

ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation / Thesis: CHARACTERISTICS OF NATURAL HELPERS

Jessica Vogel Stahl, Master of Arts, 2005

Dissertation / Thesis Directed By: Professor Clara Hill
Department of Psychology

Research on natural helping to date has been lacking in theoretical foundations and simple methods of identifying natural helpers. The current study was designed to test a theory-based measure of natural helping and explore how individuals cluster on measures evaluating proposed theoretical characteristics of natural helpers. Participants were 168 undergraduates who completed a series of self-report measures related to natural helping (e.g. empathy, social support, interpersonal strengths) and were rated by two volunteer clients on a measure of therapy process and outcome. Cluster analysis revealed five clusters, including one of natural helpers who obtained above average client ratings and had an above average composite score of all natural helping measures. Natural helpfulness of each cluster as well as validity, reliability, and utility of the theory-based measure of natural helping are discussed. Finally, the initial theoretical propositions regarding natural helping are revised and implications for future research are addressed.

CHARACTERISTICS OF NATURAL HELPERS

By

Jessica Vogel Stahl

Thesis submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of the
University of Maryland, College Park in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts
2005

Advisory Committee:

Professor Clara Hill (Chair)
Professor Charles Gelso
Professor Dennis Kivlighan

© Copyright by
Jessica Vogel Stahl
2005

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First, I would like to extend my thanks to my advisor, Dr. Clara Hill for her support, her feedback, and for sharing in my excitement about this topic. I would also like to thank my other committee members for their support in this project: Dr. Charles Gelso for helping with the theory development component of this project and Dr. Dennis Kivlighan for his help with the cluster analyses. Next, I would like to thank my research assistant, Lismarie Ortiz, for her help with data collection and data entry; the other various research assistants and graduate students who played “client” for me in a pinch; and Missy Roffman and Nicole Taylor for proofreading final drafts of this thesis. Finally, I would like to thank my friends and family who supported me through the ups and downs of this project.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Tables.....	vi
List of Figures	vii
Chapter 1: Introduction.....	1
Chapter 2: Review of the Literature	4
Terminology and Definitions of Natural and Lay/Informal Helping.....	5
Terminology.....	5
Definitions.....	5
Demographics of Natural and Lay/Informal Helping.....	8
Empirical Literature on Natural Helping	10
Rural Helping	10
Lay Helpers.....	14
Comparison of Lay Helpers to Professional Helpers	18
Outcomes for Natural Helpers and Professional Helpers	24
Personality and Natural Helping	26
Theoretical View of Natural Helping.....	32
Listening and Emotional Support.....	33
Empathy.....	33
Nurturance.....	33
Therapeutic Relationships.....	34
Non-judgmentality.....	34
Instrumental Support	35
Helping Skills.....	35
Reciprocity.....	35
Prior Experience.....	36
“Feminine” Response Patterns.....	36
Methodological Issues in Identifying Natural Helpers	37
Nominations	37
“Assumed” Helpers	38
An Alternative.....	39
Chapter 3: Statement of the Problem.....	40
Hypothesis 1	41
Research Question 1.....	42
Research Question 2.....	42
Chapter 4: Method.....	43
Design	43
Participants	43
Self-Report Measures.....	44
Demographics	45
Social Support Behavior	45

Empathy	48
Interpersonal Strengths	49
Natural Helping Tendency	54
Other-Report Measures	54
Helping Skill Use	54
Procedures	58
Pilot Test	58
Final Procedure	60
Self-Report Measures	60
Helping Session	60
Chapter 5: Results	62
Preliminary Analyses	62
Hypothesis 1	62
Construct Validity: Factor Analysis of NHM	62
Internal Consistency and Test-Retest Reliability	64
Convergent Validity	65
Construct Validity: Comparison Group	66
Research Question 1	66
Factor Analysis of Subscale Scores	66
Internal Consistency and Intercorrelation Among Subscales	66
Cluster Analysis	70
Research Question 2	71
MANOVA on Cluster Factors By Cluster	71
Cluster Descriptions	73
Composite Score	75
External Variables Analyses by Cluster	76
Additional Analyses	78
Chapter 6: Discussion	80
Hypothesis 1	80
Research Questions 1 and 2	81
Limitations	84
Implications	87
Using the NHM to Identify Natural Helpers	87
Theory about Natural Helpers	89
Future Research	97
Appendix A: Demographics	100
Appendix B: Supportive Actions Scale	101
Appendix C: Interpersonal Reactivity Index	104
Appendix D: Values in Action Inventory of Strengths	106

Appendix E: Natural Helper Measure	109
Appendix F: Session Process and Outcome Form—Client	110
References.....	111

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Measures Used to Evaluate Each Element of Natural Helping	44
Table 2. Definition and Sample Items of VIA Subscales Excluded From Study	51
Table 3. Definition and Sample Items of VIA Subscales Included in Study.....	53
Table 4. Natural Helper Measure Items and Corresponding Characteristics of Natural Helping	55
Table 5. Mean, Standard Deviation and Internal Consistency of All Subscales Administered	63
Table 6. Factor Loadings for Two Factor Analyses of Natural Helper Measure Items ..	65
Table 7. Convergent Validity Correlations for Natural Helper Measure	66
Table 8. Factor Loadings for Factor Analysis of Subscales	68
Table 9. Correlation Matrix of Subscale Factors, Plan to Pursue Helping Profession, Natural Helper Measure, and Composite Score	69
Table 10. Mean, Standard Deviation, and Pairwise Comparisons of Subscale Factors, Plan to Pursue Helping Profession, Natural Helper Measure, and Composite Score by Cluster	71
Table 11. Correlations between NHM and VIA Subscales	78

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Subscale Factors, Composite Score, Likelihood to Pursue Helping Profession, and Natural Helper Measure by Cluster.....	74
Figure 2. Revised Theory of Characteristics of Helpers and Non-Helpers	97

Chapter 1

Introduction

You've got a friend. Lean on me. I get by with a little help from my friends.

Aside from being song titles, all of these phrases have one thing in common—they are about turning to someone (presumably not a mental health professional) in times of need. Take a moment to picture, in your mind's eye, a person to whom you are likely to turn in times of need. What is it about this person that makes you turn to him or her? Is it his or her ability to listen? Empathy? Perhaps you observed or overheard this person helping someone else; perhaps, in having helped this person *yourself*, you gained a sense that this person could be helpful to you in return. Do the answers to these questions change if you picture a different person?

To date, the literature on informal, non-professional, natural helping has primarily focused on what natural helpers *do* under various circumstances (e.g. Patterson & Memmott, 1992; Memmott & Brennan, 1988; Cowen, 1982) rather than on what characteristics lead those individuals to be *identified* as helpers. In fact, the two primary ways of identifying natural helpers do not really address what it is that leads those individuals to be identified as such. The first way of identifying natural helpers is to ask for nominations of helpers within a contained community (e.g. Patterson, Germain, Brennan, & Memmott, 1988); the largest problem with this method is that although it might pinpoint individuals to whom people turn, it is not useful outside of a contained community where such a nomination process is readily possible. In addition, people can only nominate individuals they know, which could confound an individual's sociability with how helpful they can be when asked, or how helpful an individual is to the people he

or she does know. The second method for identifying natural helpers is to study the behavior of groups assumed or reputed to be helpful in difficult times, such as hairdressers, bartenders, lawyers, and supervisors (e.g., Cowen, 1982); this method also has the obvious problem of assuming that all individuals within a given career are helpful, behave similarly, or have similar personalities.

One study that examined natural helping in communities asked participants to rate how often they are sought by someone needing personal help (Vallance & D'Augelli, 1982); they then identified individuals as helpers or non-helpers based on their responses to that one question. These researchers concluded that “there are probably personality characteristics, untapped by our survey, also at work in making one a likely target for requests for help” (p.203). This suggestion, when paired with the conclusion of Shulman (1986, p.238) that “helpfulness is an identifiable and stable characteristic” suggests that natural helpfulness may be a characteristic in and of itself, which may be manifested by personality, interpersonal, and behavioral factors.

This idea of natural helpfulness is also supported by research suggesting that it is the nonspecific relationship factors of therapy such as experiencing caring and genuine interest from another (rather than specific technical skills) that primarily account for positive outcome in therapy (Strupp & Hadley, 1979).

In this study, I will seek to evaluate how a variety of self-reported interpersonal strengths (such as social intelligence and kindness), self-reported empathy, self-reported supportive style, other-evaluated helping skill use, other-evaluated relationship formation, and other-evaluated helpfulness “hang together” in order to gain understanding of the characteristics of individuals who are and who are not sought out for

help. The purpose, then, is to identify how individuals cluster together on the characteristics that seem to be associated with natural helping. The second purpose of this study is to validate a self-report natural helper inventory that I developed based on my thinking about natural helping behavior and personality.

Chapter 2

Review of the Literature

Natural helping, as a construct in and of itself, has not been systematically studied; thus, this review of the literature touches on many different areas related to natural helping. In the first major section, I discuss the definition of natural helping, including a brief discussion of the many names that have been given to the phenomenon that I refer to as natural helping. Secondly, I discuss the demographics of natural helpers. The following five sections review the empirical literature on natural helping. First, I review, in turn, empirical studies on rural helpers, lay helpers, lay helpers as compared to professional helpers, and an important study concerning the equality of effectiveness of natural helpers as compared to professionals. I then review studies on the relationship between personality variables and natural helping. Next, I present my own theoretical propositions regarding the elements of natural helping in an effort to provide some theoretical grounding for future research on natural helping. Finally, I discuss methodological issues concerning identification of natural helpers and present my alternatives to the methods that have been used in the past.

Prior research has focused on individuals' likelihood to help another person in a variety of situations (e.g., Gruder, Romer, & Korth, 1978; Otten, Penner & Waugh, 1988; Amato & Saunders, 1985). However, studies on the likelihood to help are beyond the scope of the current literature review because such studies focus on the factors affecting potential helpers' decisions to help or not and not on helping behavior itself. While the factors that contribute to a decision of whether or not to help are, of course, related to

helper behavior, they are tangential to the guiding question of what characteristics of natural helpers lead them to be identified as natural helpers.

Terminology and Definitions of Natural and Lay/Informal Helping

Terminology. At first glance, the natural helper literature appears amorphous and confusing. I believe that one of the reasons the natural helper literature appears so scattered is the variety of terms that have been used to describe natural helping. The literature on helping that occurs outside the professional realm falls into two seemingly separate but inherently related bodies of literature. One line of research examines “natural helpers” while other body of literature refers to “lay,” “unprofessional,” or “informal” helpers. Although there is little crossover between these two bodies of literature, the behaviors they are studying are essentially the same—all examine the helping that occurs outside the mental health profession. (The similarities will be further discussed in the next section.) In this review of the literature, I use each of these terms interchangeably, in an effort to be consistent with the terms used by the authors of each individual study. However, for the sake of simplicity, when discussing this group of behaviors or in discussing my own theoretical view I will only use the term “natural helping/helper” because I feel that the word “natural” best encompasses the “way of being” that encompasses this helpful personality. However, it is important to note that my use of the term “natural helper” is broader than the definition in the existing literature. The difference is discussed below.

Definitions. One of the most commonly cited definitions of natural helpers in the natural helper literature is “one to whom people turn naturally in difficult times because of his or her concern, interest, and innate understanding... Natural helpers are relatives,

friends, and neighbors who have earned reputations within their social networks as caring, competent problem solvers” (Patterson & Brennan, 1983, as cited in Patterson & Memmott, 1992, p.22). In other words, natural helpers are individuals who consistently show that they are supportive and effective when helping others. Because this definition stipulates that natural helpers must have earned a *reputation* for helping, Patterson and Memmott (1992) thus distinguish natural helpers from other types of informal helpers who do not have a particular reputation for helping.

In this discussion of the definition of natural helpers, I posit that the distinction between natural helpers as individuals with reputations for helping and informal helpers as individuals without reputations for being helpful is not always a useful one. While Patterson and colleagues’ reputation-linked definition may be useful for identifying natural helpers within a contained community in which such reputations can be ascertained, I believe that reputation can be separate from actual helpfulness. For example, not all individuals with reputations for helping always had such a reputation, such as if they just moved into the community and have not yet had the opportunity to help many people. However, this does not mean that these individuals are somehow less capable of being helpful before they earn their reputations as helpers—in fact, they may even have the required reputation for being helpful in the community they moved *from*. Thus, while natural helpers may still include friends, relatives or neighbors, in this study I will only be considering the first part of Patterson and Brennan’s (1983) definition of natural helpers: “one to whom people turn naturally in difficult times because of his or her concern, interest, and innate understanding” (p.22).

I believe that this revised definition essentially describes the same behaviors as the definitions used by the literature on lay/informal/unprofessional helping. The definition for lay/informal/unprofessional helping is less consistent across studies in terms of exact wording and focus (actual interaction vs. role of helper) than the definition of natural helping. For example, one study, focused on the natural helping interaction itself, defined it as “the interaction between two or more individuals in which at least one individual, without training for the role and without organizational auspices, attempts to help...other(s); predominantly through verbal means of an intuitive or unspecified origin, to understand, to cope with, or to modify problems of psychosocial functioning where the counselor is not a party to the problem” (Seaberg, 1985, p.187). Another study, focused more on the roles in which natural helpers are found, defined natural helpers as “people who are known and trusted in more natural contexts—people who are willing to listen when [the person who needs help] is ready to talk. Who those other people are varies with the individuals, the nature of the problems, and a community’s resource system and ecology. But they are there, voluntarily or otherwise, involved at some level in the nitty-gritty of interpersonal helping. Some are professionals...but there are others—natural caregivers untrained in any professional discipline: neighborhood folk whose jobs put them in daily contact with personal troubles. In part because of the intrinsic nature of their roles and person interactions and perhaps in part because of their personal warmth and compassion, such individuals continually field interpersonal distress” (Cowen, 1982, p.386-7). In both of these definitions, natural helpers are individuals who have not specifically been trained for helping yet are sought out for help and provide help for those who need it.

My definition of natural helping is a mix of those presented above. I see a natural helper as one to whom others naturally turn in times of need (following Patterson & Brennan, 1983), and while this individual *most likely* has a reputation for helping within his or her social network, the reputation is a result of the fact that this person is helpful. This individual could be a relative, friend, neighbor, or even a stranger—someone who sat next to you on a bus with whom you had a helpful conversation about something which was troubling you or someone who stopped to help when your car broke down on the side of the road (following Cowen, 1982). As the example just given shows, the help natural helpers provide, though often verbal or emotional, can and does also take physical or instrumental forms. Natural helpers have not necessarily been formally trained to be helpful (although they might be) and do not necessarily help through an organized activity (although they might; Seaberg, 1985). Thus, their helping appears to be spontaneous and intuitive. These individuals do not only provide help upon request, but helping others seems to be part of the nature of these individuals, and most who meet them easily perceive this nature. (Carkhuff & Berenson, 1967 refer to this as a “way of being,” as cited in Carkhuff, 1969).

Demographics of Natural and Lay/Informal Helping

In a study that assessed natural helper demographics from the helper’s perspective, Seaberg (1985) conducted semi-structured interviews with lay helpers to assess the demographics of the helpers themselves, whom they helped most often, how often this activity occurred, and to whom the helper him- or herself turned when he or she had a problem. Seaberg obtained a sample equally distributed across age (ranges of 21-40, 41-60, 61+), and gender, and racially representative of the community in which the

survey was conducted (approximately 30% Black). In terms of education, 17% of participants had less than a high school education, 26% had graduated from high school, and 27% had some higher education beyond high school, and participants with a college degree or higher represented 31% of the sample. When asked about their religious affiliation, 44% of participants reported not having an active religious affiliation, 35% identified themselves as Protestant, 13% identified as Catholic, and 8% identified with other affiliations.

In assessing whom these lay helpers reported sought them out most often, Seaberg (1985) distinguished between everyday and serious problems. For both types of problems, he found that recipients of lay helpers' help are primarily friends (83% of respondents had helped friends with an everyday problem, and 59% had helped friends with a serious problem). For everyday problems, the next most frequently helped group were coworkers (53% of respondents), followed by children (43%). The pattern was quite different for serious problems, as the next most frequently helped group (after friends) was siblings (10%) followed by coworkers (9%). This pattern of seeking help from friends more than other groups continued when participants were asked whom they most often sought out for help. Respondents reported most often seeking out a friend (48%), followed by spouses (19%), siblings (9%), and coworkers (7%).

In sum, the results of the Seaberg study suggest that natural helpers most often are sought out by and help their friends; men and women appear to be sought out with equal frequency. In addition, individuals most often seek help from natural helpers who are demographically similar to them in terms of gender, age and ethnicity.

Although it is essential to be able to define natural helping and be familiar with natural helpers' demographics, once such information has been established other questions arise. What is it about a natural helper (be they friends, relatives, or strangers; male or female) that makes one think of him or her as someone who might be helpful in a time of need? Are there characteristics that are common to natural helpers that one can observe and thus identify an individual as a natural helper? The next sections will show to what extent we have (and have not) begun to answer these questions.

Empirical Literature on Natural Helping

In this section, I review the empirical literature on natural helping. I begin by discussing research on rural helpers and review some studies that investigate helpers' behaviors in and of themselves and how the helpers' behaviors compare to those of professionals. I then discuss a study that suggests that natural and professional helpers are equally effective at helping others. Finally, I discuss studies that investigate the role of personality in helping behavior.

Rural helping. The largest group of studies that focus primarily on natural helpers have been conducted in rural communities with limited access to mental health services (e.g., Patterson et al., 1972; Patterson, 1977; Memmott & Brennan, 1988; Patterson & Memmott, 1992; Memmott, 1993). In one of the first studies explicitly on natural helper behavior, Patterson (1972, as cited in Patterson, 1977) interviewed 108 natural helpers and 42 paid helpers (such as clergy, welfare workers, teachers, lawyers, and office workers). Both types of helpers were identified by eliciting nominations of helpers from members of a rural Kansas community without access to formal mental health services. The interviewees had each been nominated by at least three different residents as helpers.

The helpers (both natural and paid) ranged in age from 16 to 83; about two-thirds of them were female, and the interviews lasted between 45 minutes and two hours.

Patterson found that there were noticeable differences between paid and natural helpers in terms of type of problems encountered, type of helping techniques used to ameliorate the problems, and the relationship between the helper and helpee. Natural helpers gave help as needed and were available around the clock to offer help; the time natural helpers spent helping varied depending upon the helping situation. Natural helpers dealt with problem situations which involved giving of themselves in terms of time and/or personal labor. Natural helpers' approach to helping was "characterized by spontaneity and modified by experience with living" (p.165); natural helpers often simply listened and/or shared their own life experiences to help the friend problem-solve. Finally, natural helpers' relationships with the individuals they helped were marked by a sense of mutuality of helping over time, which created an equality of status between the natural helpers and those they helped. Within these reciprocal helping relationships, the author concluded that helpers were helpful "because they cared rather than out of expectations of future rewards" (p.165).

Paid helpers, on the other hand, looked quite different. Paid helpers often were only available for particular populations, programs, or problems within the institutions in which they were employed. They were often unavailable outside their work hours or outside their offices. Paid helpers primarily dealt with problem situations that required information or specialized knowledge or training appropriate to their paid positions. These helpers also generally stuck to the approaches to helping that fit within their paid helper role; paid helpers rarely drew on personal experience in order to help their helpees

problem-solve. Unlike natural helpers, once the presenting problem was solved, paid helpers discontinued contact with the individuals they had helped. Finally, the relationship between the paid helper and the helpee lacked reciprocity and thus exhibited an imbalance of status.

In a re-analysis of the data from the Patterson (1977), Patterson and Brennan (1983, as cited in Patterson & Memmott, 1992) found that natural helpers' behavior fell into three primary categories: *facilitating*, *doing*, and *facilitating-doing*. *Facilitating* is an emotional, non-directive strategy that addresses problems indirectly, builds confidence and trust, and focuses on listening, encouragement, emphasizing strengths, and suggesting alternatives. *Doing*, an instrumental type of help, seeks to remove the stressful situation for the helpee by actively giving advice or material help, making decisions for others and/or using persuasion and influence. Not surprisingly, the *facilitative-doing* style combines the two styles, using both non-directive and active means to help, often tailoring it to the problem at hand (Memmott & Brennan, 1988). Patterson and Brennan (1983, as cited in Memmott, 1993) found that helpers between the ages of 16 and 35 tended to be facilitators; helpers ranging from 36 to 59 included a larger proportion of doers and facilitator-doers, and older helpers (60 or older) used all three helping styles equally.

Patterson and Memmott (1992) extended this work and investigated patterns of natural helping in rural areas. They used the same nomination process as Patterson (1977) had used to identify natural helpers and then interviewed 281 natural helpers in small New England and Midwestern communities, in addition to giving them questionnaires to fill out. Patterson and Memmott used the Natural Helper Interview Schedule to assess

demographic data, type of help given in a variety of situations (including different types of helpees), and the helpers' own experiences as a recipient of help from others. The questionnaire given, the Helping Behaviors Questionnaire, listed 17 helping techniques (either *doing* or *facilitating*) that could be used in a helping encounter.

