUDY PARTICIPANTS

To be given to them to read before they read the analysis of their journal.

INTRODUCTION TO THEORETICAL CONSTRUCTS

RATIONALE FOR THE KEY WORDS

Containment, Freedom and a Polarity

Containment and freedom within the therapeutic relationship may be understood to be *enabling* in that the counsellor attempts to provide a safe (containment) space (freedom) where the client can think and feel his / her own internal experience in the presence of the counsellor. However both containment and freedom as experienced within the internal world of the client may be *disabling*. Life events may have provided a containment that was confining and even harmful so that any form of containment may be experienced as *disabling*. Freedom may have been experienced as dangerous or overwhelming so this potential space may also be experienced as *disabling*. Within the enabling containment provided by the counsellor the client may experience the very opposite of what is being provided. In the language of theory this may be described as transference, countertransference and a myriad of other theoretical terms but these terms do not describe the client's personal experience from their perspective. The key words of containment and freedom in this study are used to discover if these concepts are understood and experienced by the client to the extent that the participant client feels the analysis and the theoretical constructs fit his/her internal feelings as a client. These concepts became the key aspects of my therapeutic journey when a traumatic event changed me and as I worked through the effect of the trauma I became conscious of strong notions of containment and freedom within my internal world. Perhaps one of the most important aspects of my process of change was to know consciously how life events were affecting me. It was this knowing that in turn enabled me to have the freedom to reclaim my self from the trauma and create a new life for myself. Etherington (2000) states:

“We cannot go back and undo the events that have happened to our clients or to ourselves but we *can* change how we feel about it and respond to it. To do that we have to know it consciously, feel it and understand the effect it has had on our lives. The freedom consciousness creates, allows us to reclaim our selves and in that freedom we can create new ways of using the rest of our lives – given the resources we discover within ourselves.”

But to discover the freedom that consciousness creates I journeyed through experiences of both disabling and enabling containment and freedom where these two concepts appeared inextricably linked. My reflections on the paradox of containment and freedom being both enabling and disabling led to the idea of a containment-freedom polarity.

POLARITY

A polarity is generally understood to be the tendency to grow differently in different directions, along an axis, as a tree towards base and apex, or roots and branches. It is the opposition that Jung (Bischof, 1964) saw as engendering the movement which leads towards resolution and momentary equilibrium within the client. In this study the polarity between containment and freedom is seen as internal growth (which affects the external life), rooting down into internal containment, and branching out into internal freedom. If the client experiences containment as imprisoning or restricting then containment within the counselling relationship may be experienced as disabling. And if the client experiences freedom as overwhelming and destructive then the freedom provided within the counselling relationship may also be felt as disabling. In this sense containment with or without freedom may be felt as imprisoning, while freedom with or without containment may be felt as dangerous. It is suggested then that this opposition between containment and freedom form a polarity (within the client) that may enable and / or disable emotional movement in the client. When the client takes refuge in a disabled way of being that has been (unconsciously) learned through various life events and experiences, the opposition between containment and freedom may come into awareness. As the counsellor attempts to provide an enabling and contained environment in the freedom of the space between (the counsellor and client) the client may be enabled to discover a way to change by finding a route through this opposition to a new conscious knowing. It seems possible that this opposition provides various but constant emotional movement between containment and freedom that the client may experience as emotional traps, pitfalls and ways of escape from different aspects of their internal selves (Etherington, 2000) that they find difficult to allow into consciousness. This opposition within the polarity may be understood as enabling the client to grow towards their own containment and their own freedom which may be likened to developing their own mature autonomy (Grotstein, 1982). The paradox of this opposition is perhaps that containment and freedom also appear to be necessary aspects of each other. But in the process of changing it is suggested that the client splits them apart in order to be able to experience the extremes of each aspect. In the space (between the client and counsellor) where anything can be known or experienced in the mind (Godwin, 1991) the client may feel containment and freedom as different and split before then integrating them back together. The paradox of the polarity may be seen as both holding containment and freedom together while also keeping them apart.

CATEGORIES

In order to categorise words and statements in the participants' journals it is necessary to have an understanding of how the polarity between containment and freedom has been separated (split) into stages or aspects of the opposition between these two concepts while still holding them together. The present meanings / understanding of these categories within the polarity remain within a process of change as reflexivity (Rennie, 1998) and subjectivity continue to influence the growth of this study. As with discourse analysis the intention is to filter out the categories with the most explanatory potential (Clarkson, 1998) about the opposition between containment and freedom. The categories came into being during an ongoing process of analysing the journal texts. A great deal of time was spent reading and absorbing the data in the journals so as to enable my subjectivity to enter into the subjective world of each participant's experience of their thoughts and feelings after counselling sessions as recorded in the journals. By giving myself the time to be reflexive (Rennie, 1998) and return repeatedly to and away from the texts the analysis

travels through its own process of change and growth as do the concepts themselves. The categories which are set out below are not seen as permanent but rather as part of a process of learning which may continue to change long after this study is complete. The highlighted main categories show the colour coding used in the journals by the researcher.

CONTAINMENT - FREEDOM POLARITY

This is the overall polarity which encompasses all the others. It is both the place of the most movement and the least movement as it holds the polarity and the paradox together. It highlights containment and freedom experienced almost simultaneously as shifts occur for the client, but it also highlights still moments where a kind of holding, satisfaction, pleasure or understanding occur, which may also be termed moments of equilibrium, balance or stillness. It holds both containment and freedom, keeping them apart and linking them together so that their split provides clarification, while being held together they become supportive (Twachtmann and Daniell, 1997). The roots of a tree may never touch the branches yet the branches cannot live without the roots anymore than the roots can live without the branches. In the same way containment may never appear to touch freedom yet freedom cannot exist without containment any more than containment can exist without freedom.

CONTAINMENT

This research understands containment as a concept which defines the client's search for a safe internal and external environment, in which s/he may be enabled to:

1. think his/her own thoughts, in a place where thought can be contained
2. play with notions, in a contained environment
3. experience feeling, in the safety of a non judgemental relationship

FREEDOM

Freedom within the therapeutic relationship is understood as a concept which defines the client's search for an infinite space in which s/he may:

1. think her/his own thoughts, in a place where thought can be set free
2. play with notions, in a free environment
3. experience feeling, in the freedom of a non judgemental relationship

The above concepts of containment and freedom appear to offer identical opportunities for the client, yet never the less this study suggests that the client perceives and experiences these opportunities differently. It feels hard to hold this split between containment and freedom yet experience informs me that when freedom has been too terrifying to explore, then the containment offered by the counsellor is essential to progress and if that containment is not felt

then exploration may be held up. This does not mean that containment was not offered or present but simply not felt as such due to the impact of the client's previous history (Etherington,2000). In these moments where emotional movement appears to be obliterated by previous experience what becomes important is the continued emotional presence of the counsellor. This is perhaps when, without the client being aware of it the counsellor holds what cannot be held or tolerated by the client. So in a sense it is the client's immobilised state which is contained (or freed) and which in being contained frees the client to experience themselves (Klein, 1995), and their own affects which have not before been brought into awareness. As feelings are brought into awareness the client is enabled to move or remain stuck as opposition is either tolerated or denied. The split between containment and freedom perhaps helps the client organise experience (Godwin,1994) so that some order begins to be created out of the chaos of their unaware unconscious.

UNCONTAINED – UNFREE POLARITY

This polarity, like the overall polarity is also a paradox in that it is a polarity without movement which may be termed stagnant opposition because of lack of movement. Perhaps it could be compared to being frozen with fear, or even an emotional paralysis that binds the client in the trauma of a past event. It may be understood as no movement and no feeling in that when feeling is cut off or denied movement is not possible.

UNCONTAINED

Uncontained could be understood as having the same meaning as freedom but the apparent similarity between uncontained and freedom is not so simple. Freedom, by its very nature suggests choice, but in an uncontained place there is no choice in that choice cannot be experienced. Uncontained, rather than being the same as freedom, is a place of no movement, for there is neither containment nor freedom at this fixed point where nothing shifts. However if this lack of internal movement can be brought into awareness through the containment and / or freedom provided by the therapy, then movement becomes a possibility as freedom comes into focus.

UNFREE

Unfree is the fixed polarity of uncontained. Each exist together in the same place both superimposed and in opposition which is the bind that holds the client in a place of no reflections, and no movement. But again if this fixed point can be experienced and brought into awareness within the safe containment and / or the freedom of the therapy it becomes a place from where movement may be viewed and tested.

It is perhaps somewhere along the continuum of this polarity that the capacity to be alone begins its growth within the individual. Aloneness may be experienced as a negative or unwanted state (Jacobs,1986), but as the experience of aloneness or isolation is felt within the therapeutic relationship it can be examined within the containment and freedom provided by the counsellor and be discovered in altered form as it comes to be realised in conscious knowing (Etherington,

2000).

OVER CONTAINED - OVER FREE POLARITY

This polarity is an internal state of agitation that may affect the physical body and the external world as racing thoughts affect judgements and physical movement. It could be described as emotional hyperventilating, a kind of suffocating of the self and one's own feelings.

OVERCONTAINED

Hiccups could be the physiological metaphor for overcontained in that with hiccups a person seems to be unable to control their body and the overcontained client does not seem to have control of their own emotions. However, unlike uncontained where there is no movement or process, overcontained does have movement within but it is as if it is not owned or does not belong to the client in that it appears to be out of his/her control. The overcontained client is full of other people's thoughts and feelings rather than their own. The movement caused by this then is an attempt to get rid of the unwanted (Steiner, 1993) thoughts and feelings while at the same time feeling restrained from doing this. Like hiccups which is caused by the involuntary contraction of the diaphragm while the glottis is spasmodically closed, it is as if the psyche contracts in the hope of expelling what does not belong to it while the insecure self spasmodically shuts itself down in deference to others' perceptions. The 'compliant' client who constantly tries to please everyone else including the counsellor would feel 'at home in' this category.

OVERFREE

This polarity of overcontained also has movement within it. Overfree is the panic or hysteria which causes a rush of thoughts or feelings exhibited in movement which cannot settle. Such rushing around is also destructive as it closes down the possibility of rational thought or action. There is a sense of feeling beyond help in the chaos of such hyper activity. Perhaps obsessive – compulsive disorders could be seen as a state where the client is almost completely taken over by this polarity as the client's attention seems solely taken up with the compulsive activity that relegates the underlying affect beyond reach.

If these states can be brought into awareness and experienced within the containment provided by the counsellor then the individual may find the freedom which enables these aspects of themselves to begin the process of change.

FIGHTING / AVOIDING CONTAINMENT - FIGHTING / AVOIDING FREEDOM POLARITY

Fighting and avoiding containment and freedom is both a fight to change and not to change. To give up a familiar and known way of dressing the self for an unknown, different and individual way of dressing, tends to cause battles.

FIGHTING / AVOIDING CONTAINMENT

This is a place that could be described as not knowing where or how to be, as the fear of losing familiar ways of being, encroaches on the desire to be dependent on the counsellor. The part of the client which needs care, chooses to come for counselling, but the independent part of the client is threatened by the possibility of becoming reliant on the counsellor. Fighting or avoiding containment is a necessary aspect of the process of movement. It is rather like the bad tempered baby who needs the reassurance of mother's presence, even as he tries to hit her. If containment has not been experienced, except for example as an unknown absence then perhaps the avoidance of containment is a fight against the unknown. The containment offered by the counsellor may also feel intrusive (Stern, 1985) as if the counsellor is breaking through the client's defences. Fighting the containment of the counsellor may be part of the process of experiencing containment which develops the awareness of the self (Carstairs,1992) that enables the client to move towards separation.

FIGHTING / AVOIDING FREEDOM

The freedom to be an individual, separate from others (as opposed to merged), is an isolating, and frightening way to be when first experienced. Just the separateness of the counsellor may highlight a sense of this aloneness for the client. The counsellor may seem distant, deaf or emotionally absent to the client because of his/her capacity to be separate. Freedom may be experienced as loss or emptiness in that to think one's own thoughts without relying on previously learned beliefs or attitudes may feel very isolating. Fighting / avoiding freedom can be seen as the intense reaction to the fear of isolation, but the movement created by that fear has a volatile intensity which may enable growth.

