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AN EXPERIMENTAL STUDY OF INFORMAL ADVICE STRATEGIES:
BENEFITS, INTENTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITY

by

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M.A., University of Windsor, 1978

A Dissertation
Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies
through the Department of Psychology
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ABSTRACT

This study examined the effectiveness of advice for coping with interpersonal conflicts. The focus was on helping with psychological stress and the maintenance of relationships. Recently, advice-giving has been viewed from an attributional framework, a theory emphasizing causality. Brickman et al. (1981); however, suggest the need to consider also the attributions of responsibility for solution. Moreover, strategies focusing on intentions and outcome are quite common but have not been studied systematically within an advice-giving paradigm.

This experiment included 320 undergraduate females. A factorial design involved two levels of each of four variables: responsibility for cause, responsibility for solution, outcome and intentions. A letter-vignette technique was developed to present the different possible combinations, resulting in 16 different letter-vignettes. Each subject was presented with the same letter describing an interpersonal conflict in which the writer asks for advice, and a second letter which contained one of the 16 combinations of advice. The instructions were to rate the advice given in terms of helpfulness. Two types of dependent measures were used to assess the advice. The first type included the affect variables of feelings of anger, sadness and feeling better. The relationship-maintenance variables included facilitation of trust and resolution to continue the relationship.

The most dramatic finding was the differential effect of advice. Advice focusing on nonresponsibility for cause was judged to be more

effective for helping with the affect variables, suggesting that people would rather see themselves as innocent victims. In contrast, advice focusing on responsibility for resolving the problem situation was judged to be most effective for repairing the relationship. Attribution of responsibility accounted for most of the variance. Intentions and outcomes had inconsequentially main or interaction effects contrary to popular beliefs.

One implication of the study is that informal advice-giving strategies can be profitably examined with an experimental letter-vignette technique. Also, in view of the fact that most people turn to non-professionals for advice, informal advice-giving strategies deserve further attention. Such research should examine behavioural vs. characterological self blame, levels of responsibility, and type and severity of the problem.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Overview

What matters above all is the attitude we take towards suffering, the attitude in which we take our suffering upon ourselves (Viktor Frankl, 1963).

Suffering from emotional stress is an unavoidable experience of life. Although suffering has been the object of philosophical speculation (Nietzsche, 1965), there has been little empirical research on this topic. It is not known which strategies are perceived to be more effective in helping in the endurance of emotional pain.

It appears that most psychic reactions to emotionally stressful events involve attempts to derive some sort of meaning from the suffering and various types of meanings have been noted (Bulman & Wortman, 1977). There is some suggestion from the empirical and theoretical literature that the perception of positive benefits, real or intended derived from the suffering renders the pain to be more tolerable. There is also some suggestion that the assumption of some degree of responsibility for the stressful event lessens or makes more tolerable the pain experienced. Little is known about the relative effectiveness of these types of cognitive strategies.

Much suffering occurs due to conflicts arising from interpersonal

relationships. Shakespeare gave expression to the common observation that the path of true love never did run smooth. The same would appear to apply to all types of intimate relationships. Several hundreds of years since that line was authored, relationships are still viewed as ever-fluctuating, dynamic phenomena.

The dynamic fluctuations in the course of a relationship implies the existence of many crisis points. Indeed, it has been speculated that conflicts are essential for the growth of relationships and the more intimate the relationship, the greater is the chance for conflicts to arise (Altman & Taylor, 1973). However, although the existence of multiple crises during the course of a relationship has been observed undoubtable many ages before Shakespeare's famous line was ever penned, there has been very little empirical study of crisis points in relationships. This is unfortunate as knowledge about responses to crises in relationships would appear to yield valuable information about the nature of the relationship itself (Shapiro, 1977). While some knowledge about the initiation of relationships has been obtained, little is known about factors which promote the maintenance of these relationships (Mikula, 1975).

The type of relationship with which this paper is concerned with is that of friendship. One frequent source of dissolution of and conflict in friendships are incidents involving acts of mistrust (Bigelow & La Gaipa, 1980). Although the importance of trust and mistrust on the development of relationships is generally acknowledged (Erickson, 1950; Klein, 1957; Mahler, 1968) the process of the development of trust and mistrust among intimates has not been extensively studied. It is the

aim of this study to explore the intra-psychic responses to the crisis caused by mistrustful acts initiated by a friend.

Two points will be considered. No doubt, acts which involve breaches of trust, of which one of the object provoke some type of emotional pain and stress. How does one protect oneself against this pain? Also, after the experience of an untrustworthy act, the choice of whether or not to continue to trust and to continue the relationship must be made. What factors influence these decisions? As most psychic reactions to stressful events involve attempts to derive some sort of meaning from the occurrence (Bulman & Wortman, 1977), the amount of emotional pain suffered and the decision of whether or not to continue to trust may be influenced by the type of meaning which the protagonist has derived from the untrustworthy act. It is the purpose of this paper to explore these possibilities. What types of meaning reduce the emotional pain of being betrayed by a friend? What types of meanings dispose one towards re-establishing trust in a friend and re-establishing the desire to continue the relationship? Before preceeding to a more precise definition of the problem and the experimental design, a literature review of the areas of meanings, toleration of pain and stress, trust and mistrust and friendships will be presented.

Meanings as a Cognitive Strategy

One of the most influential schools of North American psychology of the first half of this century was behaviourism. The philosophy of this type of scientific inquiry was in general that of materialistic monism, i.e., psychology was studied in terms of the physical aspects of behaviour and was usually explained in terms of reductionistic con-

cepts (Wertheimer, 1972). A reaction against this type of logical atomism ensued during the second half of this century and the necessity for studying mentalistic concepts was proposed (Ryle, 1949).

Heider (1958) asserted that individuals have an overwhelming desire to find meaning in events. Currently, it is generally acknowledged that behaviour is understood in terms of an individual's perception of a situation (Swenson, 1973) and that in communication, the meaning which an individual derives from a message is at least as important in determining behaviour as is the informational content of the message (Duck, 1976; Giffin & Patton, 1974; Harre & Secord, 1974).

One difficulty with the study of meanings is that the meaning of "meaning" is broad. One definition of meaning is that of intention or purpose (Webster, 1971), implying the endeavour to determine the reason for behaviour. A second definition cited by the same source is that of significance: This is similar to the colloquial definition of "meaning"--i.e., explanation. One of the most frequently used types of explanations is teleological explanations in which events are explained as having happened in order that something should occur, i.e., there was a motive. Another commonly used explanation is that which follows the form of Hempel's "Covering Law" model. This is a logical argument which consists of a universal generalization, a statement of conditions and a statement of consequent conditions (e.g., Girls sing. Jane is a girl. Jane sings). According to Thompson (1981), meanings can be used as cognitive strategies to defend against vulnerabilities.

The study of meanings has been explored most extensively in psychological research in relation to communication theory and to attribution theory. In terms of communication theory, the meaning which an indivi-

dual derives from a situation has been seen to be a function of his perception of the social rules of the situation (Pearce, 1976) as well as the individual's perception of the perception that his interactive partner has of him, i.e., the meta-perspective (Laing et al., 1966). Information about the perception that the interactive partner has of the individual can be derived from the direct content of the message as well as from inferences as to how the sender of the message defines his relationship with the recipient of the message through the analysis of the usually implicit psychological syntax of the message, i.e., the meta-message (Watzlawick et al., 1967).

Research in the field of attribution theory (which attempts to illustrate how individuals explain behaviour by making attributions) has dealt with the study of certain types of meanings more explicitly. Various types of attributions have been studied (e.g., attributions of personal characteristics to others, attributions of thoughts, etc.). Pertinent to the topic of this paper, there has been considerable research in the area of attributions of means by which an effect is produced. When examining the means by which events occur, the following types of attributions can be made: Who is the person who is thought to have caused the event?; How much control did the protagonist have in controlling the event?; What was the intention of the causal agent?; Will the causal factor persist or change over time? Can the causal factor generalize its ability to cause other events in other situations? (Wong & Weiner, 1981). Most research has focussed upon attributions of the source of causality (who did it?) and attributions of controllability, which are attributions of physical causality. According to Buss (1978), this stress is unfortunate, as it is questionable whether people use ex-

clusively causal attributions in order to explain behaviour. Buss, following the ideas expounded upon in R. S. Peter's A Concept of Motivation (1958), argues that in order for a purposeful behaviour to be made intelligible, an action must be explained in terms of means and ends, which may involve the justification or evaluation of the action, i.e., stating the reason. Whereas causal explanations allows for predictions and lawfulness, reason explanations add meaning by referring to the rules for social behaviour. From the above, therefore, it appears that in order to understand behaviour, perceptions of intentions and meanings must be studied.

One of the most significant findings in the area of attribution research is that attributions are not always logical and that certain cognitive distortions occur. Contrary to Kelley's (1967) model of rational information processing, it appears that individuals do not optimally use certain types of information (e.g., consensual data) when forming attributions and judgements and instead rely on simple heuristics (Tversky & Kahnman, 1974) leading to systematic errors. In addition, it appears that individuals often attribute the occurrence of random events to their own control and in general over-estimate the amount of control over events they perceive themselves as exercising (Bucher, 1957; Henslin, 1967). In addition, it seems that attributions of causality are influenced by motivational needs to protect self-esteem (Bradley, 1978). Furthermore, certain types of attributions and cognitive distortions are associated with various emotional states, such as depression (Seligman, Abramson, Semmel & von Baeyer, 1979; Goetz & Dweck, 1980). Therefore, the type of attributions made or the type of meaning

derived from a situation often reflects cognitive distortion and is determined in part by emotional needs.

Most research on the derivation of meanings and attributes concentrates upon attribution of causality for physical events. The explanation of intimate interpersonal behaviour has not been adequately explored and presents a fertile ground for empirical work.

In summary, it can be seen that while behaviour is now being examined in terms of mentalistic concepts through research in the areas of communication and attribution theory, certain areas have been neglected. In particular, attribution theorists have concentrated upon the attributions of the source of physical causality and have left relatively unexplored the examination of reasons for interpersonal behaviour.

Toleration of Pain and Stress

The many varieties of emotional suffering include anxiety, sadness, anger, etc. Relief from some of these experiences has been dealt with in the empirical, theoretical and clinical literature. Increased toleration of emotional pain through cognitive reappraisal has been studied in the context of attribution theory (Abramson, Seligman & Teasdale, 1970; Beck, 1976); rational-emotive psychotherapy (Ellis, 1974); logotherapy (Frankl, 1963), and psychoanalytic psychotherapy (Greenson, 1967). The common thread linking these various branches of psychological research is the idea that emotional pain can be made more tolerable through the provision of certain types of new meanings of the painful experiences.

Furthermore, when left to their own devices, in order to relieve

painful emotions, it appears that individuals spontaneously derive their own meanings for events. In a study of paralyzed accident victims, Bulman & Wortman (1977) found that 86 percent of the victims generated explanations and meanings for their misfortunes, presumably to reduce their stress. The search for meaning and attributions of causality appears to occur most often in response to negative outcomes (Wong & Weiner, 1981).

Meanings can reflect cognitive reappraisals of the protagonist's role in and reaction to a painful event, as well as a reappraisal of the painful event itself. The types of meanings which appear most prominently in the anecdotal, empirical and theoretical literature are those which reflect reappraisals of the actual benefits and harm experienced by the sufferer, reappraisals of the intentions of the other to harm the sufferer; and reappraisals of the amount of responsibility that the sufferer had in bringing about his emotional pain. Literature pertaining to each of these types of meanings will be discussed below.

Perceptions of Harms and Benefits

Viktor Frankl (1963), a former prisoner of Auschwitz, observed that survival of inmates in the camp was related to the ability to find a positive meaning in one's suffering and noted that suffering could be better endured if a benefit for oneself or for another could be perceived. As an illustration, he reports about a patient who was distraught by the fact that his wife had died. However, the patient was comforted when he realized that his wife's dying before himself had spared her of the pain of grieving for him. Similar types of meaning often occur after an accident when it is realized that one is lucky to

be alive (Bulman & Wortman, 1977). Such a sentiment was expressed in a letter to Dear Abby (cited by Thompson, 1981), in which a woman stricken with multiple sclerosis reports that her illness has brought her family together and prompted her to realize the importance of living for the moment.

Often a misfortune may be interpreted as an opportunity to overcome adversity and to gain strength. This type of reasoning is reflected by Mary Cunningham's account of her coping with the Bendix scandal (Parade, 1982). She is quoted as saying "... what dawned on me is that you can overcome anything, because you're never tested beyond your will". A similar sentiment is voiced by Nietzsche: "That which does not kill me makes me stronger". The common meaning of all these messages is that the misfortune may have brought some good.

The above observations are gathered from cases studied. There have been only a few studies of a more systematic nature. Langer et al. (1975) found that compared to a control group, patients manifested less stress during hospitalization if they were given coaching in interpreting hospital experiences in terms of positive benefits (e.g., an opportunity to rest). Beecher (1956) conducted a study of wounded soldiers and civilians undergoing surgical operations for comparable injuries. He found that the soldiers experienced less pain and suggested that this was because injury for the soldiers had the positive benefit of a reprieve from the rest of the war and a return to home.

In addition, it has been reported that subjects are more able to tolerate electric shock if they interpret the event as being an experience of interesting physical sensations rather than as being an experi-

ence of pain (Holmes & Houston, 1974). The perception of the electric shock as being an interesting experience may be construed as being a benefit, which de-emphasizes the harmfulness of the situation.

The above studies have assessed the effects of the perception of benefits arising from negative physical experiences upon the ability to tolerate physical pain. By way of contrast, little is known about these effects upon psychological pain. In terms of the effects of the perception of benefits upon the alleviation of aversive emotional states, Lipsky et al. (1980) found that anxiety and depression decreased significantly compared to a control group in those patients who had been taught to moderate their evaluations of negative consequences of aversive events as well as other types of negative cognitions.

Perceptions of Intentions

Aside from perceptions of actual benefits and harm which have arisen from a situation, benefits and harm may be experienced also in terms of perceptions of intentions by another to do helpful or harmful actions towards oneself. According to some attributional theorists (McKillip & Edwards, 1974), the type of motive attributed to a behaviour determines in part the emotion (e.g., trust) which the recipient feels towards the sender. Support for this hypothesis is provided by a study cited by Horai (1977) which reports that dull, incompetent people who produce detrimental effects are blamed less than are competent people. Presumably, this phenomenon occurs because competent people are seen as having negative motives when they effect negative consequences. Similarly, Horai (1977) cites a study which found that the more effort which is expended in trying to harm someone, the more

the aggressor is seen in negatively tinged emotional terms. Again, it is presumed that a greater effort to harm someone denotes a stronger motive.