The authors found that helpers' ages ranged from 16 to 82 ($M = 52$); most were female and Caucasian. They were also primarily longtime residents in their communities and were active within the community. Sixty-seven percent of participants said they offered help because they cared about other people, and only 25% said that they helped because they were repaying the recipient for help given in the past or because of a sense of moral obligation to help; 9% reported multiple motivations to help. When asked how they usually became involved in recipients' problems, 77% of the participants reported that they offered help before it was requested (when they became aware that it was needed), 8% gave help in response to a direct request, 3% helped at someone else's suggestion, and 12% reported becoming involved in the problem in a variety of ways. Recipients of help included friends, neighbors, and relatives.

Participants in this study reported using the *doing* style of helping most often, though interestingly, the type of help given varied by relationship to the recipient. Most helpers were rated as using a *doing* style in helping neighbors and relatives who had problems of living. However, the *facilitating* style was used much more often (two to three times) with friends than with relatives and neighbors. The combination style was used more frequently with relatives and friends than with neighbors. Echoing findings by Memmott and Brennan (1988), who found that the type of problem was influential in determining the type of help given, this elevated use of the *facilitating* style with friends

may be related to the finding that helpers addressed issues of life transition and maladaptive interpersonal problems two to three times more often with friends than with neighbors or relatives. Overall, helpers most often reported providing help for environmental/situational pressures. Patterson and Memmott (1992) concluded by pointing out that most studies of natural helping behavior have been based on self-report measures that depend on accurate reporting by the helper. Future studies would ideally include more ongoing data collection (such as asking helpers to keep a journal) or observational measures. In addition, they suggested that the effectiveness of helping could be better assessed by collecting data from recipients and significant others than from the helpers themselves.

Although the program of research by Patterson and colleagues presented in this section is very informative about natural helpers, these results may not be generalizable beyond rural environments for two reasons. First, because they have only been conducted in rural areas with limited access to mental health professionals, they may not accurately reflect the encounters and experiences of natural helpers in the broader population in which mental health professionals are more readily accessible. Second, as discussed in the definitions section above (and elaborated on in the methodology section below), while the nomination process used in these studies to recruit and identify natural helpers may accurately represent the natural helping that occurs in the communities being studied, it would not be a useful representation of the helping that occurs outside the contained community environment.

Lay Helpers. Studies of natural helping more generally (not just natural helpers in rural areas) refer to “lay helping.” Recall that lay helping has been defined as “the

interaction between two or more individuals in which at least one individual, without training for the role and without organizational auspices, attempts to help...other(s); predominantly through verbal means of an intuitive or unspecified origin, to understand, to cope with, or to modify problems of psychosocial functioning where the counselor is not a party to the problem” (Seaberg, 1985, p.187). Just as this definition focuses more on the verbal interaction, studies on lay helping have focused more on verbal interventions by helpers rather than both verbal and physical forms of help, as have studies of natural helping in rural environments.

Recall the study by Seaberg (1985) that was discussed above in the section about demographics of lay helpers. In addition to investigating demographics of lay helpers, the semi-structured interviews conducted by Seaberg also asked helpers about the types of problems they often dealt with, their models for helping, and what responses they often provided. In terms of types of problems dealt with, he attempted to distinguish between “everyday problems” (such as getting a traffic ticket, having a child misbehave in public or having someone treat you rudely) and “serious problems” (such as losing a job, a major health problem, marital problems, or a consistently problematic child). However, because respondents were asked to designate the problems as “everyday” or “serious” themselves, they reported that they dealt with a number of issues in both “everyday” and “most serious” contexts. As a result, the author suggests that respondents either did not distinguish between the two types of problems as intended or they may have been thinking of the range of seriousness of a problem in any given arena. For example, although the author did not intend to make such distinctions, marital problems may range

from a minor disagreement with a spouse (an everyday problem) to adultery, abuse or abandonment by a spouse (a serious problem).

The types of (helper-designated) everyday problems most frequently addressed by helpers were financial (reported by 57% of respondents), personal relationships (49%), work (43%), and parenting/child rearing (33%). Note that these percentages are high (and do not sum to 100%) because respondents could list as many everyday problems shared with them as they wished. For serious problems (of which respondents could list just one), participants most frequently reported dealing with marital/divorce problems (19%). Interestingly, participants were not required to report serious problems, and 17% of respondents reported that a serious problem had not been shared with them; this was the second most frequently endorsed "category" of serious problems. Other problems such as financial, physical health, personal relationships, and unemployment were endorsed by between 7 and 9% of participants.

In exploring participants' responses to problems, Seaberg also distinguished between everyday and serious problems. Again, participants could list as many response types as they wished. For everyday problems, respondents reported most frequently listening/providing for ventilation of feelings (endorsed by 58% of respondents), giving advice (58%), providing encouragement (44%), comparing to the experience of others (44%), and exploring the cause of the problem (25%). The responses to serious problems reported were not very different than those for everyday problems. For serious problems, the most frequently endorsed response was providing encouragement (45%), followed by listening/providing for ventilation of feelings (40%), giving advice (35%), evaluating alternatives (22%), and exploring the cause of the problem (22%). For both problem

types, other responses included referring to community resources (7% for everyday problems, and 15% for serious problems) and offering personal resources (4% for everyday problems, and 15% for serious problems). All of these helping interactions took place either face-to-face or on the telephone. The author concluded that “the types of responses are within the range of typical human interactional techniques which might be anticipated either intuitively or as a retrospect from the theory of various counseling and therapy disciplines” (Seaberg, 1985, p. 194).

Another study that examined the skills used by lay helpers compared the informal and interpretive helping provided by hairdressers, divorce lawyers, industrial supervisors, and bartenders (Cowen, 1982). Cowen used both survey and interview data, which varied with helper type—hairdressers and bartenders were interviewed in person, lawyers were sent mail surveys, and industrial supervisors were given survey forms by their company’s personnel office. In both surveys and interviews, participants reported the number of clients they had who discussed moderate to serious personal problems.

Lawyers reported the most interactions discussing serious problems (40%), followed by hairdressers (33%), bartenders, (16%), and supervisors (7%). The problems discussed varied from group to group, but were consistent with what one would expect in each context (e.g., hairdressers dealt with problems with children, health, marriage; bartenders dealt with job and money problems; lawyers dealt with anger at spouse and depression; supervisors addressed problems with fellow workers and job restlessness). In terms of what each helper type did to be helpful, there was also quite a bit of variability by helper type. Hairdressers and lawyers reported offering support and sympathy most often; supervisors most often reported giving support and sympathy or just listening.

Bartenders reported that they most frequently just “offer a listening ear.” Cowen also found that female helpers were asked to deal with personal problems more often and used more engaging, task-oriented helping strategies than male helpers. In general, participants in this study seemed to enjoy their helper role and felt comfortable in it; several of them even reflected that “helping others with their problems [is] a normal, indeed sometimes very important part of their job” (Cowen, 1982, p. 390).

In interpreting the results of both the Seaberg (1985) and Cowen (1982) studies, the self-report nature of the data must be taken into consideration. Results reflect what helpers say they do, and may not adequately represent what they *actually* do.

Comparison of Lay Helpers to Professional Helpers. In addition to the studies on lay helper groups, there is a growing body of work focused on comparing the skills naturally used by lay helpers to those skills used by counseling professionals. These studies are reported here because they compared lay and professional helpers in counseling skill use using a counseling-based coding system and because they represent much of the empirical work on natural helping (not because this is a focus of the present study).

The earliest of these studies compared the way a Rogerian therapist spoke with a client with communications between friends when one is helping the other with a personal problem (Reisman & Yamokoski, 1974). The authors recruited 14 psychology students to discuss a personal problem with a friend for 10 minutes. From these sessions, they eliminated portions of the tapes in which the students were “horsing around,” and began transcribing when the problem was presented and discussion about it continued for 5 minutes or it was resolved. This left them with a range of 15 to 43 message units, and

an average of 23 units per sample. The authors compared the friendship helping samples to four samples of Rogerian client-therapist dialogue (two from Carl Rogers and two from Thomas Gordon). All therapist samples were taken from middle stages of treatment and ranged from 9 to 22 message units, with an average of 15 per sample. All helping sessions were then coded using nine categories of types of helping (e.g. empathic, expository, interrogative, and interpretive understanding).

Reisman and Yamokoski found that Rogerian therapists used empathic responses 64% of the time and used a variety of different skills whereas friends used empathic responses only 3% of the time, and each person used only one or two skills throughout the interaction. However, in aggregate, friends used a wider range of skills than the therapists did. (For example, therapists did not use any self-disclosures, suggestions, or evaluations.) In addition, friends used significantly more interrogative statements (19%) than therapists (5%).

In their discussion, Reisman & Yamokoski imply that students do not use empathy when communicating with a friend; however, several limitations of the study must be taken into consideration. First, the authors did not appear to require that the friendship pairs have a history of helping one another. Thus, the relationship between the friendship pairs may not have adequately represented a comparison for the friendly-but-helpful stance taken by the Rogerian therapists. Likewise, the friendship pairs may not have been comparable to the therapist pairs because the student helpees had not specifically sought out help in the way that clients in middle stages of long-term therapy have done. Thus, helpee responsiveness and talkativeness may also have influenced helper/friend and therapist responses. In addition, sample sizes between the two groups

were quite different; the variety of responses found by the friends is not surprising given that the authors compared just 2 therapists to 14 pairs of friends. Finally, the authors compared *published* therapy interactions by famous Rogerian therapists (in which empathy and empathic responses are emphasized) to naturalistic responses by friends. Perhaps the discrepancy in empathic responses would not have been so great if the authors had used a more representative sample of therapists, or had observed responses by therapists.

More representative samples of professional helpers have been used in more recent studies (Toro, 1986; Tracey & Toro, 1989). Using audiotapes of simulated helping interactions and ratings of helper effectiveness, Toro (1986) looked at strategies and effectiveness of natural (or lay) and professional helping groups, including professional therapists, lawyers, and mutual help group leaders. (The mutual help group leaders did not have any prior formal training in mental health.) In a simulated interaction, lay and professional helpers were compared using the Counselor Verbal Response Category System (Hill, 1986). Toro found that professionals used more minimal encouragers, open questions, and reflections than mutual help leaders and lawyers. Professionals also used more restatements, interpretations, and confrontations than lawyers. Mutual help leaders used more information than professionals, and more open questions, reflections, interpretations and confrontations than lawyers; they also used more self-disclosures than either of the other two groups. Finally, lawyers used more closed questions than either of the other helper types.

In terms of effectiveness, not surprisingly, lawyers were seen as more effective than the other two groups for legal/financial matters, and professionals and mutual help

leaders were seen as more effective than lawyers for personal/emotional matters. The authors concluded that lawyers differ from both professionals and mutual help leaders; the latter two groups are more similar than they are different. This suggests that even if natural and professional helpers differ on skill usage, they do not differ significantly on effectiveness. (This issue is further discussed later in the literature review.)

In an extension of the Toro (1986) study, Tracey and Toro (1989) evaluated the effect of each helper's actions on the client's actions. This study first revealed that clients behaved very differently with each helper type, and each helper type responded to their clients differently. For example, mutual help group leaders were more likely to use questions after a client's description than either mental health professionals or lawyers. Mental health professionals were most likely to use "complex responses" (i.e. restatement, reflection or interpretation) after a client's "other response" (one that includes acknowledgement, agreement, a simple request, silence, etc.) than after a client's "experiencing statement" (an affective exploration of feelings, behaviors, or reactions about self or others). Mutual help leaders primarily used questions after client descriptions, and most often responded to client "other responses" with "other responses." In terms of "complex responses," mutual help leaders were significantly more likely to use them following a client "other response" than after a client "experiencing statement." Lawyers responded almost identically to mental health professionals, except for the use of "complex responses" and questions. Lawyers were most likely to use "complex responses" after client "experiencing statements," and most often used questions after client "other responses."

Tracey and Toro concluded that although Toro (1986) showed similarities between the verbal behaviors of mutual help group leaders and mental health professionals, the back-and-forth interaction between clients and these two types of helpers was not as similar as it might first appear. However, the external validity of both Toro (1986) and Tracey and Toro (1989) may be questionable because these interactions were simulated—the clients in both studies were recruited and trained to portray a role to several different helper types. In addition, helpers were aware that the “client” was, in fact, an actor, and they were told to behave as if the client was actually seeking help from them. The authors suggested that an examination of actual helping in more natural settings is needed.

Just such a naturalistic comparison of hairdressers and behavioral therapists was conducted by Milne, Cowie, Gormly, White, and Hartley (1992). In the first of three studies, these authors compared the observed verbal responses of behavior therapists and hairdressers in routine work with their clients by using a rating system similar to Hill’s (1986; 1992; 1999), which had twelve categories (e.g. information, questions, reassurance, reflection/restatement, exploration, and interpretation). Hairdressers used more prescriptive than exploratory responses; they mostly gave information (25% of the time), asked questions (21% of the time), gave reassurance (21% of the time), and reflected/restated clients’ speech (11% of the time). They rarely used strategies involving feelings. On the other hand, therapists primarily used reassurance (48% of the time) followed by advice (18% of the time), exploration (3% of the time) and interpretation (3% of the time). Like the Reisman and Yamokoski (1971) study, these authors only focused on therapists of one particular therapeutic orientation. Thus, their results

concerning the actual behaviors of hairdressers as compared to behavior therapists must be taken with a grain of salt. The frequency of positive reinforcement and directives that characterize behavioral therapy techniques may not be representative of therapists as a whole or accurately compared to the informal verbal helping that a hairdresser might provide.

The second study evaluated the form and function of help provided by therapists, hairdressers, friends and relatives (as evaluated by client surveys). The authors found that each source of social support (therapist, hairdresser, friends, and relatives) provided positive social interaction in addition to informational, emotional, and practical support. However, the extent to which each group provided each type of help varied. Relatives and friends were similar (used informational support 32% of the time); these two helper types were also similar to hairdressers who used informational support 39% of the time. Psychologists used informational assistance 50% of the time, followed by emotional support (32%). These results replicate those found in the first study, suggesting that while there is some overlap, clients report that supporters and therapists provide different types of help.

Finally, the third study in which hairdressers were trained in counseling skill use, demonstrated that hairdressers could be taught counseling skills effectively. Milne et al. (1992) cautioned against assuming important overlaps between social supporters and therapists and suggest that their results differ from those found in other studies (such as Cowen, 1982) because their data in the first study are based on observation rather than self-report. In addition, they suggest that these results (particularly those of the third study) can be used to demonstrate how behavior therapists can be used to support the

social supporters. Finally, they conclude that social support should be studied in as systematic fashion as therapy has been, ultimately allowing the two to be integrated. The present study is an effort to study natural helping, a social support phenomenon, in such a systematic fashion.

As mentioned above, the literature comparing different types of lay helpers (rural natural helpers, college professors, friends, social supporters, in addition to the hairdressers, lawyers, and bartenders) is growing and is quite widespread. At a most basic level, the most important thing to take away is that natural helpers are helpful. They engage in behaviors (particularly verbal ones) that can and have been compared to different types of mental health professionals. However, note that although differences in sophistication may exist, on a most basic level, natural helpers' behavior has been found to be similar to that of professional helpers both in form and effectiveness.

Outcomes for Natural Helpers and Professional Helpers. As part of the Vanderbilt Psychotherapy project, Strupp and Hadley (1979) investigated the relative contribution to outcome of helpers' skills and the qualities inherent in any good human relationship. In essence, the authors hypothesized that because therapists possess technical therapeutic skills in addition to the ability to form good relationships, outcome in time-limited therapy with experienced psychotherapists would be better than outcome in time-limited therapy with professors who were known for their ability to form therapeutic relationships.

In order to test their hypothesis, Strupp and Hadley recruited groups of therapists (both experientially and analytically-oriented) and alternative therapists (professors known for their warmth and ability to form good relationships with students) who were

all male and similar in age, academic status, and length of professional experience. In addition, independent clinicians were recruited from the community to rate clients on a series of measures at intake, termination, and follow-up. Clients were recruited via application and screened to obtain a relatively homogeneous client sample of single males between the ages of 17 and 24, likely to be diagnosed as suffering from neurotic depression or anxiety reaction. Clients were placed in either the therapist (T), alternative therapist (AT), and delayed, minimal treatment control group (MC). A silent control group (SC) consisted of students who did not seek therapy but had similar difficulties to the patients in the study. Therapists and patients met twice weekly, up to a maximum of 25 hours. The mean number of sessions for the T group was 17; the mean for the AT group was 18. No constraints were placed on the therapy itself—both Ts and ATs were told to use whatever verbal techniques they thought would be most helpful.

Generally Strupp and Hadley (1979) found that, on average and with some exceptions, clients in both therapy groups (professionals vs. alternative therapists) improved significantly on all measures used (MMPI scores, target complaint, and a variety of distress scales) between intake and termination/follow-up. Control groups also exhibited improvements, but these were less than those experienced by the treatment groups. Although the authors caution that there was quite a bit of variability in individual dyads and that this variability may have obscured treatment differences, the authors interpreted the results as suggesting that the changes experienced by the patients in the study were attributable to the therapeutic relationship. The technical skills of therapists did not generally contribute to outcome above and beyond the relationship factors offered by the professors.

The most important thing to take from Strupp & Hadley (1979) for current purposes is that the relationship factors provided by both the alternative therapists and the professionals contributed to outcome. Thus, ability to form therapeutic relationships is an important factor of helpfulness. However, one cannot assume that this means that the alternative helpers had no skills at all. On the contrary, as discussed in the sections above, subsequent research on the specific behaviors or skills used by rural and natural/lay helpers, both alone and as compared to professionals, have suggested that natural helpers do use identifiable skills in the help they provide.

Personality and Natural Helping. Where there is an overabundance of literature on the types of help provided by natural helpers, there is a paucity of research on the personality characteristics common to natural helpers. Many studies listing “characteristics of natural helpers” as a topic are most often referring to demographic or behavioral characteristics (e.g. Vallance & D’Augelli, 1982).

In one of the earliest studies on personality variables and helping behavior, Wagner, Manning and Wheeler (1971) sought to evaluate helping behavior as a function of interactions between situational factors and personality characteristics as measured by the Kipnis Insolence Scale. Individuals who score high on the Insolence scale are often immature, materialistic, resistant to social norms, and exploitive of peers. Individuals who score low on the insolence scale (other than *not* exhibiting the traits of those who are high on the scale) are more concerned with loyalty, courtesy, and fairness to peers. The authors hypothesized that insolence would predict helping behavior (operationalized as hedonistic vs. altruistic responses) as situational factors were varied.

Enlisted Navy men ($N = 108$) were recruited to participate in this study. These men were told that as part of a Navy program assessing crew effectiveness, they would be going on a simulated mission on a three-man submarine. Participants (assigned to conditions of high and low insolence based on a median split of Kipnis Insolence Scale scores) were assigned one job, and one of their crewmembers had only one job, while the other had two. Both “crewmembers” were in fact trained confederates. The crew member/confederate with two jobs could request help for one of his jobs from his fellow crewmembers. The authors were ultimately interested in whether or not participants responded to the dual-job crewmember’s requests for help. The situational factors used by the authors were varied according to level of success or failure of the helping task, the presence or absence of a modeling of helping behavior by the other one-job crew member, and the cost (degree of penalty for distraction from the assigned task) of engaging in the helping task.

The authors found that participants who scored high on insolence were significantly less likely to help as the cost of helping increased than were individuals who scored low on insolence. However, this finding is qualified in that low insolence individuals, though they helped significantly more than high insolence individuals in the low cost condition, did not help significantly more in the high cost condition. In addition, when there was no cost to helping, high insolence individuals responded positively to almost half of the helping opportunities and were not significantly different than low insolence individuals in that condition. The authors concluded that the personality trait of insolence is related to likelihood to perform a helping behavior, such that increased costs of helping generally reduce helping behavior more among high insolence individuals than

low insolence individuals. However, results may also indicate that situational factors are more important than personality when examining likelihood to help.

The generalizability of this study may be questionable for two reasons. First, the authors tested 5 factors at a time, making it difficult to interpret the results and to sort out interaction effects from main effects. In addition, the circumstances and conditions of the study were quite contrived and specific to Navy tasks where cost may be more relevant, thus making it difficult to extrapolate the results to everyday situations, such as one in which one friend asks another for help.

In another early study on personality variables and helping behavior, Woods and Beecher (1979) sought to validate a self-report instrument (called Therapeutic Instincts Scale; TIS) that measures verbal helpfulness with friends versus troubled individuals. The TIS is a 23-item, multiple choice, self-report inventory that asks participants to select the response they would be most likely to give following a hypothetical partner's statements. (Further information and sample items were not provided by the authors.) The other measures administered were the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale, Hogan's Empathy Scale, and a version of the A-B Scale, which assesses therapist personality variables. Type "A" therapists are problems solvers and seek to find acceptable behaviors for patients and leeway for solving individual problems; type "B" therapists tend to see things as black or white, right or wrong, and view patients as individuals in need of correction (Razin, 1971).