As with the other categories, fighting and avoiding containment and freedom are a necessary part of the client's journey. The fight may be passive and/or aggressive, but if a client wishes to change, then this upheaval of movement will provide the friction necessary to engender that new life.

DESIRING CONTAINMENT - DESIRING FREEDOM POLARITY

This polarity gives a sense of the enormous range of movement within the containment-freedom concept. There is a real tug of war between wanting containment and wanting freedom for while the two concepts are split they appear only to contradict each other rather than complement.

THE DESIRE FOR CONTAINMENT

Usually a more conscious movement, wanting containment is a wish to be held or cared for by the counsellor. It is a desire to feel safe as well as recognised or known as an individual. It may be experienced as a desire to feel merged within the safe containment of the counsellor, to be liked, understood (Steiner, 1993) and accepted by her, and even to feel like her, or for the client to feel that there is a likeness between him/herself and the counsellor (Siegel,1996).

THE DESIRE FOR FREEDOM

Wanting freedom has a huge energy or movement which may be grasped with a sense of control or power. It may cause a feeling of dislike or irritation with the counsellor and even a wish to escape from the relationship. It may also surface with feelings of loss or emptiness for the isolation experienced in moments of separateness may be too huge to contemplate as such.

This polarity may be seen in the client's desire to be accepted by others, to be part of a group or society and also the desire to be different, a unique self (Anderson, 1997) who can also bear to be outside of a group.

TOWARDS CONTAINMENT - TOWARDS FREEDOM POLARITY

The pull and swing of the pendulum moving from side to side is a useful image for this polarity. There remains a desire to be merged and or contained by another just as there remains a desire to keep one's freedom and be separate (Field, 1994), whether in or out of therapy. These first swings towards either side of the polarity may be tentative and momentary, but are a strong indication of movement.

TOWARDS CONTAINMENT

The concept of some movement 'towards containment' is perhaps the initial phase of an unconscious shift towards internal containment being felt within the client. It is strong, like the swing of a pendulum, but faint like the rousing of a child from sleep. Perhaps it can be seen as the tentative letting go of defended overcontainment, which momentarily lets the containment offered in the freedom provided by the counsellor be felt by the client in that s/he finds the freedom needed to experience a greater range of spontaneous feelings (Miller, 1979). In a sense it is always present in a working relationship for the uncontainable may be invisibly contained in what feels to the client to be the worst of sessions, in that affects are felt and these feel different and uncomfortable.

TOWARDS FREEDOM

As with 'towards containment' this movement 'towards freedom' is a momentary shift but this time towards separation and away from a merged state. It is a glimpse of the possibility of being a different self with new perceptions, feelings and values, or in Rogers (1951) terminology, the beginnings of self actualisation.

It is hard to visualise these two existing together for the struggling client, but perhaps that is what is so difficult, the reality that containment and freedom can coexist. Whether moving towards containment or freedom this polarity demonstrates the client's growing capacity to feel his/her own affect as opposed to what 'should' be thought or felt, or what is defended from feeling. It is an owning of the parts of the self which have not been previously brought into awareness. Sometimes it may be the dynamic meeting of an unthought known (Bollas, 1987).

NO HIGHLIGHTING

The only parts of the journals that have not been categorised are those that appear to present a statement of fact like “no counselling this week”. In this sense I have tried to separate out statements that do not appear to demonstrate the thoughts and feelings of the client.

APPENDIX 10 Brief key to categories

Brief key of categories for participants to refer to while reading their analysis. The colours are those used to highlight sections of the journal writing to denote the categories.

- i. containment-freedom - movement and stillness, the space to play and the space to think The overall polarity which encompasses all the others and where containment and freedom coexist (or are transformed into enabling containment). Words in the journals that imply a safe / secure space and movement or stillness.
- ii. overcontained-overfree – overcontained implies a disablement of movement, a kind of internal agitation. The client may be smothered or too full of the feelings and opinions of others rather than being in touch with their own thoughts and feelings. Overfree- seems rather akin to panic, a rushing around which also disables the client - almost a kind of omnipotent sense that they have to do everything themselves. Perhaps with this overcontained-overfree polarity there is a sense of being “over the edge” – in that the client feels destructive to themselves and possibly to others. All the polarities within the overall polarity have the potential to be both enabling and disabling.
- iii. fighting containment-fighting freedom – fighting containment is the fight to remain the same, to oppose change for it may feel too threatening to contemplate. Fighting freedom is the fight to change from a known way of being in that the client also wants to change. Understood from the clients’ struggle to hold on to known ways of being whilst also struggling to change to a new way of being.
- iv. a desire for containment-a desire for freedom – the tug of war between wanting containment and wanting freedom. A felt sense in the researcher which is picked up from the words in the journals as a longing/desire to feel held/contained by the counsellor, and / or the wish for freedom to be separate and individual.
- v. towards containment-towards freedom – the pull and swing of the pendulum which suggests the possibility of these states existing together. Felt in the journals as a move towards containment in the sense that the freedom to do this can be allowed, or a move towards freedom as containment begins to be experienced.
- vi. uncontained-unfree - a polarity and a paradox for it is a fixed point of stagnant opposition where the client is disabled by no forward movement. Implied by the clients’ inability to move from a position. Yet it also provides a still point from where the client may be enabled to view their internal world

APPENDIX 11 Presentations: Containment in a drop of rain

Three presentation given to counselling students interested in taking part in the main study. Each presentation lasted between 50 minutes and 1 hour. The overall title is:

RAINBOWS IN THE CONSULTING ROOM

The three presentation are entitled:

1. CONTAINMENT IN A DROP OF RAIN.
2. CONDUCTIVE POLARITIES
3. FREEDOM IN THE SPACE BETWEEN

1. CONTAINMENT IN A DROP OF RAIN

Introduction

I am here to introduce you to my research topic. Rather than present you with a title I hope the title, the theme will unfold over the three sessions that I am here. I am also here because I am looking for individuals, who are seeing a counsellor or therapist, to be participants in this research. However if none of you decide to take part in the research - that is okay - you still have the opportunity to benefit from the presentations that I bring. My hope is that some of you will take part. And although this hope is because I need participants, it is also because I believe that in taking part you will benefit. How will you benefit ? - by learning more about yourself, your assumptions and prejudices, your strengths and weaknesses, and how all of these can be of use to you in counselling. You may also learn more about the process of the counselling relationship - about how being a client influences your ability to be a counsellor, and about how, in being a counsellor, you need to experience your own vulnerabilities in order to sit alongside another.

In the third session I will go into the detail involved in the research - for the moment I simply ask you to keep in mind that perhaps taking part in this research could be a possibility.

I am extremely conscious that what I present to you in each of the sessions has to be as precise as I can make it - since this is for research, and I will be presenting it to other groups so - I have to try to make it as similar as possible. So I apologise now in case I get stuck to my notes - perhaps this is part of my difficulty of trusting my own containment, in the embryonic stages of this research - which brings us to the beginning of this first session.

RAINBOWS IN THE CONSULTING ROOM

Why a rainbow? I choose it as a way of describing something that happens in the relationship between the client and counsellor, in the consulting room. Rainbows have symbolised hope, or the possibility of change for thousands of years, from the story of the great flood and on into the present day. Rainbows if you like could be said to be written into our shared memories, or as Jung would have probably said, into our collective unconscious. But how do I see rainbows in the consulting room and why do I use this particular metaphor? To gain some understanding of this we need to examine how a real rainbow comes into existence. Now I'm not particularly

good at understanding science but I can grasp that for a rainbow to form, and be seen, a particular set of circumstances have to be in place. Rainbows come into existence through what could be termed a polarity in the weather, that is rain and sunshine in close proximity to each other, and in order to see the rainbow the observer has to be positioned in the right place, with the right conditions, looking in the right direction. When a beam of light passes through the droplets of rain, at just the right angle, the light bends, that is it is reflected inside the rain drops and refracted, (bent) as it leaves, forming a rainbow. The potential observer only sees the rainbow when the light is behind him/her. I am suggesting that to find rainbows in the consulting room there has to be a polarity, a juxtaposition similar to that of rain and sunshine.

The client, like the weather, is a functioning system, a whole. He or she comes to counselling because in some way functioning is impaired. Perhaps it feels as if life is more storm than sunshine. The consulting room offers a space, both an external space in the room, and an internal space in the counsellor, to be used to find a space within the client where light can break through the storm clouds and form rainbows in the space between - a space where the client begins to see him/herself, and perhaps their external world, differently. If, for example the client is only looking towards the light keeping the rain or darkness behind her/him then no rainbows, no space will be seen. For this way of looking hides the rainbow from the client's perceptions, for the light is in front of the client rather than behind. The client needs to turn around, to search the darkness with the light out of sight behind his vision where it cannot be seen. Then the space between, which has always been there, will be come into view. Rainbows will come into focus.

The research I am so passionate about comes from me. It has been formed and is continually reforming by my personal journey. Only through penetrating the darkness of my own experience have I discovered a wealth of rainbows. And before I began to see rainbows I spent a good deal of time in the dark. Even now there are still times when I know and feel that turning into the pain, into the dark, into the unknown is the only way of coming to a place where the worst of reality's nightmares can be changed into a rainbow of unspeakable value. This research has been, and is, coming into existence because I had the choice of either living with the horrors of a family trauma, or living with the bequest of that trauma. I chose, and continue to choose the bequest. Such a bequest turned into the most spectacular rainbows I have ever witnessed, both internally and externally. So I'm also saying that this research comes with a tremendous cost, it is in more ways than I can describe the most expensive project that I have ever undertaken. Just like you take on the cost of becoming a counsellor - that in itself comes with far more cost than the money you pay out, as I'm sure you have all already found. And part of the cost is being contained enough to continue the journey - so lets continue.

1. CONTAINMENT IN A DROP OF RAIN

When light enters the raindrop, it is contained within it, bent, and reflected out again. Two forms of energy, light and water not only meet but one is contained within, and reflected from the other. The one which is contained is also refracted, bent or turned around so that the reflection becomes visible. The beam of light which enters the rainbow is white light, and is not actually visible to the naked eye, but once it is in the drop of rain it becomes visible as a rainbow for white light is made up of colours otherwise invisible. For the colour to be seen it has to be

contained, bent and reflected out. The self, the true personality of an individual (or the true colours), like the light can only come into their own reality, find their own colours through containment. Containment within another, which offers a true reflection of the colour hidden within the self is made visible to that self only when particular, internal (and external) positions can be held.

So what does the raindrop do, or not do, in order to contain the ray of light? Certainly it makes no assumptions about the light - it merely lets it in. It also has to be in the right place at the right time. If it is too close to the sunlight, or not separate enough from it, the light will either not enter it at the right angle for a rainbow to form, or the sunlight will be blocked out by the clouds as the rain gets too close. The space between the sun and the rain will be lost so that no rainbows will form.

When the client enters the consulting room with the counsellor, two people, two potential energy sources are held both together in agreement as a contract is made, and in opposition in that they are different people in different roles. The client comes unknowingly to be contained, and the counsellor endeavours to contain the unknowable. If the counsellor is able to contain the client internally, in such a way that the client can bare to turn into the darkness of the storm and rain then the possibility of seeing reflected and previously unseen, unknown colours becomes a possibility. But like the rain drop the counsellor must keep enough space between him/herself and the client in order to contain whatever colours the client projects into her/him.

However it has to be remembered that rainbows are momentary phenomena. They exist only when the polarity of rain and sunshine meet. But they do herald change, movement which may be in or out of the storm or sunshine. Containment as felt by the client may also be a momentary phenomena, which is always in the process of moving towards or away from the next and the last moment of meeting, of perceiving new colours.

THE STORM OF BEING UNCONTAINED

To give an example of being uncontained let me use a recent TV programme as an illustration. The story was I believe called "Care" and was about a young man reliving the horrors of child abuse. For years he had protected himself by hiding the memories away deep inside himself. A court case involving the men who abused him brings the past violently into the present and the young man is tormented by the past as he gets involved

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in a very public court case. He can no longer keep the trauma in the past and he begins to quite literally howl. He howls alone. He cannot share this part of himself. The more he howls the more he becomes abusive to others. When he realises what he is doing he commits suicide. Uncontained howling, uncontained abuse, uncontained anguish leads to death, either psychic or literal or both. But containment can offer a very different outcome. However for this to happen the colour of the howling has to be recognised, taken in, and reflected back, not as the one colour that enters the raindrop, but as the many colours which are really contained within..

