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## A counselor's attempt at self-exploration.

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**FIVE COLLEGE  
DEPOSITORY**

A Counselor's Attempt At Self-Exploration

by  
William G. Quill

A Paper  
Submitted to the School of Education  
at the University of Massachusetts  
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
For a Masters Degree in Education

December, 1964

Table of Contents

Chapter	Page
I. Introduction . . . . .	x
II. The Early Years of My Life . . . . .	1
III. Self Exploration . . . . .	15
IV. A Reasonable Proposal For Counselor Education . . . . .	34
V. Conclusion . . . . .	48

## INTRODUCTION

In this paper I am going to explore a topic in a manner which is considered to be wholly unscientific. The following will be a retrospective analysis of one dimension of myself as I have perceived it. This singular perspective shall be developed from those attributes which I feel have been instrumental in influencing me to become a guidance counselor.

This purely subjective mode of inquiry is valuable to me for several primary reasons. First and most significant, it gives me an opportunity to hesitate for a moment and attempt to understand various past events in my life which appear to have influenced my personality development. Also, in the following discourse I have occasion to contemplate my reaction to graduate school, and from this, I hope to comment upon the graduate program in school guidance as viewed through the eyes of a "newcomer" to the field. Hopefully this may accentuate the necessity for certain program revisions.

Lastly, I hope that this paper may suggest to other students in school guidance the need to explore various dimensions of oneself in order to allow counselees to grow--a factor which presently seems capable of even empirical verification.

## I. The Early Years of My Life

I came from a rather typical lower-middle-class family. This sociological classification appears appropriate, for the small New England community in which my family lived is contemporarily known as Yankee City. There were only three members in my family--Mother, Father, and I. Mother and Father jointly operated a small electrical appliance business from our home.

Immediately after the Second World War, which was during my early childhood, business throughout the country began to flourish, for many men had been released from the armed services; hence, the majority of them were either rejoining their families or getting married. This of course had created a great demand for all types of home appliances in addition to numerous other household articles. As a result of this economic condition, my parents were intensely involved in conducting their business, for such items as radios, refrigerators, stoves, and so on, were in great demand. They were both quite competent business people and this was reflected in terms of the financial success and happiness that they realized from their efforts. As I recall, those were active days for all of us--myself included.

Father was in certain respects quite an unusual person. For example, it seems as though he never really considered me as a child--rather I was conceived of as an integral member of a "three-man" enterprise. There was, however, no implication of austerity or coldness in this attitude. He always treated me as an adult; thus there was never any question or consideration about my maturational level or capacity to do any task that had been assigned to me, such as installing parts in refrigerators or heating elements in various

models of stoves. Usually there was only a brief period of instruction when confronted with new installational techniques, and henceforth the responsibility for executing any given task was mine. Whenever I committed an error or had forgotten a procedural matter, he simply gave me further supplementary instructions with no additional comment. Never, in the multiplicity of diverse endeavors undertaken by us--ranging from radio and television repairs to pouring concrete or selling classical records to wealthy old ladies--had he scolded me, or unduly criticized my efforts to complete any given task or undertake any problem. This is not to say that we did not argue or quarrel, for this occurred frequently. But the disputes focused on methodological issues, and not upon one another's competence. Therefore, I was regarded as an adult in the sense that it was my responsibility to perform various essential tasks that were of significance to the operation of my parents' business. My mother had also given me similar instructions, appropriate to my age level (about 7 or 8 years), in matters of finance involving basic principles in bookkeeping, purchasing, and taxation. Also, in being treated as an "adult," my opinions about various business and family decisions were given "proportionate consideration." This early portion of my life was an extremely happy period--for me and my parents.

Our home always seemed to be bustling with activity; hence, only upon rare occasions do I recall the family ever participating in any leisurely or recreational activities together. In addition, there was rarely any overt expressions of emotion or feeling toward one another, for there never appeared to be sufficient time for "such things"--yet the feeling of cohesiveness and mutual involvement was implicit within all of our associations with one another. As I

reflect upon this thought at present, it seems to me that my parents' mode for expressing affection was not manifestly verbal or physical, but rather it was subtle and indirect, because never did we lack the awareness that our family was a close-knit unit working effectively for the good of one another. Yet even in this somewhat unorthodox manner of expression, everyone felt himself to be a very necessary and valued member of the "team." However, this method of relating to one another and transmitting affection has become intrinsic to my nature, so that now during those moments in which I find myself most at ease and closest to other individuals occur when both they and I are engaged in an intensive intellectual relationship--whether it be the mutual apprehension of some aesthetic phenomenon, a rational analysis of a particular topic, or in a counseling relationship where the counselee is attempting to explore some obscure dimension of himself.

During my childhood and persisting into early adolescence, I had been exposed to conditions that facilitated the development of a somewhat unusual form of recreation. In 1946, my father constructed a garage from lumber that had been obtained by razing a large barn in our neighborhood. Since the barn was a considerably larger structure than the building he fabricated, there was a great deal of surplus material remaining from the project. Hence, young creative minds looked upon this "pure potentiality" as a boon to their recreational existence. With little hesitation or apprehension, several of my young friends and I took the liberty of "requisitioning" such small, but essential, items as nails, roofing paper, and so on, from a local contractor who had been constructing new homes in the vicinity. Within an amazingly short time--at least my mother still regards it as such--



we children had erected what seemed to us to be a most extraordinary fortress on the front lawn of my home. Father, after some consideration and collaboration with various interested parties, felt it inexpedient to suppress our creative outbursts; therefore, he took appropriate measures to insure that our future efforts could be exercised in a less conspicuous region of the premises. When we children were finally provided with a more suitable location, considerable time was devoted to our newly acquired pasttime. In fact, from the time when I was seven years of age until approximately fourteen years, the same group of children continued to engage in this activity as the predominant form of recreation. The quality of workmanship and design of our first structure was, of course, very crude, but our succeeding attempts progressively reflected a remarkable degree of sophistication. For example, at about twelve years of age, we were experimenting with various types of corner bracing, roof trussing, and other structural considerations of this kind, as well as with electrical wiring, telegraph apparatus, heating and methods of distribution, and so on. All of this must have proved to be a great source of motivation and excitement for, with the exception of the summer months, our interest in this activity had been so great that upon various occasions anxiety was aroused in our parents because they felt that we children devoted excessive time to this particular pasttime, thus neglecting other areas vital to well-rounded behavioral development. However, this parental view did not pose any serious obstacles for us, and as we progressed into adolescence our interests turned to other areas due to "natural causes."

During this seven year period, I was consistently the leader

of our small working force. Becoming involved in various types of activity was nothing new to me even during these early years; therefore, whenever we were confronted with the problem of boredom, I merely suggested that we embark on another project and the others were usually more than happy to join in. I was much more adept at planning and engineering the projects, for my father had already exposed me to these kinds of experiences; thus, in guiding the construction of our buildings, much of my prior knowledge was given practical application. Nevertheless, being quite typical children, we often were overly ambitious in our plans for the next "bigger and better" structure. Consequently much ingenuity was required in order to actually achieve the standard of our expectations. Another factor that was instrumental in developing my facility for organization and design was the type of toys that were given to me. These consisted primarily of blocks (obviously!), Log Cabin sets, Tinker-toys, and finally an Erector set. Embodied in these "toys" are many scientific principles, engineering techniques, and mechanical designs. I conducted much experimentation in a non-threatening, self-determinative environment, constrained only by my own ingenuity. Much of my present "more sophisticated" forms of recreation entailing experimentation with various kinds of electrical and mechanical apparatus in addition to fabricating different mechanical devices merely involve the application of principles and techniques which I have been learning and implementing since childhood.