Half of the 100 participants filled out the scale as they would respond to a friend; the other half selected the responses they thought a therapist would use with a client. These authors found that participants in the psychotherapist condition scored significantly

higher on verbal helpfulness, $M = 14.44$, $SD = 5.73$, than did those in the friend condition, $M = 1.82$, $SD = 4.82$. In the friend condition, TIS scores correlated significantly and positively with empathy, $r(49) = .43$, $p < .01$; however this correlation was not significant in the psychotherapist condition, $r(49) = .02$, $p > .05$. The converse is true with the A-B scale, which correlated significantly with the TIS in the psychotherapist condition, $r(49) = .39$, $p < .01$, but not in the friend condition, $r(49) = .06$, $p > .05$. The TIS did not correlate significantly with social desirability for either condition. The authors concluded that tendency to be helpful without external motivation might be independent of the ability to be helpful when one is told to be or trying to be helpful. Thus, typical performance and level of inherent helpfulness (i.e. how helpful one can be when asked) may be independent of one another.

However, these results must be interpreted with caution as the authors used a between-subjects design and may not have used matching procedures as there was no mention of methods to control for other differences between the two groups. In addition, they provide so little information about the TIS that it is difficult to draw any conclusions about their study. Finally, generalization to other helper groups is questionable, as asking participants to respond how they think a therapist would to a disturbed client is not representative of informal, natural helping interactions in which one “normal” person is helping another.

Jackson (1985) investigated the relationship between self-reported interpersonal personality traits (self-reported on the Leary Interpersonal Check List), and a measure of peer-rated, helping-related characteristics (Therapeutic Talent) in a sample of 53 undergraduate women in a helping skills class. For the Therapeutic Talent index,

participants rated each other (at the end of the class) on a scale of 1 (not at all like this person) to 6 (very much like this person) for level of Acceptingness (e.g., “She seems warm, patient, and understanding), Understanding (e.g., “She seems to understand what others really mean”), and Openness (e.g., “She seems honest, frank, and emotionally open”). These three subscales were meant to mirror Rogers’ constructs of warmth, genuineness, and empathy. The index score was calculated by summing Acceptingness, Understanding, and Openness scores. The Leary Interpersonal Checklist, administered before helping skills training began, indicates how individuals see themselves on the dimensions of dominance/submissiveness and hostility/love. Participants’ responses were scored on eight subscales: Managerial-Autocratic, Competitive-Narcissistic, Aggressive-Sadistic, Rebellious-Distrustful, Self-effacing-Masochistic, Docile-Dependent, Cooperative-Overconventional, and Responsible-Hypernormal.

Data were analyzed by examining the effect of scores for Dominance and Love on the Therapeutic Talent score. The author found that although the overall effect of Dominance and Love on Therapeutic Talent was significant, $F_{2,50,52} = 4.83, p < .05$, the additive effects of Dominance and Love accounted for only 16% of the variance on the Therapeutic Talent index, $R^2 = .16$. In addition, individual correlations suggest that the dimensions of Dominance and Love are related to Therapeutic Talent differentially. Examination of specific correlations between the Leary subscales and Therapeutic Talent suggests that individuals who were perceived as high in helping-related characteristics saw themselves as possessing traits of interpersonal control tempered by an interest in social solidarity. Individuals who rate themselves as distrusting and passively angry are less likely to be perceived as helpful to others.

Further interpretation of Jackson's results is difficult for a few reasons. First of all, his sample is not representative of the general population, as it consisted entirely of female undergraduates in a helping skills training group of whom 85% majored in a helping profession. Thus, generalization to male and female natural helpers with no helping skills training is difficult. Secondly, he provides little explanation (beyond the statistics reported in the study itself) for why the dominance/love dimensions are important for or related to helping behavior. Such explanation or theoretical grounding would have greatly enhanced the interpretability of the study.

Finally, a measure developed by Shulman (1986; Thoits, 1986) consists of sociometric rating scales assessing dimensions of helpfulness. Individuals in 16 peer groups were asked to rate which two members of the group best represented: empathy, genuineness, trustworthiness, intelligence, open-mindedness, least anxious, best friend, and leader. In addition, participants were asked to nominate two individuals in their group whom they would be most likely to seek out in 5 different situations (e.g., "If I were in deep grief over the death of someone close to me, of all the members of this group, these are the two I would most want to be with.") Individuals rated either high or low (i.e. top and bottom 4% of distribution of nomination frequency) on this measure by peers were then rated by relative strangers a year later. These "stranger" ratings were obtained by behavioral assessments using GAIT (Group Assessment of Interpersonal Traits), a structured small-group helping exercise that involves participating in a 5-minute problem discussion in front of the group.

Shulman (1986) found that the sociometric rating scale scores were correlated with the judge's ratings on the GAIT. The significant correlations were between peer-

rated empathy and GAIT empathy, $r(202) = .425, p < .05$, peer-rated empathy and GAIT understanding, $r(202) = .474, p < .05$, peer-rated genuineness and GAIT revealingness, $r(202) = .527, p < .01$, and peer-rated open-mindedness and GAIT revealingness, $r(202) = .521, p < .01$. In addition, participants sociometrically rated as effective or ineffective helpers were similarly rated by GAIT participants, $\chi^2(2) = 8.1, p < .05$. The author concluded that peer perceptions of helper dimensions demonstrate validity, and that helpfulness may be an identifiable personal characteristic that is stable across time, observer, and situation. Although the conclusion that helping is a stable characteristic that can be later identified through behavioral means is encouraging, the sociometric helper identification methodology used in this study has the same problems as those addressed earlier regarding defining natural helpers in terms of reputation. (This will be further discussed in a later section on methodological problems in the natural helping literature.)

As demonstrated by the brevity of this section, the studies on natural helpfulness and personality are few and far between. In addition, the studies that do exist are of poor quality and/or do not view natural helping as an identifiable personality trait. Rather, these studies either assessed natural helpfulness using some other personality trait without much theoretical explanation for doing so (e.g., Wagner, Manning and Wheeler, 1971; Jackson, 1985) or the study was poorly designed (e.g., Woods and Beecher, 1979).

Theoretical View of Natural Helping

To guide this study, some theory about what natural helping entails is needed, especially since the empirical literature is so scant. Hence, I propose that natural helping is composed of the following 11 (sometimes overlapping) elements:

Listening and emotional support. First, I believe that in their interpersonal interactions, natural helpers tend to be good listeners (Patterson, 1977). Second, at the basic emotional supportive level, most natural helpers possess the ability to allow others to tell them whatever is on their minds without passing judgment or trying to “take the floor.” Listening ability and emotional support as natural helping behaviors do *not* need to extend to a particular reaction or response on the part of the natural helper; natural helpers do not necessarily need to speak in order to be helpful. Instead, when providing emotional support, natural helpers might simply provide a calming presence or a shoulder to cry on during times of emotional distress.

Empathy. The next element that I believe is common to natural helpers is empathy. Empathy has been defined many different ways and may have several sub-components (Gladstein, 1983; Duan & Hill, 1996), but here I am simply referring to the ability to sense another’s “private world as if it were your own, but without ever losing the ‘as if’ quality” (Rogers, 1957, p.77). Thus, a natural helper is empathic because he or she can imagine what the helpee might be feeling and expresses appropriate concern about those feelings. It is important to note, as suggested by Gladstein (1983), that empathy does not necessarily lead to helping; however, an individual is much more likely to be identified as a helper when he or she expresses empathy, particularly when it is combined with sympathy (Shlien, 1997, as cited in Gelso & Hayes, 1998).

Nurturance. Fourth, natural helpers may be described as nurturing and supportive. In fact, the definition of nurturance seems to encompass what one would expect of someone for whom helping is part of his or her “way of being.” Nurturance has been defined as the ability to “help friends when they are in trouble, to assist others less

fortunate, to treat others with kindness and sympathy, to forgive others, to do small favors for others, to be generous with others, to sympathize with others who are hurt or sick, to show a great deal of affection toward others, to have others confide in them about personal problems” (Grater, Kell, & Morse, 1961). I agree with Grater et al.’s (1961) suggestion that nurturance is instrumental in enjoying helping and being identified as a natural helper, although it does not necessarily lead to using helping behaviors or choosing helping professions.

Therapeutic relationships. Perhaps as a result of their emotional support, empathy, and nurturance, natural helpers have the interpersonal skills needed to form therapeutic relationships. The ability to form therapeutic relationships suggests that natural helpers have a social intelligence that allows them to intuit about how to behave or respond to others in need. As the earlier discussion of Strupp and Hadley (1979) suggested, this ability to form therapeutic relationships may often be the most helpful part of natural helpers’ helping interactions.

Non-judgmentality. A sixth element that I believe is part of viewing someone as a natural helper is a non-judgmental stance. This is related to Rogers’ condition of unconditional positive regard, defined as “a warm acceptance of each aspect of the client’s experience as being a part of that client...caring for the client as a separate person, with permission to have his own feelings, his own experiences” (Rogers, 1957, p.76). As noted by Rogers in his paper, complete unconditional positive regard would never exist except in theory, and this is particularly true outside the therapy setting. Individuals often pass judgment on what we say or do and value us accordingly. There are individuals, however, who withhold their judgment and are willing to help another in

any way they can, even if they do not approve of the helpee's behavior. At the very least, natural helpers are often far enough removed from the problem to see things from a more objective perspective (Cantoni & Cantoni, 1965). Someone with such a non-judgmental stance would be valued as a helper over and above someone who might essentially say, "That's stupid. Why should I help you?"

Instrumental support. Seventh, natural helpers provide instrumental support. Natural helpers may provide food, clothing, or water to those who need it; they may provide physical/manual help in a number of ways such as giving a ride to someone who needs it, moving furniture, or making phone calls. Such instrumental help could include simple advice giving or offering an opinion on a particular problem or issue. Describing one's own experience with the problem or issue at hand may also be helpful when the intent is to normalize or use one's self as an example, rather than something entirely self-serving like self-idealization.

Helping skills. Prior research on natural helping (such as that described earlier) suggests that natural helpers also demonstrate a seventh element: use of verbal skills similar to those formally learned by professional helpers. Although the use of helping skills by natural helpers encompasses the elements of emotional and instrumental support, it warrants its own mention because conceptualizing natural helper behavior in this way allows us to gain an understanding of their behavior in a context that has solid grounding in the psychotherapy process literature.

Reciprocity. Another distinctive element of natural helping is the equality and reciprocity of natural helpers' interactions—natural helpers are responsive to others and reciprocate when they are given support and help (Carkhuff, 1969; Cantoni & Cantoni,

1965). In fact, one definition of natural helping specifically suggests that “the natural helping relationship is marked by equality and mutual exchange, which the helper brings to the act of helping” (Patterson & Memmott, 1992). When studying who is sought for social support and the relationship between helpees and social supporters, Griffith (1985) found that 81% of participants perceived that their relationship with their social supporter(s) was mutually dependent. Level of reciprocity has been used to classify types of natural helpers (Goodman, 1984). Based on the balance of give and take in relationships among older adults, Goodman classified natural helpers into two groups: (a) high helpers (who give more than they take) and (b) mutual helpers (who give and take about equally). Goodman found that these natural helpers could be differentiated from non-helper dependents who take more than they give, and isolates who do not give or take.

Prior experience. Tenth, I believe that natural helpers often have prior experience with helping roles either through some organized activity such as volunteering with a social service organization or they may have played a helpful or parentified role in their families (Grater, Kell & Morse, 1961). As suggested by Grater, Kell and Morse (1961), they may also have had positive reinforcement for their prior helping behavior. This element of prior experience may also be encompassed by the reputation for helping highlighted by Patterson and Memmott (1982).

“Feminine” response patterns. Finally, natural helpers tend to exhibit “more traditionally feminine response patterns...helpers tend to get high scores on social service interests and nurturant inclinations as well as on indexes of restraint, friendliness, deference, intraception, [and] affiliation” (Carkhuff, 1969, p.80). Natural helpers tend to

present themselves as caring, approachable, and thoughtful. They do not usually appear aggressive, selfish, critical or narcissistic because these are traits that are contrary to the helpful, empathic, non-judgmental worldview that natural helpers tend to possess.

Basically, natural helpers are individuals who are known to do *something* helpful with some (though probably not all) of the individuals with whom they come in contact. Natural helping can be demonstrated by any behavior where one human being is helping another. This helping behavior can take several different forms, and not all natural helpers may exhibit all or even most of the skills and behaviors that encompass natural helping. As stated by the definition of natural helpers, helpfulness is part of a natural helper's way of being (Carkhuff & Berenson, 1969, as cited in Carkhuff, 1969). If one were to generalize about a natural helper's behavior, helping would be salient; natural helpers are more likely to help than not.

Methodological Issues in Identifying Natural Helpers

Thus far, two primary methods of identifying natural helpers have been used. In the first, nominations are obtained from community members or peer groups for the best helpers; the second method involves studying groups of individuals who, for some other reason such as career choice, are assumed to be naturally helpful. The issues surrounding the use of each of these methodologies for identifying natural helpers are discussed in turn below. I conclude this section by proposing an alternative method of identifying natural helpers.

Nominations. One methodology that has been used for identifying specific natural helpers (i.e., Patterson et. al., 1988) involves individuals in a community nominating individuals whom they feel are natural helpers. The identified helpers are then

interviewed and given a series of questionnaires. Studies that use this methodology have proven helpful and informative for gaining an understanding of the helping that goes on in rural communities without access to mental health services. In appropriate contexts, this method of identifying natural helpers can be very successful. However, this methodology would not be useful in an environment in which individuals know one another less well or if one wants to identify if one particular individual has natural helping ability or not. A very small number of studies have sought to identify helping ability through other means such as using scores on other personality measures, but they have been of limited use and success largely due to lack of theoretical grounding or methodological problems (see discussions of Jackson, 1985; Wagner et al., 1971; Woods & Beecher, 1979 above). This is not to say that nominations have not been useful in the appropriate context-the point is that the number of contexts in which they have the most utility in identifying natural helpers is limited.

“Assumed” Helpers. Other studies have simply assumed that individuals help because of their societal role, such as friends (Otten, Penner, & Waugh, 1988; Parham & Tinsley, 1980; Robbins & Tanck, 1995), and professionals known for listening such as hairdressers, bartenders, lawyers, and supervisors (Cowen, 1982; Nagel, Hoffman, & Hill, 1995).

Although studies of groups assumed to provide some type of helping in the course of their daily tasks are informative about what people are capable of doing, such studies do not help identify what it is about the individuals to whom others turn in times of need that makes the recipient feel that he or she would be helpful. For example, most individuals would not turn to *any* friend for support with a problem, though they do most

often seek help from friends. What factors influence the friends that they do choose? Are there traits or behaviors exhibited by the chosen individuals that indicate a helpful nature?

An Alternative. I suggest that the next step in the road to finding an adequate method of identifying natural helpers is to use a validated, theory-based self-report measure. I presented my theory of natural helping in this literature review, and have created a measure of natural helping based on that theory.

Chapter 3

Statement of the Problem

Prior research on natural helping has focused on several different areas, including the skills and responses used by rural helpers (e.g., Memmott, 1993; Memmott & Brennan, 1988; Patterson & Brennan, 1983; Patterson & Memmott, 1992; Patterson, Holzhter, Strubble, & Quadagno, 1972; Patterson, 1977), and lay helpers (e.g., Cowen, 1982; Seaberg, 1985). Research has also compared the skill usage of natural/lay helpers as compared to professionals (e.g., Milne et al., 1992; Nagel et al., 1995; Reisman & Yamokoski, 1974; Toro, 1986; Tracey & Toro, 1989), and the effectiveness of natural helpers as compared to professionals (e.g., Strupp & Hadley, 1979). Finally, prior research has examined the role of personality variables in identifying natural helpers or predicting natural helping behavior (e.g., Jackson, 1985; Shulman, 1986; Wagner, Manning, & Wheeler, 1971; Woods & Beecher, 1979).

Although prior research on natural helping has contributed to an understanding of what natural helpers do and on how natural helpers compare to professionals, I believe it is time to take a step back from attempting to find out what natural helpers *do* and take a moment to discover who natural helpers are and what natural helpers are like. I have attempted to do this in the section of the literature review that presented my own thinking on the elements of natural helping. Thus, one purpose of this study is to evaluate individuals on the elements hypothesized to characterize natural helpers in order to gain a broader picture of how these behaviors and traits “hang together.” In addition, I suggested that the best way to identify natural helpers is to use a validated self-report measure based on theory. Thus, this study will serve as a means of validating the theory-

based natural helper measure that could serve to address the methodological problems currently plaguing the natural helper literature.

Given the primarily exploratory nature of this study, one hypothesis and two research questions will guide the design and analysis. The hypothesis and questions follow from the propositions presented earlier concerning the 11 elements that can constitute natural helping and natural helpers:

First, natural helpers exhibit listening ability and (2) provision of emotional support. Although they are related to emotional support, natural helping also includes the elements of empathy (3) and nurturance (4). Fifth, natural helpers have an ability to form therapeutic relationships. They also have a non-judgmental stance when relating to others (6). In addition, natural helpers provide instrumental support (7); they also use the verbal helping skills used by professional therapists (8). Ninth, natural helpers' relationships can be characterized by reciprocity. Prior experience with helping roles is also an element of natural helping (10). Finally, "feminine" response patterns are hypothesized to be related to natural helping (11). This includes social service interests, friendliness and affiliation, and being caring, approachable and thoughtful.

Hypothesis 1: A theory-based measure of natural helping tendency will exhibit adequate psychometric qualities.

As mentioned previously, I have developed a measure of natural helping ability based on the theoretical propositions of elements of natural helping presented here. The measure itself will be tested for validity and reliability using a series of measures that assess individuals on the traits and behaviors hypothesized to be related to natural helping.

Research Question 1: What types of natural helper groups exist, if any?

As stated above, one of the two purposes of this study is to explore if and/or how the traits and behaviors hypothesized to be related to natural helping cluster together to suggest the existence of types of people related to the construct of natural helping. To answer this question, each of the elements hypothesized to relate to natural helping and describe will be assessed; these elements and the measures used to assess them (which overlap) can be found in Table 1.

Research Question 2: If there are types of natural helpers, how do they differ?

If the clustering methods indicate that natural helper types exist, the next logical step is to investigate how natural helper types differ on the elements that compose natural helping tendency. Post-hoc comparisons of the natural helper groups will serve to answer this question.

Chapter 4

Method

Design

This study examined the self-reports of undergraduate psychology students on a series of measures that tap into personality, interpersonal, and skill/behavior variables proposed to be related to being a natural helper. In addition, participants each engaged in two brief helping sessions with other participants, and were evaluated by the “helpee” on helping skill use, ability to form a therapeutic relationship, and session outcome.

Clustering methods were used in order to determine whether I could identify several types of people based on these natural helper measures (e.g., very helpful, moderately helpful, not helpful). Secondarily, this study provides reliability and validity data on a new self-report measure of natural helping (described below). Thus, the nature of this design is a descriptive field study.

Participants

Participants for this study were 168 undergraduate psychology students (53 male, 115 female) from diverse ethnicities (25 African American, 18 Asian, 13 Latino/a, 97 White, 15 Other). Participants ranged in age from 18 to 38 ($M(167) = 20.1$; $SD = 2.52$), represented a wide range of majors at the University, had an average combined SAT score of $M(145) = 1249$ ($SD = 126.4$) and an average last-semester GPA of $M(163) = 3.41$, $SD = .51$. English was the primary language for most ($N = 151$) participants. All participants received extra research credits for their participation in this study. The study was advertised as being about communication styles. The intent behind using this group

of participants was to enable me to have a range of the variability that exists in natural helping tendencies across the college student population.

In addition, 31 counseling psychology graduate students completed the self-report measure of natural helping in order to provide a comparison group for validity purposes. The graduate students ranged in age ($M = 27.61$, $SD = 3.60$), gender (9 male, 22 female), and ethnicity (21 Caucasian, 3 African American, 1 Hispanic, 1 Indian, 1 Pakistani).

Self-Report Measures

Table 1 lists the measures used to evaluate all the measures used in this study to evaluate natural helping, and the element of natural helping they assess.

Table 1. Measures Used to Evaluate Each Element of Natural Helping.

Element of Natural Helping	Measure
Listening ability and provision of emotional support	Supportive Actions Scale
Ability to form a therapeutic relationship	Relationship Scale
Instrumental Support	Supportive Actions Scale
Verbal helping skill use	Helping Skills Measure
Reciprocity	Items 3 and 11 on the Natural Helper Measure
Prior experience with helping	Demographics form
Empathy	Interpersonal Reactivity Index
Nurturance	Supportive Actions Scale VIA: Kindness VIA: Forgiveness/Mercy VIA: Intimacy
Non-judgmental stance	VIA: Judgment/Open-mindedness VIA: Honesty/Authenticity
Feminine response patterns: Social service interests	Interest in helping profession (demographics form)
Friendliness, Affiliation Caring, Approachable, Thoughtful	VIA: Intimacy, Social Intelligence VIA: Kindness, Fairness, Perspective

Note. VIA = Values in Action Inventory

Demographics. Participants were given a demographic form which asked them to indicate their age, gender, ethnicity, primary language, major, SAT scores, and GPA (all reported above). In addition, they were asked to list prior experiences and/or training with helping roles. The initial intent behind this question was to obtain ratings for prior helping experience; however, a research team of graduate students could not agree on a reliable way to rate the responses to this question due to their variety of details regarding length, extent, tasks, etc. so this item was dropped. Finally, participants were asked to rate the statement “I plan to pursue a career in a helping profession” from very unlikely (1) to very likely (7).