CONTAINMENT

Perhaps you will have smiled at my surname, Bracegirdle, an interesting phenomena in itself. For me what is interesting about it is that the two words which make it up can both be seen as having to do with containment - a brace contains, and a girdle contains. So you see I was born into an interest in containment even with my name. I hated it as a child. It caused jibes, amusement and embarrassment. History however, my history has enabled me to take it back and enjoy it, just as I can now enjoy what my history has given me. A wealth of experience with varied forms of containment. So what does containment do - lets see if we can experience a taste of it.

Exercise 1.

In this exercise we will experience, either containment - or the lack of it, or something quite different! Both external and internal!

First of all about six of you need to stand in a circle, very close shoulder to shoulder. Next put one foot behind you and feel your weight go through this back foot to the floor. You need to do this so you can let the weight of another pass through you into the ground beneath. If you try to take their weight alone you will probably collapse and taking the person to the floor with you. Once you are sure you have mastered this concept bend your arms at the elbows bringing your hands almost level with your shoulders and your palms facing out. Now as I stand in the centre of your circle I cross my arms across my chest putting my hands on my shoulders, shut my eyes and lean back onto the hands of the person directly behind me. Take a moment to feel my weight pass through you to the floor and then pass me round the circle. Note that my feet are together and I keep my body relaxed but I do not bend at the waist. As you gain in confidence you will find that you can change the direction you are moving me and even gently push me (sort of diagonally) across the circle. If you have played this game before perhaps you can go first to help build up trust in the others.

What am I asking? Can you be contained by your group? Do you trust them to contain you? Do you trust yourself enough to experience the feelings aroused by this game? Can you be contained enough to accept another's refusal to be the main player?

Talk about feelings aroused from the game.

(If assumptions are brought up by the game I will use these rather than the following) We all have an assumptive world - Part of my dog's assumptive world is that she will be taken for a walk every morning. When this walk is delayed - she gets distressed. My son's assumptive world was blown apart when his fiancée called off the forthcoming wedding. In my father's assumptive world, well polished shoes were a sign of good character. Need I say that I have a problem wearing un-shined or dirty shoes!

Exercise 2.

The meaning of containment - to be held
to be imprisoned

Think about external containment and internal containment.

Imagine containment as a continuum, at one end positive or good containment at the other negative or bad containment. What forms of containment can you place along this continuum and where would you put them? In twos or threes if a large group..

During this time I have been making assumptions - I assume you understand the words I use - I assume you understand to some degree the concept of containment. I have purposefully not asked what you think containment in the counselling relationship is. Because rather than find out what it means to you or tell you precisely what it means to me - I hope to give you an experience of it. But perhaps this is also an assumption on my part, perhaps what you experience will be something quite different. Think about it. According to C Murray Parkes : “The assumptive world is the only world we know and it includes everything we know or think we know.”

What assumptions do you have?

Are you contained enough - or free enough - to examine your assumptions?

How do these assumptions affect your internal world as a client? Do they contain you - or free you?

Do your assumptions get projected out onto family, friends, other members of this group - does this imprison you or set you free?

How do your assumptions affect your perceptions of yourself, of others - and what would happen to your perceptions if you let go of your assumptions? Do you need containment or freedom to do this?

Now, today, as an individual, as the self you know and are conscious of, what sort of containment and freedom have you experienced in your life?

How does your assumptive world interfere with your ability to be contained by another?

Does your assumptive world prevent you from searching in the dark - is this containment or freedom?

Go through the questions.

Are there any questions they have.

I want to end on, and with a personal note. I think and hope that I have made it quite clear that this research comes from me - it is personal, and I believe that learning to experience personally form our own life traumas, and day to day living is what also enables us to sit alongside another. Sharing that personal journey is also an enormous part of our learning, so I finish with a very

personal contribution.

Introduction and Poem

A Rainbow in the Dark

We started off on boundaries
Then made them into rules
And although I sensed the ideal
Felt the purpose of it all
I had this deep down feeling
That settings are just part
Of a more important wholeness...-
Like a sky that's full of stars.
The really central issue
Is something I can't touch
But I know it's in between us
Like sunlight catching dust,
It's a meeting in the middle
It's a space that's only mine
That the other one allows me
Like shadows after dusk.
The placing of her frontiers
Is kept in her control
And like planets always turning
In and out of view
She uses them to suit me
As I find a way to trace
My own design of patterns-
Like the moon that holds the hare.
I tried to tell the others
That the rules are not the key
But I couldn't find the words
That explain this holding focus
Which opens up the heart
And bursts the inner recess
Where healing really starts
With a unison of meeting
Like a rainbow in the dark.

APPENDIX 11. Freedom in the space between

2. FREEDOM IN THE SPACE BETWEEN

FREEDOM

More unconsciously than consciously I believe that I made the assumption that this workshop on freedom would come into being with about the same amount of work and time as the one on containment - I could not have been more wrong.

This *freedom (in the space between)* has been illusive. While in the process of trying to think and write about it, it seems that I have wrapped it up and contained it. It is as if in consciously thinking about freedom - the freedom to think has been lost. Perhaps this concept of freedom is so enormous that the immediate reaction to it is to try and contain it! So first of all lets experience some freedom.

Have any of you ever experienced a guided fantasy? Let me explain the idea to you. In the space between us here, between my words and your thoughts and feelings, let a dream be found. Let rainbows play.

The fantasy.

As a leaf falls from the tree top above you, you know you have entered an autumn dreaming place. Leaning against the trunk you sigh and smile thinking about the coming walk. With a crackle of autumns first fall beneath your feet you start off. There is a mist today, soft, expectant, and filled with the silence of a waiting surprise. You meander, for there is no hurry. Time is infinite in here. Fields of stubble still cast golden waves into the mist, while the barely trodden footpath guides you past changing trees, and the last of this summer's wild blackberries. While the rich brown of newly turned earth whispers of another harvest still to come. There is so much to see. The mist both enfolds you and makes way for you. Through it, glimpses of the way ahead disappear, only to reappear in the same instant. What is known? What is unknown? The path forks and for a moment decision falters and plays games with you. And yet, without really thinking anymore you walk on. Which direction did you take?. Does it matter? The path traps your concentration as it begins to climb steeply and the wariness of unknown territory excites all your senses. Before long you need hands as well as feet to scale the slope, and it is hard to remember now for how long you have been moving this way. As you sit down to catch your breath the mist lifts slowly revealing the drop of a cliff just inches from your resting body. Standing in disbelief you know this is a place you have longed. But only now do you know your desire. And with a smile of gratitude you plunge into the air - to fly.

This is freedom.

Your destination calls, calls through the vanishing mist as its parting veils lead you to future possibilities. Landing in tomorrow's sunrise you sit to soak up the view of things to come. Hopes and dreams are born here. The past, present and future shake hands.

There is so much to take - so much to leave behind. While so many dreams are flooding over you, your hand feels something on the ground. You finger it. What is it?

something something... You have seen, felt, touched. Take hold, it is the moment of leaving. Last looks meet goodbyes.

The return flight opens your senses to all beneath you, and all above you. Visions to be captured in your mind.

The cliff of your first leap tugs at your heels. Land feels clumsy after such soaring. The walk which returns you to the tree is lost in thought, it is hard to let go of such a winning fantasy. But once the tree trunk is felt across your back, so finite time sits you back on your chair, in the reality of this moment.

Discuss - small groups. What did you see, touch, find? Did you find space enough? What might have given you more space? Could you be guided? Was there too much freedom?

FREEDOM IN THE SPACE BETWEEN

If we remember the rainbow from last week, think for a moment how it arches across the sky. The rainbow appears to both take up space and yet also magnify the space. It makes us aware of the enormity of the heavens as it spreads itself across the horizon. It frees up the unseen colours in white light. It forms a connection between a beam of light and drops of rain, adding another dimension, a transformation. It makes the invisible, visible, and highlights the space between.

When trying to think about freedom, I had to first contain my thoughts. Freedom appeared so enormous that I ran from it. In his book *The Fear of Freedom*, Fromm asks:

Is freedom only the absence of external pressure or is it also the *presence* of something - and if so what?

I experienced the external pressure of creating this workshop, but I also felt the presence of my aloneness in this. No one else can help me, this is mine, alone. I both want to be individual enough, different enough to create this, but I also want what I create to be appreciated by others, by you. So in my desire for my own freedom to be this different, I find I am also confronted by my desire to be accepted, to belong. And here I note that there are two kinds, or two states of freedom:

External Freedom and Internal Freedom

External freedom can be seen as living out life as each of us chooses to do, with whatever social, political and religious freedoms we desire, and with a freedom from oppression. Therefore I create this workshop as I choose - but, I think there is a but for it needs to work for you, or it is useless as a workshop.

APPENDIX 11

Whereas internal freedom is perhaps the freedom to think, dream, and desire all that our conscious and unconscious worlds wish to conjure up, again with a freedom from oppression. So I dream this workshop into being, but all the while I keep the pressure of the others that will be involved in it. Do I play safe or do I take risks - the choice is mine. But are either of these ideals really possible, and can internal and external freedom be separate, or are they in fact as difficult to separate as the colours in the rainbow?

Example

If internally you long to achieve academically and attain a particular goal, then the appropriate external course and the right tutors may enable you to do this. But what if having arrived on the course there is an old internal voice within you that reawakens and persistently derides your efforts? Which voice will be the stronger, your desire to achieve, or past recriminations? In such a scenario the external freedom to attend the course may be ambushed by internal oppression.

In groups

Take a few moments to look at your own lives to see how freedom, and the lack of it have affected you. See if you can find instances in your life where external and internal freedom have worked either together or in opposition.

Now think about freedom as we did with containment, as a continuum, with freedom as liberty as one end, and freedom as anarchy at the other. What forms of freedom will there be along this continuum? What words fill this space?

Look at last week's words on the containment continuum. Discuss

THE SPACE IN YOU

Last week I gave you a sheet of questions about assumptions and containment. This week I have just a few questions with about freedom and containment.

Today, as the individual, as the self you know and are conscious of, what sort of containment, and what sort of freedom have you experienced in your life?

What assumptions do you have and do they set you free or imprison you?

What does your assumptive world cause to happen when you are with your counsellor - does it affect your ability to be contained or to be set free?

Do you need containment or freedom to enable you to search in the dark?

Work on freedom continuum.

APPENDIX 11 Conductive polarities

3. CONDUCTIVE POLARITIES

First of all I want us to kind of warm up. To move.

Circle game - changing places after initiating eye contact across the circle.

Can you use eye contact as a form of “conduction” or “transmission” to get the person of your choice to move.

Shut down by touch - hands behind backs as I touch.

Discuss this experience. What was it like to start and what was it like to end?

What was it like to make / confirm eye contact - to move? Did you want to be motivated by the other person? What happened when you were all making eye contact?

CONDUCTIVE - is a way of transmitting - or having the quality or power of conducting. We have already glimpsed containment and freedom in the previous two sessions. I am suggesting that containment and freedom in the therapeutic relationship form a polarity, and that this polarity is conductive so

WHAT IS A POLARITY?

A polarity is the tendency to grow differently in different directions, along an axis as a tree towards base and apex, that is roots and branches.

Tree - overhead

Nourishment from ground - nourishment from atmosphere, enabling growth in both directions, - both sunlight and the ground are essential for growth. So are containment and freedom both necessary for growth? With only one kind of food the tree will die. Also may die if growth is inhibited by severing one end of the tree from the other. But it will fight to live and it may succeed. Does this happen with us. If we lose our freedom do we use containment to get that freedom back?

Also to grow in different directions at the same time suggests that there will be some conflict, or if you like a straining, or pulling like in a tug of war - there is a friction caused by the two poles of the polarity. But then at other times perhaps the different movements work together in order to achieve a particular aim - like the tree which has been felled - the stump works to start growing again and the roots feed it. Here it seems that the polarities can be both independent of, and dependent upon each other.