There has been little empirical research which has directly assessed the effects of various perceptions of others' intentions to harm upon the relief of emotional suffering. However, anecdotal literature suggests that when subjected to a hurtful action, emotional pain is relieved if a malevolent motive is not perceived. The need for a meaning of this sort is illustrated in the following letter to Dear Abby (1982), written by a woman who has recently discovered that her deceased husband had been having an affair before his recent death. She writes "... if the other woman could bring herself to write me a letter and tell me that my husband had said some nice things about our life together, that he spoke well of me, I would be ever so grateful ... I desperately need a few words to restore my self-esteem and have something to hang on to in the years I have left ..."

Perceptions of Responsibility and Control

Some of the literature suggests that the perceptions of responsibility for negative consequences may relieve aversive emotions. For example, Abrams and Finesinger (1953) interviewed cancer patients and found that 93 percent felt that their cancer occurred due to their previous misdeeds. Feelings of guilt have also been noted to occur in the victims of the nuclear holocaust at Hiroshima (Lifton, 1963) and among victims of rape (Medea & Thompson, 1974). This type of thinking may also be observed in the statement of Mr. John Hinkely, Senior, the father of the unsuccessful presidential assassin: "I am the cause of

of John's tragedy" (Beroza & Freidman, 1982). Also, it has long been noted by psychoanalytic authors (Abraham, 1924; Rado, 1928), and by researchers (Averill, 1968; Lindemann, 1944) that during the bereavement process, survivors express feelings of guilt about real or imagined wrong-doings against the deceased. In addition, Chodoff et al. (1964) noted that parents of leukemia victims blamed themselves for their child's condition. In further support of the occurrence of this phenomenon, it has been observed that people engage in "good" behaviour when faced with the prospect of illness, unemployment and deprivation (Janis, 1951; Kubler-Ross, 1969). It seems that good behaviour is undertaken to ward off harmful future events.

Others may blame themselves for a misfortune without explicitly evoking the concept of guilt. For example, Bulman and Wortman (1977) cite the case of a victim of a motorcycle accident who chose to see the accident as a consequence of his freely chosen life-style.

In terms of theoretical speculation, Janoff-Bulman (1979) has distinguished two types of attributions of self-responsibility for negative events, i.e., self-blame: behavioural self-blame which involves the attribution of unfortunate events to past behaviours and characterological self-blame, which involves the attribution of an unfortunate event to one's character or personality traits. The former, which involves an attribution to a modifiable, controllable factor is hypothesized to lead to a better adaptation than is the latter, which involves an attribution to a relatively non-changeable and hence non-controllable factor. Thus, not all attributions of responsibility embrace the concept of control and control is defined as the ability to modify events. Similarly, it has been hypothesized that when depressed individuals

meet with failure, they will tend to attribute the detrimental effects to factors which are internal, enduring and generalizable across situations (Abramson, Seligman & Teasdale, 1978). Along parallel lines of reasoning, Beck (1976) maintains that individuals suffer from depression when they engage in negatively tinged cognitions and when they attribute their failings to internal causes. The essential aspect of these meaning attributes is whether the factors leading to the detrimental effects are changeable and hence can be controlled. It is hypothesized that depressed individuals tend to see unfortunate events as being unmodifiable and uncontrollable.

Responsibility may also be distinguished in terms of responsibility for having created problems and responsibility for the solution of the created problem (Brickman et al., 1982). Attributions of responsibility for the origin of a problem are concerned with the discovery of whom is to blame. Attributions of responsibility for the solution of a problem are concerned more explicitly with the concept of control, i.e., the determination of who is able to influence or change the unfortunate present state of affairs. Brickman et al. (1982) explain that these two attributions are often confused and that there is a misguided tendency to search for a solution to a problem through efforts to determine whom is to blame.

The distinction between attributions of responsibility for the onset of a misfortune and attributions of responsibility for the modification of a problem is also reflected in the work of Thompson (1981). She proposes the classification of behavioural control, which refers to the availability of a response that may directly influence or modify an event; and cognitive control, which refers to the psychological pro-

cessing of an event in such a way as to reduce stress. In addition, Thompson proposes the classification of retrospective control, which refers to attributions as to the cause of an event, after the event has already occurred. Thus, this appears to involve attributions of blame for the onset of an event, whereas behavioural and cognitive control are concerned with the modification of an event while the event is occurring.

In terms of empirical support, there has been little research on the effects of perceptions of responsibility and control on the reduction of emotional pain. Bulman and Wortman (1977) found that victims of accidents who blamed themselves for the cause and who regarded their accidents as being the result of their freely chosen life-styles, made the best post-traumatic adjustment. In a study of breast cancer patients, it was found that women who attributed the cause of their disease to previous modifiable behaviours, e.g., having taken birth control pills, coped more adaptively than did women who made attributions to non-modifiable factors, e.g., having a worrying type of personality (Timko & Janoff-Bulman, 1982). In terms of control over the solution to problem situations, some support for the relationship between control and coping is provided by studies which assess the relationship between various types of mental dysphoria and general feelings of control over the environment. As an example, Schultz (1976) reported that inmates of a nursing home who felt that they exercised more control over certain aspects of their life were found to be healthier than individuals who felt that they exercised less control. In general, there appears to be a positive relationship between feelings of uncontrollability and various types of disease onset (see the APA Task

Force on Health Research, 1976). Also, it has been found that spinal cord injured patients who demonstrated feelings of an internal locus of control for events in general, displayed less emotional distress concerning their injury (Shadish et al., 1981). Furthermore, a significant relationship has been found between feelings of general internal locus of control and relief from depression and anxiety (Molinari & Khanna, 1981). Certain types of feelings of control also have been found to be associated with good post-divorce adjustment (Wilder, 1981). In a study of marital relations, Madden and Janoff-Bulman (1981) reported that blaming one's spouse for marital problems was negatively associated with marital satisfaction and that perceived control over the solution of conflicts was positively associated with marital satisfaction. Also, depressed adults who received cognitive psychotherapy designed to emphasize their feelings of control showed significant improvement in comparison to a control group (Comas-Diaz, 1981). In contrast, attributions of negative events to factors outside one's personal control is associated with increased proneness of adults to depression (Seligman et al., 1979) and with helplessness and socially maladaptive behaviour in children (Goetz & Dweck, 1980).

Support for the role of meanings of control upon relief of stress is also provided from the area of toleration of physical pain (Thompson, 1981). In laboratory studies assessing the painfulness of certain physical sensations, such as noise, coldness and electrical shock, it has been found that knowledge that one can perform a behaviour which can control the occurrence of an aversive stimuli affects one's endurance of the pain (Thompson, 1981). The pre-event anxiety and the

anticipatory physiological arousal are reduced (Szpiler & Epstein, 1976; Gatchel & Proctor, 1976; Houston, 1974). While the actual sensation of painfulness is not reduced during the traumatic period (Averill & Rosenn, 1972; Mills & Krantz, 1979; Pennebaker et al., 1977), one is more willing to tolerate more of the noxious stimuli (Bowers, 1968; Glass et al., 1969; Kanfer & Seider, 1973). Knowledge that one can perform a cognitive act that will reduce the painfulness of a noxious stimuli (e.g., cognitive avoidance through selective attention) is reported to lessen anticipatory anxiety and physiological arousal (Holmes & Houston, 1972; Houston, 1974; Langer et al., 1975); and to reduce the painfulness of the noxious stimuli (Girodo & Wood, 1966; Kanfer & Goldfoot, 1966; Spanos, Horton & Chaves, 1975). Thus the perception of control over a noxious event appears to increase the ability to tolerate the resultant physical pain.

Support for the notion that some degree of assumption of self-responsibility should render the pain arising from a misfortune to be more endurable is also provided by research in the field of attribution study as it has been widely found that individuals tend to exaggerate their ability to control events. This suggests that man has a very strong desire to see himself as being in control. For example, individuals often conclude that a causal relationship exists for chance events that occur in temporal succession (Jenkins & Ward, 1965; Ward & Jenkins, 1965). Also, other experiments suggest that people often believe that they can influence chance events (Wortman, 1976). As an illustration, Henslin (1967) reports the common observation that people believe that they can influence the throw of a die by certain procedures such as by

shooting the die forcefully, by concentrating, etc. It also appears that people feel more certain about winning a lottery if they can choose their lottery ticket (Langer, 1975). It seems that the more effort which is made to control a situation involving chance occurrences, the more it is felt that control can be exercised over the situation (Wortman, 1975; 1976). When observing disasters, individuals often exaggerate their ability to have influenced the outcome, as though they are uncomfortable with the idea of random occurrences (Bucher, 1957; Drabeck & Quarantelli, 1967). These studies support the idea that people like to assume control for their behaviour and to assume control over chance events.

However, although it seems that people like to assume control over chance and random events and sometimes even responsibility for negative occurrence, some contrary studies exist. Some attribution theorists believe that judgments of self-control reflect a need to view oneself in a positive light, thus seemingly opposing the view that one may want to assume responsibility for a negative occurrence (Cialdini, Braver & Lewis, 1974). For example, there is a tendency not to make dispositional attributes for another actor's behaviour if it reflects a negative self-image of oneself (Beckman, 1973). The view that people may distort events to see themselves in a positive light may be reconciled with the view that people wish to see themselves as being in control of a misfortune, if it is hypothesized that it is more damaging to one's self-esteem to see oneself as a victim than as a causal agent for an aversive event.

Thus, there seems to be grounds for arguing that the perception of control for an aversive event may be more comforting than the perception

of being a victim. We must now examine why this may be the case. The above review of empirical studies suggests that man has a desire to see himself as being able to control his environment. This view is also supported by several personality theorists (Adler, 1956; Brehm, 1966; de Charms, 1968; White, 1959). In addition, the attribution theory of Heider (1958) and the cognitive consistency theories (see Abelson, Aronson, McGuire, Newcombe, Rosenberg & Tannebaum, 1968) are based on the assumption that prediction and hence controllability is positively reinforcing.

Another approach is to explore why control of the environment is reinforcing. One basic reward of control is that it reduces cognitive uncertainty. Knowledge that one can control to some degree the outcome of an aversive stimuli reduces the discrepancy between the anticipation and the outcome. As cognitive discrepancy is thought by the theorists of cognition to be aversive, reduction of this discrepancy must be rewarding (Zanna & Cooper, 1976).

Also, control sometimes affords predictability. Prediction as to the time of onset of an aversive stimuli allows one to cognitively prepare for the pain or to take steps to minimize its painful impact. Miller's mini-max theory of control (1979) proposes that control is reinforcing because it allows one to avoid danger. Similarly, the ability to control an aversive stimuli implies that the situation can be prevented from occurring again (Walster, 1966) or from becoming worse beyond endurance. It is the elimination of this fear of recurring and/or unendurable pain which may be reinforcing.

In addition, being able to protect oneself from harm probably boosts self-esteem. Inability to control a harmful stimulus may stimu-

late feelings of incompetence and personal inadequacy (de Charms, 1968). Seligman (1975) proposes that persistent feelings of helplessness leads to feelings of depression.

Lefcourt (1973) proposes that the belief of control over the environment is reinforcing because the perception of some measure of control is an essential ingredient of hope. Once hope is lost, it has been observed that the health of critically ill patients worsens. Thus, Lefcourt contends that the perception of control is an illusion which fosters hope and which has a positive role in sustaining life.

In summary, the above literature review has shown that certain meanings are adopted by individuals in order to relieve emotional pain. However, there has been little empirical work systematically assessing the efficacy of these meanings.

From naturalistic field studies and case reports, the types of meaning which appear to be particularly effective in reducing pain are those which reflect the belief in a positive benefit from the suffering; those which reflect the belief in the absence of a malicious motive to do harm to the sufferer; and those which reflect the belief that some measure of self-responsibility was exercised in the outcome of the misfortune. Responsibility can be classified into two categories, responsibility as to the origin of the misfortune and responsibility as to the solution of the problem. These two aspects of responsibility have usually not been distinguished.

In addition, most of the field studies and natural observations cited refer to reactions to events such as illnesses, accidents and disasters. There has been little work on meanings, which individuals derive to cope with emotional pain arising from conflicts in their inter-

personal relationships. Research in this area would provide valuable information about the concepts by which people structure their world. The possible finding that certain meanings relieve mental pain may provide information about vulnerabilities, basic needs and preferred coping mechanisms. As such, it would have important implications for psychotherapeutic interventions.

Trust and Mistrust

Emotional pain in interpersonal relationships often arises from breaches of trust between friends (Bigelow & La Gaipa, 1980). The importance of the establishment of a basic attitude of trust upon the development of healthy interpersonal relationships has been well-emphasized (Cameron, 1963; Erickson, 1950; Mahler, 1968):

Trust has been variously defined. In colloquial speech, trust refers to the belief in the honesty, sincerity and good will of another. It also refers to the belief that one will reciprocate social obligations and will be reliable and predictable. In the empirical literature, trust has been most usually measured in terms of the willingness to cooperate in game situations (Bridges & Schoeninger, 1977), the willingness to be persuaded by an orator (Giffin, 1967) and as the willingness to disclose intimate information (Wheless & Grotz, 1977). In general, mistrust is viewed and defined in opposite terms to those of trust. Thus, in colloquial terms, mistrust usually refers to the belief in the insincerity and ill-will of another.

Despite theoretical speculations as to the importance of trust, certain areas have not been adequately explored by empirical methods. The literature on mistrust is even scarcer. Regarding trust and inter-

personal relationships, a brief summary of the literature follows.

Little is known about the variables that affect trust in intimate interpersonal relationships. In terms of communication in quasi-intimate relationships, it has been found that communication of certain types of self-disclosures by another (e.g., mildly revealing and positive disclosures) increase one's trust of the other (Gilbert & Horenstein, 1975). Also, people who communicate in an amiable and expressive way are more trusted (Chitwood, 1981).

The more one trusts another, the more one self-discloses (Broder, 1981; Golembieski, 1975; Wheelless & Grotz, 1977). When one distrusts another one communicates with significantly more lies, threats and ultimatums and with less genuine and sincere attempts to exchange information (Kee, 1969). When suspicious, one is more likely to distort one's own attitude in communication with others (Mellinger, 1956). Furthermore, low trusters are more assertive than high trusters when communicating (Doherty & Ryder, 1979).

