

**THE APPLICATION OF ATTACHMENT
THEORY TO A PSYCHOTHERAPY CASE**

by

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to illustrate the psychotherapeutic use of Attachment Theory. Attachment Theory is an interpersonal theory which refers to the way an individual internalises an emotional-cognitive model of his relationships with his various attachment figures. These models of ways of relating are reflected in the way an individual speaks. The methodology of the study entailed conducting the semi-structured Adult Attachment Interview to elicit a psychotherapy client's narrative about his attachment relationships. A discourse analysis technique was then conducted to analyse the client's mode of speaking. In the context of the psychotherapy relationship the client showed a capacity for greater integration of previously dissociated thoughts and was able to gain some emotional relief in talking about his attachment relationships. Furthermore, Attachment Theory with its sensitivity to discourse can be seen to provide a useful framework for therapeutic practise.

OPSOMMING

Die doel van hierdie studie is om die psigoterapeutiese gebruik van Gehegtheidsteorie te illustreer. Gehegtheidsteorie is 'n interpersoonlike teorie wat verwys na die wyse waarop 'n individu 'n emosioneel-kognitiewe model van sy verhoudings met sy verskeie gehegheidsfigure internaliseer. Hierdie modelle van verhoudings word weerspieël in die wyse waarop 'n individu praat. Die metodologie van die studie het die voer van 'n semi-gestruktureerde onderhoud, naamlik die "Adult Attachment Interview", behels. Hierdie onderhoud het ten doel gehad om 'n psigoterapiekliënt se narratief oor sy gehegheidsverhoudings te ontlok. 'n Tegniek van diskoersanalise is daarna uitgevoer om die klient se wyse van praat te analiseer. Die klient het binne die konteks van die psigoterapieverhouding 'n kapasiteit getoon vir groter integrasie van voorheen gedissosieerde gedagtes en was in staat om 'n mate van emosionele verligting te ervaar deur te praat oor sy gehegheidsverhoudings. As gevolg van die sensitiwiteit van Gehegtheidsteorie vir diskoers, kan dit beskou word as a bruikbare raamwerk om toe te pas in terapie.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

In this study I explore how discourse analysis techniques can be used as a clinical tool in psychotherapy. The theoretical traditions on which I have drawn are Bowlby's (1988) Attachment Theory as well as the psychoanalytic and cognitive schools of thought as represented by Bion (1967) and Vygotsky (1962) respectively. The two diverse traditions of cognitive and psychoanalytic thinking have been integrated within Attachment Theory which focuses on the cognitive and emotional parts of the mind. Both theoretical traditions identify that a child's cognitive-emotional development is influenced by the nature of the relationships he* experiences. As parental relationships are a powerful influence in development, our attachment relationships play a significant role in the way we learn to use our minds. Our sense of internal coherence can be attributed to experiences of having meaning made of our states of mind and of others' behaviour. A premise of Attachment Theory is that our internalised attachment relationships form the structure for the organisation of our thoughts. Attachment Theory has identified that spoken speech reflects an individual's sense of self as being relatively integrated or fragmented. Thus language or rather dialogue has been found to be a key to accessing the structure of our internalised relationships.

A similar observation made from the field of linguistics, by Potter and Wetherall (1995) is that one of the aims of discourse analysis is to show how discourse is constructed to perform social actions. They assert that the way we speak and use language comprises "a speech act" (p. 81).

* The male pronoun has been used because the case study is based on a male client

The particular focus of the application of discourse analysis techniques within Attachment Theory is to explore how our speech actions reflect our internal constructions or models of relationships. In other words, discourse analysis can show how the way we speak both serves to represent and also facilitates our closeness or distance to others.

In the context of psychotherapy Attachment Theory can provide a framework for understanding the client's state of mind through observing the types of discourse used at various times. The Adult Attachment Interview shares some similarities with psychotherapy in that both entail listening to the speaker's discourse in the presentation of his narrative. One of the main concepts of Attachment Theory and of this study is to explore the relative levels of coherence of an individual's narrative. By being alert to jumps or entanglements of the client's narrative the psychotherapist may be in a better position to understand the possible meaning of these jumbled aspects of the discourse through discussion with the client. Thus Attachment Theory provides a clinical tool in the context of psychotherapy for exploring a client's discourse patterns that highlight the client's strategies for coping with his painful and sometimes unthinkable thoughts.

The aim of this study is to describe and elucidate the discourse patterns that arose in the audio-taped Adult Attachment Interview with a psychotherapy client. The Adult Attachment Interview elicits the interviewee's thoughts and feelings about his significant attachment relationships. I shall discuss how the interview process was useful in highlighting many of the client's difficulties in his relationships that had already been a focus of the therapeutic work. In the interview I conducted with the client, his discourse mirrors his various thoughts and feelings about his parents whilst he describes his relationship with them. His feelings about his parents appear to be complex and he reports that they had been physically and emotionally abusive towards him.

A central theme in Attachment Theory is how trauma may limit what Fonagy, Steele, Steele, Leigh, Kennedy, Mattoon, and Target (1995) refer to as a child's "mentalising" capacity which refers to a capacity to think about thinking. Parental abuse and rejection may result in conditions like Post-Traumatic Stress in which the child's sense of being unsafe inhibits both thinking and perception. As seen in the interview conducted in this case study, a child may develop various strategies to maintain a degree of safety in being dependent upon abusive parents. The effects of an insecure attachment on thinking comprises a significant aspect of Attachment Theory.

Main (1995), an Attachment Theorist outlines that metacognitive thinking skills are acquired in relationships that are secure in that the child has access to the parent's explanations and hence labelling and "organisation" of reality. According to the theory the child internalises the parent's mode of relating in the form of a cognitive-emotional intrapsychic model. Fonagy et al. (1995) note that for traumatised children the attachment figures are internalised as frightening uncontrollable intrapsychic entities. Thus the role of psychotherapy can be valuable in helping the client to think through these disorganising and frightening experiences to allow for the development of new models of relationships. The theory outlines how these internalised models of relationships are the way we filter reality. Based on these filters we tend to construct reality to fit our preconceived ideas. Our internal models of relationships are similar to the stories we construct in order to make meaning of our experiences and upon which our future actions are based. It is the meaning we attribute to our experiences which is identified as a significant aspect of reflective thinking. As Ammaniti states from an Attachment Theory perspective that "a decisive point is not so much the fact that the childhood history be positive or negative as the way it has been mentally elaborated" and adds that "what counts is coming to terms with one's own parents" (1994, p. 81). Thus Attachment Theory points to how we have internalised both desirable and unwanted facets of our

parents. The ability to integrate these various parental voices within us reflects an acceptance or acknowledgement of the different parts of ourselves.

Based on the Attachment Theory literature and in particular research by Liotti (1995), dissociated and borderline patients portray their attachment figures as frightened or frightening. The hypothesis of this study on attachment and psychotherapy is that individuals who have had experiences of trauma in childhood in their primary relationships will have dysregulations of attention that are similar to patterns of attention deficit disorder and mild dissociative thinking. In this study I elaborate upon the type of dysregulations in the client's thinking and feeling that include both avoidant, enmeshed modes of speech, as well as the more integrated aspects of the client's discourse during the interview. In addition I describe *the process of the client's strategies to overcome distancing and trace the emergence of a new repertoire of ways of relating and thinking.*

The pertinent question of how a client's sometimes limiting constructions of reality can be altered through the process of psychotherapy is addressed by Attachment Theory. Psychotherapy can offer a context in which the client can begin to think about and so shift away from the internalised models and constructions previously used for understanding experiences and so therapy allows for a new construction of meaning. I outline how the client I interviewed achieved changes in his internal models through his metacognitive reflections about his past experiences as well as through the safety offered by the therapy as a context in which to think about his otherwise dissociated experiences.

If a traumatised individual has an information processing style in which the acquisition, integration and evaluation of information occur in a skewed manner, then the therapeutic relationship can allow for a detailed focus on the client's ideas about the therapist's attitude towards him through looking at the transference. According to Fonagy et al. (1995)

the therapeutic relationship enables the client to attempt to create a mental representation of both the self and of the therapist as thinking and feeling. The client's responses within the therapeutic relationship are seen to be a significant indication of the client's behaviour and attitude in his intimate relationships.

Eagle comments that our lives are "a function of balancing relatedness and autonomy" at various developmental stages (1995, p. 124). Thus issues of intimacy and finding a comfortable distance or closeness to others is a continual aspect of relating. Our sense of being connected or disconnected to others appears to stem from our childhood experiences of how we were responded to especially in times of need and may be associated with what our caregiver's sense of a safe or dangerous distance for a relationship may have been.

PERSONAL MOTIVATION FOR WRITING ON THE TOPIC OF ATTACHMENT ISSUE

My interest and motivation to conduct research in the area of Attachment Theory is primarily because it is an issue close to my heart. Attachment Theory is very pertinent to my understanding of my relationships and subsequently this has informed the way I work as a therapist. I draw on both Object Relations and Systems Theory in my clinical work and have found Attachment Theory principles to be an useful adjunct to these theories.

My interest in Attachment Theory began as an undergraduate student where I first encountered Bowlby's (1988) work on attachment and separation and Harlow's (1979) experiments with surrogate mothers for baby monkeys. I was deeply moved and excited that there was an area of psychology that explored such issues. It was as if this was a part of my experience that had not previously been described or put into words. My strong interest in Attachment Theory has lived on and was further strengthened from my training in observational studies at the Tavistock

Clinic. Another contribution to understanding Attachment Theory occurred through being trained in the discourse analysis techniques of the Adult Attachment Interview. Furthermore, through my current clinical work I have found that having an “ear” for client’s attachment styles has been a useful clinical aid.

In terms of choosing an area of research to explore I have been particularly interested in the issue of mild dissociations. I found that the discourse analysis techniques within Attachment Theory addressed this subtle yet profound phenomenon. I am intrigued by responses in myself and in others such as forgetting names or having mild word finding difficulties or jumping from thought to thought in a disconnected way. I think that the anxiety that is evoked in relationships interferes with the ability to make the necessary connections to access these words or smooth links between bits of information. It has been useful for me to understand that disconnections are both internal and external and that individuals may have had difficult attachment experiences that have led to internal ruptures in thinking and feeling.

The capacity for intimacy and for maintaining long-term relationships are often seen as a measure of some internal stability. Ideas of relatedness are found in an attachment framework and so this type of analysis appears to be immensely useful and wide ranging in its application. The application of the theory in psychotherapy highlights being able to think and feel more fully in relation to someone else. It includes an emphasis on the validity to feel emotions and be able to put words to one’s experiences and “lived reality” (White & Epston, 1990). The value Attachment Theory provided for me is to understand that being able to speak without getting lost in either a sea of words or emotions reflects a secure state of mind. Attachment Theory also indicated to me how someone may abstain from speaking because there is an anxiety of evoking upsetting feelings in the speaker or in others.

The capacity to have “a voice” and convey my understanding of Attachment Theory became a part of my “lived reality” in the process of formulating my thoughts whilst writing this dissertation. I felt challenged in being able to put words to my understanding of relationships. I identified with the difficulty of articulating my meanings and being able to use language as a vehicle of self expression that is described by various Attachment Theory authors (Siegel, 1996; Fonagy et al., 1995). I had written about the difficulty of expressing myself in my journal in which I recorded the process of writing the dissertation. The journal entry is as follows:

My experience is one of striving to put my thoughts together and organise and represent the material I've read. It's as though the theory and the practise came to life for me in a very difficult way. At times I've felt astounded by the enormity of the task and then I decided to get some thinking help and emotional support from my supervisor which gave me a greater sense of security of being on track. This has then allowed me to feel free to go ahead and say what my ideas were with greater conviction.

In addition, I drew on emotional support from people close to me which was important in being able to write about often emotionally distressing material such as children's responses to the trauma of separation. A part of the process of writing the dissertation which I found was ironic was that I chose a topic that is about relatedness and as I researched the literature and wrote up the thesis I found myself “attached” to my computer and in virtual isolation.

A strong motive for writing on Attachment Theory was that I wanted to research an area that is relevant to the practise of psychotherapy. The work of many psychotherapists entails the careful listening to clients talking about their experiences. The act of listening is the complementary part of the treatment to what Freud called the “talking cure” (1991, p.83).

Generally listening to speech is the *modus operandi* of many psychotherapists although some therapists utilise other forms of expression such as art therapy and even then language usually plays some role. Thus the Attachment Theory framework can provide greater meaning to psychotherapists in their understanding of speech patterns by thinking in terms of the attachment categories that shall be described.

The value of Attachment Theory can be considered in relation to its limitations some of which I discuss below in relation to my own theoretical position. For instance some feminist writers have taken umbrage with Bowlby's theories and assert how it implies a criticism of women in their societal role as the primary caregivers.

FEMINIST CRITIQUE OF ATTACHMENT THEORY CONCEPTS

I present Bowlby's (1988) theories about attachment and the effects of "maternal deprivation" upon children and how these led to important social reforms regarding child care policies such as in orphanages and hospitals. I agree with the feminists such as Choderow (cited in Holmes, 1995) that in the current era Bowlby's (1988) concept of 'maternal deprivation' has been used in such a way as to leave mothers feeling oppressed by the concept. Yet misinterpretations regarding the meaning of maternal deprivation arose because commentators on Bowlby, implied that even minor separations of children from their mothers would cause irreparable harm. It was Winnicott (1960) who reassured mothers that such separations were not damaging with his concept of "good-enough mothering" (p. 145). Bowlby, in fact supported the rights of mothers to be able to work if they chose and stated that there was no evidence of children of working mothers suffering when they had good alternative care (Gomez, 1997). In addition despite my feminist inclinations, in my discussion of attachment relationships I will refer to mothers as the primary caregivers as this is still the predominant current social reality.

Another point of clarification regarding my theoretical position in terms of this study and Attachment Theory constructs is that I have not completely followed the empirical model that is associated with the type of research conducted in studies that have drawn on Attachment Theory. My objective has not been to classify the client's narrative based on the interview which I had conducted with him. In my view the empiricist basis of Attachment Theory is both its strength and its limitation. An empirical approach lends the theory its grounded concrete dimensions yet reliance on a seemingly objective model may to some extent be a tautological exercise, as is discussed below.

CRITIQUE OF EMPIRICISM

Bowlby's theories have been empirically demonstrated by Attachment Theorists such as Mary Ainsworth's (1995) observations of mother-child interactions which are presented in the next chapter. Empiricism can be a useful model to illustrate specific behaviour in an observable form. However, what is found from these observations may involve little more than a circular process of discovering what one sets out to see. As Keeney (1983) writes "We draw distinctions in order to observe and subsequently we draw distinctions in order to describe what we observe" (1983, p. 24). He cites Laing who suggests that "what in empirical science are called data, being in a real sense arbitrarily chosen by the nature of the hypothesis already formed, could more honestly be called *capta*" (p. 21). However, Keeney proposes it is necessary to draw distinctions as these provide an altered, expanded universe for subsequent investigation. Thus there is some value and validity in exploring the snapshots of behavioural and verbal interactions provided by the researcher's observations within Attachment Theory. Furthermore, there is a high inter rater agreement which does provide some basis for the validity of the observations made. This study includes the various contributions of Attachment Theory from the perspectives of both its research and clinical applications.

THE CONTENT OF THE CURRENT STUDY

Attachment Theory contains a growing area of thinking and research which originated with Bowlby (1998). The following chapters reflect some of the developments that have been made based on his formulations about our strong need for attachment in order to survive and how powerfully our attachment relationships influence our lives. Attachment can be seen to play a role in our expressions of ourselves through language and in the particular form our dialogues take. From a metaperspective Attachment Theory illustrates the choreography of our relationships. The various chapters address different aspects of the theory and its application.

Chapter two familiarises the reader with Bowlby's (1998) Attachment Theory that forms the theoretical background from which I have primarily drawn. I shall trace the evolution of Attachment Theory from its roots in Object Relations Theory and include the contributions of other interpersonal psychologists such as Vygotsky's (1962) cognitive psychology, and Bion's (1988) ideas of emotional containment.

In the third chapter I will describe the methodology of the study which is based on discourse analysis techniques which are particular to the Adult Attachment Interview. The Attachment Theorist, Mary Main and her colleagues (1992) developed the interview for exploring attachment relationships and created a form of discourse analysis to reflect various attachment patterns. In the fourth chapter I shall present the application of the Adult Attachment discourse analysis concepts to the interview which I conducted with the client. In the conclusion I shall discuss the ongoing process of psychotherapy in terms of the client's increased ability to think about his own thinking as this reflects changes in his internal world. I will present an evaluation of the Attachment Theory model as it has been applied in this study.

CHAPTER TWO

ATTACHMENT AND DETACHMENT

In this chapter I will discuss the constructs of attachment and disconnection within the parent-child relationship as described by Attachment Theorists. In particular I will focus on the cognitive-emotional aspect of the child's development that occurs in an intimate dyadic relationship. I refer to a range of interpersonal theorists who have described various aspects of the social processes that occur in the intersubjective space between parent and child. I will discuss the models provided by the following interpersonal theorists. This includes primarily Klein (1935) and Bion's (1988) psychoanalytic perspective, Vygotsky's (1962) cognitive psychology, as well as Bowlby's (1998) Attachment Theory. In addition to the dialogue provided by these different theoretical schools I will include the social constructionist perspective as represented by Anderson and Goolishian (1988) as well as other author's relevant contributions.

ATTACHMENT AND COGNITION

Crittenden (1995) comments that "Attachment figures are individuals who protect infants from harm and also provide the interpersonal context within which children learn to use their minds" (p. 401). Attachment Theory highlights both the emotional aspect of the parent-child relationship as well as the cognitive dimension. Emotions and thought are conceptualised as being interlinked. A child's ability to think in either more fluid or rigid ways is understood to be part of his experience of having had secure emotional containment. For the securely attached child, thoughts and feelings can both be accessed as sources of information without a tendency to generally exclude one or the other (Crittenden, 1995). If there were insecure attachments to a parental figure the child may be susceptible to dysregulations in thinking such as

dissociations. According to Holmes (1995) these jumps and breaks in thinking represent breaks in the emotional holding available to the child. Security of mind is identified in terms of coherence of both self and accordingly the narrative which one articulates about one's experiences. One aspect of the ability to think about one's experience and express this to others indicates an understanding of the listener's point of view through providing relevant explanations.

A central concept in Attachment Theory is the ability to take cognisance of another's perspective which incorporates what Main and Goldwyn (1992) refer to as "metacognitive thinking". This type of thinking about thinking is based on the individual recognising the symbolic quality of thought as being representative of reality and not necessarily reflecting a fixed reality. One example of metacognitive thinking is provided by Fonagy et al. who illustrate a pregnant woman's thoughts about her expectations of her unborn child. She states: "I want him to be happy with what he has. I would be content just if he was content but I know, once he is born, I will probably want him to be prime minister" (1995, p. 253). The speaker's attitude indicates her self awareness of her own thinking and recognition of her possibly unrealistic expectations of her child.

Metacognitive skills in thinking are identified as a significant developmental achievement in terms of Attachment Theory. According to the theory the ability to understand differing states of mind both in oneself and in others is an important part of making attributions and reading social situations that in turn influences one's behaviour. Attachment Theory focuses on the child's process of "learning to regulate mental and interpersonal functioning" (Crittenden, 1995, p. 367). In obtaining this type of metacognitive self-reflectiveness, thoughts and emotions can potentially be drawn upon as helpful guides in facilitating greater understanding. However, if thinking is not seen as a useful resource to problem solving or alleviating distress, then dissociative thinking

processes unconsciously operate to effectively derail thinking processes. These dissociative processes are described in further detail in terms of Bowlby's (1988) concept of "defensive exclusion".

The relationship between thinking and expressed language is complex, both at an intrapsychic and interpersonal level. Thoughts are often expressed in language which in turn has a social context, so that there is an interplay between thinking, language and society.

INTERSUBJECTIVE CONSCIOUSNESS AND DIFFERENT FORMS OF COMMUNICATION

In an interpersonal model of development, human relatedness is the medium through which we learn about the world. The interpersonal theorists propose that consciousness is fundamentally social and exists in between minds and is not located in the brain (Anderson & Goolishian, 1988). In particular social constructionist theory emphasises the role that language plays as a medium of expression and that words are linguistic signposts that represent a particular construction of reality (White & Epston, 1990). Other theorists take into account non-verbal forms of communication, for example the tactile form of physical demonstrativeness between parent and child (Siegel, 1996). In addition the psychoanalytic school identifies that non-verbal communication can also occur in a powerful way by means of projective identification (Cashdan, 1988). Alvarez (1992) humorously phrases this as the feeling you have with some individuals that your slip is showing.

The role of verbal communication is that it makes overt an individual's specific subjective meaning. Yet the paradox of expressing oneself in language is that language also carries socially constructed values. Social constructionism highlights how language contributes to the way meaning and understanding are socially and intersubjectively constructed (Anderson & Goolishian, 1988). Anderson and Goolishian comment on

the evolving nature of meaning as it is constantly changing and revised in dialogue. Hence social interactions can provide opportunities for further negotiations of meaning.

An analogy for the continual creation and modification of meaning between individuals is that each person brings a specific influence, which shapes the interaction that is similar to the contours provided by each bank of a river. Consciousness flows through and constitutes the space in between the individuals. This metaphor reflects both the fluidity of consciousness and the slippery quality of thought. From a developmental perspective the acquisition of the skills to begin making mental links and bridges between experiences and words is one that is learned in being with others.

The meaning of the phrase that the “interpersonal becomes the intrapsychic” refers specifically to the dialogic structure of thinking that is internalised from experiences of communicative interaction (Vygotsky, 1962). According to Vygotsky (1962) it is the internalised voice of the other that becomes an aid in thinking and a way of directing one’s behaviour. By having exposure to the thinking aspect of the mediating other, self regulation can be internalised as directives to the self take the form of a silent internal conversation. Thus self regulation is internalised through other regulation. There is a parallel process of the interpersonal becoming the intrapsychic within Attachment Theory. The child’s relationships to his parents are internalised as a model of thinking and relating. It is the cognitive-emotional nature of the relationship between parent and child which is internalised by the child. The interactional qualities of the parent-child relationship are considered to act as a mirror reflecting the child’s intrapsychic connection to the self as well as to others (Holmes, 1995). Thus experiences of disconnection and connection can be understood as occurring both within relationships as well as at an internal or intrapsychic level.

SIMILARITIES BETWEEN PROCESSES IN PARENTING AND PSYCHOTHERAPY

The relational model of development which is contained in Attachment Theory has profound implications for psychotherapy. The roles of parent and psychotherapist are similar in that both provide empathetic mirroring of the individual's experience (Kohut, 1977). The type of commentary and reflecting of the child's experiences are processes that generally occur in the ordinary course of parenting (Fonagy, 1995). What is termed as sensitive and attuned parenting involves an appreciation of the child's changing states of mind (Siegel, 1996). Siegel (1996) comments that the alignment of mental states that is established between parent and child, through the parent recognising the child's emotional state, fosters security of attachment. For the child having his own fluctuating states of mind recognised and then by extension gaining an understanding that other's minds are similarly variable at different times, is seen to be a critical ingredient in being able to develop a "theory of mind" and access social and interpersonal understanding. The ability to think about other's states of minds is also considered to be an important factor in developing a capacity for empathy.

Similar to the parent's mirroring role of reflecting the child's state of mind to the child in the context of psychotherapy, the therapist can be seen to do what Bion (1967) refers to as "containing" the client's emotionally overwhelming experiences. For some individuals the first step towards giving voice to their experience is to be aware of their feelings in order to represent these symbolically through language. Children who have been maltreated or who have insecure attachments have been found to have greater difficulty in putting words to their experiences (Fonagy et al., 1997). Similarly thoughts that were too painful or unacceptable to the caregiver may not have been acknowledged, and in turn may then be pushed out of mind by the child. This can lead to a dissociative quality in the child's thinking.

In terms of Attachment Theory, different attachment patterns outline different states of mind and modes of thinking. For the psychotherapist, Attachment Theory may provide some conceptual tools that are helpful in alerting the psychotherapist to the relative ease or difficulty for the client in voicing his narrative. The client's process of expressing his narrative reflects his current state of mind as well as previous interpersonal and attachment experiences. An interpersonal theory such as Sullivan's model (cited in Chrzanowski, 1982) of psychotherapy outlines that the psychotherapist's role can include an exploration of the client's experience of the relationship in the "here and now" of the therapy session. It is through negotiation and the clarification of meaning that a shared intersubjective reality can be established. In this way the therapy allows for a co-construction of meaning through the dialogue between the psychotherapist and client. In the context of psychotherapy, Attachment Theory provides an interpersonal framework for exploring the client's way of thinking and so allows for an opportunity in which the client is able to think about his own thinking.

Social constructionism steps beyond the Attachment Theory level of metacognitive analysis to a metatheoretical level which places a larger frame around the nature of the interaction. The lens which social constructionism provides is sensitive to the implications of socially constructed ways of thinking about "reality" that are contained in language itself. The concept of metacognitive thinking is similar to the social constructionist view of language in that meaning is constructed and is not fixed or absolute. Since social constructionism posits that language is not a definitive reflection of reality, the presence of many voices in a system can provide different points of views (Anderson & Goolishian, 1988). Attachment Theory can be viewed as one voice and contribution among other constructs towards understanding human relatedness.

To begin, I will introduce the 'life and death' nature of attachment by exploring how attachment to others may be fundamental for a baby to thrive.

WHAT ARE THE EFFECTS ON A CHILD OF SEPARATION FROM A PARENT?