Jung saw polarities as a necessary aspect of life and therapy - in that they engender movement in the individual towards resolution and momentary equilibrium. How many of you have said or thought at times that you want more balance in your life? What is this balance that we long for? If you watch the scales - it is quite obvious that when the scales are balanced that movement

stops. If movement is stopped completely nothing happens

Either more or less weight - more or less containment and freedom must be added or taken away for movement to begin again. Like the tree, if one source of nourishment is lost it dies - there can be no more growth - no more movement. But as long as the pull of one polarity against the other remains in place, movement will continue. When talking about this, just in conversation, someone was quick to respond that a plane is balanced as it flies - and of course it is - but it only maintains that balance through movement.

Imagine here that all this containment has confined an individual to a compliant life, which is lived through and for others. What happens when this person discovers a new form of containment? A containment that encourages freedom. As this freedom is experienced the weight of containment begins to lift. Again there is conduction, a transmission between, across the two poles. Both are necessary - they interact. Freedom conducts containment, containment conducts freedom.

Jung suggested that what we really long for are more instants of momentary equilibrium. We achieve these through opposition. For example if a desired goal cannot be achieved in one direction then it is more than likely that the individual will move in another direction. This removes the conflict- and - it also moves the person forward. Say for instance you don't manage to get onto the counselling course you want then if this really is still your desire, to be a counsellor you will find another course. Or you may do something completely different but either way there is progression. What was important to Jung was that movement to a new position had been made. Another way movement may occur is by the union of opposing forces. Two enemies may unite against a third who seeks to destroy them. To Jung opposition was good. Or to put it in more colloquial terms how often do we see two children arguing only to both turn together on the peacemaker who tries to interfere.

So what do you do when you face opposition?

How do you use containment and freedom to enable you to make progress?

Discuss and share in groups.

Put ideas on the board - containment - freedom continuum / polarity.

Look at with the previous weeks continuums.

THE RESEARCH

So what I am looking to learn more about in this research is the movement between containment and freedom and if / how this movement effects growth in the client in therapy.

Also, what polarities are there in this work, and are they part of the containment-freedom polarity?

Lets look at some of these polarities first.

separation - merged state

beginnings - endings

transference - counter-transference

conscious - unconscious

self - other

psychic - physical
personal unconscious - collective unconscious
positive transference - negative transference
acting out - acting in

The pilot study has given evidence that the containment - freedom polarity (C-Fp) exists.
Now more information is needed to broaden and define this concept.
This will form the main study.

So what if you decide to take part will I be asking you to do?

Journals

Explain - time - content - no right or wrong - no need to concentrate on containment and freedom in that it is there planted within you now and it will show itself almost organically just like a flower opening its petals.

What will being part of this research give you?

Further your learning about yourself

Give you insights into your way of working

You will be part of the progress in the counselling world

It may give you the opportunity to discover your own rainbows

It does not take huge amounts of time, but I will discuss this with you further if you are interested in taking part.

As I said when I presented the first of these hours there is no expectation on you to take part.

I am looking for up to 15 individuals who are in therapy but if all of you wanted to take part then I would be delighted to have so many.

How long - in length - in time?

You can also start but pull out at any time.

Is there anything else that you would like to ask?

How do we proceed from here. Paper passed around for names, addresses and telephone numbers for those interested in taking part..

APPENDIX 12 Table to show incidence of categories in main study journals

Weeks / journal entries	Alice	Who am I	Turned On	Wriggling Fish	Little Girl
1	Over	Desire	U-U	U-U	Desire
2	Desire	U-U	Desire	U-U	Fighting
3	U-U	U-U	Towards	U-U	U-U
4	Desire	Desire	Desire	Fighting	Over
5	Over	Desire	Desire	Desire	U-U
6	Towards	Towards	Towards	Desire	U-U
7	Desire	Towards	Towards	Towards	Over
8	Towards	Desire	Towards	Desire	Desire
9	Desire	Fighting	Towards	Desire	U-U
10	Towards	Fighting	Towards	U-U	Towards
11		Fighting	Desire	U-U	U-U
12	Over	Desire	Over	Over	U-U
13	U-U	Desire	Desire	U-U	Over
14	Towards	U-U	U-U	Desire	U-U
15	U-U	Over	U-U	Desire	Desire
16	U-U	Towards	Over	Desire	Desire
17	U-U	Over	Desire	Towards	Towards
18	Fighting	Fighting	Fighting	Fighting	Fighting
19	Fighting	Towards	Desire	Fighting	Fighting
20	Desire	Towards	Towards	Fighting	Fighting
21	U-U	Towards	Towards	Over	Fighting
22	U-U	U-U	Towards	Towards	Fighting
23	Desire	Towards	Fighting	Towards	Towards
24		Desire	Fighting	Towards	Desiring
25		Over	U-U		
26	Fighting	Towards	Towards		
27	Desire	Towards	U-U		
28	Desire	Desire	Towards		
29	Desire	Towards	Towards	Towards	

	Alice	Who Am I	Turned On	Wriggling Fish	Little Girl
30			Towards	Towards	
31				Towards	
32	Towards			Desire	
33	Over			Towards	
34	Towards			Towards	
35	Fighting			Towards	
36	Towards			Towards	
37	Fighting				
38	Fighting				
39	Desire				
40	Towards				
41	Over				
42	Towards				
43	Towards				
44	Towards				
45					
46	Desire				
47					
48					
49	Fighting				
50					
51					
52	Towards				
53	Towards				
54					
55					
56					
57					
58	Desire				

Key:

U-U - uncontained-unfree

Towards - towards containment-freedom

Fighting - fighting containment-freedom

Desire - desire for containment-freedom

Over - over contained-overfree

Blank - no counselling and no entry

APPENDIX 13 Example of a main study journal and analysis

MAIN STUDY JOURNAL ANALYSIS

“WHO AM I ?”

Week 1.

- Line 1. Co. made me aware I was
Line 2. checking her out - need for safety.
Line 3. Felt OK / “what’s wrong with me?” (thoughts)
Line 4. Felt listened to, valued.
↓
Line 5. Pain of experience of bad Co. +
Line 6. college. “let it go!” - difficult

This appears like a first or early session in that the client feels that she is made aware by her counsellor that she is checking her out (lines 1,2). She then seems to state that she has a need for safety and the fact that she appears to have had a bad experience with a counsellor (line 5) make this feel crucial. Although she says that she felt okay (line 3), perhaps about being made aware of what she was doing, she then wonders what is wrong with her. She asks herself the question using speech marks and putting the word ‘thoughts’ in brackets. She seems to want the reader to know that these are thoughts (line 3) as opposed to being part of the counselling session. It feels a very important question as if she feels that there is something very wrong with her and perhaps it feels safer to ask the question in the journal than risk saying these thoughts to the counsellor. But perhaps this question also suggests the client’s present condition in that she sees herself as having something wrong with her. It also seems that there is some pain connected to her college counselling course (line 6) which is similar to the experience with the ‘bad’ counsellor as she puts these together. She tells herself, using speech marks, to ‘let it go’ as if she wants to be rid of the memory and the pain but she also replies to herself by stating that it is ‘difficult’. However in this session she seems to have felt listened to and valued (line 4). But she connects valued to the line about the bad counsellor with an arrow as if she is marking or pointing out the difference. There is a strong sense of the client’s vulnerability, and she feels very cautious. Perhaps she is checking out writing the journal as well as the counsellor.

Construct: desire for containment - freedom

The client appears to feel heard and valued by the counsellor suggesting her desire for containment. There are also painful memories of a previous 'bad' counsellor suggesting her desire for freedom in that she may fear that she is bad herself or that this new counsellor may be bad, which makes sense of her checking her out.

Week 2.

- Line 1. Felt good, valued,
- Line 2. embarrassed to be me.
- Line 3. Working on 'stuckness'.
- Line 4. Adult self - taking care of
- Line 5. child - pain, vulnerability
- Line 6. "frozen child" - pain + trauma.
- Line 7. Re-experiencing above -
- Line 8. need to find way of making it
- Line 9. OK, appropriate / liveable.
- Line 10. Recognition of loss in childhood
- Line 11. Co. feels good, real, not a book -
human

There appears to be some opposition in the first two lines as the client felt good and valued (line 1) but then embarrassed to be herself (line 2) which seems to hark back to the previous week where she questioned what was wrong with her. From the way she writes this it is as if she is embarrassed just in being who she is. She confirms the feeling of being stuck from the previous week stating that she was working on 'stuckness'. She suggests that her adult self (line 4) takes care of her child (line 5) self and describes her child self as a 'frozen child'. This is a powerful image and surrounded by the words of pain, vulnerability, pain and trauma suggesting the image of a child who is unable to move as well being filled with emotive experiences. She is also frozen, which is perhaps her present condition, cold as if she is unloved and possibly may struggle to feel the warmth of love. Part of her is perhaps still this frozen child. She appears to re-experience (line 7) some of her childhood feelings in the session and says that she needs to

find a way of making the past okay, appropriate and liveable (lines 8,9). It feels as if the past was none of these things and perhaps the agony is that she cannot change the past and make it better. However she does recognize some kind of loss (line 10) in childhood as if she gains some understanding of what she did not have. She ends by commenting on the counsellor and it feels important that the counsellor is 'not a book' but human (line11). This perhaps refers back to the 'bad' counsellor and suggests that she may have felt like a book and possibly therefore inhuman.

Construct: uncontained - unfree.

Although the client appears to work in the session in that she says how she felt, and appears to re-experience some of her childhood, it feels that the most important part of the entry is the frozen child. If this images where the client is in her internal world, it suggests someone who is unable to move, stuck. Perhaps she needs to experience this frozen child more in order to be able to move on.

Week 3.

- Line 1. Cancelled session
- Line 2. I was ill.
- Line 3. Difficult not to go + share
- Line 4. Things feel - too much
- Line 5. College confusing
- Line 6. Are we all moving to the
- Line 7. 'beat of the same drum?'
- Line 8. Am I too idealistic?

The client appears to avoid any chance of working in this next entry in that she felt too ill to attend the counselling (lines 1,2). Yet she also says that it was difficult not to go and share (line 3) with the counsellor as if part of her really did want to go. But there seems to be more going on in her than physical illness for college is confusing (line 5) and she questions whether she and her peers are all moving to the beat of the same drum (line 6,7) as if she is wondering if they are all on the same journey. Although the course may be the same for everyone it is unlikely to be experienced the same so perhaps the client is being too idealistic (line 8) in that she may want

everyone's experience or learning to be the same. But perhaps this is also symbolic of the client's internal world. Perhaps part of her does want to attend the counselling, but another does not, and maybe she wants others to feel the same as her rather than feeling what they are, different. It feels that the confusion may be within the client. She may be an adult but she seems stuck with a frozen child. The two questions perhaps give an image of where the client is within herself. Perhaps all the parts of her are not moving to the beat of the same drum, and perhaps she is being too idealistic to believe that all parts of her can feel the same about each experience she has.

Construct: uncontained - unfree

The client still feels as if she is in a stuck, frozen place but and this seems to be imaged by her illness and inability to go to the counselling session. However she is looking around to see where she is, to see if she is in the same place as others and moving to the beat of the same drum suggests. She is also able to question herself as if she is looking inside to find answers rather than only looking outside to see what others are doing.

Week 4.

- Line 1. Use internalisation as skill /
- Line 2. tool not see as negative.
- Line 3. See from other side.
- new
↓
- Line 4. Felt good, valuable, important !
- Line 5. Speak. Give it a voice
- Line 6. so does not overwhelm self.
- Line 7. Give it back / up to be claimed.
- Line 8. Release anxiety feelings
- Line 9. keep, use the gifts
- Line 10. Synchronicity.
- Line 11. Felt good! + 'Who me'.