Social Support Behavior. Socially supportive behaviors were measured with the Supportive Actions Scale-Circumplex (SAS-C; Trobst, Collins, & Embree, 1994; Trobst, 2000). The version of the SAS-C used in this study was designed to measure social support behaviors from the *provider's* perspective. It is a 64-item scale that asks individuals to assess how they typically or characteristically respond when someone close to them has a problem. The theory behind the SAS-C is based on an Interpersonal circumplex model and places individuals in the circumplex dimensions of dominance (the vertical axis) and nurturance (the horizontal axis). Thus, there are eight scales, each containing eight items; all items are rated on a Likert scale ranging from *never* (1) to *always* (7).

An individual who is high in dominance and at the midpoint on nurturance is labeled as *directive*. Directive individuals actively take on the other's problem by offering advice and emphasizing his or her abilities and resources. A sample item from this octant is “I tell them they came to the right person.” Individuals who are high on

dominance and high on nurturance are classified as *engaging*. Engaging individuals are enthusiastic about helping and provide useful information while expressing concern and protectiveness. A sample item demonstrating an engaging socially supportive stance is “I attempt to keep in regular contact with them.” *Nurturant* socially supportive styles reflect a mid-point level of dominance and high nurturance. Nurturant individuals provide emotional support and affection, are patient, and listen actively. “I let them know I’m listening” is a sample item from the nurturant octant. Low dominance and high nurturance constitutes a *deferential* socially supportive style. Deferential social supporters are willing to listen without judging, arguing, or advising. A sample item that falls into the deferential octant is “I remain non-judgmental.” An individual who scores low on dominance and at the midpoint on nurturance is considered to exhibit an *avoidant* socially supportive style. Avoidant individuals refrain from giving opinions, advice, and recommendations. Neither do they seek to change the helpee’s behaviors or opinions. “I avoid influencing their course of action” is a sample item from the avoidant octant. Social supporters who do not express concern and seek to extract themselves from the situation exhibit a *distancing* socially supportive style. Such individuals score low on both dominance and nurturance. A sample item from the distancing octant is “I try to stay ‘at arm’s length.’” Low levels of nurturance and midpoint levels of dominance indicate a *critical* supportive style. Critical individuals minimize the problem, are reluctant to take the problem seriously, discourage further discussion, and criticize or blame the helpee. A sample item from this octant is “I tell them whining doesn’t help.” Finally, an *arrogant* socially supportive style is exhibited by individuals who score high on dominance and low on nurturance. Arrogant social supporters take over the problem, often emphasizing

their qualifications to do so. Thus, they take control, make decisions, and actively persuade the helpee to do things their way. An item demonstrating an arrogant supportive style is “I insist that they let me take care of things.”

The subscales of the Supportive Actions Scale-Circumplex have been found to have adequate internal consistency (α ranges from .71 to .85), and the eight-subscale factor structure has been confirmed by factor analyses (Trobst, 2000). For the current study, reliabilities ranged from $\alpha = .64$ (deferential) to $\alpha = .82$ (arrogant). The “deferential” subscale was dropped from further analyses due to its low internal consistency.

In addition, concurrent validity has been established by comparing participants’ scores on other social support measures to their scores on the SAS-C (Trobst, 1999; 2000). The other social support measures used for validation include the Social Support Behavior Questionnaire (SSBQ; Johnson, Hobfoll & Zalcberg-Linetzy, 1993), which evaluates helper behaviors as helpful or unhelpful; the Social Support Behaviors scale (SS-B; Vaux, Riedel, & Stewart, 1987) which measures levels of emotional support, socializing, practical assistance, financial assistance, and advice/guidance; and the Inventory of Socially Supportive Behaviors (ISSB; Barrera, Sandler, & Ramsay, 1981), which assesses tangible and intangible support with factors of direct guidance, nondirective support, positive social interaction, and tangible assistance. Because they were written from the recipient’s perspective, items in the SS-B and ISSB were reworded by Trobst to reflect the provider’s perspective. Trobst (1999) found that the subscales of the SSBQ, SS-B, and ISSB could be predictably differentiated based on which SAS-C subscales they correlated with. For example, the SS-B Advice/Guidance scale fell in the

Directive octant of the SAS-C, while the Emotional Support scale of the SS-B fell between the Engaging and Nurturant octants of the SAS-C. Interestingly, all the other support subscales (with the exception of the SS-B Advice/Guidance scale and the SSBQ helpful and unhelpful scales) fell within or close to the border of the Engaging octant of the SAS-C. Of the SSBQ scales, unhelpful fell within the arrogant octant of the SAS-C, and helpful fell into the nurturant octant of the SAS-C. Clearly, the SAS-C not only captures the information one can obtain from existing social support measures, but differentiates between them and provides information about several dimensions of socially supportive behaviors that have not really been addressed in the literature, particularly the more unhelpful styles such as critical, distancing, avoidant, and deferential.

Empathy. Empathy was measured with the Interpersonal Reactivity Index (IRI; Davis, 1980, 1983). The IRI measures trait empathy on four different dimensions, each containing seven Likert-type items (28 items total) ranging from “does not describe me well” (0) to “describes me very well”(5). The first subscale, Perspective Taking (PT), reflects one’s ability to take another’s perspective; this is the only scale that assesses the cognitive component of empathy (e.g., “I sometimes try to understand my friends better by imagining how things look from their perspective”). The three remaining subscales assess affective measures of empathy. The Empathic Concern (EC) scale measures one’s level of warmth, compassion, and concern for those who are distressed (e.g., “I often have tender, concerned feelings for people less fortunate than me”). The Fantasy (FS) scale measures one’s tendency to identify with fictitious characters in books, movies, or plays (e.g., “I really get involved with the feelings of the characters in a novel”). Finally,

the Personal Distress (PD) scale measures one's own reactions and levels of discomfort when exposed to others' experiences (e.g., "Being in a tense emotional situation scares me"). Subscale scores are obtained by summing the items; scores can range from 0 to 35, with higher scores indicating higher levels of empathy. Davis (1983) found that the inter-correlations between the four subscales of the IRI indicate that they are indeed related yet independent: FS and PT were significantly positively related to EC ($r = .33$ for both). FS-PT, FS-PD, and EC-PD were not significantly related (mean r s = .13, .07, and .08, respectively); PT and PD were significantly negatively related ($r = -.25$).

Reliability and validity of the IRI has been established in samples of college students (Davis, 1980; 1983). The IRI scales have demonstrated acceptable internal consistency reliabilities ranging from .71 to .77, and adequate test-retest reliability, ranging from .62 to .71 (Davis, 1980). Reliabilities for the current study were adequate and ranged from $\alpha = .69$ (Empathic Concern) to $\alpha = .78$ (Fantasy).

Davis (1983) reported that the IRI and its subscales have satisfactory concurrent validity, in that all four IRI subscale scores were positively correlated with the Mehrabian and Epstein Emotional Empathy Scale (1972) and the Hogan Empathy Scale (1969). The Hogan scale, an empathy scale that primarily assesses the cognitive aspects of empathy, was most highly correlated with the Perspective Taking scale ($r = .40$). The Fantasy and Empathic Concern subscales of the IRI were positively correlated to the Mehrabian and Epstein Emotional Empathy Scale (r s = .52 and .60, respectively).

Interpersonal strengths. Interpersonal strengths were measured using the Values in Action Inventory of Strengths (VIA-IS; Seligman, 2002; Peterson & Seligman, in press). The VIA-IS is a 240-item, face-valid scale that evaluates 24 character strengths

(10 items each). Tables 3 and 4 list the strengths, the definition of each strength, and a sample item for each strength (Seligman, 2002, 2003; Peterson, C., personal communication, September 9, 2003). Each item is rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from *very much unlike me* (1) to *very much like me* (5). For each subscale, scores are obtained by averaging scores for all ten items; higher scores indicate greater strength for that particular subscale.

Due to the extreme length of this measure, participants did not complete the entire VIA-IS. I believe that the following subscales (listed and defined in Table 2) are the least likely to be related to natural helping and thus they were *not* administered: Love of Learning, Bravery, Industry/Perseverance, Zest, Leadership, Modesty/Humility, Self-control/Self-regulation, Awe/Appreciation of Beauty and Excellence, Gratitude, Hope, Prudence, Originality/Creativity, Curiosity/Interest, Citizenship/Teamwork, Spirituality and Playfulness.

The scales that participants *did* take (listed and defined in Table 3) include: Judgment/Open-mindedness, Perspective, Honesty/Authenticity, Intimacy, Kindness, Social Intelligence, Fairness and Forgiveness/Mercy.

The individual scales of the VIA-IS have been found to be internally consistent ($\alpha > .75$). In the current study, reliabilities were all $\alpha = .81$ or higher. Validity for the VIA has come from an ongoing study combining VIA-IS scores with a nomination procedure (Peterson and Seligman, 2003). Participants nominated as “paragons” of a particular strength were given the VIA-IS without being told why; nominations and actual strength scores converged moderately. In addition, the VIA-IS has been found to be sensitive to changes in value orientation. Peterson & Seligman (2003) found that after the September

Table 2. Definition and Sample Item for VIA Subscales Excluded from Study.

Strength	Definition	Sample Item
Love of Learning	Mastering new skills, topics, and bodies of knowledge, whether on one's own or formally. Obviously related to the strength of curiosity but goes beyond it to describe the tendency to add systematically to what one knows.	I am thrilled when I learn something new
Bravery	Not shrinking from threat, challenge, difficulty, or pain; speaking up for what is right even if there is opposition; acting on convictions even if unpopular; includes physical bravery but is not limited to it.	I have taken frequent stands in the face of strong opposition.
Prudence	Being careful about one's choices; not taking undue risks; not saying or doing things that might later be regretted.	"Better safe than sorry" is one of my favorite mottoes.
Leadership	Encouraging a group of which one is a member to get things done and at the same time maintaining good relations within the group; organizing group activities and seeing that they happen.	I can always get people to do things together without nagging them.
Playfulness	Liking to laugh and tease; bringing smiles to other people; seeing the light side; making (but not necessarily telling) jokes.	I always mix work and play as much as possible.
Hope	Expecting the best in the future and working to achieve it; believing that a good future is something that can be brought about.	I always look on the bright side.
Gratitude	Being aware and thankful for the good things that happen and taking time to express thanks.	I always say thank you, even for the little things.
Modesty/Humility	Letting one's accomplishments speak for themselves; not seeking the spotlight; not regarding one's self as more special than one is.	I change the subject when people give me compliments.

Table 2. Definition and Sample Item for VIA Subscales Excluded from Study.

Strength	Definition	Sample Item
Self-control/Self-regulation	Regulating what one feels and does; controlling one's appetites and emotions; being disciplined.	I control my emotions.
Awe/ Appreciation of Beauty and Excellence	Noticing and appreciating beauty, excellence, and/or skilled performance in all domains of life, including nature, art, science, and everyday experiences.	In the last month, I have been thrilled by excellence in music, art, drama, film, sport, science or mathematics.
Zest	Approaching life with excitement and energy; not doing things halfway or halfheartedly; living life as an adventure; feeling alive and activated.	I throw myself into everything I do.
Industry/ Perseverance	Finishing what one starts; persisting in a course of action in spite of obstacles; taking pleasure in completing tasks.	I always finish what I start.
Originality/ Creativity	Thinking of novel and productive ways to do things; includes artistic achievement but is not limited to it.	I like to think of new ways of doing things.
Curiosity/Interest	Taking an interest in all of ongoing experience; finding all subjects and topics fascinating; exploring and discovering.	I am always curious about the world.
Citizenship/ Teamwork	Working well as a member of a group or team and doing one's share; being loyal to the group.	I work at my best when I am in a group.
Spirituality	Having coherent beliefs about the higher purpose and meaning of the universe; knowing where one fits in the larger scheme; having beliefs about the meaning of life that shape conduct and provide comfort.	My life has a strong purpose.

Table 3. Definition and Sample Item for VIA Subscales Included in Study.

Strength	Definition	Sample Item
Judgment/ Open-mindedness	Thinking things through and examining them from all sides; not jumping to conclusions; being able change one's mind in light of evidence; weighing all evidence fairly.	When the topic calls for it, I can be a highly rational thinker.
Perspective	Being able to provide wise counsel to others; having ways of looking at the world that make sense to the self and to other people.	I am always able to look at things and see the big picture.
Honesty/ Authenticity	Speaking the truth and presenting oneself in a genuine way; taking responsibility for one's feelings and actions.	I always keep my promises.
Intimacy	Valuing close relationships with others, particularly those in which sharing and caring are reciprocated; being close to people.	There are people in my life who care as much about my feelings and well-being as they do about their own.
Kindness	Doing favors and good deeds for others; helping and taking care of others.	I have voluntarily helped a neighbor in the last month.
Social Intelligence	Being aware of the motives and feelings of other people and the self; knowing what to do to fit in to different social situations.	No matter what the social situation, I am able to fit in.
Fairness	Treating all people the same according to notions of fairness and justice; not letting personal feelings bias decisions about others.	I treat all people equally regardless of who they might be.
Forgiveness/Mercy	Forgiving those who have done wrong; giving people a second chance; not being vengeful.	I always let bygones be bygones.

11 terrorist attacks, the values of gratitude, hope, kindness, leadership, love, spirituality, and teamwork all increased significantly in participants who took a web-based version of the measure, and remained elevated 10 months after the attacks. This finding reflects the changes in American orientations often discussed by the media at the time.

Natural Helping Tendency. Natural helping tendency was evaluated using the Natural Helper Measure (NHM), which was developed for the purposes of this study and seeks to evaluate an individual's helping inclinations and experiences. The initial version of the measure contained 19 items, derived from my own thinking, reading, and theorizing about natural helping. Upon discussion with my advisor, seven items were removed because they were redundant or unclear.

In the final version of the measure prior to this study, twelve 7-point Likert items (1 = never; 7 = always) assess self-perceptions of amount that individuals are approached for help, have had prior experience helping, and enjoy helping. As shown in Table 4, each item reflects one or more of the hypothesized characteristics of natural helping.

The possible scores ranged from 1 to 7 with higher scores indicating higher natural helping tendencies. In a small informal pilot study, the internal consistency on the 12-item version of this scale was found to be $\alpha = .86$. As a major purpose of this study was to provide validity and reliability for this new measure, those psychometric properties are discussed in the results section.

Other-Report Measures

Helping Skill Use. Designed to assess clients' perceptions of a helper's performance of helping skills, the *Helping Skills Measure* (HSM; Hill & Kellems, 2002)

Table 4. Natural Helper Measure Items and Corresponding Characteristics of Natural Helping.

Natural Helper Measure Item	Characteristic(s) of Natural Helping Reflected
My friends do not ask me for help when they have a problem	Listening & emotional support, Nurturance, Instrumental support (possibly), Prior experience with helping
My family members ask me for help when they have a problem.	Listening & emotional support, Nurturance, Therapeutic relationships, Instrumental support (possibly), Prior experience with helping
In my relationships, I feel that I give more than I take.	Reciprocity
I am not good at listening to others' problems.	Listening & emotional support
I often find myself helping others with their problems.	Listening & emotional support, Nurturance, Instrumental support, Prior experience with helping
I have played a helpful role in my family.	Prior experience with helping
I have been told that I am good at helping others.	Feminine response patterns, Therapeutic relationships, Prior experience with helping
I have received negative feedback when I have attempted to help others in the past.	Prior experience with helping
I have been told that I would be a good counselor/therapist.	Listening & emotional support, Non-judgmentality (by implication), Nurturance, Therapeutic relationships, Helping Skills
I consider myself to be "naturally" good at helping others.	Feminine response patterns
In my relationships, I feel that I take more than I give.	Reciprocity
I am comfortable helping others with their problems.	Listening & emotional support, Nurturance, Feminine response patterns

was tailored specifically to the Hill and O'Brien (1999) three-stage model of exploration, insight, and action. Thus, the HSM contains three subscales (4 items for Exploration, 4 items for Insight, and 5 items for Action). Each of the subscales is rated on a Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). All items use the stem, "In this session, my helper..." followed by the specific item, some of which are reverse scored. Sample items include "asked questions to help me explore what I was thinking or feeling" (Exploration); "helped me to understand reasons behind my thoughts, feelings, and/or behaviors" (Insight); and "did *not* help me think about changes I could make in my life" (Action). Subscale scores are obtained by reversing the appropriate items and averaging all items. A total HSM score can be obtained by averaging the three subscales; thus, total HSM scores can range from 1-5, with higher scores indicating more skill usage.

Reliability and validity for the HSM were established using samples of undergraduate students taking a helping skills course. Factor analyses showed three factors, and the subscales of the HSM all had internal consistency estimates greater than .70, suggesting adequate reliability. This was replicated in the current study, as all subscales of the HSM had reliabilities above .71. HSM scores also were sensitive to the changes one would expect as students learned and practiced helping skills across a semester-long helping skills course. Specifically, Exploration scores increased significantly from Session 1 to Session 2 (but not from 2 to 3); Insight and Action scores did not change from Session 1 to Session 2, but did increase significantly from Session 2 to 3. The Exploration, Insight and Action scales were moderately intercorrelated, ranging from .49 to .53, which suggests that the scales were related but distinct. Finally,

significant correlations between the Exploration, Insight, and Action subscales and the corresponding subscales (Relationship, Understanding, and Problem-Solving, respectively) of the Session Impact Scale (Elliott & Wexler, 1994) provide evidence for concurrent validity ($r_s = .47, .30, \text{ and } .43$, respectively; Hill & Kellems, 2002).

The *Relationship Scale (RS)* assesses clients' perceptions of the therapeutic bond (Hill & Kellems, 2002). The RS consists of four items each beginning with the stem "In this session, I..." Each item (e.g., "did *not* feel a bond with my helper," "liked my helper," "trusted my helper," and "worked collaboratively with my helper") is rated on a Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). The score for this scale is obtained by reversing the appropriate items, and averaging all four items; higher scores indicate stronger client-perceived relationship. Hill and Kellems' (2002) factor analysis confirmed that all the items on the RS load onto one factor. In addition, the internal consistency of the RS has been found to be adequate ($\alpha = .78 \text{ and } .81$). In the current study, reliability on the RS was .84. Evidence of concurrent validity was shown through a significant correlation of .51 with the client-rated Working Alliance Inventory-Short Form (Tracey & Kokotovic, 1989).

The *Session Evaluation Scale (SES)*; Hill & Kellems, 2002) provides an assessment of the client's perceptions of session quality and consists of four items, rated on a Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). The SES begins with the stem "I..." and is followed by "am glad I attended this session," "did not feel satisfied with what I got out of this session," "thought the session was helpful," and "did not think the session was valuable." The score for this scale is obtained by reversing the appropriate items and averaging all four items; higher scores indicate stronger client-

perceived session quality. A factor analysis by Hill and Kellems (2002) confirmed that all items in the SES load onto one factor. Hill and Kellems (2002) also found the internal consistency of the SES be $\alpha = .91$, and $.88$. In the current study, reliability of the SES was $.85$. Concurrent validity was found in the significant correlation of the client-rated SEQ-Depth subscale (Stiles & Snow, 1984) with the SES (Hill & Kellems, 2002).

Procedures

Participants were undergraduate psychology students, recruited primarily through an established, computer-based subject pool, which allows students to receive extra credit in psychology courses for their research participation. The posting of the study described it as a study concerned with communication style. The posting also specified that participants had to discuss one of their concerns with two other participants and help two other participants each discuss his or her own concern. Participants received two or three extra credits for their participation (one for each hour).

Pilot Test. The first day of data collection demonstrated several logistical problems with the methodology of this study, resulting in some loss of data, and therefore is considered a pilot test. Participants arrived in two separate groups of about 20 and were randomly assigned partners with whom to conduct the helping sessions. The first group was immediately assigned helper/client roles and began conducting helping sessions, while the second group began by filling out questionnaires. Beginning with the questionnaires proved to be problematic because some participants took significantly longer than others to complete them, and sessions could not begin until everyone was ready, causing distress and extreme impatience in those participants who were waiting. In order to simplify the process, it was decided that the sessions would always come first,

followed by the questionnaires in order to avoid potentially losing participants halfway through the study.