According to Bowlby (1998) a baby's survival depends upon more than physical nurturance. He observed that children in nurseries during World War Two, who mourned the loss of their parents, became self destructive as well as aggressive in the mourning of their attachment figures (Bowlby, 1994). He coined the term "maternal deprivation" to reflect the physical and emotional neglect of such children. He drew attention to the plight of children when they were placed in institutions where they did not have the care of a consistent alternative attachment figure. Bowlby's research work on the devastating effect of separation and loss for children led to changes in child care policy. An understanding arose that children placed in orphanages develop strong attachments to their caregivers and accordingly staff policies changed. For example staff were not rotated randomly to attend to different children on their shifts so that the child's attachment needs could be met to a greater extent, through having access to the same caregiver. Bowlby also advocated that parents be allowed into hospitals with their sick children and lobbied for financial support to be provided for mothers of young children to prevent children being taken into care.

ESTABLISHING CLOSENESS AND DISTANCE

Bowlby (1998) highlighted how issues of loss and abandonment have a critical impact upon a child's development. The question of what constitutes healthy or advantageous forms of emotional intimacy and distance between mother and child is extremely broad in that there are so many contingencies to take into account. For a parent finding the

balance in establishing closeness and distance at various times and at appropriate developmental phases may be part of learning to relate to the needs of the child at different times. For instance, recognition of the infants' needs may entail allowing for periods of rest and quiet alternating with times of playful or active interaction.

The studies by child development researchers of the reciprocal interactions between mother and child seem to suggest that interactional contact is rhythmic and cyclic, that the ups are as important and mutually sought after as the downs, and that alerting and arousing functions are as significant as soothing ones. Alvarez (1992) is sensitive to the type of words used to describe mother-child interaction which interpersonal developmental theorists have used. The ebbs and flows of parent-child interactions are characterised as having "intensity curves; to a sort of a wave function; to contouring; to rhythm; to periods of intensity followed by retreat; to peaceful withdrawal and isolation" (p. 61). Thus it seems that for babies there may be an optimal balance of having experiences of intense connection as well as the baby having some quieter time without feeling abandoned or neglected. In terms of individual's responses to loss, Freud's contributions are discussed.

Much attention has been given in the psychoanalytic literature to feelings of loss and separation since Freud's essay on Mourning and Melancholia. He notes the similarities between depression and mourning and sees depression as an expression of emotional pain regarding a loss of affection such as "being slighted, neglected or disappointed" (1964, p. 260). He describes how ambivalent feelings may manifest in someone who feels depressed and he relates this to the melancholic having feelings of love for the loved (object) person that are offset by destructive feelings of hate for being abandoned or neglected. The psychoanalytic perspective of depression is that the individual's task is to reconcile having feelings of love and hate for the same person. For Freud the work of mourning entails experiencing the pain of loss and the confusion of

having ambivalent swings of feelings towards the loved person. Ultimately the mourning process is important as it allows the ego to become free again to form another attachment. He discusses the powerful pull to continue to cling to the loved person and how piecemeal and slow the process of detachment is.

In contrast Alvarez (1992) seeks to counterbalance Freud's focus on the destructive aspects of ambivalence in forming intimate relationships. She asserts how some individuals seek to bridge gaps and form attachments when these forms of relating are still latent and budding capacities. She writes that she has looked for a word or concept that might stand opposite Freud's theory of the work of mourning and carry the same weight and dignity. Words such as rejoice, celebrate and give thanks do not convey the lengthiness and slowness of the process - that she thinks is akin to mourning in its slowness. She identifies that the birth and development of hope in a child (I would add or adult) who may have been clinically depressed all his life is also piecemeal and staggered. She states that the nearest she can get to is something like "the work of regeneration" or the "slow momentous discovery that his shrivelled heart can contain greenness" (p. 173).

Alvarez reformulates some aspects of Kleinian psychoanalytic theory and proposes that the child's desire for intimacy with a good object is seen as a step in emotional development that exists before ambivalent feelings arise. Her position is similar to Bowlby's in that they are both less exclusively concerned with the destructive aspects of the psyche. They interpret what may be typically thought of as dysfunctional ways of relating as attempts towards establishing healthier ways of being. For instance Alvarez (1992) asserts that an enmeshed way of relating to another person can be seen as an unskilled attempt to engage the other in a rather clinging, entangled fashion and is not seen as primarily destructive in intent. Issues of formulating what is human intentionality have important implications for psychotherapists' practise based on their

theoretical orientations. Bowlby's focus on the healthier aspects of the individual can be seen as being a significant contribution in terms of moving away from some of the classical psychoanalytic views of the destructive impulses of individuals responses to mourning and loss.

The evolution of Bowlby's ideas regarding attachment between mother and child and responses to loss have their roots in his origins as an object relations theorist.

BOWLBY'S THEORETICAL POSITION

Bowlby states (1998) that his initial frame of reference was previously and remained in many respects that of psychoanalysis. He was interested in psychoanalysis as a school of thought which was giving systematic attention to central concepts such as "affectional bonds, separation anxiety, grief and mourning, unconscious mental processes, defence, trauma and sensitive periods in early life" (p. 7). Bowlby had his theoretical origins as a Kleinian and underwent analysis with a Kleinian, Joan Riviere. However, he was opposed to the dogmatism and cultism of the psychoanalytic world and supported open scientific debate and inquiry. He also felt that psychoanalysis had "sequestered itself from contemporary science and clung needlessly to an ossified metapsychology and arcane vocabulary" (Holmes, 1995, p. 23).

Bowlby's (1998) aim was to scientificise and empirically demonstrate the psychoanalytic ideas about responses to loss and separation. He disagreed with the basis of psychoanalytic knowledge as many of the assumptions contained in the theory are drawn from speculations from clinical work. Frosh (1988) discusses that these clinical conclusions are hypotheses and as such are unreliable but asserts that these formulations of the psyche do nevertheless contain a validity in terms of their clinical value.

The similarities between Bowlby's Attachment Theory and Object Relations Theory are that both theories insist on the primacy of relationship. Attachment Theory is the only theory to demonstrate the hypotheses contained within Object Relations Theory. However, the difference lies in the emphasis of the theories as Bowlby tended to stress the effects of physical separation at the expense of emotional unresponsiveness (Gomez, 1997).

Bowlby was appointed head of the psychoanalytic group which contained the Freudians, Kleinians and Independent subgroups. The meetings were reported to have been fiery as the subgroups had strong theoretical differences between them. The recognition awarded Bowlby's theoretical position indicates how he was able to bridge differences of opinion and establish connectedness in his field of work (Holmes, 1995). His main interest was his research rather than in clinical work (Eagle, 1995). In his research work he adopted an ethological approach of observing behaviour (Bowlby, 1988).

THE CONCEPT OF ATTACHMENT IN BEHAVIOUR AND RELATIONSHIPS

For Bowlby attachment behaviour is defined in observable terms as:

Any form of behaviour that results in a person attaining or retaining proximity to some other individual from the self. This is usually an older larger figure. So long as the attachment figure remains accessible and responsive the behaviour may consist of little more than checking by eye or ear on the whereabouts of the figure and exchanging occasional glances or greetings. In certain circumstances, however, following or clinging to the attachment figure may occur and also calling or crying which are likely to elicit his/her caregiving (Bowlby, 1998, p. 39).

Bowlby (1998) also drew on evolutionary ideas of survival strategies as the basis for this behaviour, for example, attachment behaviour is prompted by the young child's need for physical protection. He notes that a young child's need for security is quickly evoked by conditions such as "strangeness, fatigue, anything frightening and unavailability or unresponsiveness of the attachment figure" (1988, p. 41). Furthermore he stated that the child is reassured by the ready availability and responsiveness of an attachment figure. As young children can not always distinguish between temporary and permanent separations, a deep response of grief and separation anxiety may be evoked in a child when his parent is absent. He wrote that "temporary or permanent separation from those people felt to be essential to survival is by definition a crisis manifested in typical reactions to separation and culminating in the mourning process" (Bowlby cited in Gomez, 1997, p. 155).

Bowlby (1998) outlined the various responses to separation and loss from his work with the Robertsons in 1952 in which they filmed "Thomas", a boy aged 17 months who was placed in a residential nursery without a consistent alternative caregiver. He noted that a child in such circumstances may go through phases of anger, withdrawal, despair and self destructive behaviour. He labelled these behaviours as part of the child's *detachment* responses. He identified anger as playing a role in attachment relationships as being part of the communication between parent and child which acts as a signal of distress when the child may be feeling the potential loss of the attachment figure. He notes that anger may not always be easy to understand as a response to loss in contrast to more typical responses of sadness (Bowlby, 1998).

Another of Bowlby's concepts that is central to Attachment Theory is his construct of internal working models. These models are the schematic internal representations of external experience.

INTERNAL WORKING MODELS

Bowlby provided a different model of internal representations of reality to that offered by the Kleinian notion. According to Klein, reality is distorted by the cauldron of abundant phantasies in the internal world that represent this distant reality (Klein, 1935). (The spelling of phantasy denotes these are unconscious thoughts whereas fantasy refers to more conscious thoughts such as in a daydream). The infant's perception of the caregiver is split into an ideal good nurturing figure and a bad persecutory one. For Klein there are cognitive-emotional changes which in favourable circumstances occur at about four to six months of age. During this phase there is a developmental shift in the child's ability to perceive a more integrated and continuous sense of the caregiver as one person. For example when the child experiences persecutory anxieties and these are mediated by a comforting parental response this leads to an adjustment of the child's perception that allows for a more integrated and benign sense of reality (Klein, 1935).

In contrast to Klein, Bowlby was reluctant to speculate about the infant's pre-verbal experiences. He placed emphasis on the actual experiences people have in relationships that contribute to an "internal working model" of the world. For instance the repeated experience of being non-intrusively picked up by the caregiver after falling over leads to the expectation that distress will be met by reassurance and comforting. Eagle (1995) succinctly notes that "the internal working model includes cognitive, emotional and behavioural representations of self and other and of the relationship which mediates their connection" (p. 125). Furthermore, Eagle comments that Attachment Theory is unlike psychoanalytic theory, in that it seems to have left little room for the influence of wishes, conflict, phantasy and idiosyncratic construals of meaning on personality development and how young children's immature cognitive and affective structures may contribute to these "distortions". Similarly, he proposes that a Kleinian understanding of phantasies

regarding relationships may exist where individual's may have wishes of merging with the loved object or of total self sufficiency (Eagle, 1995).

Bowlby's concept of internal working models is both simple and complex. The simplicity is in the construct containing an observable behavioural level. The observed interactional pattern between parent and child can be broadly classified and thus the theory can be seen as reductionist. Four patterns of attachment have been identified. Initially three patterns were developed and the fourth category was created for those patterns that were thought to be unclassifiable as they did not seem to fit any of the other three distinct behavioural responses. The four types of attachment patterns are as follows: *secure, enmeshed, avoidant and disorganised* (Main, 1995). Each category shall be presented in more detail further in the chapter.

The complexity of the construct of internal working models can be seen in understanding the dynamic nature of thinking and emotional processes that lead to changes in internal schematic representations. For example Fonagy et al. (1995) state that Internal Working Models' "have the capacity to aggregate past experience. Integrated with and perhaps integrating these expectations are the emotional experiences associated with these interactions" (Fonagy et al., 1995, p. 234). Thus the internal models are seen to be mutable and they can accommodate the changes which arise from different emotional experiences. There is also provision within the theory for numerous internal working models to co-exist, as well as for combinations of different types of attachments. For instance there may be a dominant mode of attachment with other more latent modes that are in the wings.

INFANT'S SEPARATE PATTERNS OF ATTACHMENT TO FATHER AND MOTHER

It is hypothesised that the two parental models which are internalised later combine into one main model of attachment that in turn becomes the dominant way of relating to one's own child (Fonagy et al., 1995). It has been found that the child develops and maintains distinguishable sets of expectations in relation to each of his or her primary caregivers. For instance, there was no indication that the type of attachment to one parent affected the child's type of attachment to the other parent that is, father's security appeared to have no observable influence on the infant-mother relationship and the influence of the mother's security on the infant-father dyad was also negligible. It is not yet known how and when such separate internal working models are combined to determine the child's general stance toward attachment relationships. One suggestion is that two internal working models such as secure and insecure may exist alongside each other - this may be the case for the resilient maltreated child.

The hypothesis of resilience based on the child drawing on an alternative supportive figure, fits with Eagle's (1995) assertion that there is no simple linearity between adverse early events and subsequent personality development. He proposes that adverse experiences may not have a measurable effect on a child's development of an insecure attachment unless these are considered in relation to other risk factors such as possible genetic or biological influences. Bearing Eagle's critique in mind, it is important to be cautious in making simplistic conclusions of attachment determinism without a full understanding of the role of other possible significant attachment figures as well as other contextual factors. Issues of resilience are discussed more fully further in this chapter.

Research has been conducted to explore the various influence of each parent on the child's internal working model. One study reflects the different contributions of each parent in terms of three year old childrens'

abilities in tasks that draw on metacognitive thinking. For example, secure attachment with the mother predicted the child's success in a cognitive-emotional task as did the security of child-father attachment. Here 83% of children whose mother and father attachments were both secure passed the task. By contrast only 60% of those with one secure relationship passed the task and 49% of those with two insecure attachments did so (Fonagy et al., 1997). Thus there was an association in the results between children who had a secure attachment with at least one parent with their increased ability to think in a task that drew on both emotional and rational skills.

Attachment Theory focuses on the microprocesses and interactions between parent and child. Although it has been applied to many different parent-child relationships it nevertheless takes into account the subtlety and diversity of these unique relationships. The research has been applied universally, in diverse cross-cultural contexts and with different linguistic groups. The mixture of fluidity and rigidity that characterises the constructs in the theory can be seen in the model of change which it contains. For instance, Bowlby (1998) proposed that a soft determinism operates in attachment styles that is carried over from our original relationships to other relationships, such as romantic, peer and sibling relationships.

OTHER SIGNIFICANT RELATIONSHIPS

Some research has been conducted on romantic attachments but different constructs have been adopted. Therefore the research findings have not shed much light on the similarities or differences in these attachment processes (Crowell & Treboux, 1995). Shaver and Hazan (1995) found that adults who described themselves as having a secure, avoidant, or ambivalent attachment style on a self-report questionnaire with respect to romantic relationships, report differing patterns of parent-child relationships in their families of origin. However, the different

methodology may account for some of the discrepancy between current and past patterns in intimate relationships. Bretherton (cited in Belsky et al., 1995) notes that there is still a need for further research on father and sibling attachment. Attachment relationships for siblings may hold particular significance especially if the sibling was older and adopted a protective role.

Although there is much stability of attachment patterns, these are also capable of changing according to different relationships. The capacity for mutability of attachment style has important implications for the psychotherapeutic relationship in being effective in facilitating change.

STABILITY AND MUTABILITY OF ATTACHMENT STATUS

In the course of development it is possible for an individual to shift from a secure to insecure type of attachment and vice versa. Fonagy et al. (1995) note that spontaneous change of a pattern is rare. Thus one of the most important questions is what kind of events and experiences lead to crucial modifications in internal working models in one case and the perpetuation of an early working model in another case.

Bowlby (1998) asserts that attachment behaviour becomes organised in a pattern based on the child's ongoing experience with attachment figures from infancy through to adolescence. However, he identifies that there may be a 'critical' period of sensitivity for the development of bonding which he places at being between six months and three years. He indicates that a broad determinism comes into play in future relationships based on the individual's experiences from early relationships, in conjunction with the influences of personality. He writes that "an individual's attachment behaviour becomes organised within his personality and *turns* the pattern of affectional bonds he makes during his life" (p. 41).

The stability of attachment patterns across these 'affectional bonds" has been identified through follow up studies of infants into young adulthood, and the intergenerational transmission of attachment styles from parent to child (Crowell & Treboux, 1995). Infant patterns have been correlated with the parental types within the same family. For example, it was found that a dismissing parent tended to have an avoidant infant (Fonagy et al., 1995).

THE NATURE-NURTURE DEBATE

Tracing the influence of the different parental relationships on the development of attachment is complex. It has been seen that each parent's relationship is reflected as a distinct internal working model. Yet as Bowlby (1998) notes other factors such as biological and temperamental tendencies may also influence the nature of the internal working model.

The studies conducted on maternal attunement and sensitivity reflect the high correlation between maternal sensitivity and a secure type of attachment (Belsky, Rosenberger & Crnic., 1995). However, Eagle (1995) cautions against adopting the etiological conclusions that "parental failures" such as the lack of empathic mirroring are correlated with the psychopathology of narcissistic and borderline characteristics as has been described by Kohut and Fairbairn. Instead Eagle advocates that conclusions can not be drawn without considering the role of genetic factors.

Attachment Theorists have explored the biological and temperamental factors which the baby may bring to the relationship in terms of the formation of attachment styles. In other words the question of nature or nurture has been raised by Attachment Theorists, in tracing whether security of attachment is linked to environmental factors (i.e. the mother's expressed attitude) or constitutional factors (i.e. the baby's level of

responsiveness). It was found that the overwhelming deciding factor, in how secure the baby will be at one year, is based on the mother's responsiveness despite temperamental factors such as her baby having colic or being prone to higher levels of distress in his first few months (Fonagy et al., 1997, Belsky et al., 1995). Similarly, children who are born deaf or who were born prematurely had the same pattern of attachment as the normal population (van Ijzendoorn cited in Belsky et al., 1995). The exception to the usual correlation between high maternal sensitivity and securely attached children was found in the classification of disorganised children (Belsky et al., 1995). This suggests that in some cases due to constitutional factors children may be unable to respond to sensitive parental communication. Therefore the role of nurture is thought to be generally more powerful than that of nature in moulding the type of interactional patterns that develop between mother and child (Belsky et al., 1995; Gomez, 1997).

Thus there are many shared assumptions as well as the conclusions drawn from research between psychoanalysis and Attachment Theory regarding the effect of early relationships on later development in terms of the aetiology of the problems with which individuals present.

MENTAL HEALTH AND SECURITY OF ATTACHMENT

The findings of follow-up studies support the significant role secure attachment plays in adulthood as securely attached children were found to have better social adjustment in later life. For instance securely attached individuals have greater marital satisfaction, sociability, psychological health, and adaptive functioning including better cognitive abilities such as sustaining concentration (Crowell & Treboux, 1995). According to Crowell and Treboux's (1995) review of the literature clinical populations do have a much higher proportion of insecure classifications than the general population. Yet there is conflicting evidence about the effect of secure attachment in terms of the quality of mental health that is

associated with a secure attachment as other studies show there is no correlation between security of attachment and the presence or absence of psychopathology (Eagle, 1995). Thus secure attachment can not be equated in a general way with mental health and insecure attachment with clinical pathology. Moreover, Eagle notes that security of attachment does not immunise one against experiencing difficulties of sufficient magnitude and intensity to warrant seeking professional therapeutic help.

The correlation between various types of psychopathology and insecure attachments has been explored extensively. These findings indicate that aggression, hostility and delinquent behaviour are associated with insecure attachments (Crowell & Treboux). Attachment status is less clearly linked to subjective feelings or symptoms of distress.

In terms of the nature-nurture debate, maternal sensitivity has been identified as a critical determining factor in fostering security of attachment. Do the above mentioned research findings mean that Attachment Theorists are mainly subscribing to an epistemology of blaming mothers (or parents) for the difficulties inherent in their child?

IS ATTACHMENT THEORY MOTHER BLAMING?

Weingarten (1994), who is a feminist Narrative Therapist asserts that a culture of mother blaming exists in that mothers are made to feel "ultimately responsible" for their children through the quality of mothering provided to their children. She states that mother blaming is the incorrect attribution to make, as she asserts that mothers do not want this role of being totally accountable for their children. Nevertheless, she acknowledges that mothers can influence their children through the way they make sense of the world for their children. Her perspective is similar to the Attachment Theorists concept of how the child's sense of coherence develops by having access to and understanding some aspects of a parent's mental state.

Weingarten's view is that mother blaming belongs to the psychoanalytic tradition that attributes children's problems to the poor mothering they receive. However, Weingarten does not seem to be aware that modern psychoanalytic theory has moved away from Laing's concepts of the "schizophrenogenic" mother that induces psychosis in the child (Laing cited in Weingarten). Instead Object Relations Theory does take account of what the mother and the child each bring to the relationship which may result in bonding difficulties (Alvarez, 1992).

It is therefore possible from a psychoanalytic and Attachment Theory perspective to describe the problems of maternal deprivation without apportioning blame. These theories acknowledge that mothers may have contended with various adverse factors that interfered with the optimal type of bonding and attunement developing in the mother-child relationship. This non-blaming approach has been outlined by Keeney in his ecological view of pathology and health. He writes that there is no gene, individual or community to blame (Keeney, 1983). Instead Keeney states that "the trick is to know when the model you have constructed is useful and when it is not" (1983, p. 144). An evaluation of the Attachment Theory model's usefulness lies in clarifying what the constructs mean when applied to various social contexts. The impact of positive and negative environmental factors on both mother and child can then be understood more fully.

A BROADER ECOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

Belsky et al. (1995) has considered the influence of the mother's support system upon the child's development of a particular style of attachment. These authors take into account factors involved in the broader ecological and social perspective such as the role of culture and economic status. In recognising possible factors that may interfere with the development of a secure attachment, Fonagy et al. (1995) note that there may be a

number of reasons which may reduce the mother's attunement and attentiveness to the child such as the stress of adverse socio-economic circumstances or the interference created by mental illness. These authors locate these factors as being based either in the environment or as being located internally in the mother.

In studies which explore the effect of social factors in the environment upon the mother-child dyad, Belsky et al. (1995) found that high social support forecast high maternal role satisfaction and thereby quality of maternal care and attachment security. However, high social support did not always result in greater security of attachment. Thus the studies of social factors such as the support available to the mother reflect there is not a linear influence upon security of attachment. Instead it was found that the mother's specific role as mediator has a greater significance than other contextual factors in facilitating emotional security in a child. Thus despite the broadened account of how other factors might influence attachment, these factors nevertheless get funnelled into the quality and nature of the mother's relationship with the child as she is the main social carrier of meaning.

Belsky et al's. (1995) review indicates that stressful social circumstances do create environments in which mothers are unable to attend more fully to their children's needs. These authors note that even if mothers do have greater practical, financial and social support, this does not always prevent the destructive effects of insensitive or abusive parenting. Therefore the source of insecure attachment can be attributed to the mother's interactional style as well as to adverse factors in the external environment. Furthermore, insecure attachments between mother and child can be traced back to the mother's experience of her attachment relationships.

CHILD ABUSE AND INTERGENERATIONAL PATTERNS OF ATTACHMENT

The social strands of previous generations are woven through into a parent's sometimes automatic responses to the child and so the past makes an appearance in the present. Fonagy et al's. (1995) review of intergenerational transmission of attachment styles is found to be between 70-80% across different studies. These studies control for factors such as marital satisfaction, personality, verbal fluency and intelligence among other criteria and so isolate the effect of various extraneous factors. In one study across three generations from grandmothers to mothers to infants there was "a 75% concordance rate for three classifications and 45% rate for four classifications" (Crowell & Treboux, 1995, p. 9).

The intergenerational effects of maltreatment may continue in some but not all instances. Children who are maltreated may have had parents who have been abused themselves and so this behaviour is then carried over in the parent's response to the new born child (Cicchetti & Toth, 1998). However, research indicates that "only a third of cases of child victims of abuse grow up to continue a pattern of seriously inept, neglectful or abusive child rearing as parents" (Fonagy et al., 1995). In the cases where abusive parenting reappears across generations, Fraiberg et al. provides a poignant description of how the "ghosts in the nursery" may contribute to the intergenerational transmission of maltreatment (Fraiberg cited in Cicchetti & Toth, 1998, p. 290).

In every nursery [or child's room] there are ghosts. They are the visitors from the unremembered past of the parents, the uninvited guests at the christening. Under all the favourable circumstances the unfriendly and unbidden spirits are banished from the nursery and return to their subterranean dwelling place ... But how shall we explain another group of families who appear to be possessed by

their ghosts? ... While no one has issued an invitation, the ghosts take up residence and conduct the rehearsal of the family tragedy from a shattered script (Fraiberg et al. cited in Cicchetti & Toth 1998, p. 290).

Similar to the ghosts in the nursery phenomenon of 'scripts' being re-enacted across generations in an unconscious form, there may also be a script of repressed caring in the homes of maltreated children that gets passed on from one generation to another. Bowlby writes that:

In some families, affectional bonds are little valued, attachment behaviour is regarded as childish and weak and is rebuffed, all expression of feeling is frowned upon and contempt is expressed for those who cry. The child comes like his parents to view his yearning for love as a weakness and his grief as childish (Bowlby, 1998, p. 224-5).

Bowlby continues by describing that some individuals who are exposed to the latter type of family experience during childhood grow up to be tough and hard. They may become competent and to all appearances self-reliant. In addition he explains that some individuals who have been maltreated have a disposition towards *compulsive caring*. Bowlby notes that "he is inclined to select someone who is handicapped (sic) or in some sort of trouble and thence steps forward to place himself solely in the role of that person's caregiver" (1998, p. 202). Bowlby's descriptions presented above of various attitudes towards others such as adopting a position of self-sufficiency or encouraging others' dependency on oneself form part of one's style of relating. Similarly these attachment patterns will manifest as particular ways of relating to one's own child and can take the form of either a generally loving or abusive relationship.

DEVELOPING A CAPACITY FOR CHANGE

In those situations where a parent was maltreated as a child, there may be a tendency in the parent towards perpetuating abusive or coercive behaviour. However, this pattern need not be repeated at an intergenerational level if the recipient of the abuse is able to come to terms with what has happened to him by thinking about and integrating past experiences instead of re-enacting these in an unaware fashion (Gomez, 1998; Cicchetti & Toth, 1995).

Thus Attachment Theory emphasises a capacity for 'healthier' relationships that can be facilitated through awareness of one's way of relating. It is this self-reflective ability and awareness that is seen as significant in being able to first think about painful or traumatic experiences, in order to begin to integrate these, as opposed to splitting them off from conscious awareness. For example Fonagy et al. (1995) describes that in successful psychotherapy with borderline clients there is an increase in self reflective thinking and a reduction in the need for splitting off frightening and incoherent mental representations. He notes moreover, that new experiences of other minds can more readily be integrated into the framework of past relationship representations.