My peer group was quite small, numbering only about six, and there was little opportunity to associate with other children our age, for we lived in an upper-class residential area, being somewhat

removed from the central portion of the community. Most of the residents in this section were elderly people owning rather large estates; thus the children were few in number. This condition persisted for approximately the first eleven years of my life, changing only when I had grown old enough to visit the homes of other children whom I had met in school. However, none of our small group, even though we had all individually made our own friends at school, wished to depart from the neighborhood in which we lived, for here there was always an abundance of engrossing and stimulating activity. This situation did impose certain hardships upon me which, I feel, have had a very significant adverse influence on my behavior. The other members of my peer group all came from wealthy families; hence, during the summer months, they were sent to summer camp. Consequently, these were long and lonely months for me, there being no other children in the neighborhood. I was compelled to rely almost totally upon my own resources for self-involvement; often I spent much time assisting my father with his work. However, in any case, the summer months proved to be very difficult for me. When I had reached the fifth grade, I used to participate occasionally in a summer playground program occurring on Saturday mornings. But this also proved to be difficult, for I had little prior experience in playing organized sports. Thus my proficiency in these activities was extremely limited. My restricted peer group was interested in fabricating things and I had learned to oversee the group activity; thus we were in effect a harmoniously functioning unity, each constituent operating within the context of a clearly defined role. We all were very good friends and as individuals had experienced success and acceptance in our own ways. But during these

summer months, I had to adjust to behavioral conditions which were diametrically opposite to those that were "normal." Here the measure of success was one's ability to play baseball or win fights. Although it was very difficult, over a period of several years I managed to develop sufficient proficiency in these areas to function adequately within the new environment. As a matter of fact, this experience had provided the basis for my emancipation from the original peer group with whom I had associated for so many years. However, during those long summers of loneliness, and in those later instances of rejection because of an inability to participate effectively in athletics, I had learned to be withdrawn and non-aggressive, thereby attempting to remove myself from the critical eyes of my newly acquired associates. And yet, in doing so, this behavior did not become apparent to my peers, for their boisterousness and adolescent spontaneity provided sufficient concealment for my inability to be as equally uninhibited and spontaneous as they. As a result it seems to me that I had acquired an image among my friends as being a somewhat sheltered and not really rough-and-tumble kind of fellow whose presence was always recognized in a somehow obscure or indefinite manner. This image seems to have also been the case in regard to my classmates and teachers, for I never spoke out in class, but often seemed to have the correct answer when called upon. This conception, it appears, is still very much in evidence among those who do not know me well. It persists because my behavior when associating with most people is indicative of this kind of stereotype.

The origin of my behavioral difficulty, I am quite certain, is to be found in those lonely summer days and later when I

attempted to adjust to the norms of a peer group whose mode of behavior was quite foreign to me. These children whom I had initially met at the city playground seemed to all know one another and were always ready to assert themselves. They interacted with each other readily and made acquaintances without great difficulty. But I found it difficult to adjust to this group pattern of behavior. In school my academic competence enabled me to gain acceptance and recognition among the other students. Also, with my neighborhood friends, I was capable of achieving success by organizing and directing a certain class of activities. However, at the playground, I was no longer an integral and significant member of a clearly definable group. Rather my hierarchical position in this new membership was of the lowest order. One's significance here was determined by his physical and athletic proficiency--criteria whose demands, at least at that time, transcended my competence. Therefore, my awareness of this condition began to have an increasingly adverse influence upon my behavior toward other children. Prior to that time the problem of associating with and being accepted by other individuals did not seem to exist, or at least I had never experienced any difficulty in this area. But later this became a significant problem, for the success in my interpersonal relationships which had previously seemed to occur naturally, now was absent. I was now experiencing considerable anxiety when compelled to interact and compete with children who were unfamiliar to me. On these occasions, it was clearly evident to me that I was incapable of behaving aggressively when associating with other children although it was a common form of behavior among them. Heretofore, I did not need to rely upon this

type of interaction for my neighborhood peers or friends in school were much more pacifistic; we were all close friends and fully accepted one another. Therefore, from those early times until even recently, I have experienced varying degrees of anxiety when confronting situations where there is the possibility that my competence will be evaluated. I perceive a person as threatening when he is in a position to be critical of my behavior. Hence, for the past ten years my role as a student has been an anxiety-producing one, for in the area of education, evaluation and criticism are intrinsic to the institution. Traditionally my method of coping with threatening situations has been to remain silent, and thereby not manifest the kind of behavior that is open to direct criticism. I shall more precisely analyze this defense mechanism at a later point.

When entering high school, I had enrolled in a vocational program because of my persistent interest in designing and constructing things. The machine shop section was more specifically appropriate for my interests and aptitudes. My junior high school teachers vigorously objected to this decision to enter the vocational program, for my grade point average had been very high and naturally their recommendation was to enroll in the college preparatory program. My parents did not strenuously object to this decision of mine for they felt that it would facilitate the development of those interests which I possessed throughout my life. Neither of them had completed high school and they had achieved reasonable success in life; hence, they, like myself, were really quite insensitive to the merits of a college diploma. This attitude toward higher education had been consistent among all of the members in both my mother's and father's families. Most of these people were quite successful in various trades and reflected an unusual

amount of pragmatic ingenuity.

While in trade school, I had no difficulty with the course work, and found the program to be quite fascinating. Since most of the curriculum was devoted to shop experience, I had adequate time and opportunity to become deeply engrossed in machine design. Therefore, most of my efforts were dedicated to designing and building various types of woodworking and metalworking machines for my own use at home.

In vocational school, there was certainly never any sign of academic competition among students. My instructor epitomized the ideal of a client-centered therapist. His method of "handling" that "gang of ruffians," who were in the broadest sense of the term characterized as students, was phenomenal. And yet, despite the fact that each day for him appeared to be a descent into Hell, he actually did succeed in consistently getting the "best" out of his students--and certainly out of himself.

From a psychological point of view, I still regard that trade-school experience as having been educationally fruitful for me. There I found myself in possession of complete freedom. The materials, machines, and technical assistance were plentiful. The only threat which one had occasionally to confront was being subjected to a practical joke, or on the other hand, expressing something which was contrary to the sentiments of a "gang leader" that happened to be in "power" at a given time. Therefore, this environment was extremely conducive to learning if only one wished to generate the motivation to actualize his ideas. All in all, my vocational school experience had been very productive and enjoyable, and one that permitted a brand of freedom which I have only upon rare occasions been able to since attain.

In the non-academic aspect of high school, I was perceived by my

classmates as being rather quiet but always friendly. Although the male students in the vocational school were in a sense quite segregated from the other students because their classroom activities differed and also because their behavior was thought to be boisterous and rather crude as compared to the "typical" high school student, I had been approached by the more academically minded students to run for class president in my junior and senior years of school. After considerable persuasion in the first instance, I decided to become a candidate, although it was with much reluctance and apprehension. Surprisingly enough, in each election I was successful. This experience proved to be very exciting and was a great inspiration for exploring a new dimension of myself. During the two years in office, my feelings were remarkably reminiscent of those childhood days when my friends and I were involved in our major pasttime. They were the same satisfying feelings that result from engaging in activities which have purpose and are fulfilling--in these one progressively obtains self-identification.

It is still very difficult to comprehend why my classmates had selected me to run for class office. My presence in high school was relatively unnoticed, for I associated with only a small number of friends known primarily from junior high school. Also, there was the negative influence of the great anxiety which I felt when confronted with the problem of making new acquaintances. To be sure, my first experience in speaking before a large group of people, at a time when my verbal facility was something less than eloquent, has been an unforgettable one. In any case, the success achieved in this rather strange "political" phenomenon will remain a mystery to me.