Regarding other personal characteristics, those who act in a consistent way are regarded as being trustworthy (Rosenberg & Newman, 1980). It has also been found that non-possessive warmth and similarity of background positively influence the trust of a potential therapy client towards the therapist (Hlasny & McKarrey, 1980). In addition, those who do not threaten one's self image are more trusted (Giffin & Patton, 1974).

In terms of mistrust, it has been found that previous untrustworthy behaviour in a game situation generates suspicion in later game

situations and that suspicion is more easily established than is trust (Kee & Knox, 1969). How untrustworthy behaviour is reacted to in a more intimate type of situation is not known. As being the object of a mistrustful act is a painful experience, it is hypothesized that one's reaction to the pain and one's tendency to re-establish trust would depend upon one's perception of the motives of the untrustworthy actor and the meaning which is derived from the act.

Trust and Control. Certain situational variables are thought to affect the trusting process. It has been found that in ambiguous situations with strangers (particularly those involving Prisoner Dilemma games), one is less likely to trust another the less control one can exert over another and the greater the assessment of a risk (Bridges & Schoeninger, 1978; Charlesworth, 1980; Deutsch, 1958; Lippitt, 1969). In the Prisoner's Dilemma game, sequential interactions facilitate trust more than do simultaneous interactions (Brickman, Becker & Castle, 1979). This effect probably occurs because sequential interactions affords more knowledge as to the intentions of one's opponent and hence more control than do simultaneous interactions. This may suggest that low levels of feelings of personal control may promote a mistrustful attitude.

In Prisoner's Dilemma game situations, distrust of another was found to depend upon the perception of the other's temptation to cheat and the amount of harm experienced when betrayed (Komorita & Mechling, 1967). As the amount of harm experienced may depend upon the interpretation of the mistrustful act, again reactions to mistrustful acts may depend upon the meaning derived.

Trust, Benefits and Intentions. Trust has been hypothesized to

occur when social obligations are fulfilled. Empirical support for this view has been reported (Rosenberg & Newman, 1980). Hake and Schmid (1981) have found that when trust exists, people do not resent temporal disparities in social equities. When considered from a social consistency framework, the view that trust occurs when one expects consistency between past and future behaviours has been supported (Fontaine & Lubow, 1977). In terms of attribution theory, the decision to trust someone depends upon the solution to the attributional puzzle "What are the motives of the person?" (McKillip & Edwards, 1974). It is hypothesized that those whose actions are thought to be performed in order to obtain a personal gain are trusted less.

From a review of the literature on trust and mistrust, some patterns can be discerned. Most of the aforementioned studies have focussed upon the trusting process between strangers, while the study of the trusting process between social acquaintances and intimates has been relatively neglected. Most of the studies reviewed are concerned with extremely limited and artificial definitions of trust which have only a tenuous connection to the everyday understanding of the trusting process.

Another characteristic of the above reviewed studies is that most of the research done does not focus upon intra-psychic reactions to mistrustful acts. How does one respond to such acts? What types of protective cognitive measures are taken? What meanings can be derived which are most conducive to emotional well-being?

Furthermore, most of the above mentioned studies concentrate on factors which promote the initiation of the trusting process. Few

studies focus upon factors which promote the maintenance of a relationship once it has been initiated. The study of responses to a crises involving mistrust in a relationship has been neglected. What determines whether one will decide to re-establish trust in a partner whom has previously acted in an untrustworthy manner? What meanings are most condusive to emotional well-being after one has been betrayed?

In summary, there appears to be a need to study the process of trusting and mistrusting in the context of an intimate relationship and to study how the meanings ascribed to mistrustful acts influence the decision of whether or not to continue a relationship.

Friendship

Several theorists have hypothesized that friendships arise and continue to the extent that they are positively reinforced. Thus, according to the social exchange theory of Thibaut and Kelley (1959), social interactions are thought to occur in order to obtain social rewards. Eidelman (1980) has delineated two conflicting factors important in the growth of relationships--the desire for affiliation and the desire for independence, both of which are rewarding. As affiliation grows, the fear of loss of independence may become so great as to overshadow the reward value of the friendship, leading to some degree of withdrawal. The degree to which one is involved in a friendship is hypothesized to be a function of the relative values that affiliation and independence have for an individual.

Friendships may provide several types of benefits. Wright (1974) proposes that three direct rewards from friendship are utility, stimulation and ego-boosting. At older ages, psychological benefits derived

from friendships gain increasing importance. For example, according to Sullivan (1953), affection and friendship grow due to "consensual validation", that is, the confirmation of one's beliefs about the world by one's chum. Wright (1978) proposes that the recognition of one's individuality by one's friend is one of the most rewarding benefits of friendship.

Relationships are fraught with misunderstandings and conflicts. Indeed, Altman and Taylor (1973) maintain that conflict is essential for the growth of relationships and that the more intimate the relationship, the greater the chance for conflict to arise. Wilmot (1979) views relationships as the "negotiation of social relationships", thus again the inherence of change and conflict is implied. Certain aspects of conflicts, such as ways of persuading one's partner, modes of conflict resolution and ways of dissolving identities have already been studied (Falbo, 1967; Baxter, 1979; Levinger & Mellinger, 1981, respectively). However, these studies have focussed upon the behavioural topography of conflicts and there has been little work on the intrapsychic responses to crises. This is an important area to study as the interpretation of a conflict will surely influence behaviour. The study of conflicts and crises is interesting in its own right. However, it has also been suggested that reactions to conflicts and crises can provide valuable information about the maintenance of relationships (Shapiro, 1977)--an area which has been less explored than the initiation of relationships (Mikula, 1975). What factors determine whether a conflict or crisis will lead to the termination of a friendship or to its repair? What dynamics occur in a continuing relationship? These questions remain to be explored.

Statement of the Problem

A variety of coping strategies are used to deal with the tensions and conflicts arising within close interpersonal relationships. When one party perceives himself/herself as being a victim or the recipient of negative, hurtful acts, one is likely to react so as to protect one's vulnerability. Two broad categories of strategies are behavioural and cognitive. While the behavioural topography of some reactions to deteriorating relationships have been studied (cf. Baxter, 1979), cognitive reactions have received little systematic attention. Derivations of meaning are one type of intra-psychic, protective mechanisms.

Stress and emotional pain in a close relationship can generate various meanings. In this proposal we are concerned with identifying the type of meaning that is perceived as providing the "best" self-protection for reducing the intensity of the felt pain as well as in the maintenance of the relationship itself. The cognitive restructuring of a negative event has possible effects on the reduction of the intensity of the emotional pain as well as in the repair or dissolution of the relationship. Whether the same kind of interpretation is equally effective in pain-reduction and in the repair of the relationship is not known.

A major type of meaning involves perceiving the negative experience in terms of possible benefits received. Anecdotal studies have suggested that suffering appears to be reduced when benefits to the suffering are perceived (Beecher, 1956; Bulman & Wortman, 1977; Frankl, 1963; Langer et al., 1975). The cost/benefit paradigm has a long history in the social exchange approach to friendship. One group of theories concede

that friendships continue as long as each partner perceives that he/she is receiving sufficient benefits relative to the cost (Thibaut & Kelly, 1959; Wright, 1974; La Gaipa, 1977). Extrapolating from this theory, it can be hypothesized that a conflict will incur less emotional pain if some kind of benefit is received (e.g., the crisis is seen as providing a chance to learn something about oneself).

Another major type of meaning which involves the perception of the intentions of one's partner to harm or benefit oneself appears to be very important (Buss, 1978; Jones & Davis, 1965; McKillips & Edwards, 1974). According to the latter attribution theorists, the type of motive attributed to a behaviour determines in part the emotions which the recipient feels towards the other--an hypothesis which has empirical support (Bridges & Schoeninger, 1978; Charlesworth, 1980; Deutsch, 1958; Horai, 1977; Lippitt, 1969). That this type of meaning may reduce emotional pain and stress is congruent with another group of relationship theories, which propose that friendships continue to the extent that one's sense of self is confirmed (Laing, 1961; Rogers, 1957; Sullivan, 1953; Wright, 1978). Assuming that individuals wish to think well of themselves and wish to believe that others think well of them (Bibring, 1953), it may be extrapolated that there exists the wish to believe that others do not have harmful intentions towards them and that this belief is a factor in the continuation of relationships.

Anecdotal accounts and natural field studies suggest that perception of control is, also, important in reducing emotional pain and stress. Empirical literature from the field of attribution theory (Wortman, 1976) and theoretical literature from personality theory (Adler, 1956; Brehm, 1966; de Charms, 1966; White, 1959), all suggest

(that individuals desire to see themselves as being in control. Furthermore, several researchers have documented that victims of accidents and disasters often view themselves as being responsible for their misfortune (Abrams & Finesinger, 1953; Chodoff et al., 1964; Lifton, 1963; Medea & Thompson, 1974). These accounts have been concerned mostly with reactions to accidents and to natural disasters. Are attributions of self control concerning the development of crises in interpersonal relationships associated with stress and adaptive coping? Attributions of control over painful stimuli have also been found to be associated with the reduction of physical pain (Thompson, 1981). In addition, empirical studies report an association between feelings of lack of control and poor physical and mental health (APA Task Force on Health Research, 1976; Molinari & Khanna, 1981; Seligman et al., 1979; Shadish et al., 1981).

There is also considerable grounds for hypothesizing that the perception of meanings of control should be a factor in determining the amount of stress experienced from crises in interpersonal relationships. In the factor-analyses of the various dimensions of relationships, the pole of control-submission has almost invariably emerged as one of two axis, the other axis being the affection-hostility dimension (Bocher, 1974; Leary, 1957; Wish et al., 1976). Thus the control aspect of relationships is a very important dimension. Indeed, the level of involvement in a relationship has been hypothesized to be reflective of the struggle between the need for affiliation and the need for independence, which reflects the need for control (Eidelman, 1980; Feldman, 1979).

As well as functioning to protect the individual from pain, the

meaning which has been derived from a conflict may also have an effect upon determining whether the relationship will continue. Again, meanings of perceived benefits, perceived intentions and of perceived control may have particular relevance. Extrapolating once more from the social exchange theory of relationships (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959) a relationship is less likely to dissolve if a benefit from the crisis is perceived. In addition, following the argument previously stated, it may be hypothesized that if following a crisis an intention by one's partner to benefit rather than to harm has been detected, there will be a greater desire to continue the relationship. Furthermore, based upon the literature previously reviewed, as individuals tend to want to see themselves as having control over their environment (Adler, 1956; Brehm, 1966; White, 1959; Wortman, 1976), as control is a major dimension of relationships (Eidelman, 1980; Leary, 1957), and as trust is related to perceived control (Bridges & Schoeninger, 1976; Charlesworth, 1980; Deutsch, 1958; Lippitt, 1969), it is suggested that meanings derived following relationship crises which emphasize that one has had in fact some type of control over the event should promote the desire to continue the relationship, more so than meanings which emphasize one's lack of influence in the event.

Therefore, the previous literature review suggests that meanings of perception of benefits, perceptions of intentions, perceptions of control have an effect upon the amount of emotional pain and stress experienced and the desire to re-establish a relationship once a crisis has occurred. While the effect of attribution and social-exchange variables upon certain aspects of friendships have been studied, and the

importance of further exploration of these variables has been stressed (La Gaipa, 1977), these variables have not been studied in conjunction with variables of perceived control. Nor have the combined effect of these variables been extensively studied in relation to the alleviation of stress and in relation to the repair of relationships.

The reader will recall from the literature review the distinction made between the concept of responsibility and the concept of control (Brickman et al., 1981). Control implies that one may change his/her behaviour or events. While one may be seen as responsible for a certain event, he/she may not be perceived as having control over the outcome, i.e., one may have generated an action leading to an event, but may not have had the power for modifying his own behaviour.

Regarding the different types of attributions of responsibility Brickman et al. (1982) stress that responsibility may be distinguished along the dimensions of responsibility for the cause of a problem and responsibility for the solution of a problem. Brickman proposes that this distinction has several important therapeutic implications for the relief of emotional stress, as various models of helping seem to be based upon the different assumptions and attributions of responsibility for cause and responsibility for solution of a problem. According to the first model of helping, commonly called the moral model, individuals are seen to be responsible both for the cause and the solution of a problem. If the problem situation does not become resolved, then the individual in question is seen to lack the proper motivation. According to the second model of helping, called the compensatory model, individuals are seen as being not responsible for the origin of the prob-

lem but as being responsible for the solution. To solve the problem, the individuals are seen as being in need of obtaining knowledge and power. The spirit of this idea is embodied by the message of the Reverend Jesse Jackson to his audience "You are not responsible for being down but you are responsible for getting up". The third model, commonly called the medical model, sees the individual as not responsible for the problem onset nor for the solution. The problem is solved through treatment by experts. This view reflects the concept of determinism, as one is not seen as having had a choice in the onset of the events of his life, nor in his responses to these events. In the fourth model, called the enlightenment model, individuals are seen as being responsible for causing the problem but are not seen as being responsible for the solution (due to inability or unwillingness). In order to solve the problem, individuals in this model are seen as needing discipline. A powerful external agent, e.g., a deity, is seen as being the agency who can effect a solution. Alcoholics Anonymous groups belong to this category of helping models, as the alcoholic is seen as being one who is responsible for his drinking, but one who is unable to control the problem without the help of God or without the help of his fellow reformed alcoholics.

Brickman's distinction between responsibility for cause and responsibility for solution appears to be a promising one as each type of attribution appears to affect a relationship differentially (Madden & Janoff-Bulman, 1981). In addition, the different models appear to attract different types of patients who vary in their psychological profiles (Rabinowitz, 1978).

Although the effect of attributions of responsibility for the cause of a problem and attributions of responsibility for the solutions of a problem upon the relief of emotional stress have been studied separately, there has been little work comparing the relative efficacy of the four helping models which result from the combination of these two types of attributions. The work which has been done, suggests that problems are relieved more effectively when individuals see themselves as being responsible for the solutions to their problems, than when they do not (Chambliss & Murray, 1979; Liberman, 1978).