It feels as if she is exhorting herself to use internalisation as a useful skill as opposed to being

something negative (lines 1,2), as if she has never seen the benefit of it before. Perhaps she is listening to her counsellor for this seems important which is new (line 4), and so important to her that she has to point it out with an arrow as if she wants this to be seen by the reader and maybe herself. But it is hard to tell what seeing this from the other side (line 3) means. Perhaps it is about voicing (line 5) what has been introjected so that what she has been unable to bring to the sessions before (week 1) is spoken rather than only thought. She seems to exhort herself to speak as if she is telling part of herself that she needs a voice that is heard. Also voicing these thoughts may stop her feeling overwhelmed (line 6) by them. It seems possible that she decides to give these thoughts back (line 7) to their original owner as if she realises that she does not have to keep them as they are not hers. This appears to enable her to release feelings of anxiety (line 8) as if what has been internalised previously has made her anxious. By the end of the entry she wants to keep and use the gifts (line 9), perhaps of internalisation as if she has learnt that all that she has internalised may be useful to her if she can use her thoughts in the session. Synchronicity (line 10) stands on its own and suggests that this could be something she felt within herself and / or with the counsellor as if there has been a meeting between them that enabled a new kind of intimacy. It certainly appears to have felt good (line 11) for she uses an exclamation mark as if to show her surprise and ends with 'who me'. Although there is no question mark she seems to be asking a question as if she cannot believe that she felt good in a session. Perhaps the question 'who me' also demonstrates that she is wondering about what to do next as if she is asking herself whether she can really have a voice that is heard, and feel good about it.

Construct: desire for containment-freedom

The desire for containment feels powerful as the client has a sense of feeling important to the counsellor, perhaps important enough to be genuinely heard and cared for. She also appears to be a desire for freedom as she does not want to be overwhelmed by part of herself, but wants to release / free her anxiety and use the gifts she is discovering.

Week 5.

- Line 1. Good + comfortable
- Line 2. Safe to cry, be + very embarrassed
- Line 3. + aware at same time.

- Line 4. Feels different / new
Line 5. “More than anything I want to
Line 6. stop punishing myself”.
Line 7. Pain, deep, deep pain.
Line 8. Why do I still feel the need to do it?
Line 9. Why invest so much energy into it?
Line 10. Assumptions over judgements
Line 11. from others - always negative.

This next session feels different (line 4). It is as if the space has changed for the client it seems to feel good and comfortable (line 1). This seems to enable her to do four things, to cry, to be, to feel embarrassed and yet aware all at the same time (lines 2,3). The next two lines feel important in that she puts them in speech marks as if she exhorting herself that this is her voice and what she wants, which is to stop punishing herself (lines 5,6). She wants to do this more than anything (line 5) as if part of her realises that there is no need to punish herself. But the pain around this is deep (line 7) and the repetition of the words pain and deep feels powerful as if she wants to emphasize to herself and the reader that there is almost a need to feel deep pain. It is as if this is an action that she feels compelled to do but in reflecting on it she seems able to question herself about why she does it. Perhaps she refers to the trauma (week 2; line 6) that keeps part of her frozen. She questions why she still needs to punish herself, and why she invests so much energy into doing so (lines 8,9). Perhaps the questions suggest that this is what she needs to look at next as if she is preparing herself to do this. She appears to assume that others judgements of her are always negative (lines 10,11) but perhaps this is how she has judged herself.

Construct: desire for containment - freedom

The client seems to be establishing her relationship with the counsellor as she feels comfortable and safe. She is able to question why she still needs to ‘punish’ herself and she also seems to allow herself to feel the depth of her pain as if the safety that enabled her to cry gave her the freedom to experience her own feelings in the presence of the counsellor. She appears to demonstrate her desire to contain her own feelings and experience as she felt safe enough share part of her internal world.

Week 6.

- Line 1. Deep painful revelations.
- Line 2. Pain of childhood - disconnection
- Line 3. of doll's head + body = abuse.
- Line 4. Mother not there 'head' could
- Line 5. not cope with what happening.
- Line 6. realized always alone + partly
- Line 7. parented self.
- Line 8. Surviving against all odds + seen as
problem
- Line 9. Don't be so hard on self (Brenda/Co.)
- Line 10. Anger to self - staying so long in neg'
- Line 11. ways. Can be diff' to have someone there

NEW

The deep painful revelations (line 1) in this session suggest abuse (line 3) in the client's childhood, and although this feels like sexual abuse there is no way of being certain of this. She writes of disconnection (line 2) as if she had to cut off from what happened to her. And this appears to be emphasized by the separation of a doll's head from its body which equals abuse (lines 2,3). As her mother was not there (line 4) the client's 'head' was unable to cope with what was happening (lines 4,5) and this seemed to make her feel as if she was always alone (line 6), as if she experienced a sense of isolation when she was far too young to be able to deal with it. She also feels that this caused her to partly parent herself (lines 6,7) as if this isolated child had to manage what happened all alone. She seems to feel that she survived against all the odds (line 8) as if part of her realizes that to survive has been quite an accomplishment yet she was seen as a problem (line 8). Perhaps her behaviour was seen as a problem by others who knew nothing of what had happened to her. Although she seems to be exhorting herself not to be so hard on herself she implies that these are the words of others which she perhaps needs to internalise. And it seems that she feels angry (line 10) with herself for staying so long in such negative ways as if she is still punishing herself. But she ends by suggesting that the past can be different (line 11) when she can have someone there with her. She notes that this is new as if she is feeling that the

counsellor has been present with her as she has re-experienced the past abuse.

Construct: towards containment - freedom.

The client seems to continue the move towards internal containment of her own feelings as these revelations (line 1) come from her sharing with the counsellor. It appears that by sharing, she is tentatively letting go of, freeing, what has been so overcontained.

Week 7.

- Line 1. Topic of rape from college.
- Line 2. My shock at response from other Co.
- Line 3. Felt like friend 'raped' by group.
- Line 4. Rape - power imbalance - where is feeling?
- Line 5. Fight / flight / Frozen
- ↑
- Line 6. "How can you get up and walk out?"
- Line 7. Understand, the process was alive
- Line 8. to learn from. Not weakness
- Line 9. from pain but strength.
- Line 10. "what is this about?" Empathy, feelings!?
- Line 11. This is my friend.

This is a difficult entry to make sense of. It seems that she took the topic of rape from college (line 1) and this seems to have led her to feel shocked at the response (line 2) she had from her previous counsellor. It appears to make her feel 'raped' (line 3) as a friend had by the group on her course, as if she had her perception of what had happened to her taken away by the previous counsellor. She seems to feel the imbalance of power in rape (line 4), and in her previous counselling experience as she asks where the feelings are. Perhaps this question also tells where she is going next in this journey in that she perhaps needs to find and validate her own feelings. She seems to understand her frozen state in that she could not fight or fly from the situation physically she could only freeze into herself (line 5). She asks another question with an arrow pointing back to frozen as if she is making it clear that a child cannot get up and walk (line 6) out when they are being abused. But as an adult it seems she did get up and walk out from her

previous counsellor which suggests that she did use her power when she could. It is hard to tell what the process is in line seven, but perhaps she is referring back to the group at college, or the previous counsellor. Maybe the process of the counselling is very alive in these moments especially as she tells herself that strength rather than weakness (lines 8,9) can grow from pain. She asks herself 'what is this about?' as if she is also confused about this entry. She answers her question with another as she seems to question if this is all about empathy and feelings (line 10). Perhaps this question also shows that she is also wondering what to do next in her counselling. Then she ends with 'this is my friend' (line 11) which on first glance appears to make no sense but perhaps she is talking about the journal rather than the friend she wrote of earlier. Perhaps the journal has become a friend in that she is speaking to herself and is making an ally of this part of herself who writes.

Construct: towards containment - freedom

The strength of the client's reactions in the entry suggest spontaneous feelings to what happened at college even if she was unable to voice these at the time. She seems to be on the side of the frozen child who could not get up and walk out. Perhaps she is beginning to contain this child self rather than freezing her out of existence. It seems that she is finding the freedom to feel her own affect even when this may be different from what is expressed by the group.

Week 8.

- Line 1. Felt validated, understood + much return to
- Line 2. normal functioning, still v. fragile inside.
- Line 3. Not good at taking care of self, saying 'no'.
- Line 4. Feeling wounded + hollow inside.
- Line 5. Determined, frustrated 'have the right
- Line 6. to speak', but aware ignored.
- Line 7. Pain.
- Line 8. Recognition of own strength.
- Line 9. Some peers in awe. Difficult to believe.
- Line 10. Shock - pain - anger.
- Line 11. Take huge risks, play by the rules.

The client seems to feel validated and understood (line 1) as if she needs this from the counsellor, in that she needs to be given this by an external other for perhaps she is unable to do this for herself. She seems to feel that she has returned to functioning normally (line 2) as if the process of counselling has been affecting her everyday life. But she still feels very fragile inside (line 2) as if the abused part of her is more aware of her vulnerability. She seems to recognize that she is not good at taking care of herself by saying 'no' (line 3) to others as if she takes on too much and tires herself. She then appears to return to her internal state as she feel wounded and hollow inside (line 4) which creates a powerful image. It is as if she is describing her internal condition and is more aware of the damage that has been done to her through the abuse. Yet there is a strength, for she seems determined yet also frustrated for she senses that she has the right to speak (line 6) as if the child within is beginning to find her voice. But at the same time she appears to feel ignored as if the child who was so isolated is unable to make herself heard. 'Pain' (line 7) stands alone as if it needs to be recognized and registered both by her and perhaps the reader, and the lack of words around it makes it stand out as something too enormous to portray in any other way. She then seems to have a sense of her own strength (line 8) which is followed by her peers being in awe (line 9) of her as if she has shared some of her experiences with them and been heard and acknowledged. In recounting this action of sharing she is able to reflect on it. She finds their awe difficult to believe (line 9) as if this a new experience, and perhaps this confirms that she has been heard and is finding her voice, or even shifting from her frozen state. This is followed by shock - pain - anger (line 10) which suggests that she may have found the appropriate feelings for her abused self. Perhaps taking huge risks is where she is at the moment as if she is doing this in her counselling, in her counsellor training and in the journal, as if she is taking the risk of speaking to see if she is heard. At the same time she appears to state the opposite as she says that she is playing by the rules (line 10). Perhaps she is playing by the rules, as if she is testing the whole idea of counselling to see if it works, to see if taking risks enables her to find out more about herself. The adjectives in this entry are all emotive and suggestive of actions as if she is describing her condition in regard to counselling and training, and also suggest that she is using both to take care of herself more appropriately.

Construct: desire for containment - freedom

Her desire for freedom seems to be demonstrated by the energy of the emotive words used in the

entry. She almost seems to be testing out her own sense of power in the writing. She also feels hollow as if separateness and difference to others is too overwhelming to feel. Her desire for containment appears to be shown in her feeling validated and understood by the counsellor.

Week 9.

- Line 1. Tired, not well - neck.
- Line 2. Loss issues
- Line 3. Not good at 'no' + taking care (self)
- Line 4. Doing / seeing things differently.
- Line 5. No longer feel / see as 'my responsibility'
- Line 6. New / confusing / hard 'to be'.
- Line 7. College - where is group safety?
- Line 8. Facilitator - created it?
- Line 9. Not able to trust group to be
- Line 10. there to support my + their
- Line 11. learning. Pain. Anger.

The client writes that she is tired and not well in this entry and there is a suggestion that there is something wrong with her neck (line 1). This could suggest that there is a struggle between her thinking self and her feeling self in that the neck connects the thinking head to the feeling body. Like the doll in week six it seems there is a disconnection (week 6; line 2) between her thinking and feeling self. She appears to be aware of issues of loss (line 2) but goes on to say that she is no good at saying 'no' and taking care of her self (line 3) as if the part of her that tries to deal with the loss is not taken care of. Yet she goes on to say that she is doing things differently (line 4) which seems to oppose the previous two lines. There is something that she no longer sees as her responsibility (line 5) which suggests that part of her is trying to take care of herself. But at the same time this new (line 6) way of seeing and feeling is confusing (line 6) and she seems to find it hard to be this way. She wonders where the group safety is at college (line 7) and then questions if the facilitator created the safety (line 8). Perhaps this question suggests that she is wondering how she can facilitate her own safety. It seems she is aware of the safety in the group yet is unable to trust them (line 9) to support her learning and theirs (lines 10,11). Perhaps the

group represents different aspects of herself which could indicate that she is still struggling to trust her counsellor and the process of therapy. She ends with pain and anger written separately as if one word sentences. This adds power to the words and seems to speak of the depth of her feelings.

Construct: fighting containment - freedom

In this entry there is opposition in her desire to take care of herself and her inability to say no when this would aid her care of herself. It is as if she wants to contain herself by caring for herself and saying 'no' but still feels unable to make this happen. She appears to desire the freedom to trust the group at college but at the same time is unable to take the risk. It is as if there is a battle within her internal world. Perhaps she needs the upheaval of the movement caused by fighting herself to create the friction that might engender change.