Another very unusual paradox intrinsic in my "image" during the last two years of high school was a dichotomous social status. In one



case, I was highly regarded by the "socially acceptable" members of the class and also by the school faculty--perhaps here success is to be attributed to my prior experience in having business relationships with the elderly ladies comprising the "upper-upper" class of Yankee City. On the other hand, however, due to my "intimate" associations and facility in acting as a liason between the two opposing factions in the vocational school who were engaged in a power-struggle, I became a bona fide member of the "least acceptable" element of the school population. In this precarious situation, it was merely a case of effecting a merger between the two groups, hence, resulting in the establishment of a "teen-age gang" which had, for a short time, accentuated the presence of the "lower-lower" class in Yankee City. Once again, when called upon to rise to the occasion in a time of strife, I was elected vice president of the "Dukes"--a post which was held for a period of two years, until the police had finally offered us the alternative between continuing our fraternal brotherhood in reform school or pursuing the course of "rugged individualism" typical of the "American way." Naturally, I selected the latter, and somehow emerged from the delightful ordeal unscathed.

After graduating from high school and working several months as a machinist, I became very depressed with the repetitive nature of my existence, and my thoughts turned to the possibility of attending college. After numerous inquiries and interviews, it soon became clear to me that my efforts were in vain, for a trade-school education is equivalent to not having attended high school at all, when conceived as a basis for college preparation. But in the latter part of August, I accidentally encountered my former trade-school teacher and informed him of my problem. He suggested as a remote possibility that I apply

to a small state college which had an industrial arts department. I followed his suggestion and was admitted to the institution on a trial basis. Fortunately, there had been several unoccupied rooms in one of the college dormitories; apparently the administration sought to have a "full house," at least at the beginning of the year.

Throughout the first semester at college, my anxiety level was very high, for the majority of the other students had broad and rather substantial high school backgrounds. Although at the outset it was quite a struggle, for I had almost no background in written composition and my verbal facility was quite inadequate, eventually, I began to make progress.

My college experience was in many respects remarkably similar to that of high school. The industrial arts program was perceived as the "college vocational school," nurturing the less academically enlightened of the student body, regardless of how this "element" attempted to over-compensate for their intellectual deficiencies. However, I once again, while existing in relative obscurity, held many "high-level" positions in various student organizations. But in this case, my academic success had tended to amplify the view that students had of me. Since I remained silent and quite withdrawn, they must have interpreted this as an indication of "profundity and wisdom." My fellow students had characterized me in the college yearbook as ". . . quiet, reserved, and well liked."

The most significant portion of my college education occurred during a senior-year introductory course in philosophy taught by a very fine and sensitive professor with a Thomistic orientation. It was here that I first developed a conscious taste for the psychological and philosophical condition of myself and for mankind. This point will

be developed more fully in the next two sections of this paper.

In my junior year at college, to progress for a moment, I had attained an academic level of competence whereby I did not any longer perceive the students at that institution as a threat to my academic security. At this point, I felt secure and autonomous for there was no longer any need to "push" myself in order to "prove" my academic ability to the other students and faculty members. In achieving this status, I felt free. Freedom in this case meant that I, my fellow students, and the faculty were fully aware of the fact that I was academically capable of functioning on a high scholastic level. Once having been assured of this, my anxieties were sufficiently relieved to permit me to act in accordance to my basic desires and explore those subjects which aroused my interests--this was freedom for me. Yet, it was only a partial victory, for my conception of freedom at that time was very vague and incomplete. Its presence had been ascertainable only when I found myself spontaneously expressing my feelings and thoughts to others without any consideration of how they might be judging my behavior. But most of the time, even when I had attained academic stability and recognition from the faculty and students, my inhibitions were so great that I still feared to "be myself."

During those last two years of college, my desire to seek diversity among activities was great. It was in this type of exploration that life seemed to remain meaningful and challenging. The variety of personalities with whom I associated at this time lucidly reflected this tendency. My roommate had been a Democratic Socialist who had participated vigorously in party activities, in addition to articulating his contentions on campus. Because of this, he was nearly ejected from college, for the faculty at that institution were only sympathetic

to those who either remained passive, or tended to express opinions that coincided with and reinforced the dogmatic view which had been "thoroughly-thought-through" by various influential faculty members. Hence, the students' role was to assimilate the "truth-system," and those who deviated from this pattern were usually not particularly successful in college. Another class friend was a fellow in his late twenties who had previously been training to become a Jesuit Priest, but later decided to enter the teaching profession. He was very intelligent and kind. The method he used for communicating his views was very effective for there was always a profound regard for explicating the many ramifications of given issues.

A third friend was a pitiful person, for his neurotic impulses of insecurity almost totally prevented him from exercising his potentially great literary talents; hence, he experienced rejection from nearly everyone with whom he had attempted to relate.

My association with people of this type proved to be very stimulating and rewarding, for in our many diverse forms of experience, ranging from attending Communist party rallies to engaging in penetrating discussions or attending religious retreats, we learned much about those regions where men can find genuine communication and acceptance among one another.

## II. Self-Exploration

From what has been said up to this point, it is clearly evident that I had interpreted many of my interactions with people as being threatening. A threatening situation would be, as it has already been mentioned, one in which there was the possibility that another person or persons would criticize or make value judgments about my behavior in a given instance. For example, I would experience great anxiety

when called upon to answer a question in class. This fear became progressively more incapacitating as time went on. Thus, when in the process of answering a given question, my attention was sharply focused upon the quality of the response that I was giving and concomitantly upon the way that I thought the class and instructor were evaluating me. Therefore, in doing this, my attention would be increasingly diverted from the question to be answered. As a result, the answers were often inconsistent and muddled. This had the effect of increasing my anxiety level due to the great dissatisfaction resulting from having known the correct answer, and yet being fully cognizant that I simply could not bring myself to express that which was actually known by me because of the mounting anxiety that kept compelling my attention toward my negative behavior. Here I was obviously being victimized by my own behavior. It was not the others who were passing judgment upon me--it was I. And certainly my criteria for self-evaluation had been amplified to an unreasonable level of perfection--much beyond that of the group. In order to avoid this constant threat confronting me in my daily interpersonal relationships, I developed the defense mechanism of withdrawal, thus being able to be physically present in a class, for example, but remaining silent most of the time and thereby avoiding the type of behavior which seemed capable of being critically evaluated, viz, verbalizing. The question which must be now considered is, why did the possibility of being evaluated provoke such an incapacitating fear within me? I basically felt that others were incapable of comprehending the full significance of my responses, and yet, I did not think that my answers were so comprehensive or profound that their import transcended the intellectual capacities of others. But it still remained my feeling that they would

evaluate me unjustly. Rather, the case seems to be that I perceived myself as being competent in certain respects and when a situation would arise where other people would be evaluating those areas in which I considered myself proficient, and where there was the danger that their evaluation of me would fall short of my own, then sufficient anxiety would be generated within me to implement the defense mechanism of withdrawal. It was my feeling that no one had the right to evaluate or criticize me unfairly, as in the case of a teacher administering grades: I felt totally helpless in being able to defend myself against what I interpreted to be an injustice. On the other hand, when someone criticized me where there was no threatening agent such as a grade--an evil against which I had no defense--I interpreted the gesture as being advantageous to my self-development, and in the case where a criticism seemed to be unjustified, I experienced no reluctance in verbally defending myself, for this was a threat,--but one which could be effectively handled.

In these previous comments, I have attempted, although not by any means exhaustively, to reflect on some of those primitive, but not always accessible, feelings which seem to have accompanied a certain class of anxiety-producing situations throughout my life. Only the bare outline of this condition has been expressed, primarily because I have not by any means completely resolved this behavioral abnormality. Within recent months, however, my practicum experiences in addition to a course in group counseling have enabled me to gain considerable understanding about this conflict area, therefore relieving much anxiety. In order to provide a clearer explanation of this phenomenon, the remainder of this section will be devoted to those significant events that preceded and made possible this revelation of greater self-insight.