These author's clinical observations outline the process of how thoughts get pushed out of mind, and how there may be a shutting down at a perceptual level that can have profound effects on the capacity to think and feel. In terms of the link between thinking and feeling the usual distinctions between emotion and cognition fall away. Bruner (1986) coined the term "perfinking" to indicate how the acts of perceiving, feeling and thinking are seen as being on a continuum and act as a unitary perceptual and information processing modality. Similarly Bowlby with his interest in cognitive theory speculated about the influence both perception and emotion have on our ability to process information.

THINKING AND FEELING IN RELATION TO ATTACHMENT FIGURES

Bowlby (1998) discussed how a child's cognitive functioning is affected by the emotional experiences that arise in attachment relationships especially when there is an active rejection of the child. He states that an individual may then split off these painful thoughts and feelings about relationships from ordinary consciousness and termed this "*defensive exclusion*" (1988, p. 70). Perception too is reduced because of the state of emotional and cognitive paralysis that occurs at times when a child feels extremely threatened by the parent's behaviour. He notes that defensive exclusion can reduce "sensory inflow of any and every kind that might activate attachment behaviour and feeling, resulting in a state of emotional detachment, which can be either partial or complete" (p. 70). In his view inhibitions in thinking and feeling exist on a continuum of being more or less disabling. This is similar to Klein's (1935) formulation of anxiety interfering with cognition during different mental states, so that at times an individual is more able to manage to integrate his thinking and perception than at other times.

In ordinary circumstances an individual may experience occasional dysregulations in thinking while performing higher mental functions such as solving a mathematical problem due to the interference of anxiety. Bowlby (1998) proposes that a child's ability to think may be more profoundly and generally affected by his early relationships which can inhibit thinking from an early stage in life. He concludes that because attachment behaviour becomes evident at six months of age that therefore "vulnerability to conditions initiating defensive exclusion are highest then" (p. 72). Thus the child's experience of relationships at this stage may facilitate or inhibit his thinking abilities.

Vygotsky (1978) and Bion (1967) have both contributed to models of how thoughts and feelings are socially mediated by parental figures. Their

theories shall be presented below in conjunction with the notion of reciprocity.

THE SOCIAL MEDIATION OF COGNITION AND EMOTION

Right from the first interactions the baby has patterns of self organisation that are established in relation to a thinking feeling “other”. For instance, Brazelton et al. (cited in Alvarez, 1992), as developmental psychologists describe the origins of reciprocity in the earliest infant-mother interactions. Here the mother appears to provide the functions of organisation and focusing necessary for the baby to begin to learn to pay attention to the mother. Brazelton et al. suggest that when mothers do this well the babies may learn about self-organisation necessary for cognitive acquisitions. Alvarez (1992) comments that “organising” seems rather too cognitive a word to do full justice to what Brazelton et al. describe. She prefers to think of the mother as claiming her baby as her own, claiming his attention, “*calling him into relation with her and in a way, calling him into psychological being*” (p. 67).

Reciprocity becomes a basis for being available and thus responsive to interpersonal interaction. It is through being with another that our capacity to begin to relate to others is developed. These interactions between infant and mother are intrinsically linked to the baby’s cognitive and emotional development. Thus the mother or caretaker exerts a powerful influence on the child’s initiation into social behaviour. The child also contributes to and moulds the relationship with his smiles and level of responsiveness to the mother.

The reciprocal and two way form of interaction is outlined from different theoretical perspectives by both Bion and Vygotsky. Bion’s (1967) concept of emotional containment reflects how the mother responds to the child’s emotions in the container-contained relationship that exists between the mother and child. From a cognitive and developmental

perspective Vygotsky's (1978) notion of mediated thought describes how the mother acts as a social and cultural guide in extending her child's current level of actual development in thinking to the child's potential level. For the child the world begins to take shape according to both the linguistic sign posts used and the sense that is made of the emotions he experiences in relation to others.

VYGOTSKY'S SOCIAL MEDIATION OF THOUGHT

As Keeney (1983) from a cybernetics perspective states that "The most basic act of epistemology is the creation of a difference. It is only by distinguishing one pattern from another that we are able to know our world" (1983, p. 18). For the child who is immersed in a world of buzzing booming confusion he needs help in making his thoughts thinkable. The intersubjective world between mother and child is created by the mother making distinctions to create a shared reality. In Vygotsky's model the child takes in an experience of the world based on the cognitive filtering the mother provides as "an external scaffold". This scaffold acts as a temporary external prop to help the child focus and organise his own thinking. Scaffolding is the process whereby adults provide guidelines and shaping messages by means of which a child makes sense of what is going on. The theory outlines that self regulation of thinking develops from having interaction with the mother in which these skills are learned. That is, self regulation develops initially through other regulation. However, Vygotsky does not discuss the role of emotion in these cognitive processes which are seen to be rational in nature. In many ways containment can be seen as being the emotional complement of Vygotsky's cognitive theory of the scaffold. Fonagy et al. (1995) refers to Bion's concept of containment as a contributing factor to the development of secure attachment in providing the child with a sense of the caregiver's mind that is presented below.

BION'S CONCEPT OF EMOTIONAL CONTAINMENT

Fonagy et al. (1995) explains that their studies on the development of metacognitive thinking in children are based on the assumption that a secure attachment relationship provides a congenial base for the child to explore the mind of the caregiver. They add that it is only through “getting to know the mind of the other can the child develop full appreciation of the nature of mental states” (1998, p. 256). The concept of emotional containment illustrates the processes involved in the understanding of mind that develops through interaction.

Bion's (1967) concept of containment and what he termed “reverie” describes the way in which the caregiver reflects an appreciation of the infant's varied emotional states for instance that the baby may be hungry and distressed. The mother's responses to the baby such as offering nurturance and reassurance may show she has accurately guessed and/or recognised what is bothering the baby. She may be able to soothe and calm the baby without panicky over-involvement but also without too great detachment. Individual mothers will most likely emphasise different aspects of their containing responses at different times. For instance, some mothers may mirror the child's affect more strongly than at other times when they may transmit to the child a sense of stability and coping (Fonagy et al., 1995). Bion discusses containment as a normal and everyday maternal function in which the mother gives back to the baby the baby's own experience in a modified form. The concept goes beyond the purely labelling function of mirroring and recognition of the infant's emotions. The mother lends meaning to the child's experience through establishing a “shared” empathically linked mental state, in which she takes in and experiences some of the infant's feelings. According to Bion, “reverie” refers to the mother's calm receptive state of mind that allows her to take in the infant's own feelings and give them meaning (Hinshelwood, 1989, p. 87). When for some reason the mother is incapable of this reverie and of providing reflective meaning, the infant is

unable to receive a sense of meaning from her. Bion states that the infant has an experience of meaning having been stripped away, resulting in a terrifying sense of the ghastly unknown which he termed "nameless dread".

The psychotherapist may perform similar functions to the mother in thinking with the client about disturbing events. For instance Alvarez refers to the type of responses the therapist makes to the client which may be either more emotional or rational in emphasis. She writes that the therapist may be aiming to achieve a balance between "a thoughtful emotionality and emotional thoughtfulness" which she states is not always easy to achieve and the emphasis is usually on one side or the other or sometimes it is just right!" (1992, p. 53). She distinguishes this from the concept of the neutral, reflecting function of the therapist. She outlines the effect on the therapist that occurs through the interaction with the client in becoming the container of the client's projective identifications and states that this also *changes* the therapist. The emotional involvement the interaction elicits in the therapist and personal impact upon the therapist is seen as a significant aspect of the therapeutic relationship and which is also critical to the therapist's understanding of the interaction. Thus Object Relations and Attachment Theory include a model of a two way influence of interaction and a two-person theory of mind. However, Frosh (1988) notes that despite the reciprocal nature of the parent-child relationship, the dyadic influence is nevertheless seen as being asymmetrical. Attachment Theory denotes that there is a causal linear relationship in which the mother's greater influence in the dyad is mainly seen to determine the child's form of attachment. Considering this imbalance of influence, the significance of a concept of a two person theory of mind, is that this construct emphasises the conditions that are conducive for the *development* of a capacity to think about one's own as well as others' thinking.

METACOGNITIVE THINKING

Main (1995) writes that one aspect of a metacognitive capacity means being “able to step beyond the immediate reality of experience and grasp the distinction between appearance and reality” (p. 250). Yet Fonagy et al. (1995) describes how at a developmental level young children can not always make distinctions between someone’s intent as opposed to their behaviour, so that it is difficult for the child to distinguish between perceived reality and other possible ideas or representations of this experience. Fonagy et al. (1995) propose that an undeveloped capacity to think easily at the level of mental representations indicates that the child does not yet have efficient control over internal representations of relationships to aid him in reconstruing social situations in safe and secure ways even when the immediate danger has passed. The thinking through of frightening experiences for a child and being able to formulate explanations to help understand these is usually assisted by an attachment figure. When the parent is the source of fear there may be few alternatives for a child in having access to this help in understanding others’ states of mind.

DEFENSIVE EXCLUSION IN THINKING DUE TO PARENTAL MALTREATMENT

For an infant who is reliant upon the care of a maltreating parent strategies are adopted to deal with the need for proximity to the parent as well as to have some protection against being hurt or rejected. These strategies represent the compromises made by the infant as a way of maintaining physical proximity with the caregiver at all costs. For instance the child will avoid eye contact and will turn away from the parent or will not elicit attachment behaviour when distressed. Holmes (1995) states that this infant “treads a thin line between the loneliness of abandonment and the pain of rebuff” (p. 35). Or other strategies may be adopted for

example some children may decide to placate rather than risk alienating their mother altogether (Bowlby, 1988).

Fonagy et al. (1995) describes the child's emotional turning away from the maltreating parent. When it is difficult for the child to deduce the reason for the parent's state of mind, this may lead to a sense of meaninglessness or arbitrariness to other's behaviour. These authors write that:

In cases of an abusive, hostile or simply vacuous relationship with the caregiver, the infant may deliberately turn away from the 'mentalising' object, because the contemplation of the object's mind is overwhelming, as it harbours frankly hostile or dangerously indifferent intentions toward the self. This may lead to the widespread disavowal of mental states by the child that further reduces the chance of identifying and establishing intimate links with an understanding object (p. 257).

Thus not thinking or relying on jumbled thinking can be advantageous to children who are at risk of being hurt. Fonagy et al. (1995) note that the abused child evades the world of thinking about painful events to protect himself. Thus acting instead of thinking may be adopted as an automatic recourse and a way of responding to painful situations. Furthermore, Bowlby's formulation of the defensive exclusion of information and more inhibited modes of thinking that are associated with the thinking styles of abused children has been noted as interfering in perception so that there is a further misrepresentation of "reality". For example, Cicchetti and Toth (1995) states that maltreated children are hypervigilant to aggressive stimuli and may block out other information because of this heightened focus. Gomez (1997) lucidly describes below the effects of trauma on thinking in terms of dissociated ways of thinking.

DISSOCIATIVE RESPONSES TO TRAUMA

Gomez notes the effects of emotional or physical maltreated by a parent upon a child and states that this can have a profoundly numbing effect on the child's thinking and feeling. She writes that "those systems of perception, feeling and incipient behaviour which involve unbearable pain are deactivated into dissociated frozen blocks of cognition and emotion" (p. 161).

Gomez's description of restricted thinking that arises from the emotional-cognitive disruption of feeling traumatised tallies with some of the DSM-IV symptoms of posttraumatic stress disorder such as: anger, numbing responses, restrictions in range of affect such as being unable to have loving feelings and having difficulties in concentrating (APA, 1994). A reformulation of the effects of ongoing trauma has been proposed by Straker (1992) who suggests that the concept of Posttraumatic Stress in a misnomer for children who are continually exposed to maltreatment. She states that they may be diagnosed instead as having continuous traumatic stress disorder.

Alexander (cited in Crowell & Treboux, 1995) found that symptoms of psychological numbing and denial were associated with an insecure attachment status in cases of incestuous sexual abuse. These sexually abused children developed an avoidance in thinking about the abuse and the pain of the incest experience. Thus if a child experiences continuous stress from repeated exposure to trauma this may result in a greater difficulty in relying on thinking as a means to address emotional stress. Crittenden (1995) notes that tendencies towards impulsive or compulsive behaviour may develop. Furthermore, such extreme forms of not thinking can entail the use of dissociative defence mechanisms.

MANIFESTATIONS OF DEFENSIVE INHIBITIONS IN THINKING

Bowlby (1998) wrote that dissociative thinking is a form of defensive inhibition and a way of avoiding experiencing pain. For instance this may manifest as the extreme sense of emptiness some people experience that is termed depersonalisation. Similarly there may be a sense of being at a remove from reality in having an out of body experience that fits the definition of derealisation. The sense of being distanced from one's own experience that characterises dissociations can manifest along a continuum of severity ranging from "highway hypnosis" to multiple personality disorder (Shirar, 1993).

Shirar (1993) notes that ordinary experiences of dissociation are healthy for instance the ability to lose oneself in fantasy or a good book. She explains that dissociation can also be a defence when it relies on the ability to make unpleasant thoughts and feelings go away inside somewhere so one can forget about them, at least temporarily. She distinguishes between voluntary and involuntary altered states of consciousness. As a defence, dissociation is seen as one of the first coping mechanisms available to children. With such a defence the child does not have to know, feel or experience bad thoughts and feelings, body pain and behaviours.

Attachment Theorists such as Crittenden (1995), Hill (1997) and Liotti (1995) and Fonagy et al. (1995) have respectively linked difficulties in thinking to dissociative processes such as Attention Deficit Disorder, Compulsive behaviour, Conduct Disorder and Borderline Personality Disorder. These different manifestations of thinking styles are presented below.

ATTENTION DEFICIT DISORDER, HYPERACTIVITY AND COMPULSIVE BEHAVIOUR

Crittenden (1995) asserts that information is discarded as unreliable by insecurely attached children. She portrays how the infants of mothers who are inconsistent in responding to their cries, are unable to make predictions and unable to organise their behaviour on the basis of these intermittent reinforcements. She states that cognition fails these children, although there is an association between the emotions that are aroused for the child such as desire, anger, uncertainty or fear in mother-child interactions. She concludes that these infants remain unorganised with regard to attachment or they fail to identify discrepancies between the experience of their strong emotions and the lack of response to these so that an integration of affect and cognition does not often occur. Securely attached children are then in a better position to be able to identify and deal with discrepancies between their feelings and cognitions, as they have learned some of the predictive and communicative value of many interpersonal signals. In terms of their cognitive-emotional development they have made meaning of both cognition and affect. She links how problems in thinking and the strategies children adopt manifest as attention deficit disorder, mindless hyperactivity or irrational compulsions may develop in relation to specific parental styles.

CONDUCT DISORDER

Similar to Crittenden's formulation of how patterns of thinking develop for children in particular circumstances, Hill (1997) concluded that the type of responses made by a group of parents of conduct disordered children who were interviewed reflected their limited ways of relating to their children. Based on the discourse analysis of their responses and speech these parents were classified as avoidant or dismissive in terms of their attachment patterns. He found that they were not easily able to review current relationships or their contribution to them. This was paralleled by

a restriction in memory of their own experiences of being parented. Where relationships were recalled by these parents and were valued they were described in idealised one dimensional terms. He suggests that this dismissing attachment style may serve to protect the individual from the effects of actual or feared loss or trauma, by pushing out of mind negative experiences that had occurred in relation to their parents. The restriction in the ability to think through one's experiences in a way that takes into account the positive and negative aspects can then be linked to these parents having felt insecure as children in relation to their caregivers. This insecurity has a variety of manifestations in the type of thinking that is associated with individuals that are thought of as having a borderline personality disorder which is discussed below.

BORDERLINE PERSONALITY DISORDER

Fonagy et al. (1995) refers to Kernberg's definition of individuals with borderline personality disorder who have particular patterns of defensive inhibition in thinking about others. He explains that these features can be identified in the context of psychotherapy, and are as follows:

Firstly, these authors note that there may be a failure on the client's part to take into consideration the listener's current mental state that makes the client's associations hard to follow. Main and Goldwyn (1992) suggest that a speaker's enmeshed style of discourse can reflect an assumption that the speaker and listener have a shared mind. I propose this enmeshed style may paradoxically both be a wish for such a linked state, as well as a fear of this omnipotent presence of the other within the self.

Secondly, they state that the borderline individual often does not feel "kept in mind" in between breaks in therapy and the client tends to rely on the physical presence of the therapist to have an experience of being thought about. I suggest that clients' sense of not being held in mind

indicates that some aspects of his thinking may be quite concrete. It is important for the therapist to be aware of this tendency in the client and his way of responding to separations that occur in between breaks in therapy sessions or even at the difficulty of ending a session. Such concrete thinking may not be evident especially when the client demonstrates a sophisticated level of abstract thinking in other areas. Through the therapy it may be a new experience for the client to think he is valued enough to be kept in mind in between the sessions.

Thirdly, Fonagy et al. (1995) identify that there may generally be an absence of concern for the other, which can manifest as extreme violence and cruelty. These authors write that,

This lack of feeling can be understood as arising because of the lack of a compelling representation of suffering in the mind of the other. A key moderator of aggression is therefore absent. The lack of reflective capacity, that is an awareness of how events impact upon others in conjunction with a hostile worldview may predispose individuals to child maltreatment (Fonagy et al., 1995, p. 264).

Thus some individuals who have been emotionally, physically or sexually abused are not able to think about the subjective experience of pain for another person, due to the lack of mediation in their own experience, which may lead to their blocking out thinking about the pain they may cause others. This dissociation from pain has important implications for the levels of violent crime in South Africa at present that is very much a product of the abusive parenting represented by the state under the apartheid regime that led to the breakdown of family structure for many individuals (Morgan, 1997).

Another borderline characteristic that Fonagy et al. (1995) note is that there may be a fragile sense of self. These authors assert that this diffused identity is reflected in the borderline individuals difficulty in

representing their own feelings, beliefs and desires with sufficient clarity to provide them with a core sense of themselves as a functioning mental entity. This may leave them with overwhelming fears of mental disintegration and a desperately fragile sense of self. This undifferentiated sense of self may be the result of these individuals not previously having had a clear sense of being recognised. The diffuse sense of self may be related to having a vacuous experience of others minds.

Similarities in the inhibited types of thinking that Fonagy et al. outline as part of the borderline personality cluster have been identified by Liotti (1995) in individuals with dissociative disorder. He notes that dissociative and disorganised types of thinking are evident in the recorded discourses of clients who have had experiences of trauma. From his clinical account of therapy with a woman who has multiple personality disorder he suggests that dissociated as well as borderline individuals portray the self and the attachment figure as frightened or frightening. Liotti makes an important contribution to the Attachment Theory literature by identifying the milder forms of disorganised thought that can be seen to belong to the spectrum of personality disorders.

An important finding in Attachment Theory research regarding the benefits of metacognitive thinking is that some individuals who have a history of abuse and who have shown a greater capacity to use metacognition seem to be less affected by psychopathology when compared to others who have the same degree of maltreatment history (Fonagy et al., 1997). Although it is difficult to make comparisons of individuals' responses to trauma as each person's situation is different, there seems to be great value in considering the role that metacognitive thinking can play in providing a symbolic buffer for traumatised individuals. This has implications for the reparative role of psychotherapy in promoting metacognitive thinking for trauma survivors.

Before presenting the classification system reflecting attachment behaviour that has been devised by Bowlby and Ainsworth, I will first discuss the validity of making the distinctions of the categories that are included in a classificatory system based on observed behaviour in terms of the issue of subjective responses to separation. Issues of the subjectivity of responses to separation and loss which may be an over reaction on the part of an overly needy child may be relevant in formulating an understanding of the child's demonstration of behaviour that reflects his internal world. Questions of how one interprets behaviour and what meaning one attributes to expressions of distress are pertinent.

A CHILD'S EXPERIENCE OF SEPARATION

For any child adjusting to the minor absences of their caregivers is a normal part of development. In terms of the subjective nature of responses to separation Klein (1935) asserts that our internal phantasy world may also contribute largely to the responses and meaning that we make of our experiences. As there will be inevitable gaps where the child's needs may not be filled, this absence may be felt as more or less depriving by different children. The role of external support and mediation of the child's distress which Bion (1967) has sketched is important in helping to contain the emotional impact of a minor absence which may otherwise be amplified in the child's mind as being unbearable. Similarly, studies of resilience show there is a significant relationship between how adverse external experiences such as trauma can be mitigated by emotional support from significant others (Dawes & Donald, 1994). The studies of resilience to trauma illustrate the importance of a mediating other who acts as a buffer against psychic pain by making sense of bewildering and overwhelming experiences. The distinction between inner feelings of distress and objective experiences of trauma can fall away to some extent as there is a constant interplay between inner and outer. Bowlby's (1988) empiricist leanings led him to place an emphasis on real and external experience. In his view, the

child's internal working model was not seen to be a misrepresentation of reality in which there may only be a phantasy of deprivation. Experiences of absence and losses are considered to have a powerful effect that can be ameliorated through verbal or physical containment.

ESTABLISHING BRIDGES THROUGH NARRATIVE

One form of containment is outlined by Holmes (1995) who proposes that dialogue and narrative serves to bridge the inevitable discontinuities individuals experience in their early relationships and established a connectedness of experience through language. He outlines how early experiences of separation that are mediated by language allows for a "capacity to survive major losses in later life, that is based on the overcoming of the minor fissures that appear in the course of normal development" (Holmes, p. 35).

Similarly Fonagy et al. (1995) identify that the parent's ability to "mentalise" or put words to experience by commenting on aspects of lived experience is an ingredient that contributes towards establishing a secure relationship. However, he also attributes the development of a secure attachment to relationships that are characterised by a loving acceptance with a relative lack of ambivalence on the part of the parent. Thus a benign loving parental figure who is not necessarily self reflective or much wont to verbalise about experience but who enjoys being with the child is able to provide secure attachment for a child. Yet what exactly do Attachment Theorists mean by "secure attachment"?

ARE SECURE ATTACHMENTS IDEALISED VERSIONS OF REAL RELATIONSHIPS?

From reading the literature on different types of attachment I wondered whether the construct of secure attachment implied a more idealised and perfect form of parenting. According to Main and Goldwyn (1992) secure

attachment reflects a parent who was actively loving and accepting of the child and who had a continuing healthy dedication to this child and his development. These authors proclaim that "*this does not mean that the parent was perfect*" (p.14). They note that a secure attachment can develop even if the parent may have been disappointing in terms of not being especially affectionate or especially noting of the child, as an individual. They assert that a secure attachment classification can also be made if the parent was not either lacking in implied affection and interest, but may have simply been adequate most of the time or may have had unloving, unaffectionate aspects which were *balanced* against affectionate aspects. They give examples of statements that are considered indicative of a loving experience. For instance " I always knew she was there for me, no matter what and I could and did depend upon it" or " I acted up a lot, but I always knew I'd be forgiven. She could be firm but she was such a softie, then you get down to it" (p. 14).

The value of Weingarten's (1994) Narrative Theory contribution is that she has drawn the same conclusions that are found in Attachment Theory but has arrived at the same point from a different theoretical tradition, which serves to validate both theories' sets of constructs. She links the concept of coherence of self to an experience of some emotional intimacy between parent and child. She advocates that mothers need to share in an appropriate way their internal world with their children without dumping on their children what is unbearable for them to hear. She states that "a mother who does not share her account of herself with her children in some way, however, small may limit her ability to experience herself coherently and eventually her children's ability to understand either themselves or her" (1994, p. 185).

She defines intimacy between mother and child as a mother being willing to let herself be known, by sharing stories of who she really feels herself to be. She describes that it may be precisely at the times "when we are most uncomfortable with our own feelings that we pull away from our

children, thinking that we are protecting them by concealing ourselves from them” (p.180). When she was diagnosed with breast cancer her fears of burdening her child or blurring generational lines were confronted by her 11 year old daughter’s need to understand something of her emotional state. Once she had explained to her daughter that she was feeling a great deal of emotional pain she said this allowed her daughter to feel less alone. Intimacy and a sense of being linked to an attachment figure at times of difficulty seems to be critical to the notion of security of attachment.

In terms of understanding security of attachment as a realistic non-idealised formulation, Holmes outlines that the concept of the secure base is rather inaccurate as “the secure base is never entirely safe. Breaks, gaps, losses are as intrinsic to the rhythm of life as are attachment and connectedness” (1995, p. 34). An understanding of secure attachment can be found in that the concept is relative to other types of attachment, namely insecure forms of attachment. A comparison between securely and insecurely attached individuals shows the difference of their responses to an experience of frustration or pain. For example, securely attached individuals acknowledge the pain of their needs that have not been recognised and fulfilled and are able to forgive their parents for these. In contrast insecurely attached individuals such as those in the dismissive adult category will tend to derogate their parents or deny their pain by idealising their parents.

Based on the Adult Attachment Interview the secure form of attachment is the most frequently found type of relationship and is found in “55% of middle class populations, in contrast to 16% who are dismissing and 9% who are preoccupied and 19% who are unresolved/disorganised” (Main, 1995, p. 444).

SECURE AND INSECURE TYPES OF ATTACHMENT PATTERNS

The secure pattern of attachment is illustrated by Bowlby's colleague, Mary Ainsworth, who created the metaphor of the mother acting as a "secure base" from which the young child can make forays of exploration into the environment whilst knowing there is a safe refuge to which she can return (Holmes, 1995, p. 34).

Ainsworth observed parent-infant interactions and made a significant breakthrough regarding infants' patterns of attachment behaviour. She found that in some instances the infants' anger and distress were based on the interactional styles of avoidance and resistance. These responses to their mothers paralleled behaviour found in situations where young children of two to three years old who had experienced a substantial separation from their parents were reunited with them. Ainsworth noted children's different responses to their mothers and these were classified into four categories which included secure, insecure-avoidant, insecure-ambivalent and disorganised attachment styles.