Both groups demonstrated complications with the session portion of the methodology. Prior to the beginning of the session, the clients were handed the Session Process and Outcome Form—Client. At the end of ten minutes, the pair was interrupted and the client was instructed to fill out the form, which belonged to their helper. The same pair of students then switched roles and repeated this process with the participant who had originally been the “helper” playing the “client” role. This resulted in several problems including: participant “clients” filling out forms before they were told to by the research assistant or myself, participant “clients” likely feeling some pressure to give their “helper” higher ratings than they might have otherwise due to filling it out in front of the helper, the helping data for the participant who played “helper” second was influenced by the fact that they had just played “client” for their rater (thus the sessions were not independent), and finally there was no manipulation check/monitoring of sessions to ensure that participants stayed on task, and observation of some sessions in the second group indicated that they may not have been staying on task. As a result of these problems with the sessions from this day of data collection, none of the session data from these participants was used. In addition, subsequent data was collected with smaller groups of participants in order to allow for monitoring of all sessions via microphones, and it was decided that participants would not have more than one session with any other participant so that helper/client sessions for each participant were independent. The self-report questionnaire data for these participants was not used in any analyses related to session data (i.e. cluster analysis and analyses on clusters).

Final Procedure. Subsequent to the changes following the pilot test, as participants arrived, they completed informed consent forms and were placed in a rotation for the helping sessions to ensure that they were each the helper twice and that pairings were not duplicated.

Self-Report Measures. Participants all completed paper-and-pencil versions of each self-report measure. The order of the questionnaires (SAS-C, IRI, VIA-IS, NHM) was randomized and counterbalanced to control for order and fatigue effects. Thirty randomly selected participants received an email two weeks after participation inviting them to re-take the Natural Helper Measure over email; 23 responded and they received one further credit for doing so.

Helping Session. The second task of this study consisted of being a helper for 2 helping sessions and being a helpee for 2 helping sessions. Participants were assigned partners at random, and each member of the pair was randomly assigned to begin with either a “helper” or “client” role. Each pair of students was then given a private space in which to conduct their helping session. Before beginning the session, each participant was told his or her assigned role for the session: either “client” or “helper.” The clients were instructed to discuss something that was bothering them (i.e. school stress, roommate problems, fights with parents, etc.), and helpers were instructed to be as helpful as possible. In addition, they were informed that the sessions were being monitored in order to ensure that they stayed on task. At the end of 10 minutes, the client exited the room and completed the client version of the Session Process and Outcome Measure. The pairings were then re-arranged and the procedure was repeated with each participant switching roles (i.e. helpers became clients and vice versa). At the end of 10

minutes, the new client completed the client version of the Session Process and Outcome Measure. This process was repeated, so that in the end, each participant was evaluated as a helper twice and served as the client twice without duplicating partners. (The only exceptions to this were when an odd number of participants arrived, in which case the “left over” participant was only the client once.)

Chapter 5

Results

Preliminary Analyses

Table 5 shows means, standard deviations, and internal consistency values for each of the subscales for each of the measures administered. All measures and subscales had adequate internal consistency. Unfortunately, it was impossible to make comparisons for most of these scores to norms for college students, as such norms were unavailable for the SAS, IRI, and VIA. Thus, there is no way to know how representative the scores obtained on these measures by the participants in this study were.

Hill and Kellems (2002) reported norms for the SPOM obtained with a sample of undergraduate psychology majors taking a helping skills course: Exploration ($M = 4.34$, $SD = .64$); Insight ($M = 3.67$, $SD = .89$), Action ($M = 3.52$, $SD = .88$), Therapeutic Relationship ($M = 4.34$, $SD = .60$), Session Evaluation ($M = 4.19$, $SD = .74$). The data obtained in the current study (in Table 5) suggest that the general group of undergraduates in this sample were appropriately rated generally lower than or equal to the norms on the SPOM.

Hypothesis 1: A theory-based measure of natural helping tendency will exhibit adequate psychometric qualities.

Construct validity: Factor analysis of NHM. Based on feedback from graduate student participants who indicated that the “never/always” anchors were confusing with the reversed items (because it created a double negative), items 1, 4, 8, and 11 were not used in the factor analysis. Item 3 was also dropped as it addressed reciprocity of

Table 5. Mean, Standard Deviation and Internal Consistency of All Subscales Administered.

Subscale	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	α
<i>Session Process and Outcome Measure (Client 1)</i>			
Exploration	4.00	.75	.71
Insight	3.23	.80	.72
Action	3.55	.85	.81
Relationship Scale	4.20	.71	.84
Session Evaluation Scale	3.80	.80	.85
<i>Session Process and Outcome Measure (Client 2)</i>			
Exploration	4.10	.81	.80
Insight	3.56	.86	.78
Action	3.71	.74	.84
Relationship Scale	4.23	.79	.86
Session Evaluation Scale	4.02	.93	.86
<i>Supportive Actions Scale – Circumplex</i>			
Directive	4.56	.93	.84
Arrogant	3.21	.98	.81
Critical	2.25	.93	.83
Distancing	2.48	.79	.81
Avoidant	2.94	.78	.89
Deferential	4.18	.83	.83
Nurturant	5.51	.75	.83
Engaging	5.32	.76	.84
<i>Interpersonal Reactivity Index (Empathy)</i>			
Fantasy	18.20	5.26	.78
Empathic Concern	21.25	3.89	.69
Perspective Taking	19.08	4.36	.75
Personal Distress	11.14	4.88	.76
<i>Values In Action</i>			
Judgment	3.94	.60	.84
Social Intelligence	3.81	.59	.81
Perspective	3.81	.63	.83
Honesty	3.96	.59	.81
Kindness	4.03	.67	.89
Intimacy	3.97	.67	.83
Fairness	3.91	.60	.83
Forgiveness	3.52	.66	.84

relationships and was intended to be paired with item 11. A principal-axis factor analysis exploratory factor analysis with a Varimax rotation was conducted on the remaining 7 items on the NHM to determine its factor structure. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin index was .76, indicating that these 7 items were sufficiently intercorrelated to justify a factor

analysis (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1996 suggested that the KMO Index should be above .60). The initial factor analysis revealed two factors with eigenvalues greater than 1.0 (3.26, 1.32), accounting for a total of 55% of the variance. A scree plot and examination of one- and two-factor structure indicated that the two-factor model was a good fit. Using criteria that required loadings of greater than or equal to .50 with a minimum of .10 difference between the highest and second-highest factor loading, items relating to being naturally helpful in general (5, 7, 9, 10, & 12) loaded on the first factor, with an internal consistency of $\alpha = .80$, while the two items related to helping family members (2, 6) loaded on the second factor with an internal consistency of $\alpha = .76$. However, because helping related to family members was decided to be different from and more difficult to define and validate than general helping, and because there were only two items, we decided to drop them and use a one-factor structure with 5 items related generally to natural helping. The factor analysis was then re-run with the 5 remaining items. The resulting one-factor structure accounted for 48% of the variance (eigenvalue = 2.86, KMO index = .77). The factor loadings for both factor analyses are shown in Table 6.

Internal consistency and test-retest reliability. Internal consistency was then assessed on the 5-item measure (whose items are starred in Table 6) and found to be adequate ($\alpha = .80$). A score was then calculated for each participant by averaging the 5 items in the new scale. Test-retest reliability was assessed by correlating initial NHM scores with re-test score for the 23 individuals who re-took the NHM (90% in two to three weeks) after initial participation; this correlation was adequate, $r(23) = .66$, $p < .01$.

Table 6. Factor Loadings for Two Factor Analyses of Natural Helper Measure Items.

Scale Item	Factor Analysis 1 loadings		Factor Analysis 2 loadings
	GEN	FAM	
2. My family members ask me for help when they have a problem.	.17	.66	-
5. I often find myself helping others with their problems.*	.42	.36	.50
6. I have played a helpful role in my family.	.11	.91	-
7. I have been told that I am good at helping others.*	.71	.35	.78
9. I have been told that I would be a good counselor/therapist.*	.62	.13	.62
10. I consider myself to be “naturally” good at helping others.*	.93	.15	.91
12. I am comfortable helping others with their problems.*	.58	.01	.58

Note. Bolded numbers indicate the factor on which item loaded; GEN = General helping factor; FAM = Family helping factor

* Item included in final version of scale.

Convergent validity. Convergent validity for the measure was investigated by correlating NHM scores with the Empathic Concern (EC), Perspective Taking (PT), and Fantasy (FS) IRI subscales and the Nurturant (NUR), Engaging (ENG), Distancing (DIS), Critical (CRI), Avoidant (AVO), and Arrogant (ARR) subscales of the SAS-C. (For correlation values, see Table 7.) The NHM was positively and significantly correlated with the Empathic Concern, Perspective Taking, and Fantasy subscales of the IRI. Similarly, it was positively and significantly correlated with the Engaging and Nurturant subscales of the SAS-C, and was negatively and significantly related to the Distancing, Critical, and Avoidant subscales of the SAS-C, indicating convergent validity. However, contrary to expectation, the NHM was not significantly or negatively related to the Arrogant subscale of the SAS-C. Hence, evidence for convergent validity was found.

Table 7. Convergent Validity Correlations For Natural Helper Measure

NHM	IRI- FS	IRI- PT	IRI- EC	SAS- ENG	SAS- NUR	SAS- DIS	SAS- CRI	SAS- AVO	SAS- ARR
<i>r</i> (168)	.16*	.28**	.25**	.31**	.30**	-.26**	-.20*	-.35**	.103

Note. NHM = Natural Helper Measure; IRI = Interpersonal Reactivity Index; Subscales of IRI: FS = Fantasy; PT = Perspective Taking; EC = Empathic Concern; SAS = Supportive Actions Scale; Subscales of SAS: ENG = Engaging; NUR = Nurturant, DIS = Distancing, CRI = Critical, AVO = Avoidant, and ARR = Arrogant.

* Sig. at $p < .05$; Sig. at ** $p < .001$

Construct validity: Comparison group. In order to further examine construct validity, NHM scores obtained by a sample of 31 counseling psychology graduate students were compared to the scores obtained by the 168 undergraduates who participated in the study. An independent-samples t-test indicated that graduate students ($M = 5.96$, $SD = .72$) scored significantly higher on the NHM than a sample of undergraduates ($M = 5.56$, $SD = .99$), $t(197) = 2.17$, $p = .03$. This difference remained and was still significant when a random sample of undergraduates equal in size ($N = 31$) to the graduate student sample ($M = 5.48$, $SD = 1.09$) was selected, $t(60) = 2.07$, $p = .04$. Because counseling psychology graduate students have self-selected and have been selected into a helping (and therapy) based profession, we could assume that they are natural helpers; thus, this suggests that the NHM distinguishes known natural helpers from a sample of undergraduates.

Research Question 1: What types of natural helper groups exist, if any?

Factor analysis of subscale scores. To minimize multicollinearity of factors entered into a cluster analysis, a principal axis factor analysis with a Varimax rotation was first conducted on the standardized subscale scores for each of the measures. Thus, the variables entered into this factor analysis included all the subscales from the both

Session Process and Outcome Measures (Exploration, Insight, Action, Relationship, Session Evaluation), all the VIA subscales (Judgment, Social Intelligence, Perspective, Honesty, Kindness, Intimacy, Fairness, Forgiveness), all the reliable SAS subscales (Directive, Arrogant, Critical, Distancing, Avoidant, Nurturant, Engaging), and the three positive subscales of the IRI (Perspective Taking, Fantasy, Empathic Concern). The KMO Index was .74, indicating that these 28 subscales were sufficiently intercorrelated to justify a factor analysis. The factor analysis indicated 7 factors with eigenvalues < 1 , (5.34, 3.60, 3.17, 2.53, 2.35, 1.36, 1.22) accounting for 63% of the variance. A Scree plot and an examination of 5, 6 and 7 factor solutions indicated that the seven-factor model was the best fit. As seen in Table 8, and using criteria that required loadings of greater than or equal to .45 and retaining the highest factor loadings, subscales primarily loaded on factors related to the measure to which they belonged. Thus, there was one factor for the VIA subscales (except for “Forgiveness” as it loaded on more than one factor and was thus dropped) which we called *Interpersonal Strengths*, one for *Session 1 Ratings*, one for *Session 2 Ratings*, one for self-reported Arrogant, Critical, and Directive social support styles (called *Condescending Behaviors*), one for self-reported Avoidant and Distancing social support styles (called *Moving Away Behaviors*), one for self-reported Nurturant and Engaging social support styles (called *Moving Toward Behaviors*), and finally one for one for the self-report empathy subscales (called *Empathy*).

Internal consistency and intercorrelation among subscales. The internal consistency for each of the factors was found to be adequate (Interpersonal Strengths $\alpha = .91$; Session 1 Ratings, $\alpha = .85$; Session 2 Ratings $\alpha = .89$; Condescending Behaviors $\alpha =$

Table 8. Factor Loadings for Factor Analysis of Subscales.

Subscale	Factor Loadings						
	<i>Interpe- rsonal Strengths</i>	<i>Session 1 Ratings</i>	<i>Session 2 Ratings</i>	<i>Condes- cending Beh.</i>	<i>Moving Away Beh.</i>	<i>Moving Toward Beh.</i>	<i>Empathy</i>
<i>VIA</i>							
Judgment	.84	.10	.07	-.05	.14	-.01	.15
Honesty	.85	-.03	.03	-.03	-.03	.22	-.08
Perspective	.81	.05	.08	.03	-.19	-.03	-.04
Kindness	.82	-.06	-.05	-.03	-.13	.14	-.05
Social Intell.	.77	.001	.03	.02	.005	.03	.09
Fairness	.69	-.03	-.07	-.04	-.08	.10	.31
Intimacy	.65	.06	-.02	-.07	-.13	-.09	.12
<i>Session 1</i>							
Exploration	-.07	.65	-.02	-.11	-.04	-.03	-.004
Insight	-.10	.74	.05	.03	-.10	-.10	.04
Action	-.05	.73	-.02	.02	.02	.07	-.02
Relationship	-.01	.70	-.01	-.03	-.03	-.02	-.02
Sess. Eval.	-.03	.83	.02	-.01	-.06	.01	-.08
<i>Session 2</i>							
Exploration	-.06	.07	.84	.03	.04	-.11	.08
Insight	-.03	.04	.75	.04	.01	.11	-.04
Action	-.04	-.04	.75	-.03	.10	.13	-.13
Relationship	-.08	-.02	.76	.06	-.18	-.11	-.07
Sess. Eval.	-.05	.04	.83	.01	-.09	.02	.06
<i>SAS</i>							
Critical	-.06	-.06	-.06	.57	.48	-.19	-.15
Directive	-.05	-.03	-.03	.83	-.22	.19	.02
Arrogant	-.03	-.08	.05	.92	.05	-.07	-.08
Distancing	-.03	-.02	-.06	.05	.83	-.17	-.21
Avoidant	-.13	-.15	-.09	-.41	.58	.06	-.06
Engaging	.15	-.05	.01	.21	-.22	.74	.16
Nurturant	.19	-.01	.05	-.21	.01	.81	.30
<i>IRI</i>							
Emp. Conc.	-.08	-.004	-.002	-.07	-.25	.28	.67
Persp. Tak.	.26	.05	.11	-.06	.05	.12	.68
Fantasy	-.05	-.03	.11	.002	-.09	.03	.45

.78; Moving Away Behaviors $\alpha = .66$; Moving Towards Behaviors $\alpha = .78$; Empathy $\alpha = .61$). The factors were then correlated (see Table 9). Interpersonal Strengths was found to be significantly correlated to Moving Away Behaviors (negatively), Moving Toward Behaviors (positively), and Empathy (positively). Moving Away Behaviors was found to be significantly negatively correlated to Moving Toward Behaviors and Empathy.

Table 9. Correlation Matrix of Subscale Factors, Plan to Pursue Helping Profession, Natural Helper Measure, and Composite Score.

Factor / Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Interpersonal Strengths (<i>N</i> = 168)	--								
2. Session 1 Ratings (<i>N</i> = 125)	.04	--							
3. Session 2 Ratings (<i>N</i> = 125)	.03	.04	--						
4. Condescending Beh. (<i>N</i> = 168)	-.08	-.09	.07	--					
5. Moving Away Beh. (<i>N</i> = 168)	-.16*	-.11	-.10	-.07	--				
6. Moving Toward Beh. (<i>N</i> = 168)	.28**	-.03	.04	.02	-.23**	--			
7. Empathy (<i>N</i> = 168)	.30**	.01	-.01	-.12	-.27**	.38**	--		
8. Likelihood to Pur. Help. (<i>N</i> = 125)	.22**	-.03	.14	-.14	-.12	.24**	.28*	--	
9. Natural Helper Measure (<i>N</i> = 125)	.40**	.11	.19*	.05	-.35**	.34**	.31**	.41**	--
10. Composite Score (<i>N</i> = 125)	.70**	.40**	.42**	-.34**	-.46**	.43**	.43**	.34**	.51**

* Sig. at *p* < .05; ** Sig. at *p* < .01

Finally, Moving Toward Behaviors was found to be significantly positively correlated to Empathy. Although these correlations are significant, they are all relatively low (i.e. all < .40), indicating that the scales are related yet independent.

Cluster analysis. The Ward method of cluster analysis was used to categorize the client sample for whom session data existed ($N = 125$). The Ward method, one of the most widely used in behavioral sciences, is a hierarchical clustering technique. Thus, clusters are constructed into a tree-like system (pictorially represented by a dendrogram) from $n - 1$ clusters to 1 final cluster. In essence, the analysis begins by first pairing together the two most similar participants, then adding new pairings, combining pairings into clusters, and combining clusters into increasingly larger clusters until there is only one cluster. Thus, the clusters are created in such a way that within-cluster variability is minimized and between-cluster variability is maximized at each stage of grouping (Borgen & Barnett, 1987). Borgen & Barnett (1987) also recommend leaving several variables out of the cluster analysis in order to test for differences between the clusters after they have been formed; thus, only the subscale factor scores were entered into the cluster analysis. Because the metric of the subscales for each factor was different, factor scores were standardized by SPSS for use in this clustering procedure. An examination of the dendrogram and a graph of squared coefficient changes (similar to a Scree plot) suggested either a five or six cluster solution. Because the graph of squared coefficient changes indicated that the largest changes in error began when 7 clusters were combined into 6, a 6 cluster solution was selected, as it provided the best fit to the data. However, one of the clusters had only 2 participants (1.6% of the sample), and thus was dropped. Hence, the cluster analysis revealed 5 clusters.

Research Question 2: If there are types of natural helpers, how do they differ?

MANOVA on cluster factors by cluster. A MANOVA indicated that the overall cluster model was significant, $F(28,460) = 15.214$, $p < .01$. Table 10 displays the results of Tukey HSD post-hoc tests that were used to control for number of tests and to examine differences between means, as the between-cluster comparisons were significant for all the factors, Interpersonal Strengths: $F(4,118) = 9.34$, $p < .001$; Session 1 Ratings: $F(4,118) = 21.56$, $p < .001$; Session 2 Ratings: $F(4,118) = 15.33$, $p < .001$; Condescending Behaviors: $F(4,118) = 5.28$, $p < .001$; Moving Away Behaviors: $F(4,118) = 11.34$, $p < .001$; Moving Toward Behaviors: $F(4,118) = 22.16$, $p < .001$; Empathy: $F(4,118) = 31.79$, $p < .001$. The significance of these overall ANOVAs is a natural result of the cluster analysis, and indicates that the clusters differ significantly on the measures that were used to create them.

Table 10. Standard Score Mean, Standard Deviation, and Pairwise Comparisons of Subscale Factors, Likelihood to Pursue Helping Profession, Natural Helper Measure, and Composite Score By Cluster

Cluster	N	Factor	Z-M	Z-SD	Significant Comparisons
1. Natural Helpers	40	Session 1 Ratings	.52	.61	1>3
		Session 2 Ratings	.58	.58	1>2, 1>5, 1>4
		Interpers. Strengths	.26	.60	1>5
		Condescending Beh.	-.32	.71	1<4
		Moving Away Beh.	.10	.79	1>2
		Moving Toward Beh.	.34	.70	1>5, 1>4
		Empathy	.14	.59	1<2, 1>5
		Likelihood	.13	.83	1<5*
		NHM	.15	.99	1>5
Composite Score	.62	.69	1>3, 1>4, 1>5		
2. Inflated Nurturers	28	Session 1 Ratings	.06	.91	2>3
		Session 2 Ratings	-.80	.68	2<3, 2<1
		Interpers. Strengths	.21	.91	2>5
		Condescending Beh.	-.14	1.15	2<4
		Moving Away Beh.	-.74	.97	2<1, 2<3, 2<5

Table 10. Standard Score Mean, Standard Deviation, and Pairwise Comparisons of Subscale Factors, Likelihood to Pursue Helping Profession, Natural Helper Measure, and Composite Score By Cluster

Cluster	N	Factor	Z-M	Z-SD	Significant Comparisons
2. Inflated Nurturers (con't)		Moving Toward Beh.	.65	.50	2>5, 2>4
		Empathy	.94	.72	2>1, 2>5, 2>4
		Likelihood	-.17	1.13	-
		NHM	.19	1.03	2>5
		Composite Score	.24	.76	2>5
3. Ambivalent Avoiders	20	Session 1 Ratings	-1.42	.91	3<1, 3<2, 3<5, 3<4
		Session 2 Ratings	.44	.69	3>2, 3>5
		Interpers. Strengths	.44	.73	3>5
		Condescending Beh.	.11	1.09	-
		Moving Away Beh.	.63	.85	3>1, 3>4
		Moving Toward Beh.	.21	1.02	3>5, 3>4
		Empathy	.42	.75	3>5, 3>4
		Likelihood	.35	.69	3>5*
		NHM	.01	.84	3>5*
Composite Score	-.18	.76	3<1, 3>5		
4. Condescending Non-Nurturers	19	Session 1 Ratings	.19	.69	4>3
		Session 2 Ratings	-.22	.85	4<1
		Interpers. Strengths	.16	.62	4>5
		Condescending Beh.	.87	1.04	4>1, 4>2, 4>5
		Moving Away Beh.	-.37	.93	4<3, 4<5
		Moving Toward Beh.	-.89	.77	4<1, 4<2, 4<3
		Empathy	-.36	.57	4<1, 4<2, 4<3, 4>5
		Likelihood	-.23	1.36	-
		NHM	.04	1.04	4>5*
Composite Score	-.28	1.03	4<1, 4>5		
5. Avoidant Non-Wannabes	16	Session 1 Ratings	.07	.82	5>3
		Session 2 Ratings	-.53	1.44	5<1, 5<3
		Interpers. Strengths	-.86	.59	5<1, 5<2, 5<3, 5<4
		Condescending Beh.	-.22	.93	5<4
		Moving Away Beh.	.82	1.05	5>2, 5>4
		Moving Toward Beh.	-1.15	1.01	5<1, 5<2, 5<3
		Empathy	-1.44	1.01	5<1, 5<2, 5<3, 5<4
		Likelihood	-.71	1.12	5<3*, 5<1*
		NHM	-.93	.99	5<1, 5<2, 5<3*, 5<4
Composite Score	-1.19	.90	5<1, 5<2, 5<3, 5<4		

Note. All significant comparisons are $p \leq .01$, except for * = $p \leq .05$

Cluster descriptions. Figure 1 demonstrates how the clusters compare on the 7 factors used in the cluster analysis. In order to characterize each cluster, the $\pm .5$ Z-score (i.e. one-half standard deviation) was set as the criteria for being above or below average on a particular factor.