During the time in vocational school, and much more importantly, those early years in undergraduate school, a parallel distinction seems always to have been implicit in the environment, namely that there were two clearly separate intellectual levels in these situations: one which comprised the college preparatory or liberal arts majors, and the other which consisted of the "shop rats" or industrial arts group. At both academic levels, I was always capable of intellectually dissolving this differentiation when the distinction involved me. But nevertheless, my feelings implied the contrary. Perhaps this distinction could be applicable to even those earlier days at the playground. In any case, there had been much more reinforcement affirming the inferior conception. This "message" became particularly clear during my freshman year at college. In high school I had only one "watered-down" English course, and read only miscellaneous trade pamphlets and textbooks. The courses in mathematics, science, and history were taught only as they related to the machinist trade. Therefore, when I finally reached college--a phenomenon which now seems to me a miracle--my preparation was something less than adequate.

In the first year at college, my reasoning was disorganized and lacked insight. This, compounded with an insufficient understanding of written composition, and also, as the final ingredient, poor verbal facility, resulted in subjecting the English language to some tragic disfigurations. However, because there still exists a small contingent of charitable professors of English who are thoroughly convinced that there is no significant positive correlation between intellectual aptitude and manual dexterity, I managed to survive my courses in English. But even when confronted with these forms of adversity, it still appeared to me that the "weighty issues" discoursed about in

college were quite comprehensible once one had mastered the "jargon and methodology" of the area. With this facility, many whom I had perceived as intellectually limited were quite capable of operating successfully in the exalted fraternity of "academicians."

These initial experiences of frustration during my freshman and sophomore years were instrumental in facilitating the development of my already frequently used defense mechanism of withdrawal. While I remained silent and introverted, there were, as time went on, an increasing number of ideas that had been suggested to me from various class discussions and reading materials. These eventually had stimulated a need for self-identification. Most of my thoughts about myself, college, my purpose in life, and so on, were quite unorganized and lacked explication. There were things that I wanted to "think-through," but most of the classes seemed inappropriate for this, and anyway, my anxieties prohibited me from "speaking out." Rather than look outward for self-definition, my attention turned to introspection--in this there would be no threat. Over a period of time, my proficiency in this increased significantly. Whenever I experienced anger,<sup>a</sup> threat, joy, or similar types of feelings, I attempted to explore the conditions that gave rise to these psychological states. After devoting a sustained effort to this practice, my sensitivity for the feelings of others as well as myself became increasingly acute.

The senior year in college proved to be most informative and inspiring for me. I had, over the years, acquired some background in psychology with a delightful professor who was non-threatening, extremely humorous, and accepting, and was remarkably incompetent in the field of psychology. Also this was the semester when my interests had been aroused in philosophy. Here the circumstances were appropriate for a



potentially fruitful learning experience. Fortunately enough, the condition necessary to promote effectively this learning was provided when I initiated the establishment of a small, informal discussion group, concerning itself with problems encompassing philosophical and theological considerations of man, contemporary politics, aesthetics, social issues, and . . . our own psychological feelings. Here in these unusually penetrating and sensitive discussions, it was the consensus of the group that a kind of freedom existed which permitted and encouraged the expression of one's inmost, protected and intimate feelings and convictions about various topics of consideration. It was also felt that, in this situation where we could confront one another, our personal lives seemed to have greater meaning and significance, in addition to providing the conditions for more effective self-realization. I truly feel that in these meetings we were approaching a type of existential freedom. Simply stated--a human being was permitted to be himself and guide his actions in accordance to his own resources and capacities as he interpreted them.

When I had contemplated attending graduate school, it was all too clear to me that history was about to repeat itself. In remaining consistent with certain research evidence--that there seems to be a tendency among those experiencing behavioral problems to enter the field of psychology--my choice of fields was in this respect quite normal. After five inquiries to graduate schools of psychology and four rejections, it soon became evident that an industrial arts major with a "smattering" of psychology, from a state teachers' college, was not considered to be a particularly good "risk." However, there was still one chance remaining; I traveled to Amherst, Massachusetts, to inquire at the state university, whereupon I was promptly rejected.

Ah despair--my world was crumbling around me. But as I was leaving the office, the secretary furtively looked in my direction and, while glancing from side to side, whispered, "Why don't you go down to the school of education?"

Well, I reported for academic duty in the fall of 1963, harboring the traditional anxieties about having to once again re-establish myself in a new environment. Yet there was an auspicious factor--at least I was in a graduate program at a recognized institution. During the first year my courses were in three different departments--psychology, education, and philosophy--and at its termination, my emotional reactions to the departments were diverse. I perceived the psychology department as being satiated with students whose predominant facilities were in remaining mute and in taking **prodigious notes**. They reminded me of a large group of parrots who were, via lectures, "programmed" to give back certain information when "prodded." However, when examination time came, much to my dismay, those parrots began to squawk out a message which suggested that I either maintain the prescribed virtue, or "fall by the wayside."

In the education department, the students seemed to fall into two distinct categories. The first consisted of full-time graduate students who reflected a reasonable amount of interest in their studies and readily engaged, both formally and informally, in discussions about issues concerning school guidance and counseling. But the part-time graduate students, who represented the majority in any given class, appeared to be relatively apathetic and uninterested in their course work. Their views seem comparatively superficial and were often validated upon personal experience. They were often threatened when a member of the **class** did introduce or make reference to empirical

evidence to support a given view. It seems to me that the dichotomous performance manifested by the two groups greatly limited the depth of class discussion, for oftentimes the groups vacillated from topic to topic with only a superficial analysis of each.

The teaching method used by the philosophy department effectively combined the good attributes manifested in the psychology and education learning environments. There was an abundance of subject matter presented by the professors in class, as with the psychology department, but this was done in the relaxed and permissive atmosphere typical to the area of education. First, instructors would give a brief historical introduction to the topic of discussion, and then briefly begin to explicate some of the salient concepts implicit within the works of given philosophers. The most prominent and general concepts were introduced initially and then working inductively and in careful steps, philosophical systems were developmentally constructed in a logical and meaningful fashion. Accompanying this whole process, questions and criticisms originating from both students and instructors culminated the learning experience by emphasizing the import and genuine significance of these philosophical issues in relation to contemporary life. Here in this learning experience, there was finally "time" to contemplate concepts from many perspectives and in varying degrees of profundity--not pass over their many subtle but ultimately more significant dimensions. Examinations were humane and designed to develop the most intellectually fruitful capacities of students, viz--their ability to think logically, critically, and creatively. This was effectively facilitated through writing papers about important philosophical issues.

In characterizing each of these departments, my views were based upon the way that they had emotionally impinged upon me. It is in this

sense that any mention of them is of significance to only a few, for their psychological impact has effected modifications in my feelings about many things including my self-concept, and some of the effects that contemporary education has upon human beings. In considering these elusive and sensitive areas of human behavior, in addition to the traditional macroscopic dimensions, I feel that empirical research will come much nearer to understanding the dynamics of human behavior than heretofore.

When taking courses in psychology, my anxieties were great, for I found myself having to reproduce (or as they say, "explicate and elaborate upon") information given in textbooks and notes. Little attention was devoted to the definition of terms, or how the course information related to a behavioristic conception of man. Hence, I could not bring myself to master information under these circumstances, for it had little meaning for me and would be quickly forgotten. My grades suffered, and, as a result, I became very depressed. My only motivation for remaining in graduate school was that it was still very obvious to me that the course subject matter was simply not particularly difficult, and it was well within the realm of my comprehension.

The education courses, on the other hand, offered great possibilities for expression and individual study, but I was psychologically incapable of adequately functioning due to the persistent fear of being criticized when engaging in class discussion. Also there was another condition asserting itself as being threatening. Since the days at undergraduate school, I made frequent use of introspection in analyzing my feelings. In doing this, I perceived certain interpersonal situations, particularly academic classes, as being threatening. Thus, my sensitivity to my behavior in these instances became abnormally acute--

I interpreted typical classroom verbalizations in terms of how painful it would have been for me had I been verbally engaged in them. Therefore, while remaining silent in class, I was concomitantly making value judgments on the quality of my behavior had I been verbally participating in the group. Many other members of the class, it appeared, dealt with class topics in a superficial and imprecise manner, and seemed unwilling or incapable of giving profound consideration to many topics of discussion. I was apprehensive about becoming involved in this intellectually tumultuous situation because the group would grow impatient with my precise analysis and move to another topic, before I had adequately qualified my views.