While the present writer contends that the theoretical models developed by Brickman et al. (1982) provide a highly systematic approach to descriptions of helping and coping, the categories in this conceptual scheme may be incomplete for the purposes of the present study. Attributions and responsibilities regarding the cause of the event and control over the outcome may provide only part of the answer. It is not known whether, and if so how, these attributions of responsibility interact with other meaning variables. The relative impact of Brickman's four models on the dependent measures in this study may conceivably vary with the perceived intentions and benefits. Under what conditions do these different models work most effectively? For example, advice that one is not responsible for either the cause of the problem or the solution to the problem may have differential effects depending on the nature of the intentions attributed to the other. Research is needed to establish the generality of the Brickman et al. theoretical models regarding the area of the intensity of stress experienced and the repair of relationships. The generality of these models may depend on other

meanings associated with a negative interpersonal event. Responsibility regarding cause and outcome may operate jointly with intentions and benefits rather than independently or separately.

The kind of stress which is of concern in this proposal involves the violation of trust in a close personal relationship. This type of incident is one of the most common causes of conflict in relationships (Bigelow & La Gaipa, 1980). However, little is known about reactions to mistrustful behaviour in intimate interpersonal relationships as most studies in this area have examined the process of trusting and mistrusting among strangers. This research will explore the types of meanings which are most effective in the toleration of stress, which has arisen from a mistrustful act as well as the types of meanings which promote the re-establishment of trust and the desire to repair the relationship. The kind of questions asked are: How do different types of meanings interact to reduce emotional stress, and to promote the continuation of friendships after a conflict has occurred? Which combinations of meanings are most effective under which conditions? Which Brickman model is most affected by perceptions of intentions and benefits?

The types of meanings which will be manipulated will be meanings which reflect the assumption of responsibility and non-responsibility for the origin of the stressful event; meanings which reflect the assumption of responsibility and non-responsibility for the resolution of the stressful event; meanings which reflect the perception that some harm or benefit has arisen as a result of the stressful event, and meanings which reflect the perception that the outcome which has arisen was intentional or unintentional. The dependent measures will include ratings of the perceived effectiveness of these meanings in reducing emotional stress and in promoting the willingness to maintain the relationship.

CHAPTER II

METHOD

Subjects

A total of three hundred and twenty undergraduate students served as participants in this experimental study. Ninety six students were obtained from the University of Windsor. The remaining were obtained from colleges in the Washington, D. C. area. A minimum of three years residency in North America was used to minimize the possible effects of any language or cultural differences. Because sex differences might have complicated the design, the sample was restricted to females. The mean age of subjects was 19.8 years.

Experimental Design

The purpose of this study was to determine whether certain dimensions of patterns of meaning in the form of various types of advice are more effective than others in relieving emotional stress and in promoting the re-establishment of trust and the continuation of a relationship.

The experiment was a 2 X 2 X 2 X 2 factorial design with manipulation of Responsibility for Cause (Responsible or Not Responsible), Outcome (Good or Bad), Intentions (Intentional or Unintentional), and Responsibility for Solution (Responsible or Not Responsible).

Independent Measures

Responsibility for Cause. The two levels of this condition were

Responsible for the Cause or Not Responsible for the Cause. The Responsible for the Cause condition indicated that the stimulus person was to blame for the interpersonal problem. The Not Responsible for Cause condition indicated that the stimulus person was innocent.

Outcome. The two levels were Good Outcome or Bad Outcome. The Good Outcome condition highlighted beneficial consequences arising from the interpersonal problem. The Bad Outcome condition emphasized the negative consequences.

Intentions. The two levels were Intentional acts and Unintentional acts. In the Intentional condition the interpersonal problem was described as being the result of a deliberate act. In the Unintentional condition, the interpersonal problem was described as being non-deliberate.

Responsibility for Solution. The two levels were Responsible for Solution or Not Responsible for Solution. The Responsible for Solution condition indicated that the stimulus person was expected to mend or correct the interpersonal problem. The Not Responsible for Solution condition indicated that the stimulus person was under no such obligation.

Dependent Measures

In order to determine the differences in the subjects' perceptions of the effectiveness of various combinations of advice, subjects were asked to respond to the vignettes by means of six rating scales. Each of these measures took the form of a nine-point bipolar scale. (The order of presentation was varied). The responses ranged from (1) indicating "not at all" (helpful) to (9) indicating "a great deal" (of help). The dependent measures are as follows:

Perceived help with anger. "How much would this advice help you with your feelings of anger?"

Perceived help with sadness. "How much would this advice help you with your feelings of sadness?"

Perceived help with feeling better. "How much would this advice help you in feeling better?"

Perceived help in regaining trust. "How much would this advice help you to regain your trust in your friend Pat?"

Perceived help in continuing friendship. How much would this advice increase your resolve to continue your friendship with Pat?"

Perceived logicity of advice. "How logical was this advice overall? Did this advice make sense?" (This was a control item).

Materials

An instrument was needed to present the subjects with a simulation of an unpleasant situation. A letter was devised in which the writer describes herself as being betrayed by a friend. Upset by this disturbing experience, she asks for help and advice. Subjects under all experimental conditions received the same letter asking for advice. (See Appendix A).

In order to manipulate the independent variables, vignettes reflecting combinations of these variables were constructed. Each vignette consisted of four segments: each segment represented one of the two levels of each of the four independent variables.

In the construction of vignette segments, it was essential that the independent variable reflected in each segment was readily perceived

by the subject as intended by the experimenter. A vignette segment was considered to reflect the independent variable if it was correctly identified by 70 percent of the judges. In order to obtain vignette segments, which reached this criterion level, a series of pretests were necessary. Forty items were administered to 70 subjects in an undergraduate psychology course. Subjects were asked to identify the vignettes along with the dimension of responsibility for cause, responsibility for solution, perception of outcome, and intentions. Most of these items were discarded (32 out of 40) because they did not reach the criterion level. An additional 12 items tapping meanings of responsibility for cause and solution were developed and administered to a second group of 40 subjects. Sixteen segments tapping intentions and outcomes were developed and administered to a third group of 40 students. Ten segments were retained.

The previous analyses dealt with the identification of single, separate items. To determine if these items still retained their distinctiveness when combined together in a longer text, each vignette segment was embedded in a letter of four paragraphs. These vignettes composed of four different segments were administered to 59 additional female subjects. Students were asked to identify the level of responsibility for cause, responsibility for solution, outcome and intentions expressed in the vignette letter. Two of the segments did not reach the criterion level of 70 percent.

Ten more experimental segments were developed and administered to a group of 45. Of these ten, four segments which had reached the

criterion level were selected as part of the final repertoire of vignette segments. The percentage of judges accurately identifying each of the vignette segments in the final repertoire is displayed in Table 1 and 2. Each vignette segment and its test question are displayed in Appendix B. A copy of the vignettes used in the experiment may be found in Appendix C.

Procedure

Pamphlets containing the materials for the various experimental manipulations were administered during classtime. The cover sheet of the pamphlet contained instructions and several questions eliciting demographical information (See Appendix A). The first letter which all subjects read and which conveyed the unpleasant experience was devised with the aim of reflecting a concern common to this age group (Appendix A). The second letter differed across experimental conditions and contained advice which reflected one of the two levels of the four independent variables (i.e., this was a 2 X 2 X 2 X 2 design). There were, then, sixteen different replies, which reflected each of the sixteen different experimental conditions (Appendix C). Subjects were randomly assigned to the following experimental conditions.

The following instructions were given:

Most people on occasion seek advice from others about problems they may be having. Different people give different types of advice and not all advice is equally effective. In the pamphlet I have given you are two letters. In the first letter which you will read, the writer asks for advice. I want you to imagine as vividly as you can that you are the person who has written that letter and that the letter describes your experience. Imagine that you are writing to seek advice from somebody whom you trust. The second letter is the reply to the first letter and contains the advice. I want you to

imagine that this is the letter which you have received from the person to whom you wrote to for advice. After you have read the reply, you will be asked to rate the advice given along several dimensions.

After the subjects had read both letters, the following instructions were given:

Listed below are several questions. As you answer these questions, continue to imagine as vividly as you can that you have written the letter which you just read and that you have received the advice which followed. After reading each question, complete the rating scale which follows the question by circling the number on the scale which corresponds to the rating which you believe the advice deserves (see Appendix A).

Upon completion of this task, the subjects were asked to identify the person they had in mind. "Who did you choose to write to? Indicate your answer by checkmarks." A choice was given of nine possible advisors (e.g., friends, parents, siblings).

TABLE 1
Identification of
Attributions in Vignettes

Independent Variables	N of Judges	Accuracy of Judges (Percent)
Responsible for Cause	72	90
Not Responsible for Cause	73	85
Responsible for Solution	72	93
Not Responsible for Solution	91	77

TABLE 2
 Identification of Outcomes
 and Intentions in Vignettes*

Independent Variables	N of Judges	Accuracy of Judges (Percent)
Good Outcome	21	91
Bad Outcome	18	83
Intentional Act (for Good Outcome)	19	90
Intentional Act (for Bad Outcome)	21	86
Unintentional Act (for Good Outcome)	28	86
Unintentional Act (for Bad Outcome)	22	91

*This accuracy level was obtained after revising vignettes.

CHAPTER III

RESULTS

Preliminary Analyses

National Differences. Since the subjects were obtained from both Canada and the United States, it was necessary to find out if any differences existed in the responses to the instruments. Means were computed on responses to all 16 conditions by country. Then, t tests were conducted on two of the dependent variables: Feeling Better and Continue Friendship. No significant differences were obtained, and the two samples were combined.

Type of Advisor. The subjects were asked to indicate whom they chose for their advisor in responding to the letters. Tabulation of the results (see Appendix D) indicated that friends were the most popular choice accounting for 70 per cent of the responses. Siblings were the next most popular choice (11%) followed by Parents (10%). Examination of the frequency distributions indicated that the advisors that were mentioned were distributed by chance across the 16 conditions, suggesting that there was little, if any, confounding of perceived effectiveness of advice as a function of type of advisor. This was further established by computing responses given by type of advice and type of advisor. No significant differences were found.

Statistical Analyses

Six separate analyses of variance were conducted using a four-fold

experimental design. Table 3 presents the means for the dependent measures by each of the four independent variables. The cell means for each of the 16 conditions are presented in Appendix E. Table 4 presents a summary of analyses of variance of the dependent measures consisting of affect variables. Table 5 presents a summary of analyses of variance of the dependent measures that include relationship-maintenance variables.

Dependent Measures: Affect

Coping with Anger. Responsibility for Cause had a significant main effect on Anger, $F(1, 304) = 9.32, p < .01$. Advice that the person undergoing the stress was not responsible was rated as more effective for coping with anger ($M = 4.70$) than advice that the person was responsible ($M = 4.30$). Intention also had a main effect on Anger of borderline significance, $F(1, 304) = 3.61, p < .10$. Interpretations made by the advisor that the harmful acts by the adversary were probably unintentional influenced the perceived coping with anger. Unintentional acts were rated as more effective than intentional acts ($M = 4.58$ vs. $M = 4.16$). No other significant main or interaction effects were found.

Coping with Sadness. Responsibility for Cause had a significant main effect on Sadness, $F(1, 304) = 11.73, p < .01$. Advice that the person was not responsible was rated as more effective for coping with sadness ($M = 4.41$) than advice that the person was responsible ($M = 3.66$). Intention had a significant main effect also, $F(1, 304) = 5.52, p < .05$. Unintentional acts were seen as being more effective in helping with sadness ($M = 4.30$) than were intentional acts ($M = 3.78$).

TABLE 3
Means of Dependent Variables

Cause	Anger	Sadness	Feeling Better	Trust	Continue Friendship	Logical
Responsible	4.03****	3.66****	3.88****	3.53	4.34	4.67**
Not responsible	4.70	4.41	4.97	3.69	4.39	5.30
Outcome						
Good	4.35	4.16	4.62	3.74	4.13**	4.83
Bad	3.89	3.96	4.23	3.48	4.59	5.14
Intentions						
Intentional	4.16	3.78**	4.29	3.43	4.37	4.89
Unintentional	4.58	4.30	4.58	3.77	4.38	5.08
Solution						
Responsible	4.46	4.21	4.58	3.91***	5.03****	5.23
Not responsible	4.28	3.93	4.29	3.29	3.71	4.74

Note: Cell n = 20; High numbers indicate greater perceived helpfulness of the advice.

** p .05
*** p .01

TABLE 4
Summary of Analyses of Variance of Affect Variables

Source of Variation	Anger		Sadness		Feeling Better		
	df	MS	F	MS	F	MS	F
Cause (A)	1	35.11	9.32***	45.75	11.73****	95.70	21.64****
Outcome (B)	1	0.11	0.30	6.33	1.62	12.40	2.80*
Intention (C)	1	13.61	3.61*	21.53	5.52**	5.78	1.31
Solution (D)	1	2.81	0.75	3.83	0.98	7.50	1.70
A X B	1	1.51	0.40	0.08	0.02	0.25	0.06
A X C	1	1.01	0.27	2.63	0.67	0.78	0.02
A X D	1	0.61	0.16	0.90	0.23	11.63	2.63
B X C	1	5.51	1.46	0.25	0.07	6.33	1.43
B X D	1	5.51	1.46	1.65	0.42	8.13	1.83
C X D	1	5.51	1.46	1.65	0.42	11.63	2.63
A X B X C	1	0.11	0.03	0.08	0.02	0.53	0.12
A X B X D	1	0.61	0.16	1.65	0.42	0.90	0.20
A X C X D	1	5.51	1.46	0.01	0.00	3.00	0.68
B X C X D	1	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.00
A X B X C X D	1	1.51	0.40	2.28	0.58	0.03	0.01
Error	304	3.77		3.90		4.42	

* p < 0.1; ** p < 0.05; *** p < 0.01; **** p < 0.001.

TABLE 5
 Summary of Analyses of Variance of
 Relationship-Maintenance Variables

Source of Variation	Trust		Continue Friendship		
	df	MS	F	MS	F
Cause (A)	1	2.55	0.79	.11	.030
Outcome (B)	1	5.00	1.62	17.11	4.62**
Intention (C)	1	1.11	2.95*	.01	.00
Solution (D)	1	31.25	10.25***	143.11	38.61****
A X B	1	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
A X C	1	0.01	0.00	1.25	0.34
A X D	1	0.80	0.26	7.20	1.94
B X C	1	23.11	7.49***	11.25	3.04*
B X D	1	3.21	0.31	3.20	0.86
C X D	1	0.31	0.10	3.20	0.86
A X B X C	1	0.31	0.10	1.01	0.27
A X B X D	1	1.80	0.58	0.61	0.17
A X C X D	1	0.31	0.10	1.01	0.27
B X C X D	1	0.11	0.04	1.51	0.41
A X B X C X D	1	0.61	1.00	0.45	0.12
Error	304	3.09		3.71	

* p < .10
 ** p < .05
 *** p < .01
 **** p < .001

No other main or interaction effects were significant.