The participants in the first cluster ($N = 40$; 7 males, 33 females) were rated above average by both clients and appeared to fall above the midpoint and within the average range for all other traits measured, including self-reports of Natural Helper Measure. Because this group's client ratings were above average and consistent with one another and because they demonstrated a trend of other helpful characteristics (all other traits except *Condescending Behaviors* were above the midpoint), this group was labeled *Natural Helpers*.

The participants in the second cluster ($N = 28$; 5 males, 23 females) were rated as average by their first client, but below average by their second client. These participants were also below average on *Moving Away Behaviors*. They rated themselves within the average range (though above the midpoint) of likelihood to pursue a helping profession and the NHM. On the other hand, they were above average on *Moving Toward Behaviors* and *Empathy*. Because this group rated themselves as below average on measures of avoidant responses to helping situations, but rated themselves high on measures of nurturance and empathy, they were named *Inflated Nurturers*.

The third group ($N = 20$, 7 males, 13 females) was named *Ambivalent Avoiders* because they were above average on *Moving Away Behaviors* (indicating behavior contrary to natural helping), but also above the midpoint on other measures indicative of

natural helping, including Interpersonal Strengths, Empathy, likelihood to pursue a helping profession, and the Natural Helper Measure. The *Ambivalent Avoiders* group also had widely discrepant ratings from clients, as their first client rated them below average, and their second client rated them above the midpoint, but within the average range.

The fourth cluster of individuals ($N = 19$, 9 males, 10 females) reported above average levels of Condescending Behaviors and below average levels of Moving Toward Behaviors. Their scores for client ratings, Interpersonal Strengths, Moving Away Behaviors, Empathy, likelihood to pursue a helping profession and NHM fell within the average range, but were below the midpoint. Thus, this group was named *Condescending Non-Nurturers*.

Finally, the fifth cluster of participants ($N = 16$, 10 men, 6 women) scored above average on Moving Away Behaviors and below average on Interpersonal Strengths, Moving Toward Behaviors, Empathy, likelihood to pursue a helping profession, and NHM. They were within the average range on client ratings and Condescending Behaviors. Because this group reported extreme avoidance of helping situations and helping professions, they were named the *Avoidant Non-Wannabes*.

Composite score. In order to obtain a simpler evaluation of differences among clusters, a composite score on the variables entered into cluster was calculated. In order to calculate this composite score and weight each factor appropriately, each of the factors was multiplied by its eigenvalue from the factor analysis. These values were then summed such that higher scores indicated greater natural helper tendency. (Thus, scores for Condescending Behaviors and Moving Away Behaviors were subtracted, as they are

contrary to the characteristics of natural helping proposed earlier.) The formula by which the composite score was calculated was: composite = (5.339*Interpersonal Strengths) + (3.596*Session 2 Ratings) + (3.173*Session 1 Ratings) – (2.531*Condescending Behaviors) – (2.346*Moving Away Behaviors) + (1.362*Moving Toward Behaviors) + (1.220*Empathy).

An ANOVA was then conducted on the composite score by cluster, and was found to be significant, $F(4,118) = 16.26, p < .001$. Tukey HSD post-hoc paired comparisons revealed that the *Natural Helpers* group scored significantly higher than the *Ambivalent Avoiders*, the *Avoidant Non-Wannabes*, and the *Condescending Non-Nurturers*. (Refer to Table 10 for descriptive statistics for each group.) However, the *Natural Helper* group did not differ significantly from the *Inflated Nurturers* group. Thus, the composite score validates the *Natural Helper* group's status as a naturally helpful group, as the *Natural Helpers* were the only group with above-average composite score. The composite score differentiated between natural helpers and the clear non-helper groups (i.e. the *Avoidant Non-Wannabes* and the *Condescending Non-Nurturers*, both of whom obtained negative composite scores) as well as the *Ambivalent Avoiders* group, who also obtained a negative composite score. The composite score also differentiated the *Avoidant Non-Wannabe* group from all other groups, as this group's composite score was significantly lower than all other groups.

External variables analyses by cluster. In addition to testing for differences by cluster for the factors used in the cluster analysis and for the composite score, several other variables (left out of the cluster analysis) were tested for differences by cluster. The following demographic variables were examined to further explore differences between

the clusters: gender, ethnicity, age, SAT, GPA and major. A chi-square analysis indicated that cluster membership was significantly related to gender, $\chi^2(4, N = 123) = 15.65, p < .01$, such that the *Natural Helpers*, *Inflated Nurturers*, and *Ambivalent Avoiders* clusters had more women than men, while the *Condescending Non-Nurturers* cluster was about evenly split between men and women and the *Avoidant Non-Wannabes* cluster had more men than women. Other chi-squares indicated that cluster membership was not significantly related to ethnicity (white vs. non-white), $\chi^2(4, N = 123) = 5.73, p = .22$, or major (psychology vs. not psychology), $\chi^2(4, N = 123) = 1.55, p = .82$.

Three separate one-way ANOVAs were then conducted on age, combined SAT score, and GPA by cluster. None of these variables differed significantly by cluster, Age: $F(4,118) = 1.27, p = .29$; SAT: $F(4,100) = 1.45, p = .22$; GPA: $F(4,114) = 1.28, p = .28$.

A one-way ANOVA was then conducted on the question from the demographic questionnaire asking participants to rate likelihood to pursue a helping profession from very unlikely (1) to very likely (7), and was found to be significant, $F(4,118) = 2.30, p < .05$. A Tukey HSD post-hoc analysis revealed that the *Avoidant Non-Wannabes* cluster rated themselves significantly less likely to pursue a helping profession than *Ambivalent Avoiders* and *Natural Helpers* (see Table 10 for descriptive statistics). This suggests that the question regarding likelihood to pursue a helping profession distinguishes avoidant non-helpers from some helper groups.

Finally, in addition to the examination of composite score by cluster and as a way of investigating differences between clusters and providing further validity data for the Natural Helper Measure, a one-way ANOVA was conducted on NHM scores by cluster. This ANOVA was significant, $F(4,118) = 4.12, p < .01$. A Tukey HSD paired

comparison post-hoc test revealed that the *Avoidant Non-Wannabes* ($M = 4.67$, $SD = 1.02$) rated themselves significantly lower on the NHM than *Natural Helpers* ($M = 5.57$; $SD = 1.01$), *Inflated Nurturers* ($M = 5.59$, $SD = 1.03$), *Ambivalent Avoiders* ($M = 5.60$, $SD = .76$), and *Condescending Non-Nurturers* ($M = 5.58$, $SD = 1.05$). This suggests that the NHM may distinguish extremely avoidant non-natural helpers from other groups, but does not further distinguish among groups.

Additional Analyses. In order to provide further validity data for the Natural Helper Measure, three further analyses were conducted. First, the NHM was correlated to the VIA subscales included in the study in order to assess if it is a related, yet distinct construct from things like social intelligence and kindness. As seen in Table 11, the NHM was significantly correlated with all the subscales of the VIA from .22 to .43, all significant at $p < .001$. Hence, the NHM is related to but distinct from the VIA subscales.

Table 11. Correlations Between Natural Helper Measure and Values In Action Subscales.

NHM	Judge- ment	Social Intell.	Persp- ective	Honesty	Kind- ness	Intimacy	Forgive -ness
$r(168)$.33**	.43**	.40**	.31**	.29**	.26**	.22**

Note. NHM = Natural Helper Measure

** Sig. at $p < .001$.

Secondly, the NHM was correlated with the Composite Score created from the cluster factors. These two variables were found to be significantly correlated $r(125) = .51$, $p < .001$, suggesting that as participants' composite scores increased (indicating higher levels of natural helpfulness), so did their Natural Helper Measure scores. This provides further convergent validity data for the NHM.

Third, a series of paired independent-samples t-tests were conducted on the NHM between the graduate student sample and each of the clusters. Only the undergraduates in the *Avoidant Non-Wannabes* ($M = 4.63, SD = .97$) cluster differed significantly from the graduate students ($M = 5.96, SD = .72$), $t(45) = -5.29, p < .001$, suggesting that the NHM is most useful for identifying a *lack* of natural helping ability rather than varying degrees of natural helping tendency.

Chapter 6

Discussion

Hypothesis 1: A theory-based measure of natural helping tendency will exhibit adequate psychometric qualities.

As hypothesized, the Natural Helper Measure (NHM) exhibited adequate psychometric qualities. The final version of the NHM contained one factor consisting of 5 items all related generally to helping others; this factor demonstrated adequate internal consistency. In addition, the NHM was found to be significantly positively related to, yet distinct from, measures of empathy, nurturant and engaging social support styles, and several interpersonal strengths (social intelligence, open-mindedness/judgment, honesty, kindness, forgiveness, perspective, and intimacy). It was also found to be significantly negatively related to measures of unhelpful reactions to helping situations such as being distancing, avoidant, or critical. Thus, it appears that the NHM evaluates a construct that is distinct from other helping-related constructs such as empathy or nurturance.

However, despite the statistical validity and reliability of the NHM, the usefulness of the measure must also be addressed. Although the measure distinguished between counseling psychology graduate students (who are presumably naturally helpful) and a sample of undergraduate students, the mean difference of their scores was less than one half-point on the 7-point Likert scale (.4). Thus, the group differences found with the NHM, while significant, may not be very meaningful. This suggests that the actual utility of the NHM in identifying natural helpers may be limited. This issue will be further addressed in the section about identification of natural helpers.

Research Questions 1 and 2: What types of natural helper groups exist, if any? If there are types of natural helpers, how do they differ?

Because both of the research questions posed in this study are intertwined, they are addressed as a unit in this section. In this study, clustering methods revealed that all but two participants for whom session data existed fell into one of five groups when assessed by measures designed to assess natural helping tendency. Three of these groups appeared to be potential helpers, as they reported traits of natural helping to some extent. In contrast, the remaining two groups appeared to be non-helpers, as they primarily reported traits contrary to natural helping. In this section, each group is described in relation to the traits proposed to be related to natural helping from most to least naturally helpful.

The *Natural Helpers* group obtained the highest composite score on the measures of natural helping tendency. They received consistent and above average ratings from their clients, and rated themselves above the midpoint (though within the average range) on other proposed elements of natural helping such as nurturant helping tendency, empathy, and interpersonal strengths including some that mirror Rogers' core conditions (i.e. non-judgmentality, open-mindedness) and the "feminine response patterns" (i.e. kindness, social intelligence, intimacy, and fairness) proposed to be present in helpers by Carkhuff (1969). In addition, when a weighted, composite score of the measures of natural helping was constructed, the *Natural Helpers* were the only group to score above average on the composite score. The moderate level scores obtained by this group on all measures of natural helping other than client ratings may suggest that natural helpers demonstrate flexibility when confronted with helping situations. Rather than be

exemplars in some or all the traits posited to be related to natural helpers, this group possesses these traits in such a combination that this group was the most similar to what one might expect a natural helper to look like. Thus, it is the combination of traits that makes them natural helpers rather than one or two particular traits. The second-most naturally helpful group (as determined by the composite score on measures of natural helping tendency) was the *Inflated Nurturers*, who rated themselves as above average on elements of natural helping such as nurturance and empathy and below average on behaviors contrary to natural helping such as responding to helping situations in distancing and avoidant ways. This group also had the highest score of all five groups on the NHM. What distinguishes this group from the *Natural Helpers* is that their client ratings were not consistent—they received average ratings from the first client and below average ratings from their second client. In addition, whereas all the scores (except the client ratings and composite) obtained by the *Natural Helper* group fall within the moderate range, this group had several scores that deviated from the average. This suggests that individuals who view themselves as possessing above average levels of empathy and nurturant responses to helping situations are not necessarily the most consistent helpers. (This seemingly counter-intuitive finding related to empathy will be further addressed in the section below in which revisions to the theory of natural helping are discussed).

The *Ambivalent Avoiders* exhibited some characteristics of natural helpers; they ranked third on the composite helper score, though this score did fall below the midpoint. They were rated well below average by their first client and above the midpoint, though within the average range by their second client, indicating at least some capacity to be

helpful in a counseling-like situation; they were the only group of the five to show such a large discrepancy between sessions. Indicative of their ambivalence, the participants in this cluster had average interest in a helping profession and identified themselves as average on empathy and interpersonal strengths. However, these participants also tended to be avoidant of and distance themselves from helping situations. This group's dramatic difference in client ratings between session 1 to session 2 combined with the avoidance of helping situations may suggest that this group is anxious about helping, but that practice may alleviate some of that anxiety.

The final two groups, *Condescending Non-Nurturers* and *Avoidant Non-Wannabes*, were both more clearly non-natural helper groups. The *Condescending Non-Nurturers* were rated within the average range by their clients, and rated themselves as average on measures of interpersonal strengths, avoidant or distancing responses to helping situations, and empathy. However, this group reported responding to helping situations in ways that were bossy, arrogant, and critical at an above-average level; they also reported below average levels of engaging or nurturant responses to helping situations. Thus, although they fell within the average range on some traits of natural helping (including the composite score, although the composite fell below the midpoint), they were considered to be non-helpers because they also reported having a few traits that are contrary to those proposed to exist in natural helpers.

The *Avoidant Non-Wannabe* group obtained the lowest composite score on the helping traits and was the least similar to the profile one might expect of a natural helper. This group, while receiving average ratings from their clients, also rated themselves below average on interpersonal strengths, nurturance, empathy, and likelihood to pursue a

helping profession. They received the lowest score of all groups on the NHM and also rated themselves as above average on avoidant and distancing responses to helping situations. Thus, this group seemed to be aware that they are non-helpers and accordingly avoided helping situations and helping professions.

Limitations

One of the primary limitations of this study is that I did not incorporate nominations in validating the NHM, creating, or comparing clusters; nominations have been the primary method through which natural helpers have been identified in the past. As a result, we cannot know how the *Natural Helpers* found in this study compare to natural helpers from previous studies. The reason nominations were not used was twofold. First, although the University is in some ways a contained community, it would have been very difficult to ask participants to nominate other individuals who were also taking classes that used the department's subject pool for extra credit. Secondly, as described in the Literature Review, the method of using nominations has its own set of problems (e.g. impractical where individuals might not know one another well enough to make nominations or confounding how social an individual is with how helpful he or she might be).

Another limitation is that the problems encountered during data collection (detailed in the method section) led to a loss of almost 40 participants from the cluster analysis. There is no way to know how or if these participants would have changed the cluster solution. Additional limitations related to data collection include participants not staying on task, participants being paired with friends and/or strangers, and clients giving helpers elevated ratings due to social desirability or lack of knowledge about helping

situations. All of these potential confounds could affect the validity of the session data, as participants may not have been rating the sessions accurately or honestly. I describe these issues in more detail below.

If participants did not stay on task, then the session data does not accurately reflect the helper's ability to help, given that the pair of participants did not follow the instructions they were given. Although precautions were taken against participants getting off task (i.e. reminding them to stay on task and monitoring sessions to see if they were on-task), it is still possible that participants may have gotten off-task for some period of time that was not caught by the manipulation checks.

Secondly, although the goal was for pairs of participants to be relative strangers, it is possible that participants were sometimes paired with people who they knew. Such pairings could have affected the session data, as participants may be more or less generous when rating a friend's helping skills than if the same person was a stranger; they certainly had more information than other dyads.

Even though clients filled out the session measures out of view of their helpers, social desirability may have also affected how participants rated their helpers. One might imagine that particularly empathic clients may have also given more generous ratings to helpers who appeared to be struggling.

Finally, because the measure used to evaluate the sessions was designed for use in therapy or helping situations (such as a Helping Skills class), lack of knowledge about helping situations (i.e. what challenges or interpretations sound like) may have also affected participants' ratings. Individuals who were more familiar with therapy may have had a different perspective on the amount of insight gained by a session or how helpful it

was than those without such familiarity. However, because no data regarding previous therapy experiences was collected, there is no way to know how such experiences may have affected the session ratings.

Another potential limitation of the session data is that having only two sessions may not provide an adequate picture of the helper's helping ability, as it would require 5 to 10 helping sessions to gain reliable estimates. Of the five helper groups, only the *Natural Helpers*' ratings were similar across sessions, three groups worsened across sessions (*Inflated Nurturers*, *Condescending Non-Nurturers*, and *Avoidant Non-Wannabes*), and one group improved (*Ambivalent Avoiders*). Hence, the data for the two sessions were almost completely uncorrelated, which raises questions about which session better represents the helper's ability to help.

A multitude of reasons could exist for the inconsistency in client ratings found in the improving and worsening groups, such as client and helper mood during the session, personality "click" between client and helper, client and helper comfort with the topic being discussed, and engagement of both participants in the task. In addition, for the three groups whose ratings worsened, session ratings may have dropped from session 1 to session 2 due to client or helper fatigue going into the session; alternatively, clients may have rated their first helpers more leniently due to the novelty of the task and then may have internally compared the second helper negatively to the first. In the case of the *Ambivalent Avoiders* group, perhaps the practice of the first session helped the second session go more smoothly due to decreased anxiety, or the second clients for this group disliked their first helper, creating a halo effect.

Unfortunately, time and recruitment constraints made obtaining such a large sample of helping sessions impractical. Thus, in this case we cannot be sure if the differences between the sessions are primarily helper-driven (i.e. actual skill or helping ability) or client-driven (i.e. clients comparing their two helpers, mood, topic chosen, engagement in the task). Although it is likely that both client and helper factors affected the ratings in this study, the pull in the context of this study was to make assumptions about the helper's helping ability (rather than client factors) when attempting to understand the meaning of the session data.

Finally, all participants in clusters completed paper and pencil self-report measures after having completed the session portion of the procedure. Thus, the measures are not independent of participants' self-perceived performance in and feelings about the sessions they had just completed; how the participants did in the sessions may have influenced their self-perceptions. In addition, participants were likely fatigued and eager to leave by the time they began filling out the measures (approximately one hour into the procedure), which could have adversely affected how carefully they did the task.

Implications

Despite the limitations of this study just described, the results of this study do further the literature on natural helping. This study has implications for both using the NHM to identify natural helpers and for developing theory about natural helpers. In addition, the results of this study suggest directions for future research.

Using the NHM to identify natural helpers. One of the primary goals for developing the NHM was to find a method of identifying natural helpers without using nominations given that the process of obtaining nominations is costly and unfeasible in

many situations. Although the NHM did demonstrate adequate reliability and validity, it was not sufficient to characterize or delineate among groups other than distinguishing the least helpful group (the *Avoidant Non-Wannabes*) from everyone else. One cause of this “failure” of the NHM may lie in the measure itself for several reasons. The final version of the measure differed in several ways from the version derived from the theory of natural helping proposed in the review of the literature; as a result of the problems created by the never/always anchors on the scale, several items were lost, including both of those concerning reciprocity of relationships. In addition, the final version of the scale addressed only helping in general and did not address helping in specific contexts such as with family. Thus, there may be types of helping and natural helpers who would not appear to be helpful given scores on the measure in its final form. Third, as the final version of the measure only used the general term “helping” without any specificity about type of help (such as instrumental vs. emotional) or a definition of “helping,” participants may have had different definitions of what does and does not constitute helping when completing the measure. For example, because the measure does not address emotional support and instrumental support separately, it is impossible to know if participants considered both types of help in responding to the questionnaire. Hence, as mentioned earlier, the actual utility of the NHM in identifying natural helpers may be limited.