Ever since undergraduate school when, having experienced the merits of participating in our small, informal discussion group, I longed to regain that feeling of freedom. In graduate school, the method of teaching used in psychology overwhelmed me, because of my inability to dogmatically master subject matter; and in education, I was also exasperated for it seemed that many who were academically incompetent achieved success primarily because of their willingness to verbalize in class. As a result of this, I pursued the last alternative for achieving academic success when entering the philosophy department. Here the subject matter was meaningful and the teaching method dialectical--two factors that must be present if I am to effectively learn. I was initially overwhelmed by the subject matter, for my knowledge of this area was extremely superficial and my capacity for logical and critical thinking was undeveloped. My perception of philosophy as being a field which encouraged much speculation about the nature of "things" was totally erroneous; hence, I found myself having to contemplate "things" with a degree of scrutiny which far

exceeded that in other areas. After much effort on my part, I finally managed to close the "content gap" and found myself once again "at the head of the class." This achievement, of course, gave me considerable reinforcement and confidence in my intellectual capacities, and came at a time when I was at the end of my "academic rope."

In the fall of 1964, I returned with great exuberance to my second year at graduate school. My hope was to devote as much effort as possible to philosophy, for it was the area in which I felt "really comfortable and adept." A final requirement for a master's degree in school guidance was, however, still remaining--this was practicum. My interest in the field of guidance and counseling persisted in being great even though I looked upon my previous year's performance as inferior. But since practicum was remaining, it seemed appropriate to also elect a course in group counseling, for my knowledge in this area was particularly deficient. I had assumed that this education course would be like the others and that my inhibitions would persist. On the first meeting, I sat quietly, "sizing up my adversaries" as they were filing into class while waiting for the instructor. He was a new faculty member and I was anxious to see what he would be like. He came into class early and remained at the front of the room nervously pacing about. His manner was stern and his countenance austere. He initially impinged upon me as a most undesirable character; it looked as though the course was to entail much trivium. The prospect of this, in addition to my already negative attitude toward education courses, proved to be thoroughly exasperating. At that point my anger mounted and I became determined to fight this instructor "tooth and nail," regardless of the repercussions. This course was not essential to my master's degree; therefore, just the opportunity to take a "crack" at this "guy"

would justify getting even a failing grade. In these thoughts that were running through my mind, there was no consideration being given to how the instructor or the class would evaluate my behavior--I had had it--to hell with all of them. As the anger mounted within me, my attention was fully directed toward the instructor. His authoritative manner was extraordinary. I began to think "is this guy for real?" With closer observation, certain inconsistencies in his behavior became evident, gradually indicating to me that his actions were pre-tentious. In a very short time, he confirmed my, and several other class-members', suspicions regarding his fraudulent behavior. Upon hearing this admission, I actually felt disappointed, for evidently I really wanted to vigorously oppose him. The instructor then asked the class to reflect on their feelings about having been confronted with this authority figure. The members of the group responded both spontaneously and thoughtfully. Their comments impressed me as being so sincere and personal that within a short time, I felt a strong compulsion to join in. Soon, I found myself contributing spontaneously to the discussion, and, of greater importance, I was capable of clearly focusing my undivided attention to the concept that I was developing for the first time without any other inhibiting thoughts or feelings "creeping" into my consciousness. The feeling that resulted from "speaking out" was a very strange and exciting one indeed. I felt like an infant initially learning how to walk--extremely fragile and insecure; yet there was a compelling fascination concomitant with this act. As I "watched myself" perform, being exposed to all of the old familiar threats, I had a hollow feeling of gratification and simple satisfaction. This was unquestionably a new learning experience --one that some now felt different from all the others. I felt more

complete and capable of definition--more like an autonomous self-sufficient entity. For the first time in my life, it was clearly apparent to me that I could say anything to anyone if the expression was representative of my true feelings. Under these conditions, regardless of the intersubjectively determined truth-value of my assertion, or the type of criticism retorted by another, I felt that my comments were of genuine transcendent value, for they represented the efforts of a human being struggling for behavioral integration. It appears to me that when men lose sight of, or become insensitive to, this human manifestation, both in themselves and in others, they are committing a seemingly minor act of human injustice which has the cumulative effect of dehumanizing men and usurping the only real kind of value that can be intrinsic to his "nature."

When the class terminated, the thought most prominent in my mind, next to that of being fully cognizant of the great learning experience which I had just undergone, was that I must not lose my grasp on this newly acquired insight, hence slipping back into the realm of fear and frustration. I had experienced something extraordinarily remarkable, which in effect rendered me capable of becoming as self-fulfilled and autonomous as our human condition permits. Therefore my future efforts must be wholeheartedly devoted to cultivating this capacity for freedom because it is herein that the resource for life's meaning can be exploited. With this attitude in mind, I proceeded to once again submerge myself into the world of practical affairs--for me, that of academics. At this point, a clarification must be made. In maintaining that I now strive to act in accordance to the implications of my feelings, this is saying nothing more than Socrates had purported over 2300 years ago. He affirmed that through rational self-insight, one could develop a



sufficiently comprehensive and integrated view of oneself so that it was possible to rely upon one's own intellectual resources as a guide to the kind of behavior which is individually and socially most beneficial. Although this may be considered as a lofty philosophical ideal, it seems to me that this notion is still profoundly relevant, even for our twentieth century "thinkers." Before leaving this subject, there is one additional thought that should be mentioned. The great significance of the Socratic adage "Know thyself," and its contemporary import for various schools of psychology, has become apparent to me, not by a rational analysis of the concept, but rather through an empirical mode. Simply stated, when I had experienced the feeling of what I have characterized as freedom, my sensitivity to that phenomenon had become somehow greater than it could have been prior to having had the experience. Although this problem is a difficult one, and is by no means a resolved epistemological issue, some psychotherapists accept it readily (however, there are many, on the other hand, who perceive those psychotherapists as "fuzzy thinkers"). In any case, it is beyond the scope of this paper to give any further consideration to the matter.

Another sequence of experiences which I feel were also of extreme academic importance in regard to understanding counseling techniques and behavioral change resulting from therapy occurred in a phase of practicum which involved my participation in individual and group counseling. In both the previous statements, as well as in my following comments, I do not mean to imply that my knowledge of counseling dynamics is at this stage anything more than superficial. But it is my feeling that, as a result of having been personally counseled with effectiveness, both in individual and group sessions, and also due to several informal discussions with several fellow graduate students, I have succeeded in

learning certain information which seems imperative for a correct understanding of counseling theories and techniques.

The merits resulting from having been individually counseled were not based upon the acquisition of any great amount of self-insight, although without question there was discernible progress made in this area, but rather the real significance occurred from my direct observation of a skillful counselor "at work." Shortly before these individual sessions had begun to meet, I had my experience of freedom which occurred in the first session of the group counseling class. The days following that experience had great implications for me because I was suddenly provided with an avalanche of new data about myself; thus, when the individual counseling sessions began, there were numerous analyzed feelings that were consciously accessible to me which I simply had not yet thought about. Therefore, when the counselor began to inquire into my feeling realm, I could provide a whole welter of "material" suitable for analytical discourse. This is not to say that he could not have been of therapeutic value to me, but rather that the meetings were not sufficiently numerous to provide the time needed for him to work through those feelings whose significance were already fairly apparent to me, and then proceed to the areas that were beyond my awareness. But the phenomenon that impressed me was his commendable facility for taking those "bits" of verbalism which I found myself spontaneously expressing to him, and reflecting the feeling implications of those verbal fragments back to me in such a way that his comments were piercing the very heart of my cognizable feelings. My first thought was, "How the hell is he doing this? This fellow is 'twisting' all of my statements in such a way that he's seeing 'right through' me." Then I attempted to implement various deceptive techniques to "throw him off the track;" but for the most part, he maintained his effectiveness.