THE AINSWORTH "STRANGE SITUATION"

Ainsworth (1995) designed the Strange Situation to activate attachment behaviour in young children. According to Attachment Theory, attachment behaviour will be elicited when the child is exposed to an unfamiliar environment as well as absence of the attachment figure. The children who participated in the Strange Situation were twelve months of age. The child and his mother were observed at the research institute in a room that was unfamiliar to the child. The children in the study had also been observed in their home over a period of a year in their interactions with their mothers from birth. The home observations were conducted four hours every three weeks. Each of the observed patterns in the Strange Situation context were linked to specific patterns based on the observations of the preceding year.

The Strange Situation is structured to include a series of separations and reunions between the child and the mother in which their responses are observed. The separations last a maximum of five minutes and if the child became distressed the child would be quickly reunited with the mother. It was found that the majority of babies sought proximity, interaction or contact upon reunion and hence were classified as securely attached. Ainsworth's classification system include a range of intensity for each of the types of attachment such as *very secure* or *moderately avoidant*.

TYPES OF ATTACHMENT PATTERNS

A. *SECURE ATTACHMENT*

Infants classified as secure were noticed to attend to the mother with ease and interest, protest her departure during separations and welcome her return and usually sought close contact. Main (1995) notes the immediacy with which the baby's distress is terminated (he may cease crying immediately on seeing mother), the comfort he took in contact with her and his readiness to return once again to play. She describes that the observer has witnessed what appeared to be "a miniature drama with a happy ending" (p. 416). Observations of secure infants in the home indicated they showed little anxiety for instance they did not cry in response to minor everyday separations such as the mother moving downstairs to fetch the laundry.

B. *INSECURE-AVOIDANT ATTACHMENT*

The insecure-avoidant infants appeared uninvolved with the parent when she was present. Generally they would either search for her

or were apparently untroubled by her departure, and ignored her on reunion and seldom sought or welcomed contact. Main (1995) highlights that attachment behaviour is virtually absent throughout the Strange Situation in the avoidant baby and is replaced with active avoidance (looking away, moving away, turning away and leaning out of arms) as well as persistent attention to the inanimate environment. In examination of the narrative records of the home observations Ainsworth found avoidance of the mother in the Strange Situation linked specifically to maternal rejection of infant attachment behaviour. Several mothers described themselves as disliking tactual contact or finding it aversive and observations showed them actively rebuffing the child's bids or attempts to be close to the mother. It is thought that the infant "deactivates" attachment behaviour in an avoidant attachment style to a rejecting mother whilst monitoring the mother's comings and goings in a distal minimised relationship and conceals his distress at her departure. In the home those babies categorised as being the most avoidant in their responses also expressed great distress at minor everyday separations and also exhibited the greatest anger towards the mother, with some striking her.

Crittenden (1995) explains that anger is among the most powerful of attachment behaviours. She asserts that secure parent-child dyads are sufficiently in synchrony and maternal attunement is greater so that anger is not felt frequently and its expression prompts responses that tend to be comforting. Like Bowlby (1998), she notes that anger serves a communicative function and is a signal of important issues requiring dyadic attention. She comments that insecurely attached children experience substantial frustration of their desires and this leads to frequent feelings of intense anger that are more likely to be ignored by the parent, increasing the cycle of angry responses. Crittenden states that for children other responses to anger such as displaying threatening

behaviour may increase the probability of parental attention, so that many of their interactions with attachment figures may have an angry quality.

C. *INSECURE-AMBIVALENT ATTACHMENT*

The insecure-ambivalent or resistant group of infants were found to be anxiously oriented toward the parent, protested separations violently, tolerated them poorly, and showed a mixture of angry contact seeking and rejection of the parent on reunion. Bowlby (1998) describes that children who make anxious and ambivalent attachments are “likely to have experienced discontinuities in parenting and/or often to have been rejected by their parents, the rejection is likely to have been intermittent and partial than complete” (p. 219). The home records showed that mothers of the resistant infants were unpredictable, discouraging of autonomy and insensitive to infant signals and communications. Most displayed some warmth and involvement at times, however, and (as opposed to the mothers of avoidant infants) most considered themselves highly invested in mothering. These mothers were not rejecting of their infants but were unpredictable in their handling of the infant and Main comments that there was a marked “absence of contingent pacing” (1995, p. 420). She notes that the avoidant baby is similar to the ambivalent baby in that they are said to be “organised” in the sense of having a singular attentional focus. However, the insecure-ambivalent baby has his focus on his mother as opposed to the toys. Like the avoidant baby and unlike the secure baby, however, his attention is not fluid and he focuses on only one aspect of his surroundings. The “ambivalent” infant has an experience of a mother who inconsistently neglects or overwhelms him and whose experience of pain on parting is matched by his *conflicted* response to reunion (Holmes, 1995).

D. DISORGANISED-DISORIENTED ATTACHMENT

The disorganised-disoriented category of infants show difficult to classify and unusual and contradictory behaviours in the reunion episodes for example, seeking, then avoiding proximity to the parent or showing “freezing” and other stereotyped behaviours. The latter pattern of attachment was subsequently found to be strongly associated with a parental history of unresolved loss or trauma.

It was found that disorganised infants had parents who had been maltreated and/or psychiatrically distressed. The infants exhibited the characteristics of both insecure avoidant and insecure ambivalent groups. According to Main this included sequential or simultaneous contradictory behaviour such as crying and running to the parent with arms outstretched and then followed inexplicably by avoidance, where the infant suddenly stops, turns his back to the parent, and is silent. Other observed behaviours included stereotypies, hair pulling and head banging or defensive movements, freezing, stilling responses and falling into a prone huddled position, led to infant’s being categorised as disorganised-disoriented regarding their attachment responses. These babies’ thinking styles as much as their behaviour were seen to be erratic.

Liotti (1995) outlines the varied capacity to think and feel according to different types of attachment, so that attention is fluid in secure babies, restricted in avoidant and resistant babies and liable to dysregulation or collapse in “disorganised” babies. The patterns of thinking that are established in infancy have important implications for children’s later cognitive functioning and relationships. For adults the coherence of discourse has been

assessed and assumed to reflect the individual's state of mind and internal form of organisation and attachment style.

THE ADULT ATTACHMENT INTERVIEW AND DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

Mary Main (1992), a student of Mary Ainsworth's, explored the concept of attachment patterns in adults by means of a discourse analysis method. The discourse was accessed by transcribing the semi-structured interview conducted with an individual which she and her colleagues had created, namely the Adult Attachment Interview. In terms of her theory, the way people speak is thought to indicate their dominant attachment pattern and state of mind. From their research distinct attachment patterns were found as well as an unresolved category that included a lack of resolution for trauma due to sexual or physical abuse. The patterns of attachment identified in adults correlated with the four patterns that the infants had shown in the Strange Situation.

The Adult Attachment Interview is considered to provide an indication of the functioning of the internal working model. The interview is designed to elicit the individual's account of the quality of his childhood relationships with each parent (e.g. happy, loving) and memories that might support those. The interview includes an evaluation of the effects of those experiences on present functioning. The interviewee is asked to describe his childhood experience of separation, illness, injury, punishment, loss and abuse. Individuals are categorised according to the emotional and cognitive features of the representational world as revealed in the transcript. The classification scheme includes the four categories which are presented below.

A. *AUTONOMOUS WITH RESPECT TO ATTACHMENT: FREELY VALUING YET OBJECTIVE*

The autonomous-secure classification correlates with the secure infant classification. Autonomous-secure individuals gave a clear and coherent account of early attachments (whether these had been satisfying or not). They neither minimise nor maximise the emotional qualities and consequences of past relationship experiences. They feel free to explore their thoughts and feelings during the course of the interview. Their personal history includes a believable picture of one or both parents serving as a secure base or haven of safety in childhood. This is a picture which is not contradicted within the interview and which tends to be illustrated through one or more convincing memories of parental comfort and support. The securely attached individual may revise his opinions but is able to reach a conclusion and there is a thoughtful quality in reviewing previous formulations of the past in a lively way.

Main and Goldwyn (1992) state that an autonomous-secure mode of thinking is seen when the interviewee can make statements about his past which present his own point of view without oscillating in that point of view in a manner which indicates an inability to accept the past as it was or to criticise his attachment figures. This does not mean that if criticisms of attachment figures are made this classification can not be given. Rather, the anger some individuals may have towards their parental figures reflects that there is still a degree of enmeshment or detachment that would then result in this person's placement in the autonomous-secure category with a subcategory classification of either enmeshment or detachment.

Autonomous-secure individuals are able to provide vivid memories of events. They value attachment relationships and view

attachment experiences as influential in their development. For instance, Crittenden (1994) states that secure individuals have a consciousness of their responses which are unwonted and of which they are unaware, shown in rueful remarks regarding the ways in which they see or hear themselves, sometimes indeliberately echoing dislikeable aspects of their parents.

B. *PREOCCUPIED WITH OR BY EARLY ATTACHMENTS OF PAST EXPERIENCES*

The enmeshed or preoccupied classification correlates with the ambivalent/resistant infant category. The chief characteristics of the preoccupied-enmeshed mode of relating are a confused, unobjective and pre-occupied passive and vague manner. The interviewee may appear to be fearful and overwhelmed or angry, conflicted and unconvincingly analytical.

The vacillating rambling quality of their opinions results in a sense of their not being able to see the forest for the trees. The tone of these transcripts may contain an angry complaining quality which has been characterised as the endless ruminating quality which Woody Allen personifies or a passive state of confusion or ill-defined experience of childhood. These two characteristics reflect the *angry* enmeshed subcategory and the *passive* enmeshed subcategory.

Main and Goldwyn state that although in some cases they seem very open in their focus upon their parents and attachment related experiences this focus seems ultimately neither fruitful, objective or incisive despite an often extensive discussion of feelings, experiences and relationships. Their sense of personal identity seems confused, weak or absent. Furthermore she comments that

there may have been an inchoate sense of negativity and parental criticism. The mother may have continually criticised the child's state, accomplishments, failures in duty or failures in appearance - criticisms which seemed to have the aim of persuading the child to please rather than turning the child away towards independence. The parent in other words may have needed the child to maintain a particular state or behave in a particular way or may have frequently made the child feel guilty. In some cases the background may be pictured as one of rejection rather than involvement; that is, the child may have felt a sense of detachment from the parent.

The pre-occupied interviewee may indicate subtle confusions between self and parent or may fail to separate past from present once he has begun recounting events involving the parent. Interviews with these subjects tend to be longer or much longer than other interviews. At least one and often several semantically confused run-on sentences are found within the interview. The interviewee may continually attempt to elicit interviewer agreement. One of the subcategories for the enmeshed-preoccupied making classification includes an ongoing pre-occupation with traumatic events from childhood of either abuse or loss.

C. *DISMISSING, DEVALUING, OR CUT OFF FROM ATTACHMENT RELATIONSHIPS AND EXPERIENCES*

The detached-dismissing classification correlates with the avoidant infant classification. Detached-dismissing individuals are seen to attempt to limit the influence of attachment relationships and experiences in thought, in feeling and in daily life. There is an implicit claim to strength, normality and independence. This is implied in the dismissal of the import of attachment relationships or experiences or through dismissal of potential effects upon the self.

The dismissive individual may have had a personal history in which the parent(s) turned away from the child's attachment through silent or direct rejection. Main and Goldwyn (1992) state that what dismissing adults share in common is "an organisation of thought which permits attachment to remain relatively de-activated" (p. 98) This de-activation can be accomplished through a variety of ways. Some individuals de-activate the attachment system through a lack of memory.

Main and Goldwyn note that other forms of deactivating the attachment system is through the interviewee providing descriptions of untoward aspects of the parents or events that are usually succeeded by a positive wrap-up which entails a return to the description of the parents as excellent or the self as strong or normal. Here "the parents may not be so much actively devalued as is the attachment or responses to attachment related experiences (such as loss) or feelings of attachment within the self or others" (Main & Goldwyn, p. 14). Idealised or derogatory opinions are often expressed by individuals who tend to be dismissing or avoidant. The dismissive responses are usually brief and self contained.

D. UNRESOLVED-DISORGANISED ATTACHMENT AND THE CAN NOT CLASSIFY CATEGORY

The unresolved-disorganised and the can not classify categories correlate with the disorganised infant category. Individuals in these categories showed incoherence in their autobiographical accounts. This is seen particularly in relation to memories of loss and abuse. For instance the interviewee might continuously refer to someone who had died as being alive. An exception is made by the rater to

classifying this kind of mistake as unresolved and disorganised if the bereavement occurred within two years of the interview. Individuals who are psychotic and thought disordered would be classified as unresolved or disorganised in relation to their attachments but would also receive a classification of a particular type of attachment. Main differs from Crittenden in that she uses the "can not classify" category instead of the unresolved-disorganised classification. In contrast Crittenden (1994) proposes the use of condensing two classifications into one category. For instance if the interview does not fit one category more than another if the attachment style is equally dismissive and enmeshed, it would then be possible to have a dismissive/enmeshed classification.

I will now discuss the definitions of the construct of coherence in terms of the values which appear to be part of Main and Goldwyn's (1992) classification system.

THE CONSTRUCT OF COHERENCE OF THINKING

The Adult Attachment Interview draws on discourse analysis techniques to reflect the particular attachment styles. This methodology is based on the premise that verbalised accounts of one's experience reflects the internal working model of the self. The interviewee is presented with the task of producing and reflecting on memories involving early relationships as well as any potentially traumatic experiences while simultaneously maintaining coherent collaborative discourse. Main (1995) refers to Grice's maxims of coherent discourse that include:

- quality (be truthful and have evidence for what you say)
- quantity (be succinct, yet complete)
- relation (be relevant)
- manner (be clear and orderly)

Grice's concept of verbal coherence can be summarised as having an "*autobiographical competence*". It is the competence to express one's experience in a fairly reliable accessible way to a listener who is not familiar with the details of the interviewee's life (Holmes, 1995). Spoken language is by nature not always clear and verbal dysfluencies such as stuttering over a few words are common. The stutter may indicate that what is being said is emotionally laden or represents an internal conflict for the speaker. The rater takes into account the occurrence of typical levels of dysfluency. The analysis does not rest on factors such as verbal skill or intelligence. In terms of the validity of the rating that is made there is a high independent co-rater reliability of 80% for making the classifications. There is also a qualifying test to become an accredited rater. The methodology used based on discourse analysis techniques will be more fully discussed in the section with that title.

I now turn to the application of Attachment Theory to psychotherapy which has been undertaken by Bowlby as well as other authors.

THERAPY AND ATTACHMENT PATTERNS

Gomez (1997) states that Bowlby saw the purpose of therapy as diagnosing the attachment pattern of the patient through monitoring the ways in which she relates to the therapist. This appears to be similar to the psychoanalytic notion of transference in which previous patterns of relating to parental figures in particular are evoked in response to the therapist. The therapist's aim is to discover what were the major events and influences which gave rise to the client's particular internal working model. In the course of therapy the client would have opportunities to understand his interactional patterns which are limiting and self-defeating.

Holmes (1995) has hypothesised that the way people tell their stories in therapy can reflect the breaks in their "holding environment" in childhood.

Similarly different narrative styles which are either more restricted or are overly elaborate or which may be succinct and well integrated can indicate the client's ease with and understanding of events in his own life. The therapist listens to the client's narrative and tries to make sense of it, "to find meaning in its inchoate swirls, to help explore the gaps and lacunae, to shape its eruptions and collapses" (Holmes, 1995, p. 34). The psychotherapist does not have an expectation in the therapy context for the client to provide a neatly articulated and packaged account of experience. Instead as Gomez (1997) states the aim of therapy for Attachment Theorists is for "the client to develop a more coherent and continuous understanding and experience of herself and what has happened to her, encompassing both positive and negative events and influences" (p. 168). Similarly, Holmes (1995) adds that the therapeutic process can be evaluated on the emergence of a "more fluent, yet emotionally charged, coherent narrative" (p. 35). The notion of coherence in Attachment Theory seems to imply there is a greater connectedness both to the self and to others and that the ability to be aware of and thus communicate different feelings is then improved. Grossman (1995) however, asserts that there are limitations to what coherence can mean within Attachment Theory. He states that "the concept of secure attachment reflects coherence of the self and is a model for developing the ability to feel integrated but is an insufficient understanding of the whole mind" (1995, p. 91).

LIMITATIONS REGARDING THE CONSTRUCT OF "COHERENCE"

The construct of coherence within Attachment Theory is imbued with different values and varying definitions. Theoretical opinions about the inherent value of coherence of the self as a quality to be achieved has been debated.

One limitation of the criteria of coherence of narrative suggested by Crowell and Treboux (1995) is that it does not reflect subjective feelings

of distress. For instance, in one study, depressive symptoms related to ratings of negative past and present relationships with parents, but were unrelated to coherence in the Adult Attachment Interview. This suggests that an individual's awareness of difficulties in his past and a capacity to self-report these problems coherently is not associated with any particular attachment status. Thus the criteria for coherence may not accurately indicate the depth or extent of emotional distress which someone experiences. I would speculate that the narrative may be organised fairly coherently and so a secure classification may be made when tendencies towards preoccupation with the past are still evident. As there are subcategory classifications that are made along with the primary pattern of attachment, these may offer a place for the rater to reflect subtler expressions of emotional distress. The subcategory classifications may be relevant for indicating subjective distress whereas the main classifications indicate more objective levels of disorganised thought. The criticism is that the tool of discourse analysis is rather blunt. If it were to be refined it may be more useful in reflecting subtle expressions of distress.

At another level of debate regarding the usefulness of the concept of coherence, is that the post-modernists posit whether it is even possible to have a sense of integration in a fragmented world (Kriegler, 1998). In contrast, the psychodynamic view bridges modernist and post-modernist perspectives in proposing that the self is individualised as a unitary being (although there may be splits between conscious and unconscious aspects of the psyche) and that greater self-integration can occur at times. One means by which some integration is achieved is through the process of psychotherapy. For instance Klein (1935) states that there is a fluctuating process in which various states of mind reflect a sense of either greater integration or disintegration. The tendency towards integration at times can be facilitated in therapy for a client by helping the client in his thinking and understanding the emotional impact of previously confusing or dissociated aspects his life.

Developing a secure “state of mind” in relation to the therapist may provide an opportunity to explore the interaction between therapist and client in the here and now which Sullivan as an interpersonal therapist has outlined (Chrzanaowski, 1982). Interactions can then be reviewed with an immediacy and a shared reality can be established. Disjunctions in understanding between the therapist and client can then be clarified and as Keeney (1983) describes adjustments to the system can be made as if these were calibrations on a thermostat in which feedback loops and new information transform the system. Adjustments in understanding that are calibrated through discussion by the therapist and client fit with Bion’s (1967) notion of providing emotional containment in naming terrifying fears and allowing these into the interpersonal space as well as into the client’s conscious awareness. In terms of Narrative Theory, it is also important that the relationship is an equal one in that a “forged narrative” can arise between therapist and client, where both parties contribute towards establishing greater understanding. I particularly like the metaphor of the therapist facilitating the client’s narrative in therapy which draws on Stern’s picture of affective attunement between mother and child and the rhythms of psychotherapy with a psychotherapist who “intervenes enough to keep the patient’s thought bubbles airborne, but not puncturing them with premature or intrusive comments” (Holmes, 1995, p. 35).

Based on the Attachment Theory literature it appears that being self-reflective and having a capacity to think about overwhelming feelings in the presence of a psychotherapist can allow for greater flexibility in thinking and feeling. In the next chapter I outline the methodology used in the interview with the client who participated in this study.

CHAPTER THREE

THE ADULT ATTACHMENT INTERVIEW AND DISCOURSE ANALYSIS METHODOLOGY

BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

I conducted an Adult Attachment Interview with the interviewee whom I will call Fred. The interview was audio taped and then transcribed verbatim and analysed. Fred had consented to participating in the interview for research purposes. At the time of the interview he had been in one hourly weekly sessions of psychotherapy with me for four months. In gaining his informed consent for participating in the research, I had explained to him what the interview would entail in that it would be audio taped and that the content of the questions would include his history and family relationships. He was amenable to discussing these areas of his life in an interview and felt motivated to do so for reasons of gaining greater insight into understanding the traumatic effects of his childhood on his life. With Fred's permission I have also drawn on relevant illustrations of Fred's attachment themes from the psychotherapy. Although his relationship with his parents had been discussed in the second therapy session, Fred had shown great reluctance initially to talk about his relationship with his parents at this stage of the therapy. I had enquired when his parents had died and he became very angry and would not talk about his mother's death except to say he had not attended the funeral. I had backed off from this sensitive topic and thought I needed to allow him to talk about it in his own time. It was only after Fred watched an Oprah Winfrey talk show that dealt with healing the wounds of the past through having psychotherapy that he felt more ready to explore these issues with me in the interview.

MY HISTORY OF BEING TRAINED IN CONDUCTING AND ANALYSING THE INTERVIEW

I had trained and qualified in analysing and classifying the Adult Attachment Interview when I had worked as a research fellow at the Tavistock Clinic in London. This entailed reading a number of transcripts and classifying these in order to pass a test. I had also conducted 20 Adult Attachment Interviews and rated a further 20 interviews in Britain for research in the area of selective mutism.

PRELIMINARY STEPS IN CONDUCTING AND ANALYSING THE INTERVIEW

As I had not conducted the interview for a few years I first practised being the interviewer with a colleague and in turn had an experience of being the interviewee. These preparatory exercises helped me to be more sensitive to the emotional intensity of discussing my early relationships with my parents with someone else. I then went ahead and conducted the interview with Fred. I have included at the end of this chapter, the type of questions which I asked Fred during the interview.

I was aware that typing up the transcript is at some level a construction in that the transformation from an auditory account to a written account is a change in medium that imposes certain artificial meanings. For instance, the place where I would decide to put a full-stop was where I thought one should be in terms of my own meaning making system. I have not made any grammatical corrections to Fred's language, so that his spoken speech is reflected as directly as is possible. O' Connel and Kowal (1995) note that "Discourse transcription can be defined as the process of creating a representation in writing of a speech event so as to make it accessible to discourse research" (p.94). However, the change in medium does not affect the reliability of the classification system as a

concordance of results was found from interviews which were analysed from video recordings and typed transcripts of the same interviews (Crittenden, 1994).

After I typed up the interview into its transcript format I read the transcript a number of times and made notes about my impressions of the interaction. I reviewed my theoretical notes on discourse analysis and applied these principles in analysing the interview. The theory of discourse analysis as used in the Adult Attachment Interview is presented below.

THEORETICAL NOTES ON DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF THE ADULT ATTACHMENT INTERVIEW

Potter and Wetherell (1995) note that the area of discourse theory and discourse analysis includes a number of theoretical traditions. These include: linguistic philosophy, psycholinguistics, rhetoric, ethnomethodology, conversation analysis and post structuralism. I am aware that discourse analysis can be applied in other ways to the approach I have outlined.

According to Main and Goldwyn (1992) the aim of the discourse analysis of the Adult Attachment Interview is to "identify an individual's state of mind with respect to attachment" (p. 14). This is based partly on the content of what is said as well as the way the narrative is expressed. I will outline the theoretical guidelines that have been developed by Main and Goldwyn for analysing the Adult Attachment Interview. This overview includes the criteria and descriptions of the four categories of types of discourse which are the secure-autonomous, enmeshed and dismissive as well as the can not classify category. I have selected the relevant notes from Main and Goldwyn's "manual" for scoring the Adult Attachment Interview with regard to the classification system as well as from Crittenden's (1994) training course.

Main and Goldwyn comment that in terms of the aim of identifying the attachment style of the interviewee the rater's goal is to try ascertain whether the interviewee had a firm sense of emotional support and availability of the particular parent under consideration especially in times of trouble. Below I shall refer to the various criteria Main and Goldwyn employ in making an assessment of secure or insecure attachment. They first gauge the impression of the narrative by looking at the gestalt. The construct of the narrative's coherence is the main concept used in evaluating the transcript.

THE CRITERION OF COHERENCE

According to Main and Goldwyn (1992) the definition of coherence is "a connection or congruity arising from some common principle or relationship; consistency; connectedness of thought such that parts of the discourse are clearly related, form a logical whole or are suitable or suited and adapted to context" (p. 34). Main and Goldwyn suggest that coherence of the transcript can be assessed by the yardstick of imagining that a naive listener would be able to make sense of the sentences and there is no great or obvious contradiction in the content. The interview is considered to be coherent if it is not really hard to follow and the reader does not find himself confused or in violent disagreement with the speaker except in one or two isolated instances. Thus Main and Goldwyn's definition of coherence is fairly broad.

In making the overall categorisation various other subscales help guide the rater's thinking in paying attention to specific elements of the discourse and content of the narrative. These subscales include criteria for incoherence such as dysfluency and distancing, as well as the subscales for the representation of accounts of unloving behaviour, experiences of trauma and abuse, the resolution of mourning, and the presence of metacognitive monitoring. The rating scales are quantified

and are set out with descriptive criteria on a nine point scale. For instance the criterion for a rating of the second highest level of coherence is as follows:

The transcript lacks some element of coherency, perhaps it is not flowing, perhaps there are occasional incoherencies or contradictions or perhaps some effort at interpretation is required now and then. Nonetheless, it has definite aspects of positive coherence and the speaker seems usually collaborative and truthful (p. 40).

The concept of coherence as outlined by Main and Goldwyn, contains Grice's maxims which are then further operationalised by these authors in terms of rating scales that form the subscales. Grice's maxims of coherence have been briefly outlined in the previous theoretical chapter and are elaborated upon in greater detail below. The subscales that stem from these maxims are presented thereafter.

GRICE'S MAXIMS

Grices' maxims of coherence refer to the quality of truthfulness in having evidence for what you say, the maxim of quantity in being succinct and yet complete, relevance and the maxim of manner in having a clear orderly manner (Main & Goldwyn, 1992).