Help in Feeling Better. Responsibility for Cause had a significant main effect in helping a person to feel better, $F(1, 304) = 21.64, p < .001$. Advice that the person was not responsible for the problem was judged as more effective ($M = 4.97$) than advice that the person was responsible ($M = 3.88$). Outcome also had a main effect, though of borderline significance, $F(1, 304) = 2.80, p < .10$. Good outcome was perceived as more effective advice in helping the advisee to feel better ($M = 4.62$) than advice calling attention to bad outcomes ($M = 4.23$).

Dependent Measures: Relationship-Maintenance

Facilitating Trust. Responsibility for Solution had a significant main effect on Trust, $F(1, 304) = 10.12, p < .01$. Advice that the person was responsible for the solution to the problem was perceived as being more effective in facilitating trust ($M = 3.91$) than advice that the person was not responsible ($M = 3.29$). Intention had a main effect of borderline significance, $F(1, 304) = 2.95, p < .10$.

Suggestions that the adversary acted unintentionally was rated as more effective ($M = 3.77$) than indications that Other acted intentionally ($M = 3.43$).

Figure 1 shows the significant Outcome X Intention-interaction, $F(1, 304) = 7.49, p < .01$. Examination of the simple main effects indicated that for bad outcome, unintentional acts were rated as being more effective in helping the advisee than intentional acts, $F(1, 304) = 9.80, p < .01$. For good outcomes, there were no significant

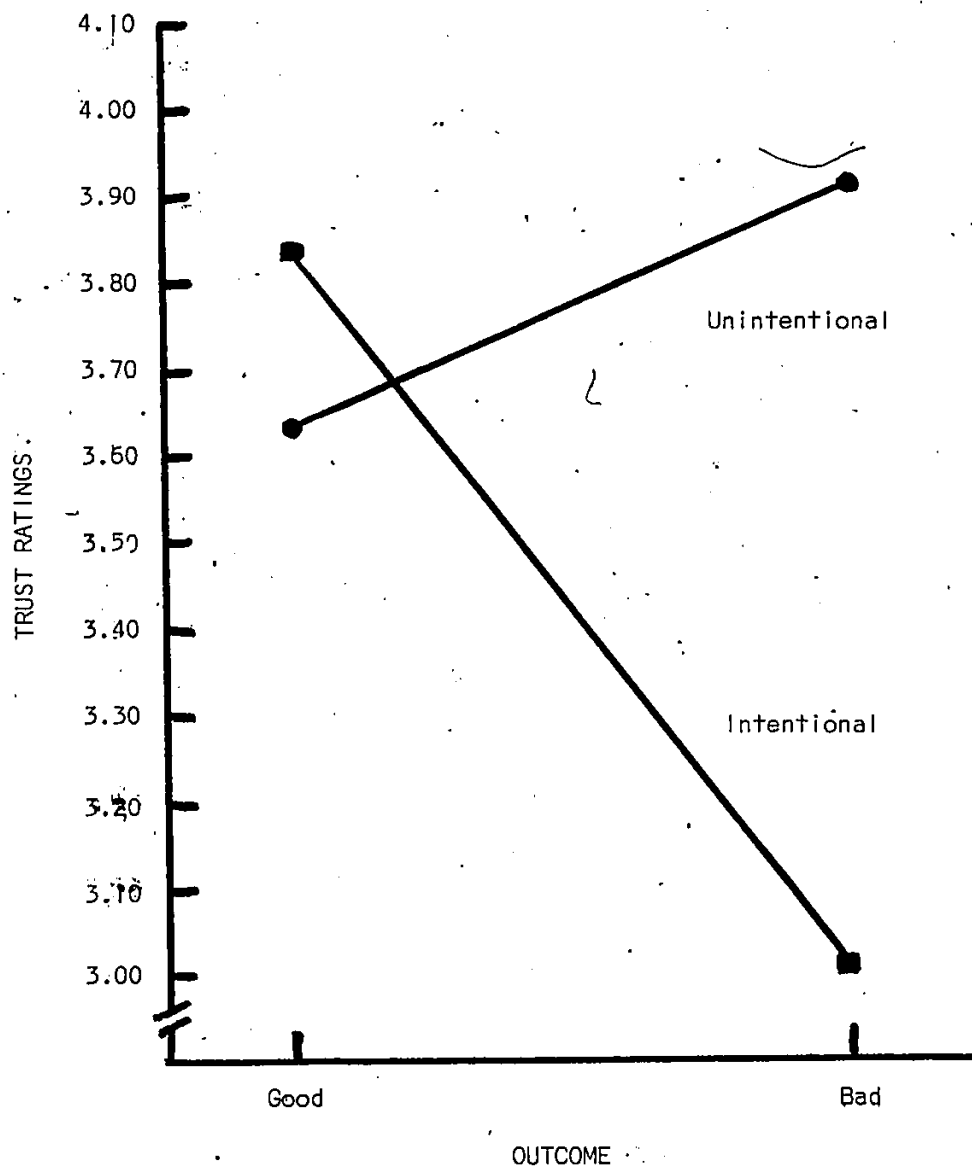


Figure 1. Outcome X Intention interaction effects on trust.

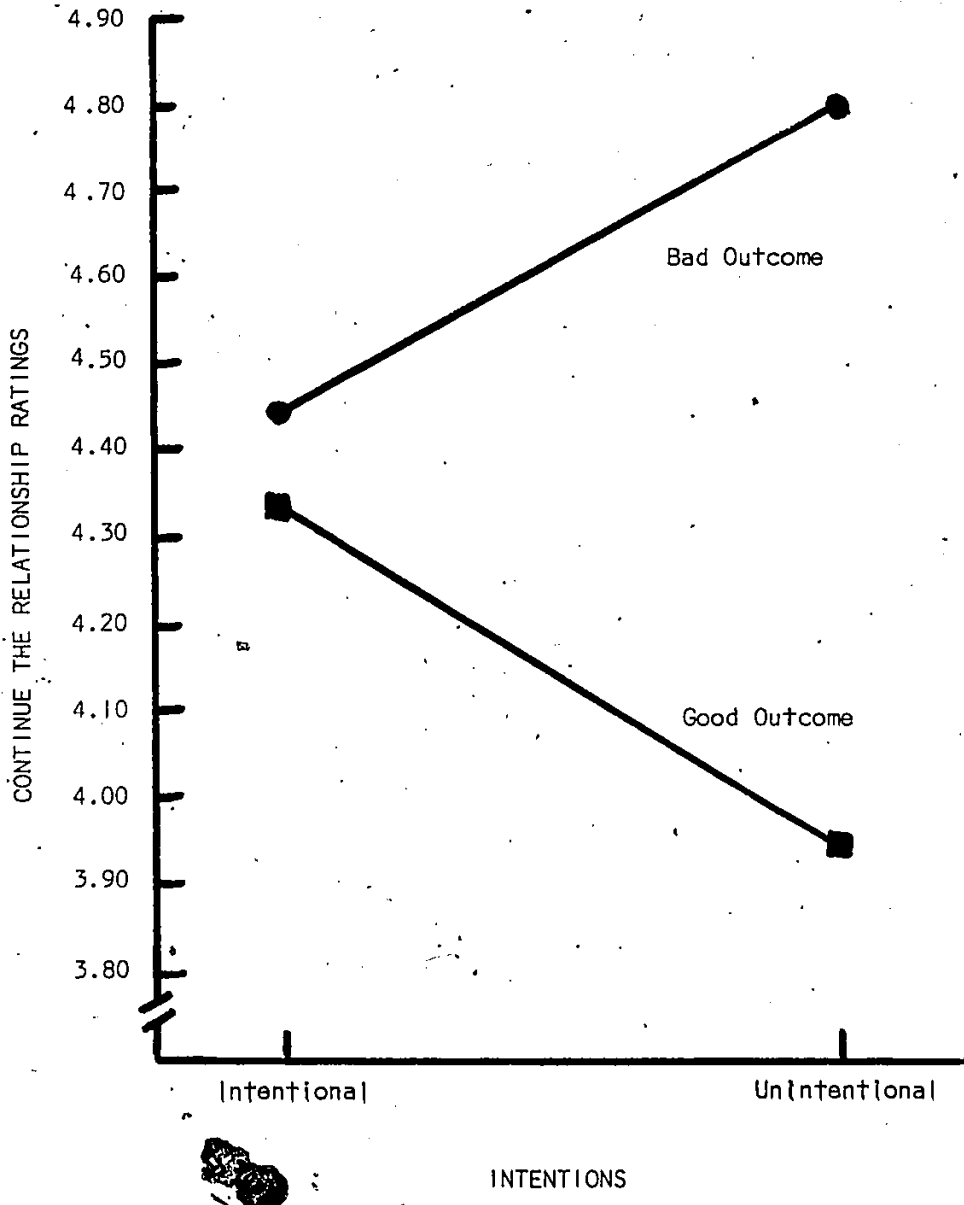


Figure 2. Outcome X Intention interaction effects on resolution to continue the relationship.

differences regarding the nature of intentions, $F < 1$. If the outcomes were positive, trust was not influenced by intentions.

Facilitating the Continuation of the Relationship. Responsibility for Solution of the problem had a highly significant main effect on Resolution to Continue the Relationship, $F(1, 304) = 38.61, p < .001$. Advice focusing upon the responsibility of the victim was judged as more effective ($M = 5.03$) than advice suggesting the victim was not responsible ($M = 3.71$).

Outcome had a significant main effect on increasing the resolve to continue the relationship, $F(1, 304) = 4.62, p < .05$. Focusing on bad outcomes arising from the conflict was viewed as more effective advice ($M = 4.59$) than stressing good outcomes ($M = 4.13$). An Outcome X Intention interaction of borderline significance was obtained, $F(1, 304) = 3.04, p < .10$. As shown in Figure 2, when behaviour was viewed as being unintentional, focusing on the bad outcome was judged as being more effective than focusing on the good outcomes. The simple main effect test was significant, $F(1, 304) = 7.98, p < .01$. When the behaviour was perceived as being intentional, it made no difference whether the outcome was good or bad, $F < 1$.

Perceived Logicality. A secondary analysis was conducted to determine whether the advice made sense (see Table 6). Responsibility for Cause had a significant main effect on logicality, $F(1, 304) = 6.36, p < .05$. Not being held responsible for the cause was judged to be more logical ($M = 5.30$) than being held responsible for the cause ($M = 4.67$). There was also a main effect trend for Responsibility for Solution, $F(1, 304) = 3.70, p < .10$. Responsibility for Solution was

TABLE 6
Analysis of Variance of Logical Scale

Source of Variation	MS	F
Cause (A)	31.88	6.36**
Outcome (B)	8.13	1.62
Intent (C)	2.63	0.52
Solution (D)	18.53	3.70*
A X B	0.70	0.14
A X C	9.45	1.89
A X D	11.63	2.32
B X C	3.40	0.68
B X D	0.90	0.18
C X D	5.25	1.05
A X B X C	3.00	0.60
A X B X D	1.38	0.28
A X C X D	8.13	1.62
B X C X D	7.50	1.50
A X B X C X D	1.95	0.39
Error	3.04	

* $p < 0.1$

** $p < .05$

rated as being more logical ($M = 5.23$) than was not being responsible for the solution ($M = 4.74$). No other main or interaction effects were found.

Relative Impact of Advice Strategies

Omega squares were computed from the analyses of variance data to assess the relative strength of the associations between each of the independent and dependent variables (see Appendix D). This index provides a rough estimate of the "pay off" of each kind of advice. The size of the advice effect was strongest for Responsibility for Cause on the feeling better scale (six per cent), and the Responsibility for Solution on the resolution to continue the relationships (11 per cent). The other variables with significant Fs accounted for three per cent or less of the variance. The main finding was that responsibility for cause or solution accounted for several times as much variance as outcome or intentions. In addition, the main effects were several times as important as any of the interaction effects.

CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION

People turn to a confidant to discuss personal problems. Such conversations can be helpful in reducing emotional stress. About one-fifth of all individuals seek mental health professionals to deal with their psychological problems (Gurin, Veroff & Feld, 1968).

The formal institution of advice-giving is psychological counseling. Most people, however, seek advice for personal problems from non-mental health professionals, such as clergymen, as well as from persons in their own informal support system (Bergin & Lambert, 1968). Much of our knowledge about the helping process is based upon the psycho-therapeutic literature which involves only a small part of the total number seeking help (Cowen, 1982). Relatively little is known about the nature and effectiveness of non-professional helping in spite of the fact that such types of helping transactions are most prevalent. An examination of these processes might be of value to both professional and non-professional helpers alike.

There is an extensive literature on attribution research, perceived control, outcome and intentionality. We have applied some of the findings from this body of theory and research to the context of psychological advice-giving. Several predictions might have been generated from this literature: (1) Acceptance of responsibility for the cause and solution of the interpersonal problem reduces negative affect and increases the willingness to continue the relationship; (2) The impact

of the benefits or harm depends on the perceived intentions of the other person; (3) Advice that benefits were derived as a result of the problem would help to reduce tension and stress, as well as promote the continuation of the relationship, and (4) Attributions, outcome and intentionality have interactive effects on affect and relationship-maintenance.

The most dramatic finding was the differential effects of advice on the two dependent measures. Avoidance of responsibility for the cause of the problem was apparently effective in reducing the perceived psychological stress, whereas acceptance of responsibility for the solution to the problem facilitated relationship-maintenance. This diametrically opposed finding was not expected. Only partial support, then, was obtained for the prediction that perceived control over an aversive event reduces stress.

The preference for the denial of responsibility for the cause of the problem can be interpreted in various ways. One possibility involves making a distinction between responsibility for cause and solution in terms of ego-defensive reactions versus perceived control. Much of the literature treats ego defenses and perceived control somewhat separately. The results of this study regarding causal attributions are congruent with research in the area of defensive attributions (Burger, 1981); self-serving biases (Bradley, 1978) and perceptual defense (Erdelyi, 1974; Greenwald, 1980). A common theme in these studies is that people distort events in order to perceive themselves in a positive light. People use flattering distortions to maintain psychological adjustment (Nelson & Craighead, 1977; Rizley, 1976). Forsythe and Forsythe

(1982) have observed that "normal" people often externalize their failures, and think they control outcomes when they don't, and feel comforted when arousal is misattributed to unrelated but alterable causal factors.