These experiences were fascinating--"he really had something here." I had to know how this was done--I had to find out about the more complex theoretical considerations involved in this remarkable process, not merely the "recipe." I expressed these views to him and asked to explore some of the many questions that were in my mind. The counselor complied with my request and henceforth proceeded to provide me with a great deal of information, much of which was related to and originated from our counseling dialogues. This brought out many of the rich implications of such theorists as Skinner, Freud, Rogers, and others. Although prior to the presentation of these illuminating comments I had read fragments of various works of leading counseling theorists, and often heard many make "knowledgeable" reference to them, those important concepts which mediated the distinctions between the theoretical and practical aspects of counseling, as well as the concepts that emphasized the areas of commonality and difference among theoretical orientations, were unknown to me. At present, my knowledge of these considerations is still only rudimentary, but now I feel that my mastery does include the essential "bare-bones" of comprehension and is increasingly sensitive to the limitations of these great systems --a condition that is indispensable to achieving continual progress. The greatest challenge is, however, in implementing the positive elements of these systems in conjunction with the surprising and increasingly fruitful discoveries of contemporary research, for effective reconciliation of behavioral abnormalities.

There is much more that could be said regarding any of the topics developed in this paper, particularly in reaction to the last two issues pertaining to the effects of group and individual psychotherapy upon me. Inadvertently, there were implications in my comments which

remained undeveloped, but in any case, I have expressed the more significant aspects of those feelings which have, it seems to me, been longitudinally instrumental in determining my present conception of myself, of other human beings, and of those modes by which people can actualize themselves--one of which is through the services of certain types of guidance and counseling. I have purposely refrained from attempting to analytically interpret my feelings in terms of some theoretical framework, for this would necessitate a competence which I do not yet possess, and also it would deviate from the primary aim of this paper, which is simply to present a longitudinal account of those feelings which seem to have been important in influencing my decision to become a guidance counselor. Also, I might add that my positive practicum experience had prompted me to formally undertake this task--it has, without question, been beneficial for me. Hopefully, as I have mentioned before, others may find this procedure useful in attempting to develop a more comprehensive and integrated conception of themselves and their motivations, in addition to gaining a greater sensitivity to the multidimensional aspects of individual behavior that deserve consideration by contemporary researchers. I feel that by precisely scrutinizing our own behavior, many suggestions for productive research can be found. Although there are a large number who would vehemently dispute this contention, the findings of a growing number of studies in counseling psychology are beginning to raise some interesting questions about various traditional conceptions in psychology and education which have the time-honored distinction of being "principles."

I would now like to terminate this section by focusing upon some positive behavioral changes that have occurred in me as a result of

having engaged in group and individual counseling. But first, it is worth mentioning that because I had only recently experienced freedom (as previously defined), much of the value of my graduate work in school guidance and counseling was lost. Those fears which became increasingly pronounced as I grew older seriously impaired my performance in classroom experiences. This of course exasperated me, and consequently, suppressed my motivation for becoming deeply involved in the courses. I dissipated some of my frustration by adopting a negative and critical attitude toward the department, and those participating in the graduate program. However, all was not lost, for as a result of those later experiences which permitted me to directly confront fear under non-critical circumstances and explore the effects of this on me, I was able to understand better and transcend these incapacities. Therefore, many of my previous feelings and attitudes toward myself and other human beings have been progressively renovated and reorganized through my own psychological resources. This process has enabled me to function more effectively in life. The following instances represent several positive behavioral changes that have occurred within me. Now that I am constrained less by fear and frustration, there is no longer the need to insulate myself from others through introspection. I now look "outward" as well as "inward," hence confronting life more comprehensively. In being a more integrated, definable, and autonomous person, I obtain greater fulfillment in becoming involved with people and sharing in their experiences. No longer am I limited to only those who are "psychologically protective" for me. Nor am I apprehensive about revealing myself, and being subjected to criticism. Since my anxieties were greatly reduced from having experienced freedom, it became my desire to do whatever I could to help others transcend

their fears and feel the same kind of relief which enabled me to more nearly function as a complete human being. Now my motivation for attempting to assist others in working through their fears is primarily that the activity possessed intrinsic value. It does give me much subjective gratification in the sense that I now do one thing in life which is worthwhile. After having been "emancipated," the field of guidance counseling took on new meaning for me--fundamental issues and problems that had been previously obscured from my attention were now manifesting themselves as deeply significant. It is this type of awareness growing out of personal strife that can support many modes for creative and penetrating research. Finally, I felt deeply sensitive for what seems to me as a genuine aspect of the contemporary "human condition." Is it possible that many in our society are held in bondage by their own fears? Is it possible to be so constrained by societal values that the prospect of self-exploration never really occurs to many? Is it possible to have learned from a very early age, by internalizing the judgments and values of others, a role in life which is as rigid and binding in its effects as the most tyrannical of autocracies? These questions, to cite but a few, merit and demand the consideration of empirical researches, for as society becomes increasingly larger and homogeneous, these issues will multiply in both complexity and magnitude.

In making the previous comments, I am by no means implying that my former sensitivity to those areas was non-existent, but rather that it had only an intellectual basis. Now, however, its basis is both intellectual and emotional--there is somehow a genuine urgency and compelling nature about these issues. If my former and latter conceptions were expressed in purely behavioristic terms, both instances

would terminologically coincide, hence signifying little difference in both psychological states. The issue is reminiscent of Thomistic epistemology, whereby Thomas maintained that man in his mundane existence could know God's nature through rational theology, but in the state of beatitude, man would directly know God through acquaintance, which was somehow a "higher" form of knowledge, yet actually no additional rational knowledge would be provided beyond that available in his earthly existence. The distinction here between the levels or modes of knowing seems to be similar to the issue in contemporary psychotherapy, viz., is there really any dissimilarity or qualitative difference in the information accessible to client-centered therapists in a "feeling-type" counseling relationship with a client, and the information revealed from a behavioristic account of that same counseling session? Here is a most intriguing problem for future research. The "scientific solution" to this problem may significantly influence the way that men will act toward--or act upon--one another in the future.

### III. A Reasonable Proposal for Counselor Education

I think it is of crucial importance that graduate students initially entering programs training school guidance counselors rapidly acquire a sensitivity to the problems that they will undoubtedly encounter in their future occupation, for it is from this type of awareness that much interest and motivation for their field can arise. Only when a human being is intimately involved in some area of exploration will he endeavor to expend his best efforts for resolving problems in that area. What prompts an individual to enter into this type of relationship with an object of interest? It seems to me that it is the result of catching a glimpse or acquiring an insight into any relationships among "things." We might well interpret the desire to

investigate a particular area of interest in terms of satisfying a certain configuration of needs. But here the analysis is becoming progressively more general, hence taking us away from the original topic. Perhaps it is enough to say, without entering into a thorough discussion of the concept, that individuals become involved with things that have meaning for them. Granted, this statement is very general--perhaps to the extent that it will lose its utility for my purposes. But I think not, for when this nebulosity is compared to another, namely, how can graduate students learn to effectively counsel human beings falling within the domain of a normal school population?--I feel rather comfortable with my initial generalization. This illustration can be used to emphasize the fact that although contemporary education is regarded as a lucrative enterprise, comparatively little thought is being devoted to determining the extent to which teaching methods are effective when conceived in the light of the abundant evidence available on how learning best occurs. To be more specific, let us consider the procedure presently being used to train "effective" school guidance counselors.