MAXIM OF QUALITY

The maxim of quality gives importance to "having evidence for what you say" and being truthful. Contradictions that are unrecognised or uncorrected by an interviewee render a transcript incoherent. This includes contradictions between the abstract, generalised or semantic level of description of attachment figures and the accounts of experiences which fail to support these assertions. These are obvious when the

interviewee describes his mother as wonderful and then remembers being beaten. It also includes rapid oscillations of viewpoint for instance “It was dreadful, no it was great” (Main & Goldwyn, 1992, p. 36).

MAXIM OF QUANTITY

The maxim of quantity refers to being succinct yet complete. This maxim has been ignored when far too much information is given than is required, the interviewee talks at too great a length and far past the requirements of the question. This may occur “when the interviewee appears to be lost in his own thoughts/memories/evaluations or else is engaged in an attempt to persuade the listener rather than converse with her” (Main & Goldwyn, 1992, p. 37).

MAXIM OF RELATION AND RELEVANCE

The maxim of relation and relevance is not heeded when the interviewee departs from the interview topic, either seemingly deliberately interjecting or substituting topics which are irrelevant or simply wandering from topic to topic seemingly indeliberately and by association. A few examples of disconnected thinking are:

- When there “is a direct avoidance of an interview query as when a subject brings up a completely irrelevant topic” (Main & Goldwyn, 1992, p. 37).
- It can occur as “a diversion from the middle of what had begun as an appropriate response” (Main & Goldwyn, 1992, p. 37).
- There is “a substitution of speech with a memorised, rhetorical or eulogistic quality in place of giving a freshly constructed response” (Main & Goldwyn, 1992, p. 37).

- The speaker “loses track of the question completely” (Main & Goldwyn, 1992, p. 37).

MAXIM OF CLARITY AND ORDER

Main and Goldwyn (1992) present various types of speech that result in a lack of clarity and order. Some examples of this are invasions into the speech such as intrusions of information which interrupt the flow of ideas. Also lapses made by the interviewee in assuming that there is a shared understanding between the interviewee and interviewer that are substitutes for explicitness, such as attempts to elicit interviewer agreement rather than to specify what really happened or what the effect was. Other examples of the lack of clarity and order include:

- Repeated bits of speech such as “you know” used very frequently.
- Entangled difficult to decipher run on sentences which are difficult to follow and essentially incoherent.
- Sentences which are left unfinished such as “That was some vacation. It was during the time that my parents ... When I got back from that vacation I started high-school” (Main & Goldwyn, 1992, p.38).
- Lapses into jargon or professional (pseudo-psychological jargon) as a substitution for real description of events or their effects.

Main and Goldwyn have incorporated a range of other scales some of which are relevant to Fred’s interview material. Below is a selection of some of the scales from Main and Goldwyn’s list.

OTHER MILD FORMS OF INCOHERENCE - DISTANCING AND DYSFLUENCIES

Distancing is defined as the use of “you” which is common and does not render an interview difficult to follow. It is considered to be a mild form of incoherence. An example of distancing is “When I was five my mother started to work but *you* don’t want your mother to work yet at that age” (Main & Goldwyn, 1992, p. 38).

Dysfluent speech is indicative of difficulties in selecting the right word or phrase or starting a sentence “ I...I...I think” or “It was just ... well, not, well ...” (Main & Goldwyn, 1992, p. 38). Main and Goldwyn state that the dysfluent speaker ultimately does not complete the sentence. Dysfluency is not in itself a marked form of incoherence and does not mean there is a passivity of discourse. Passivity of discourse refers to incomplete sentences where the meaning is left hanging.

DISTINGUISHING UNLOVING FROM REJECTING

Main and Goldwyn consider that many individuals trained in clinical or professional work utilise the terms “unloving” and “rejecting” interchangeably. For the purposes of the Adult Attachment Interview system being unloving and being rejecting are not synonymous. A highly rejecting parent will inevitably be unloving but parents can be unloving in ways which do not have the effect of shifting attention away from the parent and from the attachment (e.g. by being unloving and involving/role reversing). Thus a highly involving parent can be scored as very unloving but not at all rejecting.

In this classification system it is regarded as unloving for a parent to either “a) foster, heighten or utilise the child’s dependence and attention for oneself (involvement/role reversal) or b) to attempt to shift the child’s attention away from the self even in circumstances in which the child

needs or approaches the parent (rejection). In this system, however, only b) is termed rejection of attachment” (Main & Goldwyn, 1992, p.13).

CURRENT INVOLVED/INVOLVING PREOCCUPYING ANGER

One example of current involved or preoccupying anger is that slight annoyance is rated when the interviewee describes or evaluates one or several events in conjunction with some expression of annoyance. For instance if the speaker says in an irritated tone, “ I can’t believe she did that” (Main & Goldwyn, 1992, p. 54). This is contrasted with strongly involved or involving anger where there is a tendency to blame the parent entirely for difficulties and the parent is addressed during the discourse in an angry manner.

METACOGNITIVE MONITORING

Main and Goldwyn (1992) describe metacognitive monitoring as the ability to monitor and report on the processes of thinking and recall which take place while the interview is in progress. This may include the monitoring of possible logical contradictions, possible erroneous personal biases or the fallibility of personal memory. Metacognitive thinking is evidence of thinking about one’s own mind or one’s own thought processes, rather than simply reflecting on experiences with parents or with attachment figures generally.

Speech indicating metacognitive process is fresh speech. A speaker who says “I tend to find myself falling back into old patterns” may have learned this phrase in therapy or in a speech community in which this phraseology is dominant (Main & Goldwyn, 1992, p. 67). Main and Goldwyn assert that the Adult Attachment Interview is not an ideal context in which to assess monitoring processes because it is difficult to determine whether the speaker is or was thinking actively or spontaneously. They comment

that no evidence of metacognitive monitoring during the Adult Attachment Interview is the score most frequently given.

Metacognitive thinking includes a recognition of the following concepts:

APPEARANCE REALITY DISTINCTION.

The appearance-reality distinction includes a sense that one's knowledge may not be complete or certain because of the possibility that one's attitude is changing. This distinction is based on the idea that things may not be as they appear and indeed appearances are never certain.

REPRESENTATIONAL DIVERSITY

Representational diversity includes two aspects that are listed below :

- The same thing might appear differently to different people.
- There is a recognition of the occurrence of representations change in the self i.e. "what I think today I did not think yesterday, hence what I think today I might not think tomorrow" (Main & Goldwyn, 1992, p. 68).

COHERENCE OF MIND

Main and Goldwyn take into account that the interviewee may have unusual or bizarre beliefs which are extremely different to the rater's own assessment of reality. Beliefs such as meeting with a loved person in the afterlife are not considered to be incoherent.

MOURNING

Main and Goldwyn refer to Bowlby's (1998) definition of mourning. Bowlby identifies healthy mourning as "the successful effort of an individual to accept both a change has occurred in his external world and that he is required to make corresponding changes in his internal representational world and to *reorganise* and perhaps to *reorient* his attachment behaviour accordingly (1992, p. 77). Thus as Bowlby suggested in the case of healthy mourning the period of painful pining and searching for the lost person is completed when the bereaved recognises the impossibility of 'finding' the lost figure in the external environment and becomes re-organised and re-oriented towards the environment as it now stands.

FAILED MOURNING

This would be suspected when the interviewee dismisses a serious and major loss as a blessing which has no unfavourable effects. Main and Goldwyn note that where there has been a dismissal of experiences of loss this seems to appear most often in the narratives of parents of avoidant infants.

Some mild indices for failed mourning in terms of discourse analysis are:

- Unfinished sentences are considered weaker indices of unresolved grief.
- Sudden changes of topic or moves away from the topic are also considered weaker indices.

Main and Goldwyn's description of resolved mourning where there is no evidence of disorganisation or disorientation in discussions of loss is as follows:

The interviewee may state she felt sad at the time or may dismiss the loss in a detached way, but it is clear that all reactions to the loss are either completed or are being prevented from access and that it has no particular influence on thinking, feeling or behaviour at this time (Main & Goldwyn, 1992, p. 77).

Main and Goldwyn state that this rating is rare with respect to major attachment figures.

UNRESOLVED TRAUMA OTHER THAN LOSS

This classification is made when there has been abusive, threatening or very frightening behaviour of an attachment figure. This rating is not given in situations where there is currently,

Some continuous mild fearfulness regarding the parent's behaviour but rather in circumstances when there is continuing cognitive-affective disorganisation and thus disorientation is manifest in unfounded fear, unfounded guilt and /or unsystematic irrational thought (Main & Goldwyn, 1992, p. 91).

According to Main and Goldwyn this includes oscillations such as it did happen/ it did not happen where there is a clear report of abuse and denial that it was abuse.

An example from the rating scale includes the following rating in which the interviewee's viewpoint regarding the abuse and the abusive figure seems largely although not entirely settled.

The interviewee is not bound to the past through the emotions of anger and pain that arise during the interview or preoccupation with the experience as this seems to represent a simple return of these events and feelings to memory and does not indicate that the subject is usually bound to the past through these emotions (Main & Goldwyn, 1992, p.93)

DISMISSAL OF TRAUMATIC EXPERIENCES

A dismissal of the traumatic experience is defined as not a denial of occurrence but dismissal of its import. Here the interviewee may see the abuse as the right thing for the parent to have done or as having toughened and profited him.

RESOLUTION OF ABUSE

This involves a recognition that the child is never deserving of abuse, also the interviewee attempts to understand why the incidents occurred and may have made some attempt to forgive and understand the parent(s). According to Main and Goldwyn (1992) forgiveness entails a) recognising wrong doing, b) recognising that it was not deserved while c) feeling compassion for the perpetrator.

I have listed the 18 questions from the Adult Attachment Interview which were developed by Main and Goldwyn (1992). In the Adult Attachment Interview training which I received I was taught to ask the following semi-structured questions:

QUESTIONS INCLUDED IN THE ADULT ATTACHMENT INTERVIEW

1. Could you start by helping me understand your early family situation, and where you lived and so on? If you could say what your family did at various times for a living? Did you see much of your grandparents when you were little? If the interviewee never met his grandparents, had they died before he was born? How old were his parents when the grandparent died? Did the interviewee's parent know anything about this grandparent? Were there other persons living in household? Are the parents' siblings now scattered or living nearby?
2. I'd like you to describe your relationship with your parents as a young child, from as far back as you can remember.
3. I'd like you to choose five adjectives to describe your childhood relationship with your mother. Then I'd like to ask you why you chose them.
4. Now I'd like you to choose five adjectives that reflect your childhood relationship with your father. I'm going to ask you again why you chose them.
5. To which parent do you feel the closest and why? Why isn't there this feeling with the other parent?
6. When you were upset as child, what would you do? a) When you were upset emotionally when you were little, what would you do? Can you illustrate with specific incidents? b). Can you remember what would happen when you were a bit physically hurt. Again do any specific incidents come to mind? c) Where you ever ill when you were little? Do you remember what would happen?

7. What is the first time you remember being separated from you parents? How did you or they respond? Are there any other separations that stand out in your mind?
8. Did you ever feel rejected as a young child? Of course looking back on it now you may realise it was not really rejection, but what I'm trying to ask about here is whether you remember ever having felt rejected in childhood? How old were you when you first felt this way and what did you do? Why do you think your parent did those things - do you think she/he realised s/he was rejecting you?
9. Were your parents ever threatening with you in any way - maybe for discipline, or maybe just jokingly? For example did your parents ever threaten to leave you or send you away from home? A few people have memories of some kind of abuse. Did anything like this ever happen to you or in your family? How old were you at the time, Did it happen frequently? Do you feel this experience affects you now as an adult? Does it influence your approach to your child?
10. How do you think these experiences with your parents affected your adult personality? Are there any aspects to your early experiences that you feel were a set-back to your development?
11. Why do you think your parents behaved as they did, during your childhood?
12. Were there any other adults with whom you were close, like parents, as a child? Or were there any other adults who were especially important to you?
13. Did you experience the loss of a parent or other close loved one (sibling or close family member) while you were a young child?

Could you tell me about the circumstances and how old you were at the time? How did you respond at that time? Have your feelings regarding this death changed much over time? Were you allowed to attend the funeral and what was this like for you? If there was a loss of a parent or sibling - what would you say was the effect on remaining parent or household and how did this change over the years? Would you say this loss has had an effect on your adult personality? How does it affect your approach to your own child?

14. a). Did you lose any other important persons during your childhood? (Same queries as above). b). Have you lost other close persons in adult years. (Same queries as above).
15. Have there been many changes in your relationship with parents (or remaining parent) since childhood? What is your relationship with your parents like for you now as an adult?
16. How do you respond now in terms of feelings when you separate from your child(ren)? Do you ever feel worried about your own child(ren)?
17. If you had three wishes for your child(ren), twenty years from now, what would these be? I'm thinking partly of the kind of future you'd like to see for your child(ren).
18. Is there any particular thing which you feel you learned above all from your own childhood experiences? What would you hope your child(ren) might have learned from his/their experience of being parented by you?

The next chapter demonstrates my application of the discourse analysis techniques based on the Adult Attachment Interview that I conducted with Fred.

CHAPTER FOUR

DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF THE ADULT ATTACHMENT INTERVIEW

The Adult Attachment Interview which was conducted with Fred, the interviewee, is presented below. I describe various aspects of the process and the content of the interview in terms of Attachment Theory constructs. To give the reader some background about Fred I have also included a modified summary of Fred's biographical details. Excerpts of the interview are given to reflect Fred's different states of mind at different times in the interview. These states of mind are described in terms of the Attachment Theory constructs of autonomous-secure, dismissive and enmeshed modes of relating. I have also drawn on relevant themes that had arisen in the course of the psychotherapy that contextualise and clarify some of the attachment issues that are discussed.

THE PSYCHOTHERAPY CONTEXT

The nature of the relationship between Fred and myself is significant as this is the context in which Fred's interactive style has been described. According to the model of Attachment Theory informing this study Fred's modes of relating will reflect his various "internal working models". Liotti notes that the concept of an internal working model is "the notion of transference revisited" (1995, p. 344). Therefore Fred's transference to me may be a useful tool for accessing and exploring his feelings about his primary attachment figures.

TRANSFERENCE

Fred's perception of me or transference onto me also contained his complex feelings about his mother. Similarly my response to him or counter-transference have been influenced by my relationships. Where relevant I have included my own responses and contribution to the

dialogue. Two important aspects to the transference which I will first discuss were the factors of age and gender

AGE

My age influenced the way Fred related to me. He said he thought of me as being like his daughters and that through me he felt he was learning about the younger generation from whom he felt fairly estranged.

GENDER

Fred's attitude towards women is relevant since he felt highly uncomfortable talking to women. He was intrigued about my personal life and wanted to know whether I was married, divorced or single. In this way I represented the "unknown" woman as he did not know much about my background.

His transference response to me was helpful in the therapy as it allowed me to understand his extreme anxiety in terms of his insecure relationship with his mother which we were then able to discuss and I was able to reflect how uncomfortable he felt in relation to me because of these feelings. He had felt that he did not get to know or understand his mother's thoughts or feelings. I commented on how difficult it was for him to even talk to me because of these powerful feelings from the past.

He described that his mother had not listened to him or if she did listen she disavowed his reality so that he felt he was not being heard or recognised. For instance his mother tended to discount his achievements and had not believed he had formed a company or bought a new car. He described how she would take his wife aside and get confirmation that these achievements were valid. The effect of his mother's disconfirmation of himself was that he then distrusted that I listened to and accepted what he said. He commented:

You see if, I told you something now at the back of my mind I may think you don't believe me. And it may hamper me in telling you because I may think 'so well what's the good of telling this story if you aren't going to believe it.' And of course you won't, but because it goes back, so even now I tend to, sort of establish the facts so that there can't be a doubt, that this story is right. And that's not nice because its good to talk freely. But I'm coming there. (Trans, p. 27).

Fred is able to rationally distinguish that I am different to his mother and will believe what he says but his internal working model of relationships tends to restrict him from feeling that he will be heard. In turn my counter-transference relationship toward Fred is significant in terms of the way we related.

MY COUNTER TRANSFERENCE RESPONSE

I generally felt very positive about Fred. I regarded him as a friendly paternal man whom I perceived as being intelligent and inquisitive. At times he was fairly blunt and would say somewhat inappropriate remarks to me, often commenting either critically or in a complimentary way about my appearance. There was a naive quality that accompanied his comments and I felt that it was always possible to discuss this type of intrusive interaction with him. In turn he was very open to exploring how he came across and was concerned about "not putting his foot in it" as he encountered similar difficulties in social situations with women. There seemed to be a therapeutic fit between us where a frank yet comfortable atmosphere prevailed in which we both enjoyed the therapeutic dialogue.

LENGTHINESS AS A WAY OF SUSTAINING A CONNECTION

The most striking aspect of the interview with Fred, was its length which took about two hours to conduct. The interview schedule usually takes an hour. I had included some extra questions about Fred's adult attachments to find out about his relationship with his wife and so I had contributed towards a slight increase in the length of the standard interview. The rather long interview with Fred can be understood to reflect his wish to engage with me in a very prolonged and full way. Fred's lengthy style of speaking reflects a breach of Grice's maxim of quantity in not being very succinct (Grice cited in Main & Goldwyn, 1992). This is indicative of an enmeshed-preoccupied mode of relating.

One of the primary aims of the interview was to find out what Fred's patterns of discourse in relation to me would be and how these reflected his attachment style based on his internal working model. Hence I did not wish to be too intrusive or directive in intervening in the process by limiting his responses. I was responsive and friendly throughout the dialogue. I shall describe the nature of the interaction as it differed from a psychotherapy session in a number of ways and so constituted a new way of relating in contrast to the therapeutic relationship.

A DIFFERENT TYPE OF CONVERSATION

The length of the interview can also be attributed to the difference in boundaries between a psychotherapy session with a set time limit and the interview situation which did not have a time restriction. The roles Fred and I took and the form of the dialogue were different to the usual psychotherapy session. Another difference was that the discussion was structured in terms of the questionnaire schedule and so was more directed than a typical psychotherapy session. After the interview he said he enjoyed the structure and safety the set questions provided and wished we could always conduct therapy in this manner. His wish for

greater containment and safety in interactions is significant and reflects his discomfort with contexts that are less structured and predictable.

Related to the theme of Fred's sense of having greater containment through structure was the greater degree of connectedness that arose through having a longer period of talking together in the interview. In the therapy sessions Fred said that there was never enough time to discuss everything that he would like to talk about. The boundaries and limits of the therapy hour were experienced by him as frustrating. The ending of the therapy session entailed a temporary loss of intimacy for Fred which evoked feelings of being disconnected. In the longer period of time together in the interview context, Fred seemed to warm up and feel more comfortable in disclosing information about himself. For instance he shared with me new information about himself and his life experiences. The greater degree of self disclosure was probably not only a factor of having more time but was also due to the interview schedule specifically eliciting information about his past.

Another difference between psychotherapy and the interview was the audio taping of the interview.

THE EFFECT OF A THIRD EAR

The atmosphere of the interview was different in a number of ways to the atmosphere of the psychotherapy sessions. As the interview was audio recorded this may have brought in a feeling of there being a "third ear" or invisible observer, and so the usual sense of privacy was altered. Having the session recorded also induced a greater formality and this imbued the occasion with a sense of more than everyday importance that may have been both positive and somewhat anxiety provoking for Fred. Regarding his sense of pride and importance he had said he felt proud that I'd asked him to participate in the research as he thought that I had selected him because I regarded what he had to say as worthwhile. I suspect that

Fred felt slightly nervous as was I in having the interview audio taped but we began to relax once the discussion was underway and it absorbed our attention.

FRED'S MOTIVATION TO PARTICIPATE IN THE RESEARCH

Another of Fred's goals for participating in the research was that he felt he was helping others as he was very appreciative of having psychotherapy and felt it had been beneficial for him. In this way he wanted others who had undergone similar difficulties to himself understand this and so be able to receive the appropriate help they needed.

THE CONTEXT

The interview was conducted at the hospital outpatient's department in the same room used for the psychotherapy sessions. During the interview we sat in different places to the usual therapy seating arrangement in order to be close to the plug where the tape recorder was placed. We sat nearer each other than we normally do, thus bringing about a greater physical proximity and form of closeness. In retrospect I thought that this proximity may have induced more anxiety for Fred that is specific to his feeling of discomfort in relating to women more intimately.

BIOGRAPHICAL HISTORY

I will give a modified version of Fred's history to protect his identity. Fred is a 70 year old man who came from a physically abusive background in that his father would beat him upon his mother's instruction. He grew up during World War Two and often lived on the streets as a street-child to avoid the beatings he received at home. He is a middle child and one of five children, with an older sister, two older brothers and a younger brother. His first marriage lasted 10 years in which he had married a

physically disabled woman, whom I shall call Elaine. He parted from her in an amicable way. He remarried and had been married for thirty eight years to his second wife, whom I have called Irene. They have six children altogether, each having had two children from their previous marriages. Fred ran a successful business with Irene and they are currently an upper middle class income family. Fred is a balding man with a jovial smile and is of average build. He is generally friendly in his demeanour.

REASON FOR REFERRAL FOR PSYCHOTHERAPY

Fred was referred to me as an outpatient at a hospital where he had previously been admitted as an inpatient at the psychiatric unit. He had been diagnosed as having had an episode of depression as well as post-traumatic stress disorder. In the previous year he had been hijacked in his car and had then shown some symptoms of depression and anxiety such as tearfulness and anxiety. He also had a history of being addicted to gambling. He was admitted to hospital after his second wife could not tolerate his gambling and had left him and he sought help as he felt extremely depressed.

When he entered psychotherapy Fred had been fairly apprehensive about the process as this was his first experience of being in psychotherapy. From the start he engaged well in the therapy and showed great commitment in attending his sessions and in thinking about what was discussed during the sessions.

The presentation of the interview material is based mainly on the chronology of Fred's story as it unfolded. I have interwoven my analysis of Fred's narrative with the discourse analysis themes and so there is a two-fold organisation of the material.

ANALYSIS OF THE INTERVIEW

ISSUES OF BOUNDARIES AND WAYS OF RELATING INTIMATELY

As shall be seen in the interview Fred's tendency to call me "Judes" at one level indicates his friendliness but it is also slightly inappropriate to the context of therapy which is a more formal relationship. His wish to regard the therapeutic relationship as a social relationship can be understood as an attempt to alter the therapeutic boundaries and redefine the relationship. Fred had often told me that he would like to be considered my friend. Fred regretted that he did not have any friends aside from his relatives as he had previously mainly been preoccupied with gambling and so had never formed close friendships. I had discussed the nature of therapy with him and explained the distinction that this was not a social relationship and he had rationally accepted these boundaries. In addition his calling me "Judes" may have given him some control over the process of relating and so allowed him to feel less vulnerable in being in the position of the client and so reflects his way of equalising the relationship.

THE DANCE OF CLOSENESS AND DISTANCE

There seemed to be a subtle ebb and flow of intimacy and distance which continued through the interview. This dance of intimacy manifested at an emotional level as at times I found myself tremendously moved by the difficult experiences he had been through and felt great compassion for him. At other times I felt pushed away by his overly lengthy answers and slightly self-praising or self-sufficient attitude.

BEGINNING THE INTERVIEW

I started the interview by asking Fred about his family of origin. I tended to respond a great deal to what he said with the classical therapeutic "mmh" or "uh-hu" type of acknowledgements that are included in the

transcript along with his speech. My verbal responses were to indicate to Fred that I was following what he said because of his anxiety of not feeling heard. In retrospect I felt that Fred elicited an increased level of these verbal acknowledgements from me as a form of reassurance.

FRED'S FAMILY OF ORIGIN

In commencing with the interview I first asked Fred to tell me about his family and he replied:

O.K, Jude, I, I was born into a very poor family. "uh-humm", Uh a good family , a morally good family. "Mmh", but poor, with old fashioned ideas of, of discipline and, and today we, we would *probably* [my emphasis] call that child abuse (Transcript, p.1)

As Fred answers the question about his background he gives a description of the *probable* child abuse he experienced.

UNCERTAIN REALITIES

His word choice denotes his hesitancy to describe his abusive experience as a plain fact, perhaps because this is too painful to acknowledge. If language is the medium through which the world is labelled and defined Fred's use of a word such as "probable" tends to blur and create some confusion about what is considered to be a part of his reality. Main and Goldwyn (1992) observe that describing events as being probable reflects an "as if" quality to the speaker's experience. The word "probable" indicates the speaker is generalising information about the parent based on probabilities rather than thinking about the situation in terms of the specific details. The generalisation and blurring of meaning is both indicative of an enmeshed and dismissive characteristic which is further illustrated below.

THINKING ABOUT ANOTHER'S PERSPECTIVE

Fred then described his experience of the physical abuse that occurred in his childhood and how he felt it has had a detrimental effect upon his life. He said:

Um, I was severely beaten, but called, called it hidings, eeh, which today wouldn't be acceptable. But nevertheless in those days it was perhaps what my father thought was a good thing (Trans, p.1).

Again his choice of words is significant as he states that he was *severely beaten* but that his parents called this *hidings*. According to Main and Goldwyn (1992) adopting another's perspective instead of one's own is a characteristic of an enmeshed mode of relating. In his parent's terms the severity of his punishing treatment was minimised and instead this was seen as being beneficial for him. However, in describing his parent's perspective he does not blindly take their view. Instead there is a thoughtful quality to his tone that indicates an autonomous-secure reflective mode of thinking. Moreover, he remembers how his experience was mislabelled by others as he then gives his own words and meaning to being so severely beaten. He is able to validate his own "lived experience" (White & Epston, 1990).