Another possible reason that the NHM was not able to differentiate between the clusters may be that natural helpers simply cannot be identified by a self-report measure alone. After obtaining both sociometric and behavioral measures of helpfulness, Shulman (1986) suggested that helpfulness is an identifiable and stable characteristic that may be manifested by personality, interpersonal, and behavioral factors. Since the NHM only

assesses reports of behavior, rather than the behavior itself, these results may suggest that observed or other-report measures of behavior are necessary for identifying natural helpers. Such a conclusion is further supported when considered in conjunction with the past success of nominations in identifying natural helpers (e.g. Patterson & Brennan, 1983). In the current study, the combination of the behavioral measures (i.e. client ratings) and the NHM more effectively characterized helper groups than the NHM alone, although not as well as the combination of all the measures, as shown by the composite score. Perhaps the answer to identifying natural helpers outside the context of nominations (assuming such identification is possible) lies with combination of behavioral or analogue measures and personality measures rather than using just one type of measure.

Theory about natural helpers. In the literature review, I posited a theory that natural helpers possess the characteristics of listening and emotional support, empathy, nurturance, ability to form therapeutic relationships, non-judgmentality, instrumental support, helping skills, reciprocity, prior helping experience, and “feminine” response patterns. The clustering methods used in this study support that some of these characteristics are indeed part of natural helping, although not all of these characteristics were ultimately assessed as a part of the study (e.g. reciprocity, prior helping experience, and instrumental support). The characteristics that were not assessed as part of the study will not be addressed further in regards to my developing theory of natural helper characteristics. In addition, because some these characteristics overlap, they were assessed simultaneously; the implications of such simultaneous assessment of

characteristics are addressed here. For the rest of this section, I discuss what parts of the theory which supported and which parts need revision.

The first characteristics I proposed to be related to natural helping were listening and emotional support. These characteristics were not assessed individually, as they were measured by client perceptions of the helping sessions. In addition, listening and emotional support also overlapped with the third and fourth listed characteristics—ability to form a therapeutic relationship and verbal helping skill use (as rated by clients). The data in this study support the presence of such characteristics in natural helpers, as the pattern of session ratings seemed to differentiate the most likely natural helpers (the *Natural Helper* group) from the others. Specifically, the natural helper group was the only one that received consistent and above average ratings from both of their clients. Such results are reminiscent of studies comparing lay and natural helpers (e.g. Strupp & Hadley, 1979) which suggest that natural helpers perform similarly to professionals on therapy process and outcome measures, and that helping skills do not uniformly contribute to therapeutic outcome above and beyond relationship factors. Thus, it seems that helping skills and ability to form therapeutic relationships, as well as listening ability and emotional support are central components of natural helping. This is further supported by the factor analysis conducted on the measures, as the two sessions loaded on the second and third-ranking factors, together accounting for 21.88% of the variance in all the data used in the cluster analysis. Given the difficulty of empirically separating listening, emotional support, helping skills, and ability to form therapeutic relationships, I posit that these constructs (listening and emotional support, ability to form a therapeutic

relationship, and helping skills) should be combined into one single element of natural helping concerning therapeutic skills and relationship formation.

The natural helper characteristic of listening ability and emotional support also overlaps to some extent with the characteristic of nurturance, which was assessed by self-reports of nurturant or engaging responses to helping situations. The characteristic of nurturance appeared to distinguish between the non-helper groups (*Condescending Non-Nurturers* and *Avoidant Non-Wannabes*, who both rated themselves below average on nurturant behavior) from the helper groups (*Natural Helpers*, *Inflated Nurturers*, and *Ambivalent Avoiders*, who all rated themselves as average or above average on nurturant behavior). These results are consistent with the hypotheses about nurturance posited by Grater et al. (1961) “that not all nurturant people go into counseling psychology or even any social service profession. However... for those who do go into social service occupations such as counseling psychology, some degree of nurturance is almost a prerequisite and probably a necessity for job satisfaction... a person without the nurturant need will not choose a social service occupation or will not be satisfied with it if such a choice is made” (p.10). In keeping with the theory of natural helping proposed in the literature review, I maintain that some degree of nurturance is necessary for one to be a natural helper. However as manifested by the comparison between the *Empathic Nurturer* and *Natural Helper* groups, only a moderate amount of self-rated nurturance is needed; higher levels of self-rated nurturance does not necessarily lead to more consistent ratings from clients or place one in the most naturally helpful group. Hence, the characteristic of nurturance is separate, but related to, the characteristic concerning therapeutic skills and relationship formation.

Empathy was the sixth element proposed to be related to natural helping, and this element was assessed by its own self-report questionnaire. Empathy demonstrated a similar pattern to nurturance in that the *Natural Helper* group rated themselves in the moderate range of empathy, the *Inflated Nurturers* rated themselves above average on empathy, and the *Avoidant Non-Wannabes* rated themselves below average on empathy. (The other two groups rated themselves within the average range.) Thus, the group with the highest composite score on natural helping tendency did *not* have the highest scores on empathy. At first glance this pattern may seem counter-intuitive—after all, one of Carl Rogers’ (1957) core conditions for personality change in therapy was that “the therapist experiences an empathic understanding of the client’s frame of reference and endeavors to communicate this experience to the client” (p.73). However, the pattern of empathy self-ratings across groups is consistent with theory about empathy and therapy. For example, in his initial paper about the necessary and sufficient conditions for client change, Rogers emphasizes that a therapist’s empathy must never lose the “as if” quality that separates his or her own feelings from those of the client. This is further highlighted by Gladstein (1983), who suggested that too much empathy can be counterproductive; too much empathy creates emotional contagion or empathic distress in the helper and can cause the therapist to distance him- or herself from the client. It is for this reason, Gladstein theorizes, that “empathy can, but does not necessarily lead to helping behaviors” (p.477). In light of such theoretical propositions about empathy, the inconsistent session ratings received by the *Inflated Nurturers* (the only group to rate themselves as above average on empathy) take on a new light. Perhaps these helpers were too empathic with their clients to the point where they were unproductive as helpers.

These results, therefore, further inform the developing theory about natural helping. As Grater et al. (1961) posited about nurturance, I believe that empathy is an essential characteristic for natural helpers; however this empathy should exist at moderate levels, as too much empathy would hinder one's ability to effectively and continually help others. I believe that empathy is a separate but related characteristic of natural helping to those discussed above (e.g. therapeutic skills and relationship formation, nurturance, and empathy).

The final two characteristics of natural helping that were part of my theory of natural helping (non-judgmentality and "feminine" response patterns) were also empirically inseparable; thus they were evaluated together as "interpersonal strengths." In the review of the literature, I proposed that natural helpers tend to exhibit "more traditionally feminine response patterns...helpers tend to get high scores on social service interests and nurturant inclinations as well as on indexes of restraint, friendliness, deference, intraception, [and] affiliation" (Carkhuff, 1969, p.80). Although social service interests and nurturant inclinations were evaluated by other means, the interpersonal strengths measure assessed traits such as social intelligence, judgment, kindness, intimacy, and fairness. The clusters seem to support this characteristic as being part of natural helping to some extent, as the clearest non-helper group (*Avoidant Non-Wannabes*) rated themselves as below average on the interpersonal strengths measure. All the other groups rated themselves in the average range on this measure. It seems that some individuals who are clearly not helpers report not possessing this characteristic of "feminine" response patterns, while other non-helpers (such as *Condescending Non-Nurturers*) and helper groups (i.e. *Natural Helpers*, *Inflated Nurturers*, and *Ambivalent*

Avoiders) report moderate levels of this characteristic. Thus, although a moderate amount of “feminine” response patterns is consistent with other characteristics of natural helpers, non-helpers may also possess this characteristic. Therefore, although I believe that this characteristic should remain on the list of characteristics of natural helpers (as one could likely not be a helper without it), it may be one of the less important characteristics in distinguishing helpers from non-helpers.

Like the restraint, friendliness, deference, intraception and affiliation components of the “feminine” response patterns, the pattern of social service interests (measured by the likelihood to pursue a helping profession item) across clusters suggest that it may be one of the less important characteristics in distinguishing helpers from non-helpers. The *Avoidant Non-Wannabes* were the only cluster who reported likelihood scores that deviated from the average (they were below average), which suggests that perhaps a moderate amount of social service interest is part of the overall picture of natural helpers; however, individuals who are not considered to be helpers (i.e. *Condescending Non-Nurturers*) may also report moderate amounts of social service interests.

In the “feminine response patterns” section of the theory, I also suggested that although natural helpers tend to present themselves as caring, approachable, and thoughtful, they do not usually appear aggressive, selfish, critical or narcissistic; these are traits that are contrary to the helpful, empathic, non-judgmental worldview that natural helpers tend to possess. This part of the “feminine response patterns” trait echoes Carkhuff (1969) who posited that “helpers tend to get...low scores on more aggressive, assertive, and achievement-oriented traits” (p.80). The results of the clusters suggest that the caring, approachable, thoughtful characteristics are not necessarily inversely related

to being aggressive, selfish, critical, or narcissistic; the condescending behaviors measure (i.e. critical, directive, arrogant social support style) was uncorrelated with the measure of interpersonal strengths (i.e. the caring, approachable, thoughtful), empathy, and nurturant or engaging responses to helping situations. In addition, even the *Natural Helpers* group reported average levels of condescending behaviors; only the *Condescending Non-Nurturers* reported above average levels of such responses. Such results appear to indicate that this proposed characteristic was unsupported by the data. However, both non-helper groups reported below average levels of nurturant or engaging behaviors, which are at least theoretically contrary to critical or directive behaviors (Trobst, 1999). Therefore, it appears that individuals who are *not* natural helpers may report being arrogant or critical in helping situations *or* they may report below average levels of engaging and nurturant responses in helping situations. Natural helpers likely report moderate levels of both types of support.

Given the conclusions discussed in the three previous paragraphs, I believe that the “feminine” response patterns trait of natural helping is best broken down into two separate characteristics. First, natural helpers tend have at least moderate levels of “feminine” characteristics such as kindness, social intelligence, intimacy, and social service interests (i.e. likelihood to pursue a helping profession). Second, *non-helpers* appear selfish, critical, or arrogant when responding for requests for help and may lack nurturant or engaging responses to helping situations.

The results of this study ultimately indicate that my theory of natural helping can be simplified in several ways. First, I was able to identify a group of individuals who appear to be naturally helpful without measures of reciprocity, prior experience, and

instrumental support. Although I cannot know how these measures might have changed the cluster outcomes, one possible conclusion is that such characteristics are not necessary in describing a natural helper's profile. Second, (and in part due to my inability to measure or evaluate the reciprocity, prior experience, and instrumental support characteristics) the characteristics of natural helping may be more parsimoniously described and measured by a 4 (rather than 11) characteristic model. The revised list of characteristics of natural helpers include: (1) consistent use and formation of therapeutic skills and relationships; (2) at least a moderate level of nurturance; (3) a *moderate* (rather than high) level of empathy, as too much empathy may hinder one's ability or tendency to help; and (4) "feminine" interpersonal strengths such as capacity for intimacy, social intelligence, kindness, and social service interests. Figure 2 visually depicts my revised theory of natural helping. A corollary to these characteristics of natural helpers is that non-helpers either lack nurturant responses to helping situations or appear condescending (i.e. arrogant, directive, critical) when responding to helping situations. It must be noted that the most likely natural helpers (i.e. the *Natural Helper* group) possess moderate levels of all these traits and are best identified as natural helpers when the traits are considered in combination; higher levels of one trait do not necessarily make up for low levels of another.

In short, it appears that natural helpfulness is a constellation of personality, interpersonal, and behavioral characteristics. While the *Natural Helpers* in this study appeared to encompass a variety of traits including consistent ability to use and form therapeutic skills and relationships, nurturance, empathy, and "feminine" interpersonal strengths, and not being critical or arrogant in helping situations, they were not the only

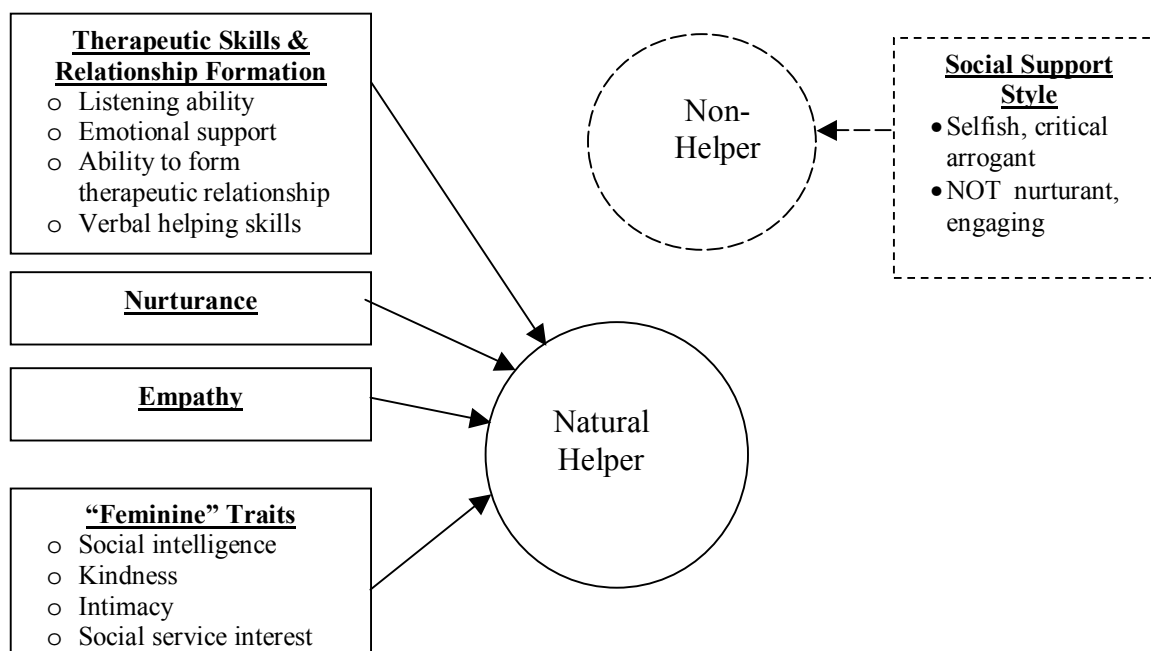


Figure 2. Revised Theory of Characteristics of Helpers and Non-Helpers.

groups to possess these traits, nor did they possess these traits to a significantly higher degree than any other group. (This is true even in the case of the helping sessions, where although the *Natural Helper* group’s client ratings were more consistent than all other groups, the differences in the individual sessions were not significant across all groups.) However, they had the highest composite score on natural helping tendency, which further underscores the importance of the combination of traits rather than high levels of individual traits.

Future Research. Given the implications discussed above, many possibilities for future research arise. Regarding the NHM and identification of natural helpers, future studies might begin by testing the Natural Helper Measure in conjunction with nominations. This might further assess whether or not natural helping can be identified through self-report means, particularly since nominations are currently the “gold standard” of identifying natural helpers in the literature. The NHM aside, another option

to identify natural helpers is to obtain nominations of both natural helpers and non-helpers (i.e. individuals to whom one would *not* turn for help in times of need), and to administer each group a series of measures and/or tasks (such as an analogue helping situation) and assess which measures or combinations of measures best distinguish the two groups. Perhaps detailed reports from or measures completed by friends and family of nominated natural helpers versus nominated non-helpers would contribute further to our understanding of the differences between these two groups of people.

In terms of assessing the theoretical characteristics of natural helpers, a place to start might be to obtain a sample of nominated natural helpers and evaluate them on personality, interpersonal, and behavioral tasks in a method similar to that used here. Given the dearth of literature on personality characteristics and natural helping, such a relatively simple study may provide a lot of information about natural helpers. In addition, future studies that seek to assess the theoretical characteristics of natural helpers should also attempt to assess the proposed characteristics that were not assessed in the present study, such as reciprocity of relationships, instrumental support (in conjunction with emotional support), and prior experience with helping. Further development of the theory might also consider how natural helpfulness develops in individuals (Where does it come from? Why does it develop?), and how much natural helpfulness characterizes one's interpersonal style. How does natural helping tendency relate to one's attachment style? Are natural helpers naturally helpful with everyone in their lives? What tempers the natural helping tendency at any given time, place, or with a particular person? Is natural helpfulness ever a maladaptive interpersonal style? If so, how and when is it maladaptive?

Finally, the quality of natural helpfulness may have interesting ties to the career development literature. Is natural helpfulness (as Grater et al. (1961) posit about nurturance) a prerequisite for pursuing helping professions such as counseling psychology? Can one who is *not* naturally helpful be satisfied in a helping profession? Why might someone who *is* a natural helper select a profession that does not allow him or her to use and develop his or her natural helping tendency? A follow-up of the participants of this study in order to assess what profession they choose may be a start to answering such questions. For the time being, the present study has begun to shed light on the characteristics possessed by those helpers about whom so many songs have been written.

Appendix A
Demographics

Age: _____

Gender (circle one): Male Female

Ethnicity: (circle one): African American Asian American or Pacific Islander

Latino

Native American

White/Caucasian

Other

(_____)

Primary Language (circle one): English Other (_____)

Major: _____

SAT scores: M: _____ V: _____

Last Semester/ High School GPA: _____

Please list all your prior experiences and/or training with helping roles (i.e. crisis hotline volunteer, candy striper, resident assistant, etc.)

Please circle the most appropriate response to the following statement:

I plan to pursue a career in a helping profession (e.g. medicine, law, clinical/counseling psychology, etc.):

Very unlikely

1

2

3

4

5

6

Very likely

7

Appendix B

Supportive Actions Scale

We are interested in how people typically respond when a friend or family member is in need of help or support. In answering the questions that follow, please try to be as accurate as possible in assessing how you *typically* or *characteristically* respond when someone close to you has a problem. Please think about times when people in your life have encountered difficulties and the types of things you have said or done in such situations. For each of the items listed, please indicate your likelihood of performing this particular behavior by circling the number next to the item that best corresponds to your answer.

Example:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Never	Almost never	Seldom	Sometimes	Frequently	Almost always	Always

I...

1. ...told them that their problem was my problem too. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
2. ...advised them to pay attention to what I had to say. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
3. ...told them that they had to learn to live with it. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
4. ...tried to not show too much concern. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
5. ...avoided giving any advice. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
6. ...did not give my opinion unless asked. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
7. ...did not put any demands on them. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
8. ...attempted to keep in regular contact with them. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
9. ...gave advice. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
10. ...emphasized how well qualified I was to help. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
11. ...reminded them that whining doesn't help. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
12. ...distanced myself. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
13. ...avoided making recommendations. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
14. ...let them make all the decisions. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
15. ...let them deal with things at their own pace. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
16. ...tried to involve them in social activities. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
17. ...advised them to take advantage of the resources I could provide. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
18. ...told them explicitly what to do step-by-step. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
19. ...reminded them that people sometimes get what they deserve. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

20. ...tried to stay "at arms' length". 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
21. ...shied away from making suggestions. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
22. ...let them do all the talking. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
23. ...was careful not to pressure them. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
24. ...enthusiastically helped out. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
25. ...told them they came to the right person. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
26. ...made decisions for them. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
27. ...told them that I'm not surprised that they have these problems. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
28. ...told them that I didn't want to get involved. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
29. ...avoided trying to change their view of the situation. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
30. ...did not impose my values on them. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
31. ...let them know I was listening. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
32. ...checked up on them frequently 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
33. ...told them to let me help with their problem. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
34. ...insisted that they let me take care of things. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
35. ...told them that nobody likes a cry-baby. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
36. ...tried to keep them from leaning on me too much. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
37. ...kept from stating any opinions. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
38. ...refrained from any criticism. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
39. ...was patient with them. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
40. ...told them that I was worried about them 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
41. ...told them what I would do. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
42. ...persuaded them to change their behavior. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
43. ...suggested that they not complain too much. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
44. ...avoided getting too involved. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
45. ...avoided intruding on their problem. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
46. ...did not argue with them. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
47. ...gave them a hug. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
48. ...eagerly helped in any way they asked me to. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
49. ...told them that I'm in a good position to help. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
50. ...told them to let me take care of everything. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

- | | | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 51. ...told them that I don't like discussing personal problems. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 52. ...did not comment on their situation. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 53. ...avoided challenging their point of view. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 54. ...remained non-judgmental. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 55. ...just tried to be there. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 56. ...did my best to protect them. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 57. ...took over any matters I felt they couldn't deal with. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 58. ...took control of the situation. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 59. ...told them that I have my own problems to deal with. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 60. ...helped in any way that didn't get me personally involved. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 61. ...avoided influencing their course of action. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 62. ...just listened quietly. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 63. ...provided them with emotional support. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 64. ...learned whatever I could about the problem and passed this
knowledge on to them. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |

Appendix C

Interpersonal Reactivity Index

The following statements inquire about your thoughts and feelings in a variety of situations. For each item, indicate how well it describes you by choosing the appropriate letter on the scale at the top of the page: A, B, C, D, or E. When you have decided on your answer, fill in the letter on the answer sheet next to the item number. READ EACH ITEM CAREFULLY BEFORE RESPONDING. Answer as honestly as you can. Thank you.