A further distinction is necessary between two kinds of attributions - dispositional and situational. The findings of the present study were essentially concerned with dispositional attributions rather than situational attributions insofar as the focus is on interpersonal problems that typically arise because of dispositional attributes. Problems in interpersonal relations are likely to generate dispositional characteristics that are countered by ego-defensive tactics. To accept blame for an interpersonal problem implies a defect in one's disposition likely to have long-term consequences. Taking the blame for the cause of a problem is likely to reflect on one's personality, whereas taking responsibility for the solution is more likely to focus on situational factors.

An important difference between dispositional and situational attributions is that dispositional interpretations reflect stable qualities not easily modifiable, while situational interpretations are more variable and modifiable. Moreover, the aim in dispositional attribution is to maintain a public image of being a "good guy" whereas for situational, there is a bias, instead, toward maintaining an image of being in control of the situation. There is some reason to believe, then, that people are more likely to accept responsibility for situational than dispositional "causes". If this assumption is valid, then the results of this study are not necessarily inconsistent

with findings that people are willing to accept responsibility for illness and accidents (cf. Timko & Janoff-Bulman, 1982; Wortman, 1976), insofar as this category of problems is situational rather than dispositional.

The findings of this study are consistent with the notion that responsibility for the solution of a problem affords a type of control over the situation. Research studies suggest that such control has positive psychological effects. Therapy designed to increase the perception of control over outcomes facilitates adjustment for a variety of clinical ailments (Chambliss & Murray, 1979; Comas-Diaz, 1981; Liberman, 1978). Adjustment can be improved if the patient believes that the unpleasant event occurred due to behaviour on his/her part that is modifiable (Janoff-Bulman, 1979; Timko & Janoff-Bulman, 1982). The attribution of negative events to non-modifiable behaviors can lead to depression (Abramson et al., 1976; Beck, 1976). Presumably, attributions to modifiable behaviors implies a method for preventing the reoccurrence of the event in the future, and a kind of solution as well.

The perception that behavior can be modified is an important consideration in the search for solutions to control the environment (Rothbaum et al., 1982). Primary control is an attempt to modify the environment in accordance with one's aims and goals. Secondary control arises when modification is not deemed as feasible. Rothbaum et al. suggest that under this condition, individuals search for the causes of the problem so as to gain control through understanding. Thus, again the saliency of attributions of cause and solution may

depend on whether the focus of an individual is towards primary or secondary control - variables not manipulated in the present study.

The preference for low responsibility for the cause of the problem for the affect-type variables and high responsibility for solution for the relational variables might also be interpreted from a temporal perspective. The Anger, Sadness and "Feeling Better" scales dealt with intrapersonal reactions to past events, whereas the Trust and Continue Friendship scales dealt with behaviours projected into the future. As future interaction involves an element of uncertainty, and insofar as interpersonal behaviour involves more commitment than intrapersonal behaviour, there is more of an element of risk in interpersonal than intrapersonal. Thus, it is not surprising that taking control over the future situation should have a greater impact on the relationship-maintenance variables. Responsibility over the solution to a problem is desirable in that it maximizes control and reduces some of the uncertainty that is uncomfortable.

A similar temporal interpretation is suggested by research conducted by Diener and Dweck (1978). These investigators found that subjects experiencing failure could be distinguished in terms of whether the focus was on the causes for failure or solutions to avoid future failure. Those who focused on the causes for failure ruminated about their recent failures in an effort to accept their past experiences. Those who focused upon solutions, however, were action-oriented. Thus, the saliency of attributions upon cause or solution may depend on whether the focus is upon acceptance of past experiences or upon mastery of future experiences.

There is some evidence suggesting that acceptance vs denial of responsibility varies with the valence of the outcome. Teachers, for instance, have been found to take more responsibility for the successes of their students than for their failures (Beckman, 1970; Schopler & Layton, 1972). Therapists accept responsibility for positive outcomes but accept relatively little responsibility for negative outcomes (Arkin et al., 1976). Experimental studies have also demonstrated the tendency to accept responsibility for position and denial of responsibility for negative outcomes (Miller, 1976; Sicoly & Ross, 1977; Stevens & Jones, 1976). Similar results were found in studies on the perception of harm infliction (Harvey, Harris & Barnes, 1975).

Heider has suggested that people are inclined to attribute to oneself good things, but one suffers when one has to attribute to oneself something that is not so good. This position is supported by Greenwald (1980) who labels this tendency as "beneffectance" - the perception of responsibility for desired but not undesired outcomes. Similarly, Forsythe and Forsythe (1982) concluded that "...attributions are more often than not biased by desire to reduce feelings of incompetency, insecurity, guilt or embarrassment" (p. 149). Heider (1958) has also suggested that self responsibility may be conceptualized in terms of several levels from being responsible for every action to being responsible only for intentional, freely chosen acts. Personal theories of self-responsibility may also vary with the degree to which self-responsibility for an act is shared with another. In this study, several subjects commented that they did not feel that the problem as stated in the response letter was all their "fault" implying

that they were willing to accept partial blame or shared responsibility, but not complete blame. In study design used, it was an "all or none" condition. Feelings of inequity in the distribution of blame, then, may have been a factor in its denial.

Outcome. The findings regarding the benefits/harm advice were quite unexpected for both the affect and the relational variables. It appears to make very little difference whether the advisor focused on the gains or losses arising out of the interpersonal conflict. Psychological stress was not influenced by advice on outcome. What was also unexpected was the finding that focus on bad outcomes were perceived to be more facilitative of the continuation of the relationship than focus on good outcomes.

Several interpretations could be made for the perceived effectiveness of the "bad-outcome" advice. It is conceivable that under certain conditions, positive interpretations of negative events is not perceived as helpful. In therapy, the positive interpretation of a patient's negative experience is sometimes interpreted by the patient as an attempt by the therapist to avoid dealing with the client's pain (Greenson, 1968). Such an intervention strategy may be perceived as aversive and as a type of maneuver designed to avoid dealing with the problem.

An alternative interpretation could be made in terms of the credibility or realism of such advice. Bad outcomes may be viewed as more believable than good outcomes. It may be difficult to accept the suggestion that a negative interpersonal event can be viewed in a positive way. Perhaps, more dissonance is created by seeking to tie

in a good outcome with a bad experience. A further possibility can be made in terms of the attitude expressed by the advisor in presenting a "bad outcome" interpretation. The advisor may have been perceived as more empathic than the advisor forwarding a good outcome interpretation. This may have been an uncontrolled variable in this study.

Intentions. There is nothing really new to the finding that a person will feel better if told that any harm done to him/her was not intended. Such a finding is also of limited interest. Considerable research has shown that the motive underlying behaviour influences the emotional reaction towards the protagonist (Horai, 1979; McKillip Edwards, 1974). What we were looking for was the possible interaction of intentions with other variables, such as attributions of cause and outcome. The small number of interactions in this study was unexpected. Causal attribution and intentions operated independently of one another.

Trust. The finding that responsibility for problem solution facilitates trust is consistent with prior research. It is necessary, however, to make the assumption that being responsible for the solution involves some perceived control over the future event. A number of studies have found that one is more likely to trust another, the more control one can exert and the less the assessed risk (Brickman, Becker & Castle, 1979; Bridges & Schoeninger, 1978; Charlesworth, 1980).

The Brickman Helping Models. The Brickman et al. model provides a conceptual framework for intervention strategies for helping people with various psychological and medical problems. A major attraction of these helping models is its heuristic value. Using different combinations

of responsibility for cause and solution, these authors have generated four helping models that appear to correspond with major intervention strategies employed in the area of support systems. But these helping models have, as yet, received little validity in terms of their utility under different conditions and situations. The present study involves an application of these helping models to communication tactics used in informal support systems. A basic problem has been that of operationalizing this paradigm. The present study is an attempt in this direction. The use of vignettes permits the manipulation of the different kinds of attributions in combination with other variables.

Let us review the four Brickman et al. helping models as these have been applied to advice-giving. In the moral model, the advisee is regarded as responsible for both the cause and the solution to the problem. In the enlightenment model, the advisee is responsible for the cause but not for the solution. In the compensatory model the advisee is not responsible for the cause, but responsible for the solution. In the medical model, the advisee is not responsible for either the cause or the solution. The main finding of this study is that the perceived effectiveness of the models depends on the criteria employed - the objectives underlying the advice-seeking. Advice focusing upon non-responsibility for the cause is judged to be more effective in helping with anger, sadness and in feeling better; the compensatory or the medical model may be the best choice to use when helping someone with their feelings and emotions. In contrast, advice focusing upon responsibility for resolving the problem situation

is judged to be most effective in repairing the relationships, the compensatory or the moral model may be the best choice for such a situation. As a general rule, the compensatory model is likely to be viewed as most effective with both types of problems. This involves telling the advisee that he/she is not responsible for the cause but is responsible for the solution. This is the Brickman et al. preferred model as it justifies the act of helping, while leaving the helped recipient with a sense of control. In contrast, it appears that the enlightenment model would be the worst choice as it would not be effective for either the cause or the solution to a problem.

A major prediction in this study was that the attributional variables in this model would have interactive effects with such variables as outcome and intention. In general, the results provide limited support for an interactive perspective. Instead, the significant findings were essentially main effects with the attribution of responsibility accounting for most of the variance, with a much lesser amount related to outcome and intentions. It is possible, of course, that methodological problems dampened the emergence of such interactions. But we have little data to support such an interpretation as yet. The findings of this study support, instead, the robustness of the Brickman et al. model in that the impact of the type of attribution does not depend to any great extent on other conditions. Strong main effects, then, enhance the viability of the theoretical paradigm.

Limitations and Research Implications

1. Individual Differences are likely to be a factor in the response made to advice. Personality factors are deserving of further consideration. Forsythe and Forsythe (1982) found that causal attributions stressing internally controllable factors produced more positive reactions for individuals with an internal locus of control than for an external locus of control. Advice regarding self-blame may have differential effects depending on an individual's internal-external scale score.

2. Demographic considerations should be examined further. In the present study, the sample was limited to females. We cannot generalize from the present study to males. Sex differences have been noted in the attribution process (Harvey, 1978; Orvis et al., 1976). Gurin et al. (1960) found, for instance, that men are more likely to attribute blame to themselves than women when discussing interpersonal problems.

The sample was also limited to university students. There may be some generational differences in response to different advice strategies. An older sample with less education, for instance, may have reacted in a different way.

3. The artificiality of the experiment may have been a factor in determining the results obtained. The subjects were asked to respond as if they were receiving the advice. We do not know how effective this simulation was for these subjects. How ego involved were they with the task? How realistic did it seem to them?

The subjects were asked to focus on an advisor of a particular type, such as friend, in rating the effectiveness of the advice given. We

suspect there were differences in the degree to which different subjects followed this instruction. Moreover, the experimental design did not permit manipulation of the advisor, and so it was impossible to evaluate the contribution of this variable.

4. The nature of the problem may have an impact on the perceived effectiveness of different kinds of advice. It is conceivable that the assessment of advice strategies varies with both the nature and seriousness of the problem. It is necessary to establish if the same findings are obtained when the problem has different "demand characteristics." For instance, the same kind of advice regarding a problem with alcohol might have a different effect than a problem concerning a disloyal friend.

5. The vignette method itself is an important consideration. Some of the differences obtained could be due to uncontrolled variation among the vignette segments. For instance, it is possible that there were differences along such dimensions as the empathy expressed by the advisor in giving the advice that may have had an effect. A semantic differential study of the vignette segments seems necessary.

The paucity of interactions might be due to vignette problems. The use of multiple vignette segments permitted systematic variation of variables. But it is possible that the use of combination of vignettes had a "diluting" or "weakening" effect. The meaning of any given vignette segment, e.g., regarding intentions, might change when interposed as part of a larger configuration of segments.

6. Further research is needed to assess the reliability of the finding that few interactions were obtained regarding responsibility, outcome and intentions. Each independent variable may not have been

equally potent, thus reducing the likelihood of interactions.

7. This study was designed essentially to tap the perceived short-term effectiveness of advice. It is possible that strategies effective for short-term relief might not have long-term benefits and vice versa. Advice which alleviates anxiety (short-term relief) may not be instrumental in effecting fundamental personal change (long-term effectiveness) and may even hamper more lasting beneficial change. Future research should consider these temporal variables.

8. This study involved judgements about the effectiveness of different kinds of advice. Whether the ratings of perceived effectiveness actually corresponds to real effectiveness has yet to be determined.

Item in San Francisco Examiner, April 22, 1979.

The telephone pole was approaching. I was attempting to swerve out of its way when it struck my front end.

APPENDIX A

SAMPLE OF TEST MATERIAL

Instructions

Letter to Advisor

Reply from Advisor

Rating Scales

On the next page (page 2) you will read a letter in which the writer describes a problem that she is having with her friend

Pat. When you read the letter, imagine as best as you can that you have written that letter and that the letter describes your experience. Imagine that you are writing to seek advice from someone whom you trust. Pick someone whom you would turn to for help. (Later on, you will be asked the type of person whom you chose.) Pretend that you have written to this person and that you have received the reply which follows the letter (on page 3). After you read the reply, you will be asked some questions.

Please indicate your sex. Male Female

How many years have you lived in this country? _____ years.

How old are you? _____

Dear _____

I'm very upset about what happened between my friend Pat and myself. I met Pat a few months ago. I really liked her because she was so much fun to be with and because she had a great sense of humor. We became good friends very quickly, doing everything together and having a great time. We seemed to understand each other really well and could talk to each other about all our problems.

Lately, however, Pat has begun to change. I've noticed that when we're in groups together, she almost ignores me and seems to prefer talking to others. She spends more time with other people and seems to invite me to do things only when she has no one else. She even gets together with my old friends, whom I introduced her to, without asking me to come along. It seems that the only time I see her now is when she wants to borrow my lecture notes or when she wants me to drive her somewhere. The thing which really upsets me is that lately I have heard that Pat has been saying some things about me which are not too nice. I am really disturbed by all this. What do you think I should do?

Please write soon.