Fred is clear in his understanding of how brutally he felt treated and what occurred but he appeared to be somewhat uncertain about what his father thought, by saying "it was perhaps what my father thought was a good thing". Here he seems to find it hard to understand what his father thought about the way he brutally beat his own child. The way in which Fred expressed his thoughts about his father are slightly convoluted and incoherent and so he created some confusion in meaning as to whether these "hidings" or "severe beatings" which he received would be considered as acceptable.

AUTONOMOUS-SECURE MODES OF THINKING

Fred continued to answer the initial question about his family background by providing a vivid description and overview of his childhood and so he showed he was able to summarise his point of view and reach a conclusion. According to Main and Goldwyn (1992) moving beyond the level of description to formulating a conclusion based on the available information is one of the criteria that indicates an autonomous-secure state of mind. Another criteria of autonomous-secure thinking is the ability to integrate emotion with a degree of objectivity which Fred demonstrates. For instance he acknowledges the impact and effect of his upbringing on himself in reviewing his experiences. He does not deny the effect of these traumatic experiences and how this has influenced his life causing him "damage in later life". He is insightful without being dismissive or bitter and complaining. He reflects:

It did do a lot of damage to me mentally in so far as, it, it shunted me off of a normal childhood. A happy normal, normal childhood onto a disorganised childhood where I don't have any good memories of a childhood. I don't actually think I had a childhood. "Mmh". I lived with a lot of fear and a lot of trauma. "Right". And a lot of expectations of being thrashed and *I didn't really know right or wrong* [my emphasis]. because as, as my parents thought right other people may not have thought that's right. And so (cough) I didn't have a good childhood, or early childhood "Mmh" or happy childhood (Trans p.1).

SOME PREOCCUPATION WITH TRAUMA

There is a lot of repetition of the word 'childhood' that reflects Fred's preoccupation with what his childhood was like. He is somewhat immersed or bound up in the emotion of these experiences as indicated by his repetitive word usage that has a circular quality as he tries to clarify

his thoughts on this topic. Nevertheless, his tone indicates that he is able to be fairly objective in thinking about how difficult and disorganising his experiences were as a child. As a child his expectations of being beaten indicates his continuous concern and preoccupation with being hurt. He shows a high level of insight in understanding the effect of what it was like to live in continual fear and how traumatic this was for him, that indicates an autonomous-secure state of mind with some preoccupation about the trauma he felt he was subjected to in his past.

REBELLION AGAINST AUTHORITY FIGURES

Fred then described the effects of these primary relationships on his later work relationships. He said:

And it caused me untold damage in later life, because, um the authority that was placed on me when I was young "Uh-hu", I rebelled against it from, from an early age, hence until I got into my own business I wasn't able to keep a job, because whatever anybody told me "Mmh", I used to think, well you know that's not right (Trans, p.1).

Fred stated how he wasn't able to keep a job because he engaged in conflict with authority figures. This attitude of defiance may stem from being forced into a submissive position on an arbitrary basis by his parents. It appears he did not have a concept of a benign authority figure and he tended to react to anyone in a position of power by being afraid.

Later in the interview he explained that he would react to authority figures by creating a fight. In this way he projected his sense of emotional vulnerability into other contexts in particular into his relationship with his boss. By having a physical fight he would re-enact the conflict he expected which at some level was also what he most feared in relationships. For Fred conflict may be experienced both as a point of

connection with others and as immensely frightening and disrupting causing internal disorganisation of his thoughts. He is insightful and recognised that this conflictual model of relating has had a profound effect upon him throughout his life.

SOFT DETERMINISM OF RELATIONSHIPS

Fred was able to think about how the past had affected him which aptly fits with the concept of soft determinism which Bowlby (1998) described. Bowlby recognised the ongoing influence of primary relationships on other relationships. Further along in the interview Fred said:

Your formative years, your early years ... is the planned road for you to walk on. What you've learned as a youth, as a child, is how you're going to walk when you're older. And I carry lots of scars and ill feelings, insubordinations and hatred all, going, going back. And I know its wrong to blame the past, but, but I don't have any other thing to blame. You know, I know its true because I, I experienced it (Trans, p. 18).

Here Fred is able to validate his own thoughts about his experiences and is tentative in attributing blame towards his parents. He feels angry about the past although he is cautious in not wanting to be destructive by unjustly blaming his parents for the "scars" he developed during this formative period of his life.

CONFLICT REGARDING FORGIVENESS AND ONGOING ANGER

During the interview he is able to think through some of his ambivalent feelings in his relationship with his parents. He attempts to resolve his feelings of anger towards his mother. He said:

... When I was very young, but I don't know how young, I told her , even at the pain I knew I was going to get. I told her I was never going to go to her funeral. And it stayed with me and I never went (Trans, p. 7).

The above excerpt illustrates Fred's extreme devaluing of his mother's passing away as well as his disconnected relationship with her. By keeping his promise of not attending her funeral he demonstrated his resistance to her and maintained his position of distance by making an extreme statement of rejection. During the course of the interview he returned to the issue of his mixed feelings towards his mother. He felt intense anger towards her which conflicted with his sense of social norms and religious beliefs in which children are expected to love and forgive their parents. Initially, in the interview he stated that he loved his parents despite the abuse. He had said:

And I love my mother and father nevertheless, even though if I think of today's child abuse, then I think of what I had, oy, then they should have been locked up permanently (Trans, p. 4).

In the above example despite Fred's feelings of anger and hurt in relation to his parents' abusive behaviour he does express some compassion towards his parents stating that he loves them despite what they did to him.

A PARTIAL RESOLUTION OF ABUSE

Fred showed an autonomous state of mind in evaluating his experience and trying to make sense of his past. According to Main and Goldwyn's (1992) criteria Fred had managed to resolve some of his feelings of being abused by recognising that a child is never deserving of abuse in that his parents should have been contained and he should have received protection from them.

Crittenden (1994) comments that autonomous-secure individuals have a relative ease with imperfections in the self, in the parents and in others. She comments that not all individuals in this category are markedly forgiving of their parents but all are at least implicitly able to perceive both their own and their parents imperfections and all are implicitly compassionate toward others. In terms of Crittenden's criteria Fred later discussed he could forgive his father, although the same did not apply to his mother. Towards the end of the interview he expressed feelings of compassion to others especially his wife and children, as he felt remorseful for previously being so hard on his children and distant towards his wife. Fred thought through his understanding of his father's relationship to him and reformulated this showing active insight in metacognitive terms.

FRED'S RELATIONSHIP WITH HIS FATHER.

Fred describes his relationship with his father in terms of "sadness" rather than the "badness" which he associated with his relationship with his mother (Trans, p.7). Initially he regards his father in a more favourable light and sees his father;

[...] as being the stick that my mother was using. I don't think he enjoyed it because there were times when he did ask me a little bit about uhh, myself, you know maybe my boxing or something. Not much, but more than she would have done (Trans, p. 7).

In the above excerpts Fred regards women as controlling and domineering men for their own purposes, so that men are seen as being helpless in relation to women. Moreover he sees his father as being less neglectful of him than his mother was. He continued with his description of his father and said:

He also worked very hard, he worked 12 hours because there was a war and because there was short staff and he came home tired and uh, he didn't have much comforts. He used to ride a bicycle to work and he also had a stressful kind of life. "Mmh". So, uh again, I, I never remember being held by my father or ... (Trans, p. 7).

Fred does not complete the last sentence when describing his father's lack of affection and demonstrativeness to him. He understands that his father was preoccupied and unavailable to him because of his work. However, in not finishing the sentence, he does not seem to be able to draw the conclusion about his father's own possible negative feelings towards him and that his father was not just mindlessly obeying his mother in acting as a vehicle of his mother's hostility. This lack of sentence completion indicates an enmeshed mode of thinking at this point.

At a later point in the interview Fred shows metacognitive thinking in reformulating his earlier understanding of his father's behaviour towards him. He then said "I don't remember my father being a warm person, and I know I'm making an excuse that he was always under my mother" (Trans, p. 12). Here Fred shows fresh thinking in reconsidering the evidence. In the following subsection the patterns of enmeshed thinking are discussed.

THE SECURITY OF ENGAGING IN THINKING IN THE CONTEXT OF THERAPY

One of the aspects of therapy that Fred said he valued is that he is able to think through his feelings and work out what he really feels towards his parents. He said that he is able to forgive his father but at this point he is not able to do the same to his mother. He said:

My father ja, ja, him I can. Although he did it all, the physical , ja, I can forgive him. But, but my mother its very difficult. I can't. Because I don't see any reason. ...[my edit]. And I know if God punishes me for it, I'll have to take that bit. I can't find a compromise for my mother (Trans, p 10).

Fred then thoughtfully added that he could review his feelings about his mother in therapy .

You know it keeps showing itself, particularly now with my therapy. "uh-hu" Where I've got a balanced view of things. "Mmh". It keeps coming up and I can't make, nonsensical excuses for it. I must look at it straight, otherwise I won't get through it (Trans, p. 10).

It appears that Fred is beginning to put the pieces of a puzzle together and integrate experiences he had previously pushed out of mind. In the context of therapy he recognised his anger towards his mother based on the pain which he felt in relation to her. Despite many instances of Fred's ability to think clearly in relation to his experiences with his parents he also tended at times to become entangled and muddled in his thinking which are presented below.

CHARACTERISTICS OF ENMESHED MODES OF THINKING

The enmeshed modes of thinking which Fred used at various times during the interview included: oscillations, assumptions about having enmeshed minds and a wish for merged minds, confusions in making distinctions and understanding boundaries, past-present type of slips, and being pre-occupied by the trauma of physical abuse and anxiety in relation to parental figures. These modes of thinking are illustrated below.

OSCILLATIONS

The ambivalent quality of oscillating between two opposing positions and not drawing a semantic conclusion based on the evidence available is part of an entangled way of thinking. For example Fred said: "I don't remember uuh, being loved although I was loved, but being loved" (Trans, p. 1).

Main and Goldwyn (1992) define oscillations as the rapid succession of contradictory evaluations which Fred articulates in first saying he did not feel loved and then adding that he was actually loved. This vacillating evaluative quality can be understood as Fred not wanting to draw a conclusion based on what has happened to him. At this point it is too difficult for him to state directly that he felt he was not loved as a clear statement, which at a later stage in the interview he does state in more direct terms, although he still used the passive tense which reflects some distancing from what is being said. For instance he then said "I wouldn't have had any love from my mother" (Trans, p. 6).

ENMESHED MINDS

Fred would also frequently repeat bits of speech such as the term "you know" as if to assume a shared understanding. This verbal mannerism had the effect of drawing me in and so connected me to him. According to Main and Goldwyn (1992) it is a form of attempting to elicit interviewer agreement that is characteristic of an enmeshed way of relating. I found that there was generally an intensity to Fred's way of engaging with me that I discuss further below.

MORE THAN ENMESHMENT - A DESIRE FOR MERGED MINDS

It seemed to me that Fred's intense level of relating reflected his wish to share as much as possible about some of his experiences with me. I attributed his need was for me to fully understand his lived experience. His wish was that I could share his *actual* experiences. It was as though words could not do adequate justice to reality. This was a theme that had emerged in the therapy when he spoke about my not knowing what it was like to have gambled and how hard it was for him to give this up. I had said to Fred I thought he had shown great will power in having given up gambling and reinforced he had felt good about being more invested in his family relationships. His frustration is significant as it points to how he felt deprived of having this type of intersubjective understanding at a much earlier stage in his life. He described that there was no "inter discussion with my father or my mother" (Trans, p. 1). The theme of no dialogue will be discussed in more detail further in the interview. First I will discuss the issue of merged minds and merged concepts that was evident in Fred's thinking.

CONFUSION ABOUT DISTINCTIONS AND BOUNDARIES

Near the beginning of the interview Fred said that "I didn't have any friends, by friends I mean family" (Trans, p. 1). From this comment it can be seen that Fred has difficulty making distinctions between which people belong in a particular category and whether friends or family members belong in the group associated as kin. At a cognitive level he mixed up two distinct categories that could reflect an emotional reason for his confusion based on his experience of his family members. Since he felt that his home was a hostile war zone, he then perceived some figures in his family of origin as being unfriendly and frightening. The confusion about friends and family reflects his insecure feelings in relation to his family and an internal working model in which intimate relationships are extremely threatening for him. Thus in his description of his family he

blurs boundaries and creates confusion and ambivalent meanings. By being in a muddled state he could avoid contemplating the hostility he felt was directed at him in his family environment. This rejection has a historical pattern with intergenerational roots, that is evident in his description of his grandparents.

INTERGENERATIONAL EFFECTS

I asked Fred what he knew about his grandparents and he said how his great grandparents were from different cultural backgrounds. His grandparents had eloped as his great grandparents would not accept their children's cross cultural marriage. The conflict within his grandparents' extended family is reflected in the emotional and physical distance between the family members. The quality of emotional distance in his family and in his relationships was evident for Fred when he was asked to describe his grandparents' personalities as these were depicted as "strict, rigid and cold" (Trans, p. 3). He provided an example to illustrate the emotional distance between him and his grandmother and recalled: "... But I, I can't ever remember, her ever hugging us or anything like that. Very cold "Right". But I suppose that is the way it is. Probably how I was." (Trans, p. 3).

Here the intergenerational patterns seem to have played themselves out in the scripts of emotional and physical distance which Fraiberg referred to as "ghosts in the nursery" (cited in Cicchetti and Toth, 1998, p. 290). Fred's preoccupation with gambling and his cold unavailability to his family are part of this intergenerational pattern. However, according to Fred due to the warmth and security given to his children by his second wife, he thought that his children had a loving manner in the way they parented their own children. In the interview context when discussing his family background Fred continued to be preoccupied by his anxieties in relation to his mother as shall be seen in his description of his siblings and his mother.

UNDERSTANDING FAMILY DYNAMICS

Fred relayed that his sister was highly academic and his brothers enlisted in the army, although they were aged 13 and 14 years old, they pretended to be older in order to join the war. He and his little brother remained at home. He recounts:

I was too young, I was nine when the war started, so, so I was at home at the war years and there was also a depression that had finished. Things were not good financially and in the country. [My edit]... my other, my elder brothers, came back from the war, but they weren't as scarred mentally as I was. I think and maybe I'm wrong in thinking it. But I think all that tension of the brothers being at war, *not mine but hers* [my emphasis] and my father's brothers being at war and all that tension and I think it came off on me (Trans, p. 3).

METACOGNITIVE THINKING

Fred stated his opinion in metacognitive terms as he said how he may be wrong in thinking what he does but he attributes his mother's abusive behaviour towards him as being due to her brother's involvement in the war. However, it is not the content of the insight which determines whether it is metacognitive as Main and Goldwyn (1992) note that the listener is not able to identify whether the interviewee's insight has been gained prior to the interview. The statement is metacognitive in that Fred does not assume that his formulation is correct or the only one which he explicitly articulates and so he has shown an appreciation of what Main and Goldwyn (1992) refer to as the distinction between appearance and reality. Main and Goldwyn state that the appearance-reality distinction includes a sense that one's knowledge may not be complete or certain.

In terms of the content of Fred's description of his family he has been sensitive to the power of the emotional dynamics that existed in his family. Here he was insightful in describing that he felt his older brothers were not as mentally scarred as he was when they returned from the war and that having remained in his family context he had suffered a great deal.

AN INDICATION OF UNRESOLVED TRAUMA IN TERMS OF AN OMNISCIENT MOTHER

In Fred's comment regarding his mother's own sense of loss with her brothers being at war he refers to his mother as "her". In so doing he assumed that I am following his internal thinking process and line of association. It seems that he jumped ahead in his mind when he was thinking about his mother and there is an implicit suggestion that he experienced his mother as omnipresent and as being present in both our minds so that I would automatically know who he is meant by saying "her". Although this is a very subtle indication of his anxiety about his mother, it may represent his somewhat unresolved feelings of trauma that result in some internal disorganisation and lack of clarity in his speech. The anxiety Fred expresses here about his mother, contrasts with his earlier pronouncement of loving his parents and indicates that there may be a greater degree of underlying anxiety than he rationally experiences which was evoked when he recalled how he felt as a child in relation to his mother at a specific time. According to Holmes (1995) when levels of anxiety in relation to an attachment figure become heightened there is a greater need to establish a distance from the source of terror. Fred's traumatic experiences discussed in the following analysis of detached modes of thinking reflect his need to protect himself through a variety of defence mechanisms that are apparent in his speech.

DETACHED MODE OF THINKING AND RELATING

I will provide examples of Fred's detached discourse patterns. Relevant constructs include Main and Goldwyn's (1992) distinction between rejection and neglect as different aspects of being unloved. Fred's reactions to being subjected to trauma are pertinent as these include both the "Fight and Flight" responses and "learned helplessness". Inhibited cognitions, a restriction and a lack of memory are also defences that appear as part of Fred's detached discourse patterns. Idealisation, and derogation, as well as the use of the positive wrap-up in response to having experienced adverse circumstances are also characteristic of detached forms of discourse and are evident in Fred's speech. He also has a mild form of incoherence in using depersonalised language which is identified as a way of removing oneself from being too close to painful thoughts. Ultimately his deactivation of the attachment system reflects being put in a position of having to be self-sufficient. I will give excerpts to illustrate each of these constructs.

THE CONSTRUCTS OF NEGLECT AND REJECTION

According to Main and Goldwyn (1992) neglect seems to refer to a passive disinterest in the child and rejection to an active hostile or cold response to the child. For instance they outline a scenario of a mild level of neglect and inaccessibility by a parent and state:

a parent who is inattentive, preoccupied, otherwise occupied or uninvolved with the child or is psychologically inaccessible. This is because the parent must manage a large or busy household, is depressed, or ill, or otherwise preoccupied or withdrawn psychologically (Main & Goldwyn, 1992, p. 27).

Main and Goldwyn's description of a neglecting parent can be seen as relevant to Fred's childhood circumstances. Due to the war his parents were psychologically unavailable in being preoccupied by their brothers and sons' direct involvement in the combat. In addition they were unavailable to him by having to work long hours in which they earned a meagre income. As a child Fred experienced his parent's behaviour as neglecting as well as rejecting of him.

REJECTION

Main and Goldwyn's concept of rejection involves the parent's active rebuff of the child's attempts to be close which Fred vividly describes. He explained that there was no physical intimacy or comfort provided between his family. He poignantly said:

I didn't know I had to get close, because how I knew how to get close you can like it to animals. A little sheep that's sucking on its mother, does it because its natural and normal, that's the way it is, that's how life is. Well, if I volunteered to get close to my mother and father, *she wouldn't allow it* [my emphasis] "Right, ja". It wouldn't have been acceptable. So I couldn't, I couldn't get that far. (Trans, p.13).

Fred explicitly felt there was no closeness or intimacy with his parents as he was not permitted to show his love to them. As Main (1995) observed dismissive-detached mothers recoil from touching their children which Fred has outlined in his portrayal of his mother as not allowing him to get close to her. Fred then explained that he did not think his parents were intentionally rejecting of him:

I don't think they, they had a baby called Fred, that they decided to reject. I don't think so [my emphasis]. No, I think they had the children as we would normally have them and circumstance in their

lives uh, and their ways in their early childhood, will have determined how they bring up their children (Trans, p. 13).

Here Fred doubts that his parents intentions were to mistreat him and so he makes a distinction between the appearance and reality of the situation where he felt he was rejected and considers that the rejection was not intended. He speculated that the reason for their rejecting behaviour is that: "they had a very strong feeling of making me into a decent citizen. That's what I really think their motives were, but the way they did it was unacceptable, that was it" (Trans, p. 15). Here he draws on Main and Goldwyn's (1992) concept of representational diversity in which the same event may appear differently to two people.

Fred is able to integrate his rational point of view about his parents with the distressed emotions of feeling he was treated in an unacceptable manner and shows autonomous-secure thinking in reviewing how he felt physically abused by their extreme form of disciplining him. Fred's parents appeared to target him and he recalls they never hit his brother whom he felt had a much happier childhood (Trans, p. 16). Main and Goldwyn identify that favouritism to other siblings can be seen as a parent's indirect sign of rejection of the child.

BEING TRAPPED

Fred associated not having a voice with being trapped. He described how when he was young he was not able to discuss problems in his family.

You can't offer any explanations or offer any kind of reasoning or any kind of suggestions. You can't ... even, I remember many hidings I got for answering back. They used to call it, when you're not really answering back. "Mmh". You just trying to put another point of view across. "Ja". But that was unacceptable, You know

what Dad said or what Ma said that was it. And so you were trapped (Trans, p.8).

Fred's sense of being disempowered can be understood in terms of Seligman's theory of learned helplessness (Krech, Crutchfield, Livson, Wilson & Parducci, 1982) .

LEARNED HELPLESSNESS

The despair that Fred felt at times can be seen as that similar to the animals in Seligman's experiments where a trapped dog received shocks and could not escape that led to the dog giving up and no longer resisting receiving the shocks. According to Seligman individuals seem to give up when they feel powerless to change a relatively permanent condition. Fred explains how stressed he felt because he was so trapped and how anxious he felt in anticipating how he would next be punished. He adopted a mode of enduring circumstances in order to survive them. He said he knew he could expect to be hit everyday "sometimes not as much as other times" (Trans, p. 14).

TAKING CONTROL BY FLEEING

Fred described having bruises from being beaten and how humiliating this was as he went to school where he so publicly wore the badges of his rejection. One option he had was to adopt a flight response and to run away instead of being beaten. In this process of deciding to run away he said how his mind would dart around as he evaluated his choices. He felt he did not really have a choice as he would be punished if he stayed and he would suffer if he went to live on the street. He describes the impulsivity of choosing to go: "Go means you're off. Or where doesn't count. You got to think on your way" (Trans, p.15). He describes how this sense of being trapped and his mode of thinking about his options has continued throughout his life. His internal working model reflects

Seligman's theory as a feeling of being continually trapped by his relationships and anxious about being too close to or too distant from others who are perceived as dangerous. He said: "And you carry through your life all those choices, always made wrong. Because going is not solving anything. Staying is not solving anything but its better than going" (Trans, p. 15). The feeling he had of not being able to find safety whether he stayed at home or ran away manifested in his thinking patterns as his thoughts became "stuck" which Fonagy et al. (1995) have described as an inhibition in thinking.

INHIBITED COGNITIONS

In addition to feeling afraid of being punished Fred gives a moving account of not feeling secure in relation to his mother. It is interesting that he chose this word which denotes the main theoretical concept of the research. He poignantly described his sense of insecurity as being trapped. He said:

My idea of insecurity, means you're in a place where you, you have to be but aren't really welcomed there ... *You can't think about it or change it* [my emphasis]. And insecurity to me means, that you're in a semi type prison (Trans p. 8).

Here his sense of helplessness included not being able to think through his predicament and so form solutions to this. He seemed to be in flight from thought itself because of his extreme powerlessness. This avoidance of thought and reliance on a restricted thinking process relates to Fonagy et al.'s account of children's inhibited cognitive functioning. According to Fonagy et al. there is a disavowal of thinking because of the child's extreme terror in not feeling safe to think about his overwhelmingly frightening circumstances. In addition these authors note that the child who has not been able to draw on a metacognitive style of thinking, tends to think rather in terms of physical and concrete reality. Thus these

authors assert that a child who has not had an experience of internalising the other as a thinking self can not easily understand the appearance-reality distinction. They state that “the young child does not have efficient control over internal representations of relationships to aid him or her in reconstruing social situations in safe and secure ways even when the immediate danger has passed” (Fonagy et al., 1995, p. 270). However, if emotional containment is provided, the child is given access to the various emotional-cognitive qualities of the caregiver, and the child is able through internalisation to acquire a self-structure capable of containing conflict and distress.

Fred had described how he was not able to think about his situation because there was no opportunity for discussion and dialogue and so he was thrown back on himself with no recourse to action. Furthermore when he reached adulthood and was working at a job he would respond to situations of conflict with his boss by physical action. He was not able to rely on symbolic and verbal representations of his thoughts and feelings as a means to resolve interpersonal difficulties. His high levels of impulsivity indicate how difficult it was to self-regulate or control his thoughts and overpowering feelings of anxiety. In Vygotsky's (1962) terms self-regulation is derived from other-regulation but this had not been sufficiently available to Fred and so he could not contain his own feelings of distress. The lack of containment he felt in relation to first his parents and then other authority figures led to his feelings of terror escalating to a point where they were externalised and erupted impulsively in physical conflict. The enormous anxiety he felt as a child was not contained by a reassuring other nor was it reflected or described by means of language as seen in the example below.

Fred described the anxiety he felt as a child in the present tense reflecting his current level of anxiety and the immediacy of these feelings for him.

EXTREME ANXIETY IN ANTICIPATION OF BEING PUNISHED

He comments on the stress he felt as a child in anticipating being punished:

... as I see it, is what's going to happen to me? What's going to happen to me tonight? What have I done? Maybe I didn't make my bed, or maybe I, uh whatever, whatever happened, I didn't know what happened. "Mmh". Cause a lot of things happened, that I didn't even know about, um, um. I might, I might have pinched some condensed milk or something and drank it, but, that'll only come out tomorrow. So, so I know I did it, but I don't know when *its* going to happen, you know. (Trans, p. 9).

Fred's anxiety about being beaten is apparent as he refers to "it" as the foreboding sense he had of getting hurt. He seems to feel too overwhelmed and frightened to be able to put those feelings into words which relates to Bion's (1988) concept of "nameless dread". Aside from his mother's criticisms of him Fred did not generally have access to his mother's thoughts and feelings which was very frightening for him as he sensed her hostility. Fonagy et al. (1995) propose that this lack of knowledge of the mother's internal states results in a sense of frightening vacuousness of the other's state of mind. His mother's lack of self expression about her feelings was illustrated when Fred recalled her response to his father's death.

VACUOUSNESS OF MOTHER'S INTERNAL STATE

Fred was middle-aged when his father died. He said he knew his mother was sad at his father's death but she did not express her grief. He recalled:

But I never saw emotion. I never saw her ... her, feelings. She must have had them and um, she'd never talk about him ... after that, and I wanted to talk about it (Trans, p. 20) .