In the traditional type of graduate program, trainees, usually comprised of part- and full-time graduate students, are exposed to a number of required courses in principles of guidance, and so on. Also courses in other related areas such as psychology, sociology, and philosophy may be elected. Hence, when trainees have accumulated sufficient credits and have participated in a practicum experience, they are given a master's degree, for example, in school guidance. For all legal purposes, this individual is a competent guidance counselor. Implicit within this kind of training program are the following assumptions, namely that graduate students all learn in generally the



same way, that the courses taken pertain to school guidance and counseling, that when students are exposed to a presumably inter-related quantum of information, they will be competent guidance counselors, that under these circumstances students are able to meaningfully integrate this information into a useful whole, that in various areas the lecture method of imparting information is effective, etc. I could go on in this fashion, but one need only reflect on these assumptions for a moment to understand the point that I am developing. In essence, it seems to be maintained in guidance counselor education that trainees can learn how to administer guidance services by 1) exposing trainees to various related subject matter; 2) exposing trainees to faculty who attempt to modify the behavior of trainees toward that which is appropriate for effective guidance counseling; 3) having trainees culminate their graduate training by directly experiencing counseling relationships with other human beings.

If these statements are taken for their face value, one would wonder, "Well, how else would guidance counselors be trained? This procedure seems reasonable enough." Although I have perhaps oversimplified the issues, and may have overlooked some others, my only justification for doing so is that this is a vast area of investigation which is not specifically related to the topic of this paper, therefore, I can consider it only in passing, for its significance will lead me into my last topic of discussion. In any case, my criticism of the three assumptions above is that the teaching conditions and the methodologies which they promote are inefficient, round-about, and humanly degrading. One has only to scrutinize the actual circumstances under which learning is presumed to occur, and then determine whether they embody the research findings on how learning is effectively facilitated.

Do trainees really gain a sensitivity to things like how to effectively conduct individual and group counseling sessions; or what influence their behavior has on their clients; or the common elements among counseling theories as well as those which differentiate theories from one another; or their own inner conflicts and motivations which may significantly affect counseling relationships, or how it actually feels to undergo counseling or psychotherapy; or how to conduct research in areas of genuine concern to guidance and counseling; or how to effectively advise or counsel parents when their children manifest the effects of conflicts at home; and so on. These are only a few of the questions that can be raised in regard to guidance counselor education. Using as a basis my own personal experience and observation and various discussions with other trainees in the same program, I maintain that considerably more effective school guidance counselors could be trained, using the same "quality" graduate students (full-time), faculty, and other school facilities, than are presently being educated. But immediately the objection will be raised, "Your assertion has only a subjective basis; it is but the mere opinion of a single graduate student--surely you don't expect an entire graduate school program to be reorganized without presenting any confirmative empirical evidence." My reply to this kind of objection is simply that it avoids the issue. Any type of education should ideally be self-criticized. It should weigh criticisms of any sort with profound regard, for they at least indicate that there are some who are deeply concerned with the quality of education as it exists at a given time. Criticism, coherently presented, also indicates that there are some who are concerned with the welfare of individual human beings as well as society. The objection which I have anticipated only encourages and characterizes

a new kind of "twentieth century inertia" created by unenlightened men of science. Today much consideration is being given to the quantitative problem of providing greater educational opportunity for more people, but, on the other hand, little mention is being made of its qualitative dimensions. I am merely suggesting that we look more closely at the "facts" regarding the quality of education to which our people are being subjected. It is imperative that we take the research evidence of learning theorists and psychotherapists and use this as our criteria for evaluation, not relying on those which are arbitrary or subjective. Then after the evaluation has been conducted, let us ask ourselves if we are justified in voice platitudes such as "optimum development of potentialities," "creative development of potentialities in accordance to one's capacities and resources," etc.

Until now, I have merely been critical of guidance counselor education. This criticism has been provided in order to prepare the way for what I feel is a reasonable proposal for counselor education. Most program designs which greatly deviate from orthodox curricula are usually criticized as being "too ideal," "sound <sup>and it</sup> but requires too many faculty members and costly pieces of new apparatus," etc. The program which seems to me as appropriate for human beings entails no additional pieces of apparatus <sup>and</sup> / no more faculty members, but rather necessitates a different conception of how individuals become individual. This "different conception," as I call it, is certainly nothing new or unusual--it is only "different" in the sense that it is rarely used in education. Certain kinds of counselors and psychotherapists know the "technique" well, and attribute the success of their efforts to it.

Now, without further comment, I will briefly outline this "different" approach to educating school guidance counselors. First, however, there

are two qualifications to be made which will promote a better understanding of the program. Primary emphasis is placed upon facilitating a "working knowledge" of counseling--both a sensitivity to its effects on clients and counselors, and its various modes of implementation. Secondly, this program is suitable only for full-time graduate students who have the opportunity to "immerse" themselves into their field of inquiry, and not/<sup>be</sup>committed to other obligations, such as full-time teaching, urgent family commitments, etc..

The objectives for the proposed program could be conceived as follows:

- I. 1) We want guidance counselors who can act independently, responsibly, and creatively.
- 2) We want guidance counselors who can be of genuine assistance to those who seek greater self-insight and assistance with present and future educational and occupational goals.
- 3) We want guidance counselors who can effectively execute other necessary contingent processes such as working with teachers, administrators, and parents to promote the welfare of students in their school and home environments; who can conduct testing programs, and so on.
- 4) We want guidance counselors who are knowledgeable about the subject matter related to their field.
- 5) We want guidance counselors who are cognizant of the methods and procedures in conducting fruitful research in their field..

Next, the main problem seems to be: how are graduate students to be effectively motivated, at the outset of their training, to become sensitive and committed to the field of guidance counseling? I feel that there are at least two general approaches to this challenge; they

are as follows:

- II. 1) Directly confront students at the very beginning of their training with the problem of effectively counseling human beings. This may be done with audio-visual aids, by role playing, in being counseled themselves, or actually attempting to counsel another when having little or no experience in this activity. These experiences should have the effect of manifesting many difficulties involved in perceiving unity in human behavior, in genuinely being sensitive to the feelings of others, in perceiving the effects of their own anxieties, and so on. Following these introductory experiences, the trainees should meet with one another as a group, and with faculty members, to discuss the significance of the initial sessions for them. These sessions should be maintained throughout graduate training.
- 2) Have students familiarize themselves with the content and problems of school guidance counseling. With appropriate educational materials, school facilities, and faculty assistance at their disposal, students will be compelled to work through various problems in their own way. This approach initially supplemented with a period of orientation to the field and the graduate program, in addition to periodic discussion sessions with fellow students, faculty and <sup>a</sup>combination of both, will place the burden of responsibility for learning directly upon graduate students themselves. This problem-solving approach to education should facilitate more effective and meaningful learning, for trainees will be able to explore problems that have immediate implication for them (as in Section II-1, above), that are appropriate for their level of educational development, that

present a challenge which will vary in proportion to the motivational level and intellectual capacities of individual students.

Some assumptions implicit within this methodology are that:

- a) students will learn to be autonomous;
- b) students are to be trusted;
- c) students are capable of learning more effectively when they are allowed to pursue their own "route" to knowledge;
- d) students are to be valued as human beings and regarded as colleagues of those who collectively constitute the academic community. It is also to be assumed that these individuals are, in their own ways, aspiring toward the same general goals, viz., self-realization and (secondly) contributing to the field of knowledge.

Now I would like to list the remaining characteristics of this proposed program, hence, indirectly and by implication, "rounding out" my conception of an effective, realistic, and humane graduate experience in school guidance.

### III. Format:

- 1) New trainees will, at the beginning of their graduate study, participate in an orientation period that will be concerned with procedural matters such as departmental requirements (upon which I shall elaborate), introductory presentations by the faculty, discussions with other advanced graduate students, etc..
- 2) Next, students will participate in practicum sessions where they will: undergo counseling, attempt to counsel others, participate in group discussion, and so on. This stage was more fully described in Section II-1, above.