Sincerely,

Dear _____,

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Perhaps you did something which provoked Pat and made her angry. The way you describe Pat is quite different from the way I have observed her to act with other people. I do not think that Pat would have acted in the way which you describe, unless she had a reason to do so. I think that most probably you did something first which lead her to act in this way. I am sure that when you examine your past behavior, you will realize what you did to provoke Pat. For a friendship to survive, you must give as much as you receive. Did you really fulfill Pat's needs? I think that probably, you did not give as much as you thought you did and that this could have caused Pat to respond by withdrawing. Remember that people react to the behaviors of others. I think that you are probably responsible for what happened.

If you look at this situation in another way, you will see that something positive has resulted. I think the fact that you see less of Pat may actually be a blessing in disguise because this may spare both of you from more pain in the future. Regardless of whom is responsible for causing the rift in your relationship, it seems that each of you wanted different things from friendship. Therefore, unless you changed your expectations, you may eventually have become even more disappointed and hurt later on, if your friendship ever did end completely. So your seeing less of Pat actually has a good consequence for you. Also, you now have a great opportunity to develop meaningful relationships with others now that you have more time. Making friends with people who like you will also help you to feel better about yourself and help you to reduce your dependency upon Pat. This has actually been a lucky break for you and things have turned out for the best. The end result is good for you.

Again laying aside the question of whom is to blame for starting the problems in your friendship, I think that after Pat became aware that there were difficulties in your relationship, she began to withdraw from you on purpose because she felt that it would be best for both of you in the long run. She thought that seeing less of each other would spare both of you more pain in the future. She wanted to give you both a chance to make new friends and to become more independent. Although this may be hard to believe because you are going through a painful experience, Pat was actually trying to help you (which I think she did) and she had good intentions. She decided what had to be done to help the both of you and then she did it. She was well aware of what she was doing. I think that her plan worked because you have both been helped. She meant kindly and acted in the best interests for both of you.

No matter who's to blame for the present situation, now that you have this problem in your friendship, what are you going to do about it? I think that if you are such a good friend of Pat's, you owe it to her to work on the problems in this friendship. A good friend is one who can be counted on not to back away when things go wrong. You are committed to this friendship and should try to save it. You are acting as though you are helpless, although in reality, there are many things you could be doing to repair your relationship. It's time to take the initiative and try to find a solution to the problem. If you don't find a way to work this problem out, no one else will do it for you. I think that you are responsible for trying to work things out between you and Pat.

I hope that you soon feel better,

Yours sincerely,

Listed below are several questions. As you answer these questions continue to imagine as vividly as you can that you have written the letter which you just read and that you have received the advice which followed. After reading each question complete the rating scale which follows the question by circling the number on the scale which corresponds to the rating which you believe the advice deserves.

1) How much would this advice help you with your feelings of sadness?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
 not at all | a bit | moderately | quite | a great deal
 | | | so | a lot

2) How much would this advice help you to regain your trust in your friend Pat?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
 not at all | a bit | moderately | quite | a great deal
 | | | so | a lot

3) How much would this advice increase your resolve to continue your friendship with Pat?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
 not at all | a bit | moderately | quite | a great deal
 | | | so | a lot

4) How much would this advice help you in feeling better?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
 not at all | a bit | moderately | quite | a great deal
 | | | so | a lot

5) How much would this advice help you with your feelings of anger?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
 not at all | a bit | moderately | quite | a great deal
 | | | so | a lot

6) How logical was this advice overall? Did this advice make sense?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
 not at all | a bit | moderately | quite | a great deal
 | | | so | a lot

7) Who did you choose to write to? Indicate your answer by checkmarks.

Friend _____ Parent _____ Brother or sister _____
 Relative _____ Teacher _____ Clergy _____
 Doctor _____ Guidance counsellor _____ Other _____ (Indicate who this is)

8) What was this experiment about? _____

APPENDIX B

VIGNETTE SEGMENTS AND TEST QUESTIONS: REVISED VERSIONS

Condition: Responsible for Cause

Vignette : Perhaps you did something which provoked Pat and made her angry. The way you describe Pat is quite different from the way I have observed her to act with other people. I do not think that Pat would have acted in the way which you describe, unless she had a reason to do so. I think that most probably you did something first which lead her to act in this way. I am sure that when you examine your past behaviour you will realize what you did to provoke Pat. For a friendship to survive, you must give as much as you receive. Did you really fulfill Pat's needs. I think that probably you did not give as much as you thought you did and that this could have caused Pat to respond by withdrawing. Remember that people react to the behaviours of others.

Test

Question: According to the writer's reply, who does the writer see as being the one who is responsible for having caused the problem? Who is being blamed for being at fault or for having started the problem in the first place? Circle the correct answer. Chris Pat

Condition : Not Responsible for Cause

Vignette : Pat sounds like she is going through a difficult period and is experiencing some emotional difficulties. This seems to be the reason why your friendship is falling apart. It sounds like Pat's problems have nothing to do with you and that you should not blame yourself for the problems in your relationship. From the way you describe the situation, it seems that you did nothing which provoked her or made her angry. You always acted like a good friend, helping her out and introducing her to other people. You should not take her behaviour too personally because she is probably acting this way with other people too. You have nothing to reproach yourself with.

Test

Question : According to the writer's reply, who does the writer see as being the one who is responsible for having caused the problem? Who is being blamed for being at fault or for having caused the problem in the first place? Circle the correct answer. Chris Pat.

Condition: Good Outcome

Vignette: If you look at this situation in another way, you will see that something positive has resulted. I think the fact that you see less of Pat may actually be a blessing in disguise because this may spare both of you from more pain in the future. Regardless of whom is responsible for causing the rift in your relationship, it seems that each of you wanted different things from friendship of you wanted different things from friendship, and that unless you changed your expectations, you may eventually have become even more disappointed and hurt later on, if your friendship ever did end completely. Also, you now have a great opportunity to develop meaningful relationships with others now that you have more time. Making friends with people who like you will also help you to feel better about yourself and help you to reduce your dependency upon Pat. This has actually been a lucky break ~~for~~ you and things have turned out for the best.

Test

Question:

According to the writer's reply, which of the interpretations listed below fits best?
 Something good may have resulted from the problem situation.
 Nothing good resulted from the problem situation.

Condition: Bad Outcome

Vignette:

Forgetting for a moment whom is to blame for causing the problem in your relationship, it's always painful to feel rejected. You sound very hurt by Pat's abrupt way of withdrawing from your friendship. Understandably, you are disappointed because Pat did not take the trouble to discuss her perceptions of the problems in your relationship with you and instead withdrew. On top of this, you may now find that your other friends now have divided loyalties because Pat is now friends with all of your old friends. Some of them may be sympathetic to her side of the story and may not give you as much support as you may like. Losing friends when you are down must add to your pain. I can understand why your confidence in yourself is shaken. Regardless of whom is at fault for causing this situation, you certainly have been very hurt.

Test

Question:

According to the writer's reply, which of the interpretations listed below fits best?
 Something good may have resulted from the problem situation.
 Nothing good resulted from the problem situation.

Condition: Intentional Act (for Good Outcome)

Vignette: Again laying aside the question of whom is to blame for initially causing the difficulties in your friendship, I think that after Pat became aware that there were problems in your relationship, she began to withdraw from you on purpose because she felt that it would be best for both of you in the long run. She thought that seeing less of each other would spare both of you in the future. She wanted to give both of you a chance to make new friends and to become more independent. Although this may be hard to believe, Pat was trying to help both of you (which I think she did). She decided what had to be done and then did it. She was well aware of what she was doing. I think her plan worked because you both have been helped. She meant kindly and acted in the best interests for both of you.

Test

Question: According to the writer's reply, did Pat deliberately intend to do something good for Chris? Yes No

Condition: Unintentional Act (for Good Outcome)

Vignette: Again, forgetting who is at fault for starting the problem in your friendship, I am sure that Pat was not aware that she was actually doing you a favor when she began to spend less time with you. She did not realize that she was sparing you more pain in the long run or that she was making it easier for you to make new friends. Making new friends will make you happier, another outcome which I am sure that Pat did not imagine that she was making possible. Pat did not know what the results of her behaviour would be and how much she may be helping you.

Test

Question: According to the writer's reply, did Pat deliberately intend to do something good for Chris? Yes No

Condition: Intentional Act (for Bad Outcome)

Vignette: I think that Pat knew exactly how hurt you would be by her behaviour but that didn't bother her. Again, laying aside the question of whom is to blame for initially creating the difficulties in your friendship, after Pat felt that you two were no longer such good friends, Pat probably wanted to meet new people and decided to make friends with all your old friends although she knew very well that she was taking friends away from you. Pat didn't care about hurting your feelings because your hurt feelings were a small price to pay for getting a chance to hang around other people. Pat is a smart girl and knew exactly what she was doing and was very aware of how much you'd be upset. She put her needs before your best interests.

Test

Question: According to the writer's reply, did Pat hurt Chris deliberately? That is, when Pat hurt Chris, did Pat act intentionally? Yes No

Condition: Unintentional Act (for Bad Outcome)

Vignette: However, it's important to realize that Pat probably did not mean to hurt you on purpose. Regardless of whom is at fault for initially creating the difficulties in your friendship, after it became clear that you two were no longer such good friends, Pat probably wanted to back off a bit from you but did not know how to handle this delicate situation in a better way. Her behaviour was hurtful and clumsy but probably not spiteful: When Pat spent time with other people, probably she only wanted to make new friends. I think that most likely Pat did not want to hurt you and did not realize that she was insulting you. I believe that she would not have acted in this way if she knew how upsetting you found her behaviour.

Test

Question: According to the writer's reply, did Pat willfully intend to harm Chris or cause a painful experience for Chris? Yes No

Condition: Responsible for the solution

Vignette: No matter who's to blame for the present situation, now that you have this problem in your friendship, what are you going to do about it? I think that if you are such a good friend of Pat's you owe it to her to work on the problems in this friendship. A good friend is one who can be counted on not to back away when things go wrong. You are committed to this friendship and should try to save it. You are acting as though you are helpless, although in reality, there are many things you could be doing to repair your relationship. It's time to take the initiative and try to find a solution to the problem. If you don't find a way to work this problem out, no one else will do it for you.

Test

Question: According to the writer's reply, who does the writer see as being responsible for finding a solution to the problem? Regardless of who caused the problem in the first place, in the writer's opinion, who is the one who is morally obligated to work out the problem? Who should do something to resolve the situation?
Chris Pat

Condition: Not Responsible for the Solution

Vignette: Because there are certain things going wrong in your relationship, Pat sounds as though she is not sure about how much she wants to continue being good friends with you. Only she can make this decision as only she knows her own mind and how much value she puts on her relationship with you. Attempts to persuade her will do no good to your relationship in the long run. Not only are attempts to influence her useless, I believe that Pat has the right to decide on her own and that you should respect this right. You have to wait and give her time to make up her mind and to work things out for herself. You have to let her make the first move and see what she wants to do. There is nothing more which you can or should do.

Test

Question: According to the writer's reply, who does the writer see as being responsible for finding a solution to the problem? Regardless of who caused the problem in the first place, in the writer's opinion, who is the one who is morally obligated to work out the problem, Who should do something to resolve the situation?
Chris Pat

APPENDIX C*

SIXTEEN VIGNETTES: EXPERIMENTAL CONDITIONS

*Note. Each vignette letter begins with "Dear ,...." and ends with "Yours sincerely...."

RESPONSIBLE FOR CAUSE, GOOD OUTCOME, INTENTIONAL, RESPONSIBLE FOR SOLUTION

Perhaps you did something which provoked Pat and made her angry. The way you describe Pat is quite different from the way I have observed her to act with other people. I do not think that Pat would have acted in the way which you describe, unless she had a reason to do so. I think that most probably you did something first which lead her to act in this way. I am sure that when you examine your past behavior, you will realize what you did to provoke Pat. For a friendship to survive, you must give as much as you receive. Did you really fulfill Pat's needs? I think that probably, you did not give as much as you thought you did and that this could have caused Pat to respond by withdrawing. Remember that people react to the behaviors of others. I think that you are probably responsible for what happened.

If you look at this situation in another way, you will see that something positive has resulted. I think the fact that you see less of Pat may actually be a blessing in disguise because this may spare both of you from more pain in the future. Regardless of whom is responsible for causing the rift in your relationship, it seems that each of you wanted different things from friendship. Therefore, unless you changed your expectations, you may eventually have become even more disappointed and hurt later on, if your friendship ever did end completely. So your seeing less of Pat actually has a good consequence for you. Also, you now have a great opportunity to develop meaningful relationships with others now that you have more time. Making friends with people who like you will also help you to feel better about yourself and help you to reduce your dependency upon Pat. This has actually been a lucky break for you and things have turned out for the best. The end result is good for you.

Again laying aside the question of whom is to blame for starting the problems in your friendship, I think that after Pat became aware that there were difficulties in your relationship, she began to withdraw from you on purpose because she felt that it would be best for both of you in the long run. She thought that seeing less of each other would spare both of you more pain in the future. She wanted to give you both a chance to make new friends and to become more independent. Although this may be hard to believe because you are going through a painful experience, Pat was actually trying to help you (which I think she did) and she had good intentions. She decided what had to be done to help the both of you and then she did it. She was well aware of what she was doing. I think that her plan worked because you have both been helped. She meant kindly and acted in the best interests for both of you.

No matter who's to blame for the present situation, now that you have this problem in your friendship, what are you going to do about it? I think that if you are such a good friend of Pat's, you owe it to her to work on the problems in this friendship. A good friend is one who can be counted on not to back away when things go wrong. You are committed to this friendship and should try to save it. You are acting as though you are helpless, although in reality, there are many things you could be doing to repair your relationship. It's time to take the initiative and try to find a solution to the problem. If you don't find a way to work this problem out, no one else will do it for you. I think that you are responsible for trying to work things out between you and Pat.

I hope that you soon feel better,

Yours sincerely,

RESPONSIBLE FOR CAUSE, GOOD OUTCOME, INTENTIONAL, NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR SOLUTION

Perhaps you did something which provoked Pat and made her angry. The way you describe Pat is quite different from the way I have observed her to act with other people. I do not think that Pat would have acted in the way which you describe, unless she had a reason to do so. I think that most probably you did something first which lead her to act in this way. I am sure that when you examine your past behavior, you will realize what you did to provoke Pat. For a friendship to survive, you must give as much as you receive. Did you really fulfill Pat's needs? I think that probably, you did not give as much as you thought you did and that this could have caused Pat to respond by withdrawing. Remember that people react to the behaviors of others. I think that you are probably responsible for what happened.