The lack of communication between his mother and himself can explain Fred's profound sense of not understanding others and women in particular which has been a source of great distress for him. Fred had stated in the interview that as a child he "did not know right from wrong" (Trans, p.1) which also reflected his past and ongoing confusion in reading social norms and responding appropriately to these. As he had not had access to a caregiver's mind to be able to make sense of what women felt and thought he did not know how to relate to women and had previously avoided them.

INTERNAL WORKING MODEL OF WOMEN

Fred gives an account of how he feels his knowledge of women is based on his experience of his relationship with his mother. He said "I only know women, like the figure I had of my mother. And in fact Judy if I'm honest, I didn't like my mother at all" (Trans, p. 10).

The discomfort and dislike Fred had of other women was derived from the association he made from the feelings he experienced in relation to his mother where he felt unloved. Bowlby proposed that an individual's attachment behaviour becomes organised within his personality and "turns the pattern of affectional bonds he makes during his life" (1998, p.41). The extreme reaction of hatred to other women which Fred felt can be explained by Bowlby's formulation. For example Fred said:

I, I never could work a women out in earlier days and I never wanted anything to do with women. "Uh-hu". I, I wouldn't even know how to talk to women, because to me a women was something that I looked upon as a domination. "Mmh". A

controller of my life. "Right". ... And I never learned , that that, that same person could have loved me and kissed me and held me, instead of the other route. "Mmh" And so hence as I grew up with an in built sort of hatred towards women. Not a hatred that I hate you "uh-hu" , but I'm not getting here (Here Fred indicated a movement of keep away with his hand).

Fred's strong feelings of hatred towards women led him to feel wary of women. Because of his discomfort in relation to women he said how he avoided them and he felt he did not build a relationship with half the world. Fred's deep seated hatred of women manifested when he described his relationship with his mother. One of the words Fred chose in describing his relationship with his mother was "ugly". I asked what he meant by that and he said:

Judy, look ugly would mean I didn't have nice thoughts "Mmh". Ugly would mean, even now if I saw a person, a girl, I wouldn't look at her and think ooh, she's got a lovely face. I would look at her and says she's too fat or she's too thin or [my edit...]. The ugly is not in so far as dirt ugly. Its, its ugly impression I've got of all women, that, that causes me to look on the black side of a woman (Trans, p. 10).

When I asked what he meant by using the word "ugly" Fred then became quite concrete in discussing his perception of women as ugly, as he referred to their physical appearance and then added how although he associated women with dirtiness (which can nevertheless stand as an association, despite his explanation negating that ugly implies dirt) and blackness. He lost track of the question and became quite incoherent as he free associates his own meaning of what ugliness evokes for him in relation to his mother. According to Main and Goldwyn's (1992) criteria the irrelevant detail and rambling tangential quality of his description reflects an enmeshed state of mind.

SPLIT BETWEEN PERSECUTORY AND IDEALISED VIEW OF WOMEN

Fred recently has begun to think differently of women and establish a more integrated view of them as he commented about discovering “the beauty and gentleness of women” which he saw as very attractive. Previously he tended to see women as mainly persecutory and cruel but he had simultaneously held a very idealised perception of women. For instance he said he could not imagine “a beautiful woman such as Anneline Kriel going to the toilet” and so seemed to think of women as being above having such base human needs (Trans, p. 22). Yet he also implicitly associated women with being dirty or ugly and so for him women represent a host of negative and unwanted qualities. His perception of women can be understood from an Object Relations point of view whereby he projects either extremely positive or negative qualities at different times and puts these into women in a madonna-witch/whore split. This split type of thinking is characteristic of what Klein (1935) would call the paranoid-schizoid position or state of mind. In addition to Fred’s discomfort in relation to women he was uncomfortable in relating to men and never formed close friendships. His internal working model of men appears to be influenced by having been severely beaten for what he said were “nonsensical reasons”, that had left him feeling so helpless.

A DESIRE FOR SEPARATION BASED ON EXPERIENCES OF TRAUMA

Fred described his fear of his father and how he would beat him. He is able to vividly recall and portray his terror in being beaten. He said:

He’d come with a plank or whatever, or whatever it was. He’d just say to me and I would cry, I’d scream and I’d lie on the floor and I’d try and escape and try beg. And at the end of the day, you just left with emptiness because ‘what has it all been about?’. You still

don't even know what its about. From that I've learned that you must *speak* (emphasised) about what its about. I mean you must *speak* about it. (High pitched tone - quite anxious). Any conflict you get, you must discuss, you must hear. I didn't have those skills. I didn't know that. Um, I didn't, I don't remember happiness with my father. In so far as, he, he would never play cricket with me or come and watch me box or come to hockey or come to something. He wouldn't do that. "uhhu". Um, it was, it was an abnormal life that we lived, because to me it appeared to be, the only thing that counts here is to get big and push off. And, and go work. Hence I went to work very early (Trans, p.12).

INDUCED SELF-SUFFICIENCY AS AN EXPRESSION OF A LACK OF LOVE

Fred currently values the opportunity for dialogue and being able to discuss problems. In the above excerpt he explains how his childhood was characterised by an expectation to be self-sufficient. Main and Goldwyn (1992) identify that the parent may simply have placed a somewhat early or inappropriate stress upon independence, perhaps urging the child to remove his attention from the parent and to acquire skills and mastery early. The underlying message is to not be dependent upon the parent and to move away from the parent and become self-sufficient inappropriately early, which Fred seems to have absorbed. For instance he found refuge as a child in sports and by running away from home and living on the streets. Moreover, Fred's continual concern regarding his parent's abusive behaviour prevented him from being able to attend to his studies.

AVOIDANCE OF THINKING AND CONCENTRATING

Fred described how he was not successful academically because of his attachment relationships which preoccupied his attention. He said

I wasn't a bright guy or intelligent guy or a studious guy. *Cause you know I didn't have time for that. I was always worried what's happening next, you know on the physical side* [my emphasis] (Trans, p.4).

He attributes his preoccupation with his parents to not having mental space for other thinking activities such as studying. Instead he found an escape in sport which he felt "saved him" (Trans, p.15).

OUTWARD SUCCESS

Fred comments that he built up a slightly better self image from being successful in sports. However, his parents were not interested in his accomplishments in this field and did not attend any sporting functions, although he had won a position on one of the national teams. This lack of pleasure in his accomplishments and lack of enjoyment of a child by the parent is what Main and Goldwyn (1992) identify as a critical contributing factor to an insecure form of attachment.

DEPERSONALISED DISCOURSE

By being physically active Fred was able to escape his abusive experiences at home as well as engage in activities that allowed him to move away from thinking in specific ways. When I reflected on his having been worried about being at home he then described again that he ran away from home many times. In so doing his language becomes depersonalised in that he refers to himself in the second person.

Ja, *you* don't have any choice really because "uh-hu" ... *you* know it doesn't matter what *you* did. And I was probably very naughty too. But *you* know the consequences , well *you* got a choice, *you* can have those consequences or try and escape ..., or *they* gonna

come back. "Right" But *you* think when *you* come back its got forgotten. Its the way it is" (Trans p. 9).

Main and Goldwyn (1992) consider depersonalisation to be a mild form of incoherency. In this instance Fred's use of "you" instead of expressing his experiences in the first person may be to avoid his feelings of distress which he experienced that led to his having to run away from home and so he creates an emotional distance from his own experience. He personalises his own experience as he interchanges "I" with "you" in the second sentence but then slips back into describing the incidents in the depersonalised form again. He also becomes slightly incoherent as he refers to either his parents or the consequences of running away which would be further punishment as "they gonna come back" reflecting some disorganisation in his own thinking. However, he does acknowledge his contributing role in the relationship by considering how he was naughty that reflects an autonomous-secure way of thinking.

DISRUPTED ATTENTION

Fred described his difficulties in concentrating as due to his unsettled internal feelings that he felt related to his fear of his mother. He said:

You know there's no reasoning and rational thinking you, you, always harassed, worried, what can happen next. And you can't settle down to doing things. And it took me many years to settle down to be successful in a particular thing, which I achieved in the end (Trans p. 16).

As a child Fred may have been diagnosed as having attention deficit disorder because of his tendency to escape from thinking and inability to sustain concentration when studying, as well as his impulsive flight behaviour in that he frequently ran away from home. When questioned

by me about his life on the streets he was evasive in remembering how long he had lived on the streets.

RESTRICTED DISMISSIVE MEMORY

The inability to remember this frightening period of his life on the streets is an example of restricted memory. In terms of his attachment relationships the position of being destitute and homeless is an extreme expression of detachment from his family. Below is an excerpt of the dialogue between Fred and myself which illustrates Fred's avoidance in wanting to recall this pain filled period of his life. The excerpt begins with Fred's response to my question of how long he was away from home when he ran away.

Fred: It depends Jude. It depends, on, from where I ran to. "Right" Or what sort of support I had or could get. No difference to a hobo. No, No difference. You live off the land.

Judy: You were out on the street?

Fred: Ja, like a streetkid what they call them today.

Judy: How long were you on the street for?

Fred: Judy, I don't really remember in terms of per time. "Mmh", but periodically I would just disappear for a time (Trans, p. 5).

Main and Goldwyn (1992) comment that a lack of recall effectively deactivates the attachment system. Fred's experience of extreme vulnerability in living on the street are currently still too painful to be thought about and are pushed out of memory and consciousness.

LACK OF MEMORY

Fred does *try* to answer the question I have asked about how long he was away from home when he ran away whilst also being vague by saying it depended upon where he ran to. When I repeat the question to gain clarity about his experiences, he then gives a description of his time away by drawing on pseudo academic language which carries a slightly pompous tone by saying he “does not really remember in terms of per time”. By not recalling the specific details of the time away he evades remembering the frightening emotions associated with being a streetchild. In addition his emotionless language and restricted recall are characteristic of a dismissive response that represents the blocking out of painful memories.

MILD INCOHERENCE

Fred then gives a positive wrap up to his life on the streets and not having had much education, which also reflects his dismissive state of mind regarding the pain of these emotions. He said:

And I um, what , what could I do? I had to ... find my feet and again ... the very fact that I had such a bad sort of childhood taught me about life much more mature than a guy that was perhaps 25 or 30. I learned how to, I never went to school hey, “uh-hu”. But I can do a set of books, not cause I learned to go to school to do the books but now I run my own business and I always have for many years now. Simply by working in that job for maybe two months and then I'd fight with the boss and maybe hit him or something. But then I'd grab a bit of experience, and I'd go here and learn a bit of selling and then I'd have a fight with that guy, and so I added up all these little pieces . “Umm”. *Afterwards I called it business* [my emphasis]. And then I had my own business. And because of all these things I knew I had to do it, not to the business, but meet the

problems. Because if you don't have problems in the business then you got a good business (Trans, p. 5).

I found that there was a disjunction between Fred's euphemistic description of his conflictual experiences in getting "business skills" and my feeling of being quite disconcerted by hearing how he'd fight with his boss. His conflictual experiences seem to get distorted in his mind and his frightening and violent interactions are minimised in his description of these events. This difference of viewpoints between the interviewee's account of their experience and the listener's view is what Main and Goldwyn (1992) identified as one aspect of the speaker's ability to be coherent in the interview. They state that if the account is coherent the reader does not find herself confused or in violent disagreement with the speaker except in one or two isolated instances. Fred is mildly incoherent in the above example as it seems he could not recognise how violence is different to being in business. Fred was mostly able to be direct and collaborative; as he did not seem to be trying to mislead either himself or me and so he generally meets Main and Goldwyn's criteria of coherence. However, in the above excerpt his language is fairly incoherent when he discusses how he had to be self sufficient in order to educate himself in business. I will present another example of Fred's dismissive thinking which has an element of denial in it that goes beyond the euphemistic level of denial illustrated in the above example.

SELF SUFFICIENCY AND THE DISMISSIVE POSITIVE WRAP UP

At times Fred also adopted a dismissive state of mind in terms of being self-sufficient and a self made man who does not need other people. According to Main and Goldwyn (1992) the dismissive state of mind relies on disregarding the importance and influence of attachment relationships and experiences in thought, in feeling and in daily life. They state that "there is an implicit claim to strength, normality and independence and an accompanying reliance and citation of personal strength" (1992, p. 100).

Fred adopts this stance by giving a positive wrap-up to his adverse experiences by saying how grateful he felt towards his father for helping him. He said:

I never went to jail and I was never a crook or, because I had that *fear* (emphasised) what will happen to me, from my father. Which I'm eternally grateful for because it kept me, on the, the road, that, that kept me clean, in, in sort of criminal ways (Trans, p. 9).

Here Fred seems to deny that his father's abusive behaviour was detrimental to his development. Instead he implies that he was an inherently bad child and would inevitably have gone to jail if it were not for his father's interventions.

Fred's tendency to split authority figures by either idealising or derogating them is part of a dismissive state of mind and is illustrated below.

SPLITTING BETWEEN GOOD AND BAD FEELINGS

Fred was disrespectful of authority figures whom he felt lacked intelligence. He showed that he had a dismissive state of mind in that competing with his boss he could avoid being in a position of vulnerability in relation to someone who was in a position of power. He commented:

And no job that I can never remember, was the boss as clever as I was. "uh-hu". I thought, I thought. And later on in life I found out he didn't become the boss because he's stupid (Trans, p.6).

Considering the strong splits between good and bad in Fred's mind, his capacity at times for seeing women as gentle and loving is thus an important side to his otherwise previously almost pervasive negativity and distrust of others. The ability to think that there is some good in others is a significant developmental achievement and cognitive-emotive shift.

Alvarez (1992) notes that for emotionally and physically deprived children negativity is not an attack on the good object. Instead she asserts that these children have never formed a concept of the good object based on their not having had consistent experiences of goodness to build up such a sense of the world. This is poignantly seen as Fred had not internalised a sense of safety or comfort in relationships. As a result he could not access a symbolic representation of his own self worth and so create a form of comfort for himself.

LITTLE ROOM FOR SOFT LOVING FEELINGS

Bowlby (1998) referred to the family script of not allowing tender feelings that has been illustrated in the hostility in Fred's family. For instance Fred said he had never owned anything like a teddy bear and that even today he would look on that as being "sissified" (Trans, p.7). As an adult he found a means of self nurturance and comfort through substance abuse and his involvement in gambling as is discussed below.

ESCAPISM AND SAFE FORMS OF DEPENDENCY - SUBSTANCE ABUSE

After Fred's term in the army he described that he "drank and smoked a lot" (Trans, p. 6). His dependency on substances such as alcohol and marijuana which he had informed me about in the course of psychotherapy can be seen as his way of coping with adverse circumstances. It can also be understood as being a substitute for being in a position of dependency upon others since he did not have an alternative support system. Self sufficiency is a response to a deactivation of dependency and having any neediness in relation to others.

SOME DEACTIVATION OF THE ATTACHMENT SYSTEM

Bowlby (1988) states that deactivation of attachment is adopted as a strategy to protect a child from parental rejection. He outlines that a child will usually activate the attachment system at times when he is hurt, tired, vulnerable and in need of parental protection. In describing times of needing help from his parents if he hurt himself Fred said he would not have asked for help from his parents as he commented "I don't think it would have helped anyway, with iodine or something" (Trans, p. 14).

Other factors that led to Fred's response of protecting himself by distancing himself included his parents threats to abandon him and Fred's general sense of not being wanted. In the course of the interview I asked Fred about these types of experiences and if any separations from his parents stood out for him. He said that all his separations from his parents while living on the street had stood out for him. (It is interesting he has such clarity about these times as earlier in the interview he had been vague about his experiences of living on the streets). I asked if he felt rejected by his parents and he said he had felt "totally" rejected. I asked if he was threatened by them that he would be sent away and he answered he was often told that he would be sent away to a reform school the next day. Bowlby (1998) wrote that threats of possible separation induce strong feelings of insecurity. Thus Fred's parents threats and behaviour towards him enhanced his feelings of having tenuous access to his home as a secure base in the world. It can be seen that Fred felt highly insecure in his relationships with his parents.

As Fred had not felt safe in relating to either women or men I was intrigued by Fred's ability to establish some type of close relationship with the women he had married. I explored the nature of his marital relationships with him.

ADULT ATTACHMENTS AND MARITAL RELATIONSHIPS

I asked him to tell me about his relationship and marriage with his first wife and how he felt his relationship was different in contrast to the negative attitude he had previously held towards women. He said:

It was a happy 10 years, uh, for me from where I'd been. "Mmh". From my childhood to there. But it was difficult. Very difficult because of her disability. I don't think I was mentally capable of being the kind of husband a physically disabled girl should have (Trans, p. 25)

Fred seemed to find some comfort in his first intimate relationship with a woman after having felt alone in the world. He then described how because of his wife's disability he could only communicate when he was physically close to her. He commented: "[...] *your communications [were] only possible when you were close together, looking at each other* [my emphasis] (Trans, p. 25).

His choice of partner seems significant in terms of Attachment Theory as he chose someone whom he needed to be physically close to in order to communicate. In this way a form of proximity may have quickly been established and may have created a sense of intimacy for him. He may have also derived some level of safety in having his wife be fairly dependent upon him in his position as the caregiver. Bowlby (1998) notes that compulsive caregiving can be a response to having had abusive treatment as a child which is partly the role Fred took in relation to his wife. However, Fred did acknowledge that he had not always been particularly sensitive to his wife in "not being the best husband for her". Fred stated that he also promoted his wife to be independent. He said, "I tried my best, to uh, build her up into a self-supporting type person" (Trans, p. 25). Although he wanted intimacy with his first wife it may also have been quite difficult for him to have someone be dependent upon him

as he had not been allowed to experience those feelings as a child in relation to his parents. In talking about their divorce he does modify how their closeness was not as warm as he had initially portrayed as he comments reflectively “but then again then *there wasn't any warmth in that marriage*” and then later added we were good friends, *without being too intimate and close, you know*. (Trans, p. 25). His first relationship ended in an amicable divorce and seemed to have held little real intimacy. He contrasted his first marriage with his second marriage which he feels had a greater degree of closeness and has been extremely positive.

A SECURE LOVING RELATIONSHIP

Fred said how grateful he is to be loved by his current wife and so indicates he now has a secure attachment relationship. He said: “... she's always loved me. Loved me so much that, through anything she'll see you through. “Right”. And now God willing she'll benefit from that, from all these things” (Trans p. 24). His second marriage fits Main and Goldwyn's description of a secure loving relationship in which there is a consistent acceptance of him despite his tendency in the past to be emotionally distant as well as his dangerous financially limiting gambling behaviour. From a systemic perspective his wife can be seen as tolerating and even enabling his problematic behaviour to continue. When she decided to leave him this resulted in his re-evaluation of his behaviour and he stopped gambling. They renegotiated the relationship and resumed living together on different terms. Fred has only recently begun to integrate his experiences and be receptive to appreciating his wife's love. He said he is now learning how to “cultivate” love.

COHERENCE - TOWARDS A MORE INTEGRATED WAY OF THINKING

In making an emotional shift in valuing his relationship with his wife, Fred has begun to see women in a more positive and realistic way. He tends

to have less of a split in perceiving women as being either all good or all bad. He now thinks of women as being more benign and supportive. Although he subscribes to very traditional notions of women's roles his comment of his view of women represents a major shift in his perception of women. He said:

... because a woman is basically there to be a help to a man, in all different ways. Building up his work ,or ,or love him, or bring his children up. A woman is an entirely different thing to what I grew up thinking (Trans, p.9).

Here Fred shows he has begun to create a different internal model or representation of women which is based partly on his experience of a positive relationship with his wife. He has begun to appreciate his relationships instead of devaluing these in order to protect himself from the pain of rejection.

COHERENT THINKING

Main and Goldwyn (1992) describe how there is coherence of thought where the interviewee seems "at ease in thinking about his past and its influence and seems able to examine and explore the evidence afresh" (p. 34). Fred had shown he had begun to consider the evidence and to "look at it straight" instead of avoiding thinking about his difficulties altogether.

Fred ascribed the development of his psychological problems that resulted in his hospital admission to his *not thinking* about his experiences. In contrast to being mindless he is now willing to think about his circumstances and relationships in an insightful way. He said.

I have to [think] Jude, because if I don't I'll be back sick just now [my emphasis]. You know if I don't work it out for myself and put

aside ah, society's type morals and society's way of looking at things I'm not going to get through. And you see I want to get through. And if in a way I'm making a few mistakes as long as I get through. And as long as when I die I, I die accepting and knowing that the last years that I had of a new life were fruitful, happy, joyous, with my children and at least that, that bit of life, my wife would also enjoy it (Trans, p.11).

Fred's philosophy incorporates the values of an autonomous-secure position in wanting to think clearly without being swayed by social or religious pressures. In addition he is able to accept his own fallibility in saying he is still making "a few mistakes" at times which Main and Goldwyn (1992) identify as characteristic of autonomous-secure thinking. Furthermore, he wishes to repair and rebuild his relationships with his family.

THE NEXT GENERATION

Fred said he thought that his response to his children has been affected by his own experiences of being brought up. He did not perpetuate the physical abuse he had received but he felt he had emotionally damaged his children. He said:

The fact that I was thrashed. "Mmh". I made up my mind long ago, that it would make no difference what my children did, I would never hit them. [my edit]... I had to apply new norms for me to my children as what I'd learned. Very difficult and I failed often. Not failed in hitting them but failed in so far as I would become in other ways, just as abusive. Verbally perhaps and um, nastier and um more hard on the punishment (Trans, p. 17).

Fonagy et al. (1995) state that despite conscious intentions to parent differently to the way one has been parented this is not always easy to

implement. These authors explain that “The determination to want something better for the child than one had oneself may be strong, but sadly, in itself, conscious determination seems to fall far short of what is required” (p. 4). Fred had tried to avoid repeating history and had wanted to be a good parent. Fonagy et al. note that a lack of concern for others is a result of not having had received empathy from parental figures which seems to have contributed towards Fred’s inability to respond in compassionate ways to his children. Recently he has been able to recognise the way he treated his own children. He subsequently asked each of them for forgiveness for having been destructive and causing them any hurt. Fred discussed how he has repaired his relationship with his children to a large extent and how pleased he is to have had opportunity to bridge the gap between them. Fred’s feelings about each of his parents have continued to affect him in different ways as seen in his response to their deaths.

EXPERIENCES OF SIGNIFICANT LOSS THROUGH DEATH

From his narrative regarding his parent’s death Fred appeared to have unresolved feelings about their death. He is vague in describing his parents age when they died. This lack of specific detail reflects possible unresolved feelings about their deaths. According to Main and Goldwyn (1992) it is common with the death of close relatives to have unresolved feelings.

In response to my questions he described the circumstances of their death. He was close to his father at the time of his death and stayed with him as he died. He said he was very sad and cried at the funeral. In contrast he said he felt “emotionless” at his mother’s death and stated that her death did not affect him, which seems to be a denial of any pain and a devaluing of their relationship (Trans, p. 19). Main and Goldwyn note that failed mourning would be suspected when the interviewee dismisses a serious and major loss as an event which has no

unfavourable effects. Fred's minimising how his parents' death affected him reflects his unresolved mourning in relation to these significant attachment figures.

In contrast Fred was able to mourn his parents-in-law whom he loved a great deal. He speaks about them in very realistic and respectful way. He had arranged for them to live with him and his wife which indicated his attachment and love for them. He said enthusiastically: "And, I actually, made my plans to have them live with me and I loved that! And they were difficult as all people are when they're old, and I really loved them" (Trans, p. 21). He continued to say how he mourned them for an extended period: "You know, I cried for, oh man, five years" (Trans, p. 21). His very emotional response to his parents-in-law is contrasted with his emotionless response to his own parents' death. I thought that he possibly displaced some of the emotion he had not felt with his parents' death in his lengthy expression of grief for his parents-in-law.

As seen in the presentation of Fred's discourse patterns there has been a variety of different types of attachment patterns. However, for the reader gaining an overview and "feel" of the predominant patterns from a reading of the whole transcript has been compromised to some extent as only excerpts of the narrative have been presented here.

OVERVIEW OF FRED'S STATE OF MIND REGARDING ATTACHMENT

A summary of my analysis of Fred's discourse styles is primarily based on his portrayal of his experiences which are well balanced and objective. He supported his feelings of being emotionally deprived with accounts of his parent's neglectful, abusive and rejecting behaviour and his escape from home by living on the street. Fred also appeared to be preoccupied by the trauma of being severely beaten. When he recounted these experiences he tended to become bound up in the frightening emotions of the past, especially in relation to his mother. He currently continues to be

angrily pre-occupied with his mother in response to her cold, distanced and invalidating relationship to him. He also seemed to fit Main and Goldwyn's (1992) description of having a detached state of mind as seen in his response to his mother's death in stating he was "emotionless". However, he was less detached regarding his father's death in stating he did feel sad at this loss. Furthermore, he seemed to feel connected to his father by holding him at the time he died. Overall his mode of relating is that of an autonomous-secure mind set although he appears somewhat preoccupied by the trauma of his childhood. The enmeshment is evident in his intensity in eliciting responses and agreement from myself as well as prolonging the interaction that reflects some anxiety about ending the interaction and in being separated. Fonagy et al.'s (1995) description of borderline clients not feeling kept in mind is relevant to Fred's anxiety at ending the session. It is as though he fears that the connection between us would be severed by parting.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

The application of the Adult Attachment Interview as a therapeutic tool in this study had differed from its conventional use as I have not specifically classified Fred's attachment style. Other studies which have aimed to classify psychotherapy clients' modes of attachment by means of conducting the Adult Attachment Interview have relied on an empirical model (Liotti, 1995; Fonagy et al., 1995). I first outline my reasons for implementing the Adult Attachment Interview for therapeutic purposes. An account of how the interview affected the therapeutic relationship for both Fred and myself is then provided. Thereafter, I evaluate the usefulness of Attachment Theory as a clinical and analytic tool in having provided a different understanding of Fred's richly detailed narrative. A presentation of the relevant attachment themes that arose during the course of psychotherapy is included to show how Attachment Theory constructs contributed towards a deeper understanding of the therapeutic process. Due to the limitations of space only a brief overview of the therapy is possible. The evaluation of Fred's progress in the therapy will be considered in terms of his gaining a degree of greater self-understanding such as seen in the development of his metacognitive thinking. The changes in his thinking will be evaluated in conjunction with changes in his emotional responses. I illustrate the shifts that occurred in his internal working models, particularly those which became evident in the transference relationship, as well as the changes in his other relationships.