Week 10.

- Line 1. Felt good, tired but also a
- Line 2. little rail - roaded.
- Line 3. Many people appear to feel the
- Line 4. need to motivate me. Why?
- Line 5. I just feel tired + am taking
- Line 6. time for myself.

This next short entry seems to suggest that the client took time for herself in the session (line 6). Something about it felt good (line 1), as if she was able to use the time to feel where she is within herself, despite feeling rail-roaded (line 2) by others who try to motivate (line 4) her. This powerful image of being rail-roaded perhaps images her present condition of feeling forced into situations or experiences that she does not want. It is possible that she felt rail-roaded by the counsellor. Perhaps the many people (line 3) represent all the different parts of her that stop her from saying no and taking care of herself. But she also questions why others try to motivate her so perhaps she is also wondering what to do next about this. It seems she might want to motivate herself within the counselling. Twice she notes that she is tired (lines 1, 5) as if she is getting in touch with how she feels (line 5) and responding to these feelings by taking time for herself (line

6). However she may also be opting out of doing the work by feeling tired.

Construct: fighting containment - freedom

Although the client says that she is taking time for herself there is also a suggestion that she is avoiding the work by feeling tired which seems to be a passive way of opting out of the session and the journal entry which is shorter than usual. The metaphor of feeling rail-roaded also suggests that there is a fight going on in her internal world.

Week 11.

- Line 1. ⊆ Anger with relate therapist.
- Line 2. Subsided by the time I left so
- Line 3. feeling tired, drained, lack - energy
- Line 4. to even think!
- Line 5. Tired from pain - neck + frustrated.
- Line 6. Domino effect in other areas of life.
- Line 7. struggle what is mine / what I
- Line 8. dump. Questioning - what is
- Line 9. reactivated + needs change
- Line 10. + where change occurs + effects
- Line 11. ‘instinctual conflict’.

The client starts this entry with anger (line 1) towards a relate therapist (line 1) which suggests that she is going to a relate therapist with her partner, perhaps because the issues from her past are affecting their relationship. But this anger has subsided (line 2) and seems to have left her feeling tired (line 3), so tired that she feels drained (line 3) of so much energy (line 3) that she is unable to think (line 4). As in the previous week she states that she is tired again (line 5) this time from the pain in her neck (line 5) which seems to frustrate (line 5) her. The domino effect in other areas of her life (line 6) implies a sense of falling apart as if she has a sense of this as she struggles with past issues. There also appears to be a felt struggle (line 7) with what issues belong to her and which of these she may dump (lines 7,8), or project onto others. She seems to be wondering what feelings or issues are reactivated (line 9) from the past, what in her needs to

(line 7,8). It seems her sons are adolescents (line 9) and she recognizes this as a difficult time 'for all' (line 9) as she seems to recognize that the difficulty is not just hers but theirs as well. There is a sense that her sons are struggling with freedom and responsibility (line10) but she sees this struggle as hers as well. Perhaps her sons represent the adolescent part of her which struggles to take her own freedom from the abuse she suffered and the responsibility to work through, and own these feelings in the present. Perhaps she also projects some of her anger that she does not want to contain, into her sons. There is visible movement in the way this entry has been written with inverted comas and the arrow between lines nine and ten.

Construct: desire for containment - freedom

The validation and affirmation of the client, apparently by the counsellor, suggest that she desires containment. If the counsellor can validate who she is (line 3) then perhaps she will be able to find and contain herself. The energy of the entry suggests her desire for freedom as she appears to take control by finding a different way of looking at things.

Week 13.

- Line 1. Clarity over other Co.
- Line 2. Tricked / Co. own agenda = my
- Line 3. feelings of sadness + become 'victim'.
- Line 4. Felt like role dumped on me.
- Line 5. Realization 'we are all struggling'
- Line 6. I'm not alone. Others just
- Line 7. wear better masks / or Ok on
- Line 8. days I'm not. OK after all!
- Line 9. Synchronicity.
- Line 10. Hope, internal pain, value of achievements.
- Line 11. Difficulty of change, valuing + internalising.

There seems to be some understanding gained over what has been happening in the relate therapy she is attending with her husband (line 1). She appears to think that she tricked the counsellor (line 2) with her own agenda which she equals (line 2) with her feelings of sadness

which she seems to use to put herself in the role of victim (line 3). She senses that this role was dumped (line 4) on her as if she realizes that this is what the abuser did to her when she was a child. There is also the realization that she is not alone (line 6) but that the whole family are struggling (line 5) which seems to be continued from the previous entry. Not being alone (line 6) feels important as she did not tell about the abuse when it happened so she felt very isolated. She appears to feel that the others in the family wear better masks (line 7) than her as if they have been able to hide the fact that they were struggling too. Or she seems to wonder if they are just alright (line 8) on the days when she does not feel alright (line 8). And this seems to make her feel that she is perhaps 'OK after all' as if this makes some sense to her. Perhaps she is only able to feel alright when others do as if she is still not separate from others in her internal world. But it is also possible that the family represent different aspects of herself that are just beginning to come into awareness at an unconscious level as she writes the journal. She uses the word synchronicity (line 9) again as if this feeling of oneness with herself and others is important to her. The statements in line ten and eleven seem to be her way of validating what is going on in her internal world, as if she is affirming the process of counselling for herself.

Construct: desire for containment - freedom

There seems to be a strong desire to feel merged with the family as she appears to want everyone to feel the same even as she realizes that this is not always so. The synchronicity that she appears to feel is perhaps the coming together of different aspects of herself as if there is a greater sense of unity in her internal world. Yet there remains the sense of her wanting to feel merged with the counsellor in that she still needs the validation and hope from an external source.

Week 14.

- Line 1. Sadness - feeling heavy.
- Line 2. Uncertainty of future, feels
- Line 3. like I have 'outgrown my
- Line 4. constructs'. much self-doubt.
- Line 5. "affair potential if I had the
- Line 6. confidence + self-esteem".
- Line 7. Huge, overbearing lethargic

- Line 8. sadness. Need to do it differently
- Line 9. How?
- Line 10. Greater nurturing of self + family
- Line 11. + reduce the energy invested in 'partnership'.

This entry starts with a description of the client's sadness (line 1) which feels heavy and later she returns to add to this description (lines 7,8) as if writing the entry has made her more aware of how enormous the sadness is. Her future feels uncertain (line 2) and she feels that she has outgrown the constructs (lines 3,4) that she has lived with until now. It appears that the process of therapy is enabling her to question who she is or wants to be and perhaps this is what her self doubt (line 4) is about. The whole of lines five and six are in speech marks as if she is talking to herself very particularly. Perhaps there is a part of her that would like to have enough self esteem and confidence to have an affair (lines 5,6) or maybe she needs an affair with herself which is what the counselling appears to offer. Yet it is after this that she describes her sadness again so perhaps she is unsure about this. It seems she wants to do life differently, or be herself differently (line 8) yet she says this is a need which suggests a desire to change. In questioning how (line 9) to do this she appears to be telling herself what to do next. She then seems to answer the question by saying that she wants to nurture herself and her family more and reduce the energy invested in the partnership (line 11) with her husband as if their relationship has been her main focus. Perhaps she has wanted more than he has been able to give in that she may have wanted him to save her from her past rather than having to do this for herself. An 'affair' with herself may enable her to save herself. Perhaps she needs to reduce the amount of energy that she spends on being the victim in her internal partnership with an abusive self.

Construct: uncontained - unfree

There is a strong sense of movement but she does not seem to actually make any progress. She seems to begin to feel the weight of her sadness yet does not seem able to find the freedom to have an affair with herself. She can imagine the possibility of change yet seems to take no action. It is as if she is trapped by her own lethargy. But in this non active state she seems to be able to view where she is and see that movement is needed.

Week 15.

- Line 1. Choices in marriage.
- Line 2. Anger at who I became / have been
- Line 3. was + am expected to be.
- Line 4. Resistance of change me + others.
- Line 5. Desire to do things differently.
- Line 6. Desire to live, to be +
- Line 7. Not 'have to' or 'should'. Have
- Line 8. always been doing + now want to
- Line 9. experience.
- Line 10. Am I alone?

There is almost an explosion of feelings in this entry. She seems to set out to do what she told herself to do next in the question of the previous week about how to change. Firstly she realizes that she has choices in her marriage (line 1) but she quickly follows this with anger (line 2) directed at herself because of who she has become. But there is also anger at who she has been (line 2) and who she has been expected to be (line 3) so perhaps there is some anger towards others too. She appears to feel that she is resistant to change in herself and others (line 4) yet has a desire to do things differently (line 5) as if there is a part of herself who has not yet lived. This desire seems to be about living and being (line 6) as if she has not really lived before and not been her own self before. She realizes that she has lived with internalised expectations that have kept her always doing (lines 7,8) as opposed perhaps to being and experiencing. She ends with a question, 'am I alone?' which at first glance feels as if it is out of place or does not make sense with the rest of the entry. However perhaps she is realizing that there are many different parts to her, or many selves which she has not encountered before. This may add to her feelings of isolation in that it makes her feel different to others. She may also be starting the process of separation from others as opposed to being merged with them and this may also make her feel alone, with no connection to others. This is also written before a two week break from counselling which is only made clear in the next entry so perhaps the sense of isolation that is felt is also due to the forthcoming absence of the counsellor from the client's life.

Construct: over contained-overfree

The confusion and explosion of feelings suggest she is uncontained-unfree. It feels as if she is aware of the 'have to' and 'should' ways of being that she has lived by up until now. The questioning if she is alone suggests that she is beginning to experience separation from others but this is also frightening, particularly with a break from the counselling looming before her.

Week 16.

- Line 1. Relief after Co. 2 week break to be
- Line 2. back. Wk 1 - OK. Wk 2 - loss and death.
- Line 3. Past loss - who am I
- Line 4. Anger at mother. Who was my dad.
- Line 5. 1 photo - nobody can tell me, no one
- Line 6. knows, acceptance I will never know.
- Line 7. Who am I?
- Line 8. Remembering - mother was told to have
- Line 9. abortion 'me'. perhaps this is why I
- Line 10. have never felt the right to be alive
- Line 11. Drawing life line + happiness line?!

The client seems to have had a two week break (line 1) from counselling and appears to feel relief (line 1) at being back as if she has missed it. The break seems to have made her more aware of loss and death (line 2) and enables her to wonder who she is (line 3). This question feels crucial to the client's whole internal journey as if the counselling is about finding out who she is, as if she has never really known. This is made clearer when she writes about her dad (line 4). She does not know who he was, has only one photo of him and no one can tell her anything about him (line 5). It seems she has to accept that she will never know him or anything about him (line 6). She asks again 'who am I?' (line 7) this time with a question mark as if she recognizes how important not knowing her dad has become. Perhaps she is also making the decision that this is what she must concentrate on next, finding out who she is. This explains her anger towards her mother (line 4) who has never given her any information about her dad. She remembers next that her mother was told to abort her (line 8) and she wonders if this is why she has never felt as if

she has the right to be alive (line 9,10). She ends this question with what appears to be a statement about drawing a life line and happiness line (line 11). But perhaps this is also a question in that this is what she wants to do next for herself that is give herself the right to be alive and start to take charge, or draw (line 11) her own life and be responsible for her life and her happiness.

Construct: towards containment - freedom

The client appears to shift towards containing the feelings about her early beginnings as she thinks about where she comes from and accepts this history. Her shift towards freedom appears to be shown in her again questioning who she is as if there is now a possibility of writing her own life as she wonders if she can draw / make her own life-line and her own happiness.

Week 17.

- Line 1. Difficulty showing life + happiness line.
- Line 2. OK talking it through.
- Line 3. 'Not much happiness' visible.
- Line 4. Seeing the sadness in childhood.
- Line 5. Expectations, 'parentification', role
- Line 6. of 'doer' in marriage.
- Line 7. Change - difficult. When low + fragile
- Line 8. return to old patterns.
- Line 9. Much confusion. Is it change, me
- Line 10. or the 'confused messages' I was given.