If you look at this situation in another way, you will see that something positive has resulted. I think the fact that you see less of Pat may actually be a blessing in disguise because this may spare both of you from more pain in the future. Regardless of whom is responsible for causing the rift in your relationship, it seems that each of you wanted different things from friendship. Therefore, unless you changed your expectations, you may eventually have become even more disappointed and hurt later on, if your friendship ever did end completely. So your seeing less of Pat actually has a good consequence for you. Also, you now have a great opportunity to develop meaningful relationships with others now that you have more time. Making friends with people who like you will also help you to feel better about yourself and help you to reduce your dependency upon Pat. This has actually been a lucky break for you and things have turned out for the best. The end result is good for you.

Again laying aside the question of whom is to blame for starting the problems in your friendship, I think that after Pat became aware that there were difficulties in your relationship, she began to withdraw from you on purpose because she felt that it would be best for both of you in the long run. She thought that seeing less of each other would spare both of you more pain in the future. She wanted to give you both a chance to make new friends and to become more independent. Although this may be hard to believe because you are going through a painful experience, Pat was actually trying to help you (which I think she did) and she had good intentions. She decided what had to be done to help the both of you and then she did it. She was well aware of what she was doing. I think that her plan worked because you have both been helped. She meant kindly and acted in the best interests for both of you.

Because there are certain things going wrong in your relationship, Pat sounds as though she is not sure about how much she wants to continue being good friends with you. Only she can make this decision as only she knows her own mind and how much value she puts on her relationship with you. Attempts to persuade her will do no good to your relationship in the long run. Not only are attempts to influence her useless, I believe that Pat has the right to decide on her own and that you should respect this right. You have to wait and give her time to make up her mind and to work things out for herself. You have to let her make the first move and see what she wants to do. There is nothing more which you can or should do. Pat is the one who is responsible for trying to work out the problem in your relationship - not you.

RESPONSIBLE FOR CAUSE, GOOD OUTCOME, UNINTENTIONAL, RESPONSIBLE FOR SOLUTION

Perhaps you did something which provoked Pat and made her angry. The way you describe Pat is quite different from the way I have observed her to act with other people. I do not think that Pat would have acted in the way which you describe, unless she had a reason to do so. I think that most probably you did something first which lead her to act in this way. I am sure that when you examine your past behavior, you will realize what you did to provoke Pat. For a friendship to survive, you must give as much as you receive. Did you really fulfill Pat's needs? I think that probably, you did not give as much as you thought you did and that this could have caused Pat to respond by withdrawing. Remember that people react to the behaviors of others. I think that you are probably responsible for what happened.

If you look at this situation in another way, you will see that something positive has resulted. I think the fact that you see less of Pat may actually be a blessing in disguise because this may spare both of you from more pain in the future. Regardless of whom is responsible for causing the rift in your relationship, it seems that each of you wanted different things from friendship. Therefore, unless you changed your expectations, you may eventually have become even more disappointed and hurt later on, if your friendship ever did end completely. So your seeing less of Pat actually has a good consequence for you. Also, you now have a great opportunity to develop meaningful relationships with others now that you have more time. Making friends with people who like you will also help you to feel better about yourself and help you to reduce your dependency upon Pat. This has actually been a lucky break for you and things have turned out for the best. The end result is good for you.

Again, forgetting who is at fault for starting the problem in your friendship, I am sure that Pat was not aware that she was actually doing you a favor when she began to spend less time with you. She did not realize that she might be sparing you more pain in the long run or that she was making it easier for you to make new friends. Making new friends will make you happier, another outcome which I am sure that Pat did not imagine that she was making possible. Pat did not know what the results of her behavior would be and how much she may be helping you. Although Pat has actually helped you, she did so unintentionally.

No matter who's to blame for the present situation, now that you have this problem in your friendship, what are you going to do about it? I think that if you are such a good friend of Pat's, you owe it to her to work on the problems in this friendship. A good friend is one who can be counted on not to back away when things go wrong. You are committed to this friendship and should try to save it. You are acting as though you are helpless, although in reality, there are many things you could be doing to repair your relationship. It's time to take the initiative and try to find a solution to the problem. If you don't find a way to work this problem out, no one else will do it for you. I think that you are responsible for trying to work things out between you and Pat.

I hope that you soon feel better,

Yours sincerely,

RESPONSIBLE FOR CAUSE; GOOD OUTCOME, UNINTENTIONAL, NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR SOLUTION

Perhaps you did something which provoked Pat and made her angry. The way you describe Pat is quite different from the way I have observed her to act with other people. I do not think that Pat would have acted in the way which you describe, unless she had a reason to do so. I think that most probably you did something first which lead her to act in this way. I am sure that when you examine your past behavior, you will realize what you did to provoke Pat. For a friendship to survive, you must give as much as you receive. Did you really fulfill Pat's needs? I think that probably, you did not give as much as you thought you did and that this could have caused Pat to respond by withdrawing. Remember that people react to the behaviors of others. I think that you are probably responsible for what happened.

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Because there are certain things going wrong in your relationship, Pat sounds as though she is not sure about how much she wants to continue being good friends with you. Only she can make this decision as only she knows her own mind and how much value she puts on her relationship with you. Attempts to persuade her will do no good to your relationship in the long run. Not only are attempts to influence her useless, I believe that Pat has the right to decide on her own and that you should respect this right. You have to wait and give her time to make up her mind and to work things out for herself. You have to let her make the first move and see what she wants to do. There is nothing more which you can or should do. Pat is the one who is responsible for trying to work out the problem in your relationship - not you.

I hope that you soon feel better,

Yours sincerely,

RESPONSIBLE FOR CAUSE, BAD OUTCOME, INTENTIONAL, RESPONSIBLE FOR SOLUTION

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Forgetting for a moment whom is to blame for causing the problem in your relationship, it's always painful to feel rejected. You sound very hurt by Pat's abrupt way of withdrawing from your friendship. Understandably, you are disappointed because Pat did not take the trouble to discuss her perceptions of the problems in your relationship with you and instead withdrew. On top of this, you may find that your other friends now have divided loyalties because Pat is now friends with all of your old friend. Some of them may be sympathetic to her side of the story and may not give you as much support as you may like. Losing friends when you are down must add to your pain. I can understand why your confidence in yourself is shaken. Regardless of whom is at fault for causing this situation, you certainly have been hurt, and this has been a very negative experience for you. I can not see any good consequences from this situation for you.

I think that Pat knew exactly how hurt you would be by her behavior but that didn't bother her. In fact, I think that she deliberately wanted to upset you. Again, laying aside the question of whom is to blame for initially creating the difficulties in your friendship, after Pat felt that you two were no longer such good friends, she became angry at you and deliberately wanted to hurt you. She thought that taking away friends from you and turning them against you would be a good way of getting back at you. Pat is a smart girl and knew exactly what she was doing. She knew exactly how much you would be upset by her behavior. She hurt your feelings on purpose. Her unkind acts were intentional.

No matter who's to blame for the present situation, now that you have this problem in your friendship, what are you going to do about it? I think that if you are such a good friend of Pat's, you owe it to her to work on the problems in this friendship. A good friend is one who can be counted on not to back away when things go wrong. You are committed to this friendship and should try to save it. You are acting as though you are helpless, although in reality, there are many things you could be doing to repair your relationship. It's time to take the initiative and try to find a solution to the problem. If you don't find a way to work this problem out, no one else will do it for you. I think that you are responsible for trying to work things out between you and Pat.

I hope that you soon feel better,

Yours sincerely,

RESPONSIBLE FOR CAUSE, BAD OUTCOME, INTENTIONAL, NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR SOLUTION

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Because there are certain things going wrong in your relationship, Pat sounds as though she is not sure about how much she wants to continue being good friends with you. Only she can make this decision as only she knows her own mind and how much value she puts on her relationship with you. Attempts to persuade her will do no good to your relationship in the long run. Not only are attempts to influence her useless, I believe that Pat has the right to decide on her own and that you should respect this right. You have to wait and give her time to make up her mind and to work things out for herself. You have to let her make the first move and see what she wants to do. There is nothing more which you can or should do. Pat is the one who is responsible for trying to work out the problem in your relationship - not you.

I hope that you soon feel better,

Yours sincerely,

.. RESPONSIBLE FOR CAUSE, BAD OUTCOME, UNINTENTIONAL, RESPONSIBLE FOR SOLUTION

Perhaps you did something which provoked Pat and made her angry. The way you describe Pat is quite different from the way I have observed her to act with other people. I do not think that Pat would have acted in the way which you describe, unless she had a reason to do so. I think that most probably you did something first which lead her to act in this way. I am sure that when you examine your past behavior, you will realize what you did to provoke Pat. For a friendship to survive, you must give as much as you receive. Did you really fulfill Pat's needs? I think that probably, you did not give as much as you thought you did and that this could have caused Pat to respond by withdrawing. Remember that people react to the behaviors of others. I think that you are probably responsible for what happened.

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Again laying aside the question of whom is to blame for starting the problems in your friendship, I think that after Pat became aware that there were difficulties in your relationship, she began to withdraw from you on purpose because she felt that it would be best for both of you in the long run. She thought that seeing less of each other would spare both of you more pain in the future. She wanted to give you both a chance to make new friends and to become more independent. Although this may be hard to believe because you are going through a painful experience, Pat was actually trying to help you (which I think she did) and she had good intentions. She decided what had to be done to help the both of you and then she did it. She was well aware of what she was doing. I think that her plan worked because you have both been helped. She meant kindly and acted in the best interests for both of you.

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I think that Pat knew exactly how hurt you would be by her behavior but that didn't bother her. In fact, I think that she deliberately wanted to upset you. Again, laying aside the question of whom is to blame for initially creating the difficulties in your friendship, after Pat felt that you two were no longer such good friends, she became angry at you and deliberately wanted to hurt you. She thought that taking away friends from you and turning them against you would be a good way of getting back at you. Pat is a smart girl and knew exactly what she was doing. She knew exactly how much you would be upset by her behavior. She hurt your feelings on purpose. Her unkind acts were intentional.

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APPENDIX D
CHOICE OF ADVISOR

TABLE 7

Choice of Advisor: Percentages

Advisor	Percentage
Friend	70
Parent	10
Brother-Sister	11
Relative	4
Teacher	0
Clergy	1
Physician	0
Guidance Counsellor	2
Boyfriend	2
Other	1

Note. N = 320.

APPENDIX E

MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS OF DEPENDENT MEASURES



TABLE 8

Means and Standard Deviations of Dependent Measures:

Affect Variables

Experimental condition	Anger		Sadness		Feeling Better	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
RC GO I RS	3.95	1.73	3.60	1.85	4.30	2.43
RC GO I NRS	3.35	1.84	3.30	1.95	3.20	2.07
RC GO UI RS	4.40	2.14	4.30	1.84	4.70	2.06
RC GO UI NRS	4.10	2.15	3.95	1.82	4.00	2.38
RC BO I RS	4.10	2.15	3.95	1.82	4.10	2.08
RC BO I NRS	4.15	1.84	2.85	2.16	3.45	2.04
RC BO UI RS	4.25	2.15	3.90	2.17	3.80	2.46
RC BO UI NRS	4.00	2.25	3.90	1.94	3.50	1.91
NRC GO I RS	4.80	1.94	4.80	2.24	5.40	2.01
NRC GO I NRS	3.95	1.36	4.10	1.71	4.50	2.14
NRC GO UI RS	5.15	1.63	4.75	1.94	5.35	1.84
NRC GO UI NRS	5.10	1.25	4.65	2.18	5.50	1.96
NRC BO I RS	4.70	2.06	3.95	1.93	4.75	1.92
NRC BO I NRS	4.30	2.23	4.15	1.90	4.65	1.98
NRC BO UI RS	4.35	2.16	4.40	2.01	4.25	2.05
NRC BO UI NRC	5.25	1.92	4.55	1.88	5.55	2.21

Note: Cell n = 20; High numbers indicate greater perceived helpfulness of advice.

RC = Responsibility for Cause; NRC = Not Responsible for Cause;
GO = Good Outcome; BO = Bad Outcome; I = Intentional; UI = Uninten-
tional; RS = Responsible for Solution; NRS = Not Responsible for
Solution.

TABLE 9

Means and Standard Deviations of Dependent Measures:

Relationship-Maintenance and Logical Scale

Experimental condition	Trust		Continue Friendship		Logical	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
RC GO I RS	4.05	2.52	5.20	2.19	4.60	2.68
RC GO I NRS	3.35	1.79	3.65	2.21	4.50	2.16
RC GO UI RS	3.90	1.80	4.55	1.64	4.95	2.06
RC GO UI NRS	3.35	1.27	3.05	1.76	3.80	1.96
RC BO I RS	3.15	1.18	5.35	1.63	5.70	1.87
RC BO I NRS	2.80	1.61	3.45	2.04	4.20	2.48
RC BO UI RS	4.10	1.97	5.55	2.14	5.15	2.06
RC BO UI NRS	3.50	1.85	3.95	1.85	4.45	1.82
NRC GO I RS	4.40	1.60	4.65	2.23	5.40	2.46
NRC GO I NRS	3.50	1.85	3.80	2.04	4.85	2.08
NRC GO UI RS	4.30	1.84	4.40	1.60	5.10	2.17
NRC GO UI NRS	3.05	1.64	3.75	1.71	5.40	1.73
NRC BO I RS	3.29	1.86	5.35	1.84	5.35	2.18
NRC BO I NRS	2.95	1.73	3.50	2.19	4.55	2.56
NRC BO UI RS	4.25	1.68	5.20	1.99	5.55	2.78
NRC BO UI NRS	3.80	1.54	4.50	1.64	6.20	2.42

Note: Cell n = 20; High numbers indicate greater perceived helpfulness of advice.

RC = Responsibility for Cause; NRC = Not Responsible for Cause;
 GO = Good Outcome; BO = Bad Outcome; I = Intentional; UI = Unintentional;
 RS = Responsible for Solution; NRS = Not Responsible for Solution.

APPENDIX F

OMEGA SQUARED: PERCENTAGE OF VARIANCE EXPLAINED

8:24

TABLE 10

Omega Squared: Percentage of Variance Explained*

Dependent Measure	Independent Measure	Percentage
Anger	Responsibility for cause	3
	Intentions	1
Sadness	Responsibility for cause	3
	Intentions	1
Feeling Better	Responsibility for cause	6
Trust	Responsibility for cause	3
Continue Relationship	Responsibility for solution	11
	Outcome	1
	Outcome X Intention	1

*Note. Omega squared were computed only on main or interaction effects that evoked significant F values.

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