THE CHOICE OF METHODOLOGY IN TERMS OF THE AIM OF THE STUDY

My approach to the methodology of the interview has been to avoid making a rigid categorisation of Fred's narrative and instead I have drawn

on the categories for their descriptive value. My decision correlates with Potter and Wetherell's (1995) intentions in conducting a discourse analysis. They note that "the aim of discourse analysis is not to classify people but to reveal the discursive practises through which relationships are constructed" (p. 88). I propose that the overall value of the classification system can also have its limitations when individuals have a range of discourse techniques and may be enmeshed in their rambling style at one point and then dismissive by avoiding thinking about their experiences at another and then secure in their forgiveness of their parents. Despite the benefit of having a shorthand form of communication by employing a classification system, for a rater to make one overall classification can nevertheless be a distortion of the various patterns that co-exist. It may also lead to a pathologising or idealisation of the interviewee by pigeon-holing him, that may entrench an aspect of the interviewee in the mind of the rater. Hence I preferred to let Fred's narrative stand to represent him in its multifaceted form so that it could serve a heuristic function.

The effect of having conducted the interview on both Fred and myself as part of the therapy and as a research project will be discussed below. There seemed to be a seamless transition for both Fred and myself in resuming the therapeutic mode after the more structured experience of the interview. Both Fred and I referred to material he had described in the interview and it soon merged into the rest of the therapy as part of the body of information and experience that existed between us.

MY IMPRESSIONS OF FRED'S RESPONSE TO THE INTERVIEW

In the session following the interview Fred commented that he had enjoyed the interview. During another therapy session in which he struggled to speak to me, he asked if I would ask him questions as I had done in the (Adult Attachment) interview. Fred's response again indicated he found the structure of the interview a relief as opposed to

relating in a more spontaneous and open ended way. At various points as the therapy proceeded Fred would often ask me how the dissertation was progressing and I kept him informed about when I expected to complete it. This was one area of my life which I willingly shared with him as he had been involved as a participant in the research. He may have felt in a positive way that the dissertation was a way of being connected to me and of being held in my mind.

On one occasion he expressed some anxiety about who would read the dissertation and seemed to be somewhat reassured by my explanation that his identity would be concealed. He was also interested in reading the research once it was completed. I felt that if he read the dissertation this would complicate the therapeutic relationship and that this was similar to his wish to read my notes about the therapy. He had correctly presumed I made notes after the sessions. I discussed how it was his right to read the notes but that it may affect the therapy and that reading the dissertation could have a similar effect. He accepted this restriction saying he did not want to create any complications for the therapy. Despite having his curiosity piqued, I think it would probably be difficult for Fred to read the analysis of the interview and the therapy and to see his situation described in black and white. Although most of the analysis has been applied in the therapy and has been discussed and negotiated there, it may nevertheless be different for Fred to see a written account of himself that may appear to be more definitive in this form. I realise that therapists from the Narrative School of therapy would write notes with the intention that these would be openly read by the client which is a very different basis of sharing information.

THE EFFECT OF HAVING CONDUCTED THE ADULT ATTACHMENT INTERVIEW FOR ME

In conducting the interview I felt uncomfortable in being in the dual role of researcher and therapist. I felt that conducting the research represented

my need and this conflicted with my professional role of being Fred's psychotherapist. I am aware that a different research design could have been implemented in which I could then have split my roles as researcher and therapist. Such a design would have carried other limitations and benefits. Being a participant observer gave me the opportunity of being able to learn more about the details of Fred's life experiences and to feed these back into the therapy. For instance I found that when reading the transcript and analysing it various aspects of Fred's life stood out strongly for me that were useful in understanding how Fred's attachment relationships had affected him. The insights I gained will be illustrated in the discussion of the hypotheses and connections I was able to make based on the interview.

REVIEW OF THE INTERVIEW IN TERMS OF THE BROADER GOALS OF THE THERAPY

Many of the themes that arose in the interview had already been touched upon in the therapy. Prior to the interview I had already gleaned an understanding of Fred's difficulties with women based on his dislike of his mother but the interview provided an opportunity for a very focused exploration of these themes. Moreover, it served to clarify how at a rational level Fred could present a fairly resolved picture about his relationships with his parents by saying he loved them, yet at times there seemed to be an underlying level of anxiety when thinking about them which indicated he had fluctuating and sometimes conflicting feelings about his parents. By being aware of his complex underlying feelings I became more attuned to Fred's tendency to present complex situations in more simplistic one-dimensional terms. In this way I did not always accept at face value Fred's account of having resolved his negative feelings as he tended to periodically sweep any negativity under the carpet. Similarly he would not allow himself to express any direct feelings of anger especially towards me. I pointed out that his reticence in showing his anger could be understood from his past experiences where

anger was seen as so explosive and destructive. He agreed that he did not feel able to talk about his angry feelings in a safe way. Thus my analysis of the interview highlighted tendencies in Fred's attachment style that I was able to explore with him such as his "defensive exclusion" of having any negative feelings.

In addition I found it had been a valuable exercise to have conducted the interview and to have paid close attention to Fred's internal working models as this allowed me to formulate *hypotheses* which I discussed with him in the course of the therapy at relevant opportunities. For instance as Fred grew to feel more comfortable in the therapy with me he was able to talk about an area which he had up until that point considered to be unmentionable. He was able to put words to and *name* women's internal bodily processes such as menopause and menstruation. He expressed that he felt delighted and relieved that he could talk about women in this way. I was able to formulate a hypothesis based on Object Relations Theory regarding his excitement at being able to talk about women's internal physiological processes. I speculated that he did not know the contents of a woman's mind (and by extension in his view, her body) and so these aspects of women had previously been split off from thought because they were perceived as being too mysterious and unknowable. For Fred the internal aspects of womanhood may have had the quality which Bion (1967) referred to as nameless dread and were unnameable and therefore not fully knowable. By drawing on both Object Relations and Attachment Theory models in which an emphasis is placed on putting words to experience as well as in naming and organising reality, I was able to make meaning of some of Fred's otherwise seemingly strange responses.

Fred's difficulty in putting words to his experience and saying to others what he feels was apparent in other instances. For example, he said when he saw the psychiatrist for a check up he would say he's fine whereas someone else may say "not so good". I reflected how difficult it

was for him to put his experience into words and to feel that this is valid. Slowly over the course of the therapy Fred has begun to feel more able to have his say and to feel that his voice could be heard.

HAVING HUMAN RIGHTS

An important indication of Fred's sense that he could stand up for his human rights arose when he initiated a lawsuit against a policeman for assaulting him. By Fred taking this action he indicated he felt that the legal system could potentially be seen as a helpful authority figure. His expectation of receiving help was fulfilled as he said that the lawyers had listened to him and validated his right not to be violated. He seemed almost surprised by their support. In addition, he explained that his motivations in taking legal action were also based on a wish to protect others who he thought may be more defenceless than himself in terms of not having the resources to go to court, thus reflecting his capacity for empathy.

Fred appeared to now feel that he could effectively protect himself from other's violent assaults which seemed to represent an internal shift by being able to take thoughtful action. This capacity for thought represented a different response to how he had reacted as a child in relation to his father. Fred commented insightfully on his recourse to legal action and linked it to his experience of his father. He said he had stood up for himself the way he had not been able to do as a child with his father. In Fonagy et al.'s (1995) terms his insight and "mentalised elaboration" of his experience allowed him to change his internal working model and perception of paternal authority figures.

Through the therapy his feelings about his mother appeared to modify to some extent and became in time somewhat less persecutory. His feelings about me as seen in the transference and his description of his relationship with his wife can be seen as a barometer of his internal

working model of women. Fred's perceptions of me fluctuated and these shifting impressions of me, reflected the changes he was making in his internal working model of women. He seemed to be grappling with the idea of what to expect from relationships with women. I will provide examples of his responses to first myself and then his wife to illustrate his oscillating views of how women are 'constituted' in his mind.

SHIFTING FROM A NEGATIVE TO A MORE POSITIVE TRANSFERENCE

In the first few months of the therapy Fred's perception of me was not very positive, and on a couple of times he referred to me as being an iceberg. As the therapy progressed he tended to idealise and sexualise me. He said he saw me as being clever and sexy and on one occasion he likened me to the Queen. By using the material from the interview I was able to understand and reflect to Fred how these splits of seeing me as good or bad represented his perception of me. I discussed how his feelings about me could be projections of his experiences with women primarily with his mother. Similarly I discussed with him that his sexualised response to me could be a way of quickly needing to establish intimacy and connectedness. Although it was sometimes difficult not to feel personally attacked by his negative and harsh comments about me, the Attachment Theory allowed me to understand his responses as part of his transference and internal working models which were so negative about women and I also realised that his perceptions had little to do with me personally. Malcolm (1982) refers to the paradox of the transference relationship is that it both is and is not about the real relationship with the therapist.

Fred's metacognitive thinking about the transference relationship became evident in a session that took place ten months after the interview. He said that he saw me as being shy but I may not necessarily be so. For the first time he seemed to have an awareness that I may not be what he thinks I am and was able to take some responsibility for his internal

working model or in other words his projections. The above examples of Fred's different transference reactions indicate that Fred's different states of mind and responses to women had been influenced in a general way by his attachment relationship with his mother. The strategies that he had employed for coping with the emotional distance of that primary relationship then became transferred onto other relationships.

WOMEN AS OTHER

I thought that Fred's sense of trust in women was still precarious despite his explanation at a rational level during the Adult Attachment Interview that he felt women to be less bad than he had previously considered them to be. This disjunction between Fred's reported feelings about women and his actual feelings became evident to me in his description of his relationship with his wife. I was aware that it was difficult for Fred to adjust to his new lifestyle since he had left the hospital. He had decided to be more involved with his wife and to give up gambling, but he nevertheless found it difficult to integrate these new values in a comfortable way for himself. In a psychotherapy session that took place eight months after the interview Fred spoke about his relationship with his wife and I then learned how little communication there had been between them. This surprised me as Fred had always indicated that there were strong emotional bonds between them and I had a sense that they had a comfortable companionship. In a therapy session he repeated a comment he had made on a number of occasions previously and said that he continued to feel that women were "an entirely different thing to men". I reflected that he found it hard to understand women as having thoughts and feelings. I then realised in a subsequent session that Fred had made a gradual shift in his perception when he began to respond to his wife as having her own thoughts and feelings. For instance when it was her birthday he recounted that he had bought her a gift after asking her what she would like. This represented a significant change as

previously he would have given her something without considering her needs.

CONCERNS ABOUT DESTRUCTIVENESS

Fred's capacity to give to his wife in a more thoughtful way appears to relate to his ability to empathise to a greater degree with others which had been evident since his hospitalisation. He demonstrated on many occasions a tremendous amount of caring and concern with others' predicaments and was emotionally and financially generous in helping his staff with their specific problems. His capacity for empathy now flourished in contrast to his previous reactions of picking a fight with his staff or anyone else who disagreed with him. At times I thought that perhaps his new generosity had a flavour of making amends for and was a form of retribution for his past destructiveness. He often seemed to be trying to prove time and again, to his wife through his charitable actions, in an almost concrete form that he was now different.

Linked to this sense I had of his wish to repair the damage he felt responsible for, Fred also remained fearful of his own destructiveness. He periodically felt he was "too much" for me, that by talking about his pain he was somehow hurting me. In his mind it was as though we were merged. Much of the therapy seemed to be dealing with Fred's feelings of ambivalence and his feelings of both love and hate towards me. A concern of his was that he was hurting me by loving me which seemed to me to have a deep connection to his sense of being rejected by his mother as a child. As the therapy progressed, Fred was able to share his emotions more freely, that represented his greater integration of thought and affect.

INTEGRATING EMOTION WITH THOUGHT

As seen in Fred's narrative in the context of the interview and generally in the psychotherapy he showed he had begun to integrate some of the emotional pain and trauma of the past. In the interview, his ability to talk about his relationship with his parents represented the greater degree to which he was connected both within himself as well as to others. I noticed that there was an improved ability in Fred to communicate his feelings as he became progressively more open to sharing what was on his mind in a spontaneous manner, that contrasted with the previous staged and rehearsed qualities of some of his earlier recounting of his experiences. For instance, on one occasion in a therapy session he said in a way that moved me, that every time we speak about his mother he feels a little less pain. Fred's ability to develop emotional intimacy in the therapy appears to have been a very profound experience for him. His increasing capacity to share his pain in the therapy and sense that I could possibly bear it are indications that he felt that the therapy could provide a safe space for him to be in touch with his feelings of vulnerability and hurt.

ACCESSING A THINKING OTHER

Fred's realisation that the emotional relief he gained in talking in the therapy was also paralleled by his sense of his mind as a place where meaning could be made of his own responses. On one occasion many months after the interview Fred said that "when we are talking about one problem, we are actually talking about much more and that I am able to look at other problems in my life". Fred seemed to have internalised me as a thinking agent. Through the process of therapy he had begun to feel that he could apply his mind in an analytic way to issues in his life. Here a thinking other could be used to aid his own thinking in the way Vygotsky (1962) described that other-regulation could be internalised as a source of self-regulation. After one session in particular I was left with an

awareness of his thinking mind and his strong intelligence that seem to reflect to me he had attained a greater degree of internal stability and integration. Shortly thereafter during another therapy session he said that if he could have a part of me it would be my mind as he felt that was the key to understanding his problems. His wish to access my mind seemed to show that he felt that my thinking about his experiences could help him to understand himself further. It was as though he recognised my mind as able to take in his experiences and attempt to make sense of these, in the way that Bion (1967) describes the process of reverie occurring between mother and child.

Fred began to show a strong curiosity in particular issues that was evident along with his wish to continue to gain insight into himself which indicated he also felt that there was pleasure to be had in thinking. Fred's world was no longer mindless. I thought that the changes that had occurred in his internal world were immense. I wondered exactly how this transformation had come about. What had made the critical difference?

HOW IS IT POSSIBLE TO ACHIEVE SHIFTS IN THINKING AND FEELING?

One question that has interested me is how change can come about in the context of psychotherapy for an individual who is still pre-occupied by the trauma of the past. If new information is not easily taken in due to the traumatised individual's levels of hypervigilance and feeling of insecurity in relating intimately, how is it possible to create a sense of safety that can allow for internal shifts in perception? How can new ideas about relating develop?

Fred had access to his wife's love for many years but had not spontaneously or substantially shifted until he experienced the potential loss of this secure base and he simultaneously entered psychotherapy. Fonagy et al. (1995) note that "positive intimate life experiences if

sufficiently intense are likely to be able to reverse the developmental anomaly, that is of inhibiting self and other reflective processes" (p. 269). However, despite receiving his wife's unconditional love, Fred had not spontaneously changed. The critical factor that had contributed towards Fred sustaining the changes which he had consciously made in choosing to give up gambling and in becoming more involved with his family, was to be able to begin thinking about his experience instead of just living in a non-reflective way.

In the context of psychotherapy where some intimacy was established over a substantial period of time, Fred developed enough sense of safety to be able to discuss his past with me. He began to bear to look at what had happened to him taking into account aspects he had previously not allowed himself to consider. In this way the process of psychotherapy contains what Alexander has referred to as the corrective emotional experience (cited in Kahn, 1991). Fonagy et al. extend the notion of the corrective emotional experience to include:

The self-righting capacity of thinking which is a corrective emotional and cognitive experience that can develop in therapy from thinking together. Here the internal working models can become an object of review and change. Such gradual and constant adjustments and readjustments facilitate the development of an internal world where the behaviour of others may be experienced as understandable, meaningful and [I would add to some extent] predictable and characteristically human (1995, p. 262).

The above excerpt emphasises how the process of therapy provided ongoing opportunities for Fred to think about and so make these constant adjustments and readjustments to his internal working model and constructions of events. Fred's ability to begin to think about his

relationship with his parents as seen in the context of the interview was part of his establishing a reflective way of thinking for himself.

TIMING AND READINESS REGARDING RECEPTIVITY TO CHANGE

Fred had taken four months of therapy to feel ready to think with me about his past and his relationships with his parents in contrast to his angry response to this topic when it had been raised in the second therapy session. Thus the interview reflects a degree of safety which Fred felt in sharing his immensely overwhelming feelings about his past with me. Previously these feelings had been pushed out of mind in an angry fashion. In Fonagy et al's., (1995) terms he was able to allow for a new experience of other minds in perceiving me as able to bear what he really felt in all its conflicting forms and so there was a reduction in the need for splitting off frightening and incoherent mental representations.

Issues of timing have also been significant in the process of the therapy as Fred would "hear" and could take in comments that I made at a particular point even though I had said them before. I found that the process of the therapy entailed a continual re-thinking of the same themes that often centred on Fred's interactions with women and his underlying fear of being rejected and hurt. For instance on one occasion when he had been to see the lawyers about his court case he was struck by how the women lawyers were so helpful. He saw them as "beautiful stars". In the next session, he enquired in a deeply thoughtful way as to why he had changed and seemed moved almost to tears by this change in his perception. I asked what he associated with this change in the way he saw these women. He said that its like seeing for the first time that women are not like his mother was. Fred seemed to be able to think about his expectations of women as being cruel and hurtful and was able to be receptive in his mind to an experience of women who could be and were actually helpful. In this instance something in Fred's internal working model of women had shifted enough to allow in a new

experience. This perception of the women lawyers as helpful represented a more substantial and positive emotional response to women in contrast to his fairly rational explication of how he saw women as helpful as when he'd described them during the Adult Attachment Interview.

Fred's different reactions to women at various times illustrates how he gained some positive feelings about women which were then temporarily lost and which he then regained in a consolidated form. Thus Fred showed a gradual and uneven movement in building up a different perception of women. Although there were times when the slow process of therapy frustrated him, he was also able to tolerate his frustration and felt that he was benefiting. My evaluation of the therapy concurred with his.

Another factor that contributed to Fred's internal changes is that Fred had gradually begun to feel contained in the therapy, which allowed him to feel safe enough to review his own thinking. I found that the Attachment Theory model had been useful in highlighting the implications of the "holding" nature of the therapy. For instance, breaks in the sessions were difficult for Fred as was evident during the long summer holiday break. He reported that he had felt distressed and depressed and had become more verbally aggressive. When I telephoned him after the break to reschedule the therapy time as I then began to work in the evening he jokingly and flirtatiously said he was afraid of women. The suggested change in the time of the meeting seemed to evoke in him an internal working model of women as being dangerous, and possibly seductive. The theory allowed me to be aware that Fred's internal world responded to such changes as though I could be transformed into a different kind of therapist and perhaps had become quite unpredictable in his mind. Thus the structure of therapy with its boundaries that were experienced as both containing and frustrating served an important role. Fred expressed relief that the therapy was a reliable and boundaried place as much as he wanted to be able to push those boundaries.

EVALUATION OF THE ATTACHMENT THEORY CONSTRUCTS AS A CLINICAL TOOL IN THE THERAPY

In evaluating the therapy I thought that Fred had made enormous gains of which he was aware and in which he took a great deal of pride. He was far less impulsive and aggressive, he had given up gambling despite his temptation at times to return to this addiction. However, his mild symptoms of depression persisted and he continued to have low self-esteem. Fred's feelings of sadness could be understood in Attachment Theory terms as being part of the mourning process and were related to his sense of emotional and educational deprivation. Through the therapy Fred was able to express his sad feelings about these losses and was able to gain an understanding of how difficult his circumstances had been. His insight allowed him to be less self-critical of his sense of failure about his limited educational achievements.

Related to his constellation of depressed feelings which at times was directed inwards at himself, were his angry feelings which were sometimes directed at others. In attempting to deal with his negative feelings Fred appeared to focus on his sexual feelings as a way of filling himself up with the kind of excitement he had experienced when gambling. It was as though despite the meaning and greater emotional security he has gained from his intimate relationships this was not enough with which to bolster up himself and to prevent the emptiness he felt inside from dominating him. Through the therapy Fred was learning to address some of his needs more directly such as being able to talk about these to his wife and to others instead of escaping into his sexual fantasies.

Other aspects of his relationships still presented difficulties for him. Although Fred has repaired his relationships with his children and grandchildren, he had some inappropriate ideas about the nature of the

boundaries between them. For instance he wanted to establish intimacy with his grandchildren by educating them about sexual issues. His confusion about appropriate roles for different relationships is an ongoing theme that appears to need further therapeutic work. In this instance, Fred has again tended to confuse emotional and sexual intimacy. His confusion can be understood in terms of his history of having had relatively little intimacy in his attachment relationships with his parents. Thus Attachment Theory continues to be useful in shedding light on Fred's rather desperate needs for intimacy.

THE THERAPEUTIC AIMS

The aims of the therapy are therefore to continue to explore the impact of Fred's attachment relationships as internal working models that affect his behaviour. Based on Attachment Theory another therapeutic aim is for Fred to be able to achieve a balance of emotional and cognitive functioning in which the splitting off of unwanted parts of the self is decreased. From an Object Relations perspective this entails his thoughtful recognition of the angry and attacking parts of himself in such a way that these can be understood and can then be modified by his loving and reparative feelings. As well as mourning the losses of the past, Fred may also be able to gain an appreciation of how he did benefit from his attachment relationships with both his mother and father, even if this was considerably little.

REVIEW OF THE STUDY

The benefits I obtained from having conducted this study of Attachment Theory in a clinical context can be seen in terms of the implications it holds for my clinical work. Working with this theory reminded me of the need to be sensitive to Fred's (as well as other client's) internal working models or constructions of reality. I found that I could not assume I shared a joint reality and I needed to allow space for Fred's internal

working model to emerge so that it could then be explored. Another aspect of the model which I appreciated is that the focus of work includes both a moment to moment tracking of the client's narrative as well as thinking about issues the client raised in the therapy in terms of his internal working models and his construction of meaning arising from these. The theory allows for a back and forth movement in which there is a linking of the past and the present. One limitation I experienced was that although I had been reading about Attachment Theory, applying it in the therapy room was not always straightforward and I sometimes had insights about attachment related issues but I didn't always know how to work with the theory and pick up on these. It then helped to have the input of supervision and a chance to reflect on my own responses to the therapy.

Both Object Relations and Attachment Theory have similar concepts and at times these models overlap in many respects that appeared to be both an advantage and a disadvantage. Another limitation which I experienced in working with Attachment Theory, was that I found I needed to supplement my therapeutic work with the Object Relations approach since Attachment Theory seemed to lack some of the depth and refinement that Object Relations Theory offers. For instance Bowlby's (1998) concept of compulsive caring is similar to Klein's notion of false reparation (Hinshelwood, 1989). Within Object Relations there is a distinction between true and false types of reparation, as well as between different types of false reparation. For instance a type of false reparation that is termed obsessional reparation is characterised by the compulsive repetition of actions that is designed to placate the other. This is contrasted with a more genuine type of reparation which is grounded in the desire to love and respect the person who has been hurt (Hinshelwood, 1989, p. 413). Object Relations Theory contains references to various psychological processes which serve as useful therapeutic tools and which go beyond the level of description which Attachment Theory provides. By thinking about Fred's reparation as

being false I could understand his wish for external affirmation that he was being good and was proving himself to be different. Perhaps he felt he was still bad, and that whatever he did would not be quite enough to dispel that notion. Object Relations Theory enabled me to probe further into Fred's internal world in a way which could allow him to think about his somewhat harsh and exacting expectations of himself.

The advantage of both Object Relations and Attachment Theories being similar in many respects, is that the sturdy empiricism of Attachment Theory can be seen to validate Object Relations concepts. Thus my speculations about Fred's internal working models could be demonstrated and made accessible by means of both the discourse analysis techniques of the interview and based on this foundation, I could then present the description of the therapy in Attachment Theory terms.

My aim in conducting the Adult Attachment Interview in this study was to gain access to Fred's internal world as he constructs it and to identify his internal working models. The interview had been enormously helpful in elucidating that Fred's fears of intimacy with women and his aggressive responses to men could be clearly linked to his primary attachment relationships. Through the therapy and his own motivation and commitment towards establishing rewarding interpersonal relationships Fred had made enormous progress. Definite qualitative shifts occurred in the way he was able to understand his internal and external worlds and by extension he has been able to establish a greater degree of control over his responses. He began to take a metacognitive perspective of his own way of thinking and so has found the key to understanding more about his own behaviour. His mind has become a place in which he found he is able to think about his experiences, instead of either becoming entangled in his thoughts or reacting by dissociating from thinking altogether. Thus attachment relationships and Attachment Theory constructs have offered a valuable path of exploration in psychotherapy in which Fred has begun to experience his mind as "a

secure base from which self understanding emanates” (Fonagy et al., 1995, p. 267).

TO CONCLUDE ...

Attachment Theory has become a focus of debate and research in parent-child relationships. For traumatised individuals who have a shattered sense of self which is characterised by a subjective experience of pain and which may show itself in eruptions of violence, Attachment Theory is a model that makes sense of these responses to loss and abuse. Psychotherapists may draw on Attachment Theory to have a greater understanding of the dissociated or enmeshed discourse styles of traumatised clients. The relative incoherence of the client’s narrative can be seen as being representative of the client’s attempt to integrate his dissociated or unintegrated experiences. Through the process of psychotherapy the therapist can begin to co-construct with such clients a scaffold for greater coherence of self which takes into account both the client’s autonomous and dependent aspects of the self.

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