She continues the theme of the previous week and apparently finds that in drawing a line to represent her life and happiness that there is not much happiness (line 1). It seems to be okay talking about this (line 2) but she writes again that there is not much happiness visible and puts this in inverted comas as if she really wants this to stand out for herself and perhaps for the reader. Drawing this life line seems to enable her to see the sadness in childhood and she is seeing (line 4) it as if this is a new process and very active. She appears to look at the expectations (line 5) that were put upon her and the parent like role that she took on. She seems

to make up her own word for this (line 5) as if this was something that was done to her. This role seems to be aligned with her role of 'doer' (line 6) in her marriage as if she makes a link that this is where this role comes from. She then recognizes that change is difficult (line 7). Particularly it seems when she is feeling low and fragile (line 7) for it appears that she finds herself struggling to continue with change as she returns to old patterns (line 8) or her known ways of being. There seems to be much confusion (line 9) for her in this process and she questions whether this is due to the change, herself, or the confused messages (lines 9,10) she was given as a child. Although there is no question mark she writes this as a question and it appears that she is again using a question to show what she intends to do next. To look at this confusion and where it comes from would be an obvious expectation but perhaps the confusion is a way of keeping herself a victim and powerless, so maybe she will let the confusion go and claim some power for herself..

Construct: overcontained - overfree

Although there appears to be movement within the client in that she is noticing how she has developed as she looks back at her life, she also appears to be battling with the confusion she feels. This confusion is perhaps a necessary part of the process of change in that she does not appear to know how to be with the knowledge she is gaining about herself. There may be some fear in losing her known ways of being.

Week 18.

- Line 1. Endings.
- Line 2. Possible working towards me having
- Line 3. a break in Co.
- Line 4. Husbands job - ended today. End of
- Line 5. course. Feels like holding many
- Line 6. loose ends - tiring, difficult + how
- Line 7. needs to be.
- Line 8. Need to take care of self - otherwise
- Line 9. burnout.
- Line 10. Sadness + dissatisfaction in marriage

Line 11. 'Something missing'. Anger, + covers pain!

Line 12. 'Resolve pain + anger or never be satisfied'??

It seems the client is thinking about taking a break from counselling (line 2) perhaps because of her husband's job ending (line 3). The counselling course she is on also seems to be ending (lines 4,5) so it is not surprising that she started the entry with just one word, 'Endings'. It seems that she feels as if she holding many loose ends (line 6) perhaps because there is a sense of the unknown in all these endings. She realizes that holding all this together is tiring and difficult (line 6) but also that it is how it needs to be (line 7). She appears to feel that there is need to take care of herself (line 8) or otherwise she may burnout (line 9) as if she is aware that she has more than enough to deal with at this time. But this is written without the anxiety of previous entries about taking care of herself as if she is getting used to doing this differently. She writes about the sadness and dissatisfaction in her marriage (line 10) and seems to think that there is something missing (line 11) within this relationship. She appears to feel anger and be aware that it covers pain (line 11) and ends this short sentence with an exclamation mark which makes it feel powerful. She then seems to exhort herself to resolve this pain and anger or never be satisfied (line 12) and with two question marks she makes this a question as if she is telling herself very firmly to do this. Perhaps this is again about her internal relationships with different aspects of herself. She may need to 'resolve' the pain and anger of her abused self in order to lose the dissatisfaction with herself. It seems possible that it is part of herself that is missing as opposed to something missing from her marriage.

Construct: fighting containment - freedom

There remains a sense of aggression in this entry that feels passive. There is a subjective feeling of her presenting her internal self in her external world, so that she feels only partially present. Perhaps the possible break from counselling is a way of her showing her anger and acting out what she is as yet unable to put into words. But it may be that choosing to have a break will also give her a sense of control over her own destiny and help her rescue herself from the role of victim.

Week 19.

The opposition felt in being powerful gives a sense of dynamic movement to this entry as if the client is finding the freedom to feel a greater range of emotions along with the ability to contain and express herself. She discovers containment in the metaphor of the apple. Yet there is also freedom in the power of being whole for she is all of the apple, or all of the different parts of herself.

Week 20.

- Line 1. Ending to present work - rest + break 2 months
- Line 2. “if given £50 note - may even spend it”.
- Line 3. Taking time to care for self - really care
- Line 4. eg health, strength + time to be!
- Line 5. A difficult year at home + college.
- Line 6. Perhaps I did not fully recognize
- Line 7. how much energy I invested or
- Line 8. was depleted from me.
- Line 9. renaming guilt - what else is it eg
- Line 10. over-responsibility / is this positive for me.
- Line 11. Taking care of myself - finding the balance.

The client is taking a break (line 1) from counselling for two months (line 1) and this appears to be her last session before the break. In quotes she writes that if given a £50 note she may spend (line 2) it as if there is a sense of freedom in this break. She seems to really want to take the time to care for herself (line 3) as if to gain in strength and health and time to be (line 4). This suggests that she feels freer to care for herself as if being might replace doing (week 15; line 8) for others with simply being. She appears to look back over the previous year which she describes as difficult at home and college (line 5). She wonders if she has not realized how much energy she invested (lines 6,7) in college or how much was depleted (line 8) or taken from her. She seems to think that she is renaming her guilt (line 9), as if she is becoming aware that she was not responsible for the abuse she suffered. She renames this guilt over-responsibility and sees this as a positive (line 10) change in herself. She ends by stating that she is taking care of herself and finding the balance (line 11). Finding the balance may suggest that she is aware of having judged

herself negatively and not been able to see herself in a positive light.

Construct: towards containment - freedom

In taking the power to have a break from counselling the client appears to be moving towards new perceptions of herself where she can see herself in a more positive light. The freedom to just 'be' as opposed to 'doing' seems that it may enable her to contain her own feelings, and allow guilt to be renamed as the over responsibility for others that has prevented her from being a separate individual.

Week 21.

- Line 1. Wonderful to have such a long break
- Line 2. + mixed feelings about returning.
- Line 3. Couldn't wait / anxiety.
- Line 4. Good session - left feeling 'lighter'.
- Line 5. Choice - to try (again) - differently.
- Line 6. Expecting more for myself whilst
- Line 7. giving what is possible + OK.
- Line 8. Perhaps what I need is to learn from
- Line 9. the past, keeping my expectations for
- Line 10. me! Respecting partner's choice of
- Line 11. 'not bothering' + voicing what it feels like. Try?!

On returning to the counselling the client feels that it was wonderful to have such a long break (line 1) and has mixed feelings about returning (line 2) and some anxiety (line 3) as if she is aware of the work that is before her. Yet at the same time there seems to be a feeling of not being able to wait (line 3) for the return. She looks back on it as a good session (line 4) and seems to feel that she left feeling lighter (line 4) as if she has unburdened herself or is even excited about the forthcoming work. There is a feeling that she has a choice to try again differently (line 5) as if she wants to do the work differently this time. She seems to be expecting (line 6) more for herself rather than of herself and these expectations (line 9) appear to be hers as opposed perhaps to those of others. There is also a sense that she will give attention to others (line 7) but this will

be what is possible (line 7) rather than too much and tiring herself out. She also appears to be trying to respect her partners differences (lines 10,11) while at the same time voicing (line 11) what it feels like to do this. She ends with the exclamation of 'Try?!' (line 11) as if she is exhorting herself to carry this through and really be different.

Construct: towards containment - freedom

Wanting more for herself seems to suggest movement to contain what belongs to her, to be an individual with her own thoughts and feelings. The energy felt in this entry implies a sense of power, of more control as if she is taking hold of the freedom to be herself and even risking letting her partner be himself and different from her.

Week 22.

- Line 1. Feeling disappointed with self
- Line 2. stuck + expecting to feel better.
- Line 3. Removing myself from situations
- Line 4. making others responsible for own mess.
- Line 5. Not allowing self to be dragged in
- Line 6. - do it differently + not explain how or why.
- Line 7. Keep asking as 'just in case'
- Line 8. stop asking + see what happens.
- Line 9. leave the load, relieve stuckness.
- Line 10. Accepting + respecting the others
- Line 11. paralysing fear.

The client seems to return to the counselling feeling disappointed with her self (line 1) and appears to feel that she is stuck (line 2) when she was expecting to feel better (line 2). It seems that she has been taking herself away from situations (line 3) with others that before she would have taken responsibility for. She appears to be trying to let others take responsibility for what she terms their own mess (line 4). Now she seems to be trying to stop herself being dragged into (line 5) these situations. She wants to do it differently (line 6) as if she is making an effort to change the way she reacts. And at the same time she does not want to explain how or why (line

6) she is changing, as if she is expecting a reaction from others. But this appears hard to do as she writes that she 'keeps asking' (line 7) as if she still has to check out what is going on for others or in her words 'just in case' (line 7). But just in case of what, just in case they need her, or just in case it is her responsibility to get drawn in. It feels very hard for her to let go of her way of being. She then appears to exhort herself to stop asking and see what happens (line 8) as if seeing what happens may help her to see the possibility of different outcomes. She then exhorts herself again to leave the load (line 9) as if she is wanting to leave all the responsibility that she takes on behind her. She also seems to feel that this might relieve the stuckness (line 9) she described at the start of the entry. She seems to feel that she is accepting and respecting others (line 10) as if this is something that she is in the process of doing already but it feels new for she follows it with paralysing fear (line 11) as if actually doing this is so terrifying that she is paralysed, stuck, by the enormity of such change. Perhaps letting others take responsibility for their own actions is paralysing to her for she loses the role she knows.

Construct: uncontained - unfree

This is an interesting entry for although the client comments on how she is changing she also seems very aware that part of her is stuck, paralysed. Yet perhaps the experience of this fixed point of no movement enables her to view the changes that she is attempting to make and her responses to those changes. It is as if, by being unfree or stuck that she is giving herself the freedom to see for herself.

Week 23.

- Line 1. How I do things just in case
- Line 2. in order to achieve satisfactory
- Line 3. ending. Does not happen.
- Line 4. Inconsistency
- Line 5. Ability to allow self to be
- Line 6. fooled 'next time the outcome
- Line 7. may be different'.
- Line 8. Good session felt awful at

Line 9. beginning, good + manageable

Line 10. at end !

It seems that she asks (previous week) and does things just in case (line 1) in order to achieve the outcomes that are satisfactory (line 2) to her. So perhaps not only does she take responsibility from others but maybe she is also quite controlling of them. But it seems she is realizing that even when she tries to control situations, the outcomes do not happen (line 3) as she intends. It appears she feels the inconsistency (line 4) of this as if she wakes up to the possibility that she fools (line 6) herself. She appears to tell herself that the outcome will be different next time (lines 6,7) and this is how she fools herself. Although the session she is recalling felt awful at the beginning (lines 8,9) she is able to see that it was a good session (line 8), perhaps because she has realized how she fools herself.. Maybe the session felt good and manageable at the end (lines 9,10) because she was being real with herself and no longer fooling herself. Perhaps she has even been taking responsibility from the counsellor during sessions and in this one she was able to listen and take in what was happening between them.

Construct: towards containment - freedom

There feels to be a strong shift towards containment - freedom as the client appears to view her own defended overcontainment which has previously held her internal world in a prison of other people's thoughts and feelings that have invaded her since childhood. She appears to see how her system of doing things 'just in case' does not work. The stuckness or uncontained - unfree state of the previous entry seems to have enabled her to view herself more clearly.

Week 24.

Line 1. Co. was good. I left feeling 'lighter',

Line 2. 'taller' + 'empowered to do anything

Line 3. well enough'.

Line 4. * I am good - is something I need to

Line 5. remind myself about.

Line 6. * Listen to my feelings. Be aware of

- Line 7. the mind work I do, as it often
Line 8. blocks what the feelings are speaking
Line 9. to me.
Line 10. I am really lucky.