ANSWER SCALE:

A	B	C	D	E
Does not describe me well				Describes me very well

- | | |
|---|-----------|
| 1. I daydream and fantasize, with some regularity, about things that might happen to me. | A B C D E |
| 2. I often have tender, concerned feelings for people less fortunate than me. | A B C D E |
| 3. I sometimes find it difficult to see things from the "other guy's" point of view. | A B C D E |
| 4. Sometimes I don't feel very sorry for other people when they are having problems. | A B C D E |
| 5. I really get involved with the feelings of the characters in a novel. | A B C D E |
| 6. In emergency situations, I feel apprehensive and ill-at-ease. | A B C D E |
| 7. I am usually objective when I watch a movie or play, and I don't often get completely caught up in it. | A B C D E |
| 8. I try to look at everybody's side of a disagreement before I make a decision. | A B C D E |
| 9. When I see someone being taken advantage of, I feel kind of protective towards them. | A B C D E |
| 10. I sometimes feel helpless when I am in the middle of a very emotional situation. | A B C D E |
| 11. I sometimes try to understand my friends better by imagining how things look from their perspective. | A B C D E |

- | | |
|--|-----------|
| 12. Becoming extremely involved in a good book or movie is somewhat rare for me. | A B C D E |
| 13. When I see someone get hurt, I tend to remain calm. | A B C D E |
| 14. Other people's misfortunes do not usually disturb me a great deal. | A B C D E |
| 15. If I'm sure I'm right about something, I don't waste much time listening to other people's arguments. | A B C D E |
| 16. After seeing a play or movie, I have felt as though I were one of the characters. | A B C D E |
| 17. Being in a tense emotional situation scares me. | A B C D E |
| 18. When I see someone being treated unfairly, I sometimes don't feel very much pity for them. | A B C D E |
| 19. I am usually pretty effective in dealing with emergencies. | A B C D E |
| 20. I am often quite touched by things that I see happen. | A B C D E |
| 21. I believe that there are two sides to every question and try to look at them both. | A B C D E |
| 22. I would describe myself as a pretty soft-hearted person. | A B C D E |
| 23. When I watch a good movie, I can very easily put myself in the place of a leading character. | A B C D E |
| 24. I tend to lose control during emergencies. | A B C D E |
| 25. When I'm upset at someone, I usually try to "put myself in his shoes" for a while. | A B C D E |
| 26. When I am reading an interesting story or novel, I imagine how I would feel if the events in the story were happening to me. | A B C D E |
| 27. When I see someone who badly needs help in an emergency, I go to pieces. | A B C D E |
| 28. Before criticizing somebody, I try to imagine how I would feel if I were in their place. | A B C D E |

Appendix D

Values in Action Inventory of Strengths

This questionnaire measures a person's strengths. Could you help with our project by choosing one option in response to each statement? All of the questions reflect statements that many people would find desirable, but we want you to answer only in terms of **whether the statement describes what you are like**. Please be honest and accurate! Because the questionnaire is long, work quickly, and trust your first response. Thank you for helping.

1	2	3	4	5
Very Much Like Me	Like Me	Neutral	Unlike Me	Very Much Unlike Me
1. I always identify the reasons for my actions. (3)				1 2 3 4 5
2. I am very aware of my surroundings. (5)				1 2 3 4 5
3. I always have a broad outlook on what is going on. (6)				1 2 3 4 5
4. I always keep my promises. (9)				1 2 3 4 5
5. I am never too busy to help a friend. (10)				1 2 3 4 5
6. I am always willing to take risks to establish a relationship. (11)				1 2 3 4 5
7. I always admit when I am wrong. (13)				1 2 3 4 5
8. I always let bygones be bygones. (24)				1 2 3 4 5
9. I always examine both sides of an issue. (27)				1 2 3 4 5
10. I know how to handle myself in different social situations. (29)				1 2 3 4 5
11. Regardless of what is happening, I keep in mind what is most important. (30)				1 2 3 4 5
12. My friends tell me that I know how to keep things real. (33)				1 2 3 4 5
13. I really enjoy doing small favors for friends. (34)				1 2 3 4 5
14. There are people in my life who care as much about my feelings and well-being as they do about their own. (35)				1 2 3 4 5
15. Being able to compromise is an important part of who I am. (37)				1 2 3 4 5
16. I rarely hold a grudge. (48)				1 2 3 4 5
17. I make decisions only when I have all of the facts. (51)				1 2 3 4 5
18. No matter what the situation, I am able to fit in. (53)				1 2 3 4 5
19. My view of the world is an excellent one. (54)				1 2 3 4 5
20. I believe honesty is the basis for trust. (57)				1 2 3 4 5
21. I go out of my way to cheer up people who appear down. (58)				1 2 3 4 5

22. There are people who accept my shortcomings. (59)	1	2	3	4	5
23. I treat all people equally regardless of who they might be. (61)	1	2	3	4	5
24. I never seek vengeance. (72)	1	2	3	4	5
25. I value my ability to think critically. (75)	1	2	3	4	5
26. I have the ability to make other people feel interesting. (77)	1	2	3	4	5
27. I have never steered a friend wrong by giving bad advice. (78)	1	2	3	4	5
28. I tell the truth even if it hurts. (81)	1	2	3	4	5
29. I love to make other people happy. (82)	1	2	3	4	5
30. I am the most important person in someone else's life. (83)	1	2	3	4	5
31. Everyone's rights are equally important to me. (85)	1	2	3	4	5
32. I always allow others to leave their mistakes in the past and make a fresh start. (96)	1	2	3	4	5
33. My friends value my objectivity. (99)	1	2	3	4	5
34. I always know what makes someone tick. (101)	1	2	3	4	5
35. People describe me as "wise beyond my years." (102)	1	2	3	4	5
36. My promises can be trusted. (105)	1	2	3	4	5
37. I have voluntarily helped a neighbor in the last month. (106)	1	2	3	4	5
38. My family and close friends cannot do anything that would make me stop loving them. (107)	1	2	3	4	5
39. I give everyone a chance. (109)	1	2	3	4	5
40. I believe it is best to forgive and forget. (120)	1	2	3	4	5
41. When the topic calls for it, I can be a highly rational thinker. (123)	1	2	3	4	5
42. I always get along well with people I have just met. (125)	1	2	3	4	5
43. I am always able to look at things and see the big picture (126)	1	2	3	4	5
44. I am true to my own values. (129)	1	2	3	4	5
45. I always call my friends when they are sick. (130)	1	2	3	4	5
46. I always feel the presence of love in my life. (131)	1	2	3	4	5
47. I am strongly committed to principles of justice and equality. (133)	1	2	3	4	5
48. I am always willing to give someone a chance to make amends. (144)	1	2	3	4	5
49. Thinking things through is part of who I am. (147)	1	2	3	4	5
50. I am good at sensing what other people are feeling. (149)	1	2	3	4	5
51. I have a mature view on life. (150)	1	2	3	4	5
52. I take pride in not exaggerating who or what I am. (153)	1	2	3	4	5
53. I am as excited about the good fortune of others as I am about my own. (154)	1	2	3	4	5

54. I can express love to someone else. (155)	1	2	3	4	5
55. I refuse to take credit for work I have not done. (157)	1	2	3	4	5
56. I rarely try to get even. (168)	1	2	3	4	5
57. I always weigh the pro's and con's. (171)	1	2	3	4	5
58. I am aware of my own feelings and motives. (173)	1	2	3	4	5
59. Others come to me for advice. (174)	1	2	3	4	5
60. I would rather die than be phony. (177)	1	2	3	4	5
61. I enjoy being kind to others. (178)	1	2	3	4	5
62. I can accept love from others. (179)	1	2	3	4	5
63. Even if I do not like someone, I treat him or her fairly. (181)	1	2	3	4	5
64. I am usually willing to give someone another chance. (192)	1	2	3	4	5
65. I try to have good reasons for my important decisions. (195)	1	2	3	4	5
66. I always know what to say to make people feel good. (197)	1	2	3	4	5
67. I may not say it to others, but I consider myself to be a wise person. (198)	1	2	3	4	5
68. My friends always tell me I am down to earth. (201)	1	2	3	4	5
69. I am thrilled when I can let others share the spotlight. (202)	1	2	3	4	5
70. I have a neighbor or someone at work or school that I really care about as a person. (203)	1	2	3	4	5
71. I believe that everyone should have a say. (205)	1	2	3	4	5
72. I do not want to see anyone suffer, even my worst enemy. (216)	1	2	3	4	5
73. My friends value my good judgment. (219)	1	2	3	4	5
74. It is rare that someone can take advantage of me. (221)	1	2	3	4	5
75. Others consider me to be a wise person. (222)	1	2	3	4	5
76. Others trust me to keep their secrets. (225)	1	2	3	4	5
77. I always listen to people talk about their problems. (226)	1	2	3	4	5
78. I easily share feelings with others. (227)	1	2	3	4	5
79. I believe that it is worth listening to everyone's opinions. (229)	1	2	3	4	5
80. I try to respond with understanding when someone treats me badly. (240)	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix E

Natural Helper Measure

For each item, please circle the best response:

	<i>Never</i>						<i>Always</i>
1. My friends DO NOT ask me for help when they have a problem.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. My family members ask me for help when they have a problem.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. In my relationships, I feel that I give more than I take .	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. I am NOT good at listening to others' problems.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. I often find myself helping others with their problems.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. I have played a helpful role in my family.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. I have been told that I am good at helping others.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. I have received NEGATIVE feedback when I have attempted to help others in the past.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9. I have been told that I would be a good counselor/therapist.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10. I consider myself to be "naturally" good at helping others	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11. In my relationships, I feel that I take more than I give .	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12. I am comfortable helping others with their problems.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Appendix F

Session Process and Outcome Measures—Client

Instructions: Indicate how much each statement reflects your experiences in this session. Please note that all of these things do not occur in every session because helpers do many different things to be helpful. The term helper can refer to a therapist, counselor, or any other person in the helping role. *Circle one number for each item using the following scale:*

	Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
In this session, my helper...					
1. asked questions to help me explore what I was thinking or feeling.....	1	2	3	4	5
2. encouraged me to challenge my beliefs.....	1	2	3	4	5
3. did <u>not</u> help me think about changes I could make in my life.....	1	2	3	4	5
4. did <u>not</u> teach me specific skills to deal with my problems.....	1	2	3	4	5
5. did <u>not</u> encourage me to express what I was thinking or feeling.....	1	2	3	4	5
6. helped me become aware of contradictions in my thoughts, feelings, and/or behaviors....	1	2	3	4	5
7. helped me think about my concerns.....	1	2	3	4	5
8. did <u>not</u> help me identify useful resources (e.g., friends, parents, advisors, schools, clergy).....	1	2	3	4	5
9. helped me figure out how to solve a specific problem.....	1	2	3	4	5
10. helped me understand the reasons behind my thoughts, feelings, and/or behaviors.....	1	2	3	4	5
11. did <u>not</u> encourage me to experience my feelings.....	1	2	3	4	5
12. did <u>not</u> discuss with me specific things I could do to make change happen.....	1	2	3	4	5
13. helped me gain a new perspective on my problems.....	1	2	3	4	5
In this session, I...					
14. did <u>not</u> feel a bond with my helper.....	1	2	3	4	5
15. liked my helper.....	1	2	3	4	5
16. trusted my helper.....	1	2	3	4	5
17. worked collaboratively with my helper.....	1	2	3	4	5
I...					
18. am glad I attended this session.....	1	2	3	4	5
19. did <u>not</u> feel satisfied with what I got out of this session.....	1	2	3	4	5
20. thought that this session was helpful.....	1	2	3	4	5
21. did <u>not</u> think that this session was valuable.....	1	2	3	4	5

References

- Amato, P. R., & Saunders, J. (1985). The perceived dimensions of help-seeking episodes. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 48(2), 130-138.
- Barrera, M., Sandler, I. N., & Ramsay, T. B. (1981). Preliminary development of a scale of social support: Studies on college students. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 9, 435-447.
- Borgen, F. H., & Barnett, D. C. (1987). Applying cluster analysis in counseling psychology research. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 34(4), 456-468.
- Cantoni, L. J., & Cantoni, L. (1962). The case for counseling by friends. *The Blind American*, 2(4), 8-14.
- Carkhuff, R. R. (1969). *Helping and human relations: A primer for lay and professional helpers*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc.
- Carkhuff, R. R., & Berenson, B. G. (1967). *Beyond counseling and therapy*. New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, Inc.
- Cowen, E. L. (1982). Help is where you find it: Four informal helping groups. *American Psychologist*, 37(4), 385-395.
- Davidson, M.L. & Skay, C.L. Multidimensional scaling and factor models of test and item responses. *Psychological Bulletin*, 110(3), 551-556.
- Davis, M. H. (1980). A multidimensional approach to individual differences in empathy. *JSAS Catalog of Selected Documents in Psychology*, 10, 85.
- Davis, M. H. (1983). Measuring individual differences in empathy: Evidence for a multidimensional approach. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 44(1), 113-126.

- Duan, C., & Hill, C. E. (1996). The current state of empathy research. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 43*(3), 261-274.
- Elliott, R., & Wexler, M. M. (1994). Measuring the impact of sessions in process-experiential therapy of depression: The Session Impacts Scale. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 41*, 166-174.
- Gelso, C. J., & Hayes, J. A. (1998). *The psychotherapy relationship: Theory, research and practice*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Gladstein, G. A. (1983). Understanding empathy: Integrating counseling, developmental, and social psychology perspectives. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 30*(4), 467-482.
- Goodman, C. C. (1984). Natural helping among older adults. *The Gerontologist, 24*(2), 138-143.
- Grater, H. A., Kell, B. L., & Morse, J. (1961). The social service interest: Roadblock and road to creativity. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 8*(1), 9-13.
- Griffith, J. (1985). Social support providers: Who are they? Where are they met? and the relationship of network characteristics on psychological distress. *Basic and Applied Social Psychology, 6*(1), 41-60.
- Gruder, C. L., Romer, D., & Korth, B. (1978). Dependency and fault as determinants of helping. *Journal of Experimental and Social Psychology, 14*, 227-235.
- Hill, C. E. (1986). An overview of the Hill counselor and client verbal response modes category systems. In L. S. Greenberg & W. M. Pinsof (Eds.), *The psychotherapeutic process: A research handbook* (pp. 131-160). New York: Guilford Press.

- Hill, C. E. (1992). An overview of four measures developed to test the Hill Process Model: Therapist intentions, therapist response modes, client reactions, and client behaviors. *Journal of Counseling and Development, 70*, 728-739.
- Hill, C. E., & Kellems, I. S. (2002). Development and use of the Helping Skills Measure to assess client perceptions of the effects of training and helping skills in sessions. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 49*(2), 264-272.
- Hill, C. E., & O'Brien, K. M. (1999). *Helping skills: Facilitating exploration, insight and action*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Hogan, R. (1969). Development of an empathy scale. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 33*, 307-316.
- Jackson, E. (1985). Interpersonal traits and facilitative helping characteristics. *Psychological Reports, 57*, 995-999.
- Johnson, R., Hobfoll, S. E., & Zalcberg-Linetzy, A. (1993). Social support knowledge and behavior and relational intimacy. *Journal of Family Psychology, 6*, 266-277.
- Mehrabian, A., & Epstein, N. A. (1972). A measure of emotional empathy. *Journal of Personality, 40*, 525-543.
- Memmott, J., & Brennan, E. M. (1988). Helping orientations and strategies of natural helpers and social workers in rural settings. *Social Work Research & Abstracts, Summer*, 15-20.
- Memmott, J. L. (1993). Models of helping and coping: A field experiment with natural and professional helpers. *Social Work Research & Abstracts, 29*(3), 11-22.

- Milne, D., Cowie, I., Gormly, A., White, C., & Hartley, J. (1992). Social supporters and behaviour therapists: Three studies on the form and function of their help. *Behavioural Psychotherapy, 20*, 343-354.
- Nagel, D. P., Hoffman, M. A., & Hill, C. E. (1995). A comparison of verbal response modes used by master's-level career counselors and other helpers. *Journal of Counseling & Development, 74*, 101-104.
- Otten, C. A., Penner, L. A., & Waugh, G. (1988). That's what friends are for: The determinants of psychological helping. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology, 7*(1), 34-41.
- Patterson, S. L. (1977). Toward a conceptualization of natural helping. *Arete, 4*(3), 161-173.
- Patterson, S. L., & Brennan, E. M. (1983). Matching helping roles with the characteristics of older natural helpers. *Journal of Gerontological Social Work, 5*, 55-66.
- Patterson, S. L., Germain, C. B., Brennan, E. M., & Memmott, J. (1988). Effectiveness of rural natural helpers. *Social Casework: The Journal of Contemporary Social Work, 69*(5), 272-279.
- Patterson, S. L., Holzhter, J. L., Strubble, V. E., & Quadagno, J. S. (1972). *Final report: Utilization of human resources for mental health* (U.S. Public Health Service Grant No. 16618). Lawrence, KS: National Institute of Mental Health, University of Kansas.
- Patterson, S. L., & Memmott, J. L. (1992). Patterns of natural helping in rural areas: Implications for social work research. *Social Work Research & Abstracts, 28*(3), 22-28

- Peterson, C., & Seligman, M. E. P. (2003). Character strengths before and after September 11. *Psychological Science, 14*(4), 381-384.
- Peterson, C., & Seligman, M. E. P. (in press). *Values in Action (VIA) classification of strengths*. Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association.
- Razin, A. M. (1971). A-B variable in psychotherapy: A critical review. *Psychological Bulletin, 75*(1), 1-21.
- Reisman, J. M., & Yamokoski, T. (1974). Psychotherapy and friendship: An analysis of the communications of friends. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 21*(4), 269-273.
- Robbins, P. R., & Tanck, R. H. (1995). University students' preferred choices for social support. *Journal of Social Psychology, 135*(6), 775-776.
- Rogers, C. R. (1957). The necessary and sufficient conditions of therapeutic personality change. *Journal of Consulting Psychology, 21*, 95-103.
- Seaberg, J. R. (1985). Lay counseling: A preliminary survey of who, what and how. *Journal of Sociology and Social Welfare, 12*(1), 186-204.
- Seligman, M. E. P. (2002). *Authentic happiness: Using the new positive psychology to realize your potential for lasting fulfillment*. New York: Free Press.
- Seligman, M. E. P. (2003). *Authentic happiness: VIA classification of character strengths* [Web page]. Retrieved 13 August, 2003, from the World Wide Web:
<http://www.authentic happiness.org/strengths.html>
- Shlien, J. (1997). Empathy in psychotherapy: A vital mechanism? Yes. Therapist's conceit? All too often. By itself enough? No. In A. C. Bohart & L. S. Greenberg

- (Eds.), *Empathy reconsidered: New directions in psychotherapy* (pp. 63-80).
Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association.
- Shulman, D. G. (1986). The quality of helpfulness: A research approach. *Psychological Reports, 58*, 236-238.
- Stiles, W. B., & Snow, J. S. (1984). Dimensions of psychotherapy session impact across sessions and across clients. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 31*, 3-12.
- Strupp, H. H., & Hadley, S. W. (1979). Specific vs. nonspecific factors in psychotherapy: A controlled study of outcome. *Archives of General Psychiatry, 36*, 1125-1136.
- Tabachnick, B.G. & Fidell, L. (1996). *Using multivariate statistics*. (3rd ed.). New York: HarperCollins.
- Thoits, P. A. (1986). Social support as coping assistance. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 54*(4), 416-423.
- Toro, P. A. (1986). A comparison of natural and professional help. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 14*(2), 147-159.
- Tracey, T. J., & Kokotovic, A. M. (1989). Factor structure of the Working Alliance Inventory. *Psychological Assessment, 1*, 207-210.
- Tracey, T. J., & Toro, P. A. (1989). Natural and professional help: A process analysis. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 17*(4), 443-458.
- Trobst, K. K. (1999). Social support as an interpersonal construct. *European Journal of Psychological Assessment, 15*(3), 246-255.
- Trobst, K. K. (2000). An interpersonal conceptualization and quantification of social support transactions. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 26*(8), 971-986.

- Trobst, K. K., Collins, R. L., & Embree, J. M. (1994). The role of emotion in social support provision: Gender, empathy and expressions of distress. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 11*, 45-62.
- Vallance, T. R., & D'Augelli, A. R. (1982). The helping community: Characteristics of natural helpers. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 10*(2), 197-205.
- Vaux, A., Riedel, S., & Stewart, D. (1987). Modes of social support: The Social Support Behaviors (SS-B) Scale. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 15*, 209-237.
- Wagner, C., Manning, S., & Wheeler, L. (1971). Character structure and helping behavior. *Journal of Experimental Research in Personality, 5*, 37-42.
- Woods, D. J., & Beecher, G. P. (1979). Distinction within the concept of the inherently helpful person. *Journal of Clinical Psychology, 35*(1), 108-109.