- 3) Students' investigations will be concerned with subject matter that pertains to the Major Problem Areas (see Section III-5, below). They will be permitted to audit ~~any~~ courses being offered at the university. Graduate credit will be given to those students who have met the requirements for each of the four Major Problem Areas.
- 4) Students will be required to attend all seminars involving fellow students and/or faculty. These sessions will be primarily concerned with attempting to stimulate a sensitivity and an increasingly coherent and comprehensive conception of school guidance counseling. This objective will be achieved through the critical analysis of: one another's behavior, subject matter originating from research studies, written materials, i.e., books, pamphlets, etc., faculty and student comments, and so on. All students must attend these seminar sessions. Other group meetings shall be classified as informal and will have originated from the motivations of faculty and/or student subgroups for the purpose of exploring various subject matter or problems with greater specificity.

The subject matter of the required sessions should be determined by the students' expressed needs and interests. Most of the discussion should evolve from students' personal investigations into Major Problem Areas. Thus, these meetings are designed to stimulate free and creative discussion about personal issues, topics relating to guidance, psychology, philosophy, and any other areas which the students feel will contribute toward their self-realization. Further, the whole atmosphere is structured to promote a reciprocity of positive criticism among the students

and faculty without the fear of being reprimanded, via grades for example, for expressing contentions in dissonance with those of others.

- 5) The Major Problem Areas will constitute the four main subject matter categories which trainees must explore at the master's level. In the doctoral program, candidates may explore any or all areas in greater depth. Students shall investigate these problem areas in any manner which they deem as personally suitable. As it was previously mentioned, in order to facilitate this inquiry, they will have at their disposal: reading materials, i.e., books, bibliographies, journals, etc.; the assistance of college faculty; college facilities, i.e., classrooms, courses which they may audit; audio-visual equipment; the resources of fellow graduate students (group discussions, group projects, etc.); and so on.

The Four Major Problem Areas are as follows:

- A) The history of school guidance counseling and its contemporary services:
- a) historical development and its import on the present day
  - b) occupational information, job placement, vocational choice, etc.
  - c) conferences with teachers and administrators
  - d) parental consultation
  - e) referrals
  - f) etc.
- B) Techniques of counseling:
- a) a consideration of the necessary conditions, regardless of orientation, which must be present in order to effectively counsel human beings
  - b) individual counseling
  - c) group counseling



- d) working with teachers and administrators
- e) working with parents
- f) etc.

C) Theoretical considerations:

- a) factors common to all counseling orientations
- b) a consideration of major theories of counseling
- c) contrasting theories
- d) current research considerations
- e) etc.

D) Research in school guidance and counseling:

- a) methodology of good research
- b) statistical implications
- c) consideration of classical research investigations
- d) reviewing the research in an area of interest
- e) departmental research, conducted individually or by small groups of graduate students, concerning problems of minor yet important<sup>in</sup> significance, i.e., improving student orientation procedures, teaching methods, etc.; establishing departmental norms; etc.
- f) major research
- g) etc.

6) Specific degree requirements: each candidate for a degree must fulfill the following degree requirements: (Note: masters candidates must do a minimum amount of work in each problem area. Doctoral candidates are required to investigate as least one problem area.)

- A) Students will be required to investigate each of the four Major Problem Areas. They shall plan and implement their

own mode(s) of inquiry, and may consult faculty and graduate students for assistance in executing this exploration.

a) At the termination of each unit of work (the sequence of topics or the length of time spent on each will be left to student's own discretion), students must submit two classes of research papers (there may be more than one paper to each class):

1) the first will concentrate on an explication of the content or major issues in a particular problem area as they are interpreted by individual students;

2) the second will reflect the implications that an investigation of a given problem area has for individual students; here it is being asked, "Now that you have comprehended and solved a given problem, what significance or meaning does the content of your solution have for you as an individual?"

b) Students will be required to investigate each of the four problem areas; however, the amount of work or the area in which greatest emphasis will be placed shall be left to the discretion of individual students.

c) When having completed each unit of work, each student will submit copies of the two classes of research papers (there may be one or more papers for each of the two classes) to the faculty for scrutinization. Then students will individually meet with faculty and any interested graduate students for a critical analysis of the papers.

d) After the critical analysis has been completed, individual students will briefly evaluate their work in writing, and

also, in order to comply with university requirements, they will assign themselves a letter grade.

- e) Those research papers which reflect unusual scholarship will be placed in the departmental library.
- B) Students will be required to attend all seminars involving faculty and/or students (III-4, above).
- C) All students will be required to conduct some type of research project that is deemed acceptable by their advisor, or, in the case of major research, their faculty committee. The research project, at its completion, must be submitted to an advisor or faculty committee in acceptable written form (III-5-D, above).
- D) Each student will be required to participate in a continuous practicum program. In this graduate program, the practicum is considered to be perhaps the most significant aspect of students' studies, for this is the genesis from which the Major Problem Areas grow, and hence, become meaningful to students. It is hypothesized here that graduate students will have a more intimate knowledge of school counseling and the related guidance services if, from the outset of their training, they have frequent pragmatic experiences such as those mentioned in section II-1, above. By initially being confronted with the problem of understanding the many phenomena intrinsic to various types of interpersonal and counseling relationships, I feel that trainees will acquire a much more profound and sensitive awareness of the manifold implications inherent in these situations. Thus if practicum experiences, involving individual and group counseling, consulting parents, meeting with teachers, etc., are immediately available to graduate students at all times, they

will be able to directly experience any phase of these situations when the need arises. An individual will, for example, want to test the implication for a new idea involving individual counseling; hence, there will be counselees available for experimentation. (In this case, the trainee would consult his advisor about the proposal, and then contend with the procedural matters of obtaining elementary, junior high, high school, or college students to act as counselees.) Thus, in complying with the requirements of the practicum program, graduate students would be compelled to meet the minimal obligations of participating in experiences such as those in section II-1, above, and also have a prolonged experience in an actual school situation where they would encounter problems typical of a professional school guidance counselor. Any other practicum experiences for the purpose of developing various skills, experimentation, and so on, would not be required by the department, but rather, would be conducted in accordance to the discretion and motivation of individual graduate students.

E) In conjunction to practicum experiences, graduate students will be requested to undergo individual counseling themselves, and also participate in group counseling sessions. Here it is hypothesized that students' awareness and sensitivity to the dynamics of counseling will be increased by actually undergoing psychotherapy themselves.

7) The graduate program (masters and doctorate) will be officially terminated by the following procedures:

A) When students have met the requirements of the department, they will be conferred their degree.

- a) On the degree, the faculty will assert their approval or disapproval (by means of a majority vote) of the student's competence as a graduate student.
- b) If the vote is "disapproval," the reasons for such a decision must be succinctly stated on the degree.
- c) If the vote is "approval," and when a particular student has manifested an outstanding competence in his graduate work, this also will be indicated on the degree.

I have endeavored to outline briefly those elements of a graduate program in school guidance which seem to me as the necessary conditions that must be present to more effectively facilitate students' educational development. Obviously much has been left unsaid in regard to the program design, but I feel that the remaining information can be obtained by carrying out the implications of what has been expressed here. This unorthodox approach to education is not by any means ideal, novel, or incapable of implementation; however, there have been only a few in the past possessing the requisite creativity, ambition, and courage to make such a program a reality.

#### IV. Conclusion

I have enjoyed writing this paper. It has represented an opportunity for me to "collect" my thoughts about an experience which I will regard as one of the most important of my life--this is of course the experience of "freedom." It has, for the first time, enabled me to clearly identify myself as an individual, and better understand those psychological and philosophical circumstances that must be present for other human beings if they are to explore and develop their most self-fulfilling and noble dimensions. These are the greatest discoveries

of my life, for they have enabled me to become myself, and to allow others to become themselves. Hence, it is through these capacities alone that I can achieve meaning in life.