This entry feels quite different as if the client is aware of a shift within herself. She perceives the counsellor as good (line 1) which feels new and she left the session feeling 'lighter' (line 1). She emphasises this by the inverted comas as she does 'taller' (line 2) and the whole phrase about feeling empowered to do anything well enough (lines 2,3). The taller may imply that she has grown as if internally she can stand tall and feel the power of her own sense of self which has not felt so present before. She goes on to star two statements (line 4,6) as if she is using this new found taller self to encourage herself. She also uses the first person, 'I' five times in this short entry which is the most she has used it in one entry through the whole journal, which again makes her feel very present. The first starred phrase tells her that she is good (line 4) as if she needs to remind (line 5) herself about how she is internally, and suggests that she struggles to internalise a sense of self that is fundamentally good. But perhaps because the counsellor is now perceived as good (line 1), she is beginning to take in some of that goodness for herself. The second starred statement appears to exhort her to listen to her feelings (line 6) as if her feeling self has previously been blocked (line 8) by her intellectual self. Yet now she recognizes that her feelings have a voice for they speak (line 8) to her which suggests that more of herself is now accessible. She ends with another realization that she is really lucky (line 10) as if this is new in that she may have known this before but never been able to feel it.

Construct: desire for containment - freedom

The counsellor is perceived as good and the client wants to see herself as good. There seems to be a real desire for a likeness between them which suggest the client's desire for containment. There is also a strong sense of energy and power as if she wants the freedom to feel taller and lighter rather than being blocked by intellectualising. It feels as if she desires her own feelings for they are part of her and can talk to her.

Week 25.

- Line 1. Change:- A mutually agreed
Line 2. + progressive change, bringing about
Line 3. personal growth for myself.
Line 4. Otherwise, change ie separation,
Line 5. new beginnings.
Line 6. Change of my view of myself.
Line 7. Doing things differently + being
Line 8. powerful rather than remaining
Line 9. powerless, emotionally cripples
Line 10. + unmotivated.

She seems to infer by the way she starts this entry that it is all about ‘change:-’ (line 1) and she appears to attempt to demonstrate this through the rest of the entry. She describes it as a mutually agreed (line 2) change as if different parts of herself are in communication. Of course she may also be referring to the counsellor as if this was discussed between them but in the context of her inner world she is perhaps beginning to be aware of more aspects of herself. She also sees the change as progressive (line 2) and about personal growth (line 3) so she perhaps defines it as being internal by referring to ‘myself’ (line 3) in this way. She goes on to suggest that the change has to do with separation (line 4) as if she is aware that she is becoming more of an individual who can be separate as opposed to being merged or too close to others. This also seems to herald ‘new beginnings’ (line 5) so perhaps she is also aware of the possibilities that being separate presents her with as this may enable relationships to change and develop. She appears to have a different view of herself (line 6) as if she is looking at herself from a new standpoint. She seems to feel that she is doing things differently (line 7) which enables her to be powerful (line 8) as opposed to being powerless (line 9). And perhaps seeing how she used to be powerless also helps her to see that she has been emotionally crippled and unmotivated (line 10). Yet the tone of this entry is in opposition to what is written for it feels almost dead as if she may be intellectualising, using her mind to block her feelings (week 24; lines 7,8). The words ‘emotionally cripples’ are also in the present tense which may suggest that this is how she is in the moment of writing.

Construct: overcontained - overfree

Although the content of this entry is positive the tone feels dead or unalive so it seems possible that the client has slipped into a compliant state where she is trying to please others by saying, thinking or writing what she imagines others want to hear. It feels as if she wants the reader and herself to see this progress in the words while her feeling self may be detached.

Week 26.

- Line 1. Feeling awful.
- Line 2. Low. Grieving. Pain. Anger
- Line 3. Isolation, Alone, Abandonment
- Line 4. Rape, let down, fragmented,
- Line 5. Frustration, Stuck!!!
- Line 6. The stuckness, pain + anger
- Line 7. are most worrying.
- Line 8. Perhaps finally he will get a job +
- Line 9. stop invading my space 100%
- Line 10. night and day.
- Line 11. left feeling validated, valuable + Okish

She starts by feeling awful (line 1) as if she is full of things that upset her. Lines two, three and four seem to be the experiences that are making her feel awful as if she is suddenly more aware of everything that has happened to her. (Perhaps this is what ‘emotionally cripples’ her in the previous week.) The feeling in these lines seems enormous and she follows this with another feeling, ‘frustration’ (line 5) as if there is just too much to feel and she does not know how to do it all so she is stuck (line 5). But perhaps she is also stuck because she is ‘fragmented’ (line 4) and unable to bring together all these aspects of herself. She seems to run away from all this in line eight as she moves to writing about her husband still not having a job and invading her space (line 9) by being around all the time. But maybe his invasion of her space takes her back to a place in the past where she is powerless and cannot move. In this way it does fit with the rest of the entry for with him around so much of the time perhaps it is hard for her to feel separate and find an internal space where she can work on herself. Although this feels like a difficult session

she ends the entry saying that she felt validated, valuable and okay as if she felt heard by the counsellor. And perhaps more importantly she was also able to hear herself.

Construct: towards containment - freedom

Although the client seems to feel stuck she actually appears to be full of her own feelings. Compared to the previous unemotional entry this one is full of feelings as if she is re-experiencing the feelings of abandonment and rape that have imprisoned her feeling self for so long. She appears to feel validated and perhaps she is beginning to validate her own feelings rather than only relying on the counsellor to do this. She also feels isolated and alone which suggests a shift towards freedom in that such separateness / difference from others may feel too awful to contemplate.

Week 27.

- Line 1. I felt better.
- Line 2. Greater understanding of the
- Line 3. 'Bereavement process' I had
- Line 4. been experiencing in my life.
- Line 5. Less emotions + pain, more
- Line 6. of an observers perspective
- Line 7. + so understanding.
- Line 8. Felt very good on leaving.
- Line 9. Returning to normality?!?
- Line 10. Some uncertainty + excitement feelings.

The client seems to feel better (line 1) following the difficulties of the previous week. She appears to have gained an understanding (line 2) of the bereavement process (line 3) in relation to her life experience (line 4). She seems aware of being able to stand outside herself from a more objective perspective (line 6) as if feeling the emotions the previous week has enabled her to do this. She seems to feel very good on leaving (line 8) the session and with question marks and an exclamation she seems to wonder is she is returning to what she terms normality. Perhaps she is finding more of her self and recognising this self which makes her feel, in her terminology,

more normal. She is also aware of some uncertainty alongside feelings of excitement which seems to confirm this sense of her being more in touch with herself.

Construct: towards containment - freedom

As the client lets go of her defended overcontainment she is able to see herself from a more objective place stance. Here she understands what she terms as the bereavement process that she has experienced through her life, as if she is making sense for and of herself. The excitement she feels suggest her shift towards freedom as she owns her own experience while her uncertainty appears to show that she is willing to step into an unknown future.

Week 28.

- Line 1. Tired, exhausted, virus.
- Line 2. Irritable bowel playing up,
- Line 3. tension + stress → shoulder, neck
- Line 4. pain.
- Line 5. Feel want to be left alone to
- Line 6. do nothing.
- Line 7. Husband back to work - feelings of
- Line 8. abandonment (after 8 months)
- Line 9. Rejection - new job “I’m not important”
- Line 10. Tired, Self-doubt. Not Good.
- Line 11. Good Session felt valued + HEARD!

In this entry she returns to a place where she feels ill (lines 1,2) and is aware of stress and tension which appear to lead to shoulder and neck pain (lines 3,4). On the one hand she wants to be left alone to do nothing (lines 5,6) so perhaps she does not even want to work with the counsellor. Yet on the other hand she feels abandoned by her husband who has a new job. Yet only a few weeks previously she felt him to be intruding into her space but now he is back to work she feels abandoned. She seems to have lost her sense of being important as if she has also lost her sense of being separate. The situation seems to have taken her back to a place where she felt abandoned, perhaps in childhood, and she appears to have retreated into illness (lines 1,2). And

in this place she also seems to be full of self doubt (line 10) as if she cannot hold onto the previous learning. Yet she does seem to hold onto something for she summarises the session as good and feels valued and heard by the counsellor. The heard is in higher case letters as if she really wants this to be seen by the reader and perhaps by herself. Perhaps one of the most poignant feelings of childhood is that she was never heard so to be heard in the present enables her to gain a sense of herself.

Construct: desire for containment - freedom

The importance given to being heard by the counsellor suggests this category, for it seems that in being heard by another she can hear herself. The wish to be left alone perhaps implies her desire for freedom, in that part of her may be irritated about having to do the work and experience all the feelings she lists at the beginning of the entry. The sense of abandonment may also be related to feeling the enormity of beginning to feel separate from others.

Week 29.

- Line 1. Taking projections as in own tiredness,
- Line 2. confusion - more open to.
- Line 3. Testing and understanding self.
- Line 4. Right to live - be, feel, do.
- Line 5. Feelings of confusion. Stuck -
- Line 6. go to brain + analyse feelings.
- Line 7. Belief in self V sabotage +
- Line 8. drivers from past / negative
- Line 9. messages of reinforced 'being a failure'.
- Line 10. Good session. Pain in chest from
- Line 11. pull of 2 'polarities'.

This last entry feels quite different to all the others in that the client appears to be making this an ending of the journal keeping and summarizing where she is within herself. She appears to be saying that she takes in projections from others (line 1) and gives the example of tiredness as if her tiredness is not really hers. She follows this by feeling that she is more open to the confusion

(line 2) within her, as if realizing that being full of projections from others makes her internal world confusing as it may be difficult to tell what belongs to her and what belongs to the other. She seems to be testing (line 3) what is hers and coming to feel that she has more understanding of herself (line 3). She appears to have gained a sense of having a right to live, be, feel and do as if this has been difficult previously. But she follows this with feelings of confusion (line 5) again as if these rights are hard to hold on to. Then she seems to say that when she is stuck she escapes from her feeling self and escapes to her brain where she analyses feelings (line 6) perhaps rather than experiencing them. She appears to feel that there is a battle within her internal world between her newfound belief in herself (line 7) and the negative drivers (line 8) from the past. This form of sabotage (line 7) against her new self is reinforced by messages of being a failure (line 9). It feels as if she is much more aware of the different selves within her for example the selves who feel that she has a right to be and feel and those who deliver negative messages from the past. She seems to feel that this was a good session even though she felt some pain in her chest (line 10) from the battle between these different aspects of herself . She names this as the pull of two polarities (line 11) as if she is, and perhaps has been aware of the theme of the study.

Construct: towards containment - freedom

The client seems to make a firm decision that this is her last entry in that it appears to be a summary. But it is a summary that appears to acknowledge confusion as part of her life as she seems to make sense of why she is like she is. It is as if she is waking up to herself and beginning to contain what belongs to her. In ending and summarizing she also appears to desire freedom, freedom from keeping the journal, freedom to feel the pull of confusion in her, and the freedom to make such choices for herself. It is as if she is beginning to know or feel who she is and no longer has to ask 'who am I?'. She is no longer a frozen child (week 2;line 6) but someone who feels. The cut off parts of herself, that have been disconnected (week 6) are regaining their connection and not only have a voice but can also be felt.

APPENDIX 14 Questions for participants on the analysis

There may seem to be a lot of questions asking you for various responses to reading the analysis of your journal. However these are a guide. Some may not apply, while you may want to make comments on something that I have not thought of, which I would like you to do.

If you wish to keep a copy of the analysis another script will be provided if you make notes on this copy.

Please write any thoughts as you read the analysis, either on the script or separately if you prefer.

Tell me about the experience of reading the analysis of your journal.

Do the constructs, at the end of each week's entry and analysis 'fit' with your experience of your process during counselling? Tell me about how it feels - whether you feel a fit or even if you don't

Was there a particular journal entry where you were aware of feeling a good fit between the construct and the journal entry and/or yourself at the time of writing. Please note the example and comment on it. Has hindsight changed this perception in any way.?

Was there a particular journal entry where you were aware of a construct that did not seem to fit at all at the time of writing? Please note the example and comment on it. Has hindsight changed this perception in any way?

How does it feel in your opinion when I have interpreted a journal entry incorrectly in that it doesn't feel as if it fits you at the time? Do the same for when you feel I have interpreted correctly.

What, about taking part in this process has been most helpful - least helpful?

Would you explain, write about, the impact of taking part in this research.

Do you feel that the notion of containment-freedom, as a polarity or containment and freedom as separate constructs have stayed with you in any way.?

As you look back now, are you able to comment on the way you were asked to write the journal - a short phrase on each line. What impact, if any, do you feel this had on when you were writing the journal?

Is there anything else that you would like to add or comment on?

APPENDIX 15

EXTRACTS FROM THE DATA AND ANALYSIS

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